

Tom Ears Vincent (1856-1934)

Character in the Sherborne Pageant:

John Baret

Episode 8: AD 1437. The Foundation of the Almshouse

Robert Neville, Sir Humphrey Stafford, Margaret Gough, John Fauntleroy and John Baret enter, the townsfolk dividing to make way for them. Each of them declare their intention to give money and timber for a new hospital, to cheers from the crowd. Robert declares it will be Saint John's House and gives a triptych image (the now famous Almshouse altar-piece).



Tom Ears Vincent was born in Henstridge, Somerset in 1856 he was the son of Joseph Vincent and Catherine Ears. He married Annie Eliza Welch. He was a butter merchant and factor operating from the Rich Filbert Dairy, Rydal Tower, Acreman Street. He was a tea and coffee dealer and wine and spirit merchant with premises in Half Moon Street and The Parade, Sherborne. Tom and Annie had five children: Gerald Charles (b.c.1889), Olive Emily Vincent (b.c.1891), Austen Ears Vincent (1895-1918), Stella Mary Vincent (b.c.1897), Kathleen Eva A. Vincent (b.c.1899).

Tom remarried, following Annie's death, to Edith Louise Butler at Tarrant Monkton on 27 April 1922. He died 14 July 1934 and was buried on 18 July 1934 in Sherborne Cemetery.

Tom and Annie's second son Austen died in WW1 on 8 November 1818. He was a Lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery and is remembered on the Sherborne war memorial. Tom served on the war memorial committee.

In the *Mate's Illustrated Sherborne* of 1903 the shop in Halfmoon Street was advertised and a photograph was taken by W Matt Chaffin. You can see two horse drawn wagons with the name T E Vincent on the side. There is also a man in a bowler hat standing next to what appears to be a delivery cart with its young operator. The man is wearing what appears to be the sort of tan coloured heavy cotton coat that someone working in such premises might have worn. Could this be Tom Vincent when he would have been around 47 years old? If you magnify the photo taken for the Pageant you can see four men likely to be playing the parts of Neville, Stafford, Fauntleroy and Baret and one of these is very likely to be Tom Vincent. Three of the four have a heavy moustache. In Sherborne Museum is a stone flagon showing Tom to be a 'Rennet Factor'.

