

T'History of t'Helliwell Family

1. Introduction

My mother, Maureen Helliwell, was born in Birkenhead, Wirral, as were her two sisters in the period 1912 – 1915. They never volunteered this fact, indeed may not have known themselves, as the family moved away from that area soon afterwards.

In the 1911 census their parents are living in south Manchester, so it was a surprise to find they were married in London, and that their father was born in Rochdale, Lancashire. However, the name Helliwell originates some 20 miles to the east, in the Calder Valley of the West Riding of Yorkshire. Various spellings are found in the records in earlier days, due to a prevalent illiteracy amongst rural folk; those in authority who could write putting down on paper what they heard. Helliwell, Halliwell, Hellewell, Hallewell even Hollowell are all doubtless of similar derivation, though nowadays most occurrences of the name are rendered as Halliwell in Lancashire and Helliwell in Yorkshire. There are two claimed variants for its meaning, firstly from Hall i'th Well, the hall (farmhouse) by the well, which probably applies more to the Lancashire folk, and secondly from Helen's Well, on Soyland Moor a few miles south of Hebden Bridge, for the Yorkshiremen.

2. John Helliwell and Jimmy Helliwell

The first known members of my mother's family are **Jimmy Helliwell**, baptized at St Thomas a Becket, Heptonstall on 12th May 1782, the son of **John Helliwell**.

Unfortunately this is as far back as we are ever likely to be able to go; the parish registers of the period do not generally give the mother's name, the father's occupation or the place of abode. The Heptonstall church registers show over 30 children of a John Helliwell baptized in the 20 years 1765-84, so there must have been at least 3, and probably 7 or 8 John Helliwells with young families in the area at that time. In fact the marriage registers show a total of **14** different John Helliwells marrying at that church alone within the same period! Given that young Jimmy named his eldest daughter Ann, we might assume this was his mother's name; in which case the most likely is the John Helliwell marrying Ann Ingham on 12th February 1782; this is just three months before Jimmy's baptism, quite a normal situation then for a first-born child.

Jimmy Helliwell – probably (and fortunately for us) baptized thus to help distinguish him from the many James's, is my great-great-grandfather.

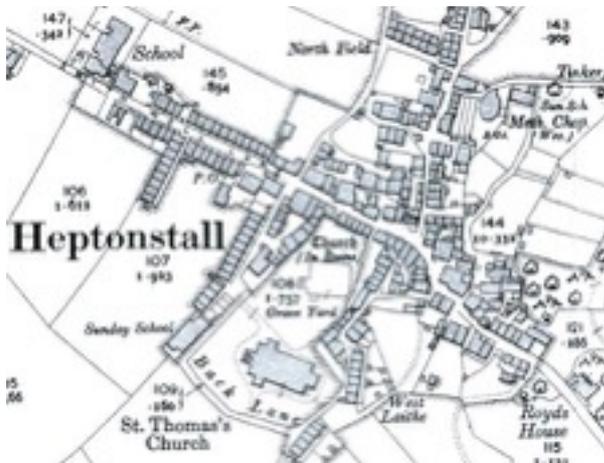
3. Heptonstall

The parochial district of Heptonstall, itself just a small town, then included other townships called Erringden, Langfield, Stansfield and Wadsworth, some of which appear later in our story. Langfield and Stansfield at least, cannot be found at all on modern maps. It is useful to realise that these "Townships" are nothing like what we now regard as towns, even very small ones, but rather an arbitrary grouping of many scattered habitations over a wide and largely uncultivated tract of country; also that the present-day busy towns of Todmorden and Hebden Bridge were relatively insignificant hamlets until after 1820. The sketch map shows the approximate boundaries of the 5 townships, with their relationship to each other, and to the modern towns.



Though Heptonstall apparently has an old-established "Parish Church" (St Thomas a Becket) it is more correctly a "Parochial Chapelry" within the very large parish of Halifax, then the biggest in England, which

extended as far westwards as the Lancashire county border on the outskirts of Todmorden.



The old church, in which many of our family were baptised and married, was struck by a thunderbolt in 1847 and is now a picturesque ruin. Its replacement, St Thomas the Apostle of 1850 was constructed alongside and remains in use today. The two buildings share a common large churchyard (pictured) in which are reputedly buried some 100,000 souls. There are certainly several thousand headstones, many of which are laid flat to almost continuously pave the entire area; apparently some were used twice (engraved on both sides) or are stacked one on top of another (or others)! They are being painstakingly recorded by the Hebden Bridge local history society.

Religious non-conformity was commonplace hereabouts from its earliest days; indeed the oldest surviving Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in the world, built in 1764 is at Heptonstall. John Wesley himself helped to establish it, and preached there on several occasions. It is, most unusually, an octagonal building – with “no dark corners for the devil to hide in” (right). Some of our family are buried in the yard here, as recorded later. The western part of Wadsworth (the later Hebden Bridge town) was served by the Birchcliffe Baptist Chapel.



The following table shows the area and population of each of the 5 townships within the Heptonstall parochial chapelry:

| Township | Area (acres) | Pop. 1801 | Pop. 1811 | Pop. 1821 | Pop. 1831 | Houses in 1831 | Houses per acre 1831 | Persons per house 1831 |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Heptonstall | 5320 | 2983 | 3647 | 4543 | 4661 | 1031 | 0.194 | 4.5 |
| Erringden | 2980 | 1313 | 1586 | 1471 | 1933 | 366 | 0.123 | 5.3 |
| Langfield | 2620 | 1170 | 1515 | 2069 | 2514 | 487 | 0.186 | 5.2 |
| Stansfield | 5920 | 4768 | 5447 | 7275 | 8262 | 1576 | 0.266 | 5.2 |
| Wadsworth | 10080 | 2801 | 3473 | 4509 | 5198 | 1073 | 0.106 | 4.8 |

It can be seen that the population of all the townships steadily increased through this period, due mainly to the expansion of the hand-loom weaving industry which came to predominate over agriculture, also that Heptonstall itself was only the third largest of the five.

By 1848, there were 4791 persons living in Heptonstall. The figure remained similar until around 1880, then declined rapidly to around 1500 by 1900, which is roughly where it remains today. The reason for this is the decline in hand-weaving, whose business was taken over by the giant power-mills of south Lancashire, and which caused a large proportion of the workforce to migrate to those parts in order to find work. This trend is mirrored exactly in our family.

Looking at the surname Helliwell, the censuses from 1841 to 1911 give the number of people in England and Wales with that exact spelling, and some variants....

| Census Year | Helliwell (exact) in all Eng-W | ...in Yorkshire (%) | ...in Heptonstall | With spelling Hellewell, E-W |as Hallewell | and as Halliwell (mainly in Lancs) |
|-------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1841 | 1188 | 1068 (90%) | | 900 | 89 | 1607 |
| 1851 | 1261 | 1145 (91%) | 76 | 1095 | 81 | 1836 |
| 1861 | 1749 | 1458 (83%) | 61 | | | |
| 1871 | 2180 | 1764 (81%) | 78 | | | |
| 1881 | 2798 | 2324 (83%) | 92 | | | |
| 1891 | 2722 | 2248 (83%) | 91 | | | |
| 1901 | | | 71 | | | |
| 1911 | 3137 | 2387 * (76%) | 39 | | | |

This data shows that virtually all those with the exact spelling Helliwell are in Yorkshire, and the 1911 figure * which is only for the West Riding, confirms in turn that they were nearly all in that part of the county. For Heptonstall itself, around 1 in 65 of the population carries the name, making it one of the more common surnames, along with Uttley, which we will also encounter shortly.

4. Jimmy (or James) Helliwell (1782 – 1874)

As we have seen, Jimmy was baptized in the established church at Heptonstall on 12th May 1782, which conventionally would have been when he was just a few days old. However there is a further entry for him in the Bishop's Transcripts, on 4th September 1783 (or maybe 1784?) which is probably at the Heptonstall Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, again a conventional practice for those of that religious persuasion.

“Jimney” Helliwell married **Salley Stansfield** at St Thomas a Becket, Heptonstall on 21st June 1801 when he was just 19 years old. Assuming Sally was around the same age as Jimmy, or just slightly younger, there are no fewer than 3 different candidates for her baptism at the same church in 1779-84 alone, so again we have no hope of knowing which one is involved here.

Jimmy & Sally had 4 known children, all baptized at St Thomas a Becket as follows:

Hannah on 12th October 1802 (christened thus, but always known as Ann in adulthood)
Mally on 12th October 1804

Grace on 13th October 1806 (where the father is recorded as James rather than Jimmy)

Tommy on 12th June 1810

It appears that Sally died sometime in the decade after 1810, perhaps in childbirth, as James (as he is henceforth always known) then married an Ann, nineteen years his junior. She is almost certainly **Ann Barker**, christened at St Thomas a Becket on 29th May 1800, the daughter of John & Mary. If this is the case, this was on 26th September 1822 at Halifax parish church, presumably where she and her parents were by then living.

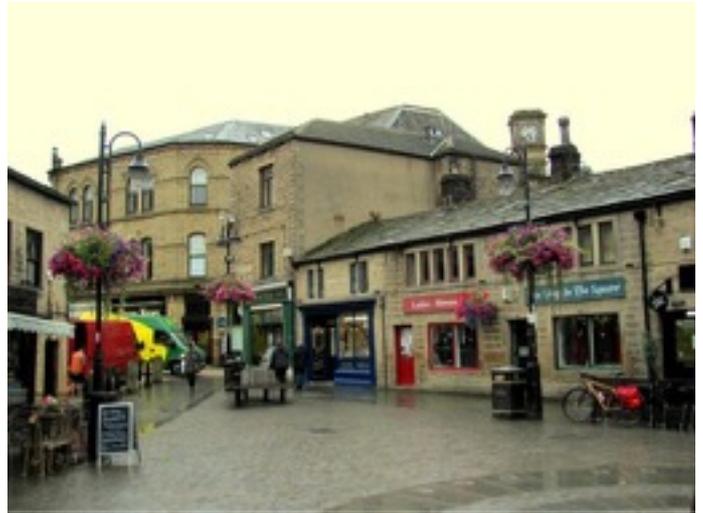
It is however known that James had one further child, **Richard**, for whom we could not find a baptism anywhere locally. He was born about 1819; in 3 out of 4 of his adult census entries, 1851-1881 he states his birthplace as Heptonstall, and in the other as Halifax. As Heptonstall is within the wider parish of Halifax, both are strictly true for him. We know that his father's name was James, which we had guessed anyway from the name of his eldest son, as that is confirmed by Richard's marriage certificate of 1846. This says that James was a labourer, and he was still alive in that year though not recorded as a witness (he probably could not write). We also guessed that his mother was named Ann as it is the name of his eldest daughter and there are no known Ann's in his wife's family. So it appears that Richard was probably born to James Helliwell and Ann Barker out of wedlock in around 1819, and that is probably the reason he was not baptised in infancy.

Of James & Sally's known children, **Ann** never married. **Mally** either married or died before 1838, but she is *not* the one who married John Ingham at Heptonstall in August 1830; the consistency of her age in the later censuses indicate she was the daughter of John Helliwell, born some 6 years later than our Mally. **Tommy** may be the one who married a Betty in Halifax, and shown in the 1841 census as a cotton spinner living at New Mill, Erringden with children James 8, Grace 4 and William 2. There are locally two other Thomas Helliwells of around the right age who also married Bettys, but from their children's names we think the Erringden one is most likely. On the other hand he could be the Thomas who married Sally Dewhirst at Heptonstall on 21st April 1835 (they could not be found in the 1841 census)...such is the problem with this very common surname in the area!

My mother told us of a story passed down in her family (probably the Helliwells, but maybe a Lawson?) that one of her forebears "was hanged for sheep-stealing", however we have so far found no documentary evidence of this. One of the many Helliwells of Heptonstall was charged was stealing several tools and other items from his employer in 1846, and committed at York Assizes to seven years transportation.

We can be more certain about daughter **Grace** Helliwell; she married **Aaron Barker**, cotton cutter of Heptonstall, on 10th June 1832 at St Thomas a Becket, when she was 25 years old. She gives her abode as Stansfield, the township including the north-west part of what later became the town of Hebden Bridge. It is tempting to speculate that Aaron might be the brother of Grace's stepmother Ann Barker, but the only recorded baptism for one of that name is in 1790 at faraway Bridlington, East Yorkshire. Sadly he died before 1838, so we know nothing more about him. Grace and Aaron had just one child, Sarah Barker, christened at St Thomas a Becket on 7th April 1833.

In the **1841 census**, James and Ann Helliwell are shown at Smithy Street, Hebden Bridge, with James “aged 55” (meaning 55-59 here) working as a labourer. Ann is shown more precisely as 41, and they have a **James Helliwell** aged 2 staying with them. He is probably a grandson, maybe Tommy’s.



Nearby at St George’s Square (pictured right) we find their eldest daughter Ann, “35” (35-39) “attending at house” (housekeeper) with her widowed sister Grace (30-34, no occupation shown), Grace’s daughter Sarah aged 5 and young **Richard** (20-24), employed as “overlooker of throstle” (a weaving term) in one of the local worsted mills.

Richard becomes head of the next generation of our Helliwell family, and we continue his story in the section following below.

Meanwhile, in **1851** we find parents James and Ann Helliwell living at **Old Gate**, Hebden Bridge (right), with James, 69 working as a “Fence Waller or Labourer”; both are shown as born at Wadsworth, the eastern part of Hebden Bridge.



Old Gate runs along the northwest side of Hebden Water, between the old pack-horse bridge and the New Road – Market Street bridge to its southwest.

At **16 Lees Yard** we have daughter Ann, 44 by now working as a cotton reeler, with sister Grace 41 “attending the house” and her daughter Sarah Barker 18 a power loom weaver in a local cotton mill. All three are show as born in Wadsworth. Lees Yard was behind the White Horse Hotel on the north side of St George’s Square in Hebden Bridge; the name survives but all the old dwellings have long gone.

This map is an extract from the 1905 large-scale Ordnance Survey showing the centre of Hebden Bridge town. For orientation, St George’s Square is at top right, and Bridge Lanes (here shown as “The Lanes”) comes in from upper left.



James' wife Ann passed away before 1861, probably the one recorded in Halifax registration district in the October-December quarter of 1859; this could be at Hebden Royd or Mytholmroyd, near Hebden Bridge. She would have been 59 years old.

He then moved in with his two daughters and grand-daughter, so we find them all together in the 1861 census at Lees Yard. James Helliwell at 79 is still working as a fence waller – evidently a healthy outdoor life in these parts. As before, daughter Grace is the housekeeper, Ann a cotton reeler and Sarah a cotton-winder and all four give their birthplace as Wadsworth. Ten years on, still at Lees Yard, James is 89 and still going strong – a fence waller (unemployed)! Ann, 67 is still working as a cotton reeler, Grace is now described as “formerly mule piecer” (another weaving term) and Sarah has become a “tayloress”. Now they state their place of birth more precisely as Hebden Bridge, that name for the growing town having been officially adopted in 1866.

It remains then to record the demise of these four, over the following 11 years from 1872. A chance find of the family headstone in Heptonstall Methodist Chapel yard (pictured above) records all the details, it reads:

“In memory of Grace Barker of Hebden Bridge who died in the Lord Sept. 26th 1872 aged 64 years, Also James Helliwell father of the above who died in his peace Octr 31st 1874 aged 92 years. Also Ann Helliwell daughter of the above James Helliwell who entered her rest March 10th 1879 in the 77th year of her age. Also Sarah daughter of the aforesaid Grace Barker who died May 6th 1883 aged 50 years. He giveth his blessed sleep”



This information was the vital starting point which enabled us to fit together most of the information in the above section with a high degree of confidence.

The headstone is over to the extreme right in this picture. Behind the chapel on the left are some fine contemporary weaver's houses, with large windows for maximum light in the upper storeys.



Sarah Barker was thus the only remaining member of this group to appear in the 1881 census; she is living at delightfully-named Back Buttress Bottom, Hebden Bridge, on her own and still working as a tailoress. Buttress Bottom was at the northern end of Old Gate, adjacent to the old

packhorse bridge on the west side of Hebden Water. “Back” denotes a separate rear entrance to her living accommodation, possibly just a cellar room under the main house.

5. Richard Helliwell and Sarah Uttley

As we have already noted above, in the Census taken on June 6th 1841 our Richard Helliwell aged “20” is resident at St. George’s Square, in the centre of the township of Hebden Bridge, occupation “Overlooker of Throstle”. With him are elder sisters Ann and Grace with Grace’s daughter Sarah.

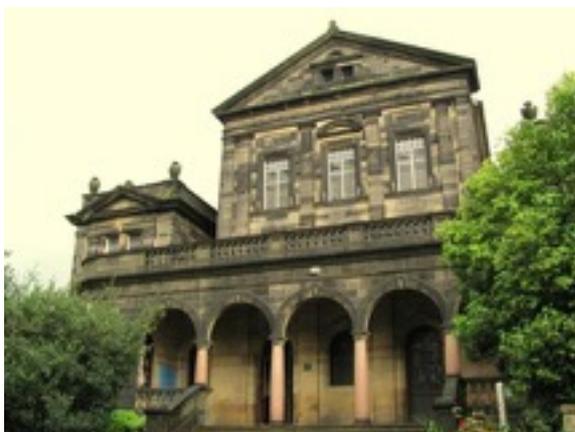
Sometime during the next five years, Richard moved well away from his birthplace area, presumably to find work or try to better himself, as we were surprised to find him described on his marriage certificate as of residence: Ashton-under-Lyne (Lancashire). He has however returned to Heptonstall to marry **Sarah Uttley**, presumably then a sweetheart from his childhood, on the 9th March 1846 at the Parochial Chapel of St Thomas a Becket. His age then is shown as 24, with occupation Overlooker. The certificate, as already noted, shows his father as James, a labourer. Both Richard and Sarah “make their mark”; the witnesses were one John Sutcliffe (another very common name in the district) and Sarah’s sister Grace (“her mark”). Uttley is also a very common surname in the Calder Valley, and originated there; the 1851 census lists 798 persons so named in England & Wales, 708 of whom were born in Yorkshire and 147 in Heptonstall alone. It is the 13th most common surname in the town.

Sarah was the youngest daughter of James Uttley, a Carder (another weaving task) born around 1775 but who had died in 1839, and his wife Sarah (aka “Sally”, nee Whitnham) born at Heptonstall in 1778. These two were married at Birchcliff Baptist Chapel, Wadsworth on 7th June 1808. Their daughter Sarah was the youngest of 3 known sisters born to them at Heptonstall and all christened at the Birchcliff Chapel as follows:

| | | |
|--------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Mary | christened 10 th February 1811 | parents James & “Betty” (sic) |
| Grace | “ 21 st April 1817 | parents James & Sally |
| Sarah | “ 18 th March 1822 | “ “ |

There may well have been others before and in between that died at birth or soon after, or whose baptism has not been recorded.

Birchcliffe Chapel was established in 1763 on Ibbot Royd Lane (nowadays called Sandy Gate) off Birchcliff Road just a quarter mile or so NE of Hebden Bridge centre. The present fine building dated 1898



(now the Pennine Heritage centre, pictured left above) is a replacement for the original, which was by then “suffering from dry rot”.

However the 1906 map extract (right) shows that the old building was still in existence then; however all that remains nowadays is the old chapel house (right, above), immediately north of the chapel itself, whose foundations may still be discerned in



the large garden.

In the **1841 census**, Sarah Uttley senior aged 64 is living at a cottage on Bridge Lanes, Hebden Bridge (right) with her 3 daughters; Mary is a silk operative, and both Grace & Sarah are shown as cotton operatives. By coincidence, next door is a James Helliwell, cotton twister with his wife Amelia, but they are both only 25-29 years old; he could conceivably be Richard's brother. But within just these 2 pages of the census return there are also 2 other Helliwell groups, and another Uttley, indicating just how common these surnames are in the area!

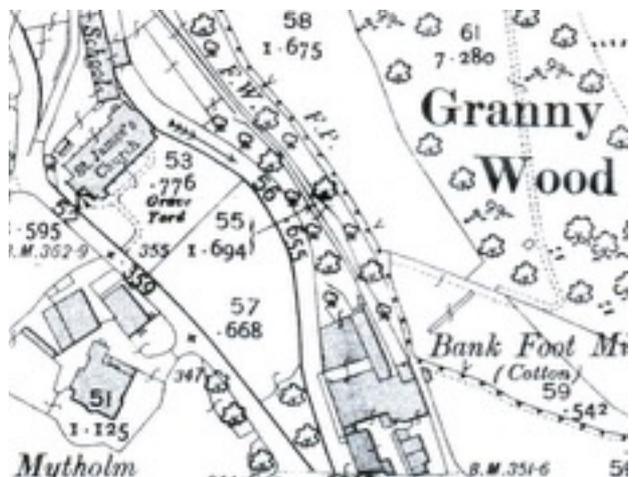


To conclude the story of our Uttley family, in the **1851 census**, Sarah and her two elder daughters Mary and Grace are still at Bridge Lanes. Both girls remain single at ages 40 and 34; Mary is employed as a silk reeler, and Grace is a cotton power-weaver. As we see below, Richard & Sarah Helliwell are staying with them on census night. **Sarah Uttley** passed away there in around 1854, aged about 76.

Grace Uttley married **John Griffiths**, a native of Salford, Lancs in the summer of 1860, and in the **1861 census** they are still at Bridge Lanes, possibly in the same house, with John, 28, a "silk twist maker-up". Note that he is all of 15 years younger than his wife! Grace's sister **Mary**, now 50 and still single, is lodging with them; she is a silk reeler. She finally married **William Holden** in the summer of 1862, but William died in 1869 aged 69.



By the time of the **1871 census**, John & Grace Griffiths have moved to Mytholm Hall Cottage, Hebden Bridge (right), with John still a silk twist maker-upper. The widowed Mary Holden is with them once again, now 60, working as a char woman; she died in the autumn of 1880 aged 69. Neither Grace nor Mary had any known children.



Mytholm Cottage is on the south side of Church Lane just below the parish church of Hebden Bridge, St James. A date plaque over the door shows it was built in 1763, and it acted as a gatehouse or lodge for the Hall, which was built for one of the wealthy mill owners in this valley. It is just below the figure "359" on this 1905 map extract.

The hall itself (marked 51 on the plan) is no longer; a residential nursing home stands on its site.

In **1881**, John & Grace's abode is now shown simply as "Mytholm", and John is now a cotton twist maker. Boarding with them are **Joseph and Ann**



expanding migrant population of power weavers and their families.

This Castleton is not as we first thought the modern community of that name some 2 miles south of Rochdale town centre, but in those days the Castleton Ward of the Borough of Rochdale, which extended right into the centre of the present town and beyond from the south and south-west. The Allotment Street houses no longer exist, the whole area having been flattened in relatively recent years to accommodate the diversion and widening of the main Manchester Road, with any surplus land given over to a modern deck-access flats complex. The location and names of the old streets are shown in this extract from the old OS map.....

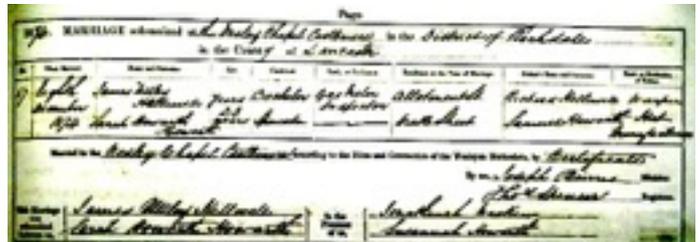


Two of Richard & Sarah's eldest children were married from the Allotment Street house in the following couple of years.

By now, if not already previously in Heptonstall, this branch of the family is clearly committed to the Methodist cause, and both marriages took place in the Castlemere Street Wesleyan Chapel, just a short step around the corner from their home (and which still exists, pictured, though nowadays in use as a smart restaurant).

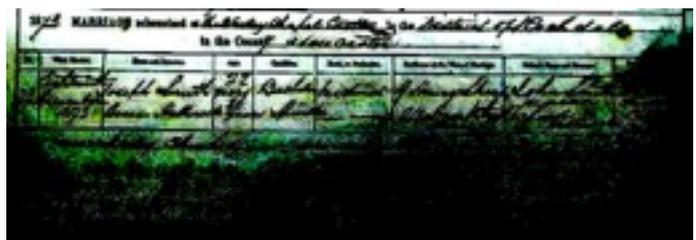


Ann was the first, married to **Joseph Smith** on 18th December 1873, when she was 26. The register entry shows her as a machinist – presumably in the local cotton mill, and her father Richard as a cotton warper. Joseph was only 22 years old from 9 Henry Street, Rochdale, also a machinist; his father was John Smith (by then deceased), overlooker in a cotton factory. Both the bride and groom signed their names, an indication of the general improvement in education in the new weaving towns. The witnesses were James Uttley Helliwell, Ann's younger brother, and his fiancée Sarah Howarth, both of whom also signed. As was then necessary for non-conformist chapel marriages, the Rochdale Borough Registrar was in attendance.



As we have already seen above, Ann returned to her native Hebden Bridge with Joseph by 1881, and are living at Bridge Lanes there with her aunt **Grace** (nee **Uttley**) and her husband John Griffiths. Joseph is shown in the census as a “mechanic (iron) - wood cutting machinery”

James Uttley Helliwell was the next to marry, to the above mentioned **Sarah Howarth** almost exactly a year after Ann, on the 8th December 1874 at Castlemere Chapel. He was 22 years old (but recorded as 23) with occupation now “gas meter inspector” and father Richard shown as a warper. Sarah was also 23, of nearby Drake Street, not in employment, whose father Samuel was a hat manufacturer. Rather curiously, her name is recorded (and she also signed the register) as “Sarah Howarth Howarth”. This is not a mistake, she was christened thus in early 1851 at her birthplace, Atherstone in Warwickshire. The witnesses were one Jonathan Maskew, and Susannah Howarth, Sarah's sister.



Sarah Howarth is shown in the 1851 census at age 2 months with her parents Samuel and Martha, at home in South Street, Atherstone, where Samuel had his business as a hat-maker. However, both Samuel and Martha were born in Rochdale around 1826, and their two older daughters Mary Ann, 4 and Susannah, 1 at Rochdale and Oldham respectively, so the family is evidently moving around a bit. By 1854 they were back up north again, as son William Joseph was born in Manchester that year.

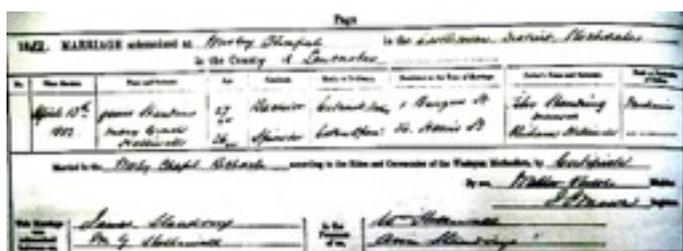
The 1861 census finds them all at 58 Edward Street, Bury, with Samuel still working as a hatter. Ten years later they have moved again, to 21 Drake Street, Rochdale, from where Sarah married, and the 1871 entry shows more detail: Samuel Howarth aged 45, Hatter is recorded as born in Spotland, Rochdale as was his wife Martha 43; daughters Mary A. 24 and Susannah 21 born at Rochdale and Hollinwood respectively, and Sarah, 20 born at Atherstone. We continue James & Sarah Helliwell's story in section 7 following, below.

Richard & Sarah's daughter **Sarah Jane** married Thomas Greenwood in Manchester in early 1880, and then returned with him to Wadsworth (just to the east of Hebden Bridge) by the time of the 1881 census. Shown at 15 Foster Lane there, Thomas was born in 1842 at Wadsworth and employed as a cotton fustian cutter. by 1891 they have moved to 2 Eiffel Buildings, Wadsworth with Thomas a fustian cord cutter and Sarah a Fustian Tailoress. The 1901 census entry is virtually identical; there are no children, but by 1911 they have both retired and moved to sunnier climes at Wallisdown, Bouremouth in Dorset. Their home is called Hebden Cottage, and appears to be at 25 Park Road (now called Old Mulbery Close and completely redeveloped). Thomas died there in early 1917 aged 74.

The 1921 census shows Sarah Jane still living in Wallisdown, surely at the same house, one of the larger ones on the road with 6 main rooms. Her brother and family moved to High Road nearby just before, see below. In 1939 she is at 25 Alton Road, again the same house, as Park Road has by now been thus renamed. She died there in early 1941, aged 91.

Onwards to the **1881 census**, and Richard & Sarah Helliwell have by then moved a short distance in Rochdale from Allotment Street to 36 Harris Street. Richard, 61, is shown here as born in Halifax, an unemployed warper – perhaps he was not in good health at the time? Sarah, 59 is also shown as born in Halifax. Only the two youngest daughters, Mary Grace and Elizabeth, are still living at home, unmarried at 25 and 20 years old, both cotton weavers shown as born in Todmorden. Son **William**, 22, “born Todmorden” has moved to Manchester to take up a teaching post at a “Public School”, and is lodging with a widow Margaret Gerrard and her two children at 13 Queen Street, Cheetham.

Over the next 3 years, we find the marriages of the remaining three children. **Mary Grace** Helliwell married **James Standring** on April 13th 1882 at the Castlemere Street Chapel. She was 26, a cotton operative from the family home at 36 Harris Street, with father Richard having no occupation shown. James was 27, a cabinet maker of 1 Burgess Street, Rochdale, whose father was Peter Standring (who had died in early 1881), a mechanic. Both parties signed their names, as did the two witnesses, William Helliwell (Mary's brother) and Ann Standring. Though the surname is relatively uncommon in the country as a whole, there are several Standring families in Rochdale at this time, and we faced some confusion trying to identify the correct James. The nearest in age would seem to be the one born in Oldham district in the summer of 1855, who is shown in the 1881 census lodging at 8 Angel Street, Manchester with no occupation shown. What happened to them subsequently is also not clear, as there are no obvious candidates for them in either the 1901 or 1911 census indexes, and no death recorded at any time up to 1930.



William was next to tie the knot, and broke with his family's Methodist tradition by marrying at the Anglican church of St Edmund, Falinge (pictured), west of Rochdale town centre.

He is 25 years old, a schoolmaster, and has come back home for the wedding; he gives his address as that of his parents, 36 Harris Street, with father Richard shown as a cotton worker.

The date was Boxing Day, 1883, his bride was **Frances Ellen Meadowcroft**, and they were married by no less a person than the Right Rev. W. J. Knox Little, Canon of Worcester Cathedral.

Frances was the 2nd daughter of James Meadowcroft and his wife Fanny, nee Coops, born in early 1861 at Rochdale. James was, until his death in 1879, butler to the wealthy Royds family of bankers at Mount Falinge house. The 1861 census shows the family living at Green Hill Lodge within the 18 acre grounds of the big house nowadays known as Falinge Park.

James, then 40 was born at Worsley, north west of Manchester and his wife Fanny, 35 at Toft in Cheshire; she was christened at St. John's church, Knutsford (co-incidentally the one I was married in) on the 5th June 1825, the daughter of John & Harriett Coops. She married James in Rochdale in early 1853, but curiously the eldest daughter shown in 1861 was Mary Ann, 15, born at Baswich, Stafford, so probably James had been married and widowed previously. They were at Falinge by 1854 when son Herbert was born. Louisa followed some 4 years later, and Frances Ellen was just 3 months old on the night of the census. In 1871 the family have moved a short distance to a cottage at Falinge Fold in the park, presumably with more room for their expanding family; son Frederick John was born in 1863 and daughter Emily in 1867; James the butler had the luxury of his own servant there! After his death, his widow and children went to live at Falinge Lodge, where they are found in the **1881 census**. Also staying with them then is Fanny's mother, Harriett Coops, born in Bath, Somerset and now a widow aged 90. Frances, 20 was at that time employed as a "School Mrs. Assistant", possibly at the same school as William Helliwell and thus how they came to meet.

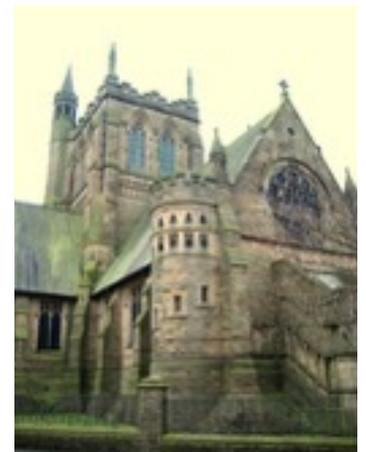
Witnesses at their wedding were her siblings Louisa and Frederick Meadowcroft. The original register of St Edmund's church, now kept at the Central Library, Manchester, contains a pasted-in slip showing the fees applicable for a marriage there in 1883 and makes interesting reading today: "Publishing Banns; 1s-0d", "Minister's fee 3s-6d; the Clerk 1s-0d, total 4s-6d"; Certificate 1s-1d (with stamp)" (total 6s-7d; or around 33 new pence!)

Mount Falinge house was built by James Royds in 1786. His son Clement founded the Rochdale Bank Co., and was High Sheriff of Lancaster from 1850 until his death in 1854. His son Albert Hudson Royds inherited the Rochdale properties but made his principal home in Worcestershire and became both High Sheriff of that county and Provincial Grand Master of the Freemasonry movement, from which his friendship with the Canon of Worcester Cathedral no doubt derives.



He built St Edmund's church in 1874 in memory of his parents, spending over £20,000 to ensure that it bore evidence of his Masonic connections in all its features. In what is nowadays known as Clement Royds Street leading directly from the park, the building today referred to as the Mason's Church still survives, though sadly disused since 2006; it is

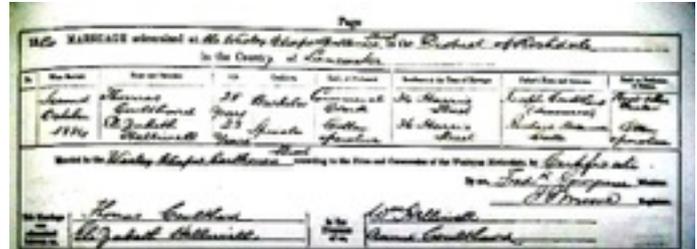
grade II listed. Falinge Park was given to the people of Rochdale in 1905 by Albert Royds' grandson, but Mount Falinge House was largely destroyed by



fire during the 1970's and only the facade now survives; plans are however mooted for its rebuilding as a community centre in the park.

For the last marriage, we go back to Castlemere Street Wesleyan Methodist on 2nd October 1884, when **Elizabeth Helliwell**, 23 married **Thomas Coulthard**. She is a cotton operative, resident at her parent's house 36 Harris Street, with her father Richard also shown as a cotton operative. Thomas is "the boy next door" from 34 Harris Street, a commercial clerk aged 28, son of Joseph Coulthard (deceased), a boot & shoe dealer. The witnesses were brother William Helliwell, and Anne Coulthard, with all 4 signing the register in the presence of the Borough Registrar.

In the **1881 census**, Thomas is shown with his widowed mother Sarah and 5 younger siblings living a 2 Fenton Street Rochdale, working as a commercial clerk. The above-mentioned Annie Coulthard is his sister, a year or so younger, a "smallware shopwoman"



William & Frances Ellen Helliwell continue my direct family line, and we follow the subsequent fortunes of both them and his other siblings in the sections below.

For their parents Richard and Sarah, it remains to record that **Richard** died at Harris Street, Rochdale around the end of June 1885 aged 66. He was interred at Rochdale cemetery, Bury Road on 3rd July, the grave plot paid for by son William who was then living at King Street, Rochdale. The burial register gives Richard's occupation as a warper. **Sarah** then went to Birmingham as housekeeper to her son James and his wife Sarah; she is with them in the 1891 census (see below).

We will see that James had to move around the country a lot in his vocation as a Methodist minister, and his mother **Sarah** went to stay instead with son William at Alfreton at some point during the 1890s. She died there in April 1898 aged 76. William arranged for her to be brought back to Rochdale, where she was buried alongside her husband Richard in Rochdale cemetery on 19th April. The cemetery records indicate that this was grave no. 28284 in plot FF15, but no unfortunately headstone survives; about 1/3 of those in the vicinity have vanished or are broken/illegible.

7. James Uttley Helliwell and Sarah Howarth Howarth

Following their marriage in Rochdale in late 1874, James and Sarah moved to the Manchester area where they had two sons, as follows.....

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| John William | born in the spring of 1876 | in Manchester |
| James | " of 1878 | in Salford |

In the **1881 census**, the family is shown living at 3 Barton Lane, Barton upon Irwell, and this may indeed be where son James was born. James senior, by now 28, shown as born at "Ebden" Bridge, has become a Gas Inspector, and is also a local Wesleyan Preacher. His wife Sarah H. Born at Atherstone and the two boys have details as expected.

By 1888 they have apparently moved to the Wolverhampton district of Staffordshire, as **Sarah** Howarth Helliwell died there in the autumn of that year, aged only 37.

By **1891** the widowed James has moved to 286 Nechells Park Road, Aston, Birmingham, where he has evidently given up his Gas Company career to become a full-time Wesleyan minister, if not already in Wolverhampton. He has the two boys John & James with him, both scholars, also as noted above, his mother Sarah, by now 69, as their housekeeper. There is also a young servant girl living in as general domestic, from Wolverhampton.

In the summer of the following year 1892, we find James Uttley Helliwell living and working in Nottingham, when he married **Harriet Eliza Cartwright** there. Harriet was born in Pendleton, Salford in the spring of 1864, and in the 1871 census shows her family at 149 Water Street, off Liverpool Road, Manchester St. John.

Her father John Cartwright, 36 born at Latchford, Warrington, was a railway engine driver and his wife Mary, the same age was from the Potteries towns. Harriet has two older brothers and one younger. In the ensuing 10 years John was evidently widowed and remarried before he himself died, so that in 1881 Harriet is shown staying with widowed stepmother Sarah and 4 siblings living in the delightfully-named My Street, Salford (no. 35), at age 17 shown as a Pupil Teacher; she thus probably knew James from his time there then, probably attending one of the chapels in the circuit where he preached.

Harriet added one more known child to James' brood, a son **Harry** born around 1893 in Glasgow – they certainly moved around a bit! By the time of the **1901 census** however, they were back in England, at Newcastle-on-Tyne. James, now 48 is shown as a Wesleyan Methodist Minister with Harriet 11 years his junior and son Harry aged 7, living at 87 Park Road, in the Elswick district of the city. They have a 22 year old female domestic servant born locally. It seems that both James' two elder sons by Sarah returned to the Manchester area. There are no clear candidates for **John** William in the 1901 census index, but by 1911 he was back at Salford staying with his parents at age 35, and ten years later he is found boarding at 177 Plymouth Grove, South Manchester, working as a Clerk to Chartered Accountants Clarke & Eckersley at 10 Norfolk Street in the city. He is probably the one who died in the autumn of 1925 in Manchester, aged 49. We do not know for sure what happened to son **James**, as none of the several candidates in the 1901 census seem to fit him convincingly. However, it is likely he is the one who married a Janet, born at Old Cunnock, Ayrshire around 1880, probably in Scotland in 1909; they are at 10 Pine Grove, Monton, Eccles in 1911, with James as a Chartered Accountant (employer). In 1939 they are at 12 Preston Avenue, Eccles and James is now also a director of his company. There are no children, and they have 1 servant.

By 1911 James senior and Harriet had returned to Salford with son Henry by now aged 17. Henry Cartwright Helliwell was enlisted into the Royal Army Medical Corps in the Great War, and was killed at Gallipoli on 13th August 1915, aged 22; he is commemorated on the Helles Memorial in Turkey. His home address is listed as 5 Brocklebank Road, Fallowfield, Manchester, which may be that of his parents at that time. The 1921 census shows James & Harriet now at 1 Heathville Road, Gloucester, where he is the Wesleyan Methodist Minister at Gloucester Methodist Church. They have one companion/home help living in.

Harriet seems to be the one who died in late 1928 at Hitchin, Hertfordshire aged 64. James Uttley Helliwell passed on back in the Manchester area in early 1938 at the age of 85.

8. Elizabeth Helliwell & Thomas Coulthard

Thomas and Elizabeth continued to live in Rochdale after their marriage there in 1884. Five children were born to them as follows, and all are recorded as baptized at Castlemere Street Wesleyan Chapel:-

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Ernest | born 18 th September 1885, baptized 7 th February 1886; residence 33 Sussex Street |
| Ethel | baptized 20 th November 1887, a few days after birth; ditto |
| Harold | born 27 th November 1889, baptized 2 nd February 1890; ditto |
| Edith | born 7 th December 1891, baptized 31 st January 1892, ditto |
| Leonard | born 10 th April 1895, baptized 2 nd June, residence Manchester Road |

In the **1891 census** the family are shown as expected at 33 Sussex Street, with Thomas a leather salesman. Elizabeth shows her birthplace as Todmorden, the three children are with them and they have one domestic servant, Ellen Hall, 15, born in Alfreton, Derbyshire, who has perhaps come to them upon the recommendation of William Helliwell, schoolmaster there?

Sadly Thomas and Elizabeth were to lose three of their children, Edith, Harold and Leonard within just a few weeks of each other in the spring of 1897, presumably due to a contagious infection. In the **1901 census** the parents and their remaining two, Ernest and Edith are at "Woodlea", Manchester Road, which

has probably been the family home since around 1894. Thomas at 44 is now a leather merchant (employer), and they have 2 servants, a cook from Crewe and a housemaid from Alfreton (though not the same girl as in 1891). Woodlea, a grand house, still survives, nowadays incorporated into the Highfield Private Hospital complex on the west side of Manchester Road about half a mile south of Rochdale town centre.

Thomas & Elizabeth are recorded in the **1911 census** at “Shawlands”, Manchester Road, Rochdale, an even grander one just along the road from Woodlea. Ernest, by now a leather merchant, and Ethel are still at home, and there are two house servants. Ethel married Frank Whipp in the summer of 1911 at Rochdale, and Ernest married Helen Whipp (possibly Frank’s twin?) in the spring of 1915.

The 1921 census shows Thomas & Elizabeth still at Shawlands, with him still working at his business in Rochdale. They have 1 servant. By 1939 and in retirement, they have moved to 35 Dene Road, Didsbury, Manchester; Thomas Coulthard died in early 1947 in the Manchester area aged 90 and Elizabeth in spring 1955 at the age of 94.

9. William Helliwell and Frances Ellen Meadowcroft

William and Frances stayed in Rochdale for a short time after their marriage in late 1883, then moved to Alfreton, Derbyshire around 1886. Three children were born to them in the period 1884 – 1892, as follows:

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Hubert | born in autumn 1884 at Rochdale |
| Madeline | “ 17 th September 1889 at Alfreton |
| Laurence | “ 19 th February 1892 at Alfreton |

Upon the death of his father Richard in July 1885, William paid for his grave plot at Rochdale cemetery. William’s address then is recorded as King Street, Rochdale. In the **1891 census** the family is living at the National School, Chesterfield Road, Alfreton, which is three doors down from the George Hotel in the Market Place of this small Derbyshire town. Both William at 32 (“born Todmorden”) and Frances, 30 are listed as “Teacher – Public Elementary”, and young Hubert at 6 is a scholar presumably under his parent’s guidance both at home and at school! They have one live-in servant, local 18 year old Sally Clamp, no doubt another one of those that William recruited direct from leaving his school.

In the **1901 census**, William and his three children are shown at Nottingham Road, Alfreton, but strangely his wife Fanny is not there with them and cannot be found elsewhere in the index; we think that the enumerator has simply omitted her when he wrote up his return.

Unfortunately no individual house numbers or names are shown on the census sheets, but we think that this may be the house which features in various photographs we have showing family members around 1910-1920, and which still survives. On a visit to Alfreton in the 1980’s my mother pointed it out to us as the one she remembered from her youth, and which is clearly recognisable from the old photographs as the same house. It is on the north side of the Nottingham Road, about ½ mile east of the town centre.....



In the census, William at 43 is shown as “Teacher at a Public Elementary School” and his son Hubert also as a “Public Teacher”. The two younger children, 11 and 9, are not explicitly shown as scholars, but they surely were. They have a 16-year old servant Annie Robinson, born in Blackwell, Derbyshire. Next door, the 18 year old daughter of a family of drapers and clothiers is a student schoolteacher, no doubt working under William’s guidance. Ten years later, the 1911 return shows the family at “Sunny Bank”, Alfreton, surely the name house. William is a certificated

schoolmaster, Frances a schoolmistress, daughter Madeline an assistant at the school, and son Lawrence a pharmacist apprentice; they have one house servant.

Here is William with his son Hubert in the rear garden at Alfreton around 1920.....



By 1921 William & Frances had retired to Dorset; in the census, William Helliwell, now aged 63 is shown living on High Road, Wallisdown near Bournemouth. Unfortunately no house number or name is shown, but my mother's recollection of a corner plot with large side garden seems to indicate what is now known as 313 Wallisdown Road. The census shows it had just 3 main rooms, which fits. Their daughter in law Clarissa is with them, and all three of her daughters, Claire, Maureen & Ena, also a James Helliwell Mein, aged 5 born in Alfreton, as a visitor, so quite a crowd in this small house, in comparison with William's sister, Sarah Jane Greenwood, living nearby, on her own with 5 rooms! Meanwhile, Clarissa's husband Hubert is working in Manchester (see later)

Frances passed away late in 1936 probably at the Wallisdown house, aged 75. William and his granddaughters then moved to South Manchester to be near Clarissa and her husband. In the 1939 wartime ID card index they are at 24 Deneford Road, Didsbury; Clarissa is called Claire here and her daughter Claire is not at home; Maureen has no job shown, and Ena was a Stenographer.

We think that William Helliwell died in the south Manchester area in early 1942 aged 83. Frances appears to be the one who passed away in late 1936 in Poole, Dorset aged 75. We originally thought that they had both died much earlier, say around 1912, and so it is strange that they were never mentioned by my mother or her sisters.

10. The family of William & Frances Helliwell

Madeline Helliwell married **James Gordon Mein** in Alfreton in the summer of 1912, when she was 22 years old. James was the son of another James and his wife Mary, and was born in Durham City on 6th March 1889. James Mein senior was born in Annitsford, Longbenton, Northumberland (in the mining area just north of Newcastle) around 1856 and married Mary Ann Boddy of Shildon, Co. Durham at Auckland in early 1878. In the 1881 census, James and Mary are living at the Boat House, Framwellgate, Durham with James working as a coal miner. Their 5 known children were as follows:

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Hannah | born in the spring of 1883, | at Durham |
| Andrew | “ early 1886, | “ |
| James Gordon | “ March 6 th 1889 | “ |
| Jane Hartford | “ autumn of 1891 | at Toft Hill, Co. Durham |
| John Boddy | “ “ 1894 | at South Normanton, Derbyshire |

So the family has evidently moved south, no doubt as an employment promotion for James, around 1893, and he is recorded in 1896 as the Manager of South Normanton Colliery, owned by other Mein family members, employing 220 men. In the 1901 census we find them living at Wincobank, South Normanton, with James, now 44 a colliery manager. In 1921 the family is at Nottingham Road, Alfreton, with James again Manager of the South Normanton Colliery, they have 1 servant. By 1923 he had also been appointed as a director of the company. He died in early 1925.

Madeline & James Mein had 4 children as follows:

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Anthony G. | Born in the autumn of 1913, | at Alfreton |
| James Helliwell (“Uncle Jimmy”) | “ 1916 | “ |
| Margaret Mary (“Peggy”) | “ 1919 | “ |
| Freda | summer of 1923 | “ |

Anthony died in 1918 at the age of just 4. By 1933 James Gordon Mein had succeeded his father as Manager at South Normanton Colliery, which by then employed 620 men. He was still in that post in 1940, but the workforce was now down to only 450.

James Mein may have been the one recorded as passing away in Newcastle on Tyne in early 1945, aged 56. Madeline Mein died in the Manchester area in late 1967, aged 78.

Laurence Helliwell had moved to Liverpool by 1916, and in the spring of that year married **Dorothy King Dwelley** in the West Derby district of that city. He was 24 years old, and Dorothy was born at Nantwich, Cheshire in the spring of 1891, thus around a year older. Her family could not be found in the census of that year, but by 1901 she was staying at the home of her uncles Thomas & Jeremiah Frost and her aunt Mary, 194 Longmoor Lane, Walton on the Hill, Liverpool, where the brothers ran a drapery shop. All three members of the Frost family were born in faraway Holt, in Norfolk. In 1911 Dorothy (shown as of “private means”) was still with the Frost’s, but now at “Artegas”, Prescott Road, Aughton near Ormskirk. Thus Dorothy’s parents remain a complete mystery; perhaps they had both died when she was young, or were often travelling abroad?

By 1918 Laurence & Dorothy had moved up to Barrow-in-Furness, co-incidentally where my father’s Mason family were at that time. Their only children, twins Dorothy M. and Peter K. Helliwell were born there in the autumn of that year. In 1921 however they are found at 66 Sinclair Road, Hammersmith, with Lawrence an assistant manager at the Navy, Army & Air Force Institute (NAAFI) based at Imperial Court, Knightsbridge in London. There is a nurse for the children, and 1 servant. Dorothy petitioned for divorce in 1929, with Laurence as sole named respondent. In the 1939 ID card register, Laurence is shown as a Motor Salesman, and is living on his own at 407, Chepstow Road, Newport, South Wales. Dorothy never re-married and died in late 1935 at Hampstead, London aged 44.

In 1950, Laurence is recorded as resident at Henbury Park, Macclesfield, Cheshire, employed as a butler. On the 18th May of that year he sailed on MV “Ascania” from Liverpool to Montreal, Canada, aged 58. Six weeks later on 30th June he arrived in Detroit, Michigan USA apparently with a wife Mary and son John, along with his employer, Mrs W. Bruce Howard, presumably continuing a connection with the motor industry. He was naturalised as a US citizen on 20th September 1951 and no doubt subsequently died there.

11. Hubert Helliwell and Clarissa Lawson

William & Frances’ eldest son Hubert, resident at “Sunny Bank”, Alfreton, the family home, was formally enrolled at his father’s National School nearby on 4th September 1898, aged 14, having started there the previous April. He is recorded as leaving in December 1900 with the footnote “Cambridge PUL”, of which the latter meaning is unclear. In the 1901 census he is back home in Alfreton, listed as a public teacher in elementary school aged just 16!

He later trained as a civil engineer, possibly in London. At the age of 25 there in 1910 he met and married **Clarissa Jane Lawson**. The wedding took place on 25th June 1910 at St Stephen’s church, Hampstead NW, which by another co-incidence was where my husband’s Jagers and Hammond families were living at that time. Hubert is shown as a civil engineer of 6 Heath Hurst Road, Hampstead (the posh bit, fringing onto Hampstead Heath!) whose father William (not shown as deceased) is recorded as a Schoolmaster. The witnesses were one F. Falcon, an Ada Watson and Alexander Lawson.

Clarissa was the daughter of Alexander Lawson, Sergeant-Major Armourer, and his wife Isabella, born at Newry, Northern Ireland in 1881. The marriage certificate records her address in 1910 as 15 Leslie Place, Edinburgh, her family home, but she no doubt met Hubert in London; we look at her family next.....

The Lawson family of Edinburgh

Clarissa's grandfather **Robert Lawson** was born about 1795 in Scotland; we know not where, but in around 1820 was married to **Jane Adams**. Jane was the daughter of Alexander Adams, a sailmaker and his wife Helen, nee Lun and was christened on the 19th May 1796 at Hawick, Roxburghshire. Robert was a blacksmith by trade, possibly in Hawick, and shortly after their marriage they moved to Edinburgh. They had five known children as follows.....

| | | | |
|------------------|------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| John | christened | 8 th March 1821 | at Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh |
| Barbara | “ | 16 th February 1823 | “ |
| Jane | “ | 18 th February 1827 | “ |
| Robert | “ | 31 st May 1829 | “ |
| Alexander | born | 2 nd December 1831 | Edinburgh St Cuthbert district |

Robert Lawson senior probably died during the late 1830's. In the 1841 census of Scotland his widow Jane is shown living at 18 Hume's Entry, Potterow in the St Cuthbert district of Edinburgh, and her children John, Barbara and Alexander are with her. John is working as a gun-miller and Barbara is shown as a servant. Daughter Jane is similarly employed and living nearby at Summer Place, in the household of Penelope Wickham, 40, of independent means, and her children. We have no idea where Robert was, at the age of 12, indeed due to the very common surname and the tendency for the English census to give the birthplace of same as merely "Scotland", we could not trace any of the other children in later life with any certainty.

In the **1851 census** Jane Lawson aged 56 is shown living at 3 Little Jack Close, Canongate, Edinburgh, with just her youngest son Alexander still at home with her; he is a gun-maker aged 19. They have a family of visitors on census night named Robertson; **Barbara** aged 27 born at St Cuthbert, Edinburgh, who is possibly Alexander's sister, since married? She has 3 young children with her. **Jane** junior is staying at the house of an uncle William Finlay, a cabinet maker aged 44 and his family, 2 South St David's Street, Edinburgh St Andrew on census night. With her is a Euphemia Lawson aged 20 born in Edinburgh, another of William's nieces and thus probably an otherwise unrecorded additional child of Robert and Jane. A possible candidate for **Robert** junior is at Birkenhead, Wirral, lodging in a converted dock warehouse and working as a labourer in the docks there aged 22, but as stated above, we cannot be sure.

My mother mentioned on several occasions that a member of our Lawson family had once been Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, a distinguished Scottish municipal appointment equivalent to that of Lord Mayor of London. The list of holders of that title does indeed show a **Charles Lawson** of Borthwick Hall, who served from 1862–65. The 1851 census shows this man living at 35 George Square, Edinburgh where he had a business as a cereal merchant. He was born in the city in August 1795, the son of Peter Lawson & his wife Patricia nee Grant, and had an elder brother James born September 1794. There were two other children but not one named Robert. Charles married a Miss Graham Stoddart from Duns, Berwickshire.

Their son Charles was born in Edinburgh around 1827 and also worked in the family business. By 1861 this had expanded to general seedsmen at nos. 34 - 35 George Square, and Charles senior had purchased a country estate, Borthwick Hall at Heriot, south east of the city. He is shown there in the census that year, described as Merchant, landed proprietor and farmer of 2000 acres employing 20 labourers, but has no family with him in this large house, just a housekeeper and two female domestic servants. Ten years later he is by now widowed, sharing the George Square houses with his son Charles, his wife Mary and family. From this limited information the connection with our Robert Lawson, a mere blacksmith born about the same year as Charles senior, is not readily apparent and was probably originally just a fanciful notion, with the story embellished as it was passed along in our family.

By 1861 the widow Jane Lawson had moved to 9 Bedford Street, Edinburgh St Bernard, where she is shown at age 64 as an annuitant on census night. She is alone in the house, and died there around 1865.

Meanwhile Robert & Jane's son **Alexander** Lawson married **Isabella Jane Anderson** in Edinburgh on 10th July 1856, when he was 24 years old. Isabella was the daughter of James Anderson, a butcher born at Dalkeith, Midlothian around 1801 and his wife Catherine, nee Thompson born 1813 at Methven, Perthshire.

They were married in Edinburgh on 26th November 1833 and Isabella was born there in 1839, so was just 17 when she married Alexander.

Both the 1841 and 1851 censuses show the Andersons living at 54 Bristo Street, Edinburgh St Cuthbert, and their full known family is as follows: **Marion** born 1834, **John** 1836, **David** 1837, **Isabella Jane** 1839, **Cathrine** 1842, **James** 1844 and **Euphemia** in the summer of 1850. In the 1851 entry, John and David have already left home, mother Cathrine is working as a nurse, Marion is a bookfolder and the next three all scholars, with Isabella calling herself Jane here. Their father James Anderson died about 1855.

In the next census, 1861, the family are at 429 Lawnmarket, in the parish of Edinburgh High Church right at the heart of things towards the western end of the Royal Mile. Alexander Lawson is shown as the head of household, working as a gun-maker, with Isabella at home as expected; they have a one-year old daughter Catherine. Also staying at the house are Isabella's mother Cathrine Anderson recorded as an office keeper, her son David a journeyman butcher having presumably carried on his late father's business, and a James Anderson, 16 also a butcher, shown as Alexander's son-in-law. The enumerator then understandably becomes a little confused; there is an Alice Anderson, also 16 working as an apprentice dressmaker, described as "daughter of mother-in-law" who could conceivably be James' twin, or maybe not? Last but not least, Euphemia Anderson, 10 is described as Alexander's daughter-in-law, whereas she is in fact his wife Isabella's younger sister!

In 1871, still at 429 Lawnmarket, things look somewhat simpler. The widow Catherine is now working as a charwoman, and her elder son John has returned to the fold, still unmarried at age 35 and working as a porter. There is however a Payne (? , that's what it looks like, anyway; a male) Anderson, 34 born at Edinburgh St Cuthbert and with no occupation shown, recorded as one of three lodgers at the house. Of course he may not be related at all, or only distantly. Catherine Anderson died in Edinburgh on 27th October 1877, aged 64.

Alexander and Isabella had seven known children born in the period 1860 to 1881; the birthplaces show how Alexander moved around the world frequently in the course of his Army career.....

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Catherine | born in 1860 | in Edinburgh, thought to have died young |
| Isabella | born circa 1866 | in Montreal, Canada |
| Alexander | born circa 1868 | Montreal |
| Barbara | born 29 th July 1870 | at Newry, Northern Ireland |
| John | born circa 1874 | on the Isle of Jersey, Channel Islands |
| Ada | born circa 1876 | "somewhere in England" (many candidates!) |
| Clarissa Jane | born 27 th October 1881 | at Newry, Northern Ireland |

By the time of the **1891 census** however, the Lawsons were back in Edinburgh, living at 18 Brunton Terrace, South Leith. Alexander, now 59 has evidently retired from the Army and has become a Servitor (or Beadle, a security administrator) at Edinburgh University. All of their children are at home; the eldest Isabella, 24, is a milliner, then Alexander, 21 a clerk, Barbara 19 an assistant housekeeper, John 17 a gun-maker apprentice following in his father's footsteps, Ada 15 a dressmaker apprentice, and young Clarissa at 8 still of course a scholar. Their mother **Isabella** passed away on 17th April 1900 at Brunton Terrace, aged 60.

In **1901** the census shows that the widowed Alexander, still a University Servitor at the age of 69, has moved a few doors along the street to 13 Brunton Terrace, a house with "4 rooms having 1 or more windows". Just the four girls are still



at home with him; Isabella is now a draper's assistant, Barbara is marked as "no occupation" and as "imbecile (since childhood)". Ada also has no occupation, and Clarissa at 19 is a clerkess. Both the boys have moved south; the 1901 England census shows Alexander working as a mercantile clerk in a brewery in Gloucestershire, and John as a fully-fledged gunsmith living in Paddington, London.

As far as we know, Clarissa's father Alexander was still alive in 1910, and so the witness shown on her marriage certificate might be either him or her elder brother. It is also likely that the Ada Watson shown is Clarissa's sister, married sometime after 1901, probably in Edinburgh. The picture above shows the Lawson clan about 1910, though unfortunately no-one is identified in it.

12. The family of Hubert and Clarissa Helliwell

After their wedding in London in 1910, Hubert and Clarissa next turn up in Didsbury, South Manchester. The 1911 census shows them living at 7 Scarisbrick Avenue there, aged 26 and 28 respectively. However they had moved to Birkenhead, Wirral by early the next year, and their three children were born there as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Claire Meadowcroft | born in the spring of 1912 |
| Maureen | born on 12 th December 1913 |
| Ena Frances | born in the summer of 1915 |

(the first and last having middle names commemorating their late grandmother, Frances Ellen Meadowcroft)

The pictures below show, from left: Hubert and Clarissa outside his parents house at Alfreton; Clarissa with Hubert's sister Madeline on the same occasion; Maureen & Claire Helliwell circa 1916.....



And here is Clarissa with young Ena, around early 1916.....



Hubert Helliwell served in the Royal Engineers in the Great War, being promoted to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant in 1916 and Lieutenant in 1917, travelling extensively. We have a set of four postcards sent from Alexandria, Egypt on the 11th of November 1917 showing views of the city, to his wife then living at Sunny Bank, Alfreton. He writes "please keep these PPCs as they will be very interesting to me afterwards".

Next came a photograph of the Jaffa gate in Jerusalem, dated January 1918. He was back in Egypt by March 1918; we have a receipt from the Winter Palace Hotel, Luxor for a one-



night stay on the 23rd of that month, total cost 110 Piastres or just over £1 including breakfast and lunch on the 24th and omnibus transportation, presumably to and from the main railway station in the city.

The following 2 nights he stayed at the George Nungovich Grand Continental Hotel in Cairo, this time running up a bill of 176 Piastres. Hubert was badly gassed in France, presumably in 1917, and was no doubt posted to the warmer climes of Egypt to benefit his health. He suffered from a bad chest as a result for the rest of his life. No medal card could be found for him in Army records.

In the June 1921 census as we have already seen, Clarissa and the 3 girls are with her father-in-law William in Wallisdown, Bournemouth. Hubert has remained in Manchester no doubt due to work commitments, and is boarding at 65 Nelson Street, Chorlton-in-Medlock, recorded as a civil engineer & specialist in re-inforced concrete with messrs. F. Michell & co, contractors of River Place, City Road in Manchester.



Smetime afterwards, Hubert, Clarissa and their family went to live in Bramhall, Cheshire. According to the inscription on his grave surround at Woodford churchyard, Stockport, Hubert Helliwell died there on 3rd March 1936, “aged 48”, but the register shows him with correct age of 51.

His widow Clarissa lived on for many years in the Stockport area, passing away there in 1959 aged 77 and also interred at Woodford.

To bring the story briefly up to date, Claire married **William Richmond Jones**, lately living in Davenport, Stockport; she passed away on 10th December 2010 at the age of 98. Maureen (my mother) married **John Robertson Mason**, a bank clerk (later manager) from Barrow-in-Furness but then engaged in war service with the Royal Artillery on Salisbury Plain, on 19th June 1941 in Manchester. She died on 14th March 2003 at Stepping Hill Hospital, Stockport, aged 89. Ena married **Derek Charles Bradbury** and they lived latterly in Cambridgeshire.

Elizabeth M. Jagers

May 2009; pictures added August 2010; last updated April 2022.