



Anglo-Celtic Roots

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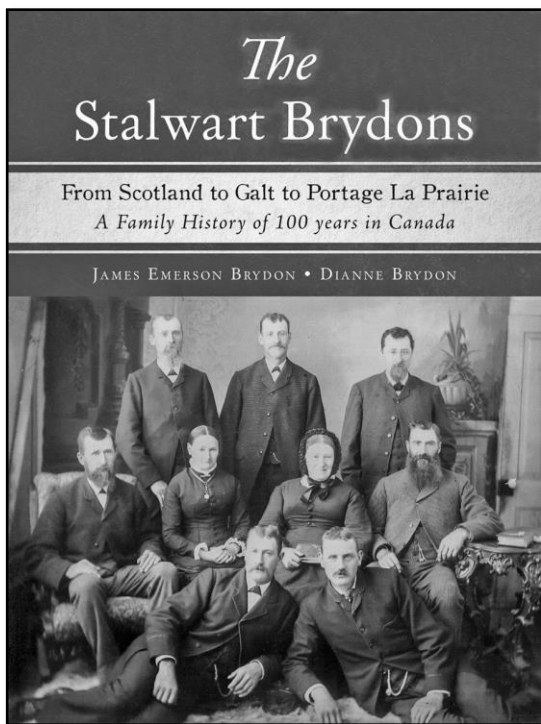
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Manchester Life in the 1930s—Part 1

They Called Him Mister Wickham

We Shall Remember Them



Anglo-Celtic Roots

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Cover Illustration:

*The Stalwart Brydons,
by James Emerson Brydon
and Dianne Brydon*

From the Editor

Dianne Brydon has published a book about her ancestors' lives, and for ACR she explains how a mystery about their arrival and early lives in Canada was solved after considerable digging in various archives.

In another excerpt from Charles Morton's family history, he tells of the Manchester neighbourhoods where his family lived and how daily life unfolded around him.

Terry Findley gives us another peek at the lives of his wife Tad's family; in this case it is her great-great-grandfather, who became a respected surgeon. We also learn why he was called "Mister."

Our WW I biography series also continues with volunteer researcher Heather Carmody describing the WW I experiences and untimely death of Private Charles Edward Smith, as well as the war service of his unit, the 9th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment.



Jean Kitchen

From the President



I've been laid up for over a week with bronchitis, and as I lay in misery on my couch, I got thinking about how my ancestors would

have dealt with such a malady.

Aside from the antibiotics and other medicines from which I have benefitted, I had the luxury of a home heated easily without having to chop my own wood, food prepared by turning a knob on my stove or pushing a micro-wave button instead of cooking everything I needed on a wood stove—and for a family of 12, no less.

I didn't have to grow and harvest my own food or slaughter my own animals, then find ways to keep it all edible through the winter months. There were no urgent chores like feeding the livestock, milking the cows or collecting the eggs.

My ancestors didn't get a break from their daily routines just because they were a little under the weather; even in my mother's time, catching a cold included the threat of a worse infection and a possible death in the family.

I think of my mother's or my grandmother's lives as so much

harder than mine and yet I don't know that they saw it that way. Unlike them, my mettle hasn't really been tested, and I wonder sometimes if I'd have survived the voyage to Canada.

Imagining our ancestor's lives is what we do as genealogists, but can we ever really know the stamina and drive it took to leave the only home you've known and travel half-way around the world to a completely unknown situation?

I suppose we witness something like our ancestors' determination in the stories of more recent immigrants—people who have lived through tribulations at least as bad as anything our ancestors experienced, if not worse.

Given the same circumstances, perhaps I too could summon the courage to take the chance of finding a better future in a new land.

On a cheerier note, may I wish you a merry holiday season, surrounded by your loved ones and with lots of time for research and genealogical fun!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara J. Tose".

Barbara J. Tose

Family History Research

The Documents Never Lie



BY DIANNE BRYDON

Dianne has an MA in historical geography from Queen's University, and four years ago began applying that knowledge to her family's history. She first told this family story as a Great Moment talk at the June 2017 BIFHSGO meeting.

In December 2016 my father, James Brydon, and I published *The Stalwart Brydons*, the story of my ancestors' life in Scotland; their move to Galt, Ontario; their struggles and successes farming there; and 50 years later, the next generation's move to Manitoba, where they started anew. This is the tale of how I pieced together who came to Canada and when, as well as how that information fundamentally shifted some of the long-held beliefs regarding our family history in Canada.



Figure 1: Margaret Brydon (with hat) and her children, Francis to her left

Source: author's photo, taken by F Rowe, Portage La Prairie, Manitoba, July 1884

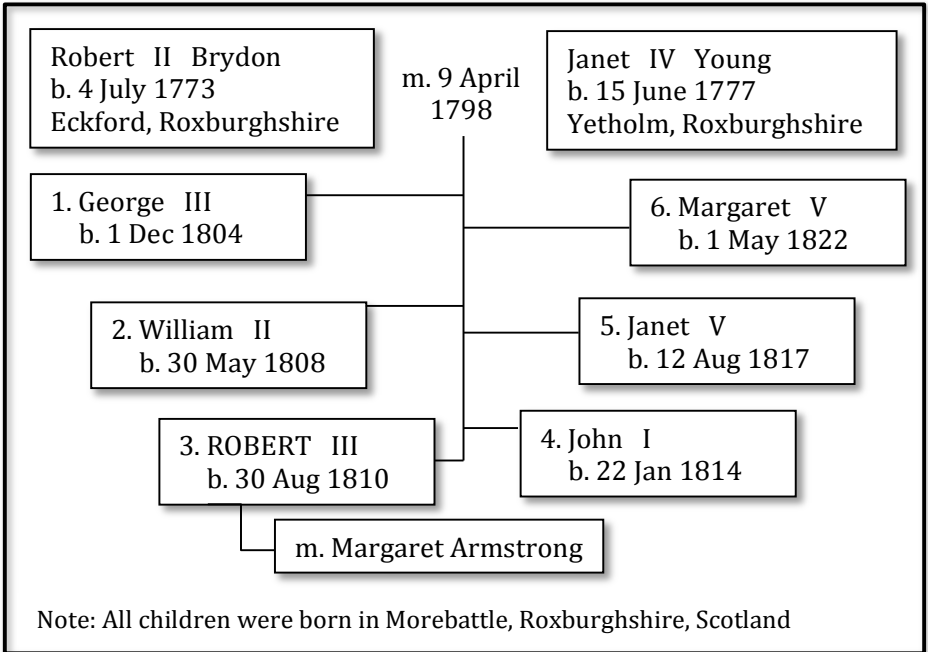
Family lore held that my great-great-grandfather, Robert (III) Brydon, and his wife, nee Margaret Armstrong, emigrated from Scotland to Canada a few months after son Francis was born on 9 January 1841. At least three local histories repeated that information, written by various children or grandchildren of Margaret.

Dad also had received from a cousin a family data sheet that recorded a marriage for Robert and Margaret in Scotland on 3 November 1839. This information was shared

among many branches of the Brydon family, and at least seven Brydon family trees on *Ancestry* repeat this information.

With this accepted wisdom, my father chose 1841 as the beginning of the Brydons' Canadian story. He worked on it for close to 35 years and when I retired in 2013, he asked me to help him finish it. I found evidence, however, that the Brydons had come to Canada a generation earlier than the date we had always been told.

Robert III's parents and siblings are shown in the tree below.



(The Roman numerals were Dad's way of telling apart the many names that occurred frequently, due to Scottish naming tradition.) Robert III eventually married Margaret Armstrong, and Robert II is his father. Brother William will feature in the story, too.

In the course of his research, Dad had found a map from 1861 (Figure 2) that showed Robert III and Margaret's property in Concession VIII of Dumfries Township, just south of Galt (now North Dumfries Township, near Cambridge, Ontario).¹ He didn't know exactly when the Brydons had received their land, and family lore was vague regarding who among the rest of the family had come and when they had settled.



Figure 2: Robert III's property along the Grand River; brother William's farm, below
 Source: Reproduced with permission of the *Ayr News*

mentioned the Brydon property three times, spelling it three different ways: Brydon, Bryon and Bradon.

This was stunning news. If this was our family, it meant that our Brydon ancestors arrived in Canada 13 years earlier than believed. And if true, it meant the story Dad was telling had to change; changing a story's ending is fairly easy, but changing the beginning affects everything down the line.

At first my father didn't believe the Brydon on the map was our family, especially with all the misspelled names. Our Robert III and Margaret had apparently married in Scotland in 1839—10 years after this map was drawn—so it couldn't be him. But could it be his father Robert II? Dad spent several hours pondering over the document and comparing it to the 1861 map; he remained unconvinced.

Away I went to find more.

About a mile further south in Concession VII the map showed another Brydon property. William Brydon was Robert III's brother's name, but Dad didn't know whether the William on the map was related. This is the point where I came in, and I set out to try and answer the question.

We knew that a William Dickson had owned 90,000 acres—essentially the whole of Dumfries Township—which he sold off to people from his homeland in the Borders area of Scotland. In his family papers at the Ontario Archives, I found a surveyor's sketch map of that property further south in Concession VII, with accompanying notes dated August 1829 (Figure 3).² One of the properties was labelled "R Brydon," and in the notes the surveyor

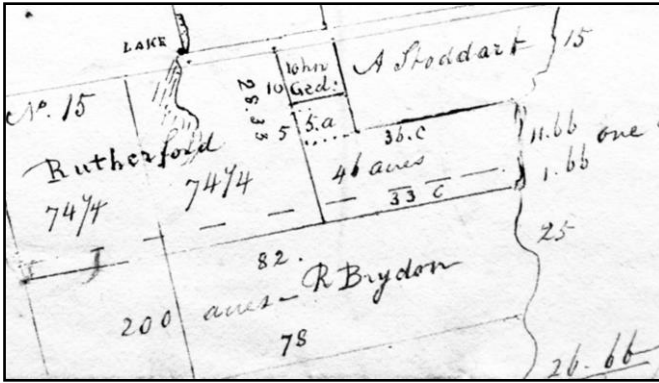


Figure 3: Surveyor's map of August 1829, showing the perimeter of Robert II Brydon's property

Source: Reproduced with permission of the Archives of Ontario

In the Ontario Archives I found William Dickson's ledger book in which he recorded all the debit and credit transactions between his settlers and him.³ In it, I found the entry for Robert Bryden—spelled with an “e.”

At the top of the page were the details of the bond for the same property on the surveyor's map (a bond

is an agreement like a mortgage, where the settler would pay off his debt, with interest, over time). The entry is dated 30 June 1829, two months before the survey.

Dad still wasn't convinced this was our family, because the name was spelled with an “e” not an “o” and the property was in Concession VII, not Concession VIII, where he knew our Robert III Brydon had settled. More documentation was necessary.

I found a Robert Bryden (again spelled with an “e”) in the 1834 Census and Assessment of Dumfries Township.⁴ In the household were one woman over 16, five males over 16 and one male under 16. The spelling was wrong, as well as the number of people that should have been present if all the children had come from Scotland with Robert II and his wife. The gender and ages didn't match, either.

Because of the discrepancies, Dad was skeptical; it might have been Robert II and his family, but without names it was hard to tell.

I next found the names of a Robert, George and William Brydon—spelled with an “o”—on an 1833 petition.⁵ The latter names were those of Robert II's two oldest sons, so it was now possible to think that our family was, in fact, in Canada in the 1830s. However, Dad still wondered if this was Robert II or his son Robert III.

Was Robert III possibly still in Scotland?

And then—eureka. In the church records for the Galt Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church I found a 14 May 1837 communion roll that showed Robert III WAS in Canada as early as 1837 (Figure 4).⁶ Both Robert II and Robert III were listed, and Brydon is spelled with an “o.” There is no confusion over names. Further, this listing of the family suggested it was the

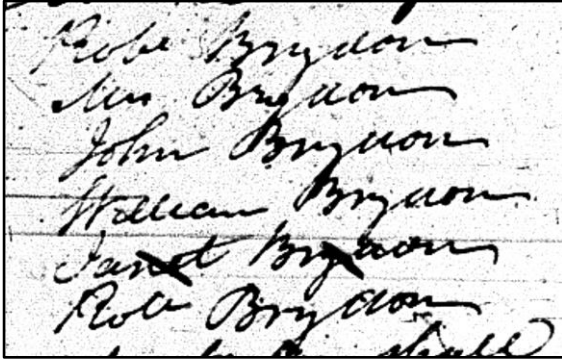


Figure 4: Communion Roll excerpt showing Robert II and Robert III Brydon

Source: Reproduced with permission of the United Church Archives, Toronto

Robert III had gone back to Scotland to find a bride.

I set out to see if I could find more.

In the Dumfries Township municipal records, I found minutes of the annual council meetings where pathmasters were appointed to ensure the roads were passable. The 1840 minutes recorded “Robert Brydon, Jr” (who is Robert III; Figure 5).⁷ We are lucky to have his signature on this document as well, to signify that he was not only appointed but was present at the meeting to pledge that he would carry out his obligation.

So . . . if Robert Brydon and Margaret Armstrong were married in Scotland on 3 November 1839, as my cousin’s family tree information suggested, it is next to impossible that Robert could have been back in Canada to sign this document by 6 January 1840. First, according to *TheShipsList*, there were no ships that late in the season. And second, even if there were, there would not have been time to make the trip across the ocean, up the Saint Lawrence and overland to Galt in the intervening period.

father (Robert II) who was the head of the family, and likely the name that appeared on all the earlier documentation, not Robert III, who would have been only 19 in 1829. And it confirmed that the Brydons had emigrated as a family.

Finally Dad was convinced. We had to begin the story anew, with the Brydons arriving in Canada a generation earlier. But . . . Dad still believed it was possible that

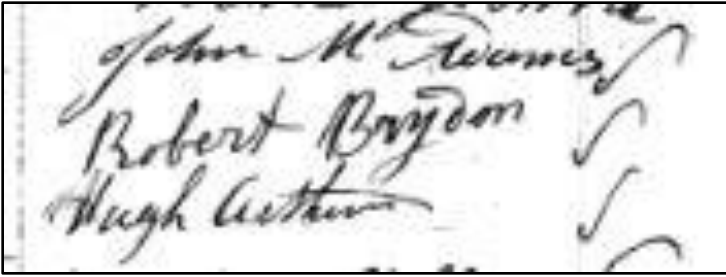


Figure 5: 1840 Dumfries Township municipal records excerpt, with Robert III's signature

Source: Reproduced with permission of the Archives of Ontario

III and Margaret had married in 1839, as family lore decreed, we would expect to find her and little Francis listed in the 1842 Census with him. There were no other individuals listed with him in the census.

The 1842 Census also showed that Robert III's brother William was currently farming on the property in Concession VII. His father (Robert II), mother and sister were living with him. This confirmed that the William Brydon on the 1861 map was, indeed, Robert III's brother.

Finally, in the church records, I found the entry where Robert III married Margaret Armstrong in Galt, Ontario, on 3 November 1843.⁹ Now it was clear that they had not married in Scotland, but more important, it was clear that if Francis was born in Scotland, he was not a Brydon.

Dad had a hard time processing that bombshell. No one in the family had ever mentioned it.

The 1861 Census is the first record we found that includes the names of Robert III and Margaret's children. But . . . Francis is missing. He would have been 20. Nor could we find a Frank, a Francis or an F Brydon—spelled with an “e” or an “o”—living anywhere else. So where was he? Dad had heard that Francis had had a falling out with the family, and was away working somewhere in Brant County, but even so, he should have shown up in the census.

There is a Frank Armstrong, aged 20, living about 10 miles away in North Dumfries Township with a Walter, Helen and John Armstrong. His age aligns with the age of Francis Armstrong Brydon. However, there is a discrepancy as Frank Armstrong's place of birth is reported in the 1861 Census as Upper Canada, rather than Scotland, where we know from other sources that our Francis was born.¹⁰ Also, we did not know (and still don't)

Our final piece of evidence: in the 1842 Census and Assessment of Gore District, Robert III was recorded as a single man on the property in Concession VIII.⁸ If Robert

of any family connection with these individuals so we cannot be confident this is our relative.

In 1863, Robert III finally paid off the debt he owed on the farm in Concession VIII¹¹ and he became a freeholder: the owner of his land.¹² That same year I noticed an interesting thing in the North Dumfries Assessment Roll: for the first time, Robert III is listed as a freeholder, and . . . Francis Brydon is co-listed with him.¹³ Clearly, if there had been a rift in the family, it was healed, as father and stepson were farming together. This is the earliest record we have of Francis using the Brydon name.

We also wondered: did Francis help pay off the final debt on the property? The deed was transferred on 1 January 1863, only a couple of months before Francis is listed as co-freeholder. Perhaps he WAS away earning money to help pay off the family debt, and he was rewarded by taking on the role as co-freeholder.

But it soon was not to matter: three years later, Robert III died, without a will. He left Margaret with eight children, ranging in age from 5 to 25; six of them were under the age of 21.

For a time, nothing changed. In 1867 and 1868 Francis A Brydon is listed in the assessment rolls as the freeholder. The estate was not probated during this time; it was not uncommon to delay probate for several years.

And then, for some reason, in 1869 Margaret found a need to probate the estate. Since Robert III had died without a will, the property would be divided amongst her and her children. And, since by this time five of her children were still under the age of 21, she had to petition for guardianship of their interests in the estate (Figure 6).¹⁴

On 17 Feb 1869 she asked for guardianship over James Brydon, Helen Brydon, William Brydon, Walter Brydon and George Brydon, who were “infant children of Robert Brydon.” Another section stated that besides Margaret and the infant children, Robert Brydon “left him surviving two other sons, namely John Brydon and Robert Brydon.”

Dad noted that Frank/Francis was not listed, and believed they must have had a falling out. The answer is legal: if Margaret had not done so before, she had to make it public that Francis was not the natural son of Robert III. And that meant he was not entitled to inherit land. Even though it appears Robert III’s intention was for Francis to take over the farm—and for a couple of years the Assessment Rolls show that he had done so—without Robert III stipulating it in a will, Francis had no legal rights to inherit.

~~Ordnance -~~
 5 That besides myself the widow of the said Robert
 Brydon and the said infant children the said
 Robert Brydon left him surviving two other sons
 namely John Brydon and ~~Robert Brydon~~ James
~~Brydon~~ Robert Brydon -

Figure 6: Excerpt of Section 5, Margaret’s guardianship petition; Robert III’s children appear, but not Francis

Source: Reproduced with permission of the Director of Land Registration, Ontario, 2016

The assessment rolls play out what happened. In 1869, the year the estate was probated, Margaret’s second son, Robert IV, was recorded as the freeholder of the Concession VIII property. In 1870, Robert IV was the freeholder again, while his mother Margaret was listed as the owner. That same year, Francis was cited as a tenant farming on the property in Concession VII, with his uncle William Brydon listed as owner.

We have one indication about how Francis felt about the situation. Following Scottish naming convention his first son was named Robert, after the father that had raised him.

In fact, he might not have been too disappointed in leaving a farm with rocky glacial till for soil that was full of hills, and swamps among those hills, and lots and lots of trees on those hills . . . to move to his uncle’s farm that also featured rocky soil, but was well drained and gently rolling.

Five years later Frank joined the exodus of Galtonians who moved to Manitoba in search of a better life, where he must have felt like he had died and gone to heaven once he saw all that flat land, with rich black soil. He took up the Canadian government’s offer of 160 acres for \$10 and, in fact, he became a very successful farmer.

So, in the end, things worked out well for all concerned. And that may be the reason why the real details of the past were never openly discussed. Why, for the rest of her life, Margaret told her children and grandchildren stories about how she had come to Canada in 1841 with baby Francis. Perhaps she actually said she and Robert III had come together, perhaps she committed the sin of omission when they interpreted her to mean both parents had immigrated.

Besides—by the 1870s she and her children had migrated to Manitoba; how would anyone know differently? But, as we family historians know, the documents never lie . . .

Reference Notes

- ¹Tremaine Map, 1861, from Andrew Taylor, *Our Today's and Yesterdays*, 1972, © Ayr News, p 313.
- ² Archives of Ontario, William Dickson family fonds F541, Field Notes, 1829–1846 & n.d. D-3, MS499, reel 1.
- ³ Archives of Ontario, William Dickson family fonds F541, Land Ledgers, 1825–1838, D-7, MS499, reel 1 and 2, folio 417.
- ⁴ Archives of Ontario, Galt and Dumfries Historical Collection, F 365, Miscellaneous Galt and Dumfries municipal records, 1825–1853, MS5, reel 6.
- ⁵ Archives of Ontario, Galt and Dumfries Historical Collection, F 365, Miscellaneous Galt and Dumfries municipal records, 1825–1853, MS5, reel 6.
- ⁶ United Church Archives, Toronto, 1995, 122L, 4-4, Session minutes, Communion List, May 27, 1837.
- ⁷ Ontario Archives, Township of South Dumfries fonds, F1923-1, Minutes 1819–1881, MS342.
- ⁸ Ontario Archives, Gore District fonds F 1679-13, Dumfries Township Census and Assessment, 1842, MS700, reel 1.
- ⁹ United Church Archives, Toronto, 1995, 122L, 1-1, Marriage Record, Brydon–Armstrong. 1843.
- ¹⁰ Francis Armstrong Brydon's birthdate, 9 January 1841, is listed in the 1901 Census of Canada, and his obituary mentions his birthplace as Scotland.
- ¹¹ Ontario Archives, Galt and Dumfries Historical Collection, F 365, Dickson Family Records, Cash Book, 1857–1869, C-8, MS5, reel 4.
- ¹² Ontario Archives, Waterloo County Land Registry Office, Copybooks of Instruments and Deeds, Dumfries (North) Township, 1860–1867, Memorial 1470, RG 61-58, GS2977.
- ¹³ Waterloo Regional Archives, North Dumfries Township Assessment Rolls, CW27A/10/1, 1863.
- ¹⁴ Petition for Guardianship, Lot s3w, Concession VII, North Dumfries Township, Reference A No 490, February 17, 1869, Director of Land Registration, Ontario, 2016.

Watch for it!
Conference 2018: Call for Presentations
Coming soon to a website near you!

Manchester Life in the 1930s—Part 1



BY CHARLES MORTON

Charles' stories of the WW II Manchester Blitz and its aftermath, part of a history he wrote for his descendants, appeared in the Spring and Fall issues of ACR. We are now pleased to launch an occasional series of stories recounting his daily life during the Depression years.

My father died in the Blitz shortly before Christmas 1940, and it occurred to me that although he left me no written record and few oral details of his own lifetime, I, as the last remaining member of his family, was the sole custodian of our history from my birth up to my own children's ability to recall the events within their own lives.

My father having been born in 1894, the period covered by my own life and his now spans well over a hundred years. I was also very close to my maternal grandmother, who died on the same day as my father, and she was born in 1874.

In recording my recollections, I truly believe that I have lived through the most important and interesting periods of modern history, not only for the events that have occurred since I was born, but also in the amount of contact I had with older generations and their accounts of events in their lifetime.

Both my parents were alive in Victoria's reign; my grandparents were born in the last half of the nineteenth century only a few years after the American Civil and the Crimean Wars. I not only knew first-hand what working class life in the Great Depression was like, but I also knew, through my father, numerous veterans of the carnage at Gallipoli, Passchendaele and the Somme during the Great War.

My own experiences and memories of the Second World War, now more than 70 years ago, are still fresh in my mind, some as though they occurred only yesterday, and considering the First War had ended only 20 years before the Second began, that earlier conflict was still vivid in most adult memories and was a great influence on public outlook. These were years when the greatest events in centuries took place and when the social structure and the technology of both Britain and indeed the whole world saw the greatest changes and advances.

In October 1929, a few months after I was born, the world banking and economic systems collapsed into the Great Depression, an inauspicious start to my life. Around 1931 the family, consisting of my parents, Charles Stuart and Nellie Doris Morton (née Wright) my two older sisters, Doris Margaret and Isabella Stuart, and me, moved to 45 March Street in the Higher Chorlton-on-Medlock area of Manchester.

Our previous address in the All Saints area, 15 Sydney Street, lay between Oxford Road and Brook Street, the two main roads running almost parallel in a southwesterly direction from the centre of Manchester.

After our move, our contacts with Sydney Street (which has long since disappeared to make way for a modern highway across the area) remained strong. My maternal grandmother still lived there and St. Luke's Church, where my parents had been married and the children baptized, was nearby.

The All Saints Area

My grandmother, Isabella Wright (nee Jackson) and known to her nine grandchildren as "Nin," was a remarkable woman. Sometime before the First World War her husband Fred had left her with four children—Fred Jr, Eddie, Nellie and Tom—and no support. Despite his having a very reasonable income as

a self-employed master decorator, she was left mostly to her own devices to survive.

This she did by first of all opening a small store-front café selling plate-sized portions of those Lancashire delicacies, meat and potato pie and Lancashire hotpot. Baked in large enamelled two-foot diameter kitchen bowls and accompanied by pickled red cabbage, they assured many people in the area of obtaining at least one hot and nutritious meal a day at a very reasonable price. Her little café became popular with local workmen and the many low- or no-fixed-income families who lived in the area.

From this, she graduated to renting two very large houses on Sydney Street, one of which she subdivided into small apartments and rented to families whose income didn't allow for the rental of the complete house that most Manchester families generally occupied. Living with her family in the other house, she rented some of the rooms to theatrical people appearing at the Ardwick or the Hulme Hippodromes and sometimes the more upscale Palace Theatre.

Among her long-time tenants, even those who were much older than she was, she became something of a mother figure, helping with the many forms of adversity that beset poor people.

One of Nin's tenants was a Spanish lady who had a small child. One day the child, Kathleen, came to my grandmother to ask her to come and look at her mother, who seemed to be very sick. The lady was, in fact, very sick indeed, and asked Nin to take care of her daughter if she should die. The same night, she passed away and Kitty, as she came to be called, became my mother's sister without benefit of formal adoption or official sanction. She was just taken into the family and treated as such until she died in the 1980s.

In the same way, in the late 1930s, my grandmother took in two teen-aged sisters, Mary and Margaret Roscoe (or Ormerod, I was never sure which) whose parents had died. Just like Kitty, both were considered full family members without any reservation, although again there were no legal formalities involved.

While Margaret went her own way in her twenties, Mary remained a close member of the family up to the end of the Second World War, when she married a Londoner she met while serving in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force.

Life in the Neighbourhood

Two streets over from Sydney Street, on Stafford Street, my grandmother was a regular patron at the Medlock, a pub where patriotic songs like "Sons of the Sea" and

"Soldiers of the Queen" were the order of the day on Friday and Saturday evenings. In those days, patriotism was very strong among the working class and there was a tremendous pride in our army and navy, many families having serving sons and brothers.

Mother's own brother Fred was himself a time-serving sailor in the Royal Navy, having joined as a boy seaman. He had served at the Battle of Jutland in the First World War and also served in Q-ships: disguised merchant vessels bristling with concealed guns that opened fire when enemy submarines surfaced and drew within range. This service qualified Fred for an award of £100 prize money in the 1930s shortly before he died; a princely sum at the time.

Most male patrons of a particular age had themselves served in the Great War and some were even veterans of the Boer War or had seen service with the peacetime army in India. In those days of national patriotism, the National Anthem closed every end of the performance in theatres or at cinemas, the audience standing, and woe betide any patron who tried to leave before the anthem was finished!

At the Oxford Road end of Sydney Street, the All Saints tavern did a brisk business, but was not nearly as popular with the locals as the Medlock. On Mark Lane, one street

over, my grandmother and my mother were both regular clients of the neighbourhood street bookie, who took bets on the daily horse races, despite off-track gambling being illegal.

This gentleman conducted a thriving business from joined together back-to-back houses with a front door on each of two streets for easy exit in the event of a police raid. I used to carry bets to him from both my grandmother and my mother, who used the nom de plume "Hick-ey" on her betting slips to avoid identification in the event the slips fell into the hands of the police.

The bookie was a bowler-hatted, rotund gentleman with several gold teeth which flashed every time he smiled, in testimony to his prosperity. He smoked cigars and wore a leather money pouch on a strap that went over one shoulder, and considering the number of small bets that were placed for only a few pennies and the fact that pennies in those days were copper coins about one and a quarter inches in diameter, the bag must have been heavy indeed.

The everyday outdoor garb for women around All Saints was a woollen shawl, worn around the shoulders or over the head depending on the weather, and in many cases, mill clogs with leather uppers and iron-tipped wooden soles that clattered on the cobbled streets.

Only a few women possessed dress coats, which more often than not would just be worn for church on Sunday (together with their carefully guarded "best" shoes) and



Figure 1: Oxford St. Manchester c. 1930s
Source: http://www.ouldukphotos.com/lancashire_manchester-page4.htm

pawned each Monday. The sight of small groups of women dressed in these shawls and chatting in the street was common, this being the usual way news was passed around the area in days when nobody owned telephones or radios.

The “Months and Seasons” Area

The March Street neighbourhood of Higher Chorlton-on-Medlock, however, was a different scene altogether. It was a mile or so further south along Upper Brook Street, which to me was the highway to unknown adventure and far-away places. Around March Street shawls and clogs were seldom seen among the newer residents and never among the original inhabitants.

March Street was the longest of seven short streets named, presumably by an imaginative nineteenth-century committee, for the months of the year from January to July. The seven streets ran parallel to each other from the west side of Upper Brook Street, on the other side of which, opposite to July Street, three other streets were named respectively Spring, Summer and Autumn, perhaps to bring some brightness to the drab appearance of the terraced brick houses and cobbled streets. There were no streets named for the months of August onward, nor for Winter, due to the intersection of Upper Brook Street with High Street.

For the family, March Street was a socially upward move from All Saints, although by the time we arrived, the general nature of the area was losing some of its appearance of moderate all-round prosperity. Among the minor civil serv-

ants and office workers who themselves had replaced the more affluent families of the late nineteenth century, elements of the lower echelons of society were gradually infiltrating the area.

Many of the newcomers already lacked that essential qualification of the working class: gainful employment, while the increasing spread of the Great Depression was also starting to have an effect of those already established there. The social gap between the two groups was never fully bridged, and the fact that some newcomers managed to hold onto jobs while some of the established inhabitants were losing theirs created a resentment that did nothing to narrow the separation.

For us, our family and neighbours, there was a certain feeling of comfortable insularity within the “month streets,” the core of which, from a child’s point of view, was centred around March, April and May streets. These streets attracted children from the streets on either side, but seldom vice-versa.

The high walls of the Christie Cancer Hospital at the end of January and February streets made each a cul-de-sac; March Street was also effectively blocked to through traffic, other than pedestrian, by a row of high iron spiked railings at its foot. Half a dozen steps at the end of these railings led down from March

Street into York Place, which, with its smoothly paved roadway and absence of traffic, was surely the best play street that a child could imagine, and where so much of my time was spent.

Door to Door

Bread, milk and a few other daily consumable commodities were delivered to regular customers or hawked by street vendors from horse-drawn or hand-pushed carts (locally known as “barrows”), each using his particular street cry advertising his wares.

One pushcart merchant who was very popular among the local children was the “rag and bone” man who, in exchange for discarded woollen items of clothing, empty bottles or large meat bones (his street cry was “Any rags, bottles or bones?”) would reward a child with a celluloid windmill on a stick or perhaps a goldfish.

Often, children gave the rag and bone man articles without parental knowledge or approval and their purchased prize being evidence of this was often the cause of swift punishment later.

Another popular vendor was the ice cream man in a horse-drawn cart, who usually did his rounds on Sundays. In addition to the usual wafers and cones, ice cream could be purchased to fill a tumbler brought from the house. When buying ice

cream, it was usual to tell the vendor “plenty of raspberry vinegar,” the term “vinegar” being used because of the resemblance of the bottle in which the raspberry cordial was kept to that of the vinegar bottles with pierced wooden stoppers that adorned the counters of fish and chip shops.

Most ice cream carts, and indeed some of the larger ice cream outlets, were owned and operated by Italians, many of whom were first-generation immigrants. I recall walking in through the gates of Platt Fields park with my father one Sunday when he caught sight of an old army friend serving ice cream from a cart on which the proprietor’s name, Carlos Garsidio, was painted in large flourishing letters. The friend’s name was Charlie Gartside, and when dad asked why the name change, Charlie told him that it was impossible to sell ice cream without an Italian name!

Rent was collected weekly in cash at the front door and each household-er had a “rent book,” a receipt book in which the rent collector noted every payment and the date of payment. This book became a family’s credit rating and had to be produced as a reference before a new house could be rented; if the payment record showed any arrears or late payments, the prospective landlord would most likely decline to accept the holder as a new tenant.

Also collected door to door on a weekly basis were life and health insurance premiums, by an insurance agent on foot or pushing a bicycle. Most families bought at least a burial policy and contributed to a health insurance system, the notable one being the "Hospital Saturday Fund." This would pay for certain medical expenses and necessary stays in their convalescent homes, usually located at the seaside or in the country.

My family, in addition to Hospital Saturday, had life insurance policies with the Prudential and, oddly enough, the Salvation Army Assurance companies, the representatives of which called faithfully each Saturday to collect the premiums of several pence.

Like the bookie on Mark Lane, the premium collectors had a leather satchel on a strap that went over the shoulder and hung in front of them to hold the large amount of loose coins.

Our Salvation Army agent, Mr. Firth, always arrived by bike wearing his uniform peaked cap, trouser cuffs held in bicycle clips, while Mr. Bethel of the Prudential Insurance operated a small car.

Mr. Bethel ran a small high-interest moneylending business on the side. In an effort to keep himself at arm's length from his debtors, Mr Bethel always told his clients that he "knew

a man who could let them have something to tide them over," although everyone knew that the man was Mr. Bethel himself.

It was apparently easier to collect his debts by telling clients that if it were left to him, he could excuse a delayed payment, but that the prime lender, a very heartless man, was capable of resorting to strong measures.

Other passing traffic included the odd musician or street singer, each gratefully receiving all contributions in his cap, and the occasional hand cranked barrel organ (or hurdy-gurdy) a type of mechanical piano with a pair of large wheels and pushcart handles, which the operator could rent by the day by in the hope that collections would exceed the daily rental cost of about one shilling.

The effort required to push these piano-sized contraptions from street to street was in itself hard labour indeed; these types of street entertainments were generally provided by unemployed veterans of the Great War, some missing a limb or an eye. A family had to be poor indeed not to spare them at least a halfpenny.

Our Local Shopping

The neighbourhood was made a self-sufficient unit by a row of shops on either side of Upper Brook Street, mainly between March

and June Streets, known to all, for some obscure reason, as "the Top." When a child was sent on an errand to a shop, he might be told "Run to the top for five pounds of potatoes."

On the west, or "months" side, we had a sub-post office, a stationery shop, a butcher, Cromack's chemist shop with huge

teardrop-shaped bottles full of coloured liquid in the window, Thorpe's greengrocery, and a "German pork shop," Braun's, which today would probably be called a delicatessen.

Next to Braun's was a wine and spirit shop, then Mrs. William's millinery and haberdashery, with Ogden's, a tobacco and newsagent at the corner of April Street.

On our side of Upper Brook Street, we knew all the shopkeepers and they knew us. When someone in the house had a cough, Cromack's would sell a pennyworth of chloro-dine in a flat medicine bottle, sealed with a cork. The concentrated liquid, about an inch in the bottom of the bottle, would be diluted with water and taken by the spoonful.

With a liquorice kind of flavour, the cough mixture had to be kept out of reach of children. When we needed



Figure 2: Market Place, Manchester c.1930s

Source: http://www.oldukphotos.com/lancashire_manchester-page4.htm

malt vinegar for mint sauce with Sunday's lamb, we would go to Thorpe's with an enamel mug and buy a penny's worth, which would be poured through a spigot at the bottom of a large barrel lying on its side.

Ogden's kept a small brass scale on the counter to weigh sweets (candy) or plug tobacco, which would be sliced on a small guillotine-like instrument as required, as well as a small "toffee hammer" to break large pieces from hard slabs of candy. Ogden's was also the store from which our morning and evening daily papers were delivered to our front door by a newspaper boy.

In 1935 and 1936, when the two biggest liners in the world were launched, Kellogg's cereals gave away two- or three- foot-long cardboard models of the RMS *Queen Mary* and its French competitor the SS *Normandie*, as well as a book of cardboard cutouts of RAF planes. Our grocer didn't mention or offer these to adult purchasers whom he knew to have no children; instead, he secretly handed them out to the children of families that would never be able to afford the luxury of a prepared boxed breakfast cereal.

On the east, or "season" side of Upper Brook Street was another tobacconist, Rutherford's, which was in loose competition with Ogden's, although he probably catered only to those who lived on his side (and vice versa). Nearby was Windsor's fish and chip shop, a lady's dress shop, an ironmonger and a barber.

When the barber started selling cigarettes to his clients, the two tobacconists were so upset they combined efforts and jointly opened another barber shop that operated at cut-price rates. The new barber shop operated until the original barber dropped his line of cigarettes and a truce was called. This in turn resulted in the closing of the second barber shop and a return to commercial harmony.

Rutherford's did have a regular stream of young customers from the

opposite side of Upper Brook Street who came to gamble on a device whereby a halfpenny bought a chance to stick a pin into a punch board, making a small ball roll out, which, dependent on its colour, perhaps entitled the young gambler to a prize of a chocolate bar, but more often, invited the young gambler to "try again." The quality and size of the rare winner's prize depended on the colour of the ball; gold, of which the game contained only one, being the most valuable.

Further towards High Street on the "season" side were several other shops not generally patronized by the residents from the "month" streets. There was Walker's fish and chip shop at the corner of Summer Street, which did claim some of Windsor's younger customers because it sold a newfangled type of bottled soft drink called Vimto, something along the lines of Coca-Cola. On the corner of Spring Street was a dry cleaner for which there was not a great deal of demand, an A. E. Smith's chain grocery store, a greengrocer and a Manchester Corporation Tramways parcel office.

The parcel office was a clever idea that was ahead of its time in an era when few people owned cars. Residents could go shopping at the larger downtown stores and take their parcels to the main tramways office on Piccadilly. For a nominal charge, around the cost of a tram

ticket, the parcels would be taken by tram to the branch office closest to their home, thereby eliminating the need to carry purchased items from store to store.

The parcels could either be picked up at the branch office or delivered to their home in a large wheeled box pushed by a youth in corporation livery and peaked uniform cap who was known as a "parcel boy."

Just before Upper Brook Street reached High Street, there was an establishment with the lofty title on its polished brass sign that read: "Hostel for Educated Women," although I cannot recall having ever seen any of the residents entering or leaving. Even if I had, I had no idea what an educated woman would look like.

The shops on Upper Brook Street provided all that was required for local daily needs, while an off-licence, a small shop selling a limited variety of essential grocery items as well as beer and stout by the jug or by the bottle, was located midway up July Street. This shop was permitted to sell ale during pub licensing hours, which meant that it was open in the evenings and on Sundays, a great convenience for buying such staples as bread when regular shops had to be closed.

The real key to its business, however, was the "tick" book, which recorded all credit purchases, a

system not generally used by the Upper Brook Street shops. It was well known that the proprietor of the off-licence kept a sharp lookout for sudden increases in credit purchases; that was a sure sign that a debtor customer was about to move and leave him with as large an unpaid account as possible.

More Amenities

At the northwest corner of High Street and Upper Brook Street, on the "months" side, was a large Cooperative Wholesale Society store with a reception hall on the second floor that was hired for weddings by those who could afford to do so.

At the corner itself and mostly on High Street was a series of hoardings, wooden structures about 20 feet high on which advertising posters were displayed. In front of them was perhaps a 20- by 150-foot stretch of long wild grass.

Such was the absence of greenery in the area that this meagre strip of waste ground was known to the local children as "High Street Field." Apart from being able to play games where hiding in the long grass and weeds was useful, a favourite pastime involved climbing up the inside of the hoardings for a good view of the area without being seen.

On the opposite side of High Street from the field was the School of Domestic Science, where schoolgirls

from various parts of the city learned to cook, clean house, sew and iron clothes and perform all those duties that were then considered to be women's work. When my sister Belle attended Ducie Avenue School she was sent there every Friday for lessons and a highly anticipated treat was the delicious smell and taste of the dinner rolls (called "cobs") she had baked and was allowed to bring home.

Directly across Upper Brook Street from June Street was Blackstock Street and the Blackstock Hotel, the only public house in the immediate area. Here the landlord and his staff dispensed the local brew, aptly known to the customers as "Chester's Fighting Ales."

Apart from Saturday nights, the hotel's busiest time was on Friday when those still with jobs received

their pay envelopes and dropped in for a quick pint on their way home from work. Unfortunately, this "quick" drink often proved to be only the first of many, and it was not uncommon to see a worried wife trying to get her husband out of the pub before the week's wages were spent, sometimes to the jeers of his workmates.

At the other end of Blackstock Street, at the corner of Clarendon Road, was St. Chrysostom's School, where I was enrolled on my third birthday.

All in all, we lived in a remarkably private area, compact and self-contained, a truly secure neighbourhood. I'll explain more about another aspect of our Manchester lives in my next article.

Save the Date!

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Ulster Historical Foundation Day

with Fintan Mullan & Gillian Hunt

They Called Him Mister Wickham: Edward Wickham, 1794–1879



BY TERRY AND TAD FINDLEY

This is the story of the great-great-grandfather of Tad Findley, who is married to author Terry Findley. Terry has spent the last 20 years researching 32 branches of his and Tad's families. The couple has embarked on a project to produce 12 issues of a magazine entitled Many Families, containing family stories and research information to assist other genealogists and family historians. Copies are available from the Findleys through manyfamilies@rogers.com.

When Edward Wickham was 37 days old, on New Year's Day 1795, his father (a grocer) passed away in the town of Maidstone, County of Kent, England. During this era, one would expect his 30-year-old mother with three other young children to remarry, but she never did. So, how did Edward manage to grow up and become a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons in London (MRCS) in 1816—and hence styled “Mister Wickham?”

Not surprisingly—in the census returns of England and Wales, 1841, 1851, 1861, and 1871—his “profession” was recorded as “Surgeon,” “Surgeon M.R.C.S. (Practising),” “Surgeon,” and “Surgeon M.R.C.S.” respectively. Nevertheless, when he passed away on 20 September 1879, his death certificate startlingly proclaimed that his occupation was “General Practitioner – MRCS.”

The following narrative reveals the answer to this apparent conundrum concerning his profession and much more. Our story sweeps across the landscape from the county town of Maidstone to the centre of London (about 35 miles to the northwest) and across time from the Napoleonic era to the Anglo-Zulu War in 1879. Unquestionably, Mister Wickham lived through a remarkable period when the British Empire was expanding, London was changing, and medical advances were accelerating.

Born on 24 November 1794 and baptized on 16 January 1795 in All Saints Parish Church, Maidstone (Figure 1), Edward Wickham was the son of William Wickham and Elizabeth Tanner. William and Elizabeth had six known children: two girls, one dying young; and four boys, one dying young as well. For Edward, growing up without a

father at the turn of the nineteenth century in Maidstone is hard to imagine. Edward's mother Elizabeth must have had an astonishingly supportive family to help her through some very difficult times.



Figure 1: All Saints' Church, Maidstone
Source: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Little is known about Edward's mother, except to say that she was a remarkable woman who had entrepreneurial savvy, ran the George Inn on Gabriel's Hill, Maidstone, worked hard to look after her small family, and gave each one of her children a good start in life. Thomas, her oldest son, was apprenticed to learn the stationer's trade, became a freeman of Maidstone in 1811, and then went on to be a printer-bookseller and business partner of the *Maidstone Gazette* newspaper. William, her middle son, was groomed to take over and run the George Inn, and he did so for many years before becoming a maltster in the 1830s.

Turning now to her youngest son, Edward was probably apprenticed to an apothecary—although it could have been to a surgeon—and most likely he was sent to London to do so; not an unusual practice back then. As an aside, apothecaries were neither chemists nor druggists: they were medical practitioners who were the forerunners of today's general practitioners. Though some young boys began their apothecary apprenticeship as young as 13 years of age and were bound to a master apothecary for five to seven years, most began their apprenticeship when they were 15 or 16 years old.

Records of Edward Wickham's early "medical" training and education are scant to say the least; nevertheless, two findings are very telling. Medical registers found in the library of the Royal College of Surgeons in London (Figure 2) revealed that he had been "in practice before 1 August 1815" and that he was admitted as a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons in London in 1816.

The fact that Wickham was "in practice before 1 August 1815" discloses several important points. First, the foregoing annotation signifies that he was legally authorized to practise as an apothecary and that he was therefore not required to be examined; that is, he was "grandfathered" from the provisions of the *Apothecaries Act* of 1815 for begin-

ning apothecaries. As with all exemptions, though, there is always a downside.

Among the new formal requirements to obtain a “Licence of the Society of Apothecaries” (LSA), a candidate had to be at least 21 years old, had to have served as an apprentice to an apothecary for at least five years, and had to have sufficient medical education. The regulations for the Society spelled out those medical education requirements: first, attend no fewer than five courses of lectures on specified medical subjects; and second, “walk the wards” of some public hospital or infirmary for at least six months, or nine months at a dispensary. Although Wickham was starting his career as an apothecary and was not obligated to have any of the foregoing medical education, he was not going to be able to compete very well with newly minted apothecaries in the post-1815 period.

Wickham, like many London apothecaries, wanted to obtain his diploma of admission to the Royal College of Surgeons in London; however, he could not be admitted to the College until he had reached the age of 22—which would have

been on 25 November 1816—and had completed the new requirements added by the College in 1813. Thus, to meet admission requirements, Wickham had to attend one course of anatomical lectures and one course of surgical lectures and had to work in a hospital for at least a year.

He may have met the lecture requirements by attending the winter or summer sessions of lectures giv-



Figure 2: The Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Thomas Hosmer Shepherd, 1828
Source: ©Trustees of the British Museum

en by a Member of the College and presented at the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn Fields (about 0.75 mile northeast of Charing Cross on the largest public square in London). The courses comprised 12 lectures in comparative anatomy (the study of similarities and differences in the anatomy of different species) and 13 in surgery and pathology (the science

of the causes and effects of diseases).

On the other hand, Wickham may have decided to combine his lecture and hospital-internship requirements by registering himself as a surgical pupil at Guy's Hospital for 12 months. The cost of doing so would have been roughly £25 (about CAD\$2,700 today). Interestingly, teaching was split between Guy's and St. Thomas' hospitals at the time, both being in close proximity to each other in the Borough of Southwark, on the south side of the River Thames. Of note, midwifery, medicine, and therapeutics were taught at Guy's, whereas St. Thomas' strengths were in anatomy and surgical teaching—a perfect fit for Wickham.

Although we do not know where or when Wickham met these new requirements, we do know that he obtained his diploma of admission to the College in 1816. The last step for a surgeon-candidate was to appear before a Court of Examiners (Figure 3) and take a *viva voce* (oral) examination. Wickham would have done so after meeting the “minimum-age” requirement on 22 November 1816 and before the end of the year.

Taking the College's oral examination was often ridiculed by satirists of the day, but the step was necessary to achieve professional

standing. Successful completion meant that the candidate received the diploma of admission to the College, took his oath to the College, paid his admission fees, and so could place the letters “MRCS” after his name, signifying his professional qualification. Moreover, Mister Wickham's professional title was henceforth styled as “Surgeon” in city directories—a title with more cachet or status than apothecary, second only to physician.

By being qualified as an apothecary and then passing the examination in the Royal College of Surgeons in London, Wickham became a surgeon-apothecary—a rather clumsy or awkward title that had no legal standing in any Act back then. Of note, around this time, the term general practitioner began to be used instead of surgeon-apothecary and man-midwife; and, by the end of the 1830s, general practitioner was in common use in the medical profession.

One notable difference between physicians and surgeons was how they were addressed—a physician was styled as “doctor” whereas a surgeon was addressed as “mister.” An aspiring physician could not practise medicine until he had completed his formal university education leading to a degree in medicine; that is, the equivalent of today's familiar MD (Doctor of Medicine).

Thus, once a physician possessed his medical degree, he was entitled to be addressed as doctor.

On the other hand, education and training for prospective surgeons until the mid-nineteenth century was different. They did not have to go to university to obtain a degree; instead, they usually apprenticed to a surgeon. As we learned earlier, they—as well as many qualified apothecaries—took the examination administered by the RCS; and, if successful, they were awarded a diploma of admission, not a degree, to the College. Thus, they could not be addressed as doctors. The surgeons and apothecaries so qualified remained with the title Mister—a form of address that continues to be used to this very day for male surgeons in the United Kingdom.

Today all medical practitioners in the United Kingdom, whether physicians or surgeons, must undertake training at a medical school to obtain the necessary qualifying degrees; and once they have done so, they are addressed as doctors.

Aspiring surgeons then carry on for several years more of training in their surgical specialties, during which time they continue to be addressed as doctors. After they have completed their specialist training and passed the RCS's diploma-of-admission examination, male surgeons stop being styled as doctors and revert to being addressed as misters.

What Mister Wickham did after securing his MRCS qualification and becoming a surgeon-apothecary is not known with certainty. Presum-

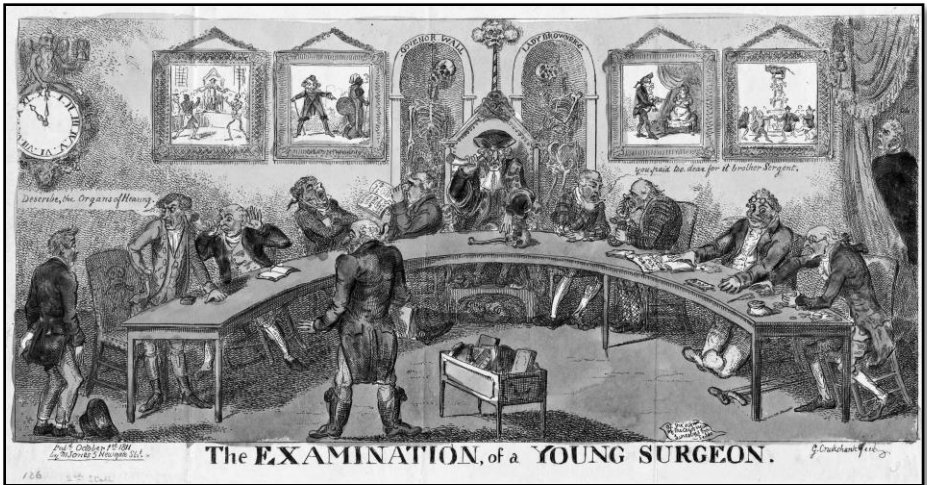


Figure 3: “The Examination, of a Young Surgeon.” Etching by George Cruikshank, 1811

Source: ©Trustees of the British Museum

ably, he was successful enough so that he could afford to get married; he did so on 22 September 1822 in the parish of Aylesford (about 3.5 miles north-northwest of Maidstone and about 34 miles southeast of London).

Edward married Anne Lee and they had three children: Eugene Lee (born about 1823), Horace Edward (born 14 December 1824), and Julian Augustus (born about February 1830).

Sometime after Horace Edward was born, Mister Wickham seems to have run into some sort of financial difficulties with the shop side of his apothecary business in Islington Green (located in today's London Borough of Islington); consequently, he ended up declaring bankruptcy on 1 June 1827. From then on, he concentrated on "general practitioner" functions, including midwifery—and his practice thrived.

A few years later, the Grim Reaper paid a visit to the Wickham household and did so twice: Eugene Lee died in early November 1835 at about 12 years of age; and Julian Augustus contracted "consumption" (known as pulmonary tuberculosis today) and died on 8 January 1838 at almost 8 years of age. Undoubtedly, Mister Wickham would have felt very despondent over not being

able to save his two boys. To learn more about the only surviving son, Horace, see "The Outspoken Clergyman: The Reverend Horace Edward Wickham, 1824–1899" in Issue No. 3 of *Many Families*.

By the early 1840s, the Wickhams had moved a little further north along Holloway Road, an area where Mister Wickham was to live for the rest of his life. (Incidentally, today Holloway is an inner-city district in the London Borough of Islington located 3.3 miles north of Charing Cross and follows, for the most part, the line of the Holloway Road.)

By 1854, there were about 2,600 or so medical practitioners, including Mister Edward Wickham, in London and the suburban districts, the vast majority of those practitioners being "misters."

Once again, on 31 January 1855, the Angel of Death visited the Wickham household and claimed Anne Wickham at age 55. She died of pulmonary tuberculosis and exhaustion after having battled this infectious disease for 17 days. Edward never remarried but chose to immerse himself in his medical practice. He continued to live at 4 Aston Place, Holloway, for another few years, and then moved to his final residence at 72 Holloway Road. He passed away there on 20 September 1879.

The death of Mr. Edward Wickham, M.R.C.S. Eng. [England], of Hol-loway-road, at the ripe age of eighty-four, is announced. It is said that he was the oldest member of the College of Surgeons, his diploma dating from 1816. He was in practice before 1815, and has seen patients at his house within the last five years. Mr. Wickham carried on a large midwifery practice, and was much respected by his professional neighbours.

This remarkable obituary appeared in *The Lancet* medical journal on 27 September 1879—noteworthy because obituaries were rare in this journal and even more so for so-called ordinary general practitioners.

Note: No references are included here, as they are too numerous; for details, contact the authors via *manyfamilies@rogers.com*. Information pertaining to man-midwives and the medical profession 1800–1850 can be found in Issue No. 3 of *Many Families*.

We Shall Remember Them[©]

Private Charles Edward Smith

Regimental number: G/6073

9th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

born: 14 May 1897 – died: 1 June 1916

BY HEATHER CARMODY

Heather, the most recent addition to the volunteer team researching WW I soldiers who died at No.1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, clearly enjoys uncovering the background of her subject's life.

At the age of 13, Charles Edward Smith was working at a colliery in Cannock, Staffordshire, operating a “coal screen above ground.”¹ At the age of 19, he was dead and buried in in France.²

Charles was the eldest of the six children born to Frank Smith and Elizabeth Thorpe. His parents were both born in Staffordshire villages about 3 km apart; his father (born 15 September 1870)³ in Edingale to

William and Eliza Smith and his mother (b. 14 December 1868)⁴ in Haunton to Charles and Elizabeth Thorpe. Both came from families that made their living as agricultural labourers. Frank was working as a ploughboy when he was 10 years old,⁵ while Elizabeth at the same age was attending school.⁶ By 1891, she was working as a housemaid at Hooper Hall House in Brampton Bierlow, Yorkshire.⁷ Five years later,

with Emma Julia Rowe and George Shaw as witnesses, Frank Smith and Elizabeth Thorpe were married in Burton upon Trent (aka Burton),⁸ Staffordshire.

Charles was born on 14 May 1897 and baptized on 7 June 1897 at St. Paul's, Church of England, Burton.⁹ Two more children followed. His brother, Frank Oswald, was born on 9 November 1898¹⁰ and his sister, Elsie May, on 9 June 1900.¹¹ Their baptismal certificates note that the family was living on Wellington Street and Frank Smith was a labourer. Probably for economic reasons, the family relocated a number of times to different villages all within a 40-km radius of Burton. By 1901 the family had moved to the Alvecote Buildings, Shuttington, Staffordshire. Frank Smith worked as a "stoker, stationery boiler."¹²

The family stayed there about three years and then relocated to Hamstead Village, which housed the miners working at the Hamstead Colliery near Birmingham. Two children were born there: Gladys Annie in the last quarter of 1904¹³ and Cyril Joseph on 29 April 1906.¹⁴ Two years later the family moved once again, this time to Cannock in south-central Staffordshire, some 40 km from Burton. Frank and Elizabeth's last son, Harold Arthur, was born there on 21 September 1908.¹⁵

In 1911 the population of Cannock Urban District was 28,586.¹⁶ Many

of the inhabitants made their living in the coal mines of the Cannock Chase District. The Smiths were living in the Hills Buildings on Stafford Road. Frank Smith was working as a "stoker colliery boilers above ground" and Charles Edward at age 13 was working the "coal screen at the colliery above ground."¹⁷ Cannock became the home town for the Smith family, who continued to reside on Stafford Road (although at a different address) as late as 1939.¹⁸

During the next three years, Charles probably continued to work in the coal mines. When war was declared on 4 August 1914, he would have been 17 years old; like many others at the time he was probably caught up in the patriotic fervour that swept the country.

In the fall of 1914, two military training camps, Brocton Camp and Rugeley Camp, capable of housing 40,000 men, were constructed on Cannock Chase land owned by Lord Lichfield. The first troops began to move into the huts in early 1915. Approximately 500,000 men trained there through the course of the war.¹⁹

To Charles, the military life must have seemed exciting and an opportunity to escape the drudgery of the coal mines. In February 1915 he managed to enlist in the 9th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment at Cannock, despite being underage.²⁰

The Royal Sussex Regiment was a line infantry regiment that was officially formed in 1881 as part of the Childers Reforms that restructured the British Army. However, it could trace its history back to over 100 years earlier. At the onset of WW I it consisted of six battalions with its headquarters in Chichester, West Sussex. It raised 17 more battalions once war was declared. The 9th Battalion was one of these, formed in Chichester in September 1914.²¹

The Royal Sussex Regiment gave all new wartime recruits a regimental number from a new series prefixed with the letter "G/".²² In September 1914, the height restriction for the army was raised from 5 ft 3 in (160.02 cm) to 5 ft 6 in (167.64 cm) to reduce the number of men trying to enlist. But as recruitment levels fell and the demand for recruits increased the height level was back at 5 ft 3 in (160.02 cm) by November 1914.²³ By the beginning of 1915, it had lowered the height requirement for recruits to 5 ft 1 in (154.94 cm) although it maintained that a man had to be between the ages of 19 and 38 to enlist.²⁴

The battalion's war diary and an interview given by its Regimental Sergeant-Major, Lewis Bonney, to the *Eastbourne Gazette* on 7 June 1916 provided a glimpse of Private Charles Smith's life in the military. Although Charles had enlisted in Cannock, he did not receive his

training in the camps on Cannock Chase. Instead, the 9th Battalion, under Lieutenant-Colonel John F.P. Langdon, moved to the South Downs to join the 73rd Brigade of the 24th Division. Langdon had been a major when he retired after 22 years with the Royal Sussex Regiment. When war was declared he reenlisted, was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel and assigned command of the new 9th Battalion. Bonney described Langdon as a proper father to the regiment.²⁵

In December 1914, the battalion moved into billets in Portslade, East Sussex, and then to neighbouring Shoreham, West Sussex, in April and Woking, Surrey, in June 1915, where the recruits received musketry training at the Bisley ranges. Private Smith was with the battalion²⁶ whose strength was just over 1,000 men when it left Woking on 21 August 1915 to march to Southampton, where it boarded the SS *La Marguerite*, disembarking at Le Havre, France, on 1 September 1915.²⁷

In the 10 months (1 September 1915–7 June 1916) that the 9th Battalion had been at the Front, Regimental Sergeant-Major Bonney reported that it had experienced its full share of hard fighting. He felt that the recruits had the very great advantage of serving under officers who spared no pains to increase the efficiency of the battalion.

This training was tested almost immediately when the battalion went into action at Loos, France, on 25–27 September 1915. The Battle of Loos was the biggest British attack of 1915, the first time that the British used poison gas and the first mass engagement of the new army units.²⁸ The 9th Battalion, which was divided into four companies (A, B, C, and D), was ordered to hold Fosse 8. Two companies were assigned to trenches in front of an enormous slag heap, while the other two companies were posted on top of the slag heap in two parallel lines.

The order to withdraw did not reach the men in the trenches, who were in danger of being surrounded. For three days they survived without food, water and sleep. They fought their way out, resulting in 381 casualties.²⁹ Bonney felt that it was a tremendous christening for a young battalion.³⁰

From there, the 9th Battalion was stationed in the trenches of the Ypres Salient area of Belgium, where it remained through the first half of 1916, involved in day-to-day trench warfare, shelling, sniper fire and small skirmishes. Rest periods from the forward trench area were taken in cellars or barracks at Ypres or Poperinge. A gift of cigarettes and peppermints arrived on 2 February 1916 from the Royal Sussex Soldiers Cigarette and Comfort Fund.³¹

On 13–14 February 1916, the battalion suffered heavy casualties at Hooge, on the Ypres–Menin Road. Sergeant-Major Bonney reported that the battalion was in trenches only 80 yards (73 m) from the German line. The enemy shelled them for 13 hours, then attacked but were pushed back. The men of the 9th advanced to a crater and dragged a machine gun in with them. They wired the place and made the position stronger.³² During the shelling a D Company platoon was buried alive.³³ By 15 February, the 9th Battalion had recorded five officers and 134 other ranks as casualties.³⁴ Besides injuries from shelling and sniper fire, illness also plagued the battalion. On 16 February, the officers had difficulty finding 200 men for a working party. Many were ill and sent to hospital.³⁵

During March, April and May of 1916 the battalion continued the routine of being in and out of the front line trenches. March was recorded as cold with a good deal of snow. In April, the battalion was in trenches near Kortepyp. Charles Smith would probably have attended the Easter Sunday service on 23 April conducted by the Chaplain, Reverend M. Dodd, who had made his way to the Front.³⁶ On 28 and 30 April 1916 the gas alarms sounded. The first was a false alarm but on 30 April, the enemy sent a gas cloud of

chlorine and phosgene toward the allies at Wulverghem about 4 km from Kortepyp. The enemy attacked the left flank of the 9th Battalion but was driven back.³⁷ By 14 May the 9th Battalion was in the trenches at Stinking Farm, where there were a few casualties throughout the day.³⁸ Then on 28 May it was in the trenches at La Plus Douve Farm, where it was shelled every half hour in the evening. The following days, 29–31 May, were listed as quiet.³⁹

No record has been found of how, when or where Private Charles Smith was injured and taken to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station (CCCS) at Bailleul, France. Perhaps it was at La Plus Douve Farm during the shelling or on one of the “quiet” days. He might have been one of the 134 injured men admitted on 31 May 1916 or one of the 140 existing patients,⁴⁰ but he was cited as one of the three men who died there on 1 June 1916.⁴¹ On 16 August 1916 Elizabeth Smith, his mother, was sent his savings of £12 7s 10p. On 23 June 1919 she was sent a War Gratuity of £5 10s.⁴²

Private Charles Edward Smith was buried at Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, Grave/Memorial Reference II. B. 124.⁴³ Bailleul is in France, close to the Belgium border. It was occupied on 14 October 1914 and became an important railhead, air depot and hospital centre. Several casualty

clearing stations, including No. 1 Canadian CCS, were quartered there. The earliest Commonwealth burials at Bailleul were made in April 1915. An extension was built and burials continued until April 1918; they occurred again in September and after the Armistice, when soldiers’ remains were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields.

Charles was awarded posthumously the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre), the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the 1914–15 Star (for serving in a theatre of war between 4 August 1914 and 31 December 1915).

There seemed to have been a problem with delivering the medals to his family; the medals were returned. His mother reapplied for them and they were reissued 23 April 1923 and sent to 186 Stafford Road, Cannock.⁴⁴ Perhaps she was motivated by the plans of the Cannock Urban District Council to construct a monument in memory of the men of Cannock who had died in the Great War. On 22 May 1923, the monument was unveiled with 120 names listed; Charles’ name (Ch. E. Smith) was engraved on the third panel.⁴⁵ His name would also be listed with the 6,800 regimental casualties from the Great War on the panels in the Royal Sussex Regimental Chapel, Chapel of St.

George, Chichester Cathedral, Sussex.⁴⁶

Private Charles Edward Smith must have been mourned by his parents and siblings. They might have been consoled by the words of Sergeant-Major Bonney, who said that “if we say that the men of the 9th Sussex can claim that they have tried to do their duty and not to fall below the standard set by other gallant regiments at the Front we shall be paying them the highest tribute they could desire.”

In 1939, the Smith family was still living in Cannock, working in the coal mines. Charles Smith’s father Frank, at the age of 69, was employed as a “colliery boiler man hewer heavy” and living at 161 Stafford Road. His mother Elizabeth was performing “unpaid domestic duties.” Two of his brothers lived with them. Frank Oswald was working as a “colliery road deggie below heavy” and Cyril Joseph as a “colliery screen hand above heavy.”⁴⁸ Elsie May had married and was living with her husband and children in Cannock.⁴⁹ Harold had married and was living with his family in Willenhall, Staffordshire, but seemed to be working in the mines.⁵⁰

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Techniques and Resources

The Cream of the Crop

Top items from recent posts on the Canada's Anglo-Celtic-Connections blog



BY JOHN D. REID

For the last six years my blog has conducted an informal poll to find the World's Rockstar Genealogists. They may or may

not be the best researchers; they are the most popular and influential communicators.

This year two of our members, recently recognized by the Society at the last Annual General Meeting, ranked high in the Canadian poll. Gail Dever, our webmaster, who was inducted into the BIFHSGO Hall of Fame in June, received the most votes for the second successive year. Glenn Wright, our past president, also in the Hall of Fame, placed fourth in the Canadian list. Member

Blaine Bettinger, from Syracuse, NY, topped the list for the US and worldwide.

On the topic of awards, Jane Down, until recently the BIFHSGO program director, was the winner of the Alan Neame Award for 2017 of the Kent Family History Society. It was for her article "Finding 21 Children: Simple—Not So Simple!" which I'm sure we'd all like to have presented at a monthly meeting.

Ireland

The 1,070,211 entries in the index of a new-to-*Findmypast* database, "Ireland Calendars of Wills & Administrations 1858–1920," cover the whole of Ireland except from 1918, when it's just the 26 counties in the Republic. Searching for a name will deliver hits for the deceased and for beneficiaries. The printed calendar or index card originals come from the National Archives of Ireland and can be accessed at www.willcalendars.nationalarchives.ie/search/cwa/.

A major update to the online catalogue of the Chief Secretary of Ireland's Office Registered Papers saw entries covering 1823–1830 joining those for 1818–1822. Included are subcategories for State of the Country and Outrage reports. While viewing the original document requires a visit to Dublin, the searchable detailed catalogue, with many names included, is available at www.csorp.nationalarchives.ie.

Ireland, known for large families, is seeing a trend to fewer children. In the 2011 Census women in their early 50s most likely had two children, those from their late 50s to early 70s three children, and four for older women. The percentage of women with eight children in their early 50s was only a tenth of those in their 80s. The 1911 Census for Ireland had eight as the most likely family size. The largest family had 22 children; there were eight families with 20 or more children.

Scotland

ScotlandsPeople at www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/ continue to add valuation rolls. The most recent, 1935, has 2.7 million indexed names and addresses for owners, tenants and occupiers of properties throughout Scotland. The valuation rolls online now span 80 years (1855–1935) and are searchable through nearly 28 million index entries. There is a helpful guide to searching and understanding the rolls.

England and Wales

The General Register Office (GRO) has another PDF pilot project running for a minimum of three months from mid-October. Customers can order a PDF copy of birth (1837–1916) or death (1837–1957) records. A GRO index reference must be provided with the application. Find the GRO index references by logging on to the GRO online ordering service at www.gro.gov.uk/. A

PDF costs £6.00 (reduced from £9.25), contains all the information you receive in a certificate but is not valid for legal purposes.

Findmypast loaded a gem of a collection for anyone with roots in Portsmouth, Hampshire: 550,207 baptisms, 379,004 marriages, 312,946 burials with index transcriptions are linked to images of the original record. You can also browse 873 volumes of those parish registers held at the Portsmouth History Centre for Church of England parishes in the deaneries of Portsmouth, Gosport, Fareham, and Havant.

The icing on the cake from *Findmypast* is the Portsmouth Workhouse Registers, with 60,953 entries. Records for the workhouse on Portsea Island run from 1879 to 1953. You typically find name, year born, religion, where from (normally Portsmouth), informant (often self) and dates of admission and discharge.

On a tour of Salisbury Cathedral I took in September it was mentioned that in the Royal Navy a ship's bell would be used for baptizing the child of a crew member. The bell, inverted with the clapper removed, was used to hold the holy water. After the ceremony the child's name would be engraved on the rim; not a genealogical record I'd heard of previously.

Furniture Makers

The first phase of a free, fully searchable *British and Irish Furniture Makers Online* database is now online at: <https://bifmo.data.history.ac.uk>. The Furniture History Society and the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, began a project in September 2016 to put online the 1,000-page *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers 1660–1840* (published in 1986).

DNA

AncestryDNA announced in early November that there were six million test results in the company database. That's double the number at the start of the year. If you've ever purchased a kit for a relative or suspected relative you'll appreciate that many of those tested have very limited knowledge of, or even interest in, family history.

DNA matching protocols are changing. *Living DNA* have introduced free uploading of DNA test results from other companies for free for matching to their customers, coming by the end of the year. It will not provide regional UK breakdown results so is not a full substitute for a *Living DNA* test. AncestryDNA customers now have the option to decide if they want to have access to the list of people they may be related to and be shown as a potential family member for other customers with whom they share DNA.

BIFHSGO News

Membership Report

BY KATHY WALLACE

New BIFHSGO Members 7 August 2017 to 4 November 2017

Member No.	Name	Address
1593	Laurie Dougherty	Arnprior, ON
1749	Brian Beaven	Ottawa, ON
1832	Sue Lambeth	Ottawa, ON
1877	Vicki McKay	Leamington, ON
1878	Joan Simms	Ottawa, ON
1879	Stephanie Dean	Ottawa, ON
1880	Debbie Dee	Ottawa, ON
1881	Tim Mark	Ottawa, ON
1882	Tim Flaherty	Vanier, ON
1883	Virginia Dunsby	Kanata, ON
1884	Neil Clark	Toronto, ON
1885	Millie Foster	Calgary, AB
1886	Sheila Murray	Nepean, ON
1887	Bob Butler	Almonte, ON
1888	Lee Hatfield	Ottawa, ON
1889	Helen Stickney	Englehart, ON
1890	Norman Bourne	Toronto, ON
1890	Joan Bourne	Toronto, ON
1891	Elise Cole	Mississauga, ON
1892	Shirley Charbonneau	Ottawa, ON
1893	Kevin Kainula	Sault Ste Marie, ON
1894	Morina Reece	Kanata, ON
1895	Elizabeth Jorgensen	Ottawa, ON

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The Society

The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa (BIFHSGO) is an independent, federally incorporated society and a registered charity (Reg. No. 89227 4044 RR0001). Our purpose is to encourage, carry on and facilitate research into, and publication of, family histories by people who have ancestors in the British Isles.

We have two objectives: to research, preserve, and disseminate Canadian and British Isles family and social history, and to promote genealogical research through a program of public education, showing how to conduct this research and preserve the findings in a readily accessible form.

We publish genealogical research findings and information on research resources and techniques, hold public meetings on family history, and participate in the activities of related organizations.

Membership dues for 2018 are \$45 for individuals, \$55 for families, and \$45 for institutions. Members enjoy four issues of *Anglo-Celtic Roots*, ten family history meetings, members-only information on bifhsgo.ca, friendly advice from other members, and participation in special interest groups.

BIFHSGO Calendar of Events

Saturday Morning Meetings

The Chamber, Ben Franklin Place,
101 CentrepoinTE Drive, Ottawa

- 13 Jan 2018** *The Kemeys-Tynte Family of Cefn Mably*—David Jeanes will tell us of this family, now largely forgotten, which was once one of the most important gentry families of South Wales, living at the imposing Cefn Mably mansion, with roots that went back to the Norman conquest of Wales and to the crusades.
- 10 Feb 2018** **The Book Creator's Journey**—Tracey Arial and Barb Angus will outline the journey from first draft to final creation using examples from the recent compilation "Beads in a Necklace, Family Stories from Genealogy Ensemble." Through the challenges and decisions necessary to take your family stories to publication and sales, you'll get everything you need to get your own book underway.
- 10 Mar 2018** **Ulster Historical Foundation Lecture Day, 9:00–4:30**—Gillian Hunt and Fintan Mullen will present a full-day session of Irish research lectures. A modest fee will be charged to cover expenses. Details coming in the new year at www.bifhsgo.ca/meetings

Schedule

- 9:00–9:30 Before BIFHSGO Educational Sessions: check www.bifhsgo.ca for up-to-date information.
- 9:30 Discovery Tables
- 10:00–11:30 Meeting and Presentation
- 11:30–4:00 Writing Group

For information on meetings of other special interest groups (Scottish, Irish, DNA, Master Genealogist Users), check www.bifhsgo.ca.

Articles for *Anglo-Celtic Roots*

Articles and illustrations for publication are welcome. For advice on preparing manuscripts, please email the Editor, at acreditor@bifhsgo.ca. The deadline for submission to the Spring issue is 19 January 2018.