

BESSIE TURNER

1883 - 1954

**Turner's Bakery, top of Filton Hill
and Gran's Cafe, opposite BAC entrance
Married to Ted Turner, 1927**

Bessie Turner was born in August of 1883, and along with her husband Ted moved to Filton from Bedminster in 1910 to start their business, Turner's Bakery. They had 4 children who helped out with the family business.

The bakery was at the top of Filton Hill close to the British Aeroplane Company. The shop sold bread, other baked goods including doughnuts, pasties, buns and confectionary to workers from BAC. Bread making started in the Bakehouse at 4am.



Photography Source: Peggy Allen

Beef pasties were Ted's speciality and Peggy (their granddaughter) would make doughnuts on her school lunch break. There would often be workers sitting all the way up the stairs drinking tea, so it became a social hub as well as a bakery. There was also a delivery service - a red horse drawn bread cart and later a motorised van - which Ted and his daughter-in-law would drive around Filton.

As the aeroplane works developed across the road during WW2, Bessie saw the opportunity to provide teas, cakes, buns, pasties and sandwiches to the lunchtime and afternoon shift workers



from BAC. She took over a big wooden hut that became known as 'Gran's Cafe'.

Bessie loved shopping and finding bargains in Bristol. She would often go to the Tramway sales (sales of lost & found at the tram depot). On one occasion she came home with a case full of gloves and everyone was given a pair.

Bessie would save some of her earnings by sewing them into the lining of her fur coat. By doing so, she was able to save up for a trip around the world in 1948. Becoming one of the first holidaymakers to fly to the other side of the world, Bessie travelled alone, landing in New York on 18th August 1948. She then moved on to Sydney followed by a trip to Adelaide where her brother lived. She returned home via Calcutta, Cairo and Iraq.

Bessie died in 1954.



Photography Source: Peggy Allen