

Alderman Albert Victor Turnbull J.P. 1913 – 1996



Albert V. Turnbull was the son of Albert Turnbull and Mary Randall, born in Gateshead beside the River Tyne in NE England. He was a 16th generation descendant of the Turnbull's of Tyneside

Albert was only 10 years of age when his mother died and he was left to look after his brother Ralph and sisters Elsie and Mary, while his father worked as a labourer at a local Flour Mill.

A bright student at St. Cuthbert's boys school, he passed the entry examination for the Grammar school. However, family needs dictated that he left school at the age of 14, to work with his father at the Flour Mill. This had one advantage as he met his future wife Lillian Couch, while working there and they were to remain married for 61 years.

Work in Engineering was almost nonexistent, in the North east, so when he was offered the chance of an apprenticeship in Coach building, he jumped at the chance. The problem was that the work was in London, some 300 miles away.

At the age of 15, Albert packed his bags, found lodgings in North London and learned the skills that would shape the rest of his life. However, even as a skilled tradesman, there were no long term jobs and he was constantly on the move as each assignment finished.

Albert built buses, lorries, horse drawn carts and even the odd caravan. Lillian joined him and found work as a sewing machinists through the day and worked at scrubbing floors in local pubs at night. They had saved up enough to marry by 1935 and their son Albert James was born in 1936 and daughter Judith in 1943.

Adolph Hitler and the second World War, brought about the next major change in their lives. London was



obviously the main target for bombing so they decided this was the time to return to Gateshead.

Albert worked for a large bus company during the War, but was also an instructor in unarmed combat, which was known as jujitsu at the time.

At the end of the war, he became involved with the Union of Vehicle Builders, where he progressed from shop steward to Area Secretary.

In local politics, he was elected to the Gateshead Council in 1952 as Councillor for the Bensham ward where he was born. By 1957 he had been appointed as a Justice of the Peace (Magistrate to the Courts).

By 1967, Albert had become an Alderman of the Borough, Chairman of Town Planning, Deputy Mayor and then along with his wife Lillian was elected as Mayor and Mayoress of Gateshead for the year 1967/8



Traditionally a Mayor was elected for a term of one year only, mainly because there were over 60 councillors available for selection. however, Albert and his wife had the honour of being elected for a second term in 1978/9. This had only occurred on one previous occasion.

Albert,s Turnbull ancestry;

Robert Turnbull of the Close, Newcastle

Henry c.1540 of Turnbull's Nook = Janet Anderson

John c. 1575 = Jane Anderson

Michael 1604 - 1656 = Phillis Wallis

John 1628 - 1697 = Elizabeth Henderson

Henry 1665 - 1753 = Mary Kell

Gilbert 1704 - 1788 = Elizabeth Forster

Forster 1745 - 1811 = Eleanor Robson

John 1775 - 1828 = Margaret Hook

William 1805 - 1847 = Elizabeth Usher

John 1830 - 1912 = Hannah Jobson

Thomas 1863 - 1934 = Margaret Thirkell

Albert 1891 - 1972 = Mary Jane Randall

Albert Victor 1913 - 1996 = Lillian Couch

Albert James = Rita Pither

Hayley Turnbull = Kevin Jackson

Ian James Victor Turnbull = Janice Davison

Rachel, Alex, Emily, Lucy