

# MILL ROAD MONOLOGUES

By local author Kay Blayney

These monologues are based on research conducted by Mill Road History and Friends of Mill Road Cemetery.

Mill Road History is a two-year community project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Volunteers learned new skills, researched the history of key sites and buildings, recorded interviews with local people and organised 'Memory Shops', to build a community archive available to all.

Visit our website at [www.capturingcambridge.org](http://www.capturingcambridge.org) to search for content on the history of Mill Road and Cambridge, street by street, road by road.

# MILL ROAD WOMEN

## MARY GURNER

Why are you looking at me in that way? What are you staring at?

Questions, questions, questions! All of the time! Questions.

*(Pause)*

Don't cry little one, please don't cry. I'm doing my best.

Can't you see I'm doing everything I possibly can!

*(Sarcastically)*

Where's your husband Mrs Gurner? Is he working away?

Oh how I'd have loved to have answered them by saying something mundane and incident like, Oh my husband he's a butcher and a fine one at that... But of course, I'd be lying.

*(Mimics the other women)*

Oh gosh! My husband has been getting home awfully late these days. Rushed off his feet you know.

They don't even know what late is! Without the night time shadows my husband would be unemployed!

I never wanted it to be this way and yes, I do feel guilty!

*(Mimics a Judge)*





Order! Order! Silence in court please! William Gurner,  
I sentence you to be hanged for stealing a lamb.

Verdict: GUILTY Mr Gurner, GUILTY!

*(Silent Pause)*

When and where is the next meal coming from? Which poor  
farmer will be counting and re-counting his flock today?

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. Eight hungry mouths  
to feed.

*(A posh voice)*

Did your husband.....did he, (whispers) pass away?

*(Dramatic pause)*

Yes he did, all the way to Australia! Back of beyond!

Transportation is what they call it, I think?

28th July 1829 a date that is implanted in my head, much like  
the sheep that I count each night as I lay my exhausted head  
on pillow.

Why are you looking at me in that way? What are you staring at?

You're all alright, you hitched yourselves up with pillars of the  
community, hard working men.

Me, Mary Gurner, I tied the knot with a sheep rustler!

## DOLLY MOY

*Hello Dolly, ... well, hello, Dolly*

Come on in and get yourself warm. Sauna is steaming today  
and so is my kettle.

*It's so nice to have you back where you belong*

Cup of tea? Biscuit?

*You're lookin' swell, Dolly... I can tell, Dolly*

Take as long as you want love. I'm here all day. Ten and a half  
hour shift and not complaining!

You're still glowin'... you're still crowin'... you're still goin' strong

Darts and Disco dancing – that's what keeps me young!

*I feel that room swayin'... while the band's playin'*

Englebert Humperdinck and Jim Reeves, can't beat 'em!

Please Release me, let me go, for I don't love you anymore...

*One of your old favorite songs from way back when*

Pass me your cup and saucer love and trust me, I'm a dab  
hand at looking into your future!



# Hello Dolly! (QUEEN OF THE SAUNA)

X CEN. 2-10-1973

**BATH-TIME** at Cambridge's municipal baths means clean towels, tea, biscuits—and Dolly.

Dolly, who runs the baths and the women's sauna on alternate days dishes out more than soap. She is always on hand to dispense homespun advice. She sits and listens to stories of husbands and boyfriends. To many women the sauna is just like a club, she points out. Some take their lunch and sit and relax there all day.

After a session in the steamy atmosphere of the "hot box"—punctuated by showers—they relax on reclining chairs, chat and sip lemon tea made by Dolly.

Dolly Moy, a warm-hearted grandmother, takes along her knitting—and a packet of biscuits which she offers round to "club members"—as she dispenses her own brand of folk wisdom. She reassures anyone not happy about their looks.

"Some people think that good looking girls stand a better chance. Don't you believe it. Just look at me."

There is a conviviality among the regulars at the sauna—who pay 55p a session, and no time limit. It is a place where the lonely can go just for a chat and company.

"They are very nice girls," she says warmly. Dolly takes a pride in her work although it does mean a long day, from 9.30 a.m. until the sauna closes at 8 p.m.

Even so, she is left with enough energy to go dancing at a disco every fortnight. And she is in the darts team at the Cross Keys public house, which is currently winning its league matches.

She knows she has got a very good husband. "Mind you, I have trained him well. He can cook as good a meal as I can." When she gets home from work at about 8.30 on Saturday evenings there is a cooked meal waiting for her.

Working five days a week she has little time to look after her home in Verulam Way, Cambridge. But she has her own system for brightening up housework.

A keen Engelbert Humperdinck and Jim Reeves fan, she puts on one of their records—very loud—grabs a mop and shuts her eyes!

And when it comes to the rattling of the tea cups Dolly is in her element. "Turn your cup upside down over the saucer and turn it anti-clockwise three times," she says when you have finished your drink. Dolly then peers into the cup and tries to make sense of the pattern of the tea leaves.

"It often comes true," she points out. There was the house by the river she kept seeing in her daughter-in-law's cup. It disappeared one day. That day she discovered her son had bought a house—by the river.

She looked at my cup. Surprisingly a corgi dog loomed large.

We have a cat, but no dog. I suppose I could start a few rumours about a new engagement for Prince Charles...



Dolly Moy — she sees the future in the tea leaves.

Image courtesy of Cambridge Newspapers Limited



*So... take her wrap, fellas... find her an empty lap, fellas*

Oh, he looks tall, dark and handsome to me...

*Dolly'll never go away*

My husband?

*Dolly'll never go away*

Oh, I'm trained him well. My dinner is on the table every Saturday night.

*Dolly'll never go away*

More tea love?

*Dolly'll never go away again*

Dolly Moy – Queen of the Sauna (female attendant at the baths back in 1973 when there was more than hot water on offer!

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Lyrics reproduced from *Hello Dolly*, by Herman, J. (1964)

# SUZY OAKES (1950-2011) TO COMMUNITY SPIRIT AND BEYOND

## A TRIBUTE

*This can be performed as a monologue or duologue.*

*(The Voice)*

Tea? Coffee? Do have some cake. It's truly delicious. Go on treat yourself. Life is too short!

*(Fact pack)*

Mill Road is a long road with a bridge in the middle. One side of this bridge is a place we all know as Romsey Town and the opposite side is Petersfield.

*(The Voice)*

When can we meet again? Let's put a date in the diary now and then we'll know that it is going to happen. Mine, yours or CB1?

*(Fact Pack)*

Shops and cafes line this prestigious location, this 'urban hotspot', this ethnically diverse mix of community and of course, spirit!







*(The Voice)*

Come a long; the more the merrier and you wouldn't not want to be involved would you now?

*(Fact Pack)*

The Salvation Army shop used to be a cinema and Subway was Barneys, selling cut price clothing, Ditchburn was a workhouse and the Cemetery, well that used to have its own chapel

*(The Voice)*

So, let's recap who is in charge of what – Food stalls check, Buskers check, Opening Ceremony Check, Health and Safety check.

*(Fact Pack)*

The terraced houses that are off Mill Road used to house the many railway workers that came to Cambridge back in the

*(The Voice)*

Great meeting with only one week to go...

Six Bells for a drink now?

*(Fact Pack)*

I have lived in the Mill Road area all of my life. I knew Mill Road before the Mill Road Winter Fair existed. I do not remember the exact date, but I do remember being 'brought back home' by this 'voice', this persuasive voice...





**SUZY OAKES**  
(1950 - 2011)



*(The Voice)*

Calling all of the community, yes each and every one of you, young and old; Community, diversity and respect is the name of the game.

When? The first Saturday in December, yes you heard correctly, December. This is a Winter Fair, not a summer one.

*(Fact Pack)*

Suzy Oakes, a lady I once met down Mill Road. With persuasive skills that were so strong you wouldn't even realise you were being press-ganged into something Mill Road minded until she'd left you!

Known as the 'Power of Persuasion'; remembered as a community champion.

Suzy Oakes we are all here today.

Mill Road Women and beyond, all playing our part in this 'meeting', we call life.

To community spirit and beyond!

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*Written for 2015 International Women's Day WOW Mill Road Women.*



Mill Road, c. 1900. *Image courtesy of Cambridgeshire Collection*

## ANNIE CARNEGIE-BROWN (1891 – 1981)

*(Annie enters the space in a secretive manner)*

*Ssssh! Ssssh!*

Reporting for duty. Carnegie-Brown, Miss Annie Carnegie-Brown, transferring from the Leeds force to serve here in Cambridge.  
1923

*(Looks around the room)*

Sssssh! - Friend or foe?

“Freund oder Feind? Schnell! Schnell! Sie sind wegen der Übermittlung von geheimen drahtlosen Nachrichten dem Feind verhaftet.”

*(Translation: Friend or foe? Hurry, hurry, you are under arrest for transmitting secret wireless messages to the enemy)*

Dangerous situations excited me during WW1 and WW2 and speaking German certainly put me in good stead to interrogate the German spies. Sssssh!

*(A shrill loud whistle followed by an arresting speech)*

“You do not have to say anything, but it may harm your defence if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence.”



*(Annie flicks through small notebook)*

7 pears to the value of 1s 6 d from a garden. It was a fair cop! I saw him stealing, so I took up chase at approximately 1300 hours. He was quick, I'll give him that! But so was I, back in the day. I ended up chasing him all the way down Tenison Road, onto St Barnabus Road and then up Gwydir Street, where I finally stopped him. Whew!

*(Takes a deep breath)*

Carnegie-Brown I'm arresting you for breaking your rule of talking about the past.

*(Picks up a newspaper and reads parts)*

My Olitary! Say's that I was 'an inspiration and described as a "clear-thinking woman, who later on in life became a determined old lady who never talked of the past".

Ssssh!

*(Mimics a prostitute)*

I'm sorry officer, I really am. This is not an house of ill repute, I promise you. You see I just looks after 'em , you know, the ladies of the night. Someone has to make sure that they have a roof over their heads. Do you know what I mean Officer? Miss?!

Yes, I am a Miss – Miss Carnegie-Brown and you 'Madam' are under arrest!

Next!





*(Mimics Star Gazer)*

Look into my eyes, yes, look into my eyes...oh yes, I can see many things. I can see a conflict between Jupiter and Mars!

Fortune telling! You're under arrest!

Stealing slippers! You're under arrest!

I was only borrowing them officer. I wasn't stealing, promise!

Anyway, who do you think you are: the spy interrogator? Blimey, you could interrogate the sword off of a musketeer or a pint of ale out of a drinking man's hands!

*(Smirks and shrugs her shoulders)*

Maybe I could, but I didn't manage to get the carving knife out of the hands of the fat woman in Ely who ended up stabbing me! OUCH!

It's alright, I'm fine. No harm done, only to my leather bag and woolly jumper.

Reporting for duty. Carnegie-Brown, Miss Annie Carnegie-Brown, retiring as the first Woman Police Sergeant.1947

Ssssh!

*(Pretends to throw out a fishing line)*

Real 'em in Annie, real them in and thank you for your services to the Cambridge constabulary all those years ago!



*Cambridge Union Workhouse, 1880. Image courtesy of Cambridgeshire Collection*



## EMMA HOSEGOOD (1849–1913)

*(From Emma's point-of-view)*

*(Old School Bell rings)*

Come along girls, hurry along, its Arithmetic time!

*(A young female pupil)*

Once twelve is twelve, two twelves are twenty four, three twelves are thirty six.

*(The voice of Emma)*

Thirty six! Just a number you may well think, but 36 is the amount of years that my dear husband Luke and I served in the Cambridge Workhouse, on Mill Road. (Contemplates) Ditchburn Place I think you call it now?

Master and Matron! Master Hosegood, that's my husband, was in charge of the boys and I, Mrs Hosegood (née Porter) was in charge of the girls and between us we worked very hard. Working with the young and elderly; variety was definitely the spice of life and we loved it!

Keeping house and teaching! Oh, think what you may, but it is more than a job, it is a vocation, it is life changing, it is a calling! I can assure you that we were dedicated to our roles and may I say honoured to be at the forefront of educating the youngsters at the workhouse.





We were trusted back then. Trusted to simply get on with our jobs.

*(A young female voice)*

Matron, Matron, how do you spell efficient?

*(Emma's response)*

Girls, come along, altogether now, E, F, F, I, C, I, E, N, T and again, E, F, F, I, C, I, E, N, T; efficient.

And why is efficient my favourite word girls?

Correct answer Mary, because hard work does not get accomplished if we are not efficient and what am I girls?

*(Choral tones)*

Efficient Mrs Hosegood, efficient.

*(Emma repeats)*

Efficient Mrs Hosegood, efficient that's what the school inspector said to me and my Luke back in 1873; November I think?

*(Mimics the School Inspector)*

"The boys school is much improved and in a state that does credit to the Schoolmaster. The girls have also passed a very fair Examination though there is need of improvement in their Arithmetic. The writing, especially that of some Girls, only seven Years old is remarkably good.





*(Irony)*

Good with Outstanding features, some might say now!

And it wasn't just the youngsters that we worked with back then, oh no, it was all ages. My Luke was outstanding. He could turn his hand to any age group. I remember that April day, back in 1883 when he was the 'hero of the day'.

*(School bell rings)*

Fire! Fire! There's a fire in the infirmary. Quick, hurry up. Help!

I can see my Luke now, he had determination in his eyes as he 'plunged' himself back into the flames rescuing the elderly inmates. He was quick of the mark I can tell you and he risked life and limb to save everyone.

Congratulations Mr Hosegood, you have earned yourself a prestigious award of bravery for 'prompt and meritorious action'. Bravo, bravo.

Bravo indeed, I was so proud of Luke and do you know what, I think he was proud of me too!

Master and Matron of the Cambridge Union Workhouse, Mill Road, Cambridge for 36 years!

Teachers, housekeepers, dining supervisors, life savers and efficiency itself that was 'us'.

All in a day's work my friends, all in a day's work!

CAMBRIDGE  
CLUB PREMISES - MILL ROAD CAMBRIDGE, - FOR - THE ROMSEY TOWN LABOUR

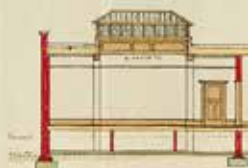
SCALE ONE INCH = EIGHT FEET



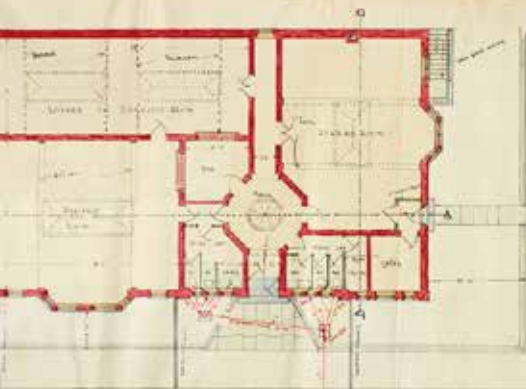
ELEVATION TO MILL ROAD



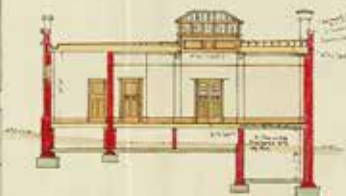
ELEVATION TO ROMSEY AVENUE



SECTION A.A.



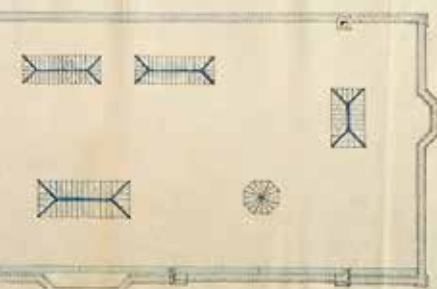
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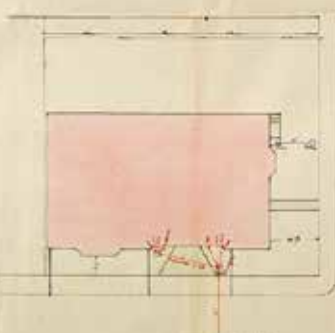
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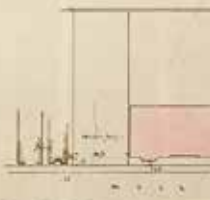
PLAN OF ROILER ROOM



GOLF PLAN



DRAINAGE PLAN



PIECE PLAN

## LEAH MANNING

*(Sings)*

*The people's flag is deepest red,  
It shrouded oft our martyr'd dead  
And ere their limbs grew stiff and cold,  
Their hearts' blood dyed its ev'ry fold.  
Then raise the scarlet standard high,  
Within its shade we'll live and die,  
Though cowards flinch and traitors sneer,  
We'll keep the red flag flying here*

*(Cheers and claps and encouraging the audience to join in)*

Look up there! Look at what the banner says: "Patriotism is not enough - Only love can save the world"!

*(Marches on the spot as if in a demonstration, chanting)*

*Save the world, feed the young  
Our chant to you has just begun!  
Save the world, equal pay  
We stand for Women, hip hip hooray!  
Free school milk. Free school meals  
Do you know how hunger feels?*

*(Leah smiles to herself and reminisces)*





Those were the days, hours of campaigning and never giving up. I can see my old chum and fellow suffragist, Susan Laurence now all dressed up as a factory manager, complete with spectacles and moustache.

*(Mimics Susan Laurence)*

What 'ave we here then? Women working in a jam factory who are not even earning the same as the men who are doing the exact same job. You must have more 'jam than Chivers' Mr Chivers!

Same thing happened with the Cambridge bedders. *(Smiles again to herself and directly tells an audience member)* I led that campaign. Hard working women simply weren't receiving the same money as their male counterparts working for the exact same Colleges. Scandalous! Outrageous! Wrong!

Equal pay, Equal pay

Come on women, what do you say?

Equal pay, Equal pay

Yes we did it. We won the day!

*(Mimics a man)*

Calm down ladies. It's great having you on the council, but one step at a time.





Yes Sir, one step, two, three and four and moving forwards,  
onwards and upwards, until we have won yet another campaign.

Equal pay, homes for orphans,...

*(Pauses and reflect)*

And then October 1928 – “Patriotism is not enough - Only love  
can save the world”!

We did it! Bravo, we did it! After four years of planning and  
numerous council meetings, we got our own premises.

Three cheers for the Romsey Labour Club, Hip hip (gets the  
audience to join in with the hurrahs) x 3

### Alternative ending

*(Could be portrayed as an older Leah Manning)*

*(Reflective mood again)*

“Now as I look back over my long life I find I have been able to  
achieve nothing of what I had in mind and that things are worse  
in the world today than when I was eighteen”

Although, we did support the Welfare of children and we did  
make a difference to how many council houses were built, but  
there are still wars ‘mankind’ seems intent on destroying this  
world one way or another!





I do not know how I can still be an optimist, but when I feel a bit low I simply turn to my favourite prayer from Michael Quoist's Prayers of Life:

*The bricklayer laid a brick on the bed of cement.*

*Then with a precise stroke of his trowel spread another layer.*

*And without a by-your-leave laid on another brick.*

*The foundations grew visibly.*

*The building rose tall and strong to shelter men.*

*I thought, Lord, of that brick buried in the darkness at the base of the big building.*

*No one sees it, but if accomplishes its task and the other bricks need it.*

*Lord, what difference if I am on the roof-top or in the foundation of your building, so long as I stand faithfully in my place.*

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Lyrics reproduced from *The People's Flag*, by Connel, J. (1889)





Rawlinsons, Mill Road, c. 1900. Image courtesy of Cambridgeshire Collection

# MILL ROAD LANDMARKS



*The Kinema building, Mill Road, 1980s. Image courtesy of Ann Horn*

## THE KINEMA

Eyes down and look in for your first number:

Two and 'O', blind twenty; at the gate, number eight, five and nine, the Brighten line, one and three, thirteen, unlucky for some!

Certainly was for us cinema lovers. There were no lucky seats back then. No unmarked territory where the regulars unofficially booked their 'lucky' seats which belonged to them on a weekly basis.

The seats were like pews back in the 20s and 30s with lino on the floor.

I can see it now, the projection room at the back of the auditorium with a big old iron ladder that Mr Pink's legs used to disappear up to!

'Legs Up', 'Legs Up'! Is what we all used to shout!  
A performance within a performance; moving images on screen and entertainment from Mr Pink off screen. I'm not sure which I preferred?





The sight of Mr Pink's legs disappearing up the ladder I think, and the batter that this caused. Although, that was nothing compared to if the film broke down, now that really was ensemble theatre, the sound of the cheers and boos almost brought the 'house' down.

Hurrah! Boo!

Other sounds of the Kinema, was live music to the tune of a piano or an orchestra if you were lucky!

Although, everything was black and white and silent...  
ssssssssssssssssssssshhh!

Excuse me. I'm sorry, excuse me. I do beg your pardon.  
Sorry to disturb you.

The familiar physical theatre routine of squeezing by a number of Kinema customers; who had just that minute settled down comfortably into their allocated seats, in preparation for the latest film, a Hoot Gibson cowboy film.

*(Mimics Cowboys and Indians)*

You couldn't hear the pianist for tuppence during that film! Too many kids shouting and screaming in the old 'flea pit' and I say that fondly, because the more crowded the auditorium became, the smellier it got, but in a nice kind of way, if you know what I mean!





Memories of the Kinema, the cinema, before it turned into...

Kelly's eye, number one, two little ducks, twenty-two,  
legs eleven (*whistle*)

Fancy a date darling. Meet you outside the Kinema, six o'clock  
on the dot.

Don't be late!

Say that again?

Top of the shop, number ninety!

BINGO!

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*Inspired from the Mill Road History Project Building Report, particularly the memories  
of the Kinema (from Peggy Mansfield, Reg Wood, Walter Miller and Fred Unwin)*

## THE BATH HOUSE

A monologue to commemorate Ben Benstead who thinks he was the first paying customer at the Public Baths (Bath House, Gwydir Street, Cambridge)

Everything changes and yet nothing changes all of the time.  
Feels like the opening line of a song and probably is?

Hang on, might as well check it out in this digital age that we live in now! Google it...

START – INTERNET EXPLORER – DOUBLE CLICK – WAIT – OLD LAPTOP – WAIT – GOOGLE - type in: Everything changes and yet nothing changes

Wow! Lots to choose from:

*nothing-changes-everything-changes – Buddhism book*

C.S. Lewis — ‘Isn’t it funny how day by day *nothing changes*, but when you look back, *everything* is different...’

Dave Smullen - “*Everything Changes* and *Nothing Changes*”

The line of a song; see I told you!

(Sings as if in the bath)

Everything changes and nothing changes

La la - La la la - La la

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*Moss & Palmer, Chemist, 206 Mill Road, c. 1909. Image courtesy of Tansy Tucker*



## HARRIS NORMAN FROM THE POINT-OF-VIEW OF MR WILLIAM WALL (HAIRDRESSER)

*(William mimics Harris Norman using his Jewish traits)*

Good Afternoon, that is a nice necklace that you are wearing. Come here my dear; let me have a closer look. Yes, looks like gold to me.

Hallmark!?

No matter. No-one really looks these days and if they do ask any questions you quickly get them to try the item of jewellery on.

Oh yes, suits you madam. Oh sir, you look a treat in that.

How much?

Aargh, how much you may enquire. Enough, but not too much to you my dears, not too much!

“Not too much” was his line. Oh yes, “not too much” is what all of the customers fell for every time. A sale, a purchase, a bargain! Ladies would get out their silk purses and gentlemen would pull out their leather wallets from their inside pockets handing over their weekly earnings to Mr Harris Norman.



*(Mimics HN)*

Jeweller and investment dealer at your service my dears!

He called everyone, my dear, apart from his so called family. By all accounts he was not impressed with them. And to tell you the truth, they weren't that impressed with him.

*(Mimics Harris's family)*

Lend us a farthing or a guinea or two. You've got plenty you old miser!

Misery and old Polish Jew is what they called him too!

Families, you either love them or loathe them!

And believe me, old Harris certainly loathed his lot. He had no intention of giving them any of his, let's say, slyly negotiated earnings. No hand-outs for this unfortunate family, not while Harris Norman was living or dead! Oh no, he stored his guineas up in that little upstairs room in number 206!

Me, I lived across the road at 171 Mill Road, Mr William Wall, Hairdresser by trade and friend to old Harris Norman. Well, he might have been mean, but he certainly knew how to earn a bob or two and he always had a good old chat with me when we saw each other (which was every day!).





In fact, it was me that told him to make a will. At first he said that it was too much bother and he had nobody to leave his money to, but as we stood on Mill Road chatting one day he told me that he had once been a patient at Addenbrooke's Hospital, where he'd apparently received very kind treatment'. Of course, on hearing this I immediately suggested that he should leave some of his money to the hospital and to my surprise, he agreed. He decided that he would leave half of his money to the hospital and half to the London Jewish Synagogue, for the benefit of poor and needy Jews.

You see, he was a Jew. Born in Poland – Polish – a foreigner!

I'm not sure whether he could write or whether it was just poor eyesight, but on the day that I'd completed his will I asked him to come across the road to mine to check and sign it and he launched into one of his speeches...

"William my dear, I can't see a thing. You know all of this looking at diamonds and pearls has stunted my sight! You'll have to sign it on my behalf my friend.

A marked cross and the deed was done. Signed, sealed and witnessed by our other friend, Mr Hurrell who lived a few doors along at 236 Mill Road.

'Mill Road' that's where we all lived and worked, all of us traders together, helping each other out whenever we could; wills and all; till death do us part!





Thank the ‘Lord Almighty’ we sorted old Harris Norman’s will because death came a knocking at his door – Number 206 - Harris Norman deceased!

Oh how the magpies and crows fly when the north wind doth blow! His family!

All dressed in black and waiting for their share; their inheritance! Waiting, waiting for their pockets to be lined with fake silver and gold and a fair few guineas and farthings!

*(Mimics HN)*

Over my dead body my dears! Never, never, never will they get their hands on my treasures; Family. Huh!

Can you keep this under your hat, can you? You see if I’d have known it was under this ole beauty, I could have told the solicitor that at the time, but I didn’t know. Didn’t have a clue.

As far as I knew Mr Harris Norman’s will was locked away in Mr Hurrell’s safe, only turns out that inside that sealed envelope that was given to Mr Hurrell by Mr Norman was a set of instructions for writing a will.

Where’s the will? Where is Norman Harris’s last will and testimony?

*(Focuses on the hat)*





Inside this! Can you believe me when I tell you that I found old Harris Norman's original will in the silk lining of this old hat that he leant me ages ago to wear at my friend's funeral. I tried to give it back to him, but the funny thing is he said that I could keep it; he never gave you anything, not even a cup of tea! Mr Miser the jeweller! Mr Miser the Jew!

He made up the excuse that his landlady (Mrs Calcott of No. 206) complained that it – this hat that I hold here in my hand, was in the way!

**This is the last will and testament of me Harris Norman, bachelor, resident at 206 Mill-road, Cambridge, in the county of Cambridge. I give and bequeath the whole of my property whatsoever and wheresoever, to be equally divided between the two establishments named herein. To Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, and the London Synagogue for the poor and needy Jews, and I name the Governor of the Hospital sole executor.**

I often wonder? Did he know that I'd keep the hat and find the will?

Hat's off to Harris Norman and may he "rest in peace, my dears, rest in peace"!

KAY BLAYNEY © 2015

*Cambridge Independent Press, 31 January 1908, British Newspaper Archive*  
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# MILL ROAD CEMETERY

## JAMES REYNOLDS

*(Stands boldly as if about to perform in a play – the actor prepares)*

To be, or not to be: that is the question? (Pauses)

To be of course, thanks to Old Nic, God rest his soul. He taught me everything I know.

*(Mimics driving a horse and cart/carriage)*

‘Four-in-hand’ - Woe boys - Giddy-up! Walk on...

John Nichols, Old Nic. Call him what you like, but “don’t call me late for my tea” – is what he used to say when anyone called out to him. He was a character! He was the finest driver in town! All aboard the Stamford Coach – roll up, roll up. Runs daily between town and Cambridge, tickets please!

He taught me everything I know – From the Rose Inn Cambridge to the Bull Inn down Aldgate-Street, London on the Safety Coach, onto to Birmingham, through Oxford and Leamington – gee up boys – let’s get them to town; we’re on the Sovereign coach now.

Change – change – change  
*(steers the horses around corners)*





Would you like to drive the ‘Telegraph’ from Cambridge to London? Yes, Sir! When Sir? Immediately Sir, Walk on boys, walk on... *(makes the sound of a horse)*

My dream come true, driving for the ‘Telegraph’ – Day return trips to Wadesmill and Cambridge; To London and back again in two days.

Cambridge to London, here we go, you’ll get there in time and never be slow. Vying for business the other coaches seek, at the time when Jem Reynolds was truly at his peak. Top coachman, they would shout and say with only one reported accident at the end of the day.

February 1830 it was when the coach overturned. I was driving at my usual steady pace when I saw this great big tree...

Woe! Steady she goes, clipperty clop, clipperety clop, to London and back, clipperty clop, clipperty clop... STOP! *(Said in the rhythm of train sounds)*

*(Whistle is blown)* The beginning of the end – the Railway!

Still the coach business kept going and all of us kept on going, up and down along the Cambridge to London route: Times, Star, Fly, Rocket, Rapid & Beehive all timetabled in the 1840 Cambridge Guide alongside the Telegraph. My beloved Telegraph – my coach, my passion, my life!

“Whip away forever, Oh drive away so clever. Oh all the way to London, oh, He drives her four-in-hand”.



# MILL ROAD CEMETERY CUSTODIAN: THOMAS STANBRIDGE

## CUSTODIAN'S DUTIES

Move back everyone. Make way for the procession. Sssssh – show a bit of respect please.

Good afternoon one and all and welcome to Mill Road Cemetery. Thomas Stanbridge is my name and being 'custodian is my game'.

Before we move on, may I remind you that this is where I live with my wife and four children (points to the lodge) Private – KEEP OUT!

May I also remind you that I am in charge of maintaining the law and order of these sacred grounds so conduct yourselves in an orderly fashion!

Evening all (*gestures being a policeman*) – As well as Custodian I am also a Special Constable, one of her majesties chosen few, so anything that you say or do may be taken down as evidence and used against you later on in the court of law!

Rules are rules and not there to be broken.





Victorian Day at Mill Road Cemetery, July 2013. Image courtesy of Becky Proctor



What do I do? That's a good question and one I am willing to share:

- 1 To keep a register book of appointments for Funerals, so as to prevent Funerals clashing.
- 2 To keep the paths clean and in order, and also the edges of the grass cut to the width of one foot.
- 3 To keep the Chapel clean.
- 4 To keep the Avenue in order.
- 5 To lock the gates at appointed times.

So don't try and stay here after this funeral is over. Pay your respects. Say your prayers. Leave your

Flowers and don't be taking flowers off of other poor beggars graves. I've seen it before. Folk come

In here, empty handed and then by the time the vicar's got to the 'ashes to ashes' bit, they are standing

there beside the 6 foot hole clutching onto bunches of fresh pickings from another man's tomb.

Disgusting!





Excuse me, what do you think that you're doing here. Yes you. No stonemasons allowed while this funeral is taking place. I've been here before, 'pushed right under one of the coaches attending the funeral, and my leg fixed between the wheel of the coach, and the headstone'. Then if that wasn't enough, I got struck under my chin, and then threatened to have me beard pulled out.'

No, no, I'm not having it. No-one comes in here to work while there's a funeral taking place.

*(Shouts out to his wife in the lodge)*

I'm on duty dear. Then I'm going to tend to 'Swans' plot. See you later. I'll be back in time for tea!

*(Directly addresses the audience)*

Ladies and Gentlemen, family of the deceased, follow me. This way please.

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Mill Road Cemetery. Image courtesy of Suzy Oakes Collection

## EMMA ROLFE

*(Sings)*

Ring-a-ring-a-roses a pocket full of posies, a tissue, a tissue,  
we all fall down

*(Falls to the ground – pauses and then sings again)*

The cows are ‘on’ the common eating butter cups, a tissue,  
a tissue we all jump up.

*(She jumps up to her feet and looks up to the sky, raising her arms up)*

Rolfe

Yes Sir!

Get on with you duties.

Yes Sir *(She scrubs her own gravestone, reading the inscriptions out loud)*

In loving memory of ‘Eliza Rolfe, died Oct 14th, 1890 aged 58  
years. 58 years old. *(Sighs and counts...)*

That’s 42 more years than I had.

*(Ponders over her own name, polishes it and moves onto the next name)*





Alfred Rolfe. Dear little Alfie (sighs again). He died when I was just 2 years old. I was too young to understand at the time, but I realised once I'd left that house in Barnwell that I'd been the scapegoat. Her scapegoat. I was the one who took the brunt of her grief. There was not a day that passed where I wasn't reminded of her loss and my luck.

You're the lucky one my girl, she would say. At least you still have breath in your lungs.

*(Gasps)*

She always called me 'my girl' but it wasn't in a proud way. No! It was abrupt and sharp, just like her tongue! ELIZA!

*(Emma spits on the grave stone and wipes it clean)*

*(Turns her back on the gravestone)*

It's alright, I'm leaving. I can't stand it here anymore. I've got a place, in town. Away from you, away from this place!

*(Emma turns back to the gravestone and polishes her own name)*

Emma Rolfe – nearly 16 – A new address now, 15 Crispin Street, off East Road

Emma Rolfe - 'My girl', making your own way now, standing on street corners - Maids Causeway.. Lardy da. Good evening sir, at your service. A Shilling for me or you can have us both if you like.

Two for the price of one! *(Laughs to herself)*





Mill Road Cemetery Chapel painting by Richard Banks Harraden (1778-1862). *Image courtesy of Michael Heafford*





That was Annie's line. Annie Pepper she did all the talking.

*(Kisses the gravestone)*

No kissing on the lips. No emotional transactions, like 'I love you'. Keep it business like. Keep it safe and keep it simple. Be discrete at all times. Don't be loud. No screaming or yelling. Keep it quiet.

Those were Mrs Phillips rules, although she never abided by them.

It was a bit after 9 o'clock that I met up with Annie again by the gate that leads onto Midsummer common. I'd also met up with this bloke right next to the drinking fountain by the railings. Annie being Annie asked him if he'd treat us ladies, us 'working girls' to an ale or two. He refused point blankly. So she asked him again and he said he would 'stand us a pint' but only after he'd had one of us. He didn't want two.

*(Calls to Annie)*

I won't be long. See you soon Annie...

Over, under, running, racing, pushing, pulling, pinching, punching, pressing, pounding, pulsating, panting, panting, panting...Hurting, hurting...SCREAMS!

*(Screams)*

He wanted it. You could see it in his eyes.  
He really wanted it.





Cut throat though it may seem, Robert Browning simply wanted revenge.

*(Softly strokes her mother's name on the gravestone)*

What was it you used to say Mother, "Two wrongs don't make a right".

*(Emma lies on her back and talks to the sky...)*

Eliza, I'm alright now. I'm standing on my own two feet – no more lying on my back...

Hello. Helloooooo. Is there anybody there? Alfie, Alfie, are you up there. Can you see me? I'm coming to play with you now.

Emma Rolfe, died August 24th, 1876, aged 16 years!

MY GIRL!

*(Sings)*

Ring-a-ring-a-roses a pocket full of posies, a tissue, a tissue,  
we all fall down

*(Falls to the ground – pauses and then sings again)*

The cows are in the common eating butter cups, a tissue,  
a tissue we all jump up, up, up, up!

*(She looks up to the sky and raises her arms and then slumps down on her knees)*



Mill Road, c. 1900. *Image courtesy of Cambridgeshire Collection*

# MILL ROAD WORLD WAR I

# FRANK LESLEY TREWEEKE (1882-1916)

## FROM HIS MOTHER'S POINT-OF-VIEW

*(A group congregate around Frank's grave and begin to sing  
Cousin Jack - a Cornish mining song)*

*(Singing)*

*Where there's a mine or a hole in the ground  
That's what I'm heading for that's where I'm bound  
So look for me under the lode and inside the vein,  
Where the copper the clay the arsnic and tin  
Run in your blood and under your skin  
I'll leave the county behind I'm not coming back  
Oh follow me down cousin Jack.*

*(Frank's Mother joins the group, shovel in hand, and joins in  
with the singing. She puts down the shovel and gasps...)*

Frank! Frank! What are you doing here?

*(Directly addressing the audience)*





They are singing for me; my fellow diggers; my fellow tunnel comrades; the Royal Engineers, at his majesties service.

I haven't seen these men for a while now, well not since France, not since we were working in the tunnels together preparing the way for the Battle of Arras.

About 500 of us worked around the clock - 18-hour shifts – two months at a time!

Preparing for the troops, digging deep, tunneling through the network of caverns which we called the 'boves'.

*(Begins to dig)*

Just keep on a digging, digging, adding new boves, clearing the way for the troops so that they can get to the battlefield safe and sound and with no-one knowing.

*(Directly to the audience)*

Sssssh it's a secret.

Digging, digging, tunneling amongst the sewage and quarries, down, down, down!

*(Exhausted, stops and leans on his shovel)*





If it doesn't kill you, it makes you stronger is what my Ma used to say and that's what I used to tell them nurses in the 1st Eastern General Hospital. When I lay there on that cold metal bed, I used to tell them – it was warmer in France in the tunnels than it is here in this cold Hospital tents – cause it was a temporary set up you see.

Thinking about it now, it seems strange that I died in that cold metal bed and not in a warm tunnel. I often used to think about meeting my maker in them tunnels, but things happen when they happen and my day wasn't up until the 7th day of November 1916 in England and not in France!

*(Begins to speak and then the others join in and sing the opening song)*

*Where there's a mine or a hole in the ground  
That's what I'm heading for that's where I'm bound*

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Lyrics reproduced from *Cousin Jack*, by Knightley, S (2007)

## WILLIAM CHARLES SIDNEY HORSPPOOL (1892-1918)

*(From the male or female point-of-view – William or Connie)*

My Dearest Connie,

It is with deepest regret that I have to inform you that I died. Yes, my love, you did read this correctly, I did say the dreaded ‘D’ word, died! I know this will come as a shock to you and I know that I could have used a more polite phrase, like, ‘passed away’, but tragically on the 29th September 1918, I, William Charles Sidney Horspool died of burns after a rather nasty accident in the operating theatre.

*(Takes a deep breath and sighs)*

My Sweet one, I want you to know that I am as shocked as you probably are. In fact, I couldn’t believe what had happened to me and let me tell you, it happened very quickly!

*(Pause)*







My love, I ask for your forgiveness; I ask you to forgive me for not dying out in there in the field as my fellow comrades so bravely did. I'm afraid it wasn't as glamorous as that for me; no guns or grenades; unfortunately, at the time it happened I wasn't even fighting!

*(Sighs)*

Alas my love, when I went and got myself killed, I was only standing in the sterilizing room; yes, the sterilizing room in the General, of all the places!

*(Reminiscing)*

Do you remember Hunstanton? How could you forget?  
Our first kiss?

*(Smiles)*

Do you remember that old primus stove that was in the guest house where we stayed? Well, there was an old primus stove at No. 41 General Hospital, just like the one in Hunstanton and I was lighting it with methylated spirits, like you do, when there was an almighty 'BANG'!

The next thing I know is that I'm a shaking and rolling around in agony, sheer agony!

Shock apparently!





2nd-degree burns is what the doctor said when I lay there. Connie, I heard him even though they thought I'd gone I heard every word he said: "severe burns to his chest, both legs, hands and arms up to his elbows, and slight facial burns, 2nd-degree".

I love you Connie. I really, really love you. You are my girl, my sweet, my one and only and I'm sorry, truly sorry.

Take care of yourself Connie and don't forget to keep smiling. Always remember me, won't you?  
Always remember me?

Yours truly and forever Connie

Your very own, 'Sergeant Horspool'

PS. It was just an accident Connie, no harm done  
my sweet, no harm done!

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## WILLIAM JAMES EPHRAIM HUNT (1885–1916)

*(From his wife's point-of-view, Ethel May Hunt neé Meeks)*

Bending down, tending to the grave.

I've brought you white lilies today William. *(Arranges the lilies one by one)*

I got them from the market, just for you my love.

So, how are you doing? Are you well?

All's well here. The children are all doing well and I've got myself a little job to help make ends meet. Sewing and a bit of washing too, you know I love washing. *(Laughs to herself)*

You remember Will *(sings)*

*Tw'as on a Monday Morning,  
When I beheld my darling;  
She looked so neat and charming  
In every high degree;  
She looked so neat and nimble, O,  
A-washing of her linen, O,  
Dashing away with the smoothing iron,  
Dashing away with the smoothing iron,  
She stole my heart away.*





I miss you Lance Corporal. I wish you were still here with us.

The Fitzroy Street lot send their love. Thank God for good neighbours.

God rest Alice Hayward's soul – your dear ole Mum, she was right after all.

For all those times she used to quote the Ten Commandments, the one that has stuck with me since you've been gone is: Love their neighbour as thyself!

Our Leslie is doing well. He got 6 overs and not out. It was a lovely day out for us all on Parkers Piece.

I thought of you William as I packed a picnic and made scotch eggs (your favourites).

He looked so handsome in his whites. He must get his cricketing skills from my side of the family – bless him. He's just like you William, the spitting image.

*(Stands up)*

He's no coward though; throws himself right into the match. He's a great batsman and good out on the field too.





I know you didn't want to go to the Somme William. I do know that. But my love you did the right thing. I bet you were good on the field too, only your field, the Western Front field, the battle of the Somme field wasn't as kind to you and the other soldiers as Parkers Piece is to our boy and his fellow cricketers.

*(Checks the lilies and smells them)*

No white feathers for you my love not today; My William,  
my hero, my love.

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Lyrics reproduced from *Dashing Away*, Traditional English folk song

### Commentary:

William worked in a reserved occupation on the railways but he was sent white feathers (a sign of cowardice). Therefore, William chose to enlist and he became Lance Corporal (36316) in the 7th Battalion (Extra Reserve) of the Royal Fusiliers (London Regiment). William's Battalion was mobilized for war and landed at Le Havre, France on 24 July 1916. It joined the 190th Brigade of the 63rd Division and was sent to the Western Front. William died on the first day of the Battle of Ancre on 13 November 1916.



Henry Hunt and family, c. 1916. *Image courtesy of Mary Naylor*

## KENNETH GORDON CAMPBELL (1895–1915)

*(Well-spoken Officer)*

*(Holding a brown parcel)*

‘A parcel delivery to France’ all the way from Cambridge, England; addressed to moi, Lieutenant Kenneth Gordon Campbell of the 12th Battalion in the Highland Light Infantry.

Now, what have they sent me this time? Let me have a guess? (Prods and feels the parcel and then directly addresses the audience)

Do you have any ideas?

*(Continues to prod and feel the parcel, still trying to guess)*

Um, a return letter or letters for sure! I’m always writing letters to them back home.

A magazine or two, I think? Soap, carbolic! *(Continues to feel the parcel and smiles)* Peppermint creams, oh I do hope so.

Chocolate! Now that just may be wishful thinking on your part, Campbell!





*(Reflects)* Chocolate the main ingredient for making cups of cocoa...

*(Puts the parcel down and walks around and around his own gravestone ranting)*

Night hikes with St Faiths, trudging on and on through Cambridgeshire fields and meadows. Wining at Winchester; Soccer, rowing, golf, and army maneuvers with the OTC – forward, steady the buffs, charge! *(Stops)*

And what was your reward at the end of the day, I hear you say! A cup of hot cocoa I tell you, a cup of hot cocoa.

*(Sits down next to his parcel and pretends to clutch onto a mug, slightly shivering)*

Merci Madame, je suis très reconnaissant de votre hospitalité. Le chocolat chaud est délicieux, surtout après avoir passé une journée longue et toute la nuit dans les tranchées.

Thank you Madame. Your hospitality is much appreciated and the cocoa is delicious, especially after a long day and night in the trenches.

*(Frantically, gets a pen and paper out of his pocket)*

Darling Lorna.







Thanks for your sweet letter from Eye. Hope George is well.  
Please give him my love, and wish me well.

Ken

*(Stands up and picks up the parcel)*

My last parcel received and my last letter sent to my  
darling sister.

“Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori” – It is sweet and  
fitting to die for one’s country.

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Translated by Philip Blayney

### **Commentary:**

Kenneth Gordon Campbell died in action at the unsuccessful  
Battle of Loos on the Western Front on 25 September 1915.

## THOMAS SMITH (1877-1914)

*(A confused Thomas is looking around, searching for South Street. Directly addressing the audience.)*

Excuse me Sir, I'm looking for South Street. Number 11 South Street to be precise. I know it's over there somewhere, but I can't seem to find it!

Excuse me Madam; can you direct me to South Street? It seems to have disappeared! I know that it lies between Bradmore Street and Broad Street.

Excuse me laddie, I'm searching for South Street. I'll give you a farthing if you show me the way.

*(Calls out to his wife)*

Julia! Julia! Where are you? I'm home. Julia? Julia, you ask! She's my wife. I've got two daughters too! My girls! JULIA!

*(Exhausted, Thomas sits down by his grave and rubs his arm)*

Cor Blimey! He got me this time, good and proper, right in the funny bone, although I'm not laughing.

"Never creep up behind a horse" is what ole Joey Blacksmith used to say. "Greet 'em first, show 'em some respect and they'll be as good as gold for you when you're fitting them with their new shoes".

I should know that I've been a farrier now for years, but it only takes one little mistake, one moment of thinking about the boys on the front line.





“Woe, steady boy”! (*Mimics the horse – Brrrrrh!*)

“Steady up Ned, easy now, you know you need new shoes; you’ve got a war to attend and an officer to carry”.

Hooves up and horseshoes on. Tap, tap, tap, there you go. Let the cavalry commence.

“Farrier Smith, of the Loyal Suffolk Hussars, you’ve made a splendid job of Sarrason’s hooves. Come on Sarro, we can do it. CHARGE”!

(*Thomas covers his head*)

Bang, bang, boom, blast! NO!

I don’t know what was worse, the falling of the men or the horses that I’d shoed myself. (Pause) The horses I think?

(*Looks around the Cemetery*)

Mill Road Cemetery! The last time I came here I’d been transported from Woodbridge in Suffolk. I was covered in a Union Jack, well that is my coffin was covered, not me! My 37 year old shell was inside the box, but my spirit was trotting, galloping, and leaping over this ‘ere Cemetery just like the horses I used to hoove.

Thomas Smith, ‘At Rest’, at Mill Road Cemetery, at least this place hasn’t changed!

Giddy up there boy, we’re going home.

(*Looks towards Anglia Ruskin University’s building*)

Now to South Street, I’m sure it is in that direction.

# KAY BLAYNEY

## BIOGRAPHY

As a child I was fascinated by local characters, capturing their lives in short stories and simple character accounts. Those observational skills never left me and over the years I have captured people's lives, places, events and passages of time through journal and monologue entries. My nomination for an Escalator Award in 2005 and short listing in 2009 spurred me on to continue my writing.

The fact that I was brought up in Romsey Town, Mill Road, has set me in good stead and has enabled me to write about local people and situations with a valid story to tell. My passion is life writing and my inspiration and ideas are endless, an array of hidden and forgotten (often buried!) local characters and events waiting to be revived and written about in a creative non-fictional way.

With thanks to Mill Road History Society; Friends of Mill Road Cemetery; key researchers, Ian Bent, Emma Easterbrook and Mary Naylor; and Compass Theatre students from Parkside Federation Academy (Parkside & Coleridge). Translation by Philip Blayney.



Inside cover image,  
Women's Cooperative Society outing, 1948.  
*Courtesy of Cambridgeshire Collection*