

West Dean Village History Trail

NUMBER 1 - THE POST OFFICE

No 24



THE POST OFFICE EARLY IN THE 20TH CENTURY. L TO R MRS JAMES REYNOLDS, HER SON INO REYNOLDS, A POSTMAN FROM WINTERSLOW, MR COOMBS AND MR STANLEY FRY, WHO WAS TO ACHIEVE 40 YEARS AS A POSTMAN, 36 OF THEM IN WEST DEAN

MR LEWIS READ WHO SERVED AS A POSTMAN IN WEST DEAN FOR 28 YEARS

The Post Office, which had previously been at Number 35, now part of Quill Cottage, was transferred to Number 1 in 1903 and James Reynolds became postmaster. In the early days Post Office letters and parcels were delivered from Salisbury each morning by a horse-drawn mail cart.

Up to six postmen collected the mail from the Post Office for delivery to Winterslow, Landford, Whiteparish, East Grimstead, Pitton and East and West Dean.

In 1936 the tenancy passed to Carl Reynolds, the son of James, and Carl's wife, Mrs Winifred Reynolds, became postmistress. At the Norman Court sale in 1945 the property, described in the catalogue as "The Post Office, Smithy and Garage Premises with Dwelling House" was bought by the Reynolds for £850.

Mrs Reynolds continued to run the Post Office until 1965. She then sold the house and smithy part of the premises to two sisters, Misses Winifred and Beryl Youngman. Until then the Post Office had been to the right of the front arched porch and reached by a door in that porch. The Youngmans converted that Post Office room for domestic use and converted the old smithy, or wheelwright's / blacksmith's shop, into a shop and Post Office accessed from the former smithy entrance.



THE POST OFFICE IN 1962

The Post Office and house passed on to two more owners, Mr and Mrs Lauder in 1973 and Mr and Mrs Bowden in 1976, before being sold as a private house in 1979.