

Step back in time

Celebrate Local and Community History Month with Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal and Kendal Local Studies Library Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal, in conjunction with Kendal Local Studies Library, celebrates the launch of the 1921 census.

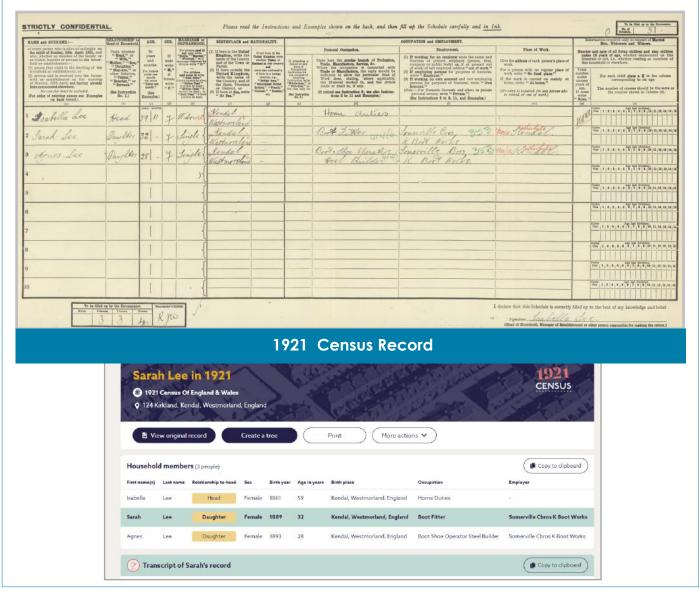
The census is available via 'Find My Past' for a fee but we shall update you when free access becomes available.

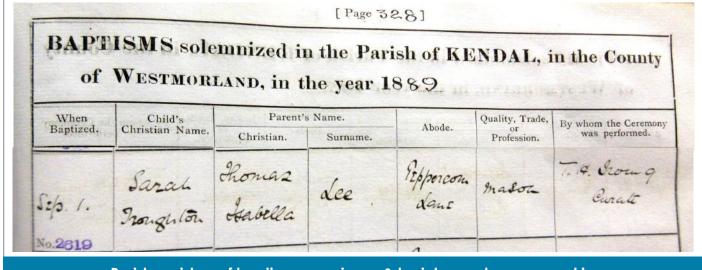
Local History Research

To illustrate how census records can be used to assist with local history research we have used an example of a K Shoes employee, Miss Sarah Lee.

Miss Sarah Lee, K Shoes Employee

The 1921 census shows that Miss Sarah Lee was 32 years of age and that she lived with her mother and sister. We are able to deduce from the census that Sarah's year of birth was 1889. From this we can trace her baptismal record, which was listed at Holy Trinity Parish Church, Kendal.





Parish registers of baptisms, marriages & burials may be accessed in Kendal Local Studies Library where they are stored on microfilm.

Census Records

The census, a survey which takes place every 10 years, gives us a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales.

Besides looking at the 1921 census, we looked back at previous census records.

This has enabled us to discover more about Sarah Lee's family, the households where they lived, and details about Sarah's siblings, including whether they were employed or at school.

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1911 Census is available on www.ancestry.co.uk

1891

Address: 9 Kirkland Thomas Lee: Age 46 Occupation: Waller / Mason Isabella wife: Age 29 Robert: Age 16 Mary: Age 5 Sarah: Age 4 months

1901

Address: 7 Kirkbarrow Thomas Lee: Age 46 Occupation: Builder / Mason Isabella wife: 39 Robert: 16 (Joiner's Apprentice) Sarah Lee: Age 11 Agnes Lee: Age 7 Thomas Lee: Age 4 William Lee: Age 6

1911

Address: 7 Kirkbarrow Thomas Lee: Age 55 Occupation: Builder Isabella wife: Age 49 Sarah Lee: Age 21: Boot fitter Agnes Lee: Age 17: Cotton winder Thomas Lee: Age 14 Fulton Lee: Age 10

1921

Address: 124 Kirkland Sarah (age 32), Isabella - mother (age 59) and sister, Agnes (age 28).

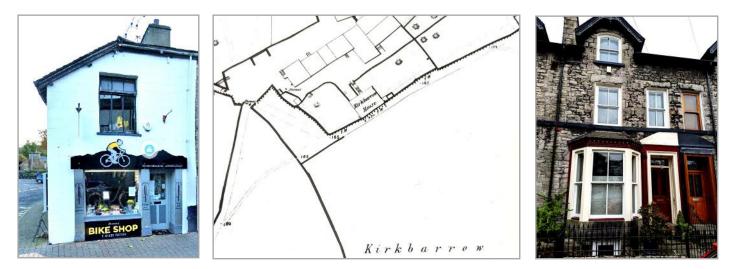
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The 1931 census was destroyed and no census was taken for 1941 due to the war. Therefore, the 1939 Register is an important genealogical resource for England and Wales.

Where Sarah lived

The records show the various locations in Kendal where Sarah's family lived. When Sarah was born the family lived at 9 Kirkland. By 1901 the family were living at 7 Kirkbarrow (see map below) and in 1921 at 124 Kirkland where Sarah lived with her mother, then a widower, and Agnes, her sister. The 1939 Register shows Sarah living with Agnes, a brother-in-law, a nephew, plus one other family member, whose record is closed.

They lived at 4 South Road, a four storey house (below right) overlooking the K Shoe workplace which played such a large role in Sarah's life.



9 Kirkland > 7 Kirkbarrow > 124 Kirkland > 4 South Road



Above left: The view from South Road (Cumbria Image Bank) **Above right:** The view from 4 South Road today, looking across River Kent to K Village.

In Sarah's own words

The Eyelet newsletter is an incredible source of historical content, which besides promoting the ethos and culture of the company documented the achievements of its employees.



December, 1959. THE K SHOE MAGAZINE Threepence

In December 1959, upon the year of her retirement, Sarah Lee wrote of her experience and opportunities as an employee of K Shoe company.

'I started at Netherfield at the age of 14 and served my apprenticeship on leggings and boot-fitting. My training was in the making of Eton boots and shooting boots.'

Sarah worked through both World Wars. By 1922 she was appointed Head Forewoman and in 1931 Superintendent, in charge of Kendal and Lancaster Closing Departments.

1939-1945

No. 26.

'3rd September saw the outbreak of the WWII. Many girls were called up for service. At Netherfield we tackled a new venture. We made gun-muffs, tents for desert warfare and waterproof covers for the

aeroplanes. We also made tarpaulin sheets, seat-packs, kit bags, Catalina covers and hugs camouflage covers. The work was extremely interesting and we felt that we were making a good contribution to the war effort.'

1954

'On 1st January, 1954, I was notified that the Order of M.B.E. had been conferred upon me "For special work during that war and subsequently in visiting America and developing the export trade."'

Copies of the Eyelet are available at Kendal Local Studies and also as part of the extensive K Shoe collection housed at Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal.

EYELET

December, 1959

The K Shoe Magazine

Protected by her own industry and good repute, she greets the morro with a smile

THE COVER PICTURE, by Bryan Horner, is of Miss Sarah Lee M.B.E., Superintendent of all the K Closing Rooms. We have asked her to tell us a little about her life with the Company during the last fifty-six years. Here is her story.

From 1903 to 1959

1903

I started at Netherfield in August, 1903 at the age of fourteen and served my apprenticeship on leggings served my apprenticeship on leggings and on boot-fitting. My training was in the making of Eton boots and shooting boots. At certain times of the year there were apecial orders for Prairie and Canadian Mounted Pol-ice boots—these had a high leg with full bellows tongue, and it was no easy task to fit the tongues. I really enjoyed making boots.

1914

Outbreak of World War I. Some girls had to go into other departments and others on to munitions. We had a team on Russian boots and Army boots.

1918

War ended and we got back to normal production of boots and shoes.

1922

It was in May, 1922 when I made my bow for responsibility. I was anpointed Assistant Forewoman at Kendal, but this was only for a short time.

1924

1924 In November, 1924, owing to the death of Miss Mary Merrett, I was appointed in her place as Manageress at Lancaster. It meant uprooting and going to live at Lancaster, but I was very happy there. The girls were good sports. We started the Nether-lune Athletic Club which was a great success. At Lancaster we made Men's Oxfords, Women's Bars and Twin-straps, also Oxfordettes. We felt we were part of Netherfield in making so many styles.

making so many styles. When I left Lancaster I felt so sad that I came away without telling my girls--it was the best way. Now I love to go back to Lancaster and meet some of the girls with who worked.

1931

In July I was appointed Superin-tendent of Kendal and Lancaster. I

was reluctant to take the post, but now I am glad I relented. At Kendal we make so many styles of the higher grade shoes, and I must thank the Directory for the meni-Directors for the experience which they gave me through my visits to many factories in England, on the Continent, and in the United States of America.

1934

Mr. R. A. Somervell was interested in the Conveyor system. We went to Brussels to the F.F. Factory, and in November to the Oscaria Factory. Orebro, Sweden, to see a three-band conveyor which was installed later at Kendal and Lancaster.

I might say that Mr. R. A. Somer-vell and I were the first members of the Company to travel by air. Fur-ther, I was the first member to cross the Atlantic by air when I went on the Company's business to America in 1947.

1939 to 1945

3rd September saw the outbreak of World War II. Many girls were called up for war service. At Nethercalled up for war service. At Nather-field we tackled a new venture. We made guan-muffs, tents for desert warfare and waterproof covers for aeroplanes. We also made tarpaulin sheets (heavy, dirty work) seat-packs, kit-hags, Catalina covers and huge camouflage covers. The work was extremely interesting, and we felt that we were making a good contri-bution to the war effort. We obtained additional labour by way of skilled sewing-machinists.

Since my return to Kendal I have Since my return to Kendai I have enjoyed many happy working and leisure hours with the girls. Miss Lily Wilson and I introduced an evening leather class for the teen-agers where each girl mide various leather goods; this helped to boost the team spirit. Further in 1549 we instand collecting. Id noth work started collecting Id. each week towards flowers for the room, then followed the annual summer trip to followed the annual summer trip to Blackpool; this proved so popular that we later introduced a pantomime trip each year, and I have enjoyed many hours sharing these girls' plea-sures.

1953

We opened the Askam Factory which now produces more than 5,000 pairs of women's K shoes per week.

1954

On 1st January, 1954 I was notified that the Order of M.B.E. had been conferred upon me "For special work during the war and subsequent-ly in visiting America and developing the export trade." On my arrival at work the girls gave me a rousing reception. It was the happiest day of my life, and I felt proud that the honour was not mine alone, but was shared by all who had worked so hard and loyally with me. When I attended the Investiture at Bucking-ham Palace I received the Order from the hands of H.M. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother-able occasion. It was a memor

1960

Long may the Company continue to prosper and expand. Sarah Lee, M.B.E.

A very impressive lady

Sarah Lee, M.B.E., retired on the 31st December, 1959, after 56 years of service. She was the only female Superintendent in the company and prior to retirement had been in charge of over 650 women, ranging in age from 16 to 60.



Above left: Sarah pictured with the Duke and Duchess of York visiting Netherfield, 1935. (The future Queen Mother and King George VI) - photograph by Westmorland Gazette from the Local Studies' collection at Kendal Library. **Above centre:** A picture of a Closing Room - Kendal Archive Centre. **Above right:** Sarah with Sir Arnold Somervell at a Staff dinner at The Windermere Hydro - Kendal Archive Centre.

In Memoriam

Sarah Lee, M.B.E., died in 1974, at the age of 85 in Manchester, where she had gone to live with her brother after her sister died.

She worked the whole of her life at Netherfield for Somervell Brothers Ltd, where she had a very distinguished career in the Closing departments of the firm. In 1922 she went to Lancaster to start a new closing room. In 1931 she was promoted to Superintendent of all the Closing Rooms in Kendal and Lancaster. She travelled to Sweden, Belgium, France and Germany to study new methods and machinery. (She was the first person in the company to use air travel). In 1953 she started a new Closing Room in Askam,-in-Furness; this was a very successful venture. Later she spent three months in America ... As a personality she was outstanding. She was a genius for dealing with people kindly, fairly, firmly; those who worked for her loved her; those who worked with her appreciated her wisdom and judgement; I never heard a word of criticism where Sarah was concerned. In 1954 she was awarded the M.B.E. for her contribution to Industry.

In 1959 she retired after 56 years of service with the Company... she is one of the most remarkable and loveable people I have ever known and there will be many who will remember her, as I do, with joy. **Ronald Somervell (***Eyelet magazine***).**

An extract from Westmorland Gazette & Parkside Cemetery, available at Local Studies

LEE

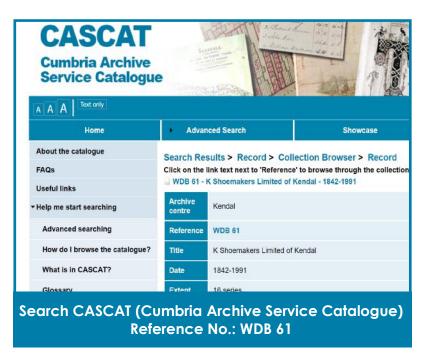
Oct. 25. suddenly, at 6 Arnfield Road, Withington, Manchester. SARAH TROUGHTON LEE, MBE aged 85 years, daughter of the late Thomas and Isabell Lee., loving sister of William Fulton Lee and the late Robert. Mary Agnes and Thomas Lee. - Internment took place Wed., Oct. 30, 1974 at Parkside Road Cemetery, Kendal

to Ings Church please LEE 25. suddenly, at 6 Arn Withington, Manchester at 6 Arnfield SARAH TROUGHTON LEE. aged MRE Vears. Thomas and Isabell Lee sister of William File of the ing William Fulton and the late Robert. .00 Marv and Agnes Thomas place Wed. Oct Road Cemetery took Interment 30, at Oct. side Park HIDDLETON Kendal

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Ques SANAL SARAH TROUGHTON LEE	RETO BOOT - SALE DR.	85	6 ARMFIELD RD, WITHINGTON, M/CR.	30 OCT	REV. MARSTON	Registras, Gauchart

Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal

At Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal, we work to secure the future of physical and digital records. As part of our collection we hold a wide range of records for K Shoes Company. K Shoes played an important role in the history of Kendal and Cumbria.





The Collection includes ...

... administrative records, promotional advertising, staff records, photographs, plus lots more.

You can view the list of contents online via CASCAT (see above). Select the documents you wish to view and make an appointment to visit us at County Offices. **kendal.archives@cumbria.gov.uk**



Visit us

To make an appointment please email us via the email addresses below:



Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal: kendal.archives@cumbria.gov.uk

Local Studies at Kendal Library: kendal.library@cumbria.gov.uk

Further reading

K Shoes - The First 150 years 1842-1992 by Spencer Crookenden

This book tells the story of K Shoes, from the start of the Company to the moment when it ceased to exist independently. The Author, a declared 'Optimist', played key roles in the management of K Shoes from the end of WWII to his retirement in 1983.

Other books which include information about K Shoes

Roger Bingham	Kendal A Social History
Andrew White	A History of Kendal
Maurice Baren	How it all Began in the Lake District



Trade Directories

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Kelly's is just one of the trade directories in England that listed all businesses and tradespeople in a particular city or town, as well as a general directory of postal addresses of local gentry, landowners, charities, and other facilities.

You can view copies of Kelly's and other directories at Kendal Local Studies Library and Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal.

Your History, Your Place, Be Part of It!

