

Burton's Newsagent's Shop

This photograph recently came to light in a rather grubby and very creased condition. Not only is it an interesting photograph of a Quorn shop, but it provides a great opportunity to show how modern techniques – both in terms of research and photographs – can draw out a surprising amount of information and turn an ordinary picture into a story.

The location is 25 High Street, which is now a private house, opposite Quorn Court on High Street.

The first job was to make the best of the image by repairing the creases and sharpening the picture, to bring out all the detail. From here it was possible to read all the newspaper headlines on the posters and many of the advertisements. By enlarging the window area it was also possible to see the names of some of the magazines and the numerous advertisements for tobacco and cigarettes. There is a women's magazine called

'Good Taste', with elegantly dressed ladies on the front, and a magazine for football fans called 'Pool Specialist'. The footballers can just be made out with their stripy socks.

When zooming in very closely, it is possible to see a string across the window, and on it are pegged some postcards. Although the actual pictures are extremely fuzzy (remember they are less than 3mm or 1/8th in wide!), it is possible to identify some of the exact postcards by comparing them to an extensive collection of old Quorn postcards. On Station Road there was another newsagent, Charles Gamble. He is named as the publisher of a range of postcards around this time. It was assumed that he only sold them in his own shop, but it would now appear that this shop was selling them too. Below is one of the cards.



The next task was to ascertain a date. This crammed image includes several newspaper bill boards, one of which says 'Fierce battle for San Sebastian' and another 'What new Edward VIII stamps are like'. The Spanish Civil War and Edward VIII's reign both took place in 1936, and both specific events, ie the battle at San Sebastian and the launch of the stamps, took place in September of that year.



There are three people standing outside the shop, which was run by Fred Burton and his wife Gladys. Fred was born in Quorn in 1902 and he married 19 year old Gladys Waterfield from Barrow upon Soar in 1922. Freda Joyce, their daughter was born in 1923, and their son Brian was born in 1934. The photograph shows Gladys with the eleven year old Freda and two year old Brian. The family lived above the shop, but also owned their own house at 33 Mansfield Street. Sadly two years after this photograph was taken, Gladys died aged just 36. Fred never remarried, and future electoral rolls record him living on his own with his children. Freda helped Fred to bring up Brian.

On the far right you can just see the shop next door. This belonged to Frank Butcher and was a general grocery shop. When zooming in closely, it is possible to see signs in the window for Oxo, Hovis and something that looks like 'cake'.

Olive Thompson, a long time resident of Quorn, remembers that a Mr & Mrs Richard Joyce had the newsagent's business at number 25 High Street during the war, Olive worked at Wright's factory with their daughter Hazel. This couple later sold the business to Olive's sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Kath and Jo Garrett. The shop continued as a newsagent until it was converted for purely residential use in the 1990s.

This article was produced by Sue Templeman on behalf of www.quornmuseum.com. Thank you to Richard and Olive Thompson for their help. If you have any photographs (even in poor condition), Sue and the team would love to hear from you. Please contact sue@quorndon.com or 01509 412112 or pass a message through the Parish Office.



25 High Street in 1944, when it was owned by Mr and Mrs Joyce

Postscript

After this article was published in Autumn 2013, Brian's wife Joyce, contacted Sue Templeman, and Sue was delighted to reunite them with their old photograph, together with a restored copy. On the right is a photograph of Brian and his wife Joyce in 2013.

Thank you to Joyce, Brian and their daughter Karen for getting in touch.

