

[Information from Val Masters during conversations in 2012 & 2013 with Clare Weston, Curator – Domestic & Cultural Life.]

### **Lillian's Parents and Grandparents**

*James Hodgkiss, Lillian's father was born in about 1844. In 1882 (on the birth certificate for their daughter, Caroline) his occupation is listed as coal miner. They were living at 101 York Street, Coseley.*

*Ann Hodgkiss, formerly Hampton, was Lillian's mother. Her father (see studio portrait) was Thomas Hampton, a builder/ bricklayer. He built the whole of Hampton Street & several public houses. According to Val Masters (2012) he eventually lived on his own and died penniless, after being robbed by his housekeeper.*

### **Lillian's Siblings**

*Elizabeth: she was the eldest and seems to have been brought up by her Grandparents, the Hamptons. Val thinks it was because Elizabeth was only little when Mary was born so the grandparents were helping out.*

*Mary Ann: Val recalls that Mary Ann left home and rented a little house opposite Birmingham Hippodrome, taking Sarah with her. Mary was good at sewing and she made the first proper suit ever worn by Vesta Tilley, a popular male impersonator.*

**[Val is sure that Sarah was older than Caroline, but the information taken from the census records differs—who is correct?]**

*Thomas James: Val recalls that he had all daughters, no sons but couldn't provide further details.*

*Caroline: she had an accident when she was very little, losing an arm. They were playing shops on land opposite where the King Arthur pub is today (off Birmingham New Road) . Caroline was picking up pretty bits of platter to use as money when a coal truck on a track hit her and caused the injury.*

*William: worked on the railway and took exams to become a guard. On the first morning he took up his new post, he was killed by an Express Train as he crossed the line at Bescott Station, Walsall.*

*Julia: married becoming a Hampton*

*John (Jack): lived in Coventry and worked at Kersley Colliery. Val says he died suddenly in 1943. He went to bed without his dinner after working all night & died. His landlady found him on his bed covered in blood. Val recalls that he died from a brain haemorrhage. He never married.*

*Val believes Lillian was the youngest surviving child, so the Elizabeth born in 1898 presumably didn't survive. (We know that Ann had 14 children in total, but that 5 died.)*

### **Moving to the Toll House**

*Val Masters (2012) said that when James Hodgkiss died, Ann's name was not on the deeds and after they had paid the solicitor etc. they lost the property. They moved to a little old house but Ann didn't like it. Bill had a steady job so they were able to pay the rent on the Toll House.*

*Only four children moved into the Toll House – William, John, Julia and Lillian. Caroline married – there wasn't room at the Toll House for all of them. (Julia isn't listed in the 1911 census, but it might be that she was listed at another property as she worked in service until she married in the 1920s.)*

*Val heard of the family liking to play dominoes.*

### **Lillian's employment history**

- *Reeds Wholesale Chemist*

*Lillian's first job on leaving school, packing drugs that were sent out to the chemist shops.*

- *Palethorpes Factory*

*Left here during the war as she had to work in munitions*

- *Munitions factory – First World War*

- *Dalloways*

- *Servant job in small household*

*Lillian took over Julia's job when Julia married. Val thinks it was a solicitor's home. It allowed Lillian to return home to look after Ann. Val donated a trunk (2012) belonging to Lillian that she used whilst in this employment.*

*Lillian married before her mother died and though Val has no memories of the Toll House she was told by Lillian that she would walk to the house most days, pushing Val in the pram and if Val was crying she always stopped crying when Lillian put the pram, with Val inside, in the garden of the Toll House.*