

**Dorothy May Powell
Mazasitisz**

**Later Wallace – Bird
04.02.1895 – 13.09.1983**



Dorothy May was born on 4.02.1895 at 19 Chatham Street London in the Registration District of St Saviour Newington (now Southwark). Father **Alexander Powell** mother **Florence Lillian Dunn**



It appears the property was a multi occupancy lodging house at the time.

1891 Census

Shows a **Dunn** family living in Chatham Street with a 10 year old daughter Florence. This could have been Dorothy's mother who would have been 15/16 at the time of Dorothy's birth. No other trace of a Florence Lillian Dunn has been found apart from one in Manchester which does not appear to match up.

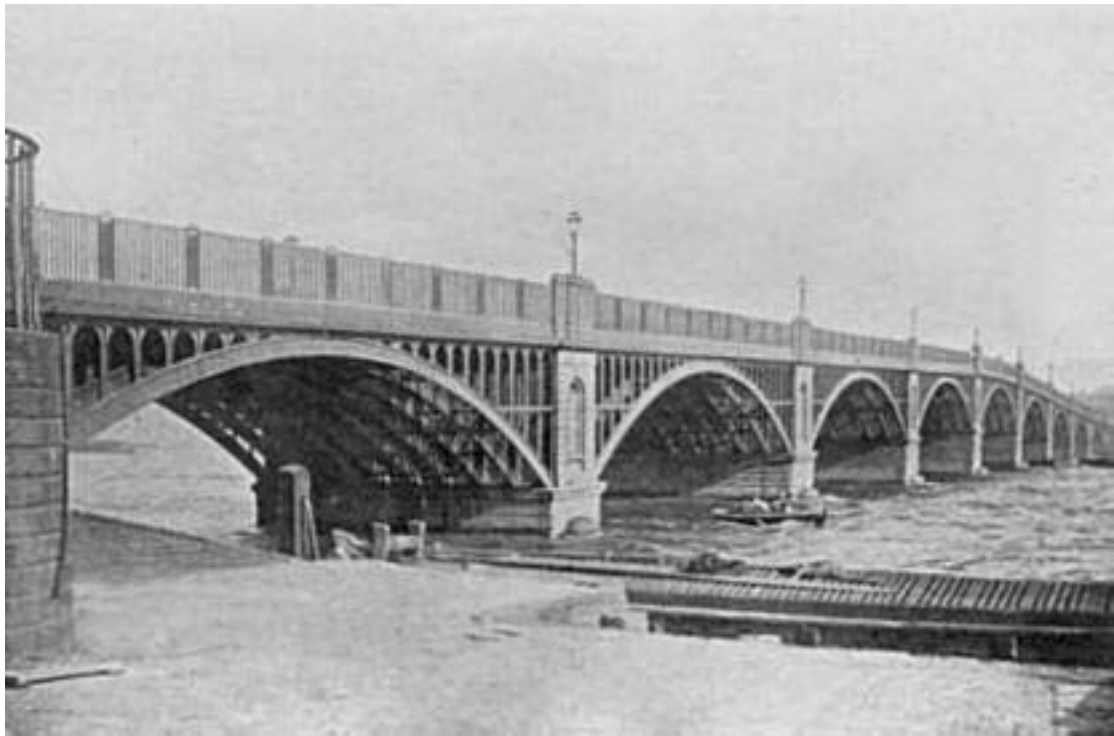
1901 Census

Shows Dorothy May 6 living with her father **Alexander Powell** 40 born New York USA and his wife **Emily E Powell (Buck crossed out)** 30 a 'sick nurse monthly' The family were occupying two rooms at 43 Gladstone Street Battersea (now demolished) sharing the house with a Mr & Mrs Brown and daughters. There are old rumours that there may have been a sister, half sister or even a twin in the family. Alexander has been traced to New York where his parents declared they were born in Prussia. Hence the **Mazasitisz**. There has been no marriage traced between Alexander and anyone



Alexander was working at the Nine Elms Gas Works which were near to Gladstone Street. According to the Booth surveys life around Gladstone Street was pretty poor and grimy with multi occupancy lodging houses, the area also being criss-crossed with new railway lines. The street itself however was mixed , some comfortable with good average earnings & some poor. Mr Brown for example, who shared the house, was a packer at the RAMC.

It is uncertain as to what happened to Dorothy between 1901 and 1912 when she met Harry Bird & became pregnant with Norman, she would have been 17. Harry was married to Gertrude Goldsmith and residing at 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road running a Confectioners and Pastry shop from the premises, Dorothy presumably moved from Battersea to Westminster. There was another business at 133 Praed Street Paddington a Newsagent Stationers and Booksellers registered under the name of **William Bird**, it is rumoured that Dorothy may have worked in one of the shops.



Vauxhall Bridge c 1900

From July 1914 it appears that Dorothy went away with Gertrude to have the next two babies. Firstly to Brighton then to Pinner, both accessible to nearby train stations. Story has it in the family that Gertrude delivered all the babies, they then returned to Vauxhall Bridge Road or Praed Street in Paddington. Harry was registered there until 1918. His parents Thomas and Rebecca Bird also disappeared from the Westminster records around this time.

From 1918 the family appeared to have moved out of London with Dorothy giving birth in different towns around the south of England. Harry was calling himself **William Wallace** on the birth certificates and stated he was in the Electrical trade. It is uncertain how the family lived financially. Perhaps from the sale of the two shops which both had different proprietors by 1919. A reason for leaving London may be because of a conflict between Harry and Gertrude's brothers.

Dorothy referred to herself as Mrs Wallace. She did however pass on her name **Mazasitisz** to five of her children.



The family finally settled in the Torquay area in Devon around 1921 buying and selling properties Hotels and businesses. For the birth of his last two children Harry reverted to the surname **Bird**

Harry appeared to have had several jobs along the way he didn't appear to start his property dealing until around 1923. He had two 'wives' and nine children to bring up. Stories are told of big houses, hotels and guest houses even a 'Governess' for the older girls. All tell of having a fairly happy childhood although none of them seemed to know who their real mother was, Gertrude taking on the caring and nurturing role whilst Dorothy worked in the businesses with Harry and didn't have much to do with the bringing up of her children. This pretence was continued until Harry's death when he named Norman the executor and his **nephew** of his Will. Supposedly the son of his fictitious deceased brother.

Harry and Gertrude instilled their beliefs of vegetarianism and herbalism into the family and conventional doctors were never allowed in the house.

After the 2nd World War Harry bought Maidencombe House Hotel for his three sons after they returned from the War, with him having a part share



Maidencombe House Hotel

Dorothy was very evasive when talking of her early life with her children and grandchildren. Most were quite certain that she was the legal wife of Harry Bird and that Gertrude was the widow of Harry's brother who was reputed to have died in the first world war.

Other stories were Mr Wallace her first husband had died in the first world war and Harry was her second husband whom she had met in Torquay

Some even thought she was Gertrude's sister. She often told stories of being brought up on a farm in Wales to some of her grandchildren. Therefore research has proved difficult.



Dorothy & Harry Torquay Sea Front

Dorothy had an interesting and very varied life with Harry and his wife Gertrude Goldsmith bringing up nine children between them. There were several name changes and addresses along the way. Harry always appeared to have some form of business activity, especially in property. Later businesses were a Wool shop and a Bakery Confectioners and Café.

Dorothy had ten grandchildren when she died and did not leave a Will

**Dorothy died on 13th September 1983 in Newton Abbot Geriatric Hospital
She was described as a Retired Business Proprietress**

