

# **AN INVESTIGATION OF THE LIFE OF RONALD CHILDS**

## **THE VILLAGE COBBLER**



**Memorial plaque for Ronald is in the churchyard**

**Ronald James Childs was born in Ropley on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 1913 . He died in 1992.**

**He worked and lived in Ropley as a shoemaker and a cobbler.**

**A cobbler is someone who mends boots and shoes**

## Ronald's Family and working life

We found Ronald and his family on Census records. Census records are important government lists about people and their personal information. For example – date of birth or place that they were born. A census happens every 10 years. You will all be on the 2021 census!

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	William James Childs	Head	46	11	M	Married	Popeley Hampshire	British born	—	Boot Maker	400/3	Employer	353	at Home	—	—	—	—	—
2	Louise Childs	Wife	51	11	F	Married	Wallington Somersetshire	—	—	Home Duties	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	Stanley William Childs	Son	14	5	M	Single	Popeley Hampshire	—	—	Assisting Father in Boot repairing	482/17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	Ronald James Childs	Son	8	5	M	Single	Popeley Hampshire	—	—	Whole Time	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

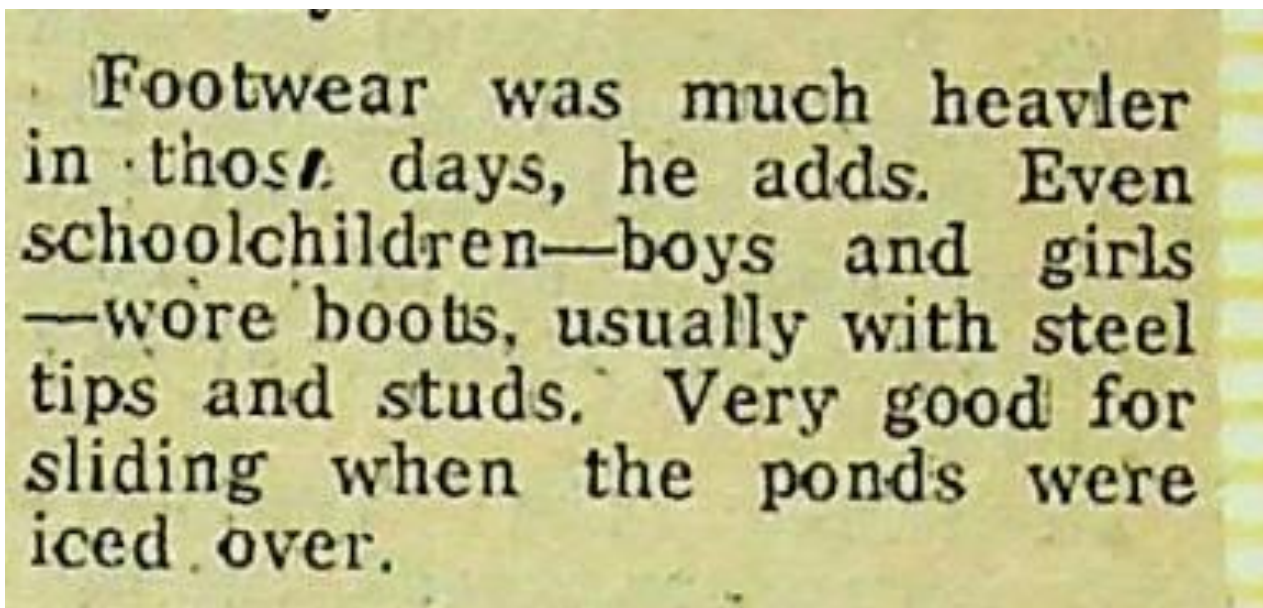
Here in 1921 , Ronald is just 8 years old

Abbin Lodge "	123	1	Evans John	-	M	15 <sup>th</sup> April 66	M	Factory Hammer (Retire)	
		2	Evans Alice	-	F	3 <sup>rd</sup> July 76	M	Unpaid Domestic Dut	
		3	Phillips Barbara J.	-	F	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct. 04	M	Unpaid Domestic Dut	
This record is officially closed.									
2. Home side "	134	1	Childs Matilda H.	-	F	1 <sup>st</sup> Feb 49	S	needlework, Dressm	
1. Home side "	135	1	Childs Florence	-	F	6 <sup>th</sup> July 69	W	Unpaid Domestic Dut	
		2	Childs Ronald J.	-	M	16 <sup>th</sup> Jan 13	S	Boot Repair	
Vicarage Rd.	136	1	Turner Reginald B.	-	M	3 <sup>rd</sup> Aug 67	M	Schoolmaster (Retire)	
		2	Turner Louisa M.	-	F	15 <sup>th</sup> May 65	M	Unpaid Domestic Dut	
1. Long Cott "	137	1	Bates Mary	-	F	4 <sup>th</sup> Dec 61	W	Unpaid Domestic Dut	
		2	Bates Elsie C.	-	F	4 <sup>th</sup> Dec 94	S	Child's nurse (Pres	
This record is officially closed.									
2 Long Cott "	138	1	Wood Walter H.	-	M	25 <sup>th</sup> Dec 84	M	gardener.	
		2	Wood Edith M.	-	F	10 <sup>th</sup> Aug 95	M	Unpaid Domestic Dut	
		3	Wood Henry	-	M	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct 21	S	Unpaid Domestic Dut	

10 years later in 1921, the census shows Ronald, aged only 13 years old working as a boot repairer. He had left school as he had to work to earn money for this family.

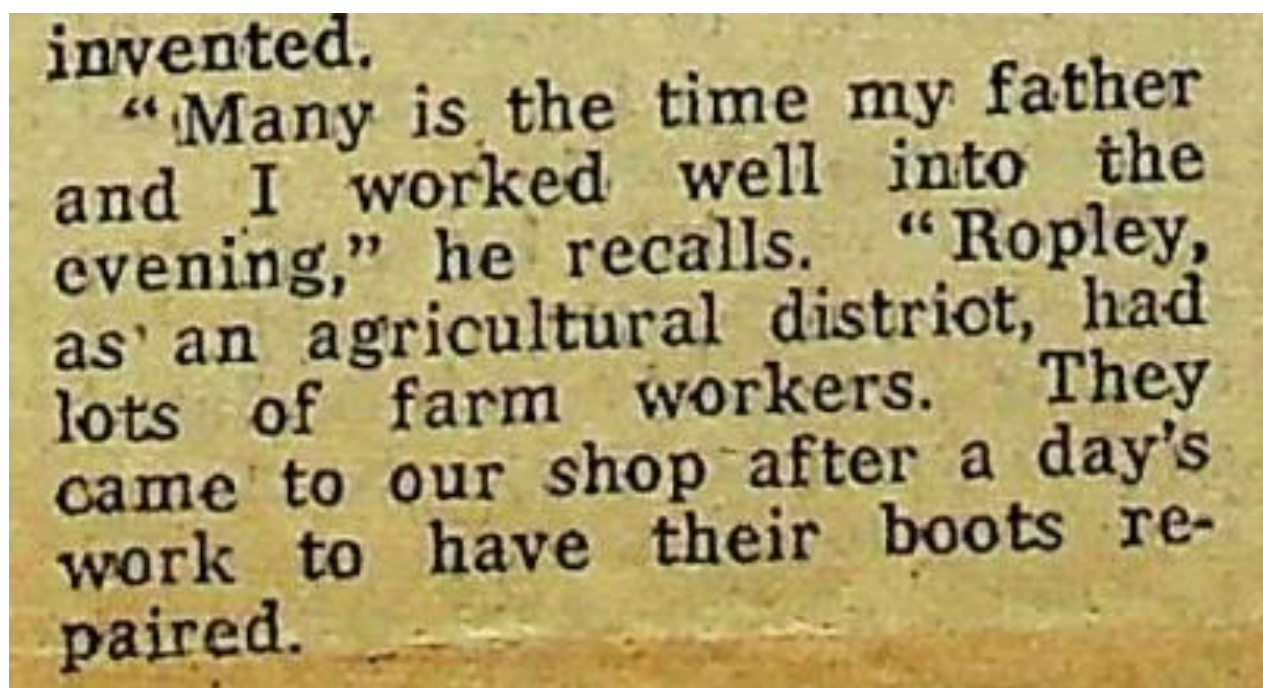


When Ronald retired (stopped working), in 1978 aged 65, he was interviewed for the local newspaper. He talked about his work as a cobbler.



Footwear was much heavier in those days, he adds. Even schoolchildren—boys and girls—wore boots, usually with steel tips and studs. Very good for sliding when the ponds were iced over.

Most boots and shoes were handed down to younger children when they were grown out of.



invented.  
“Many is the time my father and I worked well into the evening,” he recalls. “Ropley, as an agricultural district, had lots of farm workers. They came to our shop after a day’s work to have their boots repaired.”

Most people only had one pair of shoes or boots. It was cheaper to mend boots than buy new ones.

# Family Tree of Ronald Childs

**James Childs** married **Ann**  
Born 1782 Born 1785  
Agricultural labourer

**William Charles Childes** married **Olive**  
Born 1821 born 1816  
Shoemaker Shoemaker

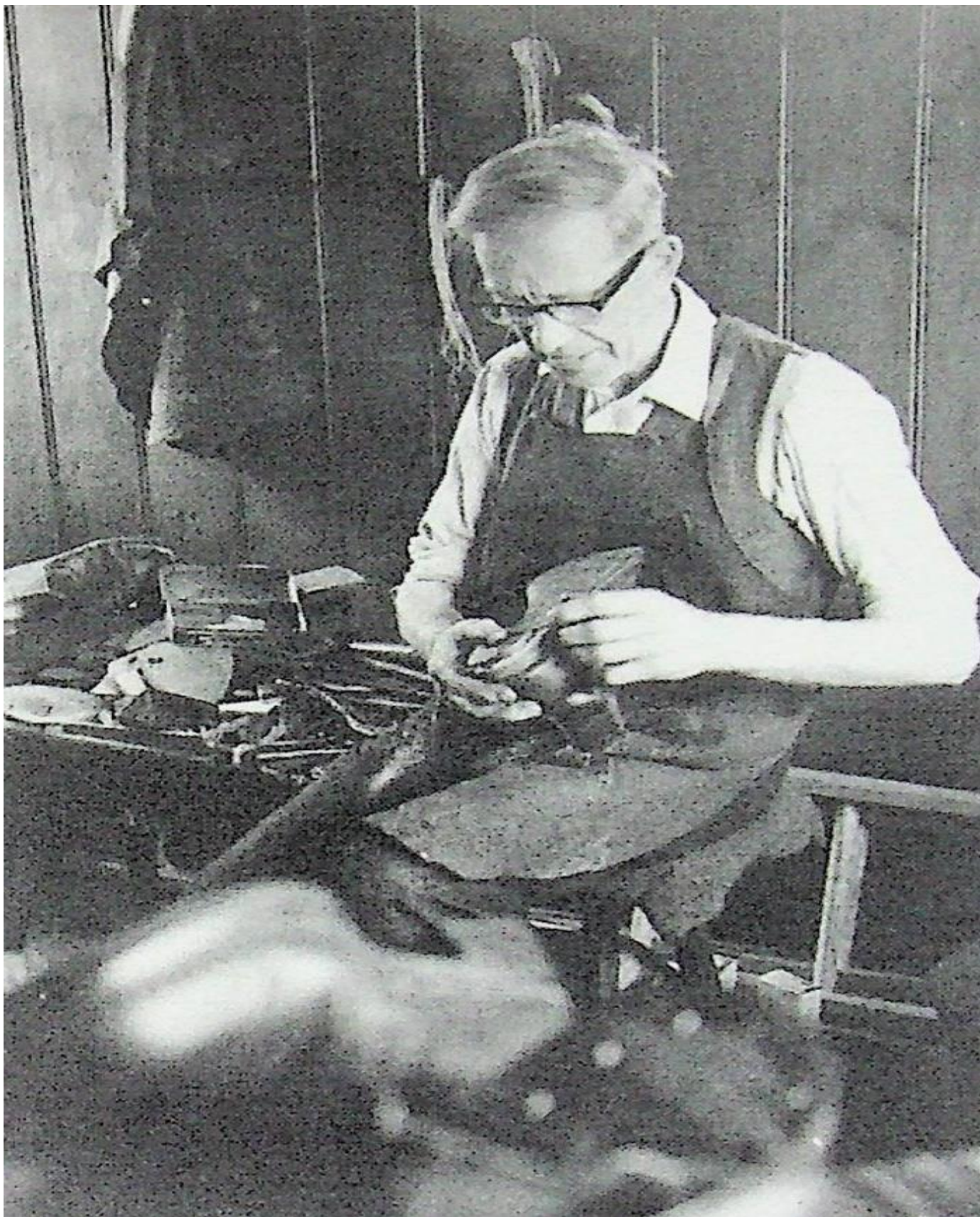
**James William Childes** married **Rhoda Martha Henbury**  
Born 1848 1873 Born 1846  
Shoemaker

**William James Childs** married **Florence Gardiner**  
Born 1875 1905 born 1870  
Shoemaker

**Stanley Childs**  
Born 1907  
Footman to the Queen

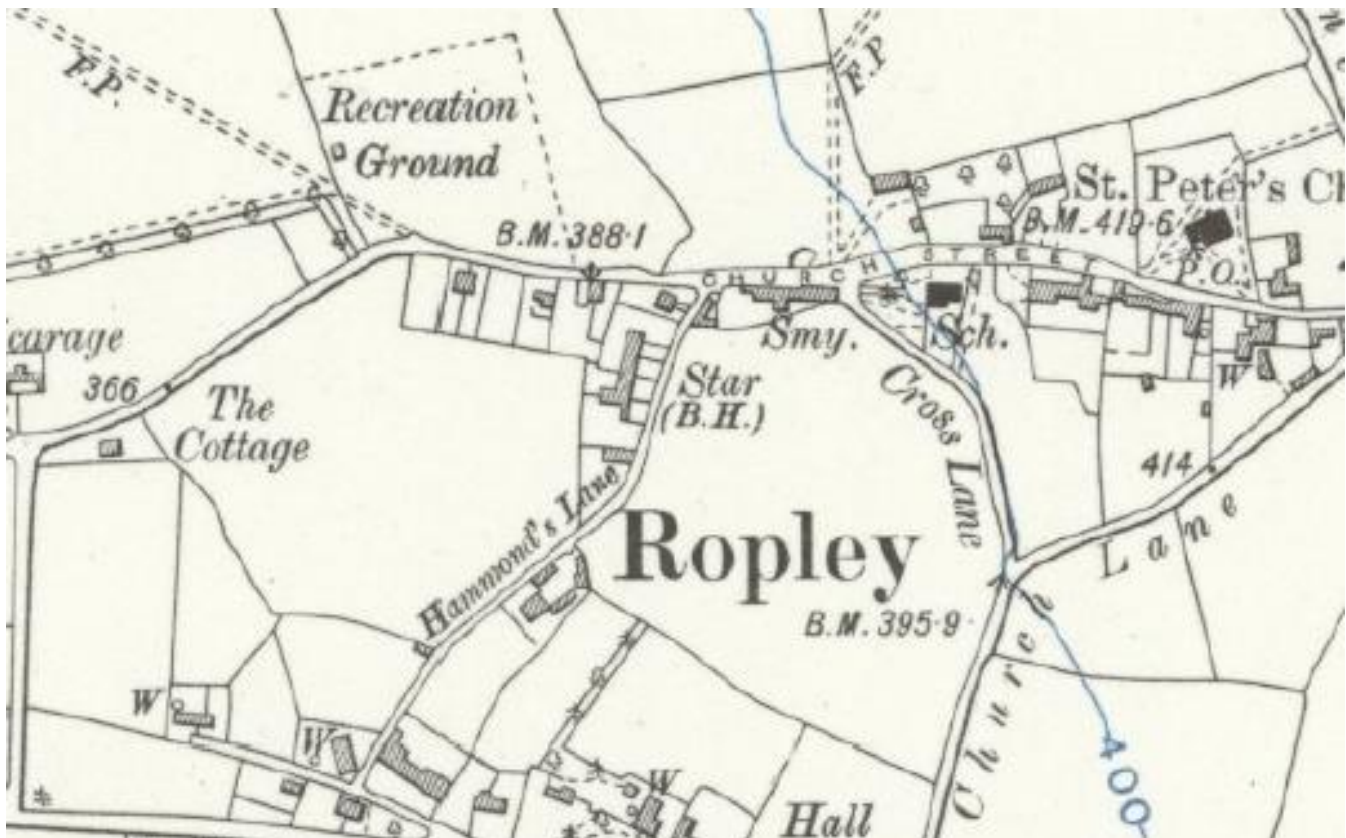
**Ronald James Childs**  
1913 – 1992  
Village shoemaker and Cobbler





**Ronald mending shoes in his workshop**

**Ronald Childs lived and worked at Number 1 , Homeside, Vicarage lane opposite the Parish Hall and recreation field.**



**Map of the centre of Ropley in 1910**

**Using the many census records, birth, marriage and death certificates we were able to discover and make a family tree for Ronald and his family. Ronald also had Uncles, Aunts and Cousins who lived in Ropley.**



