

## Evacuated

In 1939, at the outset of the Second World War 20-year-old Violet Smith was evacuated to a farm in Northwest Wales near the English border. Tyn Ddol farm was in the village of Pontfadog and was managed by Thomas and Caroline Evans.

I've been researching the Evans family for the last few weeks for a friend who knows very little about his paternal grandmother, a descendant of this couple, and while not living at the farm when war broke out she would have certainly known Violet Smith.

I discovered Violet's link to the Evans family through the 1939 Register of England and Wales. This is a resource I use quite regularly but I've never before seen 'Evacuee' recorded under 'Personal Occupation'. I am aware that thousands of children in the UK were evacuated from cities at risk of bombing by the Nazis but I was surprised to discover that adults were also evacuated and I was fascinated by that and wanted to find out who Violet was and where she came from.

What follows is based entirely on records available on-line. I have not purchased any certificates nor undertaken further archival research. I'm not a member of the family, nor have I spoken to any members of this family. So, there is a significant risk that my assumptions and conclusions could be wildly inaccurate. But for what it's worth this is what I found and surmised. And I hope others find this helpful.

One thing about the 1939 Register I've been aware of for some time is that it became a living document and was regularly updated. In particular, noting changes in the surnames of women who subsequently married. Adding further interest, Violet as well as being recorded as an evacuee is also recorded as having at least four spouses.

### Already married (?)

Column 9 of the register is marked 'M' indicating she was already married and the record has been updated since that time to record the surnames of 3 other men. There are dates associated with each of these names which I understand records when the update was made. There are also some coded references which I'm not familiar with but I wonder if they possibly record the source for the update or some other record that was completed at the same time.

Each subsequent entry is also in a different coloured ink, which along with the different handwriting makes clear there were a number further entries made at later dates. So, I have concluded the additions were made in the following order -

1. (red ink) Smith is crossed through and written above is 'Tsai o/w Ning' with a notation to the left '16.11.44 M (NHA)', then
2. (blue ink) Tsai o/w Ning is crossed through and written to the left was 'Lee' with the notation '18.10.49 NR230/NHA', then
3. (green ink) Lee is crossed through and written to the left was 'Hannan' with the notation '7.8.68 LIP CR283'

So armed with this information, along with her date of birth, 14 March 1919, I wanted to see if I could work out who this woman was and what became of her.

### **Three in one**

First stop was the UK Marriage indexes searching for Smith and Tsai, or Smith and Ning. Whilst Smith is a very common name in the UK neither Tsai nor Ning are. The only record that came close was a marriage at Liverpool South in the fourth quarter of 1944. Volume 8b, page 216 of the index lists the marriage of Violet Smith to a man whose name is variously given as Ning S TSAI, Chew S NING and Tsai N SHING.

I can only presume the reason for this confusion is in part that Chinese convention is for the family name first followed by the given name. This record fits very neatly with the date noted in the 1939 register (16 November 1944). I was tempted to think the register recorded the date of the marriage however what I've been able to find on the web suggests that the date used in annotations to the register refers to the date the annotation was made. I've concluded from this then that the actual date for the marriage is likely to be sometime between late September and the 15th of November 1944.

In the second quarter of 1947, registered at Liverpool South there is recorded the birth of a boy named Andrew L Ning, with mother's maiden name; Smith. I have taken this to be the son of this couple. I've not been able to find any more children of this couple. It also seems that Andrew was only registered under the name Ning, which I have taken to be the correct family name.

This raises an interesting issue in that Violet's maiden name is recorded here as Smith. Yet the 1939 register records her as married for which I would presume 'Smith' was her husband's name. Of course, it's possible that 'Smith' was both Violet's maiden name and married name. It's not at all unusual, particularly with Smith which is such a common surname, for people to marry someone with the same surname. Indeed, the Evans family that Violet stayed with at the outset of the war are such an example. Both Thomas and his wife Caroline were born with the surname Evans. There were a dozen Violet Smiths marrying men named Smith in the 4 years leading up to 1939. So, for me the verdict is still out on whether Mr Ning was her second or first husband.

### **Widowed**

Violet 's next husband had the surname Lee and was recorded in the 1939 Register in an update seemingly made in October 1949. This suggests that Mr Ning died sometime between 1946 when Andrew was conceived and before the updated entry made in the 1939 Register.

However. this poses some problems because the only marriage record that seems to fit the bill took place in 1951 at least 17 months after the date noted in the 1939 Register. As mentioned above I'm unsure what these dates signify but I'm confident for reasons I will explain below that the marriage between Violet Ning and Mei Li Ah or Lee in the second quarter of 1951 is of our Violet.

That being so I extended the search for deaths to 1951 and from the index found these candidates;

- Chan A Tsai aged 37. Death registered at Liverpool Nth 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 1947
- Chow Ning aged 52. Death registered at Manchester 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 1949
- Yee H Shing aged 75. Death registered at Liverpool Sth 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 1951

I have discounted Yee H Shing as he deviates the most from the known names for her husband and it seems less likely, though not unknown, that her husband died in the first quarter of 1951 and she remarried during the following quarter. I also think his age rules him out.

Of the other two I believe Chow Ning who died in the first quarter of 1949 is the most likely candidate for a number of reasons. Firstly, his death being registered in Manchester fits with the fact I can't find Violet, or indeed her husband in the on-line electoral rolls for Liverpool until 1949 when Violet Ning is registered 'living alone' at 32 Newlands Street, L6.

I'm guessing then that Violet had been living in Manchester with her husband and following his death had moved to Liverpool at least by 10 June 1949, the qualifying date for entry on that electoral roll for that year. In any event, whilst Chan A Tsai was registered as a voter in Liverpool in 1947 I can find very few other Tsais in the electoral register and certainly no Violet Tsai.

While Chan is probably a better fit age wise at just 9 years older than Violet his name does not fit well with those in the marriage indexes while 'Chow Ning' is very close to 'Chew S Ning'. Obviously, purchasing the certificates would confirm one way or other, but for the moment I've got Violet married to Chew/Chow Shing Ning (1897-1949).

### **A descent man**

Violet's next husband, Ah Mai Lee was born circa 1900 and it appears the two did not stay in Liverpool after they married in 1951. At least I can't find them in the electoral register. However, 'Ah Mai Lee' shows up again in Liverpool in 1962 at 31 Carter Street, L8 but there is no Violet Lee registered at this address and that is in part because I believe they had separated by this time and Violet was then in another relationship.

Ah Mai continued to live in Carter Street until 1967 when he moved to St Oswalds Street, L13. The following year, Andrew, Violet's son with Chow Ning appears in the electoral register at that address. He has adopted his stepfather's surname and is listed as Andrew Lee. When Andrew married Patricia Caple in 1974 the marriage was registered at Liverpool (vol. 10D, pg. 740) and he is indexed under both Andrew Lee and Andrew L Ning. His stepfather Ah-Mai Lee died 3 years later. Andrew died in 2001 in Liverpool. He was 54y.o.

I don't know how long Violet's relationship with Ah Mai lasted. Certainly, long enough for him to establish an enduring relationship with his wife's son who was just 4 years old when they wed.

In 1957, while seemingly still married to Ah Mai, Violet had a daughter with Kenneth Hannan who was himself likely still married to his first wife. Kenneth was born in 1921 and was 2 years younger than Violet.

### **Violet moves on**

Kenneth Hannan first appears in the Liverpool electoral roll in 1956 at 189 Grove Street L7. His wife of 2 years Elsie Hannan née Farrington b.1825 was living with her parents at 4 Jolliffe street L8 which, if the electoral rolls are anything to go by, had been where she was living for the duration of her marriage to Kenneth Hannan. Elsie had been married once before and her first husband was Louis F Cailleau. Apart from the index of their marriage I haven't any other documents that references this man.

Now, this is where I'm going to speculate a bit and what I'm about to say can probably be very easily confirmed or discounted by purchasing a few records. In 1945 there was a birth of a William L Cailleau, mother's maiden name Farrington, undoubtedly a product of Elsie's first marriage. I will now hazard a guess that Louis died soon after this, quite possibly overseas in the war. Certainly, there is no UK record of his death that I can find, and he is not listed alongside Elsie in the electoral rolls during the 1940s and 50s. Of course, it may be that he wasn't eligible to vote in the UK and wasn't on the roll for that reason.

In the second quarter of 1954 there is indexed the registration of the birth of a girl named Wendy D Cailleau, mother's maiden name Farrington. It was registered at Liverpool South. The following quarter is when Elsie married Kenneth Hannan. Two decades later when Wendy married in 1973 she used the surname Hannan, rather than Cailleau. This would not be unusual if she was adopted or grew up knowing only one man, Kenneth Hannan, as her father. However, I think that unlikely for a number of reasons.

Given the above there are two explanations that spring to mind. One is that Louis Cailleau died sometime in late 1953, early 1954 either before or just after Wendy's birth, and her mother, newly widowed, married Kenneth Hannan in the following months. Another explanation, as I have suggested above, is that Louis had died some years before and was not Wendy's father, but she was registered with the name Cailleau as her mother's married surname, and she was the daughter of Kenneth Hannan born before he married her mother. It is usually the case in English law that the husband of the mother is deemed to be the father of the child but I'm not sure how that works where the mother has been some time widowed.

I think the fact that Wendy married under the name Hannan is quite telling particularly since it seems that Hannan had separated from Elsie whilst Wendy was an infant suggesting Kenneth was her biological father. But in the end, this is mere guess work on my part and may be far from the truth of the matter.

Based solely on the UK BDM indexes it appears that Elsie and Kenneth had [another] 2 children, a son named Roy born in 1956 and a daughter Doreen born in late 1957.

As mentioned above Kenneth also had a daughter with Violet Smith in 1957. Carole Y Hannan's birth was registered at Liverpool south in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the year indicating

Violet gave birth to her first child with Kenneth before Elsie gave birth to Doreen, their last. It can't have been an easy time for either woman.

Violet and Kenneth then had a son, Kenneth junior, in 1959. In that same year this family was living at 14 Musgrave Street, L8 but it appears Violet and Kenneth's relationship didn't last much longer than his marriage with Elsie did.

### **Another new start**

In 1962 Violet using the surname Hannan was living at 140 Chatham Street, L7, Kenneth however was not with her. The following year Kenneth was registered in the Liverpool electoral roll at a flat at 7 Hargreaves Road, L17 while Violet was still registered at Chatham Street.

There were around seven flats at 7 Hargreaves Road and one of those was occupied by the widow Grace Griffiths née Owen b.1902. In 1965 Kenneth married Grace. I can only presume Kenneth and Elsie had divorced by this time. I can find no evidence to suggest Violet and Kenneth ever legally married.

Violet Hannan's death was registered at Knowsley, Lancashire in 1996. The England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916-2007 records her date of birth as 14 March 1919 which accords with that in the 1939 Register.

I am of the view that Violet was most likely single when she was evacuated and the 1939 Register is in error on that point. In any event Violet's maiden name was given as Smith at the birth of all three of her children. There are 72 Violet Smiths aged 2 in the 1921 census for England and Wales. Violet's birth could have been registered as late as the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 1919 and there were 42 Violet Smith births registered in the first half of 1919. I think I will leave it for others to work out which one, if any, was the subject of this note.

### **And finally...**

All my findings are in my ZZ Friend Lloyd Family Tree on Ancestry.com. Grateful to be corrected wherever I am in error and given the speculative nature of much of the above I'd be surprised there aren't more than a few mistakes in my conclusions. Anyone researching the above families please take this note as no more than a starting point. You have been warned!

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## ANNEX

### Violet Smith 1919-1996

- (m) 1 - Chow Shing NING 1897-1949
  - Andrew L NING aka LEE 1947-2001
- (m) 2 – Ah Mai LEE 1900-1977
  - no issue
- (m) 3 – Kenneth HANNAN 1921-1989
  - Carole Y HANNAN b.1957
  - Kenneth S HANNAN b.1959

### Kenneth Hannan

- (m) 1 – Elsie FARRINGTON 1925-1986
  - Wendy D HANNAN aka CAILLEAU b.1954
  - Roy HANNAN b.1956
  - Doreen L HANNAN b.1957
- (m) 2 – Violet SMITH (as above)
- (m) 3 – Grace OWEN 1902 – 1976
  - no issue

### Elsie Farrington

- (m) 1 – Louis F CAILLEAU (birth & death dates unknown)
  - William L CAILLEAU b.1945
- (m) 2 – Kenneth HANNAN (as above)

### Grace Owen

- (m) 1 – William T GRIFFITHS b.1901
  - Mair Owen GRIFFITHS 1925-1925
  - Gladys Owen GRIFFITHS b.1928
- (m) 2 – Kenneth HANNAN (as above)