

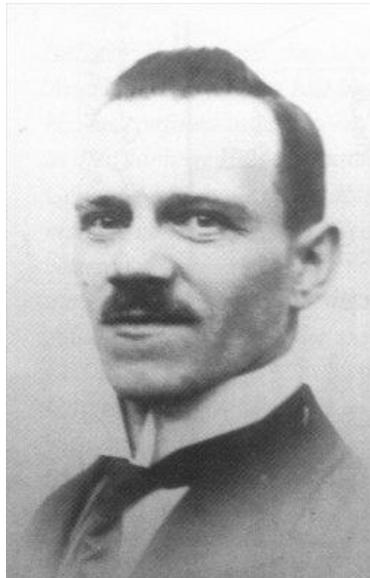
# The Hitlers of Liverpool

**Mike Royden**

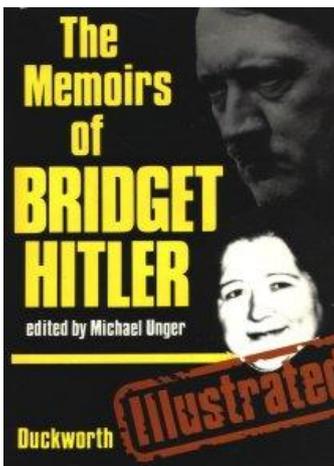
*Of family and history, I have no idea. In this respect I am completely ignorant. Before, I did not know that I had relatives. Only when I became Reich Chancellor I learned this. I am a totally un-familial creature. That does not suit me. I belong only to my people.*

Adolf Hitler. *Monologues*, 1942

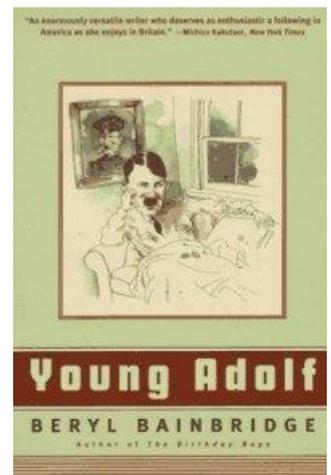
There is a Liverpool urban myth that surfaces from time to time, which meets with a flurry of activity between believers and disbelievers, then disappears until enough time has lapsed for the story to gather 'credibility' again and demand attention from new readers. And it is this: 'Adolf Hitler lived in Liverpool before World War One with his half-brother Alois'. It conjures up many, images - the young artist studying the architecture, improving his mind, learning the language, standing on the Kop. In fact, what has been published is even more ludicrous; loafing around his brother's house, ranting about German politics in a Toxteth back kitchen, learning about his future with an astrological mystic neighbour, followed by a reconnaissance trip to the waterfront to make a note of the shipping using the port – just for future reference you understand, should Germany ever go to war with, say, Britain for example. So aside from the elaborations, is there any truth at all in this story?



**Above: Alois Hitler and his wife Bridget Dowling**

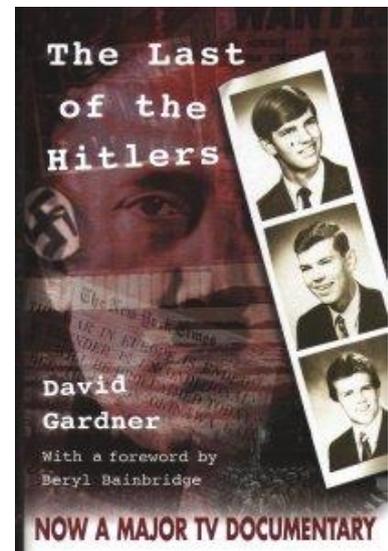


Much of the interest has stemmed from the publication in the 1970s of a memoir written thirty years earlier, supposedly by Bridget Hitler, the wife of Alois, Adolf's half-brother. This was met with wide reportage in England, especially in the Liverpool press. It also influenced local writer Beryl Bainbridge to produce *Young Adolf*, a fictionalised story about his visit to Liverpool as told in the memoir. She followed this in 1981 with a drama commissioned by the BBC called *The Journal of Bridget Hitler*, with Maurice Reeves, Siobhan McKenna and Julian Glover in the lead roles. This television play portrayed the 'pre-war visit' by Adolf to his half-brother's Liverpool home.



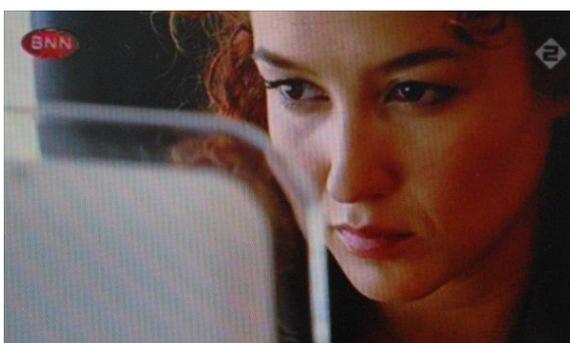
Since then, there have been many corruptions of the story, including a version by a local writer who also featured a fake photograph on his web site of a young Hitler standing in front of the William Brown Street Galleries and Library buildings, just to muddy the waters still further.

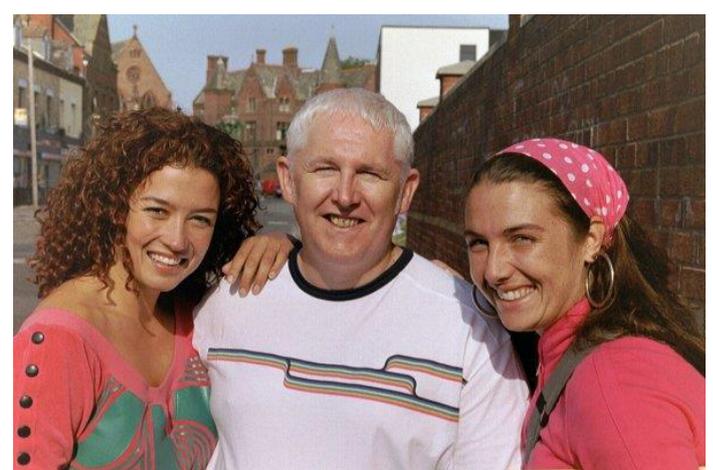
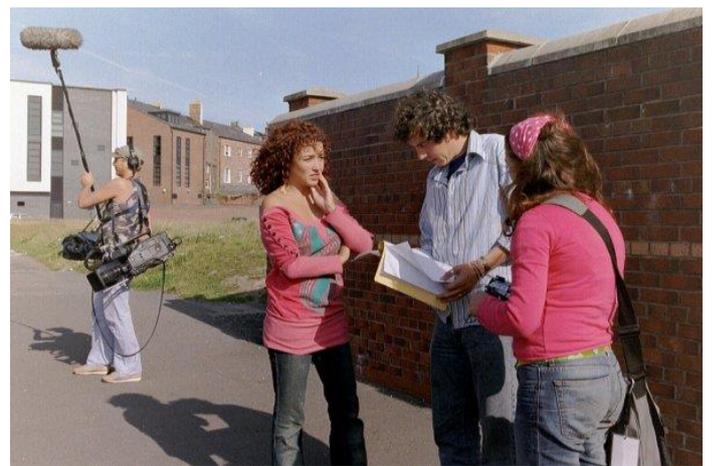
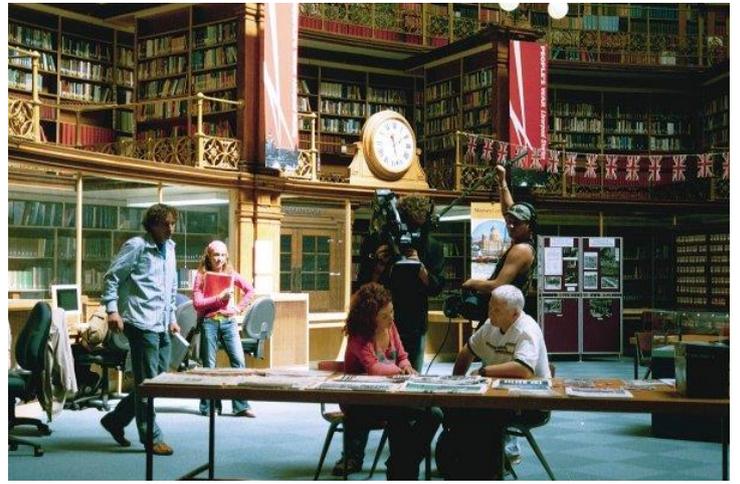
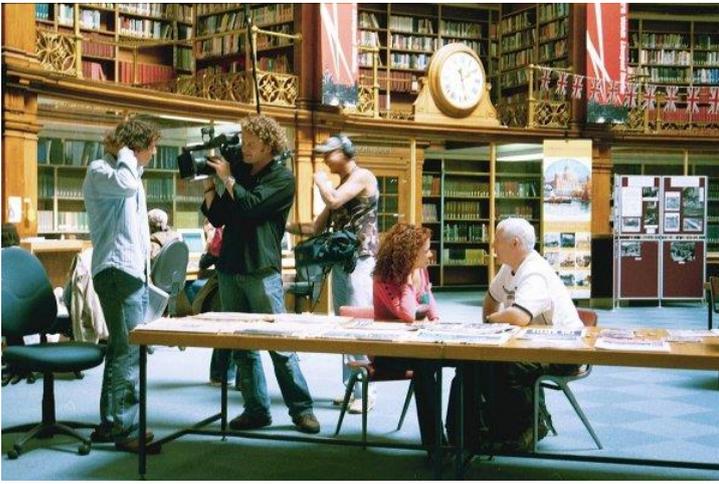
The story came to the fore again in 2002, when David Gardner, a former crime writer and senior foreign correspondent on the Daily Mail, published a book entitled *The Last of the Hitlers*. Although it deals primarily with his story of how he traced the last remaining relatives of the Nazi Dictator, he discusses the Liverpool connection, and this was shortly followed by a Channel 5 documentary which consequently reawakened interested in the story.



The following year in December 2003, the story was featured on Radio 4's *Making History*, where an objective approach was taken to get to the truth of the matter and involved myself in the making of the programme, together with Liverpool Record Office archivist Roger Hull, Hitler's biographer Professor Sir Ian Kershaw, and producer Nick Patrick. This had a knock-on effect, resulting in my further participation with numerous radio features on Radio 4, and local radio (Merseyside and City) and a few television appearances, including Stuart Maconie's 'TV Towns'. Most bizarre was filming and appearing in a Dutch programme, 'Mission Unfindable', a series where the presenter, Dutch celebrity Katja Schuurman, was sent each week on a new mission. That week she was given the task of finding the living relatives of Hitler. The previous weeks she had to try to discover the closely guarded recipe for Coca-Cola and the whereabouts of Osama Bin Laden, which gives an idea of the realms the programme makers were living in. But then, this was the country that gave us 'Big Brother'.

I met Katja and the film crew outside Liverpool Central Library and we spent the day filming in the Picton Reading Room, (as 'front' for Liverpool Record Office), then later in Upper Stanhope Street. There was an interlude in Dale Street where Katja went off with a handy cam (with the crew in tow), in search of where Alois Hitler may have worked and where the Hitler's might have sunk a few beers. I tried to put them off. Point that camera at someone with questions thrown at them, such as 'Did Hitler used to drink around here?' and, well, you can imagine the situation and the Scouse wit that would follow. 'Oh yeah, he useter drink in d'pub round d'corner wid me arl feller' was the first response, and it quickly went downhill from there. But I digress.





## Previous page:

(top) Picton Reading Room in Liverpool Central Library, but this was the location used to give the Dutch TV viewer the impression it was the L.R.O.

(2nd row) Upper Stanhope Street, the location of Alois Hitler's demolished family home

(3rd row) Katja and crew look like they are waiting for a bus, but they are discussing the next shot in Dale Street. Alois Hitler was known to have been a waiter in a restaurant near here in 1912.

(bottom row) Adjusting the microphone pick-up. So he said anyway. Three other blokes look on to make sure everything is ok.

Katja and producer Marlin with Mike Royden

(Right) An 'Iplayer' format of the full programme was on the channel website for some time but no longer available. Maybe it will appear one day on YouTube.



The crux of the story is that in pre-First World War Liverpool, young Adolf, still hoping for a career as an artist, came to stay at the house of his half-brother and his wife Bridget in Upper Stanhope Street, in Toxteth. There he stayed for around six months, before returning to the men's hostel in Vienna. As the only source for this is Bridget's own memoir, it has inevitably undergone thorough analysis.

According to an interview given to the Daily Express in the thirties, Bridget Dowling may have met Alois at a staff dance at the Royal Hibernian Hotel in Dublin (*right*). This contrasts with the version she gave in her memoir, where she states she met Alois for the first time at the Dublin Horse Show in 1909. There, she said her father and neighbour began talking to a stranger. The young man cut a dashing figure in his smart suit and his waxed, turned up handle bar moustache. He introduced himself as Alois Hitler from Austria, and with his 'fine foreign manners and his debonair Viennese ways' he made a great impression on the teenage Bridget. 'He fairly won my heart with his sugary talk and foreign ways', she declared.



They agreed to meet, and a close friendship soon developed between them. However, Alois had already created suspicion in the family with his fancy talk about being in the 'hotel business', and that he was there on a 'fact finding trip' covering France, Belgium, and the British Isles, to study the trade. It wasn't long before they discovered he was actually a waiter

at the Shelbourne Hotel, in the centre of Dublin, sent there by a London employment agency. Despite this, Bridget was 'head over heels in love' and they began to see more of each other.

The Dowlings clearly did not approve of the relationship, especially once they became aware of his true station. Having decided to marry, the couple eloped to London, where they were married at Marylebone Registry Office on 3 June 1910. William Dowling, Bridget's father, a farm labourer from Kilnamanagh, was so incensed he even wanted the police to arrest Alois for kidnapping.



**CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE** **GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE**

*Application Number* 3103715-1

1910. Marriage solemnized at <i>the Register Office</i> in the District of <i>St. Marylebone</i> in the County of <i>London</i>								
Groom's No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
160	<i>Third June</i>	<i>Alois Hitler</i>	<i>24 years</i>	<i>Bachelor</i>	<i>Hotel Waiter</i>	<i>37 Blanford Square St. Marylebone</i>	<i>Alois Hitler deceased</i>	<i>Customs Officer</i>
	<i>1910</i>	<i>Bridget Elizabeth Dowling</i>	<i>18 years</i>	<i>Spinster</i>		<i>4 Percy Street St. Pancras</i>	<i>William Dowling</i>	<i>Carpenter</i>

Married in the *Register Office* according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the \_\_\_\_\_ by Licence *by me,*

This Marriage was solemnized between us, *Alois Hitler* in the Presence of us, *William Oldbury* *F. G. Cummings* *Henry J. Dudson* *Superintendent Registrar*

**CERTIFIED** to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a register of Marriages in the Registration District of *St. Marylebone*  
given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the *28th* day of *March* 2011

IXF 253906

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WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.



'My father - rest his soul - was a real Irishman', wrote Bridget. 'He would not hear tell of a wedding to a foreigner. Alois and I used to meet every afternoon in the museum and make plans to elope. Four months later when Alois had saved enough money, we went to England on the night boat and came to London. I wrote to my mother and said I would not return until we got permission to marry. She talked my father around and he gave his consent'.

Bridget was reunited with her father the following year, when she presented him with a new grandson. By now the Hitlers had relocated to 102 Upper Stanhope Street in Toxteth, Liverpool, where their baby was born on 12 March 1911. He was christened William Patrick, and the birth was also officially registered (as was their marriage in London). In the census of April 1911, they were recorded living in a flat in No.102, where there were several more boarders occupying the other flats. It is likely the information was given by Alois, although his own name was recorded as Anton – was that intentional, or had the enumerator misunderstood his accent? Bridget's surname was, at first, declared as Dowling before the mistake was realised, causing the enumerator to cross it out and start again. Alois gave her first name as 'Cece', this was his pet name for her after a painting of St Cecilia which he admired (according to her memoir). The official misheard, and wrote it as 'Cissy'.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number COL093618

REGISTRATION DISTRICT **Toxteth Park**  
 1911 BIRTH in the Sub-district of **Toxteth Park Central** in the **County of Liverpool C.B.**

Columns:-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
226	Twelfth March 1911 102 Upper Stanhope Street Toxteth Park U.S.	William Patrick	Boy	Alois Hitler	Bridget Elizabeth Hitler formerly Dowling	Hotel Waiter	B. C. Hitler mother 102 Upper Stanhope Street Toxteth Park	Twentieth April 1911	Joseph Maiden	Registrar

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 14th day of January 2004

**BXCA 184493**

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022317 6274 1003 SPSL 006234

**Above: Birth certificate of their son, William Patrick Hitler, in 102 Upper Stanhope Street, Toxteth Park.**

**Below: William Patrick Hitler Baptism record**

1957

Sa Hitler  
 Hitler  
 102 U. Stanhope

Anno 1911 die 12 mensis Martii natu, et anno 1911 die 30 mensis Aprilis baptizatus est  
 Gulielmus Petrus Hitler filius Alois et  
 Brigittae Elizabethae Hitler (olim Dowling) conjugum: a me Nicolae Forke, Miss. Forde  
 Patrinus fuit Anton Kohler Matrinas fuit Maria Elizabetha (Pheblan)

# CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Number of Schedule 97  
(To be filled up by the Enumerator after collection)

*Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.*

*The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.*

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family	AGE (Last Birthday) and SEX	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE					PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards				BIRTHPLACE of every person	NATIONALITY of every Person born in a Foreign Country	INFIRMITY
			For Infants under one year state the age in months as "under one month," "one month," etc.	Write "Single," "Married," "Widower," or "Widow," etc. opposite the names of all persons aged 15 years and upwards.	Com- pleted years the present marriage has lasted. If less than one year write "under one."	Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no children born alive write "None" in Column 7.)	Children born alive to present Marriage has lasted. If less than one year write "under one."	Total Children Born Alive.	Children will Living.	Children who have Died.	Personal Occupation.			
1. Thomas Wm John	Head	58	Married						Labourer			Liverpool	English	
2. Sarah Maria H. Gray	Wife	50	Married						none			Liverpool	English	
3. Francis John	Grandson	4 1/2										Liverpool	English	
4. Anton Hitler	Boarder	28	Married	under 1	1	1			Chief waiter of Café Lyons's			Vienna Austria	Austrian	Resident
5. Cissie	Boarder	20	Married	under 1	1	1			none			Dublin	Irish	Resident
6. William Hitler	Boarder	11 months										Liverpool	English	
7. Robert Edward Jones	Boarder	35	Married	15					Plater's Lab			Liverpool	English	
8. Christina Jones	Wife	35	Married	15	3	3						Liverpool	English	
9. James John	Wife	37	Married	15					Doak Lab			Liverpool	English	
10. Adda John	Wife	26	Married	5	2	2			(none)			Liverpool	English	
11. Fossie John	Daughter	2										Liverpool	English	
12. William John	Son	11										Liverpool	English	

(To be filled up by the Enumerator.)

I certify that—

(1) All the ages on this Schedule are entered in the proper sex column.

(2) I have counted the males and females in Columns 3 and 4 separately, and have compared their sums with the total number of persons.

(3) After making the necessary corrections I have completed all entries on the Schedule which appeared to be defective, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous.

Initials of Enumerator: *AS*

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)

Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (Kitchens, Parlours, or Apartments). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom, nor warehouse, office, shop.

Total: Males 9, Females 5, Persons 12, 4

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: *Thomas William John*

Postal Address: *102 Upper Stanhope St*

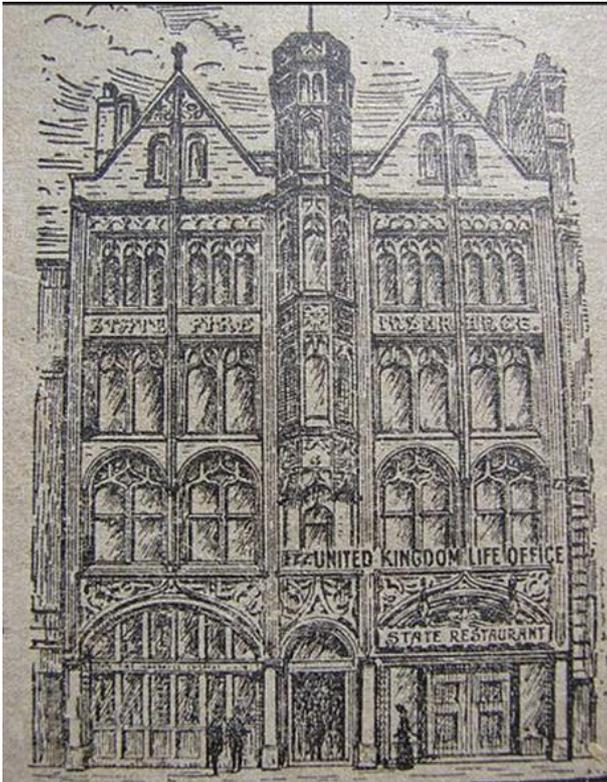
*S. Rosin*

(Above) Census record of 1911 for 102 Upper Stanhope Street

Name	Relationship	Age	Married	Years	Occ	Emp
Anton Hitler	Boarder	28	Married	Under	Chief waiter Café	Lyons Comy
Cissie	Boarder	20	Married	Under	none	
William	Boarder	1 mn				

Their one-month old son is also recorded as William – Bridget preferred Patrick, whereas Alois called him William, further suggesting it was Alois who spoke to the official. His occupation was recorded as Chief Waiter at the Lyon’s Café (possibly the State in Dale Street, owned by Lyons).

Alois found it difficult to settle in Liverpool, and changed his source of income four times in their first two years of married life. According to Bridget, he ran a restaurant on Dale Street, a boarding house on Upper Parliament Street, and then a hotel in Mount Pleasant. When he became a salesman for a disposable razor firm, he began to have grand ideas about developing his own business in the same field. This, he hoped, would involve his sister Angela, and brother-in-law Leo Raubal back in Austria [was Bridget confused again? – Leo died in 1910]. He then sent them money to cover their travelling expenses in the hope they would come to Liverpool for a visit where he could discuss his ideas further. According to Bridget, ‘...we were looking forward with pleasure to their visit. When we went to Lime Street Station to meet them, I eagerly scanned the couples descending from the 11.30 train, wondering if I would recognise our relatives. Instead of Angela and Leo Raubal,



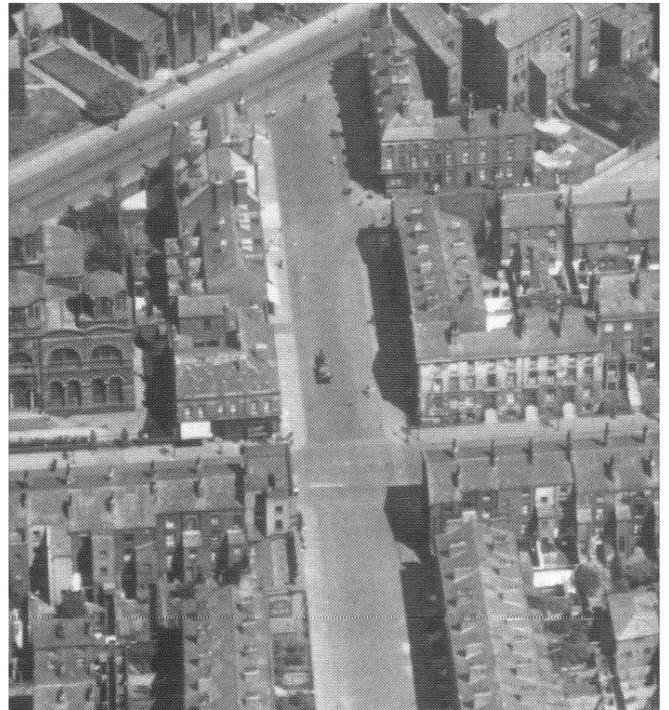
**(Above) The Lyon's company owned the State Restaurant in Dale Street, half of the building was demolished due to war damage**

however, a shabby young man approached and offered Alois his hand. It was my husband's younger brother, Adolf, who came in their place'.

A row then broke out between the brothers and Bridget left them to it. When they returned to the flat later that evening the tension was gone, and once Adolf had retired to bed, Bridget berated her husband for the way he had treated him. What then followed was a diatribe against Adolf and how Alois portrayed himself as the classic mistreated step-child, while all favouritism went to the true off spring of the mother. He described to his young wife his unhappy childhood and the way he was constantly beaten by his father, especially when he came home the worse for wear after yet another night at the local tavern. Despite his uncomfortable memories, Alois was not going to turn his half-brother away, and this was to be the beginning of a stay that would keep Adolf in Upper Stanhope Street for almost 6 months, from November 1912 until April 1913.....according to Bridget.



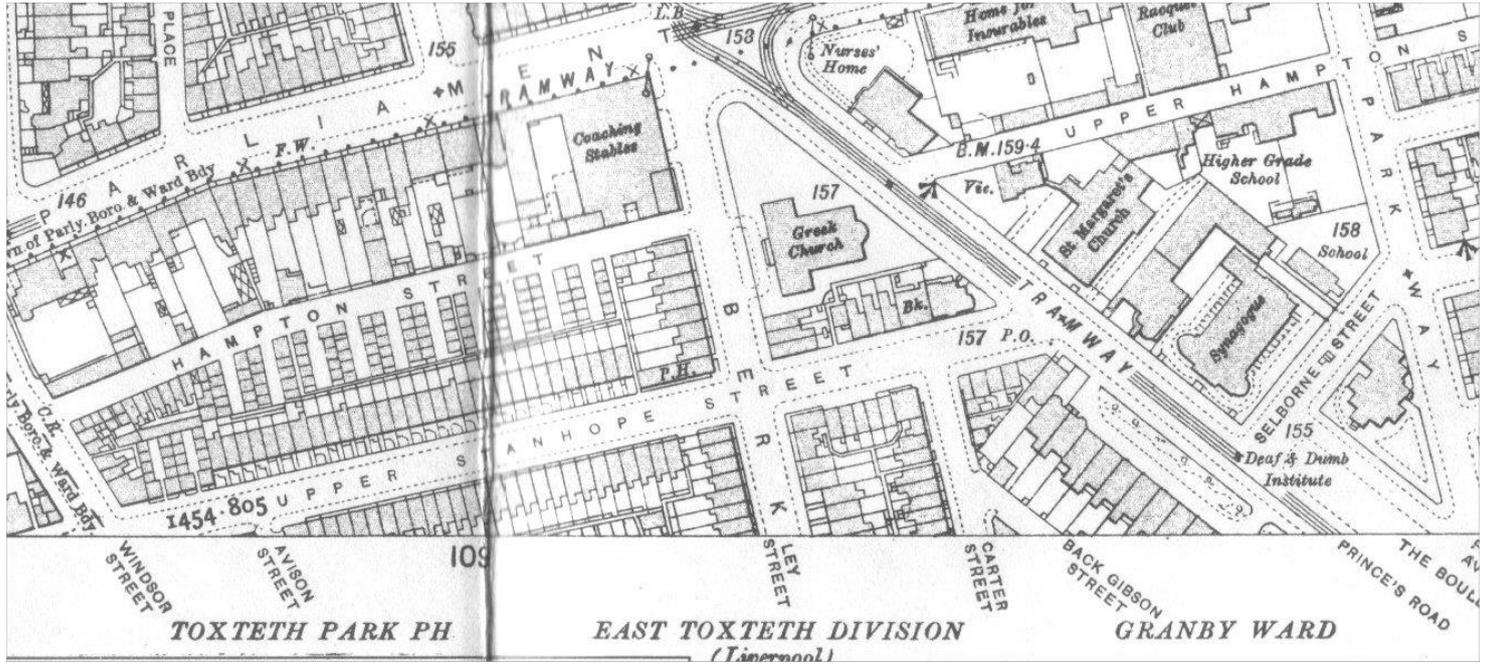
Alois did have a difficult childhood. Alois senior, the natural father of both Alois and Adolf, was born on 7 June 1837 to Maria Anna Schickelgruber, a forty-two-year-old cook and the unmarried daughter of Johann Schickelgruber from the village of Strones in Lower Austria. The entry made that same day in the baptismal register of Dollersheim parish, shows that the baby was christened Alois Schickelgruber. The space in the register for the father's name was left blank, and despite much speculation has remained a mystery ever since. In 1842, Maria Shickelgruber married a journeyman miller named Johann Georg Hiedler. The marriage lasted only five years as Maria died in 1847. Young Alois was taken in by his step-father's brother Johann Nepomuk Hiedler, who raised him like his own son. Why this was so is unclear, but Johann Georg may have returned to his travels to support himself.

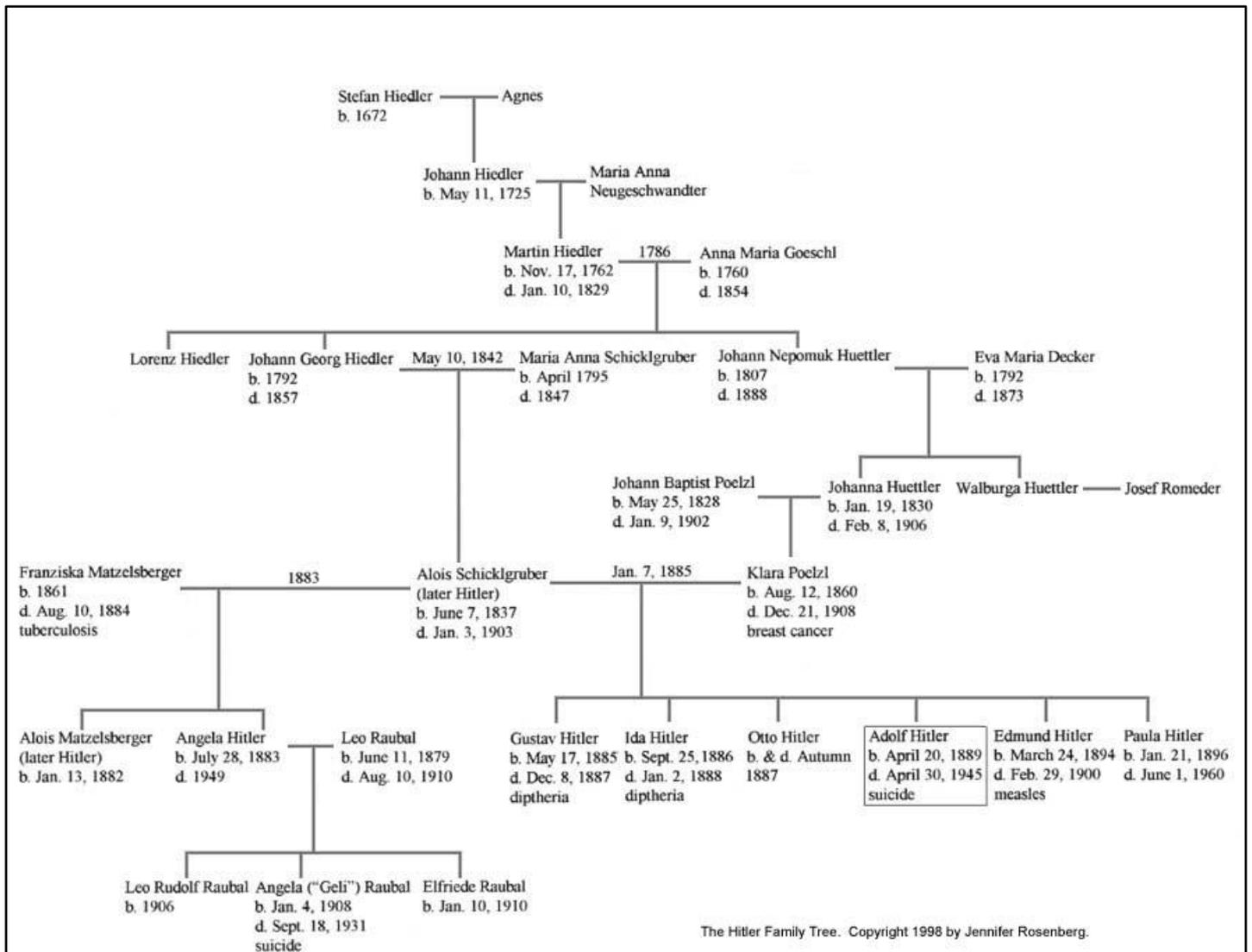
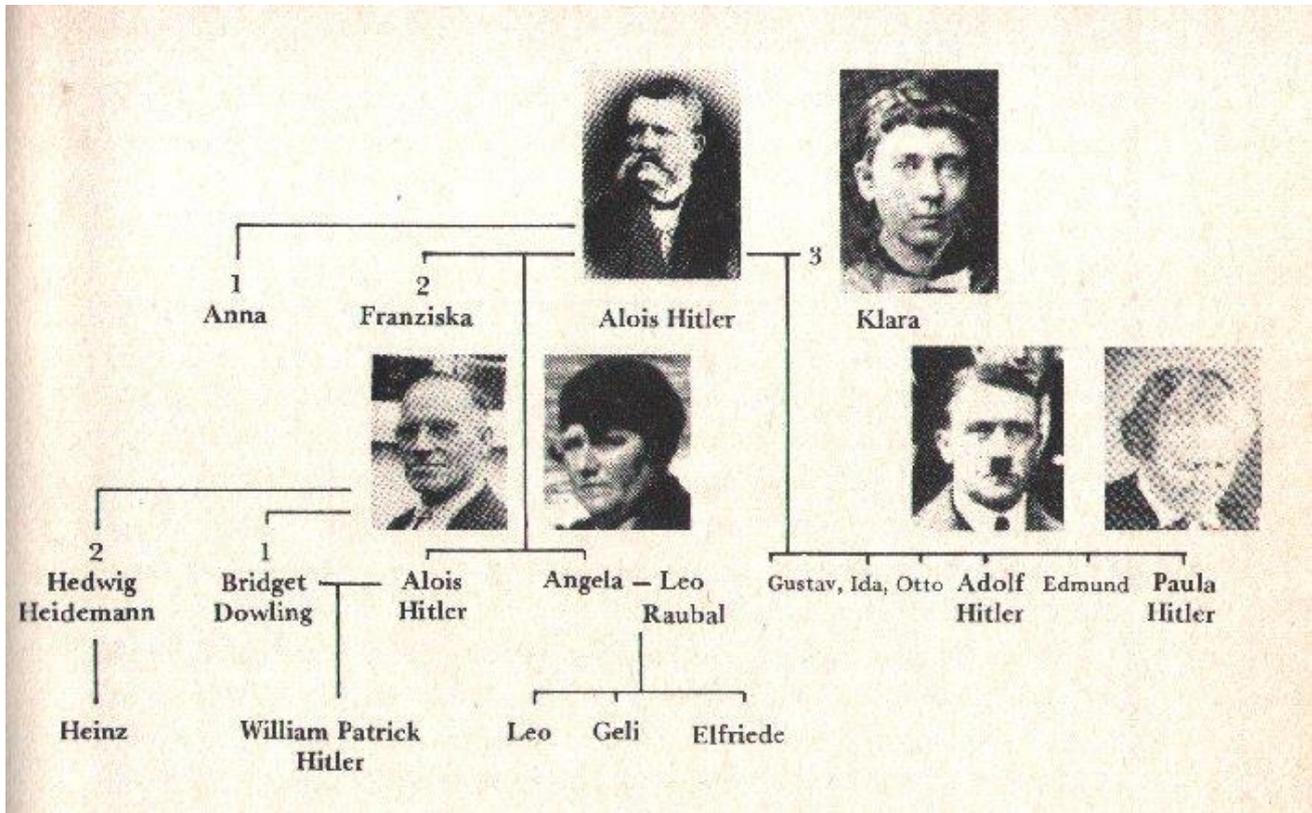


Upper Stanhope Street

Modern A-Z







The Hitler Family Tree. Copyright 1998 by Jennifer Rosenberg.



Adolf Hitler with half sister Angela.



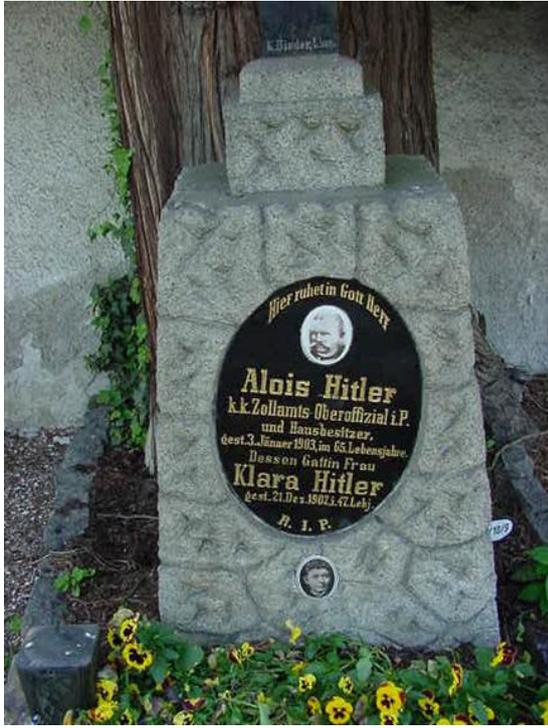
Paula Hitler



**(top) Hitler's parents - Alois Hitler senior, Klara Pölzl.**

**(middle) Sisters Angela and Paula**

**(bottom) Sister Angela and brother-in-law Leo Raubal**



## The grave of Hitler's parents

**Alois Hitler**  
Died 3 Jan 1903

**Klara (Poelzl) Hitler**  
(3rd) wife of Alois  
Died 21 December 1908

*Below: the family home in Linz*



At eighteen, Alois senior entered the Austrian civil service and by 1875 he had risen to the position of customs inspector in Braunau am Inn. The following year he had cause to have his name changed. It would not appear to be due to his illegitimacy, as he had never attempted to conceal it, rather, it may have been due to a legacy from his adopted father Johann Nepomuk Hiedler, who, having no heir, required Alois to legally take the family name. As a consequence, his birth records were altered to read Johann Georg Hiedler as the name of his father, despite the fact he had been dead for nearly 20 years. In fact, it was 'misspelled' as 'Johann Georg Hitler' in the process. The parish priest was also persuaded to strike out Schickelgruber and to change 'out of wedlock' to 'within wedlock'. There was also marginal note: 'The under signed confirm that Georg Hitler, registered as the father, who is well known to the under signed witnesses, admits to being the father of the child Alois, as stated by the child's mother, Anna Schickelgruber, and has requested the entry of his name in the present baptismal register'. Three illiterate witnesses added their marks to the statement. The statement was clearly false, but his natural parents were no longer around to object. From January 1877 Alois Schickelgruber called himself Alois Hitler.

[Hiedler, Huttler, Hietler, Hutler, Hitler, were all phonetic spelling of the same name on documents of the 19th century. The name means 'smallholder']

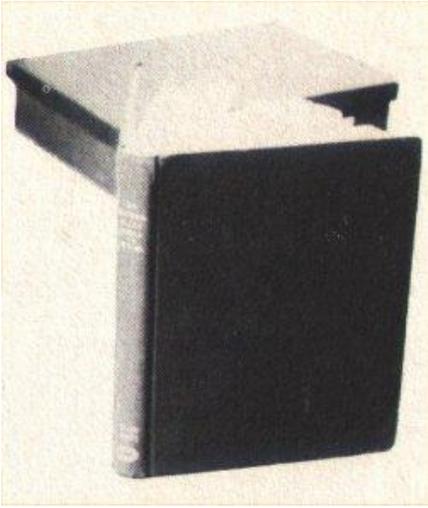
Alois, who was now a much-respected customs official, was to marry three times. Firstly, to Anna Glassl, a woman much older than himself, then to two young women, Franziska Matzelberger and Klara Pölzl, who were young enough to be his daughters. Anna Glassl, whom he married in 1873 was by then aged fifty, and it seemed to be a marriage of convenience, she being fourteen years his senior, well off, and with useful connections in the civil service. It wasn't long before Alois took himself a mistress, and by 1880 Anna, who had clearly had enough, was granted a legal separation. Franziska, now the focus of his affection and wary of Alois' wandering eye, insisted that his housekeeper (and cousin) Klara Pölzl - should be dismissed.

In 1882, Alois junior was born, although he was not legitimised until the following year, when Alois senior and Franziska were married after the death of Anna earlier that year. A daughter Angela followed a few weeks after the wedding. In August 1884, Franziska contracted tuberculosis and died at the age of only twenty-four. While she had been sent to the country for convalescence, Alois immediately brought Klara back to look after the children. She became pregnant very quickly after the death of Franziska. As they were second cousins they needed special dispensation from the church to marry, which took four months. Once cleared, they were married on 7 January 1885. Five children followed soon afterwards, of which Adolf was the fourth, born in 20 April 1889. Her first three children all died at various stages of infancy, while her fifth, Edmund, born in 1894, died from measles in 1900 aged six. Paula, her sixth child, was born in 1896, and lived until 1960.

Alois senior has been described as a pompous, strict authoritarian, who demanded respect, while giving little time or devotion to his family. He frequently resorted to beating his sons to ensure unquestioned discipline. At thirteen, Alois junior left the family home, having been found the position of a waiter. However, by 1900 he had been found guilty of theft and jailed for 5 months, followed by a similar offence two years later, for which he received 8 months. On his release, he left for Paris, then London, trying to make a fresh start by securing work in the catering industry. The domineering Alois senior died in January 1903, and the family relocated to Linz two years later.

In 1907, his third wife Klara - Adolf's mother - died from cancer aged forty-seven. The grief-stricken Adolf, who had already failed to secure a place at the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts, determined to return to the city intent on becoming an architect. It did not go well. From early 1908 until May 1913 he remained in Vienna, living hand to mouth, drifting from one menial job to another, unable to get into college to pursue his chosen career. By 1910, after a period of living rough, often in the open, he moved into a men's hostel, while hawking postcards of paintings he had made of views of the city. So far, much of this detail about the brother's early life is factual and generally accepted by most historians and biographers. It is the next development which has caused the most controversy.

The only source for Adolf's 'visit' to Liverpool is contained in Bridget's *Memoir*. The existence of the manuscript has been generally known since its 'rediscovery' in early 1970's, when the historian Robert Payne, while researching material for his book *The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler*, read through it in the manuscript division of the New York Public Library. This unfinished manuscript, which ends in mid-sentence, was published for the first time in 1979, with an introduction and discussion of its authenticity by Michael Unger, then editor of the Liverpool Daily Post. It was probably written by Bridget and son William, around 1940-41, perhaps with the help of a ghost writer, as there are noticeable differences in style contained within.



Historians have little time for the memoir, and have been highly critical of its contents, feeling there are too many discrepancies (not just with the Liverpool episode) to be taken seriously. Indeed, Ian Kershaw, speaking on the *Making History* programme, went as far as calling the memoir 'a work of fiction without a grain of truth'. And here lies the problem. There is no other evidence placing Hitler in Liverpool. Until something else appears to either support or contradict, the controversy is sure to continue.

*(left) The 1970s edition of Bridget (Dowling) Hitler's memoir edited by Michael Unger, former editor of the Liverpool Daily Post.*

Michael Unger's edition of the *Memoir* was republished in 2011, and while publicising its release, he told JMU Journalism,

'My instincts are that he did come to Liverpool. These are also the instincts of some historians, the FBI and the boss of the wartime British spies, William Stephenson. The only doubts that I have had have been dispelled in recent years, although some people, journalists and historians among others, doubt it simply because they doubt it. One of my great surprises is how bad the research is of some eminent people.'

Unger's 'instincts' are not enough however, and his views on historians are misleading and unfair. Seasoned historians who deal in convincing evidence can see this *Memoir* is too unreliable to give it credence. Furthermore, research that can take a great deal of time and produces little in the way of tangible material, may have the appearance of no research at all. Not to find material that may well not exist is hardly a failure.

The myth surrounding Hitler's visit was not helped by the novel *Young Adolf* by Beryl Bainbridge. This was a work of fiction, where Bainbridge took the idea of Adolf visiting Liverpool, as recounted in the just-published memoir, and developed the idea further. Later, when it was made into the two-part television drama, it reached an even wider audience. Although she made it clear at the time that it was a product largely of her own imagination, many observers, especially Liverpoolians, accepted the visit as historical fact. Talking to the *Washington Post* in 1979 about non-fiction, Bainbridge said,

'I haven't really got the education for that sort of thing. The bit of what I laughingly call research that I did on young Adolf I quite enjoyed. I felt rather educated rushing around looking in libraries... the part of them [the memoirs] that seems the most real is the part about Adolf coming to Liverpool. It's the most understated, whether it's true or not. There's no proof that he came, but there's no proof that he didn't'.

Good research for a fictional novelist, but trying to blur the boundaries with poor scientific historical research and making unsupported claims to a trusting readership is unforgivable and damaging. Years later in the Foreword to Gardner's *Last of the Hitlers*, her view of the truth was undimmed, '...what rings true, by reason of its mundane content, its very naivety of expression, is her [Bridget's] account of Adolf's arrival in Liverpool'.

This encapsulates the view of many of those who feel this section of the memoir has 'credibility', its very 'matter-of-factness', not being 'dressed up for effect'. In fact, it's quite the opposite. The ordinariness of it is quite stark; Young Adolf playing with her child in the kitchen, while chatting about the future of Germany -

'...he would never hesitate to interrupt my housework to explain how Germany was going to take its rightful position in the world. First would come France, then England. I didn't find this talk very interesting, but whenever I tried to get away he

would begin to shout, although I rarely troubled to contradict him. He would whip himself up into a rage and go on until hoarseness or some interruption stopped him. I put it down partly to the pleasure he took in hearing his own voice - another trick he had in common with my husband - and partly to a desire to domineer me'.

A few paragraphs later she says, '... During his Liverpool stay, Adolf hadn't even picked up enough English to ask directions to the station'. This topic of conversation seems quite bizarre, given the fact he was an Austrian and was there in Liverpool, according to Bridget, to dodge the draft into the Austrian army. Until one remembers that the memoir was written around 1941 with a complete awareness of Hitler's true intention by then. Maybe it was quite simple and appealing to look back to her little flat in Toxteth and recount where Adolf Hitler first had the idea for world domination. That should sell a few books for William on the lecture circuit.

At the time the memoir was written, it was common knowledge that there was a 'lost year' in Hitler's life. Hitler had never alluded to it, it wasn't in *Mein Kampf* or any other of his writings. Hitler had conveniently glossed over the period, or rewritten it, to provide a more acceptable version of the public figure he now was. His failure to enter the Academy, living rough, the doss houses, and draft dodging, was a phase he felt was not for public consumption. Bridget and William may have been only too ready to fill in the 'missing months' with an alternative story. Those close to him say apart from brief trips to Italy and Paris, he had made no visit to any other country. Furthermore, at no time did he mention to any British people that he met later, that he had ever visited England.

Professor Ian Kershaw and Professor Robert Waite both point to the fact that there are no records in Germany or Austria that point to a visit abroad, while they do place him in Vienna at the time he was supposed to be in Liverpool. According to Kershaw, again speaking on *Making History*,

'There is actually an eye witness to Adolf Hitler's presence in the men's home in Vienna in February 1913 at a time when he is supposed to be in Liverpool. Beyond that, the records kept by the men's home were very careful records and they recorded when people were residents and when they left. Adolf Hitler did actually leave the men's home just for a few days, and they recorded his departure and his return in May 1913, when he left to go to Munich. They again registered his departure. Since the records are so carefully kept, they would unquestionably have recorded a departure of his in 1912, had he been going to Liverpool. What a wonderfully surreal image to think of Hitler standing on the terraces at Anfield, but there isn't a grain of truth in the story.'

The blue half were not to be left out. While researching his book *The Last of the Hitlers*, David Gardner was called by his business partner who had just received a letter from someone he described as a 'complete whacko';

"some guy says Hitler lived next door to him in Liverpool and they used to go together to watch Everton at Goodison Park. It goes on and on about how he converted Adolf from liking Liverpool when he first came to Britain."

A letter written by the ghost of Shankly no doubt.

Alois left the family home in Liverpool for Germany in May 1914 never to return, and he remarried bigamously in 1916 to Hedwig Heidemann with whom he had a son, Heinrich Hitler, (nicknamed Heinz) who was born on 14 March 1920. When war broke out Heinz joined the Wehrmacht and served on the Eastern Front, where he was reported as captured by the Russians. He died in a Russian prison in 1942 after being tortured.

In the early 1920s, Bridget and William moved to live in London. William renewed contact with his father and visited him in Germany in 1929 and 1930, before returning there in 1933 to try to take advantage of his relationship with his uncle Adolf. The dream of a high

powered, well paid position did not materialise. It would appear that he was more of a thorn in the side to his uncle who was 'related to the state' only, and who tried to erase his family details, and their potential embarrassing revelations, from all public knowledge.



**Alois and wife Hedwig Heidemann and son Heinz**

### **Heinrich (Heinz) Hitler**

He served in the German military, as a signals NCO with the 23rd Potsdamer Artillery Regiment on the Eastern Front.

On the evening of 10 January 1942, he was ordered to recover radio equipment from an army post. He never came back.

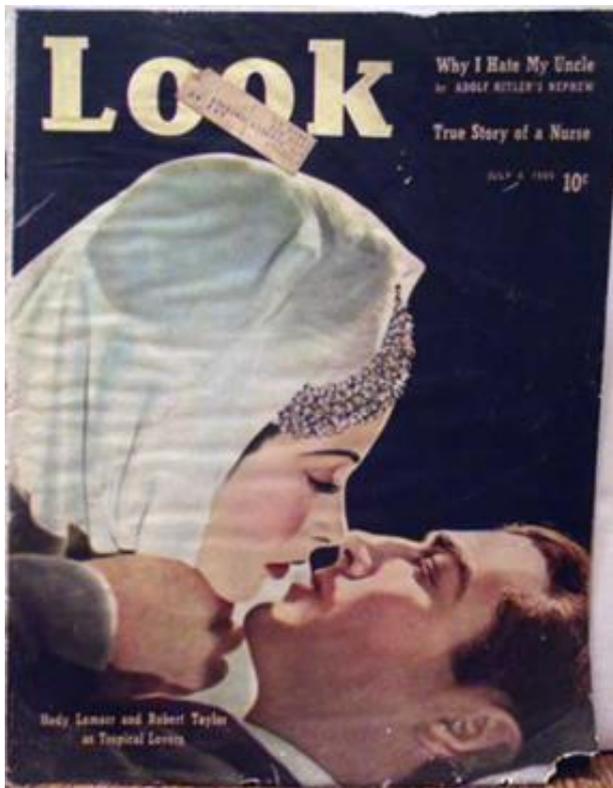
He was captured and tortured for several weeks before dying in a Moscow prison, age 21, on 21 February 1942 and received the Iron Cross 2nd class.



*(left)* Bridget and son 'Pat' moved to 26 Priory Gardens, Highgate, London, where she took on a musical career, studying at Mayfair School of Music, and touring with Harry Lauder's troop in comedies and revues. *(below)* 1920s Electoral roll record for 26 Priory Gardens.

4957	R	O	Cooper, Dorothea Isabel	24
4958	Rw	Dw	Hitler, Brigid	26
4959	Rw	Ow	Hitler, William Patrick	26
4960	R	—	McKeown, Edward	26
4961	R	—	McKeown, Edward	26
4962	R	O	Cooper, John William	28

By 1938, following a summons to meet Hitler, William was given an ultimatum to give up his British Nationality and commit himself to the Nazi cause. William declined and made a clandestine exit from the country, now fearful of his own safety. Months later in March 1939, he arrived in New York with Bridget, ready to tour the country giving lectures on the subject of 'My Uncle Adolf', the visit being organised between theatrical agents in London and New York.



In January 1939, he documented much of the previous 1930s record in an article in *Look* magazine headlined

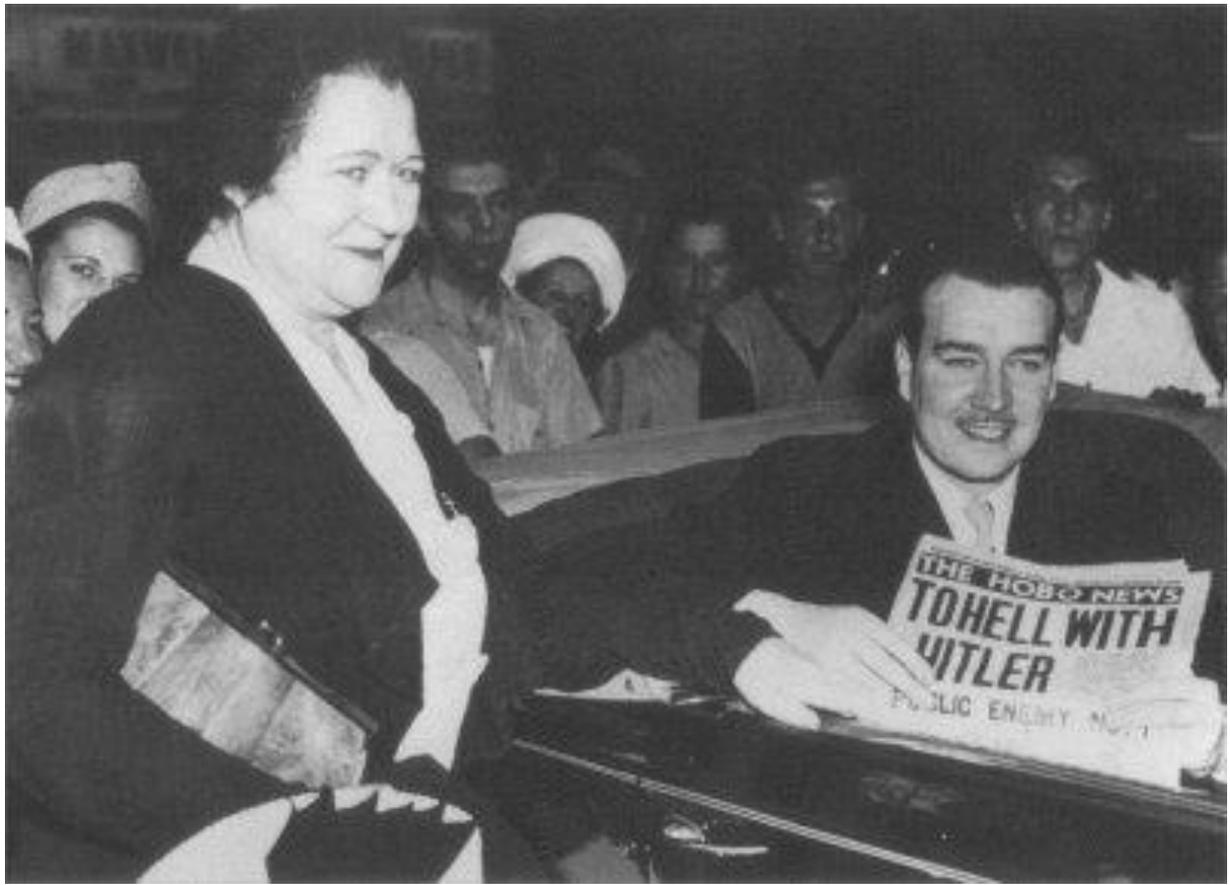
*"Why I hate my Uncle".*

*LOOK* July 4, 1939

On 25 March 1939, Bridget and William left England for the last time on the SS *Normandie* (the world's largest liner), bound for New York

(below right) William Patrick Hitler, on board the S.S. *Normandie* arriving in New York 1939.





The Truth About Hitler And His Regime  
From One Person Who Knows Them Both Inside Out!

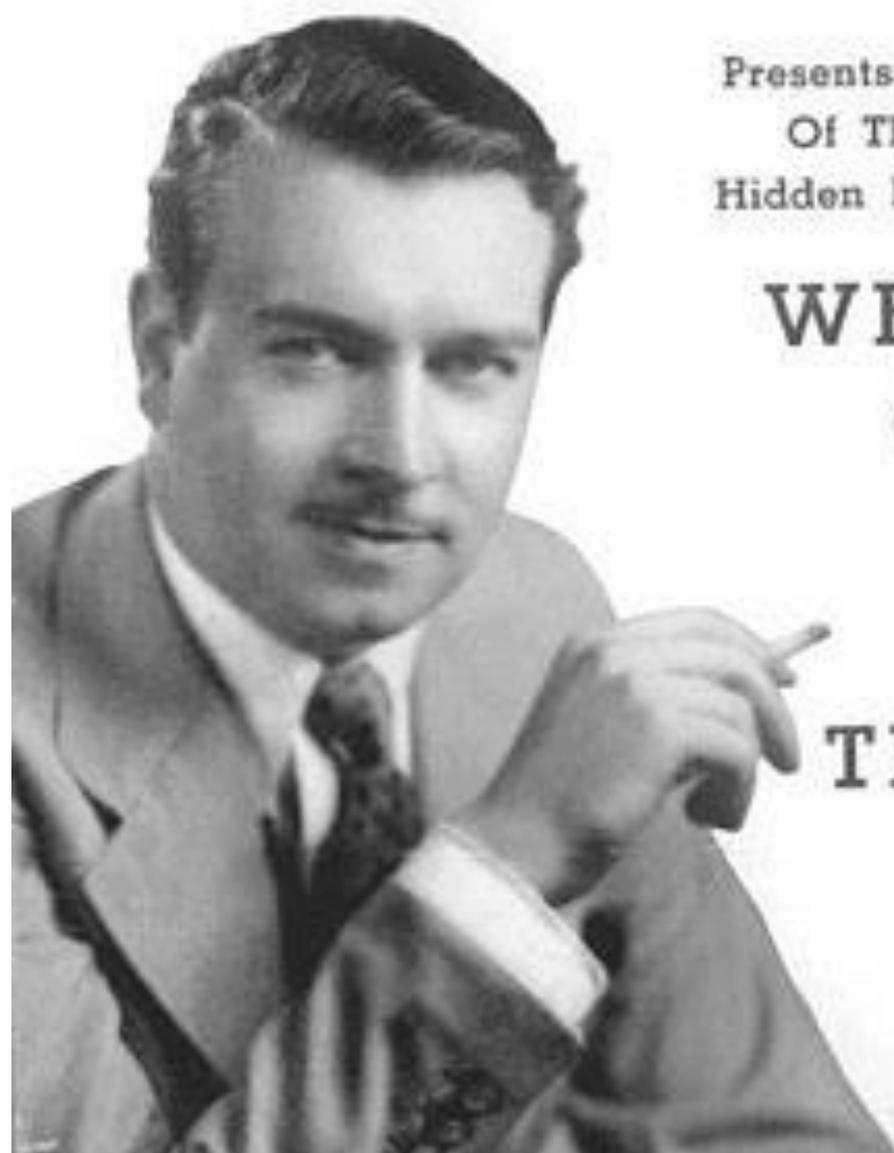
WILLIAM PATRICK **HITLER**  
(NEPHEW OF ADOLF HITLER)

Presents His Startling Story  
Of The Real Germany  
Hidden Behind Nazi Fictions

**WHAT THE  
GERMAN  
PEOPLE  
ARE  
THINKING**



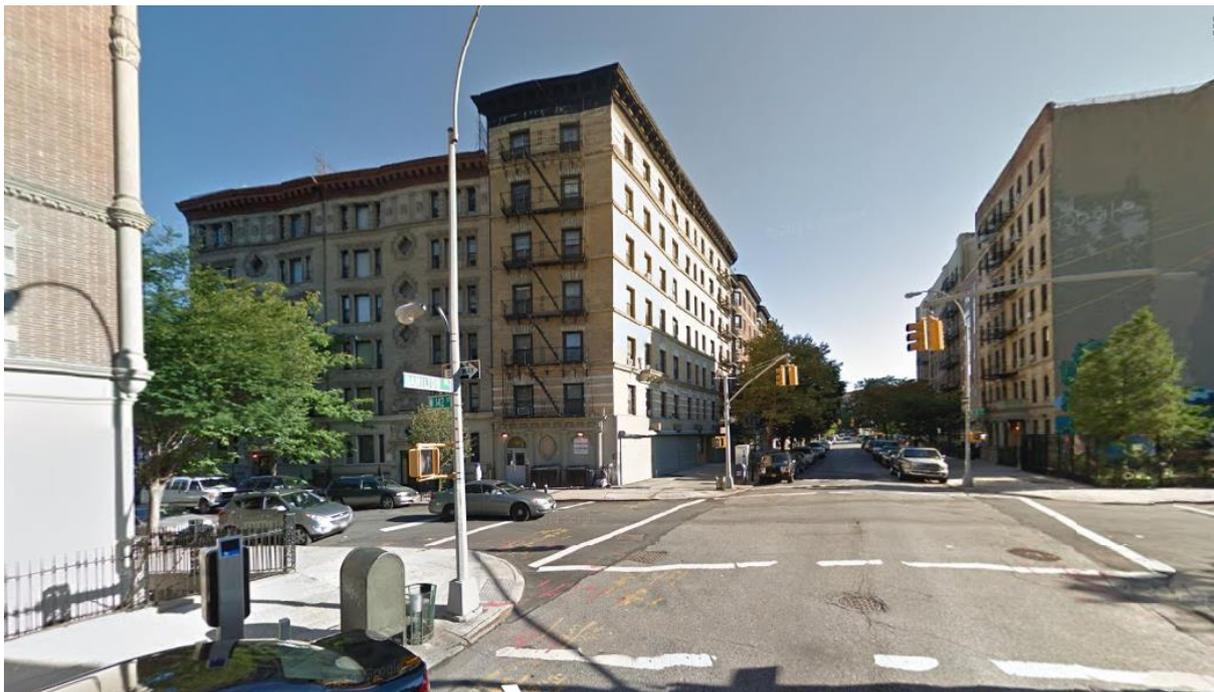
Harold R. PEAT, Inc.  
Exclusive Agents



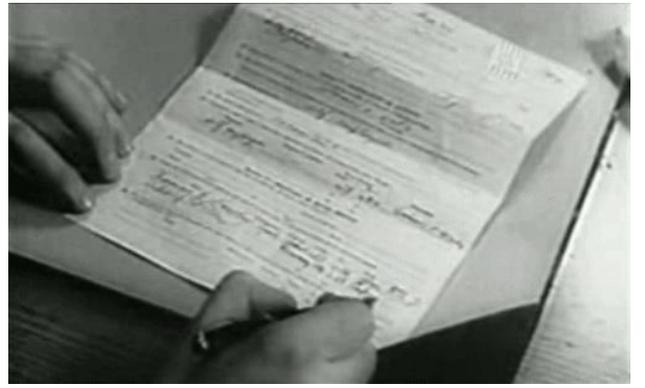


**Bridget Dowling Hitler working for the British War Relief Society in 1941.**

**The Hitler New York residence during the war, 505 W 142nd St, Upper Manhattan**



William was now sufficiently at home in his adoptive country that he decided to enlist in the American Forces to fight for the allies against Uncle Adolf. Meanwhile, the FBI and the OSS were keeping a watchful eye on his every move and spoke to him on several occasions, trying to learn what they could about Hitler and Nazi Germany. Whatever his motives, he was eventually accepted and signed up to the U.S. Navy. In surreal circumstances, as he gave his name to the recruiting officer, he was met with the reply 'Glad to see you Hitler - my name is Hess!' A great photo opportunity, but the officer was a Gale K. Hess of Chicago. After training he was sent to the Medical Corps and saw action before being honourably discharged in 1946.



## **A Letter from Patrick Hitler to the President**

**March 3rd, 1942.**

**His Excellency Franklin D. Roosevelt.,  
President of the United States of America.  
The White House.,  
Washington. D.C.**

**Dear Mr. President:**

**May I take the liberty of encroaching on your valuable time and that of your staff at the White House? Mindful of the critical days the nation is now passing through, I do so only because the prerogative of your high office alone can decide my difficult and singular situation.**

**Permit me to outline as briefly as possible the circumstances of my position, the solution of which I feel could so easily be achieved should you feel moved to give your kind intercession and decision.**

**I am the nephew and only descendant of the ill-famed Chancellor and Leader of Germany who today so despotically seeks to enslave the free and Christian peoples of the globe.**

**Under your masterful leadership men of all creeds and nationalities are waging desperate war to determine, in the last analysis, whether they shall finally serve and live an ethical society under God or become enslaved by a devilish and pagan regime.**

**Everybody in the world today must answer to himself which cause they will serve. To free people of deep religious feeling there can be but one answer and one choice, that will sustain them always and to the bitter end. I am one of many, but I can render service to this great cause and I have a life to give that it may, with the help of all, triumph in the end.**

**All my relatives and friends soon will be marching for freedom and decency under the Stars and Stripes. For this reason, Mr. President, I am respectfully submitting this petition to you to enquire as to whether I may be allowed to join them in their struggle against tyranny and oppression?**

**At present this is denied me because when I fled the Reich in 1939, I was a British subject. I came to America with my Irish mother principally to re-join my relatives here. At the same time, I was offered a contract to write and lecture in the United States, the pressure of which did not allow me the time to apply for admission under the quota. I had therefore, to come as a visitor.**

**I have attempted to join the British forces, but my success as a lecturer made me probably one of the best attended political speakers, with police frequently having to control the crowds clamouring for admission in Boston, Chicago and other cities. This elicited from British officials the rather negative invitation to carry on. The British are an insular people and while they are kind and courteous, it is my impression, rightly or wrongly, that they could not in the long run feel overly cordial or sympathetic towards an individual bearing the name I do. The great expense the English legal procedure demands in changing my name, is only a possible solution not within my financial means. At the same time, I have not been successful in determining whether the Canadian Army would facilitate my entrance into the armed forces. As things are at the present and lacking any official guidance, I find that to attempt to enlist as a nephew**

of Hitler is something that requires a strange sort of courage that I am unable to muster, bereft as I am of any classification or official support from any quarter.

As to my integrity, Mr. President, I can only say that it is a matter of record and it compares somewhat to the foresighted spirit with which you, by every ingenuity known to statecraft, wrested from the American Congress those weapons which are today the Nation's great defense in this crisis. I can also reflect that in a time of great complacency and ignorance I tried to do those things which as a Christian I knew to be right. As a fugitive from the Gestapo I warned France through the press that Hitler would invade her that year. The people of England I warned by the same means that the so-called "solution" of Munich was a myth that would bring terrible consequences. On my arrival in America I at once informed the press that Hitler would lose his Frankenstein on civilization that year. Although nobody paid any attention to what I said, I continued to lecture and write in America.

Now the time for writing and talking has passed and I am mindful only of the great debt my mother and I owe to the United States. More than anything else I would like to see active combat as soon as possible and thereby be accepted by my friends and comrades as one of them in this great struggle for liberty.

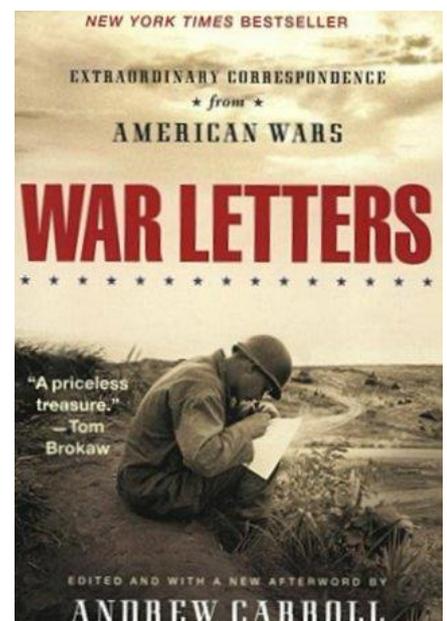
Your favorable decision on my appeal alone would ensure that continued benevolent spirit on the part of the American people, which today I feel so much a part of. I most respectfully assure you, Mr. President, that as in the past I would do my utmost in the future to be worthy of the great honour I am seeking through your kind aid, in the sure knowledge that my endeavors on behalf of the great principles of Democracy will at least bear favourable comparison to the activities of many individuals who for so long have been unworthy of the fine privilege of calling themselves Americans. May I therefore venture to hope, Mr. President, that in the turmoil of this vast conflict you will not be moved to reject my appeal for reasons which I am in no way responsible?

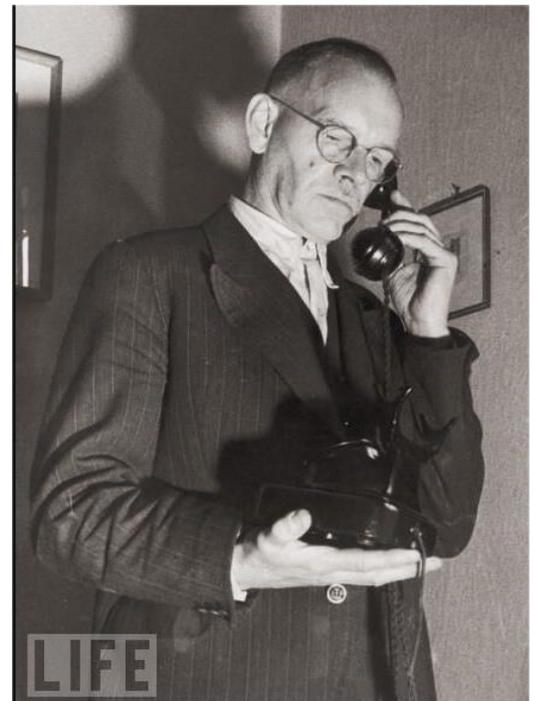
For me today there could be no greater honour, Mr. President, to have lived and to have been allowed to serve you, the deliverer of the American people from want, and no greater privilege then to have striven and had a small part in establishing the title you once will bear in posterity as the greatest Emancipator of suffering mankind in political history.

I would be most happy to give any additional information that might be required and I take the liberty of enclosing a circular containing details about myself.

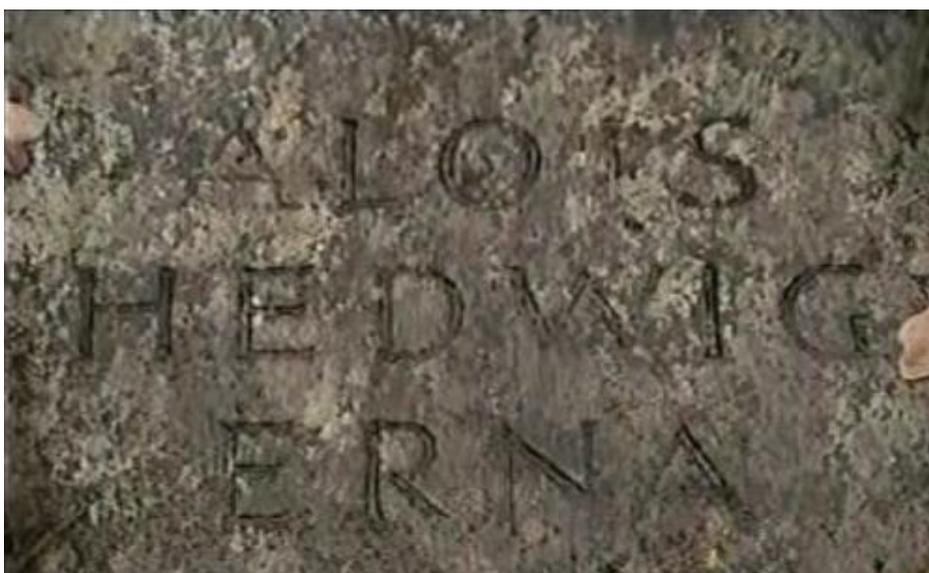
Permit me, Mr. President, to express my heartfelt good wishes for your future health and happiness, coupled with the hope that you may soon lead all men who believe in decency everywhere onward and upward to a glorious victory.

I am,  
Very respectfully yours,  
Patrick Hitler





In Germany, Alois had established a restaurant in Berlin by 1934, which became a popular drinking hole for Nazi soldiers. He kept it open through the duration of the war, but in 1945 he was arrested by the British, although released when it became clear he had played no role in the Nazi regime. Nevertheless, it is reported that he was involved with a right-wing political party into the 1950s, while he also made money signing photographs of his brother and selling them to tourists. He died in Hamburg on 20 May 1956.



**He is buried in Hamburg, together with Hedwig and Erna and Hans Hitler**

STUART-HOUSTON      Patrick Alexander  
 No. 5289105

Name *Patrick Alexander Stuart-Houston*

residing at *505 W 142nd St. N.Y.C. N.Y.C.*

Age *35* years. Date of order of admission *10/29/46*

Date certificate issued *10/29/46* by the  
*U. S. District* Court at *New York City, New York*

Petition No. *147811*

Alien Registration No. *Patrick Alexander Stuart-Houston*  
 (Complete and true signature of holder)  
 5289105

A new identity for William Patrick Hitler:  
 Patrick Alexander Stuart-Houston

On 29 October 1946,  
 William Hitler became a  
 naturalised USA citizen,  
 under his new identity –  
**Patrick Alexander Stuart-  
 Houston**

Name changed by decree of Court from  
 WILLIAM PATRICK HITLER to PATRICK ALEXAN  
 STUART-HOUSTON, as part of the naturaliza  
 October 29th, 1946  
*Al Spring*  
 Deputy Clerk



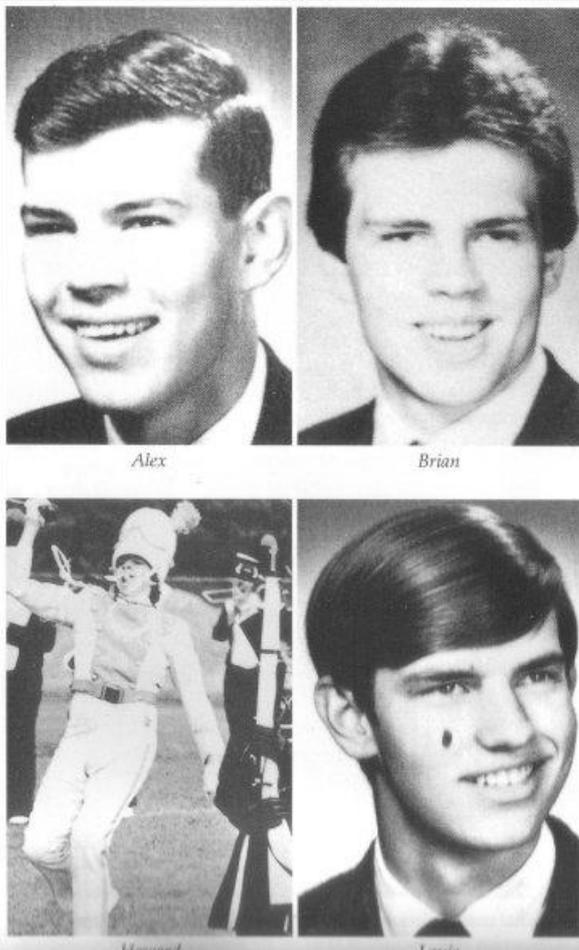
And a new wife, Phyllis Jean-  
 Jacques, and family

Nothing further is heard of William or Bridget Hitler, although John Toland indicated knowledge of them still living in the New York area in the 1970's when carrying out research for his Hitler biography. The trail was picked up by British journalist David Gardner, who spent most of the 1990's trying to find out what happened to William, especially as there was a suggestion that the Hitler name was still alive and well in America. After much research, he found he was too late, discovering instead their final resting place.

He wrote,

'William died in 1987, 18 years after his mother, in the anonymity he craved for much of his life. His family even considered leaving the grave unmarked, but decided instead to bury him under the false name that had brought him peace'.

In light of the fate of his uncle, and everything the Nazi regime stood for, William wisely felt it advisable to melt away into the background, change his name, and live in obscurity, in contrast to the very public life he had enjoyed on his lecture tours. Clearly, the worry of retribution towards anyone bearing the name could not be ignored. Nevertheless, Gardner discovered William had made a success of his American life. He married a German girl, Phyllis Jean-Jacques, he had met during his time working in Germany during the 1930's, and together they appeared to be the model family; four all-American boys, while he worked in the medical field. Later he set up a blood analysis laboratory, in the home they moved to in the countryside to avoid prying eyes. Neighbours spoke about them as a pleasant family, well respected in the community. There were four sons, Alexander (1949), Louis (1951), Howard (1957) and Brian (1965). Howard was killed in a car crash in 1989, but the three remaining brothers are still living, bearing a double barrel name that gives no hint of their roots. None of the sons married and it is likely that the Hitler name may now finally die out.



**The house in Patchogue in Suffolk County, where Patrick Stuart-Houston raised four sons quietly**

The fact that William's family have led a relatively normal life in America in the face of their family history is some achievement. The family understandably refused to co-operate fully with Gardner, nor with the Channel 5 film company. He persisted in trying to shed light on Bridget's memoirs. William's wife Phyllis told Gardner, 'It's all made up', while Alex said, 'We read it and it was the funniest thing I ever saw in my life'.



However, on a later visit when pressed further, Alex went so far as to say it was all true and not only did Adolf visit Liverpool but he visited Ireland too, furthermore, the remaining manuscript was actually completed and the library only had the first half. All of which is unlikely and sounded very much like a sarcastic, angry outburst in reaction to the intrusion into their private lives. There were further contradictions in William Patrick Hitler's life. Not only did he give his first son the middle name of Adolf, but the adopted name he was to use for the rest of his life was the same double barrel name of one of the most notorious anti-Semitic theorists of the far right, and a significant influence on Hitler when writing Mein Kampf. Why use these names?



**Houston Stewart Chamberlain**  
(Sept. 9th, 1855 — Jan. 9th, 1927)

*Anglo-German publicist, playwright, cultural critic  
and race theorist*

An admirer of Richard Wagner, he wrote a biography of the composer and later married Wagner's daughter.

In his *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* he presented a broad but biased analysis of European culture and proclaimed the racial and cultural superiority of the so-called Aryan element in European culture.

His theories, influenced German nationalist thought, particularly Adolf Hitler's National Socialist movement.

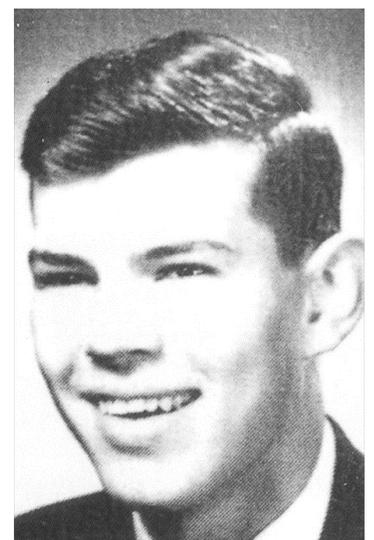
**"I know that in England there is still a lot of interest in Hitler and it is on the television and in books and newspapers more often than it is here. Just make sure you say good things about my father because he was a good guy. He came to the United States, he served in the US Navy, he had four kids and he had a pretty good life."**

**"My father was definitely anti-Nazi and anti-Hitler."**

**So why did he name his eldest son Adolf?**

**"I don't know. I wasn't there when that was decided."**

**The naming of Alexander Adolf is one of the many contradictions in the fascinating saga of a family's attempt to escape from its surname.**





**William moved from New York City out to Patchogue on Long Island**



**Louis and Brian live in a log cabin-style house in East Patchogue, 50 miles east of Manhattan on Long Island. They spent their working lives running a landscaping business.**

**Alexander lives a few miles away and retired several years ago after a career as a social worker, assisting Vietnam War veterans.**

**Brigid Elisabeth (nee Dowling) Hitler**

**(died 18 November 1969)**

**Patrick Stuart -Houston**

**(died 14 July 1987)**

**‘William died in 1987, 18 years after his mother, in the anonymity he craved for much of his life. His family even considered leaving the grave unmarked, but decided instead to bury him under the false name that had brought him peace’.**

**Phyllis Stuart-Houston**

**(died 2 November 2004)**



A family of many contradictions, and a branch that has created the urban myth of Adolf Hitler in Liverpool. Consequently, we may never get to the truth, but to place Adolf Hitler in Liverpool in 1913 is to rely on one piece of very flimsy evidence. Sounds like a Monty Python sketch. Billy Hitler of Toxteth. Adolf in Liverpool. You couldn't make it up. Seems Billy's mother did.

### **Postscript**

During the completion of this book, I have had long conversations and meetings with a reputable film company in London, who have made a series of high quality documentaries, plus an award-winning documentary film maker known for his work in American politics, both of whom are working on making films on '*The Hitler's of Liverpool*'. Whether they see the light of day remains to be seen, but is further testament to the continued interest and debate surrounding this urban myth. Both sounded very exciting and the story does deserve a full professional production that would do the narrative and debate justice, rather than the superficial films and reports done so far.

### **Further reading**

**Gardner, David**, *The Last of the Hitlers* (2001)

**Hitler, Bridget, / Unger, M. ed.**, *The Memoirs of Bridget Hitler* (1979 - new publication 2011)

**Kershaw, I.** *Hitler 1889-1936: Hubris* (1998)

**Toland, J.** *Adolf Hitler*, (1976)

### **BBC Radio 4**

*Making History* 'Adolf Hitler in Liverpool' Programme 10, broadcast on 2nd December 2003

### **On the Net**

**Royden, Mike**, *Adolf Hitler - did he visit Liverpool during 1912-13?* BBC web site;  
[www.bbc.co.uk/legacies/myths\\_legends/england/liverpool/user\\_1\\_article\\_1.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/legacies/myths_legends/england/liverpool/user_1_article_1.shtml)

**Mike Royden's History Pages** – [www.roydenhistory.co.uk](http://www.roydenhistory.co.uk)

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# MEET THE HITLERS: THE BRITISH CONNECTION

THE story of the secret Hitlers began when Alois Junior, half-brother to the future dictator, moved to Britain and married Brigid Dowling in London. It was 1910. The pair then moved to Liverpool, giving birth to William Patrick Hitler, author of the diary. 'Willy' Hitler met the Fuhrer, but disappointed him by refusing to take German citizenship.



**FRANSISKA**  
1861-1884 (1st wife)



**ALOIS**  
1837-1903



**KLARA**  
1860-1907 (2nd wife)



**BRIGID**  
1891-1969



**ALOIS JUNIOR**  
1882-1956



**ADOLF**  
1889-1945

## ...THAT LEADS TO THE USA

IN 1939, Willy Hitler and his mother crossed the Atlantic. He took US citizenship, married and had four sons, as this family tree shows. Three, Alex, Louis and Brian, survive but use a different surname. They are the last of the Hitlers.



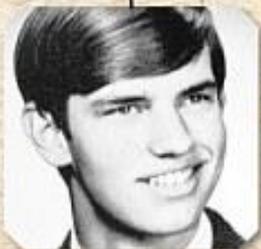
**WILLY**  
1911-1987



**PHYLLIS**  
1925-2004



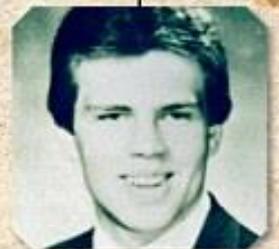
**ALEXANDER**  
1949



**LOUIS**  
1951



**HOWARD**  
1957-1989



**BRIAN**  
1965