

The 'Victory Tea Company' Kidderminster

1931 to 1965

Proprietor Ernest Hill

Prepared by Bob Millward from documents donated to the
Kidderminster & District Archaeological & Historical Society.

1956

'Few documents in the 1956 collection have survived after March'

....so much so that it is not feasible to comment sensibly on how well or not the Victory Tea trading situation performed in this year. There is limited data related for tea purchases: but we do know that **James Ashby & Sons** of London supplied **964 lbs** of tea in just one delivery on 13th March - more than they had delivered in the whole of 1955 (**616 lbs**). **J Milton Hindle & Son Tea merchants** of London, provided **357 lbs** on 3rd January 1956 compared to the **3,069 lbs** 1955. **Summerfield & Co.** of Liverpool, despatched 5 chests of tea by GWR on 19th March. This order was made after the Summerfield's friendly salesman **Fred Scholefield** had sent a persuasive note to Hill on 5th March: *'Dear Ernest, as the market for Ceylon tea looks very attractive just now I am sending you some samples. We are still packing for Albert Pogson, A Cantwell, Ted Johnson & Gil Sutcliffe & supplying M Worley, it grieves me not to have you in the fold! How has you football team done this season? Our locals seem to have taken up train wrecking for a hobby when they lose. Perhaps we will be safe when the cricket season starts. Hope you are keeping fit and keeping the flag flying in your area.'* This was the first time that Summerfield had supplied Hill **since March 1942** when swingeing restrictions were introduced which limited from where tea retailers could buy tea.

Hill seemed to be trying to do some sort of deal with Ty-Phoo Tea Ltd. On 13th February he received a reply saying: *'We are unable to pursue this matter. Our speciality is packed tea in standard 1/4-lb and 1/2-lb packets, and we do no loose tea whatever.'*

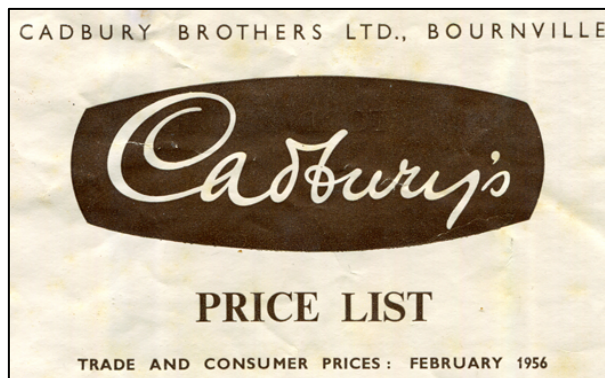
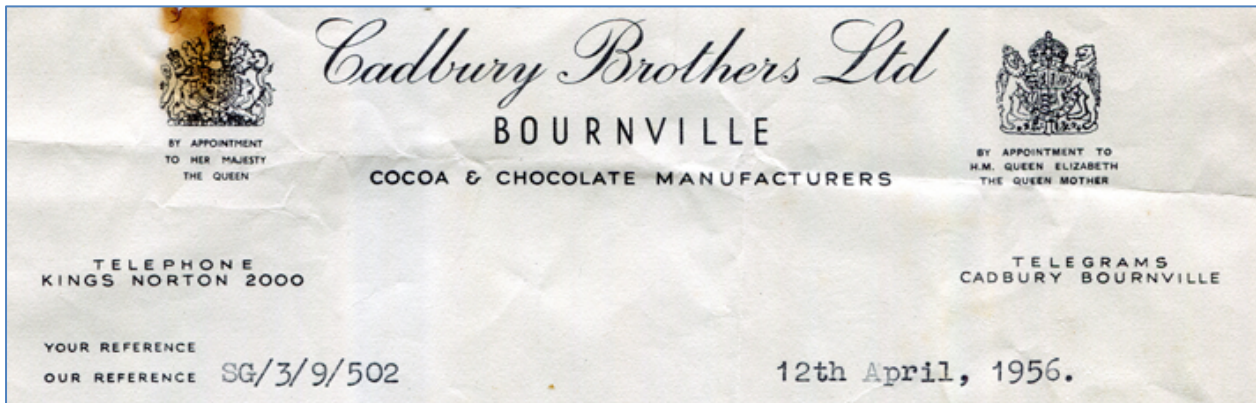


Clark's Optimus Coffee Extract Ltd. made a small delivery on 13th January (18 x 1 lb tins of **Roasted & ground pure Coffee** and 6 x 1-lb tins of Clark's "CONTINENTAL" Blend No. 4: **French Coffee & Chicory Mixture**). Note the later was the first time Hill had bought Coffee & Chicory in powder form. Previously it had been as a liquid in a bottles. There were no invoices from **John Bromley & Sons Ltd.** of Leeds, Hill's long term 'go to' supplier for Coffee & Chicory products.

Biscuits were still on Hill's business menu and **Frears Limited Biscuit Manufacturers** of Leicester invoiced in February and March for orders costing a total of **£63.5.9d**. Varieties ordered were: Mayfair Creams, Custard creams, Nice, Rosalind, Lincoln, Shortcake, Teatime Assorted, Arrowroot Wafers, Butter Fingers and Ginger. **Sweets and Chocolates** were obtained from **Mayfair**

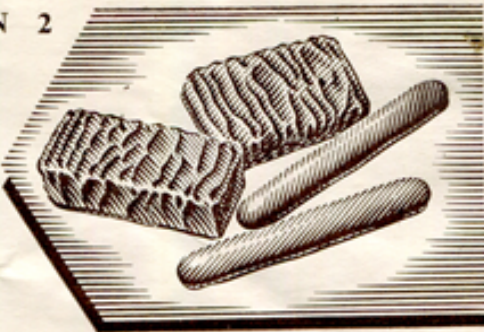
Products Ltd. of Sunderland in one order on 13th March when Hill spent **£8.7.10d** on Golden Charms, Choc-O-Toffs, Choc-O-Creams and Premiere Toffees.

In April, Hill was in the process of setting up an account with **Cadbury's** and awaiting a call from their representative Mr W. F. French. Meanwhile he received an extensive pricelist by post.



SECTION 2

CHOCOLATE BISCUITS



½ LB. PACKETS	Price to		Price per outer for quantities of :				
	Public (per ½ lb.)	Packed in	Less than 4 outers	4 outers	8 outers	12 outers	20 outers
Dairy Milk Finger	2/1	1 doz.	21/3	20/8	20/2	19/10	19/9
Dairy Milk Wafer	2/1	1 doz.					
Dairy Milk Assortment	2/-	1 doz.	20/4½	19/9½	19/4½	19/0½	18/11½
Dairy Milk Choc. Sandwich	1/11	1 doz.	19/6½	19/-	18/7	18/3	18/2
Dairy Milk Orange Sandwich	1/11	1 doz.					
Dairy Milk Shortcake	1/10	1 doz.	18/8½	18/2½	17/9½	17/5½	17/4½

A section from the price List for Chocolate biscuits

In terms of transport, here was only one invoice from **T. H. Matthews, Foley Park Garage** for petrol with two purchases of 2 gallons of petrol on 2nd and 9th January. The petrol was 4/9d per gallon the same price that it had been since 1st October 1955. He did, however, also buy a cycle light battery

for 1.3d. There was only one invoice related to servicing of transport and that from **Edwards Bros. Automobile Engineers & Distributors** of Plimsoll Street, who supplied one 450x17 tyre for **£5.3.0d** and tube for **19/-** and other minor adjustments and parts for a total of **£7.12.4d**.

Hill's **1948 Fordson van** was laid up for at least part of this year. Clem Andrews, writing on 25th February, says that he had arranged for the van to be covered for Fire & Theft only - **as from 1st January**. When the van is licenced and on the road an additional premium could be paid. Fire & Theft meant that the van was covered by the **The Westminster Fire Office** for 'Loss of or damage by Fire, self-ignition, Lightning or explosion or by theft or any attempt hereat'.



The Telephone Manager wrote on 1 February about price increases from 1st January 1956. Hill was classed as a small Business user and his quarterly rent was increasing from £1.15.0d to £2.10.0d. Local calls were also going up: 1½d to 2d; 3d to 4d; 4½d to 6d; 6d to 8d.

In case of non-delivery please return to:
 M.E.B. Mucklow Hill, Halesowen.

MIDLANDS ELECTRICITY BOARD
 ELECTRICITY SERVICE CENTRE
 4 VICAR STREET
 KIDDERMINSTER. Tel. Kidderminster 3621
 BRANCH CENTRES:
 Bewdley—40 Load Street. Tel. Bewdley 2295
 Martley—Knighwick Road. Tel. Wichenford 386
 Stourport—29 High Street. Tel. Stourport 122

WD/ 225650130 15
 E.HILL ESQ..
 THE VICTORY TEA CO..
 13, HOLMAN STREET,
 KIDDERMINSTER, WORCESTERSHIRE.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY THIRD PERIOD 1956	Meter Readings		Units Charged	Pence Per Unit	Description of Charges	Amount
	Present	Previous				
	2	0	2	4½	COMMERCIAL	0.9
LATEST DATE FOR PAYMENT To avoid disconnection for non payment this account must be paid not later than						
17 OCT 56	SAFETY—Do not use portable electrical appliances in a bathroom, or earth electrical apparatus, including radio sets, to a gas pipe. Please advise us before connecting new appliances.					TOTAL £ 0.9

Please produce the account when making payment or enquiries.

RECEIVED the sum here stated in machine-printed figures. This space

The format of MEB (Midland Electricity Board) bills has changed since that shown in the Victory Tea Co. account of 1951, and so have the charges. The cost is now 4½d per unit as apposed to 5d per unit in 1951. The meter rental of 1.3d per quarter no longer applies. Note that the Victory Tea Co. account is here classed as 'commercial' fro the first time.

B.R. 14300/335

BRITISH TRANSPORT COMMISSION

Telegrams
GOODS RAILWAY STATION
KIDDERMINSTER

Telephone
4004
Ext. **3/4.**



**GOODS AGENT
WESTERN REGION
KIDDERMINSTER**

On page 122 above we refer to tea despatched by Summerfield on 19th March by (says Fred Scholefield) **Great Western Railway**. [Note: *GWR became the Western Region of British Railways in 1947*] It appears that at least some of that delivery was damaged enroute. A letter dated 1st April 1956 was received by Hill referring to his letter of 22nd March about damage by water to 5 chests of Tea ex Liverpool. "My representative has tried 4 times to inspect the damage without success. I am obliged by your immediate assistance in drying out the damage and hope that will be successful. Will you please advise if a claim is impending and oblige."

This next item is nothing to do with Hill's tea trading but is included as a bit of social history. He purchased a watch from **Marks & Spencer** on 17th December 1955. The watch must have failed because he sent the watch for repair within the 6 month Guarantee period.

IMPORTANT

Do not return the watch to the store from which it was purchased, as this will involve unnecessary time and correspondence.

If it should be necessary to return your watch for repair, please observe carefully the following directions—

<p>1. Remove the strap (where detachable).</p> <p>2. Complete particulars on Page 4, detach and enclose form with watch.</p> <p>3. Pack carefully, so that the watch will not move about inside the package while in transit.</p>	<p>4. Address clearly in print to : "SIRO" Service Dept., 18, Bury Street, London, E.C.3.</p> <p>5. Despatch by registered post as responsibility for loss in transit cannot be accepted.</p>
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Acknowledgment will be sent to you immediately on receipt of watch.

SPECIAL NOTE. Should the watch require attention after the guarantee period has expired, it should be sent by registered post to the address shown against item 4, and not returned to Marks & Spencer, Ltd. An estimate for the work will be sent immediately.

"SIRO" WATCH

Guarantee

THIS WATCH IS GUARANTEED FOR SIX MONTHS AGAINST FAILURE FROM ANY CAUSE WHATSOEVER*, including accidental damage, need of cleaning, broken springs, etc. During this period, adjustments and repairs will be carried out **FREE OF CHARGE** or the watch replaced at our option.

*This Guarantee becomes void should the watch be tampered with or otherwise mishandled, or if it is damaged by water.

IMPORTANT

This Guarantee is NOT valid unless dated on page 4 at time of purchase.

"SIRO" Service Department,
18, BURY STREET,
LONDON, E.C.3

The significance of the hand-written 'Cancelled' on the return form (right) is not clear.

A postcard was received by Hill from Siro Service Dept. dated **14th Feb 1956**: Ref number 32644, acknowledging receipt of watch. "The watch will be examined and returned to you after test in **10/14 days** from this date."

TEAR OFF THIS PORTION IF RETURNING WATCH

DATE OF PURCHASE **17 DEC 1955**

To "SIRO" SERVICE DEPARTMENT, **18, Bury Street, London, E.C.3.** **17 DEC 1955**

I enclose herewith my watch for **FREE** repair under the guarantee.

CUSTOMER'S NAME AND ADDRESS (Please use Block Capitals) STORE NO.

Name **MR. ERNEST HILL**

Address **25 SPRING GROVE ROAD, KIDDERMINSTER, WORCS**

Cancelled

This was not the case for Hill received a letter (see the letterhead next page) from C.A. Lyons of **M&S** dated **18th December 1957** stating: "We regret that there is a little delay in dealing with the watch that you sent for servicing. When you purchased the watch the wrong Guarantee Form was issued. The consequence is that the watch did not reach the correct service department as quickly as it ought to have done. The watch is receiving attention and will be returned as quickly as possible."

Marks and Spencer Limited

BANKERS
MIDLAND BANK LIMITED
117 FINSBURY PAVEMENT
LONDON EC 2

MICHAEL HOUSE, 82 BAKER STREET
LONDON W 1

TELEPHONE: WELBECK 4422
TELEGRAMS: MARSPENZA LONDON TELEX

D. 21 FANCY GOODS

IN YOUR REPLY
PLEASE QUOTE

DIRECTORS
SIR SIMON MARKS, D.Sc.
CHAIRMAN & JOINT MANAGING DIRECTOR
ISRAEL M. SIEFF, B.COM.
VICE-CHAIRMAN & JOINT MANAGING DIRECTOR
J. EDWARD SIEFF
ASST. MANAGING DIRECTOR
B. W. GOODMAN, A.C.A.
E. KANN, Ph.D., F.R.I.C.
NORMAN LASKI, M.A.
A. LERNER, M.D., M.C.P.S.
W. F. NORRIS
HARRY SACHER, M.A.
M. D. SIEFF
MARCUS J. SIEFF, O.B.E., B.A.
J. A. LEWANDO
(ALTERNATE)
M. M. SACHER, M.A.
(ALTERNATE)

What better than to conclude our account of 1956 than with two of Hill's **Church Organ engagements**. He was asked by 'Ted' to cover the organ music for him at Evensong Sunday 5th February at St John's Church. Ted had been asked to present his test Sermon and he felt it would be awkward to go from organ to pulpit and back again.

Harold Evers organist at St George's Church also had work for him – a **Wedding on Monday 12th March at 11.a.m.** The Bride was the daughter of Mr & Mrs Garbett of the Worcester cross whom Harold Evers knew very well and had promised to play at the wedding. The timing was awkward for Evers and he asked if Hill could manage to do this one for him? Evers wrote on 7th March saying "*I am grateful to you for doing duty for me at the wedding on Monday next 12th March. I am enclosing a list of the wedding items. The music for 'Crimond' will be left for you and also copies for the congregation. They did want some Boys, but this is not a practical proposition these days – School Masters won't loose them in school time, although I am still trying to get a few.*"