

Patricia & Ernest Grayston – Family History

Patricia and Ernest were married on the **31 October 1953** at St Patricks church in Sliema Malta. Patricia and Ernest had had met at a local dance Hall in Birkenhead when he either bravely or foolishly strayed ashore from his submarine Tally Ho which had gone into the Birkenhead Docks for repairs.

Patricia - the fifth and youngest child of Sarah Jane and was born in the family home at 12 Getley Street Birkenhead (opposite Cammell Lairds shipyard) and had attended the local school - St Werburgh.

The Second World War interrupted her schooling, and she was evacuated to plas Wiggan St Martins Shropshire with her life long friend Nora Hayes. But her mother, Sarah Jane brought the two of them home just before the intense bombing by the Luftwaffe had started. As their home was between the shipyard and the docks, frequently the family had to quickly shelter under the stairs.

After leaving school at 14, Patricia started work in the Co-operative Departmental Store in Grange Road Birkenhead and later she worked the Co-op store in West Kirby. When she and her family had moved to Berkshire she worked for NHS dealing with GP Records.

One thing Patricia liked doing was going on holidays with friends to places like the Isle of Man and Scotland as well as the Festival of Britain. Also Patricia likes being with the very young members of the family to jangle, especially if there is cake and a glass of *Ginger Wine* at hand.

Ernest - as also born in 1927 at the Royal Navy Hospital in Gillingham Kent but a month earlier (*which he never allowed to forget*).

Until the Second World War Ernest lived with his parents and younger brother in Dale St Chatham. When the War started the brothers were evacuated to South Wales but to different locations.

Ernest had to return to Chatham when he was old enough to start work and his first job was an apprentice Cooper. He then worked with Shorts Brothers on the River Medway making wooden aircraft frames for Sea Planes.

In 1943 Ernest joined the Royal Navy in the Signals Branch and rose to the rank of Yeoman of Signals; serving on both on surface ships and submarines. Taking part in both in the Atlantic and Arctic Convoys, he also trained Danish SOE Agents in the Royal Navy signal procedures.

Then in 1945 he was part of the Royal Navy Squadron that took King Haakon VII back to Norway immediately after the Germans had surrendered. This involved sailing through the minefields laid by the Germans in the Fiords leading to Oslo, which the Germans had deliberately laid to frustrate the return of the King by sea which for the Norwegians was a very symbolic gesture.

On leaving the Navy, Ernest joined the Waterguard then part of the Custom and Exercise, first boarding ships at sea to search for contraband, then after moving to Heathrow Airport he then worked the development of the first Computer Systems, for the processing and the collection of duties as well as in the Duty-Free Warehouses. After retiring Ernest worked as a consultant to the Namibian Customs Service in Windhoek.

With his sense of adventure Ernest and Patricia have travelled extensively Africa, North America as well as Europe.

Being born south of the River Medway, Ernest was a very proud - '*Man of Kent*' and insisted on eating only produce from the '*Garden of England*', although he was very partial to a glass or two of *Henley Special Bitter* hence why he moved to Wokingham to be in walking distance of his favourite Breakspear Pub.

Ernest died 24 June 2011 at his home in Wokingham.

Family- Ernest & Patricia

Children - **Nicholas** – 1954 Administrator, **Andrew** – 1957 Manger of Plumbing and Heating Merchant **Clare** 1960 – 2013 Corporate Lawyer (Top 500).

Grandchildren – **Matthew** – 1975 Railways Signals Engineer; **Paul** – 1978 Fireman & Electrician **Phillip** -1980 Equestrian Rider & Stuntman, **Robert** – 1982 Manager of a furniture Store.

Great Grandchildren **Nicol** – 1998, **Ben** – 2002; **Isabelle** - 2004 **Zachery** - 2006, **Evie** - 2009, **Sebastian** - 2019, **Ryker** - 2021.

The range of interest of the Great Grandchildren include Video Editing, Equine Science and mucking out, Snakes & Motor cars, Social Care & Mixed Basketball, Eating Ice Cream and being a loveable nuisance.

Clare's Goddaughter – **Anna Palmer** who is a Medical Doctor and has a weakness for Orange juice and a drop of Champagne, thanks to her Godmother!

Nora Hayes (1927-2010)

A life long friend of Patricia and they may have shared a cot together, they went to the same school, were evacuated together, both worked in the Co-op, went to Dances where they were the wallflowers, shared boy friends, went on holidays together and occasionally quarrelled.

Later they even managed to marry Customs Officers with the same first name; Nora married Ernest James (Jim) Pointon in 1960 and they had a son Michael and two granddaughters.

Nora and Patricia were dancing together at the Kingsland Hall when they met Ernest, Nora was not too impressed so she graciously let Patricia dance with him and the rest is History!

Trevor and Maria

In Malta a long-lasting friendship developed with Maria (1927-2015) and Trevor (1928-2004) Instone. The friendship started when Maria rescued a lamb stew that Patricia had left on the hob when she went to walk along the sea front with Ernest.

Trevor was also in the Royal Navy, a Coxswain. Maria was an active member of Baptist Church and was involved in number of social events which Patricia and Ernest attended.

After they all had returned Home there were visits to each other homes and exchange of Christmas cards. The visits to Trevor and Maria were particularly interesting when Trevor had small holdings in Shropshire and Devon.

Parents and Grandparents

	<i>Parents</i>	<i>Grandparents</i>
Ernest 1927-2011	Dorothy 1908-1991	Frank Fitch 1876-1941
		Elizabeth Harden 1881-1920
	Ernest G 1886-1972	George William Grayston 1851-1909
		Mary Ann Spurgeon 1849-1921
Patricia 1927	Sarah Jane 1882-1975	Thomas McCormick 1835-1910
		Mary Spellman 1839-1895
	Alexander 1862-1945	Gilbert McKellar 1839-1904
		Margaret Roberts 1831-1918

Patricia - Parents

Father - Alexander McKellar

Born 1862 – Price St Birkenhead > Died 1945 – Workhouse Hospital Birkenhead

Alexander was the eldest of 8 children: he did not complete his education but ran away to sea. He became a Bosun in the Merchant Navy and sailed around the world going to China for Tea and around Cape Horn to Valparaiso Chile to collect Guano.

Until his marriage to Sarah Jane Alexander in 1912 he lived around St Mary's church in Birkenhead with his parents and may have worked Shipyard whilst waiting for a position on a ship.

Alexander and Sarah Jane may have got to know one another through Sarah Jane's brothers who were also Merchant Seaman and may have gone to Sea with Alexander and the eldest brothers had shown Alexander the ropes.

Patricia remembers her father as a quiet and gentle man who spent the evenings with her telling stories about his adventures and bought her comics from the back of Birkenhead Market.

Mother - Sarah Jane McCormick

Born 1882 – Pall Mall Liverpool > Died 1975 – Tranmere Birkenhead

Sarah Jane was the youngest of eleven children; her mother, Mary, died when she was 13 and she was then looked after by her older sister Letitia.

At 14 Sarah Jane was a Child Minder for a group of women from Birkenhead including her sister Letitia who were cleaners in Liverpool, they lived in Gibraltar Row Liverpool, known as a very lively area.

In 1898 at 16 Sarah Jane married John Henry Jones (*nick name Tiny*) at St Peters in Liverpool. John Henry had lived near Sarah Jane in Birkenhead and was a Labourer. In 1906 John Henry died aged 27; their family had consisted of three children – William George (1901), Mary (1902-1975) and Thomas Francis (1904) but sadly William George and Thomas Francis died soon after they were born.

Sarah Jane married Alexander McKellar in 1911 and they had two children – Margaret Theresa (Peggy) (1913-1993) and Patricia in 1927.

Family of Sarah Jane

Besides Patricia the family consisted of

Mary (1902-1975) Worked on the Cunard Liners which sailed from Liverpool as a Steward.

Mary married William Benjamin Jones (1901-1973) who worked in the ship yard. The family consisted of Ann Shirley (Nancy), two Grandsons Peter and John and three Great Granddaughters.

Margaret Theresa (Peggy) (1913-1993)

Peggy also worked on the Cunard Liners as a Steward.

In 1940 Peggy married John Redman Flynn (1911-1962) who was Ships electrician and their family consisted of John Redman Alexander and Pauline, two Grandchildren Shaun and Cheryl and two Great Grandchildren.

Sarah Jane's - Extended Family

The two youngest daughters of Sarah Jane's brother, Richard who was killed in WWI, were integral part with their 15 children of Sarah Jane's own family -

Mary (1890-1960) married William James Steen in 1912 and who died in 1928 aged 41, their family consisted of 4 children.

Catherine (1892-1984) married Joseph Sloan in 1910 and their family consisted of 11 children.

Emily (Polly) Brannon (1891-1965) was another permanent member of the family with her own family and her 'step sister' **Annie Arden**

Sadly Polly's mother, Margaret Brannon, died giving birth to her and she was brought up by her mother's sister, Emily (1868-1902). In 1898 Emily married John Arden and their first daughter Annie was born in 1899. In 1902 tragically Emily died in giving birth to her second daughter, Ellen, who also died; Polly and Annie were then looked after by Letitia and Sarah Jane.

In 1908 Polly married Hugh Hughes and their family consisted of 7 children. The eldest son Hugh Hughes known as George was Patricia's Godfather.

Polly's son William George was killed due to enemy action in 1942 aged 26 and he was newly married. William was a member of a Royal Naval Gunnery crew on the Defences Merchant vessel SS Drew.

Annie Arden was married to George Brown in 1938 and they had one child, Elizabeth born in 1942.

Annie Hardy was another daily visitor to the homes of both Letitia and Sarah Jane. Annie was born in 1893 on a farm in Thurstaston Wirral. Her sister, Elizabeth had married Thomas Quinn the brother of Letitia's second husband Edward; Annie lived with her sister Elizabeth and her family in the *Dockers Flats* in Birkenhead. In 1943 Annie married George K Jones.

There was also a very large circle of friends, too numerous to list who would fill the front room and sometimes it was standing room only.

Back of Chester Street

The 'Back of Chester Street' was notorious slum in the centre of Birkenhead between the main road from Chester and Tunnel Road and to the north of Waterloo Place, Sarah Jane became the *Matriarch* of this area and a *Stalwart* of St Werburgh the Mother Church of Birkenhead. In 1912 Sarah Jane was joined the Third Order of St Francis, taking the name of Sister Teresa.

Travels

Sarah Jane travelled to Chicago in 1945 to visit her sister Catherine who had emigrated to Wisconsin with other family members before Sarah Jane was born. Then at the beginning of the 1960's Sarah Jane visited Lourdes.

There were also regular visits to and from Goole, the children and Grandchildren of Sarah Jane's Aunt Bridget, her mother's sister. Finally there were almost daily ferry trips across the Mersey.

Ernest – Parents

Father - Ernest Gilbert Grayston

Born 1886 – High St Linton Cambridgeshire. > Died - 1972 – 233 Dale St Chatham Kent

Ernest G was the youngest of five children of George William and Mary Ann, and was born in Linton Cambridgeshire. After leaving school Ernest G became a Carpenter and then a Chauffeur.

In 1914 Ernest G joined the Army Service Corps and was a Battlefield Ambulance Driver, and was part the British Expeditionary Force in France; during the latter part of 1915 he had returned to Britain. At the start of 1916 he returned to Flanders. In 1917 was part of the British Forces that were sent to Italy to open a second front and was involved in the fighting over the South Tyrol known as the '*White War*'.

On Christmas Day in 1915 Ernest G. married Susannah Brumham of Dunsfold Surrey at St Mary's Church Saffron Walden.

Susannah Brumham

Susannah was born in 1888 in Dunsfold Surrey and her father was a Agricultural worker. After leaving school Susannah went into service first in the area around Dunsfold and by 1911 she had moved to Little Chesterford Park near Saffron Walden and was a House Maid to the Manager of the estate.

In 1914 the estate was sold by Lord Inchcape and Susannah may have found work at the Surgical Hospital in Saffron Walden and it may be there that she met Ernest G. The Army may have tasked Ernest G to transport wounded service men between the Hospital and the Red Cross Convalescent Homes at Linton Manor and in Saffron Walden.

Raymond Ernest Grayston

Their son Raymond Ernest was born on the 14 October 1918 at Pear Tree Green near Dunsfold Surrey. Raymond trained as a Motor Mechanic and during WWII he joined the RAF - Dambuster Squadron. On a mission Raymond was shot down and became a PoW and as the War came to a close he was subjected to the brutal Death March.

When the war had ended Raymond worked in the Aircraft Industry and continued to live in Dunsfold with his mother and was married twice. After Raymond retired he moved to Scampton Lincolnshire where he had been based during the War and died in 2010 aged 91.

Post First WWI

After the First War Ernest G left Susannah and Raymond and by 1930 the couple were divorced. Susannah remarried twice the first marriage was in 1930. In 1982 Susannah died and was buried in the churchyard of St Marys Dunsfold.

Sadly it was not until the obituary in the Daily Telegraph for his son Raymond Ernest that it became known that Ernest G had been married before and had another son. Perhaps the split with his first family was due to what he had experienced in the First World War as an Battlefield Ambulance Driver.

Ernest G left the Army in 1921 he then went to stay with his mother's cousin's in London. By the beginning of 1926 Ernest G had moved to the Medway area of Kent where his brother Albert may have been still living and there he met Dorothy Fitch and started a second family.

In Chatham Ernest G. drove Taxis and lorry's to Covent Garden Market and when he retired he became a gardener.

With his second family Ernest G was not very communicative about his life nor did he appear to have close friends or to keep in touch his sister and brothers as well as other members of his family. However, when his sons Ernest and Stanley were married he did regularly visit them and enjoyed their company and that of his five Grandchildren.

Mother - Dorothy Fitch

Born - 1908 – Hilly Fields Gillingham Kent > Died - 1991 – 233 Dale St. Chatham Kent

Dorothy was the youngest child of three. Her father Frank had left the family by the time she was three and her mother died when she was twelve. Her mother's parents who lived in Rainham Kent

then looked after Dorothy. When she left school Dorothy became a Domestic Servant and worked in Public Houses.

How and when Dorothy met Ernest G is unknown, their family consisted of three children – Ernest (1927-2011) a daughter who sadly died at birth and Stanley William(1932) who became a Quantity Surveyor and is now living in Witney Oxfordshire.

After her children were born, Dorothy became a shop assistant in London, a Ambulance Driver in Chatham during WWII and in the canteen of a factory in Rochester. She also picked Hops and collected Mushrooms from the orchards around Chatham to sell.

Despite being the youngest sister, Dorothy became the Matriarch of her two sisters family as well looking after her own family of whom she was very fond of. Dorothy was bequeathed a caravan on the Isle of Sheppey by one of her employers for whom she cleaned for. She enjoyed staying in the caravan even in the Winter.

Patricia – Grandparents (Paternal)

Grandfather Gilbert W McKellar

Born 1839 – Levinside Terrace Dumbarton > Died 1904 – Priory St. Birkenhead

Gilbert had been baptised Gabriel but he changed his name to Gilbert.

Like his father Daniel, Gilbert was a Shipwright. In Dumbarton, where Clipper ships like the Cutty Sark were being built, these ships were both sleek and fast and used to convey high value cargo from India and China.

Gilbert's father Daniel moved with his 5 children to Gilbert House Howard St Liverpool, after his wife, Helen, died in 1848. In Liverpool Gilbert worked first in the ship yards where the Liver Building is now located, then went to work in the John Lairds shipyard in Birkenhead which had moved from the Wallasey tidal inlet to the River Mersey foreshore.

Gilbert married in 1861 Margaret Roberts at St. Nicholas church in Liverpool and settled in area around St Mary's Church next to the John Lairds Shipyard.

Grandmother - Margaret Roberts

Born 1831 – Llanelidan Denbighshire > Died 1918 – 13 Priory St. Birkenhead

Margaret's – parents were Robert Roberts from Clocaenog and Jane Patry from Llanelidan. They were married in 1829 settled in Llanelidan and farmed on the surrounding hills. In 1861 Margaret and her sister Alice had moved to Liverpool and were House Maids in the Walton Hill area.

The family of Margaret and Gilbert besides their son Alexander consisted of -

Margaret Alice (1865-1954) married James Blythell Rutter, 1 son and 1 Grandson. Margaret and James worked for an Upholster making soft furnishings for the Liners.

Walter (1866-1952) married Amy Broadhead (1886-1918) in 1909 and their family consisted of 4 children and 4 Grandchildren.

In the 1911 census Walter and Amy were living in Castle St Birkenhead, within the St Mary's area and Walter has recorded his occupation as a Barber and Tobacconist. Amy and her newly born son, Douglas Haigh, died of the Spanish Flu in 1918.

Martha Teresa (1868- 1876) died aged 8 and was buried in St Mary's Churchyard.

Francis (1870) died in his infancy.

Maud (1871) died in her infancy.

James (1873 – 1963) Worked in the Shipyard and married Elizabeth Harding, 4 children 17 Grandchildren.

Harold (1875-1941) Worked in the Shipyard and married Jane Thornhill (b.1882) in 1918.

George Henry (1878-1942). George who worked in the Shipyard, was Birkenhead's *Don Juan* and on a Friday evening when he passed his brother Alexander's home on his way to an assignation he would give a sixpence to his niece Patricia if she was sitting on the door step, which she was!

Albert Ernest (1870) died in his infancy.

Alexander & Alice

In 1862 Gilberts brother Alexander (1840-1905) and who also worked in the John Lairds shipyard, married Alice Roberts (1839-1871) the sister of Margaret also at St Nicholas in Liverpool and they too lived around St Mary's Church. Alice sadly died in 1871 aged 32, tragically two of her five children died in their infancy.

Children of Alice and Alexander –

Martha Ellen (1863-1911) married William Field Redhead (1863-1917), 6 children. William was a Engine Fitter and the family lived in Lowwood Rd Birkenhead.

Emily (1866-1945) married Joseph Moore, 3 children.

Margaret Ann (1868-1939) married Albert Edward Gardner, 1 child.

Samuel (1869) died in infancy. buried in St Mary's Churchyard.

George (1871-1877) died age 6 and buried in St Mary's Churchyard.

St Mary's Churchyard

Alice was buried in St Mary's Churchyard and following inscription of her headstone was recorded –

In affectionate Remembrance of Alice Beloved wife of Alexander Mckellar Who died March 27th 1871 aged 32 years "here thy Merciful kindness O'Lord be upon us" Also Samuel Mckellar Son of the above Who died March 30th 1870 aged 6 months "Thy will be done" Also George Mckellar Son of the above who died June 14th 1877 Aged 6 years & 4 months "so sweet to hear him say at last ye blessed children come The days of banishment are past Your Father calls you home"

The inscription for Margaret and Gilbert daughter Martha Teresa was also recorded –

In affectionate remembrance of Martha Tersa McKellar Who departed this life December 12th 1876 Aged 8 years "God took thy in his way a lamb untasked untried he fought the fight for thy, he won the victory and thou art satisfied"

Mortality rate

The high mortality rate of the six young children for both families may be because atmospheric pollution; there was a Iron foundry immediately below their houses, Gas works across the road and other heavy industries in the immediate vicinity.

Family visitors

There was for about 100 years a temporary railway station in Tunnel Road that gave immediate access to Birkenhead Market and the 'Country women' from Cheshire and North Wales, where the railway lines extended to, came to sell their Farm produce in the stalls at the back of the market on a Thursday. Some of those women would have been very close relatives of Margaret and they would of met and kept in touch with their families.

The *Pigs Brawn* sold by the 'Country women' in Birkenhead Market was a delicacy.

Patricia – Grandparents (Maternal)

Grandfather - Thomas McCormick

Born - 1835 - Limerick Ireland > Died - 1910 – 200 Chester St. Birkenhead

The lack of records relating Thomas's immediate family could indicate that around the age 14 in 1849 Thomas was an orphan. This period of time in Ireland coincides with the Irish Famine and that it had brutally claimed the lives of all Thomas's immediate family and faced with destitution or joining the British Army, Thomas chose the Army.

Thomas joined the South Gloucestershire Regiment and took part in the Crimean War (1853-1856). At the battle of Inkerman in 1854 Thomas was badly wounded and was discharged from the Army and was awarded an Disability Pension which he received for 52 years.

Thomas & Mary

Thomas first settled in area between Chester and Flint along the estuary of the River Dee, which was near Chester Barracks from where he collected his Army Pension.

On the 14th October 1856 Thomas married Mary Spellman on the at the Chapel of The Sacred Heart at Hawarden. After 1868 when their fifth child Margaret was born Thomas and his family moved from the Dee estuary area to Birkenhead and lived in a tenement block at the back of Chester Street; the area was a notorious slum area known as the '*Back of Chester Street*'. Then after 1878 they moved to Pall Mall Liverpool; returning to Birkenhead after 1885 to live again in '*Back of Chester Street*' area.

Thomas worked as a Labourer at two Chemical Factories between Flint and Chester and later both in Birkenhead and Liverpool he was a Scaler – cleaned and painted the Hulls of ships on the foreshore of the Mersey and in the Docks.

Court appearance

In 1896 Thomas gave evidence in Court for the defence in relation to a charge of stabbing. The case involved William Liversage being charged with stabbing Elizabeth Formerstone in Tunnel Road Birkenhead; William was acquitted.

Death of Thomas

In 1910 Thomas died, he was then living in Chester St with his daughter Sarah Jane and her family.

Thomas was buried in a *Third-Class* grave in Flaybrick Cemetery for which he paid Three Pounds Nineteen shillings and six pence to the Mayor of Birkenhead Corporation on the 28/01/1896. The Birkenhead News reported on the death of Thomas under the headline - 'Crimea's Veteran Death' with a photograph of Thomas. The funeral was attended by an Officer from the Army.

Grandmother - Mary Spellman

Born -1839 - Knock Ireland > Died - 1895 – 25 Tunnel Road Birkenhead

Mary was the eldest child of Thomas Spellman and Bridget Grimes. The second child, Bridget was born in 1843 in Crossmolina in Co Mayo. There is then a ten year gap until 1852 their third child Catherine is born in the SW area of Chester.

In those 10 years the Irish Famine raged and claimed 2 million lives and forced many more to flee Ireland. Besides malnutrition; dysentery and other contagious diseases claimed the lives of many and in particular the lives of the newly born and the very young. It was the northern part of Co Mayo, that bore the brunt of the Famine and that is where Thomas and Bridget were living,

In 1856 Margaret is born again in the SW area of Chester. Then sadly in 1857 Catherine dies and was buried in Liverpool.

It's not known when or how the family of Thomas and Bridget came to England. In 1851 there is a census return for Mary's Uncle Patrick Spellman who was living in Birkenhead above what is now Borough Road.

From the various records Mary was working as an Agricultural Labourer with her parents and sisters on the wind swept and rain sodden reclaimed land of the River Dee marshes.

Family of Mary & Thomas

The family of Mary and Thomas consisted of 11 children, the brothers and sisters of Sarah Jane were -

Thomas (1858-1881) born in Sealand. A Merchant Seaman, who died aged 24 of Phthisis-TB in the Liverpool Workhouse Hospital. The Hospital did not provide any proper Nursing or Medical care but it did provide a straw filled wooden cot.

Richard (1860-1914?) born in Flint. A Merchant Seaman and was Killed due to enemy action in WWI. Richard was married in 1882 to *Mary McKeneally* and their family consisted of 4 children and 21 Grandchildren.

Ann (1862-1899) born in Saltney. In 1886 Ann married Bernard Noland a Merchant Seaman who was born in 1864 and after Anne's death Bernard went to live with Sarah Jane and her family at 200 Chester St.

Francis born in 1865 in Saltney. A Merchant Seaman who emigrated to New Orleans before 1881 and perhaps with his Fiancée. His decedents were in touch with Sarah Jane in 1960's for some documents relating to a Baptism.

Margaret (1868 – 1883) born in Saltney. Sadly Margaret may have contracted TB like her elder brother Thomas and died also in the Liverpool Work House hospital.

'Paddy's Wigwam' now sits on top of the Workhouse Hospital a fitting memorial those who unnecessarily died there.

Letitia (1871-1929) born in Birkenhead. In 1890 Letitia married James Kennedy (1859-1904) a Merchant Seaman, Sarah Jane was their Bridesmaid and in 1915 Letitia married Edward Quinn (1871-1937) a Labourer

Letitia did not have any children but became the Matriarch of the family after her Mother's death in 1895, she cared not only for Sarah Jane and her brother Richard's children but also 3 children of her friends.

Mary Ellen (1873-1942) born in Birkenhead. In 1889 Mary Ellen married George Pover a Merchant Seaman, their son Thomas died in infancy and Mary Ellen brought up Julia Josephine the daughter of her younger brother Joseph David.

Joseph David (1876-1900) born in Birkenhead. Joseph married Agnes Coyne in 1898 and died just before his daughter Julia was born.

Catherine (1878) born in Birkenhead. After 1881 Catherine had emigrated to Chicago with two of her Aunt Bridget's older children.

William George (1881-1927) born in Liverpool. A Merchant Seaman whose ship was subject to an enemy attack in WWI and was awarded a Merchant Navy Gallantry & Bravery Medal. William George married Margaret Clegg in 1892 and their family consisted of 11 children.

Move to Goole

Before 1871 Mary's sister Bridget, had moved with her family to East Yorkshire, settling in Goole and by 1881 Bridget had been joined by her parents and younger sister Margaret.

The husband of Bridget, Bartholomew Drury was a 'Navy' and worked on the Aire & Calder canal.

Mary - Death

Mary sadly died on **Christmas Eve** in 1895 at the family home at 25 Tunnel Road Birkenhead.

Patrick Spellman

Patrick (1827- 1861) was the younger brother of Thomas the father of Mary; and was living in Birkenhead in 1851 as a Labourer.

In 1856 Patrick married Elizabeth Ledsham who was a House Maid, aged 27 in Chester. Their son John was born in 1858 but sadly died in 1859, their second son James was born in 1860. In 1861 Patrick sadly died in Chester.

In 1881 Elizabeth, helped to care for her Great nephew Thomas when he died of TB.

James a Labourer married in 1881 Sarah McHale (1860-1936) and there were 14 children, some descendants of the family are still living In Chester. James died in 1906.

Through the support of the Earl of Denbigh in the late 1850's a Franciscan Friary was established in Chester with the Friars coming from Belgium, they opened a School and a Dispensary. Further support was provided by the Earl Shrewsbury who replaced the Roman Catholic Chapel with a Church and it's Clergy helped the Friars. The school and dispensary enabled James's family to become not only literate but healthy.

As the family of James became literate they helped those in Birkenhead and Goole as well as those in the USA to keep in touch one another. The first family members to become literate in Birkenhead was Sarah Jane and in Goole her cousin Bridget (1881-1963).

First World War

The son of James, Thomas, was Killed due to enemy action in 1917 aged 30, his name is recorded on the Tyne Cot Memorial.

Thomas Spellman

Thomas Spellman Mary's father and may have delayed moving to Goole to join his daughter Bridget until Patrick's son James, was able to care not only for himself but also his Mother.

When Thomas died in 1904 aged 83, his wife Bridget (1823-1892) and all but one of his children had predeceased him. Also there were 23 Grandchildren but sadly 15 of them predeceased Thomas and of his 35 Great Grandchildren who were born between 1883 and 1927, 43% of them died before their 7th birthday.

This high mortality rate was due to the Irish Famine and it's consequences – maturation, contagious diseases, abject poverty, squalid housing, a lack of medical care compounded by incompetence, apathy, religious bigotry, denial of an education as well as very poorly paid work that was both hard and dangerous.

For the British Government the Famine was a *fortuitous* event which provided them with opportunity to eliminate the majority of the Irish Roman Catholic population and enslave the few that survived. This policy had started at the beginning of 17th centenary today, it could be argued that it was an Act of Genocide.

However, the British Government failed as witness by the presence of 7 Great Grandchildren of Thomas Spellman's Great Granddaughter Patricia.

Ernest – Grandparents (Paternal)

Grandfather - George William Grayston

Born 1851– High St Linton Cambridgeshire > Died - 1909 – High St Linton

George was the eldest child of James and Elizabeth Pearson. After leaving school he developed a wide range of skills - Builder, Carpenter, Cooper and Brewer as well as Undertaker and Registrar of Marriage; he even learnt to play the Cello.

George specialised in Gothic carpentry and probably worked on the designs of the Architect Pugin and in the renovation and repair of the University buildings including Kings College Chapel.

In 1875 he married Mary Ann Spurgeon at St Paul's Cambridge and they first lived in Wilden House Mill Road Cambridge where George had a business premises attached to his home.

When his father died in 1879 the family moved back to Linton, to run the family Brewery as well as maintaining the building business in Cambridge.

Grandmother- Mary Ann Spurgeon

Born 1849 – Bocking Essex > Died 1921 – High St Linton Cambridgeshire

Mary Ann was the daughter of Haddon and Mary Ralling.

Before Mary Ann was married she was living in Bocking Essex on her own and was probably working at the Courtaulds Silk Mill located there; the Mill employed a large number of women and was powered by water.

Family of Mary and George

Besides Ernest G the family consisted of -

Nellie (1876-1939) a Music Teacher who in 1911 married Kerlogue Wiffin (1880-1951) they had 1 child and two Grandchildren.

Kerlogue Whiffin after leaving school joined the Royal Navy and after completing 12 years he joined the Coastguard. At the start of the First World War he re-joined the Navy and at the end of the War he returned to Coastguard and was first posted to Filey Yorkshire and later to South Shields Tyneside.

Haddon James (1877-1972) a Butcher and in 1916 married Esther Johnson (1880-1967).

During WWI, Haddon was a volunteer in the Red Cross (VAD) looking after wounded service men in the Linton Manor Convalescent Home. After the War Haddon remained living in the family home in the High St Linton and became a Farm Labourer.

Walter Charles (1880-1967) a Builder and in 1904 he married Rose Emma Gostlow (1880-1955) they had 2 children.

They first lived in his fathers Builders premises in Wilden House Mill Road Cambridge. In WWI, Walter was in the Inland Water Division of the Royal Garrison Artillery. After the First War the family moved to Sleaford Lincolnshire where his wife's family lived. The father of Emma, William Joseph was a Police Officer.

Albert Edwin (1883- 1946) a Grocer he moved to Strood Kent where in 1911 he married Ada Beatrice Taylor (1885-1964).

In the First World War Albert was in the Army. By 1939 Albert had moved to Burgess Hill to run his own Grocery shop and he retired to Cuckfield Sussex.

Baptists Church

Mary Ann and George William were very active Baptists and there were a number of Baptist Congregations in the River Stour valley.

With George being a builder he may have been involved in the building and maintenance of the chapels and schools. Also George was a Marriage Registrar, which enable marriages to be conducted in the Chapels instead of the Anglican Churches. Their daughter Nellie was a Music Teacher and probably played in the chapels sometimes with her father accompanying her on the Cello.

The Grandfather of Mary Anne was James Spurgeon who was a Baptist Minister and in 1862 James gave Mary Anne a Bible published by the Bible Society, with a dedication.

Ernest – Grandparents (Maternal)

Grandfather - Frank Fitch

Born 1876 – Gillingham Kent > Died 1941 Church Street Gillingham Kent

In 1901 Frank a Labourer, married Elizabeth Harden in Gillingham, but by 1911 they had separated and Frank was living Eythorne Kent where he was a labourer digging out water boreholes.

Grandmother - Elizabeth Harden

Born 1881 – Rainham Kent > Died 1920 - Brompton Kent

In 1901 when Elizabeth married Frank Fitch she was a General Servant and living with her married sister Olive and her family In Gillingham. Her first daughter Olive was born in 1901, Kate in 1903 and Dorothy was born in 1908.

By 1911 Elizabeth had separated from Frank Fitch and was living with her three daughters in Brompton Kent and there was a lodger Leonard Shilling; Leonard was a Carpenter and had been born in Gillingham where his parents and family were still living.

In 1916 Leonard was sadly killed in the battle of the Somme aged 38. It was Elizabeth who received the 'Next of Kin Memorial Plaque' from the Army, which was then given to Dorothy.

Other family members

John Grayston

John (1797-1876) the Grandfather of George William was born in Dallinghoo Suffolk and was both a Miller and Grocer in Castle Camps near Linton.

On the 4 May 1844 there was fire at the Mill which was extensively damaged, as the property was not insured, James became bankrupt. It was in 1862 that the debt was discharged, a Dividend of 1s. 3 3/4d was paid to Creditors.

In 1826 John had married in Linton, Rebecca Perry who was born in in 1808 near Colchester and their family consisted of 13 children and 43 Grandchildren.

There is a burial record for John in 1876 at Wicken Bonhunt Essex and one for Rebecca in 1893 at Little Willbraham Cambridgeshire.

James Grayston

James (1827-1879) was the son of John and the father of George William and was a Brewer in the High St Linton.

In 1850 James married Elizabeth Pearson and besides George William their family consisted of

Frederic (1853-1901) who completed a Coopers Apprenticeship in London where he in 1878 married Ellen Woods who was from Doles Lane Wokingham Berkshire and was born in 1848.

The couple first lived in London and by 1880 they moved to Linton to live with Frederic's family. After 1884 Frederic moved back to London with his family where he worked in three large Breweries as a Cooper and settled in the Bermondsey area. Their family consisted of 5 children.

Ellen's mother Laura Halfacre (b.1823) was also from Wokingham and her family had lived at Radical Cottage Barkham Ride.

John Perry (1856-1879) died aged 23 in Linton.

Elizabeth (1856-1905) who in 1881 married Aaron (*Alfred*) Cawley in London and they moved to Salford Lancashire where Alfred worked in a Warehouse and Elizabeth was a machinist in a shirt factory. Alfred was born in 1860 in Bardwell Suffolk and his mother was Cecilia Cawley (1840-1913).

In 1865 Cecilia Cawley married George Grayston (1842-1914) the uncle of Alfred's wife, Elizabeth. George like his father was a Miller and lived at the Mill in Linton in 1871. Their family consisted of 12 children.

Ann Julia (1859-1925) married in 1891 James Parlett who ran a Inn in Wisbech Cambridgeshire and their family consisted of six children.

Lilla (1866-1907) married in 1890 her first cousin Herbert George the son of her uncle Benjamin (1844-1918) who was a Miller.

In 1894 their son William was born and the family moved from Kings Lynn to Croydon where sadly Lilla died in 1907 aged 40.

In 1908 Herbert George married his second cousin Bertha Grayston (b.1881) the daughter of Frederic and Ellen. By 1917 Herbert and Bertha had emigrated to Ottawa Canada with Herbert's son William. In Ottawa Albert Benjamin and Margaret Edith were born. The descendants of the family visited England around 1998 and met with Ernest Grayston.

William George Grayston

The son of George and Cecilia Cawley, was born in 1868 at Wicken Bonhunt. In 1892 he married Minnie Maria Few (b.1866) in Cambridge and their family consisted of 5 children.

Like his father, William was a Miller and moved to work in the flour Mills in London and then in Brighton.

William had become a member of the Church of Latter Day Saints and after 1921 emigrated with his family first to Vermont and then to Utah. In 1939 William died in Salt Lake City aged 73.

Rev. James Spurgeon

James (1776-1864) the Grandfather Mary Ann, was a part time Baptist Minister in Stambourn Essex where he also farmed. He married Sarah Rudkin (1773-1828) in 1806 and their family consisted of -

Haddon (1809-1884) the father of Mary Ann who was a farmer at Whitehouse Farm Finchingfield Essex. In 1846 Haddon married Mary Ralling (1819-1901) and besides Mary Ann their family consisted of -

George Edward (1852-1935) was a Farm Manger and worked on Estates in Thaxted-Essex, Kinton-Warwickshire and Browsholme-Forest Bowland where his descendants are still living.

Walter died aged 9 in 1864.

Edwin (1857-1935) the was a Baker in Tackley Essex.

John (1810 – 1902) - see below.

Samuel (1811-1901) was an Estate Agent and Tea Merchant he lived in Colchester Essex. In 1843 he married Elizabeth Pretlove and there were 3 children, Elizabeth died in 1858. Then in 1859 he married Harriet Lamb and they had one child, Samuel Charles – see below.

Obadiah (1813-1896) was a Farmer at Woodgates End Broxted Dunmow Essex. In 1847 Obadiah married Elizabeth Joslin and there were 9 children.

James (1820-1903) was a Grocer in Callis St Clare Suffolk. In 1847 James married Deborah Joslin the sister of Elizabeth, Obadiah wife, and there 11 children.

Rev John Spurgeon

John the second son of James, who was a boat owner in 1851 and then by 1861 had become an Independent Minister in Colchester. Later he moved as a full time Minister to Clare in Suffolk.

By 1891 John had become a Minister in Croydon Surrey. The move to Croydon was probably because many of those who had been forced to move to South East London for both work and housing.

John married **Eliza Jarvis** in 1833 and their family consisted of 9 children, two of their sons became Baptist Ministers as well as two of their Grandsons.

Rev. Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Charles Haddon (1834-1892) was the eldest son of John and a renown Preacher.

In 1850 Charles Haddon attended a school in Cambridge that was in the house of the Tutor, Edwin Seeding, where Charles H also lived.

In 1856 Charles H joined the 'Tabernacle Fellowship' a Baptist Congregation which goes back to 1650 in the Kennington area of South London. The Fellowship was once one of the largest Baptist Congregations in England.

Charles H quickly became a popular Preacher and drew in large crowds to his Sermons which would last several hours, he also baptised a very large number of people. Charles H was instrumental in the building of the Metropolitan - Reformed Baptist Church in the Elephant Castle London as well as the establishment of the Spurgeon's College in Norwood London.

After Charles H died in 1892 his Sermons and other papers were acquired by the Midwestern Baptist Theological College in Kansas City and a Library dedicated to Charles Haddon was built to house those documents

Family of Charles Haddon

In 1856 Charles Haddon married Susannah Thomson (1832-1903) and they had twin sons who too became Ministers – see below.

James Archer Spurgeon

James Archer (1838-1899) was John's second son. He was first a Minister in Southampton and then he moved to Reading and there he was a Minister in two Congregations.

In 1860 James had married Emily Georgina Burgoyne who died in 1881 and then in 1882 he married Ellen Withers in Reading and their family consisted of James Archer and Ellen.

Charles Oliver Spurgeon

Charles Oliver (1856 -1926) was the twin son of Charles Haddon and became a Minister in Greenwich.

In 1881 Charles married Sarah Ann Jacob and there were 5 children.

Thomas Spurgeon

Thomas (1856–1917) was the second twin son of Charles Haddon.

Thomas emigrated first to Australia and then to New Zealand and became a Minister at the Auckland Baptist Tabernacle. He returned to England after the death of his father in 1892 and became a Minister at the Metropolitan - Reformed Baptist Church in the Elephant Castle.

In 1888 Thomas married Eliza McLeod Rutherford in Auckland New Zealand and there were 3 children.

Charles Oliver Spurgeon

Charles Oliver was born in 1891 was the son of Charles Oliver and Sarah Ann.

In 1911 Charles Oliver was training to be a Farmer at the farm of Clement Charles Smith at Pearsons Farm Timley Suffolk.

By 1925 Charles had emigrated to Australia where he married Joan Grant Campbell at Camden New South Wales. In 1972 Charles died.

Thomas Harold Spurgeon

Thomas Harold (1891-1967) was the son of Thomas and Eliza.

In 1911 Thomas Harold was attending Trinity College in Dublin and later he became a principal of Irish Baptist College.

In 1939 Thomas Harold married Dorothy May Webster and their son David was born in 1942 in Dublin.

Donald Spurgeon

Donald was Killed due to enemy action in 1918 aged 20 in Palestine and was buried in the Ramleh War Cemetery in Israel, Donald was a Lieutenant in the London Regiment.

Donald's father was Samuel Charles (1861-1925) the son of Samuel and Harriet. In 1882 Samuel C married Jane Chapman (1853-1913) and they settled in Maldon where Samuel C was an Auctioneer.

The family of Samuel C and Jane consisted of three children, sadly the two older children predeceased Donald, in 1910 Haddon C P aged 26 and in 1913 Jessie aged 30, there is a memorial to the three siblings in the church yard of St Mary the Virgin Maldon Essex.

Henry Clarence Spurgeon

In 1940 Henry C (1901-1967) married Rosetta Fitch (1908-1979) in Saffron Walden. Henry was the son Edwin and the nephew of Mary Ann. Like his father Henry was a Baker.

The father of Rosetta was Reuben (1879-1939) and he was Labourer and the family lived in Ashdon Essex, Reuben's family had originated from Radwinter 4 miles to the south.

It is possible that the families of Rosetta and Dorothy Fitch who married Mary Anne's son Ernest G are closely related, as the paternal Grandfather of Dorothy was John Fitch who was born in Widdington 7 miles to the west of Radwinter.

John Fitch

Both John (1842-1922) the paternal Grandfather of Dorothy, and his wife Louisa Coston (1843-1898) were born and brought up in Widdington.

In 1871 John and Louisa were married in Saffron Walden, in the same church Ernest G was later to be married in. The couple moved to Bow in London and by 1876 they had moved on to Gillingham Kent where their second child Frank the father of Dorothy, was born.

It is very difficult to believe that both John and Louisa did not know of the families of Dorothy's husband Ernest G including Henry C as they would get to know them through school, work, shopping (Edwin was the local baker) family visits and attending chapel and the long Sermons of the Rev. C H Spurgeon which were also a social event.

Also the local papers in those days were a vital source of information (*social media of the time*) in particular details of births weddings and deaths.

Although John and Louisa had died by 1922 some of their children also must have been aware of their connection with Widdington and had very likely heard of the families of Ernest G.

If Dorothy did know of her Grandparents family connection with the Linton area and had been told of the families of Ernest G, she never spoke about it; nor did Ernest G.

Thomas Harden

Thomas (1854-1928) was the maternal Grandfather of Dorothy Fitch who helped to look after her after her mother's death in 1920; according to Dorothy, Thomas was a Master Pruner.

In 1874 Thomas married Martha Smith and they had 8 children and continued to live in Rainham where he was born and brought up; Rainham was then a rural area with orchards, hop fields and ancient woods.

Alfred Whiffin

Alfred (1826-1901) was the Grandfather of Kerlogue who had married Nellie the daughter of George William Grayston. Born in Linton, Alfred married Susan Casbolt in 1848 and there were 9 children. The first recorded occupation of Alfred was that of a Hawker and then he ran a Sweet Shop in Linton where Nellie obtained her first job after leaving school.

His son Edward, the father of Kerlogue, was born in 1853 was a Publican in West Mercia and Teyling and retired to Myrtle Cottage on Linton. In 1878 Edward married Mary Ann Kerlogue a children's Nurse, their family consisted of 5 children.

As a Publican Edward may have been involved in the Grayston's Brewery.

Other Matters

Beer or Tea?

Background

The village of Linton had a number of Public Houses and Breweries and although the village and the surrounding settlements are small they were very densely populated and the predominant occupation was that of a Labourer, which was hard and thirsty work. Also the main road between Cambridge and Colchester ran through the centre of the village and therefore there were a large number of tired and thirsty travellers seeking refreshment and accommodation. Then the water supply to Linton may not have been safe to drink until around 1925, when work on the water supply was completed; the work had included a new source of water from a deep water borehole as well as new supply pipes. Therefore it may have been necessary to boil the water before drinking it, and therefore why Beer and Tea were the favoured drinks.

The Brewery

James Grayston had started the Brewery in Linton, around 1850 which included a Pothouse where Beer could be bought and drunk and a Cooperage where Barrels were made or repaired.

When James died 1876 George William his son took over the Brewery and at the beginning George had business cards printed with details of both his Building and Brewing businesses; after George died in 1909 Mary Ann his wife became responsible for the Brewery. When George William took over, his brother Frederic a Cooper returned from London and lived in Linton for several years before going back to London.

The Brewery may have been run in some form of partnership with James Cowling (1829-1886) who lived in the High St Linton and was a Publican and his son William Mott (1866-1911) became the Clerk and Manager of the Brewery. Tragically in 1911, William committed suicide in the Brewery and was found by the brothers Ernest G and his brother Haddon. In 1891 William Mott had married Elizabeth Rowling (b.1869) and there were 3 children; they were living at Osnaburgh House in the High St Linton.

James Cowling daughter Louisa (b.1864) took over James's Public House when he died in 1886, with her husband Henry Edlin (1860-1892). A nephew of James, John Cowling (1861-1887) and his wife Emma Bradford (1858-1926) also ran a Public House, the brother of Emma, Bennett (1868-1939) was a labourer in the Brewery.

Tea from Rotterdam

For those who preferred Tea, three of Mary Anne's uncles. could of collectively been involved in the distribution and the sale of Tea; John the Boat owner; Samuel the Tea Merchant and James the Grocer. As John and his two brothers were living in Colchester it would of been easier to have the boat to sail to Rotterdam and to obtain the Tea from the Dutch East India Company rather than to sail around to the Pool of London.

Temperance Movement

Alcohol abuse was in particular in the 19th century a very serious problem, in particular in the industrial towns like Birkenhead as illustrated by Thomas McCormick the Grandfather of Patricia McKellar, appearance in the Court for the defence in 1896, in relation to a drunken assault.

The Temperance Movement was trying to encourage people to abstain from drinking alcohol and the son of Rev. James Archer and Ellen, James Archer (1888-1964) was a Director of the Movement. The son of James Archer, James Archer (1919-2007) was a Director of the Baptists Travel company which helped to promulgate the ideas of Temperance Movement.

Origins – Spurgeon

After the death of Charles Haddon in 1892 a number of biographies were written about Charles H and a '*Tree of Jessie*' was produced of Charles's family. A view formed that the Spurgeon family may have originated from the what was then the Low Countries.

During the 16th century this area which was part of the Catholic Hapsburg Empire but the population had become principally Protestant. The Protestants were perceived as a threat and persecuted, especially when the Spanish branch of the Hapsburg family ruled those territories. The Spurgeons emigrated to East Anglia and for some with the intention of going on to North America.

Origins – Grayston

In East Anglia there was and still is a single large family cluster around the Ipswich area, from this cluster that some moved to south east Essex and John Grayston moved to the Linton area.

Where did the Ipswich Group originate from as there are no other large groups in East Anglia that cannot be linked to the Ipswich cluster? The only other large Group is in the area of the central Lancashire - Forest Bowland and the adjoining part of west Yorkshire.

At the time of the Reformation from 1535 two groups in England refused to conform and attend Anglican services. The first group was those who remained loyal to the Roman Catholic church and became known as Recusants because of the Parliamentary Acts passed in attempt to completely eliminate the Roman Catholic Church. The second group regarded disparagingly that the Anglican church was more Roman than the Roman Catholic church and therefore did not attend the Anglican services and became known as Dissenters.

Dissenters

The Dissenters formed their own Congregations which were independent of each other and responsible for appointing their own Minister as well as deciding on how they worshipped. These Congregations were seen as a threat during the reigns of Charles I and Charles II, not only to the Anglican church but to the Crown itself and draconian laws were enacted in an attempt to suppress the Dissenters. To escape from this persecution many of them emigrated to North America.

Therefore perhaps the Grayston's from the Forest Bowland and the adjoining west Yorkshire moved to the Ipswich area with the intention of emigrating to North America. However, emigrating was not straightforward as you had to find and pay for a passage as well as the cost of the land to settle on and the new home. There was also a very large risk associated with emigrating. So some may have been unable to immediately emigrate and took on the recently vacated farms and businesses of those who did emigrate with the intent of going later.

Roman Catholics – Forest Bowland

In those parts of the Forest Bowland Yorkshire, there remained a very strong Roman Catholic presence in spite of the 1558 Recusancy Act which severely punished including execution to those adhering to Catholicism in particular those who became Priests, the Recusancy Act was not repealed until **1888**.

The Catholics in this area of Lancashire and Yorkshire built new places of worship, which were known as '*Barn Church*' the church mimicked the look of a barn which enabled others not to notice that it was Catholic church.

Roman Catholics - Merseyside

For similar reasons in Merseyside, several new churches to be built since the reformation were purposefully designed not to look like a Catholic church. In Liverpool St Peters looks like a Meeting Hall and St Patricks mimics a Methodist Chapel, in Birkenhead, St Werburgh church looks like a Greek/Roman Temple; all these churches originally did not have any external ornamentation.

The discretion was needed in Merseyside there was a great of religious tension through out the 19th century and up to First World War. This bigotry was orchestrated by just one key political and industrial figure who hated Roman Catholicism. This tension, resulted in a large number of very violent religious riots.

Rev Richard Grayston

Rev Richard Grayston a Roman Catholic Parish priest of St Patrick in Liverpool died 1847 of Typhus. The Rev Richard had contracted the disease after caring those that had contracted the disease; in total 10 Priests died during this outbreak.

From the records Rev Richard may be descended from the Grayston's who lived in the Forest of Bowland area at the time of the Reformation in 1535. Whilst his own ancestral family remained loyal to the Roman Catholic church, other closely related family members either Conformed or became a Dissent and some of those went to the Ipswich area with the intention of emigrating to North America.