

The Lofty family of Seer Green 1904-1992



Milton & Martha lofty - circa 1920

Milton Cromwell Lofty, who was born and raised in Chalfont St Giles together with his large family of 10 siblings, was the founder of Cromwell Bakery in Seer Green in 1904, later becoming Lofty & Sons Ltd.

Milton started his Bakery apprenticeship in the Whitechapel area of London around 1900, it's here that he met his wife Martha Berle, Martha was the daughter of German immigrants who were also Bakers.

In 1904, Milton & Martha, together with their first child Berle, relocated to Seer Green and opened the Bakery and shop at the top of Wynnswick Road; this location was probably chosen to facilitate the use of fresh water from the village well opposite.

Milton & Martha lived over the premises in Wynnswick Road, and went on to have 4 more children; Milton Zachariah, Elizabeth, Justina, Ivy & Ernest Cromwell; Milton, Ernie and Ivy would later join the business.

Milton was quite the entrepreneur, the business flourished and expanded over the years and more staff were taken on to work in the Bakery, and delivery drivers to deliver bread and confectionery to the ever expanding catchment area, which included Jordans, the Chalfonts, Gerrards Cross and beyond; Milton also provided housing for some of his employees.

An additional retail shop was opened in Chalfont St Giles, which was managed by Ivy Lofty. Milton also had his own Cherry orchards, the fruit was used to create the famous Seer Green 'Cherry Pies' The coal fired bread ovens were also used by villagers to roast their Sunday joints, they were left in the bread ovens on the way to Chapel and collected on the way home.

In 1957, Milton Cromwell Lofty passed away, the business was left to his two sons, Milton and Ernie, Milton was eventually bought out of the business and moved with his family to Teignmouth in Devon, where he went into the Hotel business.

In the late 50's early 60's, due to the advent of massed produced sliced bread, small Bakery businesses became hard to sustain, Ernie eventually sold the premises and moved to a new shop unit in Orchard road and started a Grocery/Deli business, where eventually his son Barry joined him, and later his middle son Chris, joined the business opening another shop in Windsor, Berks. The business ran successfully for many years, until Ernie's death in 1992 when the business was sold.

Ernie Lofty was very skilled at his job, his cake icing was a work of art, he was often tasked to ice and decorate cakes for special occasions in the village and also to create the Harvest Festival Wheatsheaf.

Lofty's delivery vehicles from 1904 - 1950's



Martha Lofty outside the bakery at the top of Wynnswick Road



Milton Zachariah Lofty



Cissy Lofty (nee Boddy) & Ernest Cromwell Lofty - Morris Van circa 1924



Cissy Lofty (nee Boddy)



Decked out for the Coronation of King George VI 1937 - Milton Lofty, Rosie Payne & Ivy Lofty



Ernie Lofty circa 1948



Morris Y Series Van - circa 1948

The Shop & Bakery



Milton & Martha outside their shop in Wynnswick Road - circa 1910



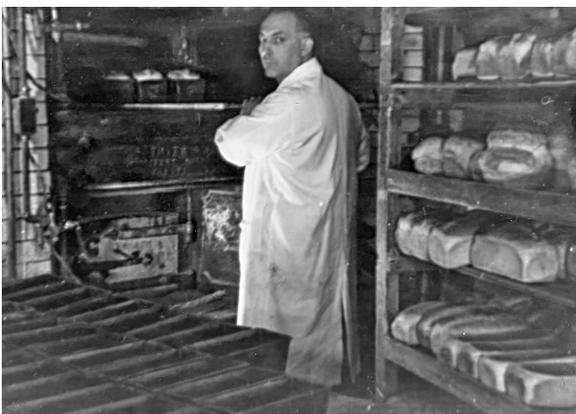
Martha with daughter Berle - circa 1918



The shop front in the 1950's



Shop front in Chalfont St Giles which was uncovered during renovations by new owners



Ernie Lofty in the Bakery



The move to new premises on the parade in Orchard Road. Barry Lofty with a group of visiting Japanese business men - circa 1965