

Ethel Dutton

1886-1973
Eastcombe
Gloucestershire

Absalom Hackney

1891-1973
Newcastle under Lyme
Staffordshire

Introduction

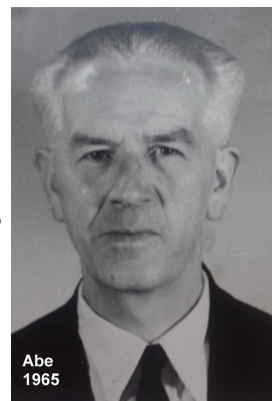
Olga Pansey Dutton was born in 1912 in Staffordshire and her mother was Ethel Sarah Dutton. That much the family knew. What no one knew was who her father was. This is the story of how we found out.

Absalom's Early Life

Absalom Hackney was born in August 1891 in [Bridge Street](#), Silverdale, Newcastle, Staffordshire. His parents were Edward and Rebecca Hackney, Edward was a coal miner.

Absalom, normally called Abe for short, was named after his grandfather, his father's father who was also Absalom Hackney. Both his father and grandfather were from Burslem, Staffordshire and his mother from Silverdale, Staffordshire. [Abe's Family Tree](#) is traced back to 1600 - his 7th Great Grandparents.

At the time of his birth Abe had 2 older brothers and 1 sister and he'd go on to have another 4 younger siblings making a total of 8 children, the youngest and oldest being girls, the other 6 all boys.



Abe
1965



By 1901 the family were living at 139 Rosemary Street, Silverdale with both parents and 7 children being listed in the [1901 census](#). 10 years later in 1911, with Abe now aged 20 the family are living at [24 Chapel Street](#), Knutton, Staffs. By this time the 3 oldest children had left home, leaving Abe the oldest with his parents and 4 younger siblings as shown in the [1911 census](#). Abe was now working as a coal miner whilst his father was a labourer in a tile manufacturer.

Ethel's Background

Ethel was born in 1886 in Eastcombe, Gloucestershire, to Richard Ridler Dutton and his wife Alice (nee Blackwell).

Ethel, then aged 5, and her family are listed in the [1891 census](#) living at No [1 Laburnum Cottage](#) in Eastcombe in the parish of Bisley. By 2015 the cottage must still have been in existence because the owners [submitted plans](#) to add a timber storage shed!

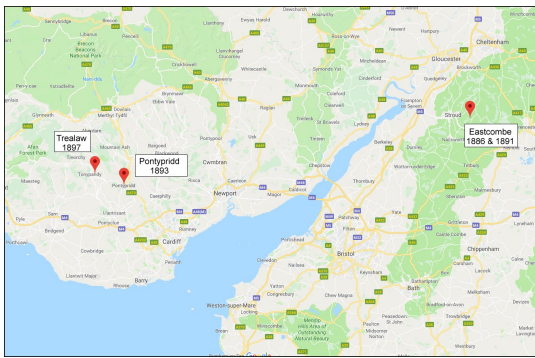
Ethel's family had lived in Eastcombe for several years. Fifteen years before her birth the [1871 census](#) shows that her grandfather Thomas Ridler-Dutton was a grocer and lived in the grocery in Eastcombe. Ten years later, the [1881 census](#) shows Thomas is now a coal-merchant and Innkeeper at the [Lamb Inn](#), Eastcombe - just 200 yards from Laburnum Cottage. When Thomas died in 1898 [he left](#) nearly £2000 having owned cottages, probably including Laburnum Cottages, as well as the Lamb (around £1 million in today's money) to Augustus Randall, his daughter Charlotte's husband.



Ethel's father Richard was also from Eastcombe and was living with his parents at the Grocers and the pub in 1871 and 1881 respectively. He must have moved from the Lamb Inn to Laburnum Cottages some time between 1881 and 1891, maybe when he married Alice Blackwell in 1883, so chances are that Ethel was born at Laburnum Cottages, if not then The Lamb.

Richard was a painter, plumber and glazier. Through the 1890s Richard moved the family to Wales, first to Pontypridd and then to Trealaw where, according to family folklore, he worked on Church stained glass windows.

By the [1901 census](#) Alice and youngest son Frank had moved to Hanley, Staffs where Alice was a housekeeper for a John Walley whilst [Richard and oldest son Stanley stayed in Wales](#) lodging with his brother-in-law Frank Blackwell. That year Ethel too, at the age of 14, had moved to Staffs where she was [working as a servant](#) for a Bernard and May Devany in [63 Waterloo Road](#), Burslem, Staffordshire. Bernard Devany, originally from Ireland, was a Hay and Straw



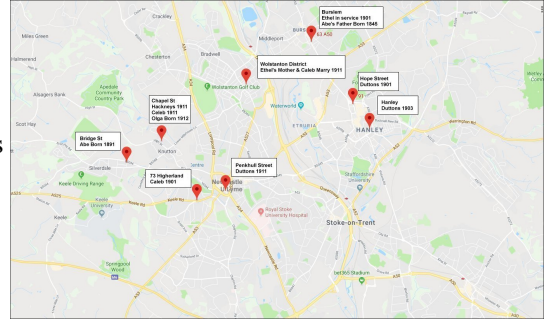
dealer.

Ethel's youngest sister Irene Alice Walley Dutton was born in 1903 in Hanley Staffordshire. Since Richard Ridler-Dutton was still in Wales it's possible, though not certain, that John Walley was the father; there's no entry on Irene Alice's [birth certificate](#) for her father. (Ethel's [immediate family](#) and [ancestors](#).)

How Ethel Met Abe and Olga's Birth

Through a good part of the 1900's Ethel and Abe and their families lived within a [few miles of each other](#) in and around Newcastle under Lyme in Staffordshire. It's quite possible they met sometime during this period when Ethel was in her late teens or early 20's and Abe was in his mid to late teens.

By 1911, however, Ethel had moved away from the area to Ashton U Lyne where she was in service in Brook House, Taunton, Ashton U Lyne for Joseph and Clara Ann Boughton. Joseph owned a Hatter and Men's Clothing shop as shown in the [1911 census](#). Ashton U Lyne is some 40 miles north of where Abe was living in Knutton which is quite some distance.



Although Ethel had left the area her mother and younger siblings remained in Newcastle. In 1909 Ethel's father Richard Ridler Dutton had died and in 1911 her mother Alice was living in Staffordshire at 6 Ashley Square, off [Penkhull Street](#), Newcastle Under Lyme, just a mile from the Hackneys. (Penkhull Street was later renamed High Street.) Ethel's younger brothers Oswyn and Frank and her sister (Irene) Alice were living with their mother at that time as shown in the [1911 census](#) on April 2nd.



If they didn't already know each other, what would almost certainly have brought Abe and Ethel together though was the [marraige](#) in April 1911 of Ethel's mother [Alice](#) to Abe's Uncle, [Caleb Baggaley](#) (sometimes spelt Bagguley) in Wolstanton, Staff. Caleb was the brother of Abe's mother Rebecca. In the [1911 census](#), just before his marraige, Caleb, a widower, was living with his nephew John Stone in [16 Chapel Street](#) just 4 doors up the road from Hackneys!

At the time of her mother's marraige to Caleb, Ethel would have been 25, some 5 years older than Abe who was 20. Because of the marraige, Abe and Ethel were now [related by marraige](#) as step-cousins.

In any case, whatever the exact circumstances of their meeting, by October 1911, some 6 months after her mother's wedding, Ethel must have been expecting. The [birth certificate](#) shows her daughter, Olga Pansy Dutton was born at 8 Chapel Street in the district of Wolstanton, Staffordshire on July 9th 1912. It's likely that after their wedding Ethel and Caleb had gone to live at 8 Chapel Street, 4 doors up the road from where he was previously living and 8 doors up the road from the Hackneys and that Ethel had left her job and went to live with them before and after Olga was born.

How We Know Absalom was Olga's Father

Although it looks highly likely that Ethel and Abe knew each other that's no proof he was Olga's father of course.

This proof comes from his army records in WWI. This includes an army document detailing the contents of the [court order](#) dated 12th August 1912 for Abe to pay Ethel Sarah Dutton the sum of 4 shillings a week maintenance for the support of his child born in July 1912. In addition there is another army document dated 7th October 1915 outlining the [deduction in pay](#) of 4d a day from Abe's wages which rises to 7d a day if he got promoted to Sergeant! The wording is a little blunt but there can be no doubt that Olga was Abe's daughter.

The [typical daily pay](#) for a private in the British Army during WWI was around 1 shilling so some 1/3rd of Abe's pay was taken to support Olga and this was still less than the 4 shillings a week the court ordered which would have been well over half his pay as a soldier.

After Olga's Birth

Clearly, Abe and Ethel did not continue their relationship after Olga's birth and 3.5 years later on 1st January 1916 Abe got married to Maria Scott (aka Marian and Mariah). Abe and Maria were married for 57 years had 8 children between them, 3 daughters and 5 sons born between 1917 and the 1930's. These would have been half-brothers and sister to Olga. Though we don't know whether she knew them or even knew of them. Certainly, none of the Hackney family





apart from Abe himself were aware of Ethel and Olga until the war records were found over 100 years later.

One of Abe's sons, their oldest son Sidney, was killed in action in 1944 in Caen, Northern France during WW1. Whilst fighting with 2/6th Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment. [Abe & Marion's Descendants](#).

Details of Abe's duties in the army and other matters are shown in [further army documents](#). It's shown he was 5 ft 9 1/4 inches and had dark brown hair. He joined the army in September 1915 and during the war there were periods when he was released for work in the Tyler and Freeman munitions factory. After the war Abe got a job as an electrician at a munitions factory.

By 1939 the [census](#) showed that Abe and Marion and their 8 children were living at [37 Harper Avenue](#) and Absalom was employed as a Steel Works Electrician. Living next door to the Hackneys at number 39 were Frederick and Alice Millward and their 4 children, John, Mary, Sheila and Gladys. Abe's son Clifford would go on to marry Shiela and have two children, Jacqueline and Keith. Jacqueline and Keith are thus Abe's grandchildren and are half-cousins to Barbara, Bernard, David, Bob and Danny. By age though they are closer to, and slightly younger than, Abe's first great-grandchild Lynette.



Clifford and Shiela holding their children Keith and Jacqueline. 1957
Keith is the younger of the two



Abe died on 18th September 1973 at the age of 82 at Bucknall Hospital, Bucknall, Staffordshire from Stomach Cancer. His wife Maria died just 3 weeks later on 8th October 1973, also at Bucknall Hospital.

Ethel's Move To Redditch

Ethel and Olga eventually moved from Staffordshire to Redditch. The move was prompted by the marriage of Ethel's brother Oswyn in 1917 to a girl from the area, Elsie May Birch, and his own move to Redditch around that time. Oswyn and Elsie had a daughter, Marjorie in Feb 1918 but then [Elsie died](#) at the end of that year. Oswyn also recently lost an arm when fighting in WW1 so Ethel moved down to Redditch with Olga to help look after him as well as Marjorie and Reginald who was Elsie's 10 year old son from a previous relationship.

[Oswyn](#) married again in 1930 to Florence May Petford and it's confirmed in the [1939 census](#) that they were living at 376 Evesham Road, Redditch. By that time Olga had married Harold Browning also in 1930 and, along with Ethel, was living at [101 Batchley Road](#) as also shown in the September [1939 census](#).

At this time Olga was 27, had at least 3 children and was an Acetylene Welder at "[The Alloys](#)" which had just opened in August 1939. Her husband Harold worked for the same company as, later, did their 4 sons, Bernard, David, Bob and Danny. During the war Harold was away fighting in Burma and with Olga working Ethel took on the role of looking after her grandchildren. Granny Dutton remained the bed-rock of the Browning family for the rest of her life.



Ethel passed away around March 1973, aged 86, by coincidence in the same year as Abe and his wife but some 6 months earlier. Olga passed away in 1995 having lost her husband Harold 3 years earlier.

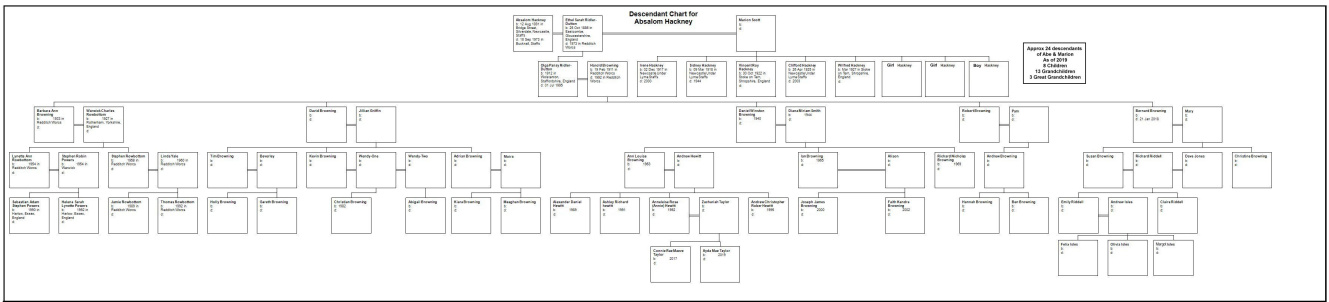
Absalom & Ethel's Legacy

It had remained a mystery for over 100 years to both the Ridler-Dutton/Browning and the Hackney families but the relationship between Abe and Ethel led to:

1 child
5 grandchildren
11 g-grandchildren
20 gg-grandchildren and
5 ggg-grandchildren.

All together 42 descendants - 40 of whom are still living as of 2019.

Click on any of the pictures below to enlarge



Family Tree For Bernard, Barbara, David, Bob & Danny

Postscript - Celeb Baggaley



Although Ethel's mother Alice died in 1936 the [1939 census](#) shows that Abe's Uncle Caleb is now living with Alice's daughter Irene (Alice), her husband Samuel Jackson and their children Hilda Jackson (and we assume) Olga Jackson. It's likely Alice was also living with them at the time of her death. Caleb died in 1941. ([Irene Alice's descendants](#).)



It's worth noting that Caleb was linked to Olga Dutton in two ways - he was her great uncle through her father Abe and her step-grandfather through grandmother Alice. We can't be sure, but as both Abe's uncle and Ethel's step-father and with Ethel and Olga living with them after the birth, it's unlikely that he and his wife Alice did not know of the connection between Ethel and Abe. If so he may have been the last family member, other than Abe and Ethel themselves, who was aware of the connection.

How did we find Absalom?

Huge thanks are due to Keith Hackney, the grandson of Abe and Marion Hackney and half-cousin to Bernard, Barbara, David, Bob and Danny Browning.

Keith had been researching his own family tree since 2017 or earlier and started to run through his grandfather Abe's army records. A couple of these showed that Abe was paying maintenance to an Ethel Sarah Dutton for the support of Abe's child who was born in July 1912. This came as a surprise to the Hackney family, they had never known their grandfather not only had eight children with Marion but also had an earlier ninth one with this young woman, Ethel Dutton!

So Keith searched on line for Ethel and found her and her child Olga who indeed had been born in July 1912. He added them both to his family tree in Ancestry UK. The family tree also showed another connection, Abe's uncle Celeb had married Ethel's mother Alice the year before Olga was born.

Steve Powers had signed up to Ancestry UK in March 2019 with the original intent of researching the Rowbottom side of the family as Warwick had a good idea of his mother Beatrice's family but wasn't even sure of his grandfather Rowbottom's name. This was reasonably successful and jokingly Steve said to Lynette ... "Right then, I've cracked that, now I'll find out who your gran Olga's long lost dad is"! Never expecting to succeed.

He typed "Olga Pansey Dutton" into the search engine - to be fair there's not likely to be a huge number of "Olga Pansey Duttons" but to our huge surprise the first item on the results list showed Olga's mother as Ethel Sarah Dutton, which was a good start, but also included her father - Absalom Hackney!! It came from a family tree created by a Keith Hackney.

We were sceptical to say the least so we messaged Keith to understand how he'd linked Abe with Ethel and Olga. Keith was good enough to respond, many people may not have when approached by someone out of their grandfather's mystery past, and explained the army records and the maintenance payments. That was rock solid evidence indeed!

So thanks to Keith's work the Hackneys found a new family member they never knew existed and the Duttons/Brownings put a name to a gap they always knew was there but never thought they'd be able to fill.

Ancestry.co.uk

It's also thanks to Ancestry.co.uk that we've been able to unearth the truth behind Olga's origins. Below are some links that go straight to the relevant pages on Ancestry UK set up by Keith but you'll need to be a subscriber to access them. Having said that you can have 2 weeks free trial by visiting <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> Beware though - it's addictive!

[Absalom's Timeline](#)

[Ethel's Timeline](#)

[Hackney Family Tree](#)

[Absalom's Pay Deductions](#)

If you do sign up you can start exploring yourself - there are many more documents related to Abe and Ethel than those shown here.

Using This Site

Click on the links to open up the relevant documents in a new window. Depending on the browser you're using you then may need to click again to enlarge the document to its original size.

Return to this page by closing the new window that opened up.

If you want to print a summary it's easiest to use this [pdf file](#).

If you spot any errors or can fill any gaps email stevepowers99@msn.com - Lynette's long-suffering husband! :)