

1. Foreward

This text documents the results of a project to determine the family history of Joseph Blaker (1916-2007; *Joe*), looking specifically at his predecessors. It is entitled '*A Blaker Family History*'.

The current genealogy project involved research over the period 2004 to 2013, with most of this being undertaken by Graham Joseph Blaker (1946- ; *Joe*; son-of *Joe*) and his wife, Juliet Elizabeth Blaker (1948- ; nee Hammond; *Juliet*).

It is hoped that this text will go some way to recording the life and times of *Joe* and his predecessors, and to answer the question, 'where did he come from'? The work is also intended to be a point of reference for members of our family who have an interest in their family history, and it is hoped that, as time progresses, and new information emerges, they will wish to add to this body of knowledge.

Throughout there is an underlying desire to learn more, since bald facts do not paint an adequate picture of the people concerned – how we wish we had been able to talk to more people during their lifetimes – sadly opportunities that have been missed cannot now be recovered.

This genealogy project has uncovered many fascinating insights into the lives of the people, and the social history of the times concerned. The story that has emerged covers a wide spectrum of professions, accomplishments, wealth, social status, life styles and life spans - with the advent of premature death, as a consequence of respiratory infections in the era before antibiotics, being striking. There are examples of most human situations – of obvious joy, and obvious sadness and tragedy.

The earliest records date back to the early 1500s, and trace back 12 generations for my father *Joe*. At the time that the current project started, we had no idea that there was such a strong lineage in Sussex back through the centuries. Indeed, my father, *Joe* was approached by several people with the Blaker surname in the Brighton area, to see if he was related to them, but, in ignorance he replied that his family came from London, not Sussex. How we wish we had known our true roots, and how we would love him to know what we have discovered – maybe he is looking over our shoulder now!

Other text have documented the lineage of *Peg* Blaker (1920- ; my mother), *Lewis* Hammond (1904-2000; my father-in-law) and *Joyce* Hammond (1908-2004; my mother-in-law). Accordingly, the current text does not include substantive material relating to *Peg* Blaker (nee Jackson).

Copies of all reference materials are separately collated, as are copies of birth, marriage and death certificates.

We hope you find something of interest, as you look at the fruits of our research and travels. Any views expressed are based on our best available information.

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3. Initial Understanding of the Blaker Family Tree

My initial understanding of my lineage came from my father (Joseph Blaker; 1916-2007), and those of my relatives with whom I had contact. Whilst I knew my grandfather - 'Alf' - and my grandmother - Mary - I did not ask them any questions about their lives; an opportunity was lost! My father maintained contact with most of his siblings, and with a few of his uncles and aunts, but interaction between family members was not extensive, and there was little interest in recording family linkages or history. Indeed, early family photographs were very limited, probably reflecting the expense of early photography and the relative lack of value placed upon recording or sharing images of people and history. How I wish that we had been more inquisitive!

The initial overview of my antecedents within the Blakers is shown in the Appendices. Not surprisingly, it was very scant, leaving much to be discovered and researched. We now have a very much more detailed view of our lineage.

4. The Key Locations

4.1 Introduction - With Particular Reference to Sussex

In order to gain a better understanding of our ancestors it is useful to review the key areas in which they lived – to add some perspective and colour to otherwise bland facts and dates. There are 3 key areas: Mid Sussex, the south of West Sussex and Greater London.

It is believed that most, if not all, of the Blaker lineage originated in the Mid Sussex Weald, with the parishes of Cuckfield, Bolney and Worth being of major interest. In the 1870s, several members of the family moved from Sussex to Surrey (now part of Greater London), in order to find work, away from the agricultural environs in which their ancestors had lived.

Looking back to the early 15th century, Mid Sussex was largely covered in dense forest with a limited number of farmstead clearings where crops were grown and where livestock was enclosed. There were few roadways, save for those of Roman origin, or to service major trade routes. Clearings were often linked by paths or rough tracks, along which livestock was driven. In wet weather these tracks would often become impassable. Inhabitants typically lived their entire lives in these isolated communities. In contrast, the wealthy landowners often travelled extensively, enjoying a lifestyle that was dramatically better than their tenants.

In the mid/late 16th century, cast iron was made at Buxted in Sussex, and the iron industry in the Sussex Weald reached its height during the reign of Elizabeth I, when some 7,000 people were employed in it. Sussex had all of the resources needed: ironstone in the Wealden clay, fuel in the forests for charcoal, waterpower from streams, hammerponds to drive the hammers and bellows, and accessibility to major ports. By the early 18th century, a chronicler described the countryside of Sussex as follows:

'A great deal of meadowland is turned into ponds and pools for driving mills by the flashes, which, beating with hammers upon iron, fill the neighbourhood around day and night with continual noise'.

The sites of the large ironworks, from which the Burrells, Coverts and Bowyers made their fortunes, can be seen in the hammerponds at Slaugham and at Horsted Keynes. However, in most villages, local yeoman set up furnances – often simple hearths c. 1m in height. This industry has long since vanished, and it is difficult to envision the sights, sounds and smells that must have pervaded the countryside in which some of the Blaker ancestors lived.

Increasing geographical mobility in society, coupled with developments in domestic trade and commerce in the 17th and 18th centuries, put pressures on a parish-based road system, which was both haphazardly organised, and poorly maintained. Parliament's solution was to empower responsible local bodies with authority to stop-up highways by gates, where a toll for passage could be demanded. That every user should pay in proportion to usage was a new principle in highway maintenance. By a statute of 1663, the first road to be regulated in this way was established between Wadesmill, Hertfordshire, and Stilton, Huntingdonshire. This was because barley wagons on their way to the maltings were making the road almost impassable. The first measure to affect

Sussex was the Reigate and Crawley Turnpike Act, 1697. Every horse was charged a penny, every stage coach, hackney coach, carriage, wagon or cart, sixpence, every score of sheep a penny, every score of calves or hogs twopence, and every score of cattle sixpence.

Subsequently, during the first seventy years of the 18th century, a basic grid of trunk roads was established between the main centres of population in the county. The advent of the railways in the early/mid 19th century served to further dramatically increase access and population movement. It is difficult in the 21st century to imagine how difficult travel and communication was for our ancestors – the world is now a much smaller place!

4.2 Mid Sussex Villages

An overview of the Sussex parishes is shown below:

Map of Mid Sussex Parishes

Key Areas of Interest in Mid Sussex

Balcombe

Reason for Interest

- Harriett Blaker (1850-1933) married John Botting (1851-1930): September 1872, St. Mary's Church
- Ann Blaker (1854-1903) married Henry John Beal (1848-): February 1879, St. Mary's Church

Several children from these marriages were baptised in St. Mary's Church, Balcombe.

Location

Balcombe is a village and civil parish in mid Sussex. It lies 50km south of London and 26km north of Brighton. The village of Balcombe is situated between the towns of Haywards Heath and Crawley, and lies close to Ardingly Reservoir, at the heart of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

History

The origin of the name Balcombe has long been subject to conjecture. 'Coombe' certainly refers to the steep sided valley where the old mill was. 'Bal' could be the old Celtic word for 'sun' (or a ball of hot iron?) or more likely an abbreviation of the Saxon Tribe 'Bealda'. It is also possible that the name Balcombe means 'Mining Place Camp'. 'Bal' is a Cornish word meaning a mining place, so it is possible that the same word existed in Ancient British Celtic. Although 'Coombe' or 'Combe' can mean a 'valley' it can also come from the Roman 'camp'. So possibly from its name Balcombe could have once been a Romano-British mining settlement. We will never know!!

From clearings in the forest over 2,000 years ago, small groups of individual farms developed, over the centuries. In the 1850s, a large part of Balcombe

parish was forest, with many of the inhabitants employed in tree cutting. Additionally, there were several stone quarries. The railway boom in the mid 19th century accelerated the expansion of Balcombe and the surrounding area, which has seen a decline in population since then.

The parish church of St. Mary stands on a site that has accommodated a church since 1090. The present church, which sits on a hill above the London Road (B2036), is largely of Victorian origin, following a major rebuilding project that commenced in 1847, with further extension work undertaken in 1872. The old church is now largely the south aisle of the current building. A painting of the church in 1805 gives an impression of its former glory.

St. Mary's Church, Balcombe, Sussex: 1805 Painting

The belfry has a ring of eight bells, 3 of them dating back to 1614, with the balance hung in 1878 and in 1936. The bell tower is 15th century in origin. The font – in which several Beal and Botting children were baptized - dates from 1847, being part of the refurbishment work.

The village of Balcombe is well known to thousands of rail commuters for its association with the astounding Balcombe Viaduct. The viaduct, which is as beautiful as it is impressive, played a key part in the development of West Sussex. It allowed the London to Brighton railway to span the valley of the River Ouse, thereby helping to connect the Sussex coast to the capital. Balcombe Viaduct stretches for nearly 500 metres, and was built in the early 1840s, with the work being completed in 1842. It is said that the viaduct contains around 11 million bricks.

Balcombe is noted for its beautiful woods and scenic waters of lake, millpond and reservoir. Balcombe is now home to 'Wings' – a WWII Remembrance Museum. In the future, Balcombe's landscape may be changed dramatically, as a result of fracking for shale gas, by a company called 'Caudrilla' – who are being opposed by local residents.

Bolney

Reason for Interest

A large number of Blakers lived in Bolney, and were baptised, worshiped, married or buried at its church. The earliest grave of a Blaker found in the churchyard of St. Mary Magdelene is that of Richard Blaker (1677-1755), although the parish registers record earlier burials of Blakers, including that of John Blaker in 1610. The latest Blaker grave is that of Gladys Blaker (1896-1980).

Location

Bolney is located 58km south of London and 18km north of Brighton, just off the A23 road, close to its junction with the A272 road. The village was originally in 2 distinct parts – a cluster close to the church of St. Mary Magdelene, and a second

cluster around Bolney Common. These parts are now united physically as a result of extensive building development along The Street.

Bolney O.S. Map, 1896

History

It is believed the name of the village came from the Saxon word '*Bolne*', meaning '*a village (or high place) near marsh*', as the area is on high ground, in an area that was marshy. Other historians believe that the name, whilst of Saxon origin, came from two Saxon words, meaning '*Bolla's Island*' – i.e. high ground above a marsh, populated by the Saxon *Bolla* tribe. It is believed that the main road in the village, called '*The Street*', was a Saxon route north to St. Leonard's Forest – a heavily forested area, that lies on the Weald ridge, south of the current A264 road, between Horsham and Crawley. A walkway of oak timbers has been found near The Street, dating back to c. 972 AD.

In mediaeval times the village was noted for its cherry fair and iron smelting.

Situated on the lower slopes of the Weald and St. Leonard's Forest, Bolney was ideally located to provide the charcoal for the iron smelting furnaces at nearby Cuckfield, Slaugham and Lower Beeding. Following the decline of the iron industry, Bolney became an agricultural community, lasting about 400 years, up to the period soon after the Second World War. Following the decline of agriculture, the village became a dormitory town for commuters to Brighton, Crawley and other more distant locations. The current village has a large number of listed buildings.

The church of St. Mary Magdelene was built on a steep rise, east of The Street – doubtless to set it away from the marshy ground. It was constructed in the Early English style, with suggestions of Saxon and Norman influence in the architecture. The nave and chancel date from the middle of the 12th century; the unusual tower was built in 1533-1536, at the expense of John Bolne. It boasts the oldest peal of eight bells in Sussex, the earliest bell being dated 1592 and the latest to 1740. The churchyard is well maintained and, on the south side of the graveyard, you will also see the strange '*Barrel Graves*' dating back to the 1600's. No other church in England has so many of these unique and extraordinary features.

There is an area in the churchyard containing numerous Blaker graves, several of which comprise substantial, table or altar burial monuments – indicating relative wealth and prestige.

Barrel Graves: St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Blaker Graves South of Church Porch, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney

St. Mary Magdelene Church, Bolney, Sussex

The local pub is *'The Eight Bells'*, located in The Street, just below the church.

The Street, Bolney: Old Postcard

Burstow

Reason for Interest

John Blaker (1852-) and his sister, Harriet Blaker (1850-1933), were born in Burstow. It is likely that their parents, William Blaker (1823-1900) and Caroline Box (1827-1903) worshiped in the church of St. Bartholomew, whilst living there.

Location

Burstow is a village and civil parish in the Tandridge District of Surrey. It is situated east of Gatwick airport and close to the M23 motorway. Burstow is 39km south of London and 6km north east of Crawley. Of course, when John and Harriet were born in Burstow, Crawley was a relatively small market town, whose initial growth was fuelled by the railway (from 1841), and Gatwick airport was not envisaged in anyone's imagination.

Contemporary Aerial View of Burstow – East of Gatwick Airport

History

Burstow was called *'Burstowe'* and *'Burghstowe'* in the 14th century; *'Byrstowe'* appears in the 15th century, and *'Bristowe'* is seen as an alternative to *'Burstow'* in the 17th century. Stephen de Burstow, whose name appears in the seals as *'Stephen Fitz Hamo'*, held the manor of Burstow in the latter part of the 12th century – this appears to be the origin of the name of Burstow. Burstow Manor is now a Grade II-listed building.

The earliest mention of Burstow appears in a church record of 1121, but it is practically certain that a church had been in existence long before that time. St. Bartholomew's is a delightful half-timbered 12th century Church of England church in this tranquil village, which is disturbed by all of Gatwick airport's air traffic, that thunders a few hundred meters overhead – involving 55 aircraft movements per hour and transporting more than 33.6 million passengers per year (2011 figures)!

The plan of the nave of St. Bartholomew, and probably that of the chancel, dates from c. 1121, and the north and part of the west walls of the nave, with the west half of the north wall of the chancel, are for the most part of this time. Two original windows remain, one in the chancel and one in the nave; but nearly all the rest of the building, including the south aisle, belongs to the 15th century, and has been connected, though apparently on no direct evidence, with Archbishop Chicheley. The church was restored in 1884, the east wall of the aisle and the eastern quoins of the chancel being rebuilt.

Cowfold

Reason for Interest

Several Blakers were christened, married or were buried in Cowfold:

- George Blaker (1569-1617) married Elizabeth Living (-1615) in St. Peter's Church: 28 May 1604
- Richard Blaker (1611-1672) was christened there.

Location

Cowfold is a village and civil parish, 13.5km south east of Horsham, between Billingshurst and Haywards Heath in West Sussex.

History

The village owes its name to Saxon settlers, who made enclosures for their cattle, one such enclosure becoming know as '*Cowfold*'. In the 11th and 12th centuries the land within Cowfold seems to have been used for woodland pasture. A large proportion of the parish was woodland or orchard, and remained so up to 1733. The scattered settlement of Cowfold parish may represent the gradual and progressive establishment of outlying farms on what had been woodland pastures belonging to manors. By the early 14th century, farmsteads were widely scattered through the parish.

The parish lies predominantly over Weald clay, which in turn overlies Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand except along a tongue of land running from the north-east corner almost to the centre; there are two patches of gravel in the south-east quarter, and five narrow bands of Horsham Stone running east-west. There were brickworks in 1875 and 1909 in the north part, just east of the Horsham road, at a site marked in 1984 by Brick kiln Cottages, and brickfields southwest of the church at the centre of the parish in 1896 and 1909. In about 1890, stone was quarried at High Hurst, and at three places in the north-east quarter, and there were gravel pits towards the north-east corner and a sandpit near the south-west corner.

The oldest building in Cowfold is St. Peter's Church, built in the 13th Century, at the centre of the parish. The church is built of rubble and coursed ashlar, and has a chancel with south chapel, nave with south aisle and north porch, and a 15th century west tower. The font dates to 1482, and is octagonal with geometrical designs on both the stem and bowl. The surviving churchwardens' accounts contain a payment of 5s to a mason '*for the making of the fonte*' in 1481/82. Beneath a carpet in the nave is an effigy in brass for Thomas Nelond (d. c. 1430), prior of Lewes. This brass is the largest and most elaborate in Sussex and the most notable feature of Cowfold church.

Sadly, the churchyard of St. Peter's is now neglected and unkempt.

Neglected Churchyard Area, St. Mary's Church, Cowfold

Cuckfield

Reason for Interest

The earliest members of the Blaker lineage in which we have interest lived in, or close to Cuckfield, and were baptised, married or were buried in Holy Trinity Church, in the centre of the village, e.g.

- Richard Blaker (1502-1546) was buried the churchyard of Holy Trinity church in May 1546
- Richard Blaker (1547-1623) was buried the churchyard of Holy Trinity church in April 1623

Location

Cuckfield is a large village on the southern slopes of the Weald, some 55km south of London and 21km north of Brighton.

Cuckfield O.S. Map, 1896

History

The origin of the name, Cuckfield (earlier spelled *Kukefeld*, *Cucufeld*, *Cucufelda* and *Cokefeld*), is debated, but it is generally associated with the cuckoo, which is the village emblem. The '*field*' part of the name Cuckfield is of Saxon origin, meaning '*a clearing where forest trees were felled*'.

During the Saxon period, the greater part of Cuckfield was covered in woodland, almost impenetrable, with overgrown oak and ash trees and matted undergrowth, with a few patches of rough heath and scrub. William de Warenne (1st Earl of Surrey) built a hunting lodge and then a wooden chapel in a clearing in the forest, where they established a small settlement, called '*Kukefeld*'. It is wooden chapel was destroyed by fire. In 1202, an Adam de Cucufeld gave a gift of land to the monks for the church of the Holy Trinity. The church took its present structural form by about 1340, after a decade of rebuilding and enlargement. The new stone church, with its solid square tower, must have dominated the small medieval market town. The church has been renovated and extended many times since then. The parish church of the Holy Trinity today consists of a chancel, north and south chapels, and north vestry, nave of four bays, north and south aisles, north and south porches, and a west tower with a spire. The walls are of Sussex stone rubble and the roofs are covered with Horsham slabs. The extensive churchyard has far-reaching southward views to the South Downs, and many 17th- and 18th-century gravestones still survive. – sadly none of Blaker origin have been found to date.

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Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield: Old Postcard

In medieval times, the majority of trade in Cuckfield was focused on the weekly market, initially established under charter by King Henry III in 1255. This charter was replaced in 1313 by another, granting markets on Mondays, and a 3-day fair on the feast of the Holy Trinity. Cuckfield market still exists, but is now held only twice per month.

In common with other areas of Sussex, Cuckfield was an important centre for iron smelting. Sites of three hammer ponds can be found in Cuckfield, providing evidence of a once thriving industry. The furnaces and mills have long since disappeared.

Cuckfield High Street: Print from Drawing by Rowlandson, 1740

Cuckfield boasts many fine old houses, several of which are listed buildings. The earliest houses in Cuckfield date back to the 14th century, and include Brainsmead cottages and No 1 Church Street. There are 2 notable Elizabethan Manor houses in Cuckfield, namely Cuckfield Park and Ockenden Manor.

Cuckfield Place was built around 1575 by Henry Bowyer (d. 1589) an ironmaster, who acquired the property from 4th Earl Derby in 1573. Henry and his wife Elizabeth demolished the existing medieval manor house and replaced it with Cuckfield Place, which remained in his family until 1693, when it was purchased by Charles Sergison (d. 1732), Commissioner of the Navy and Clerk of Accounts. Cuckfield Park (as it is now named) is a now a private house. It was the inspiration behind William Harrison Ainsworth's (1805-1882) famous romance novel, 'Rookwood'. Ockenden Manor dates from 1520, and is now operated as a hotel by the Historic Sussex Hotels Group.

A Free Grammar school was founded in Cuckfield in 1528, and endowed with some estates by Edward Flower, Esq., of London, and the Rev. William Spicer, of Balcombe, for the sons of parishioners of Cuckfield and Balcombe. The will of Edmund Flower states that 'I may be reputed and named the first founder'. He gives instructions on the appointment of the schoolmaster, and the conduct of the school. His money was insufficient however, and further endowments were made in 1529 by the Rev William Spicer of Balcombe, who was to be named 'the second founder of the grammar school'. Spicer gave further instructions on the curriculum, which was to be 'after the form, order and usage used in the grammar school at Eton'. Many years later when Eton's archives were destroyed in a fire, they borrowed the curriculum from Cuckfield! The Old School, as it is now known, was acquired by Holy Trinity Church in 1992, and since then has been operated by the Church as a parish and community centre.

In 1761, the first direct road was made from Cuckfield to London. The first stagecoach from London to Brighton was advertised in 1780. The advertisement advised that the 'Brighthelmstone & Cuckfield machine left London at 5am, and the fare to Cuckfield was 10s 0d'. The Prince of Wales (George IV) used to travel by a 'carriage and four' to Brighton, stopping at Cuckfield en route. At that time, the landlord of 'The Kings Head' kept 30 to 40 pairs of horses in stables to

service the coaching trade. Around 1816, the new London to Brighton Road (now the A23) was completed, and although stagecoaches still came through Cuckfield, traffic was drastically reduced. 1845 saw the last commercial stagecoach call through Cuckfield.

Cuckfield Stagecoach: from 'An Old Sussex Town' by Maisie Wright

Nuthurst

Reason for Interest

Edmund Blaker (1576-1634) lived in Nuthurst, working there as a servant, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Andrew's Church. Richard Blaker (1611-1672) married Mary Randell (-1669) in St. Andrew's Church, Nuthurst in 1639.

Location

Nuthurst is a village some 4km south of Horsham, Sussex and close to St. Leonard's Forest. Nuthurst village is one of several distinct hamlets within the parish of Nuthurst, which comprises Maplehurst, Mannings Heath, Copsale, Monks Gate and Sedgwick. Nuthurst lies at the point where the Tunbridge Wells sandstone beds dip under the younger Weald clay beds to the west, the junction between the two formations being very irregular. The sandstone formerly supported open heathland in the north-east quarter of the parish, but it also provided the site of Nuthurst village. The Weald clay contains scattered outcrops of Horsham stone and other sandstones, one of the former providing the site of Sedgwick castle. The Horsham stone beds were quarried commercially in the past.

History

Much of the parish in the later Middle Ages lay within St. Leonard's Forest. In the 15th century, Sedgwick Park formed one bailiwick of the forest. Woodland has continued to be plentiful in the parish since medieval times, and throughout history many of the prominent local trades related to the use of woodland, with farming of deer and swine in the forest, timber merchants, colliers (i.e. charcoal makers), carpenters and wheelwrights.

There has been a church on the current site of St. Andrew's since c. 1130, in the reign of Henry I. The north chancel is 12th century, and the chancel was extended eastwards in the 13th or 14th century. The church was further extended in 1661 and during the period 1856-1860. To celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria, the church was thoroughly repaired and restored, on the inside and outside. St. Andrew's today has some remarkable carved and gilded screens, and beautiful stained glass windows several of which are Victorian in origin.

St. Andrew's Church, Nuthurst, Sussex

The font is one of the oldest items in the church and is made of Purbeck marble; it was restored in 1961.

West Hoathly

Reason for Interest

Thomas Blaker (1703-1788) married Sarah Budgen at St. Margaret's Church, West Hoathly; April 1730,

Location

West Hoathly is a village in Mid Sussex, some 5.6km south west of East Grinstead. It was originally a hilltop settlement in the High Weald, adjacent to the dense Ashdown Forest.

History

West Hoathly was originally recorded by the Saxons as '*Hadlega*' or '*Hodlega*', which meant '*a heath covered clearing*'. The recorded name then migrated to '*West Hoathly*'.

The parish has many medieval houses and farms. The oldest part of the village lies in the street running approximately north and south, west of the church. The Manor House is on the west side of the street opposite the church; it was built as a dower house in 1627 by the Richard Infield of Gravetye, a local iron master. In the centre of the village opposite St Margaret's Church is the 15th century '*Priest House*'; it was turned into a museum by the Sussex Archeological Society in 1935.

Standing 180 metres above the Sussex Weald, St. Margaret's Church has been the focus of Christian worship for the communities of West Hoathly and Sharpthorne for over 900 years. The foundations of this church were laid over 900 years ago, when a Norman baron ordered it to be built here in 1090, a few years after the Domesday Book was compiled. He gave the church to Lewes Priory, which was in charge of both church and people living here for over 400 years. The first building was a small rectangular one, perhaps with an apse. Directly opposite the entrance is the North Wall, which is part of the Norman Church. The sturdy round pillars were made when the building was enlarged a hundred years later. Nearly 200 years later the chancel was extended. Then the chapel was built on the South side, and made into a full aisle at the end of the 14th century. The tower appeared in the 15th century. Today, the church has a tower with a perpendicular Gothic broach spire, a single-aisled, a chancel and a side chapel.

St. Margaret's Church, West Hoathly, Sussex

The terraced churchyard is a well-known viewpoint, with far-reaching views across the Weald.

Lower Terrace of Churchyard, St. Margaret's Church, West Hoathly, Sussex

Extensive restoration work took place in about 1870. St. Margaret's church is rich in historic features, amongst which is the Font. It stands near the entrance, symbolising the admission of the newly baptised Christian to the congregation. Believed to be made in 1180, unusually enough, of 'Paludina' limestone, sometimes called 'Sussex marble' or 'Winklestone'.

The contemporary plan of the burial ground lists 2 Blaker graves – Alfred Blaker, d. 1949 and James Blaker, d. 1950. Neither is of direct relevance to the current study.

Worth

Reason for Interest

Various Blaker family members were baptised, married or were buried in the church of St. Nicholas, Worth. The first members in the lineage in which we have interest were:

- William Blaker (1717-1791) married Elizabeth Allingham (1712-1775): 27 September 1744
- Mary Blaker (1714-) married Thomas Charrington: 2 October 1744
- James Blaker (1738-1779) married Elizabeth Easton : 7 April 1768

The earliest record for a 'Blaker' in the surviving church registers is for the marriage of William Blaker and Elizabeth Allingham.

Location

Worth is located 13 km. north of Cuckfield and 11km. west of East Grinstead, near the main Forest Ridge that borders the forests of Forth, Tilgate, and Balcombe. It is close to the M23 motorway and has largely been absorbed into Crawley New Town. A sense of Worth and the surrounding area before the arrival of the railway, motorways or urban development is shown below:

1816 O. S. Map of Worth, Sussex

History

Worth is a Saxon name meaning 'clearing' or 'enclosure'. The place appears under Surrey in the Domesday book, with the old spelling 'Orðe'. During Saxon times, Worth was a high clearing in the 'Great Forest of Anderida' – a name taken from the Roman word for 'Pevensey'. This forest was one of the favourite hunting grounds of the Saxon Kings, and they would often entertain guests to the very best of Royal hospitality. King Edward (Edward the Confessor; 1003-1066) decided that he and his guests needed a place to worship in the area, and, using his best masons, architects and builders, he commissioned St. Nicholas church at Worth. The church is a remarkable example of a pre-Conquest building of cross-plan, dating practically from one period. Whether it can be assigned to an earlier date than the first half of the 11th century is doubtful. It has rightly been called the finest church in all England - it is certainly the largest with Saxon foundations, and, for centuries, Worth was one of the largest rural parishes in Sussex. It is thought to be the 4th oldest surviving church building in England.

Given the scale of the church, and its commissioning sponsor, it is quite possible that Worth was the spiritual home of a college of secular or monastic clergy.

The church is cruciform, with a circular apse. Entering the church by the west door (14th century) one stands immediately beneath the gallery bearing the inscription *'This Gallerie is the gift of Anthony Lynton, late Rector of this Parish, who deceased the XV day of June Anno Domino 1610'*. The fabulous Saxon chancel arch is the dominant feature of the building, and is 6.7 metres high and 4.2 metres wide, and is one of the largest pre-conquest arches still standing. The church also has 3 original Saxon stained glass windows in the nave – a feature unique amongst English churches. The font is curious, consisting of a square stone bowl of 12th century date, bearing some ornamental decoration of cross motifs. In 1986, a fire destroyed the nineteenth century roof of the nave, and the church needed extensive renovation, which took nearly two years to complete. Since the end of the Second World War, the growth of Crawley and, latterly, the formation of a separate Parish of Turners Hill, have eaten into the area of the parish of Worth, so that the present Parish occupies little more than a third of the original.

St.Nicholas Church, Worth, Sussex: Old Postcard

The Wealden iron industry was important in the area, producing a large proportion of the bar iron made in England in the 16th century, and most British cannon until about 1770. By 1808, the area was predominately agricultural fields, with much smaller woods and forests.

In 1850, a prominent London banker, Sir Joseph Montefiore, purchased the Worth Park Estate. However, three years later the original building was destroyed by fire, enabling him to construct a large red brick mansion complete with 10 reception rooms, 10 bedrooms, and a stable quadrangle accommodating 18 carriages. Sir Joseph died in 1880, and his son, Sir Francis Abraham Montefiore began rebuilding the house. The Worth Park Estate was broken up in 1915 and sold. After many different owners, most of the building have been demolished and modern flats constructed on the site.

Today, in addition to St. Nicholas church, Worth is famous for its independent Roman Catholic, co-educational boarding and day school, and the Benedictine Worth Abbey, that occupies the same site on Paddockhurst Road, Turners Hill. At the heart of Worth Abbey is a community of some 25 monks who follow the rule of 'St. Benedict'.

Worth, today is a far cry from the rural idyls of yesteryear, when there was a simple rural community, focused around a beautiful historic church.

4.3 Other Sussex Locations

Coombes

Reason for Interest

- George Blaker (1607-1639) married Ann Burges at Coombes Church, Lancing; November 1636

Location

The hamlet of Coombes is located 4km north of Shoreham-by-Sea, Sussex and just north of Lancing College, in the River Adur Valley.

Location of Coombes, West Sussex

History

The parish of Coombes existed, with the name 'Cumbe' at the time of the Domesday Book. The small parish of Coombes contained 2 settlements, namely Coombes village and Applesham, both of which were held as separate Manors.

By the end of the 16th century, most of the land had been aggregated into Applesham farm. Wheat, barley, oats, peas and tares were grown in the parish in the 17th and 18th centuries, and more than 1,000 sheep were recorded in the parish on three occasions. At some time during the early or mid 19th century the Applesham farm buildings were rebuilt as a model farm – still operated today as the 'Coombe Farm Experience' as well as a day-ticket fishery, known locally as 'Passies'.

A church was first recorded at Coombes in 1086. Coombes church is of unknown dedication, although some believe it to have been dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The church is built of flint rubble with ashlar dressings, and has a chancel and a nave with south porch. The small nave is probably of the late 11th century and retains its original south doorway and chancel arch. The former west tower may have been of the same date. The church is remarkable for the large amount of surviving wall painting. Much of it is of the 12th century, but there is also work of later periods down to the 18th century. The 12th-century work, discovered in 1949, includes New Testament scenes in the nave and decorative patterns in the chancel, and has stylistic similarities with work at Hardham and Clayton churches. These are rare survivals from the time when English churches were richly decorated, and taught the Gospel to those who could not read through pictures.

Coombes Church, Coombes, Sussex

12th Century Wall Painting, Coombes Church, Sussex

Old Portslade Village

Reason for Interest

Whilst there are no members of the 'Portslade and Old Shoreham' grouping of Blakers that are directly related to the 'Bolney' grouping in which we have interest, the importance of the former, and the impact that they had on life in Portslade, Brighton and beyond merits their mention in the current research project. As noted elsewhere, it is entirely feasible that these and other groupings of Blaker had common ancestry in the 12th or 13th century in Sussex.

Location

Old Portslade, or Portslade Village is located north of the A270, Old Shoreham Road (the old Roman road, '*Noviomagus Reginorum*', linking Chichester to Brighton) in West Sussex. It is west of the Adur River, and is some 1.5km north of Portslade-by-Sea, which is a mixed residential and industrial area abutting the Shoreham harbour basin.

Location of Old Portslade, West Sussex

History

The actual etymology of Portslade may be '*portus*' + '*ladda*', which means '*way to the port*', where '*ladda*' is from the Old English for '*way*', but this is conjectural at best. The parish is intersected by an ancient thoroughfare, which passes from Saddlescombe, through Hangleton, towards the coast by Southwick. Where this road passes through Portslade village it is called Drove Road.

The northern part of the parish is all Downland, and covered with traces of Early Iron Age field systems, the summits of Tenant Hill and Sweet Brow having the remains of contemporary and Romano-British settlements upon them.

The Old Village can be traced back to Roman times, and is mentioned in the Domesday book. The area that is now known as Portslade Old Village became established in the 11th century, with the building of the manor and church.

Opposite the church and manor house, on the north side of the High Street, is an old house called '*Kemps*', now divided into cottages. '*Kemps*' is now a Grade II-listed building, and is the oldest surviving dwelling house in Portslade Old Village, located at the Eastern end of the High Street behind St. Nicolas Church. The house, which was built in c. 1540, was the first house built on what later became Portslade Street and then Portslade High Street. '*Kemps*' consists of two wings at right angles; the western wing is the oldest. It has been much altered but shows traces of its 16th century origin. The eastern wing is later, possibly about 1740. The exact details of the buildings that comprised the original remain a mystery, but it is clear that there was a house, a forge, a barn, stables, and a considerable amount of land, the main parts enclosed with traditional flint walls. Whilst much altered, '*Kemps*' has been kept very much in the spirit of the Elizabethan times, with a wealth of historic features. In many ways the modern facade is deceptive, as beneath the lime-washed stucco lies solid flint walls (up to 1.2 metres thick). The present kitchen has an open fire with a spit-rack, upon which the wooden pulleys of the turn-spit remain. The threshold of this room is formed by a 13th-century tomb-slab.

'Kemps' – Blaker Family Home, Portslade Old Village, Sussex

'Kemps' was the home to the Blaker family for many generations. The earliest record in the church shows that the Blaker family was living in the village in 1485. The last recorded Blaker living in '*Kemps*' was Ann Kemp Blaker (1784-

1869). During the Blaker's 400-year association with the parish, the family have taken prominent positions in public life.

The church of St. Nicholas was constructed, in around 1170, of rubble and flint with Caen stone dressings. The nave, south aisle and the lower part of the tower all date from this time. The font is particularly interesting. The shaft of the font dates from the 15th century and it is octagonal with foliated panels but the lead-lined bowl has been renewed.

Font, St. Nicholas, Portslade Old Village, Sussex

The earliest mention of the dedication to St Nicolas occurred in 1489. Although today we tend to associate St Nicholas exclusively with Christmas, in earlier times he was best known as the patron saint of sailors and children. It is an obvious dedication because of the proximity of the sea and the ever-present dangers awaiting sailors and fishermen. The church was also a landmark to those at sea, a cheerful sight on their way home.

There are many Blaker graves and memorials in the churchyard of St. Nicholas. The most prominent of these are the vaults located to the exterior of the church, to the east and west of the walls of the southern aisle.

Blaker Memorial Plaque above Vault, St. Nicholas – Note Coat of Arms

Although some ruins remain, most of the manor house was purposely demolished in the 19th century for reasons unknown. Today, the remaining structure is much valued as a rare example of a Norman manor house. Conservation work has been carried out, including the restoration of a 12th century window, previously taken down because it was in a dangerous state. The manor was built so close to the church that one of its walls formed part of the churchyard boundary. It is thought there was once a direct connection between the two, with a sheltered way and a now vanished doorway leading straight into the chancel from the manor side.

Whilst there have been many notable Blaker family members descended from the Blaker family of Portslade, the following illustrates the family wealth and importance:

- Edward Blaker of Portslade was granted a Coat of Arms in 1616 – these depict the side-facing heads of three Blackamoors - negroes with African hair. The significance of these images is not known.
- Nathaniel Blaker (1742-1815) was one of the wealthiest men in Portslade. He married Elizabeth Rogers of Patcham, and they had a large family of five daughters and seven sons. He was churchwarden at St. Nicolas in 1764. When he died in 1815, he left £25,000 - a considerable fortune for those days. He left his house to his two spinster daughters, Catharine age 40 years and Cordelia aged 27 years. The last Blaker living

at 'Kemps' appears to be Anna Kemp Blaker (1784-1869). After Catharine's death in 1847, Cordelia (1788-1854) inherited the house, and her will stated that the house was to be sold and divided up between the rest of the siblings. It is not certain whether Ann Kemp Blaker bought the house or not, but according to census records, she was living there from 1854.

- The Blaker Recreation Ground in Brighton was a gift from Sir John George Blaker, a descendant of Edward Blaker who built Kemps, who was mayor of Brighton from 1895 to 1898, and chief military representative of Brighton during the First World War. Sir John's gift of some 1.7 hectares was for *'the free use and enjoyment of the inhabitants and visitors to Brighton for the purposes of recreation'*. He also donated £1,000 for the building of a clock tower and to provide for future maintenance of the park.
- Edward Blaker was MP for Shoreham in the 17th century.
- Harry Blaker was one of the first surgeons appointed to Brighton's Royal Sussex County Hospital. He attended Queen Victoria when she was in residence at the Royal Pavilion – for which he received an honorarium of £300. He vaccinated the Prince of Wales (later to become Edward VII) and Princess Victoria, who became the Empress of Germany and mother of Kaiser Wilhelm II.

Sompting

Reason for Interest

- John Blaker (1705-1761) married Elizabeth Swift; St. Mary's Church, Sompting; December 1733
- John Blaker (1705-1761) buried St. Mary, Sompting; October 1761
- Elizabeth Swift (1710-1783) buried: St. Mary, Sompting, Sussex; July 1783

Location

Sompting is a village and civil parish in West Sussex, located 4.8km north-east of Worthing, and close to Lancing, at the foot of the southern slope of the South Downs. The busy A27 road, which follows the old Roman road to Chichester, bisects Sompting.

Location of Sompting, West Sussex

History

The name Sompting (known as 'Sultinges' in the Domesday Book) is said to come from the Old English for 'dwellers by the marsh' ('Sompt' + 'ingas').

The south part of the parish is low-lying alluvial land, which was once part of the tidal estuary of the Broadwater or Sompting brook. Land in the south of the parish provided meadow and pasture. The plateau on which the settlements of

Sompting and Cokeham lie, and the lower slopes of the downs, have remained predominantly arable farm land and wheat, barley, peas, and vetch were grown there. The higher downland for long provided sheep pasture, and the highest slopes have remained grassland. Sompting was well known in the 19th century for its orchards, and particularly its fig trees.

The church of St. Mary the Blessed Virgin is a Grade 1-listed Saxon and Norman church. It is a flint building, with dressings of Caen stone and a slate roof. Its most distinct feature is its unique tower – which is internationally famous. The tower, at the west end, incorporates some reused Roman-era brickwork, and was built in two parts; it assumed its current appearance by the end of the 11th century. The tower is topped with a '*Rhenish helm*'—a four-sided gabled pyramidal cap rising to a central mast, which is unique in England. The helm was re-shingled in 1984, which offered the opportunity for a detailed study. Samples of the timber frame were sent for radio carbon dating and tree-ring dating, identifying the wood as 14th-century oak. It is likely that this wood was a replacement of earlier work, because the original tower construction shows a shape that is consistent with the '*Rhenish helm*'.

The church was originally built by the Saxons in c. 960, and was then adapted by the Normans when William de Braose granted it to the Knights Templar in the 12th century. In the 1324, Pope Clement V passed the church to the Knights Hospitaller. The beautiful churchyard contains many Blaker graves, including those of John Blaker (1705-1761) and his wife., Elizabeth (1710-1783). The headstones pictured on page 40 show the headstones of William Blaker (1785-1861), his wife, Elizabeth (1790-1867) and daughter, Ellen (1824-1843). William was a grandson of John Blaker (1705-1761).

Close to the church is the Sompting Abbots building, designed by Philip Charles Hardwick, and completed in 1856. It is now a preparatory school. However this has been the site of one of Sompting's manor houses since Norman times, when it was owned by the Abbot of Fécamp in Normandy, and later owned by the Abbott of Syon Abbey in Middlesex .

St. Mary The Blessed Virgin, Sompting, West Sussex

Headstones for William, Elizabeth and Ellen Blaker, St. Mary's Church, Sompting

4.4 Greater London

Lewisham

Reason for Interest

Location

History

Norwood

Reason for Interest

Location

History

Streatham

Reason for Interest

Location

History

6. Blaker Family Lineage

6.1 Introduction

The current research was initiated in 2004, when parallel projects were started to discover more about my lineage and that of my wife, Juliet Blaker (nee Hammond). Access to key databases has been invaluable, notably:

www.ancestry.co.uk

www.findmypast.co.uk

www.familysearch.org

www.blaker.org.uk

The current research demonstrates a lineage over 15 generations back to c. 1502, with the information in the early centuries largely based upon the work of Walter Charles Renshaw and additional investigations collated by, or driven by, 'The Blaker Society'. Since these were key to the project, it is worth dwelling on them before focusing on my Blaker family history.

6.1.1 Walter Charles Renshaw (1840-1922)

Walter Charles Renshaw was the eldest of 7 children born to Thomas Charles Renshaw (1810-1886) and Elizabeth Blaker (1816-1893). Walter was educated at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and became a Queens Counsellor. He wrote a genealogy and family history called '*Searches into the History of the Family Blaker of Sussex*', published in 1896, and to which he added a second edition in 1904. It is a key reference text for anyone researching the Blaker genealogy.

Walter's obituary was published in '*The Times*' newspaper on 18 July 1922: *'We regret to announce the death of Mr. Walter Charles Renshaw, K.C., on Sunday night, at his residence, Sandrocks, Hayward's Heath.*

Mr. Renshaw, who was in his 82nd year, will be better remembered by the older generations of lawyers, but his career was a distinguished one. Coming of a legal stock [his father was the late Thomas Charles Renshaw QC] Mr. Renshaw was educated at Trinity Hall, Cambridge [LL.M 1886], was called to the bar in 1864, and became, as his father had been, a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn in 1890. He practised on the Chancery side, and in addition to his own practice, was for many years a member of the Council of Law Reporting, and of the Bar Committee, and for some years served on the Supreme Court Rule Committee. He was in his later years a Justice of the Peace in Sussex, and a member of the Baronetage Committee. Outside his profession, Mr. Renshaw achieved a reputation as archaeologist: he was a past president of the Selden Society and remained a member of the Council till his death. He was also chairman of the Council of the Sussex Archaeological Society and the Sussex Records Society. Genealogy was his special study, and he contributed several articles on that subject to archaeological papers. In his

younger days, Mr. Renshaw was fond of outdoor sports, more especially cricket, rowing and shooting. He married, in 1870 Elizabeth, daughter of the late John W Wilson, of Elsbrock, Holland, and leaves one daughter'.

Although Walter's mother was descended from the '*Old Shoreham and Portslade*' Blaker line, as distinct from the '*Bolney*' Blaker line in which we have interest, Walter Renshaw's genealogical publication is a key point of reference in unraveling the Blaker lineages.

The work captured by Renshaw has been substantially expanded by Rod Blaker – who lives in Ottawa, Canada – and '*The Blaker Society*' that he was instrumental in founding in 2009.

6.1.2 The Blaker Society

The Society is a not-for-profit organisation. It is now Co-Chaired by Rod Blaker and Christine Rodgers. Sir David Renshaw (Baronet) has recently become Patron of the Society – particularly fitting, as he is a great nephew of Walter Charles Renshaw.

'The Blaker Society' is a member of the Guild of One-Name Studies. It has a superb web site under www.blaker.org.uk, that has been diligently organised by Jossie Campbell and other volunteers. The database currently contains some 7,250 individuals.

'The Blaker Society' has divided individuals between different groupings including:

- '*Bolney Blakers*': 1488 individuals – this is the grouping we have particular interest in
- '*Old Shoreham & Portslade Blakers*': 817 individuals
- '*Cuckfield Blakers*': 769 individuals

It is thought that all the *Blaker* people of Sussex are blood related, and that the relationship may be seen somewhere around the 12th or 13th century. The Blaker Society is now seeking to verify this statement through DNA testing, and are currently seeking male *Blaker* volunteers to that end.

Further support for this common ancestry is that within The National Archives of the UK there are 2908 entries for the name *Blaker*; of those, 2580 are in Sussex, and of the remaining 328, '*The Blaker Society*' recognise many as originating in Sussex, and then emigrating to surrounding counties and to London. Work is currently in progress to review the records and to cross reference them to '*The Blaker Society*' database in order to build up a fuller picture.

Whilst the different groupings in the www.blaker.org.uk database may have a common ancestor, our focus is on the '*Bolney Blakers*' – probably inappropriately named since the earliest records to date are for burials of members of this grouping in the nearby village of Cuckfield.

For our purposes, the first individual unequivocally linked to my Blaker lineage is Richard Blaker, who was born in c. 1502 – when Henry VII was King of England.

6.2 Richard Blaker (1502-1546)

Born: c. 1502, Sussex

Married: Unknown date, married Agnes

Died: May 1546

Buried: May 1546, Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

No unambiguous information has emerged about Richard's lineage. The main information about him is derived from tax records and from his will. The later document confirms that his wife was Agnes.

6.2.1 Agnes Unknown

Born: ?

Married: Unknown date, married Richard Blaker

Died: ?

Apart from mention in her husband's will, nothing else is known about Agnes.

6.2.2 Richard Blaker and Agnes

Very little is known about Richard and Agnes. It is understood that they had at least 3 children:

- John: b. 1525
- Amy (*Amny*): b. 1526
- Jane (*Jone*): b. 1527

The first definitive written record for Richard occurs in the 1523/4 Lay Subsidy Rolls of the Hundred of Buttinghill (which includes Cuckfield), Richard Blaker was recorded with '*Goodes £20 taxed 20s*'. The Lay Subsidy was a tax levied on lay people on their movable property, rather than land. The tax was usually raised, as and when needed, to fund a particular venture, such as a military campaign. The Hundred of Buttinghill contained the parishes of Ardingly; Balcombe; Bolney; Clayton; Crawley; Cuckfield with Haywards Heath; West Hoathly; Hurstpierpoint; Keymer with Burgess Hill; Slaugham; Twineham; and Worth.

Richard appeared in the 1543/4 Lay Subsidy Rolls of the Hundred of Buttinghill, where he was recorded with '*Goodes £16 taxed 10s 5d*'.

Nothing further is recorded about either Richard or Agnes until Richard executed his Will. Richard's Will described him as Richard Blaker of '*Cokefeld*' (i.e. Cuckfield). His Will, which was proved on 6 May 1546, in the Archdeaconry Court of Lewes, directed that he should be buried within the church of Cuckfield and bequeathed:

'to the high alter 1s., and to the reparation of the church 6s. 6d., and to the poor 20s., and providing for four masses at his burial, and four others at his obits', he bequeathed to his wife Agnes 'Three kine (i.e. cattle), one whyte maire, ten ewes,

one sowe with a pygge, halfe the whete (wheat) which is in ther house, halfe the whete that growth upon the Land, and the bedding that belongeth to her chambere, that is to say a bedstook, a bedd, a boulster, two paire of sheets, a paire of blankets and a coverlet. I gyve to John Blaker my Sonne, six oxene, six bullocks and a nage. I gyve to Amny my Doughtere, a cowe wth a calfe. I gyve to Jone my doughtere, a cowe wth a calfe. To Anne a cowe with a calfe. Richard also bequeathed gifts of animals to 2 servants and to 2 other persons. His will then concluded by stating '*The Resydew of alle my goodes and chatalls I gyve to John Blaker my sonne, whom I make my sole executor.*' The witnesses were John Homer, Robert Baron (priest) and Thomas Syms. His estate was valued at £15-4s-8d. The estate largely comprised animals and household goods. It is interesting that the bedding and bedclothes were of such value as to warrant separate mention. Richard and Agnes were clearly not paupers, and had the benefit of service from at least 2 servants.

It is assumed that Richard was buried in the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, consistent with his wishes. It is not known where his wife, Agnes, was buried.

Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

6.3 John Blaker (1525-1568): Son of Richard Blaker (1502-1546) and Agnes Unknown

Born: ?; estimated as 1525

Married: At an unknown date, married Katheryne

Died: 1568

John was one of three children born to Richard and Agnes Blake. It is not known when or where John was born. Information about John's life is very scant. Based upon his last Will, it is known that he was married to Katheryne, and that they had at least 2 children.

Baptismal Font, Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

It is tempting to speculate that John and his children were baptised in the font pictured above, although the location of the font and the interior of the church may have looked very different in the early 16th century.

6.3.1 Katheryne Unknown

Born: ?

Married: At an unknown date, married John Blaker

Died: ?

Apart from her husband's Will, we have no records relating to Katheryne.

6.3.2 John Blaker and Katheryne

John and Katheryne had at least 2 children:

- Richard: b. 1547
- Elizabeth: b. 1549

John was recorded in the 1543/4 Lay Subsidy of the Hundred of Buttinghill, paying a tax of 2d. on 'Goodes' of £2.

He was further recorded in the Lay Subsidy of the Hundred of Streat (adjoining Worth to the north), paying tax of 2d, and, in 1558/59, in the Lay Subsidy of the Hundred of Buttinghill, paying 1s-4d tax.

John made his last Will on 2 September 1567, and the Will was proven in the Archdeaconry Court of Lewes on 25 May 1568. The Will is for John Blaker of Cucfield.

Whilst the terms of the will did not suggest that John owned any land, it conferred benefit upon "*my daughtere Elizabeth,*" and appointed "*Katheryne my wife and Richard my sonne to be my executours and assignes,*" the witnesses being Richard Bartley, Robert Herd, and Thomas Seman, with others. The inventory shows the value of his estate to have been £98-2s.-4d - quite a significant sum in the mid 1500s.

It is assumed that John was buried in the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield.

6.4 Other Children of Richard Blaker (1502-1546) and Agnes Unknown

6.4.1 Amy Blaker (1526-)

Apart from mention in her father's Will, nothing has been found to capture Amy's life or death.

6.4.2 Jane Blaker (1527-)

Apart from mention in her father's Will, nothing has been found to capture Jane's life or death. Like her sister, she is essentially unknown.

6.5 Richard Blaker (1547-1623): Son of John Blaker (1525-1568) and Katheryne Unknown (-)

Born: c. 1547, Sussex

Married: c. 1568, married Joanne

Died: 1623

Buried: 4 April 1623, Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

Richard was one of two children born to John and Katheryne Blaker. There are few records that capture Richard's life. In 1567, he was named in his father's Will.

Based upon the birth year of his first child, it is assumed that Richard married Joanne when aged c. 22 years-old.

6.5.1 Joanne Unknown (-1610)

Born: ?

Married: c. 1568, married Richard Blaker

Died: 1610

Buried: 6 October 1610, Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

6.5.2 Richard Blaker and Joanne Unknown

Richard and Joanne almost certainly lived in Cuckfield, or the surrounding area of the Sussex Weald. They had 4 children, all of whom were born in Sussex:

- George: b. 1569
- Elizabeth: b. 1572
- Richard: b. 1574
- Edmund: b. 1576

The next record for Richard occurred in 1584 and details his rental of land from the Manor of Cuckfield – *‘Richard Blaker held of the manor of Cuckfield a quadrant of land called Amfryes, containing 25 ½ acres (i.e. 10 hectares) at the rent of 8 ¼d, half a cock and six eggs, and also a cottage and ferlingate (i.e. 4 hectares) of land called Blakers at the rent of 22d’*. At the time of this record, the Manor of Cuckfield was subdivided between: Henry, Earl of Derby; Philip, Earl of Arundel and Lord Bergavenny. It is not known which nobleman owned the land plots that Richard rented, or their precise location in the area of Cuckfield.

In the 1601 Lay Subsidy Roll of the Hundred of Cuckfield, Richard Blaker was assessed in *‘Landes’* for 20s and paid 1s 4d. In 1614 and 1615, he was fined for non-attendance at the Courts of the Hundred of Buttinghill, and, in 1618, was involved in a Court dispute concerning a fine on lands in Bolney. In 1621, he was assessed at Cuckfield to *‘the subsidies at 20s/ in lands’*.

Richard died in 1623, and was buried in the churchyard at Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield. According to surviving records of his burial, Richard was described as *‘an old man’*. It is not known when his wife, Joanne, died, nor where she was buried.

No Will has been discovered for Richard. From surviving records, he appears to have been a tenant farmer, who had scant regard for the authorities – he was probably a *‘bad lad’*!

6.6 Other Child of John Blaker (1525-1568) and Katheryne Unknown:

Elizabeth Blaker (c. 1549-):

We have no information about Elizabeth, save for her mention in her father’s Will dated 1567.

6.7 George Blaker (1569-1617): Son of Richard Blaker (1547-1623) and Joanne Unknown (-1610)

Born: c. 1569, Sussex

Married: 28 May 1604, aged c. 35 years, married Elizabeth Living; St. Peter’s Church, Cowfold, Sussex

Died: April 1617, aged c. 48 years

Buried: 24 April 1617, St. Peter’s Church, Cowfold, Sussex

George was probably c. 35 years-old when he married Elizabeth Living.

6.7.1 Elizabeth Living (-1615)

Born: ?

Married: 28 May 1604, married George Blaker; St. Peter's Church, Cowfold, Sussex

Died: September 1615

Buried: 18 September 1615, St. Peter's Church, Cowfold, Sussex

Virtually nothing is known about Elizabeth, save for the births of her children and her burial record – as the *'Wyfe'* of George.

6.7.2 George Blaker and Elizabeth Living

George and Elizabeth lived in Bolney, Sussex and then in Cowfold, Sussex – some 11 km from Cuckfield, where George was probably born.

They had 5 children:

- John: b. 1605, Bolney, Sussex
- George: b. 1607, Bolney, Sussex
- William: b. 1610, Cowfold, Sussex; d. 1610, Cowfold
- Richard: b. 1611, Cowfold, Sussex
- Thomas: b. 1615, Cowfold, Sussex

After his marriage record, the next reference to George arises from the record of the burial of his son, William, in May 1610 which describes *'George Blaker of Kings'* – might this be a reference to the 15th century *'Kings Barn'* – now a Grade II-listed building in Cowfold?

In March 1611, George was listed as a *'Surveyor of the Way'* at St. Peter's Church, Cowfold. It is not clear what this role entailed, but it sounds like a description of a lay minister!

George executed his Will on 23 April 1614, in which he made provisions for *'my fower children John Blaker, George Blaker, Richard Blaker and Thomas Blaker to bee payed at the age of twenty yeares'*.

Elizabeth died in 1615, in the same year as her last child was born. Her body was buried in the churchyard of St. Peter's Church, Cowfold. George was left as a widower with 4 young children. George died in 1617, just 3 years after establishing his will. He was also buried in the churchyard of St. Peter's Church.

It is not clear who looked after George and Elizabeth's children after their parents had died.

6.8 Other Children of Richard Blaker (1547-1623) and Joanne Unknown (-1610)

6.8.1 Elizabeth Blaker (1572-)

Born: c. 1572

Married: 26 May 1607, aged c. 35 years, married William West, Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

Died: ?

Virtually nothing is known about Elizabeth's early life, until her marriage to William West in 1607.

6.8.1.1 William West (-)

Born: ?

Married: 26 May 1607, married Elizabeth Blaker, Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

Died: ?

6.8.1.2 Elizabeth Blaker and William West

It is believed that Elizabeth and William had at least one child:

- Stephen West: b. c. 1610

No records have emerged to establish the place and dates of the deaths of either Elizabeth or her husband.

6.8.2 Richard Blaker (c. 1574-1656)

Born: c. 1574

Married: 1st: 22 June 1607, aged c. 33 years, married Elinor Dumbrell; Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

2nd: 6 August 1627, aged c. 53 years, married Margaret English; Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

Died: April 1656, aged c. 82 years

Buried: 8 April 1656, Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

6.8.2.1 Elinor Dumbrell (1586-1625)

Born: 1586, Wivelsfield, Sussex

Christened: 23 December 1586, St. John the Baptist Church, Wivelsfield, Sussex

Married: 22 June 1607, aged c. 23 years, married Richard Blaker; Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

Died: February 1625, aged 39 years

Buried: 11 February 1625, Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

6.8.2.2 Richard Blaker and Elinor Dumbrell

Richard and Elinor had a large family, comprising 10 children, 6 of whom died young:

- Ann: b. 1608, Cuckfield, Sussex; d. 1608
- John: b. 1609, Bolney, Sussex; d. 1609
- Edmund: b. 1610, Bolney, Sussex; d. 1615
- Thomas: b. 1611, Bolney, Sussex
- Marie: b. 1612, Cuckfield, Sussex; d. 1678
- Richard: b. 1615, Cuckfield, Sussex
- Edmund: b. 1617, Cuckfield, Sussex; d. 1617
- Elizabeth: b. 1619, Cuckfield, Sussex
- Henry: b. 1620, Cuckfield, Sussex; d. 1626
- John: b. 1623, Cucfield, Sussex; d. 1626

In 1608, and again in 1612, Richard And Elinor were recorded living at 'Blakers' – land rented from the Cuckfield Manor Estate. In April 1614, Richard was named as one of the Executors in the Will of his brother, George (1569-1617).

The next record for Richard occurred when he was mentioned in the 1622 Will of his nephew, Stephen West of Barckam (i.e. Barcombe) and Cuckfield. In 1625, Elinor sadly died, leaving Richard as a widow with up to 7 young children (the exact number is not known, as records are incomplete). It is not known how Richard coped, or who looked after his children.

In 1627, just 2.5 years after the premature death of his wife, Elinor, Richard married Margaret English. Margaret must have been a great help in raising Richard's children.

6.8.2.3 Margaret English (-1655)

Born: ?

Married: 6 August 1627, married Richard Blaker; Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

Died: 1655

Buried: 18 January 1655, Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield, Sussex

Apart from the date of her marriage to Richard Blaker and the date of her death and burial, nothing is known about Margaret.

6.8.2.4 Richard Blaker and Margaret English

Richard and Margaret did not have any children.

In 1634, Richard was again mentioned in a Will, this time that of his brother, Edmund (1576-1634). In 1655, Margaret died, leaving her husband '*auld Richard*' as a widower.

Richard eventually died in 1656, aged 82 years. He was known as '*Richard the Elder*' – to differentiate him from his son, Richard. He was buried in the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield.

6.8.3 Edmund Blaker (1576-1634)

Born: 1576

Married: Did not marry

Died: December 1634, aged 58 years

Buried: 23 December 1634, St. Andrew's Church, Nuthurst, Sussex

Edmund was the youngest of 4 children born to Richard and Joanne Blaker. Information about Edmund is very sparse. It is believed that Edmund did not marry.

In 1614, he was named as an Executor in his brother George's Will. In 1822, Edmund was mentioned in the Will of Stephen West, where he was described as '*Servant*' to Stephen West of Barckam (i.e. Barcombe) and Cuckfield.

In c. 1634, 'Edmund Blaker of Nuthurst' executed his Will, which provided:
*'Brother-in-law William West and his wife Elizabeth West £5 a piece;
Henry West £10 and my great Bible
George Blaker, son of George Blaker £15
Thomas Blaker, son of George Blaker (under 21) £20
My brother, Richard Blaker 40/- a year
John Jenner 20/- a year
Richard Blaker, son of Richard Blaker £15
Mary Blaker, daughter of Richard Blaker £10
Elizabeth Blaker, daughter of Richard Blaker £10
John Tanner and Elizabeth Holdness 5/- a piece
Richard Blaker, son of George Blaker, my house, barn and land
Richard Blaker, son of George Blaker named as Sole Executor'*
Edmund executed his Will by a 'Mark' that demonstrated that he was unable to write his name. Edmund's bequests of money exceeded £90, and his estate included an unquantified amount of property. Edmund was obviously not a poor man, despite being a 'Servant'!

Edmund died in 1634 and was buried in Nuthurst, some 14km west of Cuckfield.

6.9 Richard Blaker (1611-1672): Son of George Blaker (1569-1618) and Elizabeth Living (-1615)

Born: 1615, Cowfold, Sussex

Christened: 2 June 1611, St. Peter's Church, Cowfold, Sussex

Married: 26 November 1639, aged 24 years, married Mary Randell; St. Andrew's Church, Nuthurst, Sussex

Died: June 1672

Buried: 20 June 1672, St. Mary Magdelene Church, Bolney, Sussex

Richard was one of 5 children born to George Blaker and Elizabeth Living.

Richard was named in his father's Will dated 1617, and, in 1634, was named as the Sole Executor in the Will of his uncle, Edmund Blaker (1576-1634), who bequeathed to Richard a house, barn and land. In 1639, Richard acted as witness to the Will of his brother, George (1607-1639). Richard was then recorded as 'Richard of West Grinstead' – presumably that was where he was living in 1639.

In April 1639, Richard married Mary Randell.

6.9.1 Mary Randell (-1669)

Born: ?

Married: 26 November 1639, married Richard Blaker; St. Andrew's Church, Nuthurst, Sussex

Died: April 1669

Buried: 28 April 1669, St. Mary Magdelene Church, Bolney, Sussex

Virtually nothing is known about Mary. It is assumed that Mary lived in the Nuthurst area of Sussex.

6.9.2 Richard Blaker and Mary Randell

Richard and Mary initially lived in West Grinstead, Sussex. They had 2 children:

- Joan: b. 1641, West Grinstead, Sussex
- Richard: b. 1643, Sussex

In 1662, Richard Blaker was assessed to the Hearth Tax in the Hundred of Buttinghill (which included Bolney). By 1665, Richard had become a Churchwarden of St. Mary Magdelene Church, Bolney.

Mary died in 1669, and was buried in Bolney, Sussex. Richard survived his wife by some 3 years and died in 1672. Richard died *'intestate'* and Administration to his estate was granted at Lewes later that year, with his son, Richard being given due authority.

Richard, like his wife before him, was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex. The exact location of these graves is not known.

6.10 Other Children of George Blaker (1569-1617) and Elizabeth Living (-1615)

6.10.1 John Blaker (1605-)

Born: 1605, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 13 January 1605, St. Mary Magdelene Church, Bolney, Sussex

Died: ?

John was one of 5 children born to George and Elizabeth Blaker. We know virtually nothing about John's life, save that he was mentioned in his father's Will in 1617. We do not know if John married, or when he died.

6.10.2 George Blaker (1607-1639)

Born: 1607, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 29 March 1607, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Married: 2 November 1636, aged 32 years, married Ann Burges; Coombes Church, Lancing, Sussex

Died: 1639

Buried: 5 March 1639, Lancing, Sussex

George was one of 5 children born to George and Elizabeth Blaker. In 1617, George was mentioned in his father's Will. In 1634, George was mentioned in the Will of his uncle, Edmund Blaker (1576-1634).

In 1636, George married Ann Burges at Coombes Church – in the little hamlet of Coombes, between Lancing College and Bramber.

6.10.2.1 Ann Burges (-)

Born: ?

Married: 2 November 1636, married George Blaker; Coombes Church, Lancing, Sussex

Died: ?

Apart from the date of her marriage to George Blaker and mention of her in her husband's will, we know nothing about Ann Burges.

6.10.2.2 George Blaker and Ann Burges

It is understood that George was an '*Alehouse Keeper*'. In those days, ale would have been made without hops, and would remain drinkable for 5 days or so. The ale houses were distinguished by the sign of a bunch of twigs at the end of a pole, put out when fresh ale had been brewed.

George and Ann had 2 children, both of whom died at a young age:

- John: b. 1637, West Tarring, Sussex; d. 1637
- Mary: b. 1639, Lancing, Sussex; d. 1643

In March 1639, George executed his Will, which included:

'I Gorg Blaker in the prish of Lansinng, aelhouse? keeppar my body to be buried in the chruch yard of Lannsinng my brotheres Richard Blakcar and Thomas Blakcar both of ye prish of Westgrensted (i.e. West Grinstead), my wife An Blakcar'

George died in 1639, and was buried in the churchyard at Lancing – either in Coombes Church, or the church of St. James the Less, in North Lancing? His Will was proved 26 Mar 1640.

6.10.3 William (1610-1610)

Born: 1610, Cowfold, Sussex

Christened: 6 May 1610, St. Peter's Church, Cowfold, Sussex

Died: May 1610

Buried: 14 May 1610, St. Peter's Church, Cowfold, Sussex

William was one of 5 children born to George and Elizabeth Blaker. William died as an infant. His burial notes record him as '*son of George Blaker of Kings*' – i.e. land rented from the Manor of Cuckfield.

6.10.4 Thomas (1615-)

Born: 1615, Cowfold, Sussex

Christened: 10 September 1615, St. Peter's Church, Cowfold, Sussex

Died: ?

Apart from mention of his name in various Wills, we know virtually nothing about Thomas. It is not known whether he married, nor do we know when he died. It is believed that he lived in West Grinstead.

In 1617, Thomas was mentioned in the Will of his father, George (1559-1617). He was additionally mentioned in the Will of his uncle, Edmund (1576-1634).

In May 1638, Thomas was a witness to the Will of Mary Soper of West Grinstead. In 1639, George was a witness to the Will of his brother, George (1607-1639). Thereafter we have no further records that relate to Thomas.

6.11 Richard Blaker (1643-1696): Son of Richard Blaker (1611-1672) and Mary Randell (-1669)

Born: c. 1643, Sussex

Married: 16 December 1673, aged 30 years, married Dorothy Beckley; St. Mary Magdalene Church, Bolney, Sussex

Died: September 1696

Buried: 4 September 1696, St Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Richard was one of 2 children born to Richard and Mary Blaker.

Very little is known about Richard. He was granted Administration of his father's estate in 1672 – his father, Richard Blaker (1611-1672) having died intestate.

In 1673, Richard married Dorothy Beckley.

6.11.1 Dorothy Beckley (1644-1698)

Born: c. 1644

Married: 16 December 1673, married Richard Blaker; St. Mary Magdalene Church, Bolney, Sussex

Died: 1698

Buried: 1 March 1698, St. Mary Magdelene Church, Bolney, Sussex

Nothing is known about Dorothy until her marriage to Richard Blaker in 1673. The transcription of her marriage record in the parish register denotes her as '*Dorothy Blechly*' – it is not known if this is a transcription error.

6.11.2 Richard Blaker and Dorothy Beckley

Richard and Dorothy appear to have lived in Bolney, Sussex. They had at least one child:

- Richard: b. 1677, Bolney, Sussex

Richard's Will, dated 16 May 1696, described him as a '*Yeoman of Bolney*', and provided that he '*heirs all his lands in Bolney called Gravehurst, alias Gravenhurst, containing 3a Or 32p, and also all his goods, to his loving wife, Dorothy, and made her sole executrix*'. The 1896 map of Bolney shows '*Gravenhurst*' as a named area of land west of Boney. In the 1890s, Henry Courage (a member of the '*Courage*' brewing dynasty) owned '*Gravenhurst*' (now Farney Close) in the 1890s and had a private cricket pitch on the south side of what is now the A272 road. It is not clear how much of this land was owned by Richard Blaker.

Richard died in 1696, leaving Dorothy was a widow. Richard was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney.

Dorothy was described in 1697 as '*Dorothy of Bolney*'. In 1698, Dorothy died intestate. She was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney. The exact location of her grave is not known.

On 11 March 1698, Administration to the estate of Dorothy Blaker was granted in the Archdeaconry Court in Lewes to her '*eldest son*', Richard Blaker, who was described as a '*Carpenter*'. These letters of Administration suggest that Richard had siblings that have been lost from the surviving records. Dorothy's inventory was valued at £59-16s-9d. – not a fortune!

6.12 Richard Blaker (1677-1755): Son of Richard Blaker (1643-1696) and Dorothy Beckley (1644-1698)

Born: 1677, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 1 July 1677, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Married: 16 January 1700, at the age of 22 years, married Jane Jeffrey ; St. John the Baptist, Clayton, Sussex

Died: June 1755, aged 77 years

Buried: 9 June 1755, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Richard was the sole child born to Richard Blaker (1643-1696) and Dorothy Beckley (1653-1698). In the baptismal record he was registered as '*Blacker*'.

Relatively little is known about Richard's early life. He was a '*Carpenter*' by trade, and appears to have been closely involved with his local Anglican church – St. Mary Magdelene. At the age of 22 years, Richard married Jane Jeffrey. By that time, both of Richard's parents were dead.

6.12.1 Jane Jeffrey (1680-1768)

Born: 1680, Clayton, Sussex

Married: 16 January 1700, at the age of 20 years, married Richard Blaker; St. John the Baptist, Clayton, Sussex

Died: 10 January 1768, aged 88 years; Bolney, Sussex

Buried: 17 January 1768, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Jane's father, Thomas Jeffrey worked as a '*Yeoman*' and was an elder of St. Mary Magdelene church, Bolney, Sussex. Thomas died in 1708 and his will was proven in Lewes, Sussex on 24 March 1708. The will refers to his daughter, Jane Blaker.

Jane and Richard were married in Clayton, Sussex, a small village some 15km south east of Bolney. It is presumed that Jane was living in Clayton before her marriage.

6.12.2 Richard Blaker and Jane Jeffrey

After their marriage, Richard and Jane lived in Bolney. Richard and Jane had 9 children, all of whom were born in Bolney, Sussex:

- Richard: b. 1701
- Thomas: b. 1704
- John: b. 1705
- James: b. 1708
- James: b. 1711
- Mary: b. 1713
- William: b. 1717
- Henry: b. 1721

- Moses: b. 1730

It is interesting that John Blaker continued his father's trade as a carpenter, and that William Blaker became Churchwarden of St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney for many years (including the period from 1760 to 1770).

Font, St. Mary Magdelene- used in many Blaker Christenings?

In 1775, Richard died, aged 77 years. His wife, Jane, survived him by more than 12 years, and eventually died in the village of Bolney, Sussex at the age of 88 years. Richard and Jane were buried in adjoining graves, in the churchyard of St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex. Their graves are in close proximity to other Blaker graves in the churchyard, close to the southern porch of the church. Whilst the writing on Richard's headstone is no longer decipherable, his wife's headstone bears the following inscription:

'In memory of Jane the wife of Richard Blaker who died January ye 10th aged 88 years'

Headstones of Jane Blaker (left) and Richard Blaker (right), Bolney, Sussex

Location of Graves of Richard & Jane Blaker, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney

6.13 James Blaker (1708-1784); Child of Richard Blaker (1677-1755) & Jane Jeffrey (1680-1768)

Born: 1708, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 20 May 1708, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Married: 27 April 1736, aged 28 years, married Sarah Back; Holy Trinity, Cuckfield, Sussex

Died: February 1784, aged 76 years; Bolney, Sussex

Buried: 4 February 1784, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

James was the fourth son born to Richard and Jane Blaker. Nothing is known about James' early life. In 1736, James married Sarah Back in a service held in Cuckfield, Sussex. The record of his marriage records his surname as '*Blacker*'.

6.13.1 Sarah Back (-1779)

Born: ?

Married: 27 April 1736, married James Blaker; Holy Trinity, Cuckfield, Sussex

Died: April 1779

Buried: 27 April 1779, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

No trace of Sarah has yet been uncovered before her marriage to James in 1736. There are conflicting records concerning Sarah's surname. Renshaw records this as '*Back*', whilst the Sussex Marriage Register records it as '*Banks*'.

6.13.2 James Blaker and Sarah Back

After their marriage, it is likely that James and Sarah lived in Cuckfield, Sussex.

James and Sarah had four children:

- James: b. 1738, Cuckfield, Sussex
- Betty: b. 1741, Cuckfield, Sussex
- Sarah: b. 1743, Cuckfield, Sussex
- Thomas: b. 1746, Cuckfield, Sussex

Further information on the children of James and Sarah is given in section XXX.

Sarah died in 1779, leaving James as a widower. James survived his wife by almost 5 years, dying in 1784, aged 76 years. Both James and Sarah were buried in the churchyard of St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney. Their graves have not yet been precisely located in the churchyard. The location of their burial indicates that at some time after 1746, James and Sarah probably moved from Cuckfield to Bolney, Sussex.

6.14 Other Children of Richard Blaker (1677-1755) and Jane Jeffrey (1680-1768)

6.14.1 Richard Blaker (1701-1743)

Born: 1701, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 23 February 1701, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Died: March 1743, aged 42 years

Buried: 12 March 1743, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Apart from records of his christening and his burial, we have not uncovered any information about Richard. There are no records consistent with his marriage. Hence, it is likely that he died a single man. Richard's grave has not yet been precisely located in the churchyard.

6.14.2 Thomas Blaker (1703-1788)

Born: 1703, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 21 August 1703, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Married: 16 April 1730, aged 27 years, married Sarah Budgen; St. Margaret's, West Hoathly, Sussex

Died: February 1788, aged 85 years

Buried: 26 February 1788, St. Margaret's, West Hoathly, Sussex

Apart from records of his christening we have not discovered any information about Thomas until his marriage to Sarah Budgen in 1730.

6.14.2.1 Sarah Budgen (1709-1782)

Born: 1709, West Hoathly, Sussex

Married: 16 April 1730, aged 22 years, married Thomas Blaker; St. Margaret's, West Hoathly, Sussex

Died: April 1772, aged 63 years; West Hoathly, Sussex

Buried: 19 April 1772, St. Margaret's, West Hoathly, Sussex

Sarah was the second of eight children born to Thomas Budgen (1681-1757) and Sarah Cumber (1682-1758). Thomas was born in Frant, Sussex, whilst Sarah Cumber was born in Worth.

Nothing is known about Sarah until her marriage to Thomas Blaker in 1730. Their marriage took place in West Hoathly, Sussex, a small village some 20km north east of Bolney.

6.14.2.2 Thomas Blaker and Sarah Budgen

Thomas and Sarah lived in West Hoathly after their marriage. They had 11 children, all of whom were born in West Hoathly:

- Sarah: b. 1730
- Mary: b. 1731 – died in February of the following year
- Mary: b. 1732
- Thomas: b. 1735
- Richard: b. 1737
- John: b. 1739
- Jane: b. 1742
- William: b. 1745
- Hannah: b. 1748
- Nancy: b. 1750
- Elizabeth: b. 1753

Sarah died in 1772, leaving Thomas as a widower. Thomas survived his wife by some 11 years, before he died in February 1788. Both Thomas and Sarah were buried in the churchyard of St. Margaret's, West Hoathly, Sussex.

6.14.3 John Blaker (1705-1761)

Born: 1705, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 8 November 1705, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Married: 27 December 1733, aged 28 years, married Elizabeth Swift; St. Mary, Sompting, Sussex

Died: October 1761, aged 55 years

Buried: 12 October 1761, St. Mary, Sompting, Sussex

John was known to be a carpenter, as his father before him. In 1733, John married Elizabeth Swift.

6.14.3.1 Elizabeth Swift (1710-1783)

Born: 1710, Lancing, Sussex

Christened: 16 February 1710, Lancing, Sussex

Married: 27 December 1733, aged 23 years, married John Blaker; St. Mary, Sompting, Sussex

Died: July 1783, aged 73 years

Buried: 5 July 1783, St. Mary, Sompting, Sussex

No information has been uncovered about Elizabeth's life before her marriage to John.

6.14.3.2 John Blaker and Elizabeth Swift

John and Elizabeth appear to have lived in Bolney, Sussex after their marriage, before moving to Lancing, Sussex and then to Sompting, Sussex.

John and Elizabeth had at least 5 children:

- Betty: b. 1735, Bolney, Sussex
- Mary: b. 1736, Lancing, Sussex
- Baruch: b. 1739, Sompting, Sussex
- John: b. 1745, Sompting, Sussex
- Richard: b. 1748, Sompting, Sussex

Some records suggest that there was a 6th child:

- John: b. 1753, Sompting, Sussex

12th Century Font, St. Mary the Blessed Virgin, Sompting – used for many Blaker Christenings

John died in 1761, leaving Elizabeth as a widow. John's will was executed on 16 August 1761, a few weeks before his death. His will was proven in Chichester, Sussex on 5 October 1762. In his will, John referred to his 5 children, indicating that the attribution of 6 children to John and Elizabeth may be incorrect.

Elizabeth survived her husband by some 21 years, and died in 1783.

Although both John and Elizabeth were buried in the churchyard of St. Mary's, Sompting, no trace of their headstones has been found.

6.14.4 Jane Blaker (1711-1713)

Born: January 1711

Christened: 6 January 1711, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Died: February 1713, aged 2 years; Bolney, Sussex

Buried: 22 February 1713, St. Mary Magdelene, Sussex

Jane was the first girl born to Richard and Jane. She died aged 2 years.

6.14.5 Mary Blaker (1714-)

Born: 1714, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 11 March 1714, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Married: 2 October 1744, aged 30 years, married Thomas Charrington, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: ?

Very little is known about Mary. At the time of her marriage, she was living in Horley, Surrey.

6.14.5.1 Thomas Charrington

No information has been discovered about Thomas. In some records, his surname is shown as *'Charinton'*.

6.14.5.2 Mary Blaker and Thomas Charrington

It is not known whether Mary and Thomas had children. No trace has been found of the deaths of either Mary or Thomas.

6.14.6 William Blaker (1717-1791)

Born: 1717, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 29 May 1717, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Married: 1st: 27 September 1744, aged 27 years, married
Elizabeth Allingham; St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

2nd: 2 December 1788, aged 71 years, married Sarah Parsons; St.
Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Died: November 1791, aged 74 years

Buried: 8 November 1791, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

William was a yeoman. In 1744, he married Elizabeth Allingham.

6.14.6.1 Elizabeth Allingham (1712-1775)

Born: 1712, Worth, Sussex

Christened: 19 July 1712, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Married: 27 September 1744, aged 32 years, married Elizabeth
Allingham; St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: February 1775, aged 62 years: Bolney, Sussex

Buried: 27 February 1775, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Elizabeth's parents were Henry and Elizabeth Allingham. Henry was a very devout man, and was a churchwarden and Overseer. By 1772, Henry held land near Turners Hill and owned several properties.

6.14.6.2 William Blaker and Elizabeth Allingham

After their marriage, William and Elizabeth lived in Worth, Sussex. Their 3 children were all born in Worth:

- Elizabeth: b. 1746
- William: b. 1748
- Hannah: b. 1751

At some stage after the birth of their 2nd daughter, Hannah, William and Elizabeth moved to Bolney, where William was a Churchwarden of St. Mary Magdelene for many years. In 1760, William inherited *'copyholds'* (ie titles) to land in Bolney. The inheritance was provided by his mother's brother, Thomas Jeffrey, in his will dated 17 January 1758.

In 1768, William elected to pass these *'copyholds'* to his sole son, William.

In 1775, Elizabeth sadly died, aged 62 years, leaving William as a widower. She was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary Magdelene,

Bolney. The inscription on her memorial includes a lengthy and moving tribute:

“She was a person of an exemplary life and conversation and acted well in the different relation to which God hath called her to those of wife, mother, friend and neighbour she was sincerely devoted to all religious office both public and private and her deep sense of religion appeared by an earnest concern for spiritual and temporal good of her fellow creatures and employing extraordinary spirit and labour for all”

According to researchers into Blaker family history, William married again in 1778, at the advanced age of 71 years. His wife, Sarah Parsons was aged just 27 years old. It is not known why William married such a young woman – maybe he just wanted to be ‘looked after’!

6.14.6.3 Sarah Parsons

Born: c. 1761

Married: 2 December 1788, married William Blaker; St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Died: ?

Virtually nothing is known about Sarah. A limited number of records on the ancestry.co.uk database suggest that Sarah was born in c. 1761, and was thus much younger than William Blaker. When Sarah married William, she was living in the Parish of Bolney.

6.14.6.4 William Blaker and Sarah Parsons

Amazingly, William and Sarah had a child:

- Sarah: b. 1791, Bolney, Sussex

On 13 February 1789, William made his last will, naming both Hannah and his wife Sarah as Executors.

William died in 1791, just 2 years after the birth of his daughter, Sarah. William was buried in the Churchyard of St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney. William was buried in a substantial tomb, together with his first wife’s remains.

6.14.7 Henry Blaker (1721-)

Born: 1721, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 10 June 1721, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Died: ?

Henry was the 8th child born to Richard and Jane Blaker. Although very little is known about Henry’s early life, it is known that he became an exceptionally tall man. At the age of 27 years, and with a height of 7 feet 4 inches (2.235 meters), he exhibited himself in London. In the *Daily Advertiser* publication of 8 December 1752, Henry was described as follows:

“This is to acquaint the curious that Mr. Blacker, the Modern Colossus, or Wonderful Giant, who has given universal satisfaction, is to be seen in a commodious room in Half Moon Court adjoining Ludgate. This phenomenon in nature hath already had the honour of being inspected by great numbers of nobility and gentry, by many of the Royal Society, and several gentlemen and ladies who are lovers of natural curiosities; who allow him to be of stupendous height and affirm him to be the best proportioned of his size they ever saw. He is to be seen by any number of persons from nine in the morning till nine at night.”

Henry was variously known as ‘*The Cuckfield Giant*’, and ‘*The British Giant*’. His many admirers included William, Duke of Cumberland.

It is not known what Henry’s family thought of his exhibitionist activities, nor the money and fine clothes that must have resulted. There are no records of Henry’s death. It is likely that he did not marry, and that his condition was caused by excessive amounts of growth hormone in childhood, due to a pituitary gland tumour, or genetic abnormality.

Grave of William & Elizabeth Blaker, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney

Henry Blaker: Etching by Carpenter

6.14.8 Moses Blaker (1730-1730)

Born: 1730, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 18 August 1730, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Died: October 1730, aged c. 2 months; Bolney

Buried: 11 October 1730; St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

In the churchyard of St. Mary Magdelene there is a tiny round headstone next to the graves of Richard and Jane Blaker. It is tempting to speculate that this stone marks the final resting place of Moses, the last child born to Jane.

6.15 James Blaker (1738-1779); Child of James Blaker (1708-1784) and Sarah Back (-1779)

Born: 1738, Cuckfield, Sussex

Christened: 5 May 1738, Holy Trinity, Cuckfield, Sussex

Married: 7 April 1768, aged 30 years, married Elizabeth Easton; St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: January 1779, aged 41 years, Worth, Sussex

Buried: 13 January 1778, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

James was the first child born to James and Sarah Blaker. Nothing is known about James’ life until he married Elizabeth Easton in 1768.

6.15.1 Elizabeth Easton (1749-)

Born: 1749, Worth, Sussex

Christened: 1 November 1749, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Married: 1st: 7 April 1768, aged 18 years, married James Blaker;
St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

2nd: 9 November 1780, aged 31 years, married John Holder; St.
Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: ?

Elizabeth was one of at least 9 children born to Elias Easton (1705-1789) and Mary Potter (1710-1795). The Easton family lived in Worth, Sussex.

12th Century Font, St. Nicholas Church, Worth

In 1768, Elizabeth married James Blaker in Worth, Sussex. At the time of their marriage, James was some 12 years older than his wife.

St. Nicholas Church, Worth, Sussex

6.15.2 James Blaker and Elizabeth Easton

After their marriage, James and Elizabeth lived in Worth, Sussex. They had six children, all of whom were born in Worth:

- Mary: b. 1769
- Sarah: b. 1770
- James: b. 1772
- Thomas: b. 1774
- Betty: b. 1776
- William: b. 1778

In 1779, James died prematurely at the age of 41 years, leaving 29 year-old Elizabeth as a widow with five surviving children. James was buried in the churchyard of St. Nicholas, Worth. The funeral must have been a very sad occasion.

After James' death, it is believed that Elizabeth continued to live in Worth, Sussex.

Just under 2 years after James' death, Elizabeth married John Holder.

6.15.3 John Holder (1758-)

Born: 1758, Worth, Sussex

Christened:

Married: 9 November 1780, aged 22 years, married Elizabeth Blacker; St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: ?

John was one of 5 children born to William Holder (1724-1800) and Sarah Alfrey (1736-). Elizabeth was some 9 years older than John when they were married.

6.15.4 Elizabeth Bla(c)ker and John Holder

Elizabeth and John had four children, all of whom were born in Worth, Sussex:

- John: b. 1784
- Thomas: b. 1786
- Elizabeth: b. 1789
- Mary: b. 1794

By the time that Elizabeth gave birth to her last child, Mary, she was 43 years-old.

No records have emerged to date to indicate when either Elizabeth or her husband, John, died.

6.16 Other Children of James Blaker (1708-1784) and Sarah Back (-1779)

6.16.1 Betty Blaker (1741-)

Born: 1741, Cuckfield, Sussex

Christened: 29 March 1741, Holy Trinity, Cuckfield, Sussex

Married: 16 April 1761, aged 20 years, married John Holder; St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: ?

Virtually no information about Betty has been discovered.

6.16.1.1 John Holder (-)

Born: ?

Married: 16 April 1761, married Betty Blaker; St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: ?

Records for John Holder are very scant.

6.16.1.2 Betty Blaker and John Holder

It is not known whether Betty and John had any children, nor has any trace been found of the deaths of either Betty or John.

6.16.2 Sarah Blaker (1743-1798)

Born: 1743, Cuckfield, Sussex

Christened: 23 October 1743, Holy Trinity, Cuckfield, Sussex

Married: 2 December 1766, aged 23 years, married Daniel Ockenden, Holy Trinity, Cuckfield, Sussex

Died: 1798, aged 55 years; Cuckfield, Sussex

Sarah was the third child born to James Blaker and Sarah Back.

No records have emerged to capture Sarah's early life. In 1766, Sarah married Daniel Ockenden.

6.16.2.1 Daniel Ockenden (1742-1806)

Born: 1742, Bolney, Sussex

Christened: 7 March 1742, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex
Married: 2 December 1766, aged 24 years, married Sarah Blaker, Holy Trinity, Cuckfield, Sussex
Died: 17 November 1806, aged 64 years; Cuckfield, Sussex

Daniel was the youngest of four children born to James Ockenden (1712-1769) and Mary Philips (1713-1781).

6.16.2.2 Sarah Blaker and Daniel Ockenden

Sarah and Daniel lived in Cuckfield after their marriage. They had two children:

- Daniel: b. 1767, Cuckfield, Sussex
- Thomas: b. 1773, Cuckfield, Sussex

Sarah died in 1798, aged 55 years. Her husband survived her by some 8 years, and died in 1806.

6.16.3 Thomas Blaker (1746-1817)

Born: 1746, Cuckfield, Sussex

Christened: 4 May 1746, Holy Trinity, Cuckfield, Sussex

Married: 1 April 1777, aged years, married Elizabeth Lindfield; St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Died: 1817, aged 76 years

Buried: February 1817, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Thomas was the youngest child born to James Blaker and Sarah Back. Nothing is known about Thomas' early life.

In 1777, Thomas married Elizabeth Lindfield.

6.16.3.1 Elizabeth Lindfield: (1752-1818)

Born: 1752

Married: 1 April 1777, aged 25 years, married Thomas Blaker; St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Died: 1818, aged 66 years; Bolney, Sussex

Buried: 1 March 1818, St. Mary Magdelene, Bolney, Sussex

Very little information has been established for Elizabeth before her marriage to Thomas. At the time of her marriage, Elizabeth was living in Bolney, Sussex. It is understood that she was known as *'Bett'*.

6.16.3.2 Thomas Blaker and Elizabeth Lindfield

After their marriage, Thomas and Elizabeth lived in Bolney, Sussex. They had four children:

- Thomas: b. 1778, Bolney, Sussex
- Elizabeth: b. 1780, Bolney, Sussex
- James: b. 1786, Cuckfield, Sussex
- William: b. 1789, Bolney, Sussex

In 1817, Thomas sadly died, leaving Elizabeth as a widow. She died the following year in 1818.

6.17 William Blaker (1778-1857): Child of James Blaker (1738-1779) and Elizabeth Easton (1749-)

Born: 1778, Worth, Sussex

Christened: 26 July 1778, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Married: 13 October 1805, aged 27 years, married Mary Funnel; St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: 3 October 1857, aged 79 years, Poor House, Worth, Sussex

Buried: 7 October 1857, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

William was the last of six children born to James Blaker and Elizabeth Easton. Very little is known about William until his marriage to Mary Funnel in 1805.

6.17.1 Mary Funnel (1783-1856)

Born: 16 June 1783, Ifield, near Crawley, Sussex

Christened: 21 August 1783, Crawley, Sussex

Married: 13 October 1805, aged 22 years, married William Blaker; St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: 21 August 1856, aged 73 years; Church Lane, Worth, Sussex

Buried: 25 August 1856, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Mary's parents were Henry and Polly Funnel. They lived in Ifield, near Crawley, Sussex.

6.17.2 William Blaker and Mary Funnel

After their marriage, William and Mary lived in Crawley, Sussex, before moving to Worth. William and Mary had seven children:

- James: b. 1805, Crawley, Sussex
- Hannah: b. 1808, Crawley, Sussex
- Mary: b. 1810, Crawley, Sussex
- Henry: b. 1813, Worth, Sussex
- Sarah: b. 1817, Worth, Sussex
- Elizabeth: b. 1820, Worth, Sussex
- William: b. 1823, Worth, Sussex

The next record for William and Elizabeth is from the 1841 Census when they were living with their married daughter, Sarah Rice and her family in Brook Log, Worth, Sussex. William was then working as an '*Agricultural Labourer*'.

In the 1851 Census, William is captured as a 75 year-old '*Agricultural Labourer*' living with Mary and two lodgers in Copthorne Common, Worth, Sussex.

In 1856, Mary died in Church Lane, Worth, leaving William as a widow. Her death certificate records the cause of her death as '*Diarrhea with*

Hemorrhage'. By the time of his death in 1857, William was living in the Poor House, Worth. The Worth Poor house was part of the East Grinstead Poor Union, catering for the rural poor. It must have been a grim place, and a sad location in which William's life of hard work ended. His death certificate records '*Debility and Retention of Urine*' as the causes of his death.

Both William and Mary were buried in the churchyard of St. Nicholas, Worth. The location of their graves has not been established.

6.18 William Blaker (1823-1900): Child of William Blaker (1778-1857) and Mary Funnel (1783-1856)

Born: 1823, Worth, Sussex

Christened: 16 March 1823, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Married: 31 March 1849, aged 26 years, married Caroline Box, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: December 1900, aged 77 years; Cuckfield Union Workhouse, Sussex

Buried: 14 December 1900, Holy Trinity, Cuckfield, Sussex

William was the last child born to William and Mary Blaker. His early years were spent in/near Worth, Sussex. By the time of the 1841 Census, William was living together with his elder sister, Mary, as lodgers at Copthorne Bank, Burstow, near Reigate, Surrey.

Location of Copthorne Bank, Burstow, Sussex

In 1849, William married Caroline Box.

6.18.1 Caroline Box (1827-1903)

Born: 1827, Worth, Sussex

Christened: 15 January 1827, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Married: 31 March 1849, aged years, married William Blaker, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: 17 January 1904, aged 76 years; Cuckfield Union Workhouse, Cuckfield, Sussex

Buried: ?

Caroline was the eldest of at least 3 children born to Peter Box (1797-) and Ann Harber (1802-). Her family lived in Worth, Sussex, where Peter was an '*Agricultural Labourer*'. In the 1841 Census, Caroline was shown as a 14 year-old girl, living with her parents and two siblings at Turners Hill, Worth, Sussex.

6.18.2 William Blaker and Caroline Box

William and Caroline were married in Worth, Sussex. Their marriage certificate simply records their respective marks, indicating that neither could write their names.

They established their initial home at Copthorne Bank, Burstow, near Reigate, Surrey. William and Caroline had 3 children:

- Harriett: b. 1850, Burstow, Surrey
- John: b. 1852, Burstow, Surrey
- Ann: b. 1854, Worth, Sussex

By the time of the 1851 Census, William and Caroline were living with their four month-old daughter, Harriett, at Copthorne Bank, Burstow, Surrey. William was then working as an '*Agricultural Labourer*'.

Ten years later, in the 1861 Census, William, Caroline and their three children were living in Balcombe Lane, Balcombe, Sussex. They continued to live in Balcombe Lane for at least the next two decades.

The properties in Balcombe Lane no longer exist, as they were probably demolished before the late 1970s, when the Ardingly reservoir was constructed, adjoining Balcombe Lane. Given the proximity of Balcombe Lane to St. Peter's, Ardingly, it is possible that this was the focus for their religious worship, as opposed to the parish church of St. Mary, Balcombe.

Location of Balcombe Lane, near Ardingly, Sussex

Within the 1891 Census, William and Caroline were recorded visiting their married daughter, Harriet Botting, and her family at Middle Pilstyle, Hazeldean, Cuckfield – this is c. 4 km north of Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield. These records describe Caroline as being deaf.

Some time thereafter, William and Caroline entered the Cuckfield Union Workhouse. William died there in December 1990, leaving Caroline as a widow. William's death certificate record '*Senile Decay*' as the cause of his death.

Caroline was recorded in the 1901 Census as a 74 year-old widow, living with some 200 other inmates of this foreboding institution. Caroline survived her husband by some 4 years, before she also died at the Cuckfield Union Workhouse. Her death certificate showed that she died of '*Bronchitis*'. This was a depressingly sad end to a very hard life.

The Union Workhouse became the site of the Cuckfield Hospital, which was eventually closed in 1991 when regional hospital services were focused on the newly opened Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath.

Cuckfield Union Workhouse: c. 1909

Cuckfield Union Workhouse: Ardingly Road, Cuckfield: 1896 Map

It is not known where Caroline's body was buried. Perhaps it was in an unmarked grave plot in the churchyard of Holy Trinity, Cuckfield.

6.19 Other Children of William Blaker (1778-1857) and Mary Funnel (1783-1856)

6.19.1 James Blaker (1805-)

Born: 1805, Crawley, Sussex

Christened: 22 December 1805, St. John the Baptist, Crawley, Sussex

Died: ?

James was the eldest son of William and Mary Blaker. In 1820, at the age of 15 years, James was the subject of a Boarding Agreement under which Peter Caffin acted as his guardian, and also acted as guardian for James' sister, Hannah. It is assumed that these Boarding Agreements indicated that William and Mary were unable to look after at least some of their children, due to poverty.

After 1820, records of James' life disappear. It is not known whether he married, or when he died.

St. John the Baptist Church, Crawley; Old Postcard

6.19.2 Hannah Blaker (1808-1898)

Born: 21 May 1808, Crawley, Sussex

Christened: 19 June 1908, St. John the Baptist, Crawley, Sussex

Married: 20 June 1827, aged 19 years, married Thomas Smith; Merstham, Surrey

Died: 21 March 1898, aged 89 years; Workhouse Row, Merstham Road, Reigate, Surrey

Hannah was the second child born to William and Mary Blaker. In 1820, at the age of just 12 years, Hannah was the subject of a Boarding Agreement under which Peter Caffin acted as her guardian, and also acted as guardian for her elder brother, James. The following year, Hannah was the subject of a further Boarding Agreement under which William Hudson acted as her guardian.

In 1827, Hannah married Thomas Smith in Merstham, Surrey.

6.19.2.1 Thomas Smith (1799-1887)

Born: 1799, Woodmansterne, Surrey

Married: 20 June 1827, aged 27 years, married Hannah Blaker; Merstham, Surrey

Died: 1887, aged 88 years; Reigate, Surrey

Thomas' parents were William Smith and Jane Barton. Nothing is known about Thomas' early life. At the age of 27 years, he married Hannah Blaker.

St. Katherine's Church, Merstham – Possible Site of Marriage

6.19.2.2 Hannah Blaker and Thomas Smith

After their marriage, Hannah and Thomas lived in Merstham, Surrey. Thomas worked as a '*Bricklayers Labourer*'.

Hannah and Thomas had six children all of whom were born in Merstham, Surrey:

- Mary: b. 1829,
- William: b. 1837
- Jane: b. 1840
- Thomas: b. 1844
- Richard: b. 1847
- Susannah: b. 1849

By the time of the 1851 Census, Hannah and Thomas were living together with five of their children in rooms at '*The Old Fox*', Merstham, near Reigate, Surrey. Their eldest daughter, Mary, had married a farm labourer, Reuben Baldwin (1828-1891), in January 1851, and was living with her husband in Chipstead, Surrey.

Ten years later Hannah and Thomas were still living at '*The Old Fox*', together with 2 of their children. Thomas was then described as a '*Bricklayer*'.

In the 1871 Census, Hannah and Thomas were recorded living with two of their children in Workhouse Row, Merstham, Surrey. It is not clear whether they were living as members of the Merstham Workhouse governed by the Reigate Poor Law Union, or in a property nearby, but unassociated with it.

Ten years later, in the 1881 Census, Hannah and Thomas were living in Merstham Village, Merstham, Surrey. Thomas was then described as an 81 year-old '*Bricklayers' Labourer*'.

In 1887, Thomas died, leaving Hannah as a widow. Hannah continued to live in Merstham and was recorded in the 1891 Census as an 85 year-old widow living in Poor House Cottages, Well Head, Merstham.

In 1898, Hannah died in Workhouse Row, Merstham Road, Reigate, having survived her husband by some 11 years. Her daughter, Susannah Bowyer, was with her when she died. The cause of her death was certified as '*Senile Decay*'. It is not known where either Hannah or her husband is buried. Hannah led a long, but very hard life.

6.19.3 Mary Blaker (1810-)

Born: 21 July 1810, Crawley, Sussex

Christened: 30 September 1810, St. John the Baptist, Crawley, Sussex

Died: ?

Mary was the third child born to William and Mary Blaker. In 1824, at the age of 14 years, Mary was the subject of a Boarding agreement, which resulted in Mr. Martin becoming her legal guardian. Her two elder siblings had also been subject of separate Boarding agreements.

In the 1841 Census, Mary is shown as a 30 year-old single woman, living in Tuners Hill, Worth. Her occupation was recorded as a *'Needle Woman'*. Ten years later, Mary was included in the 1851 Census as a 43 year-old single woman, lodging in Worth, Sussex and employed as a *'Dressmaker'*.

By the time of the 1861 Census, Mary was living in the Union Poor House, Pound Hill Road, Worth, Sussex, together with fifty four other inmates, and five staff. Sadly, like most of the inmates, she was described as a *'Pauper'*.

No clear evidence has been found to determine when Mary died, although there is a record of death of a Mary Blaker in the District of East Grinstead in 1870. Mary seems to have led a sad and lonely life.

6.19.4 Henry Blaker (1813-)

Born: 1813, Worth, Sussex

Christened: 5 December 1813, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: ?

Very little is known about Henry's early life. In 1823, when Henry was just 10 years of age, he was the subject of a Boarding agreement that resulted in Mr. West becoming his legal guardian. Subsequently, in 1828, at the age of 15 years, he was subject to a further Boarding agreement, that resulted in Mr. Akehurst becoming his legal guardian. He had truly followed in the sad footsteps of his younger brother and sisters.

Thereafter, the trail of Henry becomes cold, with no further records being found.

6.19.5 Sarah Blaker (1817-1906)

Born: 1817, Worth, Sussex

Christened: 9 March 1817, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Married: 21 November 1835, aged 18 years, married Matthew Rice: St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: 14 September 1906, aged 89 years; North Road, Three Bridges, Worth, Sussex

Buried: ?

Sarah was the fifth child born to William and Mary Blaker. Although the records may be incorrect, it is thought that Sarah was subject of a Boarding agreement in 1828, resulting in Miss Knight of Merstham becoming her legal guardian.

In 1835, Sarah married Matthew Rice. The Rice family was very extensive in the local area, with many working as '*Agricultural Labourers*'.

6.19.5.1 Matthew Rice (1811-1881)

Born: 1811, Balcombe, Sussex

Christened:

Married: 21 November 1835, aged 24 years, married Sarah Blaker: St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: 1876, aged 65 years; Worth, Sussex

Matthew's parents were John Rice (1780-1863) and Mary Simmons (1792-1864). He was one of 10 children born to John and Mary. Matthew was an '*Agricultural Labourer*'.

In 1835, Matthew married Sarah Blaker.

6.19.5.2 Sarah Blaker and Matthew Rice

After their marriage, Sarah and Matthew lived in Worth, Sussex.

Sarah and Matthew had a large family, comprising at least twelve children, most of who were born in Worth, Sussex:

- Elizabeth: b. 1838
- Mary Ann: b. 1840
- Martha: b. 1842
- Mildred: b. 1844, Three Bridges, Sussex
- Robert: b. 1846
- Amos: b. 1848
- Harry: b. 1850
- Jane: b. 1854
- Sarah: b. 1854
- James: b. 1855
- Ester: b. 1858
- Eliza: b. 1865

In the 1841 Census, Sarah and Matthew were living at '*Brook Log*', Worth, Sussex together with their first two children. Sarah's parents, William and Mary were visiting their daughter at the time of the Census. Ten years later, Sarah and Matthew were living with seven children at New Barn, Worth. Matthew was still working as an '*Agricultural Labourer*'.

By the time of the 1861 Census, Sarah and Matthew were recorded living at '*Furnance*', Worth, together with seven of their children.

Sarah and Matthew had moved to Crawley Lane in the nearby village of Three Bridges by the time of the 1871 Census. They were recorded living with seven of their children. Matthew was still working as an '*Agricultural Labourer*'.

In 1876, Matthew died, leaving Sarah as a 59 year-old widow with several children still living at home, in Three Bridges. By the time of the 1881 Census, Sarah was working as a *'Charwoman'*, living with two unmarried sons and a ten year-old granddaughter.

Sarah must have had a strong constitution, as she lived until the age of 91 years. She was recorded in the 1891 Census as a 74 year-old widow living with two of her adult sons in North Road, Three Bridges, Worth. Her next record was in the 1901 Census, when she was living with her 42 year-old unmarried son, James, in North Road, Worth.

Sarah died in 1906, aged 89 years. The cause of her death was certified as *'Senile Decay and Exhaustion'*. She had survived her husband by some 30 years. It is not known where she was buried.

6.19.6 Elizabeth Blaker (1820-1822)

Born: 1820, Worth, Sussex

Christened: 2 July 1820, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Died: March 1822, aged 1 year

Buried: 1 April 1822, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Elizabeth was the youngest daughter born to William and Mary Blaker. Sadly, Elizabeth died before she reached her second birthday. Her burial in Worth must have been a sad day for her family.

6.20 John Blaker (1852-): Child of William Blaker (1823-1900) and Caroline Box (1827-1904)

Born: 17 February 1852, Burstow, Surrey

Christened: 7 March 1852, St. Nicholas, Worth, Sussex

Married: 23 December 1876, aged 24 years, married Emily Rump; All Saints, Upper Norwood, Surrey

Died: ?

John was the only son born to William and Caroline Blaker. He was recorded in the 1861 Census as a 9 year-old boy, living with his parents in Balcombe Lane, Balcombe, Sussex. By the time of the 1871 Census, John was working as a 19 year-old *'Agricultural Labourer'*, living with his parents at 9 Balcombe Lane, Balcombe.

In 1876, John married Emily Rump. At the time of their marriage, John was living in the district of Croydon.

6.20.1 Emily Rump (1854-1938)

Born: 24 June 1854, Mitcham Road, Streatham, Surrey

Married: 23 December 1876, aged 22 years, married John Blaker; All Saints, Upper Norwood, Surrey

Died: 6 February 1938, aged 83 years; 84a Kingswood Road, Clapham, Wandsworth

Emily was one of at least 3 children born to William Rump (1814-) and Mary Ann Blanchflower (nee Aiger; 1817-). William was a 'Gardener' who was born in Wooton, Norfolk, and later moved to Streatham, Surrey.

6.20.2 John Blaker and Emily Rump

Their marriage certificate showed that neither John nor Emily could write their names, as they simply made an 'X' mark in place of a signature. The church where John and Emily were married has since been redeveloped, and a new building stands on the site in Lyham Road, Streatham.

All Saints Church, Lyham Road, Streatham

It is not clear where John and Emily initially lived after their marriage, but it was most likely in the Wandsworth/Croydon area. Although they moved to several different rented properties during their married life, they remained in Norwood or Streatham for most of their married lives.

John and Emily had nine children:

- William George: b. 1877, Norwood, Surrey
- Emily Caroline: b. 1880, Norwood
- Alfred John: b. 1882, Norwood
- Lavinia Hetty: b. 1885, Streatham
- Christopher John: b. 1888, Streatham
- Mary Ann: b. 1890, Streatham
- Emma Maude: b. 1893, Streatham
- Beatrice Alice: b. 1895
- Edward John: b. 1896, Norwood

Some researchers have suggested that John may have had an illegitimate son, Harry, before his marriage to Emily. It is unclear whether Harry Blaker (1873-) is John's son. Rather it is likely that the records have been incorrectly attributed/transcribed, or that John had 'adopted' a close relative to provide him with a home. Attempts to trace records of the birth of Harry/Henry Blaker/Blake have so far failed. Whilst Harry's place of birth was recorded in two Census records as 'Norwood', and detailed in www.blaker.org.uk as 24 June 1873, Norwood, no corresponding birth record has been found for Wandsworth (i.e. Norwood), Greater London, Kent, Surrey or Sussex. Harry is a mystery!

In 1877, eleven months after their marriage, John and Emily had their first child, William George, who was born at 6 Glaister Road, Norwood.

In the 1881 Census, Emily was recorded visiting a property in Anerley Park, Penge, Surrey. Her husband, John was recorded living at 7 Balcombe Lane, Balcombe, with Harry Blaker, his 7 year-old son. John was working as an 'Agricultural Labourer' at that time. If this record were correct, then Harry (possibly 'Henry') would have been born in 1873/4, some 2 to 3

years before John and Emily were married. Was Harry John's son, or was he a close relative incorrectly recorded as John's son?

In 1883, John and Emily were living at 2 Beardman Street, Norwood.

By 1891, John and Emily were living at 64 Wellfield Road, Streatham, with seven children, including nineteen year-old Henry, who was employed as a 'Gardener'. His father, John, was then working as a 'Bricklayer's Labourer'.

Their children's school records show that between 1893 and 1900, John and Emily moved at least five times, living in:

- 38 Revisom Street, Streatham
- 30 Levenson Street, Streatham
- 21 Bensons Lane, Gypsy Hill, Norwood
- 110 Romany Road, West Norwood
- 11 Faiview Terrace, Auckland Hill, Norwood
- 71 Forsbrook Road

In the 1901 Census, John and Emily were living at 63 Eardley Road, Streatham, together with their four youngest children. John was then working as a 'General Labourer', whilst Emily was working as a 'Charwoman'.

Between 1901 and 1908, John and Emily moved home at least twice, living at:

- 120 Levenson Street, Streatham
- 40 Levenson Street, Streatham

120 Levenson Street, Streatham: Contemporary View

By the time of the 1911 Census, John and Emily were living at 9 Wellfield Road, Streatham, together with their three youngest children. John was then working as a 63 year-old 'Night Watchman' on a building site.

My father, 'Joe' Blaker (1916-2007) recalls his grandfather, John, as a fairly short man who typically wore a grey trilby hat.

John and Emily were still living at the same street in Streatham in 1918, but by 1921, had moved to Sunnyhill Road, Streatham. The last definitive record of John is from 1923, when he and Emily were living at 17 Sunnyhill Road, Streatham. Thereafter, despite extensive searches, no records have been found for John. Whilst it is not known when or where he died, my father recalls that his grandfather died when he was c. 70 years-old – i.e. in c. 1922/3.

John Blaker (1852-), Unknown Date

17 Sunnyhill Road, Streatham: Contemporary View

By 1933, Emily was a widow, living alone at 120 Kingswood Road, Streatham, close to her married daughter, 'Polly' (Mary Ann) Fibbens. Emily's eyesight started to fail, and became particularly pronounced during a trip to Margate with her daughter, 'Beatie' (Beatrice) Joy.

Lily Caswell, Emily's granddaughter, remembers Emily visiting 'Alf' and Mary Ann Blaker in Norwood, during which time she often enjoyed a 'Rock and Chips' fish supper, before taking a tram back to Balham. Lily Caswell recalls her grandmother as a "delightful old lady, with rosy cheeks, with a neat black skirt and a bonnet adorned with violets". Emily's son, 'Alf' would ensure that his mother's shoes were in good repair and each month would give her 'half a crown' – i.e. 2s-6d - for a few treats.

By 1935, Emily was living with her daughter, 'Polly' Fibbens and husband at 84a Kingswood Road, where she died in January 1938. Her death certificate shows that the cause of her death was '*Cardiac failure coupled with Bronchitis*'.

Kingswood Road, Streatham: Aerial View

Emily Blaker (1854-1938) with Grandson Joseph Blaker (1916-2007); Unknown Date

6.21 Other Children of William Blaker (1823-1900) and Caroline Box (1827-1904)

6.21.1 Harriett Blaker (1850-1933)

Born: 6 December 1850, Burstow, Surrey

Christened: 12 December 1850, St. Bartholomew, Burstow, Surrey

Married: 14 September 1872, aged 22 years, married John Botting; St. Mary, Balcombe, Sussex

Died: 1 February 1933, aged 82 years; 8 Spencer Road, Ifield, Horsham, Sussex

Harriett was the first of three children born to William and Caroline Blaker. Harriett was recorded in the 1851 Census as a 4 month-old girl living with her parents at Copthorne Bank, Burstow.

In the next Census, Harriett was recorded as a ten year-old girl, living with her parents and two siblings in Balcombe Lane, Balcombe.

By 1871, Harriett was working as a '*General Servant*' to seventy nine year-old Thomas Gibb in Balcombe Village, Sussex.

6.21.1.1 John Botting (1851-1930)

Born: 28 September 1851, Ardingly, Sussex

Married: 14 September 1872, aged 20 years, married Harriet Blaker; St. Mary, Balcombe, Sussex

Died: 13 June 1930, aged 78 years, Black Dog Cottage, Worth, Sussex

John was an '*Agricultural Labourer*'. His parents were Stephen Botting (1817-1897) and Ann Dawes (1828-1891). John's father was an '*Agricultural Labourer*', who lived in Balcombe Lane, near Ardingly. John had at least four siblings. There were numerous members of the botting lineage in mid Sussex at that time – they were prolific breeders!

In September 1872, Harriett Blaker and John Botting were married. Since their first child, William, was born in late 1872, it is evident that Harriett was heavily pregnant at the time of her marriage to John.

6.21.1.2 Harriett Blaker and John Botting

Harriett and John initially lived in Balcombe Lane, Balcombe. They had a large family, comprising at least eleven children, most of who were born in Balcombe, Sussex:

- William: b. 1872
- Harry Stephen: b. 1874
- Alice: b. 1876
- George: b. 1878
- Emily: b. 1879
- Ernest Charles John: b. 1882
- Rose Annie: b. 1884
- Alfred Frederick: b. 1887 (known as '*Freddy*)
- Albert Percy: b. 1889 (known as '*Burty*'), Cuckfield, Sussex
- Ada Kate: b. 1891, Cuckfield, Sussex
- Arthur: b. 1895, Cuckfield, Sussex

Their first two children died as infants.

Harriett and John were recorded in the 1881 Census, living at 18 Balcombe Lane, Balcombe, together with their three surviving children. Ten years later, their family had expanded, and Harriett and John were then living in the rural location of Middle Pilstyle, Hazeldean, Cuckfield, Sussex, together with six of their children. Middle Pilstyle is some 4 km north of Cuckfield church.

By the time of the 1901 Census, Harriett and John were living at Upper Pilstyle Cottage, Cuckfield, together with six of their children. John was then working as a '*Farm Carter*'. Ten years later, Harriett and John had moved to Black Dog Farm, Worth, Sussex, and were living there in a cottage with two of their sons, both of whom were working as '*Farm Labourers*'.

In 1930, John died at Black Dog Cottage, leaving Harriett as a widow. Harriett survived her husband by some 3 years, before she died aged 82 years.

6.21.2 Ann Blaker (1854-1903)

Born: 10 July 1854, Worth, Sussex

Christened: 6 August 1854, All Saints, Crawley Down, Sussex
Married: 22 February 1879, aged 24 years, married John Beal; St. Mary, Balcombe, Sussex
Died: 4 February 1903, aged 48 years, Elm Cottages, Newtimber, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex

Ann was the youngest of three children born to William and Caroline Blaker.

Ann was recorded in the 1861 Census as a 6 year-old girl living with her parents and siblings in Balcombe Lane, Balcombe. By 1871, Ann was working as a '*General Servant*' still living with her parents in Balcombe Lane, Balcombe.

Eight years later, Ann married Henry Beal.

6.21.2.1 Henry John Beal (1848-)

Born: 1848, Buxted, Sussex
Married: 22 February 1879, aged 30 years, married Ann Blaker; St. Mary, Balcombe, Sussex
Died: ?

Henry was one of at least five children born to John (1808-) and Mary Ann Beal (1814-). John was an '*Agricultural Labourer*', who originated from Mayfield, Sussex. John's parents were of modest means, and lived for some years in an Arms House in Hog House Lane, Buxted, Sussex.

6.21.2.2 Ann Blaker and Henry Beal

Ann had two children before she was married to Henry:

- Clara Jane: b. 1 March 1873, Balcombe, Sussex
- Sarah Anne: b. 27 March 1876, Balcombe, Sussex

Their respective birth certificates show no name for their father(s). At the time of her first child, Ann was only 19 years of age. Ann must have been regarded as a very promiscuous girl in the rural community of Balcombe. Indeed, since Ann's sister, Harriett must have been heavily pregnant at the time of her marriage, it is evident that William and Caroline's daughters were not well versed in the morality of their time!

It appears that neither Ann or Henry could write their own name, since their marriage certificate simply has their 'X' marks.

St. Mary, Balcombe, Sussex

Ann and Henry had nine children:

- William: b. 1880, Balcombe, Sussex
- Henry: b 1882, Balcombe, Sussex
- Joseph: b. 1884, Balcombe, Sussex

- George: b. 1886, Balcombe, Sussex
- Caroline Elizabeth: b. 1887, Cuckfield, Sussex; known as 'Cary'
- Charles James: b. 1890, Ifield, Sussex; known as 'Charley'
- Alfred: b. 1891, Crawley, Sussex
- Emily: b. 1893, Horley, Surrey
- Edith: b. 1897, Horley, Surrey

In the 1881 Census, Ann and Henry were captured living at 1 Guy's Cottage, Balcombe, together with their son, William, and Ann's two illegitimate children, both of whom retained the Blaker surname.

By 1891, Ann and Henry were living together with six of their children in Ifield, Sussex close to Crawley. Henry was then working as a 'General Labourer'.

Ann and Henry then moved to Horley, Surrey, before moving to Shalford Cottages, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex, where they were recorded in the 1901 Census, living with six children. Henry was then working as a 'Carter on a Farm'.

In 1903, Ann died, leaving a young family. John was present when his wife died. The cause of her death was certified as 'Ulceration of the Bowels'. It is not known when Henry died, as no definitive record of his death has been traced.

6.22 Alfred John Blaker (1883-1965): Child of John Blaker (1852-) and Emily Rump (1854-1938)

Born: 19 February 1883, 2 Beadman Street, Norwood, Surrey

Married: 2 June 1901, aged 19 years, married Mary Ann Martin; St.

Michael & All Angles, Bell Green, Lower Sydenham, Kent

Died: 4 April 1965, aged 82 years, Tooting Bec Hospital, Tooting, London

Cremated: 9 April 1965, West Norwood Cemetery, London

Alfred John was my paternal grandfather.

Alfred John was known as 'Alf'. He was the third of nine children born to John and Emily Blaker. He was initially educated at St. Leonard's School in Norwood, before moving to Eardley Road School, Streatham. He finally left school in May 1894, at the age of 11 years.

In the 1891 Census, 'Alf' was shown living with his parents and siblings at 64 Wellfield Road, Sydenham. By the time of the next Census, 'Alf' was living with his married sister, Emily Caroline Grist, and her husband at 3 Stanton Square, Lewisham.

6.22.1 Mary Ann Martin (1885- 1960)

Born: 14 April 1885, 5 East Street, Norwood, Surrey

Married: 2 June 1901, aged 19 years, married Alfred John Blaker; St. Michael & All Angles, Bell Green, Lower Sydenham, Kent
Died: 15 January 1960, aged 76 years, Dulwich Hospital, East Dulwich, London.

Whilst there is some confusion about Mary Ann's date of birth, the current research focuses on an 1885 year of birth. The birth certificate for Mary Ann Martin in 1885 aligns with her father's name, William, and her birth district (Norwood). Although other researchers have suggested that Mary Ann's was born in 1883, no records for this suggested birth date have been found.

Assuming that the 1885 certificate is correct, Mary Ann's parents were William Martin (1857-) and Mary Ann Jennings (1858-). William was a *'Labourer'*. It is believed that Mary Ann was one of three children born to William and Mary Ann. Curiously, my father, *'Joe'* Blaker recalled his maternal grandfather as *'Tom'* Martin, who lived with his wife, Mary, in East Place – virtually consistent with the birth record for my grandmother, Mary Ann. He said that *'Tom'* was a *'Street Trader'* who sold vegetables and fruit in Norwood on 3 days each week, making enough to live on. His wife, Mary, helped her husband, and also worked in a laundry. My father recalls meeting his grandmother, Mary Ann Martin, after her work with a 2-pint jug of ale for her to take home to enjoy with her husband, John.

Mary Ann Martin (1858-)

Lily Caswell recalls that her mother (Mary Ann Blaker [nee Martin]) told her that William was an *'ogre of a man'*, who had served in the Army, and was often drunk and prone to mistreating his wife. She even recalls one evening when she asked the local police officers to arrest her father, as he was threatening his wife with a meat cleaver. A night in jail ensued! It cannot have been a happy home!

In the 1891 Census, Mary Ann is recorded as a 6 year-old girl, living with her parents and siblings in rooms at 11 Change Alley, Norwood, Surrey. This record is consistent with Mary Ann's 1885 birth certificate.

Ten years later, on her marriage certificate, Mary was recorded working as a *'Domestic'* – presumably a *'Servant'*? Searches of the 1901 Census records has failed to find a definitive entry for Mary Ann. However, a possible entry is that for 12 Glengarry Road, Camberwell, where Mary Martin (born in London) was working as a *'General Servant, Domestic'* to Neil and Kate McClaren. In that record, Mary was recorded as an 18 year-old single woman.

Mary and *'Alf'* were married in June 1901. Their marriage certificate confirms *'Alf's'* age as 19 years, and his address as 3 Stanton Square,

Sydenham – the home of his sister and brother-in-law, Emily and Joseph Grist. Mary's age is also recorded as 19 years, but this is inconsistent with the birth certificate attributed to her, which, if correct, would put her age at just 16 years – below the legal age for marriage! Equally disturbing is that no trace has been found in any English County for Mary Ann's address which she gave as '63 Heardley Road, Streatham'.

It is assumed that 'Alf' and Mary Ann chose to get married in Lower Sydenham as that was the area where 'Alf' was living – Stanton Square has since been demolished, and is now part of the Stanton Square Industrial Estate.

The witnesses to 'Alf' and Mary Ann's wedding were Joseph Albert Grist – 'Alf's' brother-in-law, and Lily Maud Blaker – presumably 'Alf's' sister, Lavinia Hetty under another name incarnation?

Proximity of Stanton Square to St. Michael & All Angels Church, Lower Sydenham

6.22.2 Alfred John Blaker and Mary Ann Martin

The church in which 'Alf' and Mary were married was destroyed in 1940. A new building was built on the site in 1955/56, and the road has been renamed as Champion Crescent.

At the time of their marriage, 'Alf' was working as a 'Plate Layer', together with his brother-in-law, Joseph Albert Grist, and employed by the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway.

Based upon their children's birth certificates, their school records, and the lists of Electoral Voters, we can trace at least some of the addresses where 'Alf' and Mary Ann lived as:

- 95 High Street, Norwood – c. 1904
- 12 Dunbar Street, Norwood – c. 1907
- 4a Eaton Cottages, Ernest Street, Norwood – c. 1909 –
c.1911
- 7 Auckland Place, Auckland Hill, Norwood – c. 1918 - c.
1932
- 32 Wolfington Road, West Norwood – c. 1939 – c. 1945
- 15 Wolfington Road, West Norwood – c. 1946 – c. 1961

With the exception of the properties in Wolfington Road, the other locations have been demolished and redeveloped. However, it is evident that they were all located in close proximity to each other.

'Alf' Blaker & Mary Ann Martin: Unknown Date

'Alf' and Mary had seven children, all of whom were born in Norwood/West Norwood, Surrey:

- Mary Ann: b. 1904
- Alfred John: b. 1907
- James Edward: b. 1909
- Emily Maud: b. 1911
- Beatrice: b. 1914
- Joseph: b. 1916
- Lily: b. 1922

Mary Ann Blaker with Six of Her Children: c. 1917 – Joseph on Her Knee

'Alf' worked as a 'Carman' –i.e. as a haulier or carter – in his early married life and then became employed by the local Council as a 'Road Repairer and Labourer'.

'Alf' and Mary Ann were recorded in the 1911 Census, living with their first 3 children, in 3 rooms at 4a Eaton Cottages, Ernest Street, Norwood.

'Alf' joined the Army in 1915 and served in the 'Labour Battalion of the Royal West Surrey Regiment'. He did not rise beyond the rank of private - his Regimental Number was 20146.

Cap Badge, Royal West Surrey Regiment

During his military service, 'Alf' was posted to Constantinople, and served in Turkey and Palestine. He was posted as 'Missing in Action' and this left Mary Ann with a young family to look after with no income or certainty of the future. In order to ensure that her family was "Saved from the Workhouse", Mary Ann worked 12 hour shifts at a local laundry. It must have been a hard and very worrying time. We can only imagine the sweat and tears, and wonder how her children were looked after whilst Mary Ann worked.

Fortunately, 'Alf' was not dead. He had suffered a severe bout of malaria, and had been in a deep fever for an extended time, during which he was cared for by local people. 'Alf' eventually returned home – to the relief of his family, parents and siblings. The effect of his malaria infection remained with him through life – he always felt cold, and would often sit close to an open fire – even in the heat of an English summer.

On his return to 7 Auckland Place, West Norwood, 'Alf' obtained employment as a 'Labourer' with the local Council, a job that he retained until his retirement. His working hours were long – 08.00 to 18.00 on weekdays and 08.00 to 13.00 on Saturdays. He also assisted a local 'Cobbler', Mr. Beard, in his shop – doubtless a useful contact to keep his children's shoes in good order. Mary Ann worked locally in Norwood, assisting in the delivery of babies and in the 'laying out' of deceased

persons – a combination of midwifery and mortician! They were a devoted couple, who, despite living on limited means, kept a loving and happy home.

By 1939, the family had moved from Auckland Place to Wolfington Road in West Norwood.

In June 1944, 'Alf' and Mary Ann's son, Joseph Blaker, married Margaret Marie Jackson. The newly-wed couple started their married life living in rooms at 15 Wolfington Road. In 1942, Lily Blaker married 'Alf' Foster and they lived with 'Alf' and Mary Ann Blaker in rooms at 15 Wolfington Road.

During WWII, 'Alf' and Mary Ann moved from their flat in 32 Wolfington Road, West Norwood to a house at 15 Wolfington Road that was being vacated by a tenant who wanted to escape from the German bombings. Lily Caswell recalls that her parents agreed a rent of 9s. 0d. per week plus a quarterly contribution towards the rates. They took in a sub-tenant who rented a couple of rooms at a cost of 2s. 6d. per week, but this came to an end when the local council learned of the arrangement.

The house was opposite the Arnold and Jane Gabriel Home that formed part of a large Jewish orphanage. The orphanage was originally established, in 1866, as the '*Jewish Hospital and Orphan Asylum*' on a 3.4 hectare site adjoining Knights Hill in West Norwood, and, at that time, provided accommodation for some 220 children. In 1910, the Gabriel Home extended the accommodation to a total of some 400 children, and was itself used for 5 to 8 year-old children. During WWII, West Norwood was heavily bombed, and, the orphanage's children were evacuated to homes in Worthing and Hertford, returning to West Norwood after the end of hostilities. After the War, the institution, then known as the '*Jewish Orphanage*', started to undergo some changes of its own, and was gradually phased down and relocated. The old orphanage site in Knights Hill, West Norwood now belongs to Lambeth Council as Norwood Hall - for which there are ambitious plans to build a swimming pool and health centre.

Jewish Orphanage, Knights Hill, West Norwood: 1861 Photograph

15 Wolfington Road, West Norwood, London: Contemporary View

'Alf' & Mary Ann Blaker: Unknown Date

Mary Ann died in 1960 in Dulwich Hospital. The cause of her death was certified as '*Cerebral Haemorrhage, Hypertension and Embolism in Bronchial Artery*'. Her body was cremated in West Norwood Cemetery.

After Mary Ann's death, 'Alf' was cared for, at 15 Wolfington Road, by his youngest daughter, Lily Foster (nee Blaker), who was herself widowed in

1955. In 1961, Lily married Ernest (*'Ernie'*) Richard Caswell (1922-2010), and they lived at 15 Wolfington Road, together with *'Alf'*. Lily and *'Ernie'* started to decorate and improve the rented property, and eventually bought the title to it from the owner, who lived in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea. The agreed purchase price was £1,300.

Lily then became pregnant with twins, whom she lost as a result of a miscarriage. She was advised by her doctor to rest, and to ask other members of the Blaker family to help in looking after *'Alf'*. As a result, *'Alf'* went to live with his daughter, went to live with his daughter, *'Emmy'* Garner (nee Blaker) at 147 Glenister Park Road, Streatham. *'Alf'* was recorded in the 1964 Electoral List living with *'Emmy'* and her husband (*'Ernie'*) and daughter, *'Pat'*, at that address in Streatham. *'Alf'* had a separate combined bedroom and living room, and various of his family contributed to pay for newspapers and a rented television.

147 Glenister Park Road, Streatham: Contemporary View

'Alf' became ill and was admitted to hospital where he recovered. Instead of returning to his daughter in Streatham, he entered a care Home at 294 Leigham Court Road, Streatham. After a while, *'Alf'* absented himself from the Care Home and was found early one cold winter morning in his pyjamas, lying in the paddling pool at Streatham Common. His family were very concerned that *'Alf'* was losing his mental faculty, and were relieved when, after a brief time in hospital, he returned to the Care Home. However, their concerns became more substantial when *'Alf'* tried to set fire to his accommodation – whether this was an attempted suicide, a cry for help or simply an irrational act is not known. This resulted in *'Alf'* being admitted to Cane Hill Mental Asylum, near Coulsden, Surrey. It is not known what form of mental deterioration *'Alf'* had suffered, but he was clearly in need of help in a secure environment.

Cane Hill was a huge, fearsome place that was founded in 1880 and, at its peak, in 1954, housed 2,400 mentally ill patients, isolated from society as *'lunatics'*. I recall visiting *'Alf'* – my grandfather – there in the mid 1960s. The Victorian buildings were claustrophobic, the corridors were full of deranged people, and the huge, locked doors served to emphasise that this was a place of isolation and sorrow, not of hope. It was sad to see *'Alf'* in such surroundings.

Cane Hill Hospital, Entrance

Cane Hill Hospital Complex: Aerial View

By the late 1980s, the number of patients had greatly declined, largely due to the recommendations of the Mental Health Act (1983) with its emphasis on care in the community. Following a gradual winding down of hospital services and operations, the entire hospital closed in 1992. The

large site became derelict, and became a magnet for 'urban explorers', vagrants and arsonists. With the exception of a few buildings, the site has now been cleared, and there are only photographic memories of the sanctuary and suffering of the inmates, isolated there over a period of more than a century.

After contracting pneumonia, 'Alf' was admitted to Tooting Bec Hospital, where he died in April 1965. He had survived his wife, Mary Ann, by some 5 years. The cause of his death was certified as '*Bronchopneumonia and Cardiovascular Degeneration*'. His body was cremated at West Norwood Cemetery.

6.23 Other Children of John Blaker (1852-) and Emily Rump (1854-1938)

6.23.1 William George Blaker (1877-1893)

Born: 3 November 1877, 6 Glaister Road, Norwood, Surrey

Died: 16 October 1893, aged 17 years; Charing Cross Hospital, London

Buried: 25 October 1893, Public Grave C693, Streatham Cemetery, Garratt Lane, Tooting, London

William was the eldest child born to John and Emily Blaker. William attended St. Leonard's school in, before moving to Eardly Road school in Streatham. He left school on 20 July 1890, aged 12 years.

Contemporary View of Eardley Road School – now a Nursery School & Derelict Building

In the 1891 Census, William was captured as a 14 year-old 'Errand Boy', living with his parents and siblings at 64 Wellfield Road, Streatham.

64 Wellfield Road, Streatham: Contemporary View

By 1893, William was living at 30 Levenson Street, Streatham. He sadly died in Charing Cross Hospital, London in October of that year. The cause of his death was certified as '*Pericarditis and Cardiac Failure*'. A young life was cruelly cut short. William was buried in Streatham cemetery in a grave that contains several other unrelated remains.

30 Levenson Street, Streatham: Contemporary View

6.23.2 Emily Caroline Blaker (1880-1959)

Born: 15 January 1880, Salters Hill Cottages, Norwood

Married: 25 December 1900, aged 20 years, married Joseph Albert Grist; St. Andrew, Lambeth, London

Died: 15 February 1959, aged 79 years; 45 Haywood Road, Bromley, Kent

Emily Caroline was the first daughter born to John and Emily Blaker. She was initially educated at St. Leonard's School, Mitcham Lane, Streatham, before moving to Eardley Road School, Streatham.

Emily was not recorded in the 1881 Census, perhaps as a result of her mother visiting friends in Anerley Park, Penge, Surrey, whilst her father was then living in Balcombe, Sussex. Emily was recorded in the 1891 Census as an 11 year-old girl living with her parents and siblings at 64 Wellfield Road, Streatham. Emily left school on 2 October 1891, aged just 11 years.

On 9 November 1900, whilst living together with Joseph Albert Grist at 9 Mercy Terrace, Ladywell, Lewisham, Emily gave birth to her first son. He was named Joseph Albert, after his father. Although Emily and Joseph were not then married, the birth certificate is for *Joseph Albert Grist* and his mother is recorded as '*Emily Grist, formerly Blaker*'.

Seven weeks after the birth of their son, Emily and Joseph were married. At the time of their marriage, Emily and Joseph were living together at 16 Duke Street, Lambeth.

6.23.2.1 Joseph Albert Grist (1878- 1928)

Born: 1878, Mitcham, Surrey

Married: 25 December 1900, aged 22 years, married Emily Caroline Blaker; St. Andrew, Coin Street, Lambeth, London

Died: 1928, aged 50 years, Bromley, Kent

Joseph was the eldest of eight children born to William Henry Grist (1855-1910) and Fanny Allen (1859-1921). William was born in Newport, Monmouth, Wales, and worked as '*Railway Signaller*'.

Joseph was recorded in the 1881 Census as a 2 year-old boy, living with his parents at 18 Percy Road, Croydon, Surrey. No record has been found in the 1891 Census for either Joseph, his parents or siblings.

In 1900, Joseph married Emily Caroline Blaker. At the time of their marriage in 1900, Joseph was described as an '*Engineer*'. The church where Emily and Joseph were married was bomb damaged during WWII and was demolished after the war, and was completely rebuilt in 1960.

6.23.2.2 Emily Caroline Blaker and Joseph Albert Grist

Emily and Joseph initially lived at 3 Stanton Square, Lewisham, London, before moving to Sydenham and then to Bromley, Kent, later in their lives.

Emily and Joseph had six children:

- Joseph Albert: b. 1900, Lewisham, London
- William Henry: b. 1903, Sydenham, Kent
- George Arthur: b. 1909, Bromley, Kent
- Alfred John: b. 1910, Bromley, Kent
- Ethel M. L.: b. 1911, Bromley, Kent
- Ivy M.: b. 1913, Bromley, Kent

In the 1901 Census, Emily and Joseph were recorded living, together with their young son, at 3 Stanton Square, Sydenham. Joseph was then working as a *'Plate Layer'* for the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway. Emily's brother, *'Alf'* Blaker was living with the Grist family and was also working as a *'Plate Layer'* – perhaps Joseph had recommended his brother-in-law for work?

By the time of the 1911 Census, Emily and Joseph were living with their four children and Emily's sister, Mary Ann (*'Polly'*) Blaker, in 4 rooms at 32 Victoria Road, Bromley Common, Kent. Joseph was then working as a *'Newsagent'*, and his sister-in-law was employed as a *'Laundry Worker'*.

Joseph died prematurely in 1928, leaving Emily as a widow. She survived her husband by some 31 years, and died at the age of 79 years in 1959, in Bromley, Kent. At the time of her death, Emily was living at 45 Haywood Road, Bromley - the same road as her daughter, Ivy M. Austin (nee Grist). The cause of her death was certified as *'Haemopericardium with Ruptured Myocardial Infarct and Coronary Thrombosis'*. 45 Haywood Road is a small terraced house that has been modernized with uPVC windows, a mahogany front door and new tiles to the front elevation.

45 Haywood Road, Bromley: Contemporary View

6.23.3 Lavinia Hetty Blaker (1885-)

Born: 26 June 1885, Wellfield Road, Streatham, Surrey

Christened: 4 October 1885, St. Leonard's, Streatham

Married: 24 December 1903, aged 18 years, married Thomas Charles Hayes; The Register Office, Wandsworth, London

Died: ?

Lavinia was generally known as *'Lily'* or *'Lilly'*. It is not known why *'Lily'* and her parents were happy to see *'Lavinia Hetty'* be abbreviated to *'Lily'*. Tracing records of her life has proven to be very difficult, because she changed her stated Christian name several times during her life, and was very imprecise about her age.

'Lilly' was recorded in the 1891 Census as a 5 year-old girl living with her parents at 64 Wellfield Road, Streatham. School records show that she attended 3 schools: Eardley Road, St. Leonard's and Salters Hill (Gipsy Hill, Lambeth). She left school on 29 July 1899, aged just 14 years.

In the 1901 Census, she was recorded as a 19 year-old *'Servant'* to Arthur and Mary Pawson at 115 Mitcham Lane, Streatham. In the record, Lavinia is simply recorded as *'L. M. Blaker'*. Arthur Pawson was a local butcher, which must have helped *'Lily'* to support her parents, who lived nearby.

In 1903, *'Lily'* married Thomas Charles Hayes. At the time of their marriage, *'Lily'* and Thomas were both living at 27 Ellora Road, Streatham.

'Lily' recorded her name as 'Lillian Ethel' – a far stretch from 'Lavinia Hetty'! 'Lily's' parents were witnesses to the marriage. John had to place his mark as an 'X' on the marriage certificate. 'Lily' stated her age as 20 years, whereas she was only 18 years-old.

6.23.3.1 Thomas Charles Hayes (1877-)

Born: 1877, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

Married: 24 December 1903, aged 26 years, married Lilian Ethel Blaker;
The Register Office, Wandsworth, London

Died: ?

Thomas was one of eight children born to Thomas Hayes (1840-1910) and Ellen Field (1844-1898). Thomas Hayes (1840-1910) worked as a 'Sawyer' and 'Labourer'.

Thomas was recorded in the 1881 Census as a 3 year-old boy living with his parents and siblings at 8 York Cottages, Cheltenham. In the next Census, Thomas was working as a year-old 'Colliery Boy', living with his married sister, Elizabeth Drinkwater and her husband at 98 East Road, Ystradyfodwg, Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, Wales.

In the 1901 Census, Thomas was living as a lodger at 49 Ellora Road, Streatham, and was working as a 'Labourer'. Thomas must have met "Lily" in Streatham, either when she was living with her parents, or when she was working as a servant in Mitcham Lane. At some time before their marriage they rented rooms at 27 Ellora Road, Streatham.

Location of Ellora Road, Streatham

'Lily' and Thomas were married in 1903.

6.23.3.2 Lavinia Hetty Blaker and Thomas Charles Hayes

'Lily' and Thomas had seven children:

- Thomas Charles: b. 8 May 1904, Streatham, Surrey
- Frederick John: b. 26 July 1905, Streatham, Surrey
- Edward George: b. 19 September 1909, Penarth,
Glamorgan, Wales
- Ellen Beatrice: b. 26 August 1912, Penarth, Glamorgan,
Wales
- Doris Maud: b. 26 November 1913, Penarth, Glamorgan,
Wales
- William Henry: b. 27 June 1915, Penarth, Glamorgan, Wales
- Alfred Edwin: b. 5 October 1918, Penarth, Glamorgan,
Wales

It is evident that 'Lily' was pregnant at the time of her marriage, as her first son, Thomas Charles was born just 4.5 months after her marriage to Thomas Charles Hayes.

'Lily' and Thomas initially lived at 14 Cunliffe Street, Streatham, where their first two children were born. Thomas was working as a '*General Labourer*'. The house in Cunliffe Street has since been demolished and a block of flats now sits on the site.

Contemporary View of 14 Cunliffe Street, Streatham

The family then moved to Penarth, Cardiff, Wales, where the rest of their family were born.

In the 1911 Census, 'Lily' and Thomas were recorded living with their first 3 children, in 2 rooms, at 39 Howell Street, Cogan, Penarth. Thomas was working as a '*Dock Labourer*' in Penarth Docks, close to Cardiff.

39 Howell Street, Penarth, Wales: Contemporary View

Based on information on their childrens' birth certificates, the family then moved to 31 Harriett Street, Penarth, and then to 32 Hewell Street, Penarth. Within these records, Thomas is described as a '*Dock Labourer*' or a '*Pontoon Labourer*', or as a '*General Labourer*'.

31 Harriett Street, Penarth, Wales: Contemporary View

With the exception of the birth certificate for Edward George, 'Lily' was recorded in the other documents as '*Lillian Ethel*'. In the case of Edward's birth certificate, 'Lily' was recorded as '*Lavinia Hetty*'. It is not known why 'Lily' briefly reverted to her original Christian name.

No definitive records have emerged for either 'Lily' or Thomas after 1918, when their youngest son, Alfred Edwin, was born. Lily Caswell recalls that she and her first husband, 'Alf' Foster visited her aunt near Cardiff – putting this at some time after 1942 – when Lily Blaker and 'Alf' Foster were married. Lily Caswell also recalls her aunt visiting her parents, 'Alf' and Mary Blaker in Wolfington Road, West Norwood. Lily Caswell recalls that her aunt 'Lily' survived her husband, and that she then worked as a '*Housekeeper and Companion*' to an elderly gentleman somewhere in Wales.

It has not been possible to trace 'Lily' Hayes via any of her children or their relatives – unfortunately, 'Hayes' is a very common surname in Wales! No photographs have been discovered of either 'Lily' or her husband, Thomas.

6.23.4 Christopher John Blaker (1888-1958)

Born: 1 September 1887, 64 Wellfield Road, Streatham, Surrey

Christened: 6 November 1887, St. Leonard's, Streatham, Surrey

Married: 1st: 26 March 1916, aged 27 years, married Ada Brown; Wesleyan

Church, Broadway, Streatham
2nd: 18 July 1920, aged 33 years, married Beatrice Eugene
Blaxland; St. George's Church, Bickley, Kent
Died: 17 February 1958, aged 70 years; Laurel Cottage, Nichol Lane,
Bromley, Kent

St. Leonard's Church Interior, Streatham: Old Postcard

He was recorded in the 1891 Census, as a 3 year-old boy, living with his
parents and siblings at 64 Wellfield Road, Streatham.

Christopher was known as *'John'* or *'Jack'*. He was educated at Eardley
Road School, Streatham and Salters Hill School, Gypsy Hill. He left school
on 27 November 1887, aged 10 years.

No unambiguous record of *'John'* has been found in the 1901 Census.

In the 1911 Census, *'John'* was included as a 21 year-old *'Baker's
Assistant'*, living at 7 Wimbledon Park Parade, Wimbledon. He was then
working for Ernest Stafford Moule, a *'Baker and Confectioner'*.

'John' enlisted into the Army and joined the Royal West Kent Regiment as
Private TF/240780 until the end of WWI. In 1916, whilst still in the Army,
'John' married Ada Brown.

6.23.4.1 Ada Brown (1890-1918)

Born: 1890

Married: 26 March 1916, aged 26 years, married Christopher John Blaker;
Wesleyan Church, Broadway, Streatham

Died: 17 November 1918, aged 28 years; 94 Elm Park, Norwood, London

Very little is known about Ada Brown. The first definitive record is that
detailing her marriage to *'John'* Blaker. At the time of her marriage, Ada
was working as a *'Domestic Servant'*, living at 8 Eckley Road, Streatham.

Wesleyan Church, Streatham: Old Post Card

6.23.4.2 Christopher John Blaker and Ada Brown

At the time of their marriage, *'John'* was living in Pembury Road,
Tonbridge, Kent, and was described as a *'private in the West Kent
Regiment'* and a *'Journeyman Baker'*. *'John'* was awarded the Victory Medal
on his discharge from the army; his Regimental number was TF/240780;
Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment. After their marriage in 1916,
'John' and Ada lived in Lambeth, where their son, Edward was born.

'John' and Ada had a single child:

- Edward John: b. 1918, Lambeth

Sadly, in November 1918, Ada died at their home in Elm Park, , shortly after the birth of her son. The cause of her premature death was certified as '*Puerperal Fever and Pneumonia*'. This left '*John*' as a widower with a young child. It is not known how '*John*' coped with a young child. Did he give Edward to others to look after whilst he worked? We will never know.

In 1920, '*John*' married Beatrice Eugene Blaxland. It is not known how, or where, they met. At the time of their marriage, '*John*' was living at 26 Homendale Road, and was working as a '*Baker*'.

Christopher John Blaker & Beatrice Eugene Blaxland: Unknown Date

6.23.4.3 Beatrice Eugene Blaxland (1879-1965)

Born: 1882, New Brompton, Kent

Married: 18 July 1920, aged 38 years, married Christopher John Blaker; St. George's Church, Bickley, Kent

Died: 23 December 1965, '*Fallowfield*', Ashfield Lane, Chiselhurst, Kent

Beatrice was one of 2 daughters born to Thomas Blaxland (1852-1922) and Ellen Denison (1852-1889). Thomas was a '*Carpenter and Joiner*', who was born in Milton-by-Sittingbourne, Kent. In 1889, Ellen died at a young age and Thomas married Eliza Costa Richmond (1858-1934). Eliza then became Beatrice's stepmother.

Beatrice was known as '*Beatie*'. In the 1891 Census, '*Beatie*' was recorded as a 9 year-old girl, living with her father and stepmother at 48 Luton Road, Chatham, Kent. In the 1901 Census, '*Beatie*' was working as a '*General Servant*' to Susan Cadell and her family at South Hill House, South Hill, Milton, Kent. Ten years later, in the 1911 Census, '*Beatie*' was recorded as a 29 year-old '*Domestic Cook*', employed by John and Charlotte Solomon, living at 7 Westbourne Villas, Hove, Sussex.

6.23.4.4 Christopher John Blaker and Beatrice Eugenie Blaxland

John' and '*Beatie*' had a single child:

- Winifred Mary Maud: b. 1923, Bromley, Kent

It is not known whether Edward, '*John's*' son from his first marriage, lived with '*John*' and '*Beatie*'.

John' became a '*Master Baker*' – putting to good use the training that he had received in Wimbledon many years beforehand.

In 1958, '*John*' died at Laurel Cottage, Nichol Lane, Bromley, leaving '*Beatie*' as a widow. The cause of '*John's*' death was certified as '*Chronic Bronchitis and Asthma coupled with Coronary Thrombosis*'.

Location of Nichol Lane, Bromley

'*Beatie*' survived her husband by some 7 years. She died in '*Fallowfield*' nursing home in Chiselhurst in 1965. Prior to her move to '*Fallowfield*' nursing home, '*Beatie*' was living at Laurel Cottage, Nichol Lane, Bromley, Kent – the home that she and '*John*' had shared. The nursing home still exists today – operating as the '*Fairlight and Fallowfield Care Home*'. Probate to '*Beatie's*' estate was granted to her stepson, Edward John Blaker, who was then working as a '*Club Steward*'. '*Beatie's*' estate was valued at £4,340.

6.23.5 Mary Ann Blaker (1890-1975)

Born: 22 February 1890, 64 Wellfield Road, Streatham, Surrey

Married: 24 May 1914, aged 24 years, married James Julian Fibbens;
Wesleyan Church, Broadway, Streatham

Died: 26 April 1975, aged 85 years; 31 Bond Gardens, Wallington, Sutton,
Greater London

Mary Ann was one of nine children born to John and Emily Blaker. She was recorded in the 1891 Census as a one year-old girl living with her parents and siblings at 64 Wellfield Road, Streatham.

Mary Ann was educated at Salters Hill School, Streatham and left school on 25 May 1900, aged just ten years. By the time of the 1901 Census, Mary Ann was recorded as a twelve year-old girl living with her parents at 64 Eardley Road, Streatham.

By 1911, Mary Ann was living with her married sister, Emily Caroline Grist, at 32 Victoria Road, Bromley Common, Kent. Mary Ann was then employed as a '*Laundry Worker*'.

In 1914, Mary Ann married James Julian Fibbens. It is understood that Mary Ann was known as '*Polly*'.

6.23.5.1 James Julian Fibbens (1890-1971)

Born: 4 May 1890, Brixton, London

Married: 24 May 1914, aged 24 years, married Mary Ann Blaker;
Wesleyan Church, Broadway, Streatham

Died: 1971, Camberwell, London

James Julian was known as '*Jim*'. He was the eldest of four children born to James Julian Howell Fibbens (1862-1945) and Lucy Maria Cookoo (1867-1956). '*Jim's*' father was a '*Bricklayer*', who lived for most of his life in Greater London.

He was captured in the 1891 Census, living with his parents at 62 Mayall Road, East Brixton. Ten years later, he was recorded as a 10 year-old boy living with his parents and siblings at 21 Hurst Street, Lambeth.

In the 1911 Census, *'Jim'* was working as a *'Canteen Waiter'*, living with his parents and siblings at 68 Wellfield Road, Streatham. Wellfield Road was also the home of John and Emily Blaker, Mary Ann Blaker's parents. It is assumed that this proximity was key to *'Jim'* and *'Polly'* first meeting.

In 1914, *'Polly'* and *'Jim'* were married in Streatham. At the time of their marriage, *'Jim'* was working as a *'Tram Conductor'*, whilst *'Polly'* was working as a *'Domestic Servant'*.

6.23.5.2 Mary Ann Blaker and James Julian Fibbens

After their marriage, *'Polly'* and *'Jim'* lived at 66 Wellfield Road, Streatham.

On 1 June 1915, just 11 months after his marriage, *'Jim'* enlisted into the Suffolk Regiment; Regimental Number: 20467. He served in the rank of *'Private Infantry Man'* in France between 16 December 1915 and 9 December 1917. During his time in France, *'Jim'* attended the Lahore Military Hospital, Calais, and was treated for severe varicose veins in both legs, coupled with nervous disability. He was discharged from the Army on 17 January 1919, and returned to his home in Streatham, where he found work as a *'Tram Conductor'*.

'Polly' and *'Jim'* had two children:

- James Julian: b. 21 July 1920, 94 Elm Park, Brixton Hill, Greater London
- Sylvia Joan: b. 20 December 1926, 45 Wingford Road, Clapham, London

By 1935, *'Polly'* Fibbens and husband were living at 84a Kingswood Road, together with *'Polly's'* mother, Emily Blaker. Emily died at this address in January 1938.

As described in Section XXX, over a period of at least 12 years, from 1948, *'Polly'* and *'Jim'* lived in the same house in Holmewood Gardens, Streatham, as her sister *'Maude'* and her husband, Cecil Gardner. Holmewood Gardens was something of a Blaker enclave, in that *'Beatie'* Joy, and her husband, *'Jim'*, also lived in the same road, just across the leafy green from the Fibbens/Gardner household.

'Jim' died in 1971, leaving *'Polly'* as a widow. *'Polly'* died in 1975, aged 85 years. She was living with her daughter, Sylvia Joan Holmes at the time of her death. Her death certificate records the cause of death as *'Chronic Aortic Reflux and Atheroma'*.

6.23.6 Emma Maude Blaker (1893-1979)

Born: 22 June 1893, 30 Leveson Street, Streatham

Christened: 3 September 1893, Immanuel Church, Streatham High Road, London

Married: 13 April 1912, aged years, married Cecil Maurice Gardner; The Register Office, Wandsworth, London
Died: 4 July 1979, aged 86 years; Clifton, 42 Clarence Avenue, London

Emma Maude was known as '*Maude*'. Very little is known about '*Maude*'s' early life. She commenced her education at Salters Hill School, Streatham on 29 March 1897, aged just under 4 years. There is a record of her leaving that school on 29 September 1900, aged 7 years, but it is not known if she attended school thereafter.

'*Maude*' was recorded in the 1901 Census as a 6 year-old girl, living with her parents and siblings at 63 Eardley Road, Streatham. In the next Census, she was recorded as a 20 year-old unmarried girl, living with her parents and siblings at 9 Wellfield Road, Streatham.

In 1912, '*Maude*' married Cecil Maurice Gardner.

6.23.6.1 Cecil Maurice Gardner (1890-1968)

Born: 1890, Streatham, Surrey

Married: 13 April 1912, aged 21 years, married Emma Maude Blaker; The Register Office, Wandsworth, London

Died: 1968, aged 78 years; Thanet, Kent

Cecil was one of 9 children born to Alfred Garner (1842-1923) and Cecillia Ann Norman (1848-). Alfred was born in Sheldon, Surrey and worked as a '*Labourer*' and '*House Painter*'.

Cecil was recorded in the 1891 Census, living with his parents and siblings at 55 Sunny Hill Road, Streatham. His father, Alfred, was then a '*Working Maltster*'. The family was still living at the same address at the time of the 1901 Census, where Cecil was recorded as a 9 year-old boy. His father was then working as a '*House Painter*'.

By the time of the 1911 Census, Cecil was working as a '*Railway Porter*', living with his widowed father at the same address in Sunny Hill Road.

In 1912, Cecil married Maude Blaker – i.e. Emma Maude Blaker. At the time of their marriage, Cecil was living at 55 Sunny Hill Road, Streatham, working as a '*Motor Mechanic*' and '*Maude*' was living at 96 Sunny Hill Road.

6.23.6.2 Emma Maude Blaker and Cecil Maurice Gardner

It is understood that '*Maude*' and Cecil initially lived in Wellfield Road, Streatham. '*Maude*' and Cecil had two children:

- Cecil John: b. 1913, Streatham, Surrey
- Beatrice Alice: b. 1914, Streatham, Surrey

On 17 March 1915, Cecil enlisted with the Mechanical Transport Army Service Corps. At the time of his enlistment he attested that 4 shillings

should be taken from his pay on a daily basis and paid to his wife. Private Gardner (Regimental No. M2/053713) was serving in France just 8 days after his enlistment.

Based upon absent voters' lists in the electoral registers for 1918, we know that Cecil's home was recorded as 4 Valley Road, Streatham. He was discharged from Army service on 27 July 1919 and returned to civilian life. His wife, '*Maude*', had brought up their 2 children in his absence.

In the 1948, 1951, 1958 and 1960 London Electoral Registers, '*Maude*' and Cecil were listed sharing accommodation with '*Polly*' and '*Jim*' Fibbens at 80 Holmewood Gardens, Streatham. This was the same road where '*Maude*' and '*Polly*'s' sister, '*Beatie*', was living with her husband, '*Jim*' Joy (at number 48). Thus, three sisters were living in close proximity with each other, over a period of at least 12 years – must have been impossible to keep any family secrets!

80 Holmewood Gardens, Streatham: Contemporary View

Location of Holmewood Gardens, Streatham

Cecil died in Thanet, Kent in 1968, leaving '*Maude*' as a widow. She survived her husband by some 11 years and died in Lambeth in 1978. Her death certificate gives the cause of death as: '*Ischaemic Heart Disease; Hypertension and Diabetes Mellitus*'. Her son, Cecil John Gardner was the informant for '*Maude*'s' death.

6.23.7 Beatrice Alice Blaker (1895-1975)

Born: 16 October 1895, Norwood, London

Married: 25 December 1919, aged 24 years, married James Joy; St. Leonard's Church, Streatham

Died: 18 January 1975, aged 79 years; Putney Hospital, Putney, London

Curiously, no direct record has been found of the registration of Beatrice's birth. The earliest records that have emerged to date relate to her schooling at Salter's Hill and Eardley Road Schools. Based upon these records and her death certificate, an estimated date of birth is 16 October 1895.

Beatrice was known as '*Beatie*'. She was recorded in the 1901 Census as a 6 year-old girl, living at 63 Eardley Road, Streatham, together with her parents and siblings. By the time of the 1911 Census, she was working as a '*General Housemaid*', living with her parents and siblings at 9 Wellfield Road, Streatham.

In 1919, '*Beatie*' married James Joy, a 23 year-old '*Labourer*' from Lancashire.

6.23.7.1 James Joy (1896-1964)

Born: 1896, Liverpool, Lancashire

Married: 25 December 1919, aged 23 years, married Beatrice Alice Blaker; St. Leonard's Church, Streatham
Died: 24 December 1964, aged 68 years; South Western Hospital, Stockwell, London

James was one of 9 children born to Samuel Joy (1866-1917) and Elizabeth Burke (1865-). Samuel was a '*General Labourer*' who was born in London.

James was recorded in the 1901 Census as a 4 year-old boy living with his parents and siblings at 80 Leta Street, Walton-on-the-Hill, Liverpool. Ten years later, James was working in a '*Grocer's Shop*' and living with his parents and siblings at 58 Andrew Street, Walton, Liverpool.

It is not known when James moved to Greater London – perhaps after the death of his father in 1917?

Curiously, the marriage certificate for '*Beatie*' and James records his address as 27 Stoddart Road, Walton (Lancashire). Maybe James did not move to London to live after all. If that is the case, then where did '*Beatie*' and James meet?

6.23.7.2 Beatrice Alice Blaker and James Joy

'*Beatie*' and James were married in St. Leonard's Church, Streatham.

St. Leonard's Parish Church, Streatham

It seems that sometime after their marriage, '*Beatie*' and James travelled to West Derby, Lancashire where they established their home.

'*Beatie*' and James had 2 children:

- James John: b. 1923, West Derby, Lancashire
- Doris E.: b. 1926, West Derby, Lancashire

By 1947, '*Beatie*' and James were living at 48 Holmewood Gardens, Streatham. Based upon London Electoral Register entries, it is known that they were still living at the same address in 1960, and, as previous described in section xxx, that their home was close to the property occupied by Emma and Cecil Gardner and '*Polly*' and James Fibbens.

Prior to his retirement, James worked as a '*Lorry Loader*' and '*Despatch Clerk*' for a Mineral Water Company. In 1964, James suffered a heart attack at his home in Holmewood Gardens, Streatham, and died later in hospital in Stockwell, leaving '*Beatie*' as a widow. The cause of James' death was certified as '*Myocardial Infarction due to Coronary Thrombosis*'. It is not known where '*Beatie*' lived after her husband's death.

48 Holmewood Gardens: Contemporary View

'Beatie's' last address was in Hollybourne Avenue, Roehampton, close to Putney Heath. The property has since been demolished as part of the redevelopment of Roehampton University's Whitelands College. 'Beatie' died in hospital in 1975. The cause of her death was recorded as 'Myocardial Infarction'. Her son, James John Joy notified her death.

6.23.8 Edward John Blaker (1896-1973)

Born: 23 December 1896, 110 Rommany Road, West Norwood, London
Married: 25 December 1922, aged years, married Edith May Jonas; All Saints' Church, Clapham
Died: 8 August 1973, Farnborough Hospital, Farnborough, Hampshire

Edward was known as 'Ted'. On 11 February 1901, aged 4 years, 'Ted' was admitted to Eardley Road School, Mitcham Lane, Streatham.. He was recorded in the 1901 Census, living with his parents and siblings at 63 Eardley Road, Streatham.

In the 1911 Census, 'Ted' was recorded working as a 15 year-old 'Greengrocer', living with his parents and siblings at 9 Wellfield Road, Streatham. On 13 June 1915, at the age of 19 years, 'Ted' entered military service with the 154th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, on a 'Short Service' contract. His regimental number was: L/30201. At that time, he was working as a 'Milk Carrier', living with his parents at 4 Wellfield Road, Streatham. On 27 November 1915, 'Ted' transferred to France, where he served as a 'Driver'. He was recorded in the 1918 Absent Voters' List, giving his address as 4 Valley Road, Streatham. His date of discharge from the Army has not been established.

On his return to England after WWI, it is not clear where 'Ted' lived. In 1922, 'Ted' married Edith May Jonas.

6.23.8.1 Edith May Jonas (1899-1975)

Born: 17 April 1899, Wycombe, Buckinghamshire
Married: 25 December 1922, aged years, married Edward John Blaker; All Saints' Church, Clapham
Died: 18 October 1975, aged 76 years; 39 Oakley Avenue, Chesterfield, Derbyshire

Edith May Jonas was one of six children born to George Frederick Jonas (1872-1932) and Mary Ann Clark (1878-). George was born in Cambridge and worked as a 'Farmer' and later as a 'Butcher'.

In the 1901 Census, Edith was living with her mother in Cambridge Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire. There was no record of the rest of their family – they were simply recorded as 'Family Absent'! Edith was captured in the 1911 Census as a 14 year-old girl living with her parents and siblings in York Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire.

By 1915, when George enlisted in Royal Berkshire Regiment (Regimental Number 16364), Edith's parents were living at the Post Office, Upper Wargrave, Berkshire. It is not known whether Edith was still living at her parents' home at that time.

By 1922, Edith had moved to Lambeth. It is understood that she was known as 'Eadie'.

6.23.8.2 Edward John Blaker and Edith May Jonas

Prior to their marriage, 'Ted' was living at 65 Thornbury Road, Lambeth, and was working as a 'Baker'. 'Eadie' was living at 45 Wingford Road, Lambeth – a street adjoining Thornbury Road. They were married at the nearby All Saints Church in Clapham.

All Saints Church, Clapham: Old Postcard

'Ted' and 'Eadie' lived in Bromley, Kent, where their 2 children were born:

- Margaret Edith: b. 31 January 1927, Maternity Hospital, Bromley, Kent
- Peter Edward: b. 4 March 1929, 34 Manor Way, Bromley, Kent

'Ted' worked as a 'Baker's Roundsman', and then as a 'Security Officer', and lived at various addresses in Bromley during his life, including:

- 61 Canon Road – when Margaret Edith was born
- 34 Manor Way – when Peter Edward was born
- 7 Mons Way – 1964 Electoral Register for Bromley

It is tempting to speculate that 'Ted' may have even worked with his brother, 'John', who worked as a 'Baker' and who also lived in Bromley.

'Ted' and 'Eadie' were a very jovial and devoted couple, who kept contact with 'Ted's' brother 'Alf' and his wife, Mary Ann.

'Ted' & 'Eadie' Blaker: Unknown Date

7 Mons Way, Bromley: Contemporary View

'Ted' died in Farnborough in 1973. The cause of his death was certified as 'Bronchopneumonia'. His daughter, Margaret Edith Wood (nee Blaker) was the informant for her father's death.

'Eadie' survived her husband by some 2 years, and died at her daughter's home in Chesterfield in October 1975. The cause of her death was certified as 'Left Ventricular Failure, Arteriosclerosis and Carcinoma of Breast'.

6.24 Joseph Blaker (1916-2007): Child of Alfred John Blaker (1883-1965) and Mary Ann Martin (1885-1960)

Born: 30 November 1916, 7 Auckland Place, West Norwood, London
Married: 3 June 1944, aged 27 years, married Margaret Marie Jackson; St. Luke's Parish Church, West Norwood, London
Died: 19 July 2007, Dane House Care Home, 52 Dyke Road Avenue, Brighton, East Sussex
Buried: 27 July 2007, Section C, Plot 759, Hove Cemetery, Old Shoreham Road, Hove, East Sussex

Joseph was my father. He was one of seven children born to 'Alf' and Mary Ann Blaker. He was known as 'Joe' or 'Joey'. His parents moved their rented home several times within the West Norwood area.

As a young child, 'Joe' contracted rheumatic fever and spent some 7 months in Dulwich hospital. As a consequence, he was exempt from military service during WWII, although he did act as a 'Volunteer Fire Watcher'.

'Joe' was a bright child and performed well at the local school. However, at the age of 14 years, and against the advice of his teachers, his mother forced him to leave school, in order to start to contribute to the family's finances. Amongst other jobs, he worked for the 'Swan Pen Company', before joining 'Metalgravure', a company in the chemical engraving and nameplate business. This was the start of a long career within that specialised industry.

'Joe' Blaker: 16 May 1935, Aged 18 Years

6.24.1 Margaret Marie Jackson (1920-)

Born: 8 March 1920, Castletown Geoghegan, County West Meath, Ireland
Baptised: 19 March 1920, St. Michael's Church, Castletown Geoghegan;
Emigrated to England: at age of 16 years in 1936 – initially living with her aunt Ellen ('Nellie') and her husband, Frank Hogston;
Married: 3 June 1944, aged 24 years, married Joseph Blaker; St. Luke's Parish Church, West Norwood, London

Margaret – my mother- was the eldest of five children born to Francis ('Frank') Jackson (1894-1960) and Sarah Anne O'Connor (nee Hartford; 1889-1974). The family lived in Doorah, Castletown Geoghegan, before moving to a cottage in Keel, Castletown Geoghegan, County West Meath. Castletown is a small village, located south west of Loch Ennell, close to the County town of Mullingar. 'Frank' worked on the nearby Middleton Park Estate in their stud farm, and was essentially an 'Agricultural Labourer'.

'Peg's' siblings were:

- Marie Bridget ('Bertie'): b. 1922; d. 1926

- William (*Willie*): b. 1924
- Francis (*Frankie*): b. 1928; d. 2002
- Patrick (*Paddy*): b. 1929; d. 2004

Margaret also had two stepsisters, from Sarah's first marriage – to John O'Connor (1887-1917), who was killed in action on 7 June 1917 during WWI. John O'Connor was a Sergeant (Regimental Number 53668) in the Machine Gun Corps.

Her stepsisters were:

- Sarah O'Connor: b. 1909; d. 1984
- Christina (*Chrissy*) O'Connor: b. 1912 ; d. 1931

Margaret was known as *Peg* or *Peggy*. She grew up, and went to school in Castletown Geoghegan. As *Frank* and Sarah's family grew, with the birth of *Peg's* brothers, it became increasingly difficult for her to continue to live in their small, 2-bedroom cottage in Keele. At the age of 11 years, she went to live with Mr. James and Mrs. Rose Casey (nee Chapman; originated in County Offaly) in Rathdrishoge, close to Castletown Geoghegan, to help them look after their son, Seamus. *Peg's* mother, Sarah, knew Mrs. Rose Casey, since Rose worked in Brennan's draper's shop in Castletown. Whilst living in Rathdrishoge, *Peg* continued her schooling, travelling across the fields to school in Castletown. After Rose gave birth to twin girls (Mary and Teresa), Margaret helped with the extended family – although, sadly, Teresa died at a young age.

James Casey was an addicted gambler – each day cycling to the railway station to place his bets. Inevitably, he gambled away his money, with the result that the family could then no longer afford to pay for domestic help (at the rate of two shillings and six pence per month), nor to feed *Peg*. Subsequently, Mrs. Casey looked for alternative arrangements for *Peg*, and found a post for a domestic help advertised in Cualtamore, Moate, County Westmeath. *Peg* moved there at the age of 15 years, working for Mrs. Upton. This employment lasted about 1 year, before her father, *Frank*, asked his sister (*Nellie*) and her husband (*Frank*), who were visiting from England, if they could assist *Peg* in obtaining work in England.

In 1936, at the age of 16 years, *Peg* moved to England, initially living with her aunt, *Nellie*, at 4 Kepler Road, Clapham, London. *Nellie* helped *Peg* obtain work in Pratt's departmental store (now John Lewis), washing up in the staff canteen, under the direction of the cook, Mrs. Hall. The job also provided accommodation, and *Peg* shared a room with another Irish girl – Mary. Despite the hard work, it was a happy environment, particularly since there were a lot of single Irish girls working in the Pratt's store and its canteen and restaurants. Leisure time often involved going to dances in nearby Streatham, South London – a far cry from the quiet life in rural Castletown Geoghegan.

The job in Pratt's lasted some 3 years, and was a staging post to a position as a housemaid, working under a housekeeper (Mrs. Eme) for Mrs. Cornwall in Coldharbour Lane, Brixton, South London. Mrs. Cornwall owned green grocer's shops in London and would often bring 'Peg' a large box of fruit – which she, in turn would pass on to her aunt, 'Nellie'. During 'Peg's' working time, she would send most of her spare money back to her parents in Ireland, both to repay her fare to England, and to help with the meager family finances in Ireland.

Margaret Marie Jackson; Unknown Date

'Peg' met my father, 'Joe' Blaker in 1940, at a childrens' party in West Norwood, South London. 'Peg' had gone there at the invitation of Henry Atwell, a Minister's son, thinking the invitation was to a dance, as opposed to a childrens' party! Whilst watching a lantern show, she met 'Joe' who had been helping out with the washing up at the party. That was the start of 67 years together.

6.24.2 Joseph Blaker and Margaret Marie Jackson

'Joe' and 'Peg' were married at St. Luke's Church in West Norwood, followed by a reception in the church hall, and had a subsequent blessing of their marriage at St. Matthew's Roman Catholic Church, Norwood High Street, West Norwood. Needless to say, following their wedding celebrations, they soon returned to work - during the war years there was no time, or money, for a honeymoon! Indeed, on the following Monday, 'Peg' had to go to the local Town Hall to get her ration books changed to her married name.

'Joe' and 'Peg' had 3 children:

- Graham Joseph: b. 1946, Lewisham, London
- Anne Dolorosa: b. 1953, Lewisham, London
- Christina Mary: b. 1953, Lewisham, London – an identical

twin to Anne Dolorosa

3 June 1944, St. Luke's Church, West Norwood, London

After their marriage, for a period of 18 months, they lived at 15 Wolfington Road, before living for 6 months with 'Beat' and 'Les' Cook in Croydon.

At that time, 'Joe' used to cycle to and from his work in Hither Green, London – a considerable distance. On Saturdays, 'Joe' typically travelled to work by tram and train. On 25 November 1944, 'Joe' had a lucky escape from certain death. On that day, he missed his usual tram, which was fortunate in the extreme, as the tram was destroyed at New Cross, when a V2 rocket hit the Woolworth's store, on New Cross High Street. It was the

worst loss of life from a V2 rocket during WWII, with 168 people killed and 121 seriously injured. Fate had looked after my father that day!

Following a recommendation from a work-mate, *'Joe'* and *'Peg'* moved to rented accommodation in rooms at 159 George Lane, Lewisham (with Mrs. Marion Devereux; 1893-1975), close to the large Mountsfield Park. This location was close to his place of work in Hither Green, London.

The family knew Marion Devereux (nee Nickless; 1893-1975) as *'Dev'*. She was born in Birmingham in 1893, and was married to Frederick Richard Devereux (1891-). She had a single child with Frederick, who was named Rita Laurian (1923-). *'Dev'* was a lonely woman, as her husband had deserted her and her daughter chose to emigrate to Southern Rhodesia (now called Zimbabwe), where she married. Rita Fogg, as she then became, did not have any children.

'Dev' became part of *'Joe'* and *'Peg's'* family, sharing her house – in which she occupied rooms on the ground floor at the rear of the property - and allowing her to take their children to the local park, where *'Dev'* was proud when passers-by would stop to admire her *'grandchildren'*.

By this time, *'Joe'* had moved to *'The British Engraving Company'*, whose factory and offices were in Friern Barnet, London, some 12 km north of Charing Cross.

159 George Lane, Lewisham, London: Contemporary View

In 1953, shortly after the birth of their twin daughters, *'Joe'* and *'Peg'* bought a semi-detached property at 45 Sherwood Avenue, Potters Bar, Middlesex. It had taken *'Joe'* and *'Peg'* 7 years to save the £250 deposit for their new house.

'Joe' and 'Peg' with Graham, Anne & Christina

'Joe' had a vision for his new garden – a sunken lawn. After months of toiling with family and friends, moving tones of clay soil, he awoke one morning to find that his sunken lawn was now a small lake – the yellow and blue clay was great for growing roses, but not ideal for creating a sunken lawn! There was no choice; it had to be filled in! *'Joe's'* strengths of patience, determination and his even temperament were fully tested.

In late 1959, the family moved from Potters Bar to 28 Cobton Drive, Hove, East Sussex. *'Joe'* had become *'Factory Manager'* of the British Engraving Company Ltd. site, close to the Old Shoreham Road, Hove. He replaced the previous factory manager who had decided to leave the company, together with several key staff. *'Joe's'* task was to rebuild a Management team and improve performance of the business – a task that he completed with a lot of hard work and leading by example – one of his sayings was

'never ask someone to do a job that you won't'. The factory site in Hove has since been demolished, and a small retail park sits on the ground.

In 1964, *'Joe'* told his family that he had decided to convert to the Roman Catholic religion, and started to take instruction from Father Olivier at St. Peter's Church, Portland Road, Hove. On 3 November 1964, *'Joe'* was received into the Roman Catholic Church and took his first Holy Communion at St. Peter's Church, Portland Road, Hove, East Sussex. He was subsequently confirmed at a service at Arundel Cathedral.

In 1965, *'Joe'* and several of his work colleagues from the British Engraving Company became frustrated at the lack of investment and interest in growing the business, and, as a consequence they decided to start a new Nameplate Company, approaching Butler Jones Ltd. in Lower Sydenham, Kent. Five months later, Butler Jones Nameplates Ltd. was in operation in a new factory in Durban Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex. He developed the business and helped to expand sales for the bronze and aluminum foundry in Sydenham.

Novel Business Card to Illustrate Anodised Aluminum Finishes

One of the most memorable commissions for the Company was a huge cast bronze plaque that commemorated the 1966 FIFA World Cup Competition, illustrated with the flags of all of the participating nations. The finished plaque was hung in a prominent position in the old Wembley Stadium.

In time, *'Joe'* was appointed *'Managing Director'* of the Company, a post that he retained until his retirement. *'Joe's'* long period within the nameplate industry had exposed him to many noxious chemicals – as the factory was full of tanks of sodium hydroxide, sulphuric and chromic acids, bitumen and various dyes. As a result his sense of smell was attenuated – strangely he could smell sweet odours, such as the fragrance of a rose, yet was incapable of smelling foul odours, such as sewage.

45 Sherwood Avenue, Potters Bar, Middlesex: Contemporary View

28 Cobton Drive, Hove, East Sussex: Contemporary View

'Joe' loved many different sports – with wrestling, show jumping, cricket and motor racing being particularly enjoyed. He was a frequent visitor to the motor events at Goodwood, together with son, Graham, where they shared a Family Membership of the Goodwood Motor Racing Club.

'Joe' Blaker on Nigel Mansell's 'Red 5' Williams-Renault F1 Car; Goodwood, July 2002

However, 'Joe's' first introduction to sport was Speedway Motorcycle Racing, at New Cross Stadium, Hornshay Street, Old Kent Road, South East London. The New Cross track was opened in 1934 by the joint promoters, Fred Mockford and Cecil Smith, who had previously operated a speedway track at Crystal Palace. The new club colours were orange and black, with a black Maltese cross as the emblem. The new track, which was one of the shortest in the country, was built inside the greyhound racing track, and was nicknamed the 'Frying Pan'. Speedway meetings were held at the track every Wednesday evening, with the 'New Cross Rangers' attracting large crowds.

'Joe' became intimately involved with the New Cross Supporters Club, organising coaches to away fixtures and occasionally acting as stand-in announcer, starter and steward at meetings at New Cross. 'Joe's' son, Graham, was adopted as the Club's mascot for several seasons, and together with some 50 other supporters, travelled to away fixtures in a coach hired from Bradshaw's Coaches, and driven by Sam Hutchings, who became a family friend.

New Cross Speedway Supporters' Club Card

Presentation to Ron Johnson, Speedway World Champion by Fred Mockford and 'Joe' Blaker, with Graham Blaker in Arms

After 'Peg' gave birth to her twin daughters, the event was broadcast to supporters at the stadium at the next home fixture – on 6 May 1953, against Norwich. On that occasion, 'Joe' was driven around the track by the team captain, with 'Joe' riding pillion! By the late 1950s, attendances at New Cross had dwindled from almost 30,000 in the 1940s to less than 5,000, with the result that Fred Mockford closed the Club at the end of 1953. Although it was briefly resurrected in 1959, it finally closed in 1963, following a meeting against Poole. The track was used for stock car racing for some time, but it was finally demolished in 1975, and now forms part of a public open space called 'Bridge House Meadows'.

'Joe' and 'Peg' were strongly family-orientated and took great delight in their children and grandchildren.

'Joe' and 'Peg' with Grandchildren James, Paul and Jonathan; Christmas 2002

'Joe' was a very active man, always eager to help, and possessing a very calm temperament. He was very involved with his local church – St. George's – organising church cleaning, renovation and the important Covenant scheme for the church finances.

In June 2004, 'Joe' and 'Peg' celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary, followed by a blessing and renewal of wedding vows at St. George's Roman Catholic Church, Court Farm Road, Hove, East Sussex.

'Peg' and 'Joe' Blaker: June 2004

Renewal of Wedding Vows: June 2004, St. George's Church, Hove

'Joe' enjoyed the occasional drink of Cognac, with 'Hennessy Paradis' being his favorite tippie – indeed, his will specified that a good measure of this choice cognac was to be included in his coffin – needless to say, we obliged!

'Joe' Blaker with Cognac Trolley, Christmas 2005

In November 2005, during a holiday in the Lake District, 'Joe' was admitted to Furness General Hospital suffering from chest pains and emesis, and after initial review, declined a more extensive period of investigation. In February 2006, after a lengthy period of ill health, 'Joe' was diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer. During his illness, he received wonderful support from Caroline Clews, his allocated Macmillan community nurse. After a number of hospital admissions and treatment, in mid June 2006, 'Joe' was transferred to the Martlets Hospice, Wayfield Avenue, Hove, where he was expected to pass his last days. Miraculously, with the help of the all-embracing care and love in the Hospice, he recovered, and, much to the amazement of his doctors, nurses and family, was discharged 5.5 weeks after his admission. He then moved to Dane House Care Home, where he lived until his death. During that time, his wife, 'Peg', visited him almost every day, and they both demonstrated a precious love, great faith and a determination to live each day at a time.

'Joe' and 'Peg': October 2006

In November 2006, 'Joe' celebrated his 90th birthday with family and friends at the family home in Cobton Drive, Hove. His birthday cake carried the message: 'Thank God I've Made It – 90 Today' – a fitting testimony to his faith, and to a remarkable man.

'Joe' Blaker at Home for 90th Birthday Celebrations; 30 November 2006

Notice in The Argus Newspaper, 30 November 2006

'Joe' & 'Peg' 30 November 2006, Cobton Drive, Hove

'Joe' died peacefully at Dane House Care Home on 19 July 2007. He had survived for some 17 months beyond his diagnosis of terminal cancer. His death certificate records the cause of his death as '*Carcinoma of the Pancreas and Hypertension*'.

Probate to his estate was granted in October 2007. My father's body was buried in Hove Cemetery, Old Shoreham Road, Hove, East Sussex. His local parish priest, Father David Weston, wrote a glowing tribute to my father in the Parish Newsletter for St. George's Church:

Extract from St. George's Parish Newsletter; 22 July 2007

Joseph Blaker (1916-2007) Funeral Notices; The Argus & The Telegraph, 21 July 2007

His headstone carries the affectionate words:
'*An Inspiration and Friend to All Who Knew Him*'.

Headstone to Grave of 'Joe' Blaker (1916-2007)

'Peg' continued to live in Cobton Drive until mid 2010, when she moved to full-time residential care at St. Joseph's Care Home in Brighton, and then, in 2012, to a Medical Nursing Home in Worthing, West Sussex, where she now lives.

In March 2010, 'Peg' celebrated her 90th birthday with family and friends at the Hangleton Manor Hotel, Hove, East Sussex.

*'Peg' Blaker: 6 March 2010; 90th Birthday Celebration Lunch
Hangleton Manor Hotel, Hove*

6.25 Other Children of Alfred John Blaker (1883-1965) and Mary Ann Martin (1885-1960)

6.25.1 Mary Ann Blaker (1904-1990)

Born: 16 May 1904, 95 High Street, West Norwood, London

Married: 11 July 1926, aged 22 years, married John James Hart, St. Giles Parish Church, Camberwell, London

Died: 26 October 1990, aged 86 years, Northgate Hospital, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk

Mary Ann was the first child born to 'Alf' and Mary Ann Blaker. She was captured in the 1911 Census as a 7 year-old girl, living with her parents and 2 siblings at 4a Eaton Cottages, Ernest Street, West Norwood. Mary took a lead role in helping her mother, Mary Ann, to raise her siblings.

My father recalled that his sister, Mary, worked in a flour mill in Camberwell and it was at this factory that she met John James Hart, who was a fellow worker. In 1926, Mary married John James Hart.

6.25.1.1 John James Hart (1903-1964)

Born: 30 January 1903, Old Kent Road, Camberwell, London

Married: 11 July 1926, aged 23 years, married Mary Ann Blaker; St. Giles Parish Church, Camberwell, London

Died: 15 January 1964, aged 60 years; Croydon General Hospital, Surrey

John James was known as *'Jack'*. He was the eldest of 5 children born to John James Hart (1876-) and Sophia Ann Payne (1882-1922). John James was a *'Carman'* (i.e. a delivery man), who was born in Camberwell, London.

He was recorded in the 1911 Census as an 8 year-old boy, living with his parents and younger siblings at 48 Westmoccott Street, Camberwell.

6.25.1.2 Mary Ann Blaker and John James Hart

At the time of their marriage, Mary was living with her parents at Auckland Place, West Norwood, whilst *'Jack'* was living at 20 Camberwell Green. *'Jack'* was then working as a *'Labourer'*.

St. Giles Church, Camberwell, London

Mary and *'Jack'* had 5 children:

- John James: b. 1932, West Norwood, London
- Mary: b. 1933, West Norwood, London
- Joan: b. 1935, West Norwood, London
- Alfred: b. 1939, West Norwood, London
- Yvonne: b. 1945, West Norwood, London

Further information about their children is given in section 6.28.

During their married life, Mary and *'Jack'* lived at various addresses in Norwood, including:

- 107 High Street, West Norwood: 1932
- 28 High Street, West Norwood: 1933
- 2 East Place, West Norwood: 1935
- Beadman Cottage, Beadman Street, West Norwood: 1939
- 18 Robson Road, West Norwood: 1945

18 Robson Road, West Norwood: Contemporary View

Whilst *'Jack'* was away from home during WWII, Mary moved home several times, with the help of her younger brother, *'Joe'*, who helped to load a barrow with the family possessions, and push it to the next rented accommodation. During WWII, *'Jack'* was a *'Sergeant'* in the Army *'Pioneer Corps'*; Regimental Number: 10561340.

Pioneer Corps Cap Badge

After demobilisation, 'Jack' worked as a 'Builders' Labourer' and was later employed by the local Council undertaking road repairs. 'Jack' and 'Mary' were a hard-working couple.

'Jack' developed lung cancer and, after a period of nursing by his wife, Mary, in 1964, he was admitted to Croydon Hospital, where he died, leaving Mary as a widow. The cause of his death was certified as 'COD Heart Failure' and 'Carcinoma of the Lung'.

In January 1964, administration to the estate of 'Jack' Hart was granted to his widow, Mary. His estate amounted to £715.00.

After 'Jack's' death, Mary continued to live in Robson Road, close to the boundary of West Norwood Cemetery. In order to make ends meet, Mary had a variety of jobs, including cleaning and helping in a local hairdresser. Following an accident on a bus that resulted in a wound to one of Mary's legs, she developed a severe leg infection, necessitating the amputation of her leg, just below the knee. Whilst Mary returned to her home in Robson Road, her age (in excess of 80 years), poor health and lack of local family, resulted in her moving from West Norwood to Great Yarmouth, where she lived at 56 Middle Market Road, close to her eldest son ('Jack'), daughters Mary and Joan, and sister Lily. Mary maintained her independence until close to her death.

Mary died in Northgate Hospital, Great Yarmouth in 1990. The cause of her death was certified as 'Myocardial Infarction'.

6.25.2 Alfred John Blaker (1907-1978)

Born: 4 February 1907, 12 Dunbar Street, Norwood, London

Married: 18 June 1932, aged 25 years, married Ellen Grace Leslie; The Register Office, Lambeth, London

Died: 21 March 1978, aged 71 years; Dulwich Hospital, East Dulwich

Alfred John was the eldest son born to Alfred John Blaker and Mary Ann Martin. In the 1911 Census, he was recorded as a 4 year-old boy, living with his parents and siblings at 4a Eaton Cottages, Ernest Street, West Norwood. My father recalls that his brother, Alfred, initially worked selling newspapers at Norwood railway station, until he was able to train as a lorry driver. No further information has emerged about Alfred until his marriage to Ellen Grace Leslie.

6.25.2.1 Ellen Grace Leslie (1915-)

Born: 4 January 1915, 261 Railton Road, Herne Hill, Brixton, London

Married: 18 June 1932, aged 17 years, married Alfred John Blaker; The Register Office, Lambeth, London

Died: September 1980, aged 90 years; Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne & Wear

Ellen was born to Wilfred Arnold Leslie and Elsie Grace Parrington (1889-1980). Wilfred was a *'Tailor'*. Wilfred had died before Ellen's marriage to Alfred John Blaker.

6.25.2.2 Alfred John Blaker and Ellen Grace Leslie

At the time of their marriage, both Alfred and Ellen were living together at 57 Brailsford Road, Brixton, sharing the rented property with Ellen's mother.

Alfred John and Ellen Grace had 3 children:

- Alfred Arnold: b. 1933, East Dulwich
- Maureen Ruth: b. 1935, East Dulwich
- Josephine Lesley: b. 1949, Dulwich

Further information about their children is given in section 6.29.

Alfred worked as a lorry driver – for *'Tillings'* and later as a *'Private Chauffeur'*.

During their married life, Alfred and Ellen lived at least 5 properties in the area of Norwood and Brixton:

- 184a Camberwell Grove, Southwark: c. 1933-1934
- 13 Bloom Grove, West Norwood, London: c.1935-1938
- 38 Neuchatel Road, Lewisham, London: 1939-?
- 98 Thurlow Park Road, Norwood, London: c.1945-1959
- Flat 61, Crownstone Court, St. Matthews Road, Brixton:

c.1962-1978

The dates above are not contiguous, since the surviving Electoral Lists are incomplete.

Although Alfred and Ellen lived close to his parents and siblings, there appears to have been relatively little contact between them – the reason for this has been lost in the mists of time!

13 Bloom Grove, West Norwood, London: Contemporary View

98 Thurlow Park Road, Norwood: Contemporary View – Busy A205 Road

Alfred died in Dulwich Hospital in 1978. The cause of his death was certified as *'Uraemia'* and *'Carcinoma of the Bladder'*. Prior to his admission to hospital, Alfred was living at Flat 61, Crownstone Court, Brixton. To date, we have not traced the date or place of Ellen's death – maybe she is still alive!

6.25.3 James Edward Blaker (1909-1979)

Born: 8 April 1909, 4 Eaton Cottages, Ernest Street, West Norwood, London

Married: 21 April 1930, aged 21 years, married Eveline Isabella Williamson; St. Lukes Church, West Norwood, London
Died: 26 December 1979, aged 70 years, Dulwich Hospital, West Dulwich, London
Cremated: West Norwood Cemetery, West Norwood, London

Curiously, *Jim* did not use his second Christian name of *Edward* and, in formal usage, he added *Henry* in its place. Hence, *Jim*'s marriage certificate is in the name of *James Henry Blaker*. It is not known why *Jim* chose to adopt the name of *Henry*!

Jim was recorded in the 1911 Census as a 2 year-old boy living with his parents and siblings at 4a Eaton Cottages, Ernest Street, West Norwood. No further records have been found for *Jim* until his marriage to Eveline Isabella Williamson in 1930. At the time of his marriage, *Jim* was working as a *Milkman* employed by United Dairies – a job that he retained until his retirement.

6.25.3.1 Eveline Isabella Williamson (1908-1980)

Born: 31 March 1908, Epping, Essex
Married: 21 April 1930, aged 22 years, married James Henry Blaker; St. Lukes Church, West Norwood, London
Died: 8 August 1980, aged 72 years; 67 Auckland Hill, West Norwood, London
Buried: 13 August 1980, Grave O93 42446, West Norwood Cemetery, West Norwood, London

Eveline Isabella was known as *Eva*. She was one of 10 children born to Charles Williamson (1865-) and Harriett Beatrice Coombs (1872-). Charles was a *Carpenter*, who was born in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire.

In 1930, *Eva* married *Jim* Blaker.

6.25.3.2 James Edward Blaker and Eveline Isabella Williamson

At the time of their marriage, *Jim* was living at 7 Auckland Place and *Eva* was living at 16 Elder Road. *Jim* and *Eva* started their married life living at 32 Knights Hill, West Norwood.

Jim and *Eva* had 2 children:

- Marion Eveline: b. 1938, Kings College Hospital, Lambeth
- Lewis James: b. 1949, Dulwich Hospital, West Dulwich

Further information about their children is given in section 6.30.

From the Electors' Lists, we can trace the various properties where *Jim* and *Eva* lived:

- 32 Knights Hill, Norwood: 1930-1931
- 11 Hubbard Road, Norwood: 1932-1934
- 13 Cotswold Street, Norwood: 1935-1937

- 81 Auckland Hill, West Norwood: 1938-?
- Basement Flat, 67 Auckland Hill, West Norwood: 1945 onwards

Auckland Hill, Norwood: Contemporary View

'Jim' worked as a 'Milk Roundsman' – plenty of early morning starts for him to ensure that fresh milk was delivered to his customers in time for their breakfasts. My father, 'Joe' Blaker, once recalled that as a young boy, he helped his elder brother, 'Jim', deliver samples of 'Ex-Lax' chocolate to addresses in West Norwood. Unfortunately, they both decided to sample copious amounts of the chocolate themselves, not realising that it was a stimulative laxative! The results were explosive, and they needed to use several of 'Jim's' customers' toilets to obtain relief - a lesson was learnt!

Lily Caswell recalls that 'Jim' did not trust banks, and kept a large amount of cash in a suitcase underneath his bed. His daughter, Marion, persuaded her father to take some of the cash to a bank, as his hoard of money included a lot of white five pound notes that were taken out of circulation by the Bank of England, and were no longer legal tender beyond March 1961!

In 1979, 'Jim' died in Dulwich Hospital. The cause of his death was certified as '*Carcinoma of the Bronchus*' and '*Carcinomatosis*'. Prior to the time of 'Jim's' admission to hospital, 'Jim' and 'Eva' were living at 67 Auckland Hill, West Norwood. When 'Jim' died, 'Eva' did not want other family members to know of his death or the funeral arrangements, and this created friction within the family. The reason for 'Eva's' attitude is not clear – now lost in the mists of time!

'Eva' survived her husband by only 8 months. In 1980, 'Eva' died at her home. The cause of her death was certified as '*Myocardial Fibrosis; Coronary Atheroma and Carcinoma of Cervix Uteri*'. 'Eva' was buried in West Norwood cemetery – where her son, Lewis, worked.

6.25.4 Emily Maud Blaker (1911-2003)

Born: 20 April 1911, 4 Eaton Cottages, Ernest Street, West Norwood, London

Married: 6 October 1934, aged 23 years, married Archibald Ernest Garner; The Register Office, Wandsworth

Died: 17 March 2003, aged 91 years, St. Raphael's Hospice, London Road, North Cheam, Sutton

Emily was one of 7 children born to Alfred John Blaker and Mary Ann Martin. She was known as 'Emmy'.

My father, 'Joe' Blaker recalled that his sister, 'Emmy' initially worked in as a 'Waitress' in a café. In 1934, she married Archibald Ernest Garner.

6.25.4.1 Archibald Ernest Garner (1908-1985)

Born: 13 April 1908, 28 Waldeck Road, Strand, Chiswick, Middlesex
Married: 6 October 1934, aged 26 years, married Emily Maud Blaker; The Register Office, Wandsworth
Died: 1 April 1985, aged 76 years; Tooting Bec Hospital, Tooting, Wandsworth, London

Archibald was known as '*Ernie*'. He was one of 4 children born to Frederick George Garner (1868-1946) and Mary Lynch (1876-). Frederick was a '*Bricklayers' Labourer*'.

At the time of his marriage, '*Ernie*' was working as a '*Window Cleaner*', living at 176 Hopton Road, Streatham with his future wife.

6.25.4.2 Emily Maud Blaker and Archibald Ernest Garner

'*Emmy*' and '*Ernie*' had 3 children:

- Hilda Mary: b. 1935, St. James' Hospital, Battersea
- Gordon Ernest: b. 1938, St. James' Hospital, Battersea
- Patricia: b. 1940, St. James' Hospital, Battersea

Further information about their children is given in section 6.31.

'*Emmy*' and '*Ernie*' lived at several different properties in the Streatham area, including:

- 15 Feathers Street, Streatham: 1935
- 56 Natal Road, Streatham: 1937/8
- 98 Natal Road, Streatham: 1939
- 30 Ellora Road, Streatham: 1940
- 14 Ferrers Road, Streatham: 1946/7
- 147 Glenister Park Road, Streatham: 1949 onwards

During WWII, '*Ernie*' served as an '*Auxillary Fireman*'.

'*Ernie*' died in hospital in 1985, leaving '*Emmy*' as a widow. The cause of his death was certified as '*Chronic Bronchitis*'. After his death, '*Emmy*' lived for a while at 147 Glenister Park Road, Streatham. '*Emmy*' survived her husband by almost 18 years. She died in St. Raphael's Hospice, North Cheam in 2003. The cause of her death was certified as '*Squamous Cell Carcinoma of Bladder*'.

6.25.5 Beatrice Blaker (1914-1999)

Born: 21 March 1914, 4A Eaton Cottages, Ernest Street, West Norwood, London
Married: 26 October 1935, aged 21 years, married Leslie Harold Cook; The Register Office, Croydon
Died: 19 December 1999, aged 85 years, South Parade Nursing Home, 98 South Parade, Skegness, Lincolnshire

Beatrice was one of 7 children born to Alfred John Blaker and Mary Ann Martin. Beatrice was known as 'Beat' or 'Beatie'.

In 1935, 'Beat' married Leslie Harold Cook.

6.25.5.1 Leslie Harold Cook (1909-2000)

Born: 23 December 1909, 23 Peshurst Road, South Hackney, London

Married: 26 October 1935, aged 25 years, married Beatrice Blaker; The Register Office, Croydon

Died: 31 May 2000, aged 90 years, South Parade Nursing Home, 98 South Parade, Skegness, Lincolnshire

Leslie Harold was the 4 of children born to Charles Ernest Cook (1882-1918) and Rebecca Wait (1885-). Charles was a 'Licensed Victualler'.

'Les' was a Private in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps (Regimental Number 7651322) at the time that he married 'Beat'. He served in WWII in the Army's R.E.M.E. Corps, with his 3 brothers ('Charlie', 'Ken' and 'Alex'), each of whom returned safely at the end of the war.

'Les' was a life-long pipe smoker, and always sported a dapper moustache.

Leslie Harold Cook, Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers; 1940

6.25.1.2 Beatrice Blaker and Leslie Harold Cook

At the time of their marriage in 1935, 'Beat' was living at 3 Northbury Road, Norbury, and 'Les' was living at 45 Leander Road, Thornton Heath.

'Beat' and 'Les' had 2 children:

- Valerie Lilian: b. 1936, Epsom
- Brian Leslie: b. 1942, Thornton Heath, Croydon

Further information about their children is given in section 6.32

'Beat' and 'Les' lived at:

- 60 Priory Road, Cheam, Epsom
- 18 Delamere Crescent, Croydon
- Flat 53, 2nd Floor, Gatestone Court, Central Hill, Upper Norwood – opposite Gypsy Hill Police Station

18 Delamere Crescent, Croydon – close to Ashburton Park; Contemporary View

Gatestone Court, Central Hill, Upper Norwood: Contemporary View

'Les' worked as a 'Refrigeration Engineer & Electrician' for the 'Bon Marche' departmental store in Brixton. 'Les' was a keen motorbike enthusiast and owned a number of different motorbike and sidecar outfits. The sight of 'Les' in his black leathers and roll-neck jumper, riding a BSA motorbike, with 'Beat' squeezed into the attached sidecar, looking fearful of the impending acceleration, was an enduring memory. 'Les' and

'Beat' were also loyal supporters of New Cross Speedway, and introduced my father, 'Joe' to the sport.

Beatrice Cook: Unknown Date

After his retirement from work, 'Les' and 'Beat' visited Australia several times to see their son, Brian and daughter-in-law, Beverley. 'Les' thoroughly enjoyed the Australian lifestyle and climate, and said he could easily settle there, but as 'Beat' was not keen, they remained living in England.

'Beat' died in 1999, leaving 'Les' as a widower. The cause of 'Beat's' death was certified as '*Ruptured Myocardial Infarction and Coronary Artery Occlusion*'. After 'Beat's' death, 'Les' continued to live at South Parade Nursing Home. 'Les' died in 2000. The cause of his death was certified as '*Carcinoma of Oesophagus and Carcinomatosis*'.

6.25.6 Lily Blaker (1922-)

Born: 24 August 1922, 7 Auckland Place, Auckland Hill, West Norwood, London

Married: 1st: 19 December 1942, aged 20 years, married Alfred William Foster; St. Luke's Parish Church, West Norwood, London

2nd: 18 March 1961, aged 38 years, married Ernest Richard Caswell; The Register Office, Lambeth

6.25.6.1 Alfred William Foster (1919-1955)

Born: 5 December 1919, 20 Rommany Road, West Norwood

Married: 19 December 1942, aged 23 years, married Lily Blaker; St. Luke's Parish Church, West Norwood, London

Died: 18 June 1955, aged 35 years; on way to Kings College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London

Alfred William was known as 'Alf'. His parents were William Alfred Foster and Alice Sandford. William was a '*Hall Porter*'.

At the time of his marriage, 'Alf' was working as a '*Sheet Metal Worker*', living at 5 Essex Grove, Upper Norwood.

6.25.6.2 Lily Blaker and Alfred William Foster

Lily and 'Alf' were married in St. Luke's Church, close to her parents' home in Wolfington Road, West Norwood. After their marriage, they lived at 15 Wolfington Road, sharing the property with Lily's parents.

'Alf' joined the Fleet Air Arm, and, using his sheet metal skills, worked as a fabricator, repairing and maintaining aircraft in both Scotland and Devon. After 'Alf' was demobilised from the Fleet Air Arm, he returned to live with Lily at 15 Wolfington Road.

In 1955, 'Alf' died after a coronary thrombosis that struck him as he was working on the roof of 15 Wolfington Road, West Norwood. He died en route to hospital. The cause of his death was certified as '*Cardiac Failure due to Coronary Thrombosis*'.

After 'Alf's' untimely death, Lily Foster continued to live with her parents, each drawing solace from the company of the family. Lily worked for a local printing company, and it was whilst working there that she met 'Ernie' Caswell.

6.25.6.3 Ernest Richard Caswell (1922 -2010)

Born: 15 June 1922, 49 Shand Road, Peckham, London

Married: 1st: 24 December 1945, aged 23 years, married

Georgina Catherine Williamson; Parish Church of the Holy Redeemer, Bromley, Kent

2nd: 18 March 1961, aged 38 years, married Lily Foster;

The Register Office, Lambeth

Died: 19 November 2010, The Heathers Nursing Home, Beccles Road, Bradwell, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk

Body Cremated: 29 November 2010, Magdalen Cemetery, Oriel Avenue, Gorleston, Norfolk

Ernest Richard was the sole child born to Sidney Ernest Caswell (1897-1972) and Catherine Sullivan (1898-1984). Sidney worked as a '*Railway Porter*' and then as a '*Painter and Decorator*', whereas Catherine was employed as a '*Cook*'. Ernest Richard was known as '*Ernie*'.

At the age of just 17 years, '*Ernie*' joined the Army, and served as a '*Driver*' in England and overseas.

In 1945, '*Ernie*' married Georgina Catherine Williamson. At the time of his marriage, '*Ernie*' was working as an '*Engineer's Fitter*', and was living at 151 Moorside Road, Southend Village, London.

6.26.6.3.1 Georgina Catherine Williamson (1925 -)

Born: Q1 1925, Woolwich, London

Married: 24 December 1945, aged 21 years, married Ernest Richard Caswell; Parish Church of the Holy Redeemer, Bromley, Kent

Georgina was born to William Baden Williamson (1900-1973) and Alice E. Walder. William was a '*Warehouseman*'. At the time of her marriage, Georgina was working as a '*Factory Worker*' and was living at 2 Roseberry Avenue, London.

6.26.6.3.2 Ernest Richard Caswell and Georgina Catherine Williamson

After discharge from the Army at the end of WWII, '*Ernie*' was employed as a plumber's apprentice and subsequently qualified as a '*Plumber*'.

Whilst it is understood that Georgina and 'Ernie' had a son, no trace of his birth has been found, and 'Ernie' did not retain any records or photographs of him, or indeed, of his 1st wife.

'Ernie' and Georgina separated and divorced. 'Ernie' met his future wife, Lily, when she was working at 'Truslove' printers in West Norwood. 'Ernie' worked as a 'Driver' for W. H. Smith Ltd, taking newspapers and magazines from the printing works to W. H. Smith depots and shops.

6.26.6.4 Lily Foster and Ernest Richard Caswell

At the time of their marriage, Lily and 'Ernie' were living at 15 Wolfington Road, West Norwood, London.

Lily fell pregnant with twins, but unfortunately, was unable to carry them to term, and miscarried at c. 5 months. She did not have any other children.

During his employment with W. H. Smith, 'Ernie' served as a Union Representative for some 20 years, negotiating with Management on behalf of Union members. His sense of humour and pragmatism must have been invaluable assets, as he sorted out issues in smoke-filled rooms, acting as a bridge of realism between employees and Management. In 1985, at the age of 65 years, 'Ernie' retired from W. H. Smith Ltd.

Prior to his retirement, Lily and 'Ernie' moved from 15 Wolfington Road, West Norwood to 72 Friar Road, St. Mary Cray, Orpington, where 'Ernie' enjoyed golf amongst other leisure pastimes.

72 Friar Road, St. Mary Cray, Orpington, Greater London

After some persuasion from several of Lily's relatives – notably 'Jack' Hart and his sisters, Joan and Mary – in 1987, Lily and 'Ernie' moved from Orpington to a bungalow in Belton, near Great Yarmouth, Norfolk.

Kalamunda II, New Road, Belton, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk

Lily and 'Ernie' enjoyed a relaxed lifestyle in Belton, where 'Ernie' played bowls, and together with Lily, kept their garden immaculately tidy. 'Ernie' was a heavy cigarette smoker, who struggled to give up his addiction, until his health started to deteriorate.

Lily and 'Ernie' Caswell, July 2005

'Ernie' developed 'Parkinson's Disease' and this, together with respiratory and cardiac problems, made him increasingly frail, and immobile. His wife, Lily, nursed him, and was his constant companion, until he entered

the James Paget Hospital in Gorleston, followed by The Heathers Nursing Home, Bradwell, where he died.

Lily Caswell: January 2011

Lily continues to live independently in Belton, Norfolk. In August 2012, Lily celebrated her 90th birthday.

Lily Caswell with Nephew, Graham Joseph Blaker: August 2012

6.27 Children of Joseph Blaker (1916-2007) and Margaret Marie Jackson (1920-)

6.27.1 Graham Joseph Blaker (1946-)

Born: 11 August 1946, Lewisham Hospital, London

Christened: 1 September 1946, The Catholic Church of St. Saviour and St. John the Baptist and John the Evangelist, 175 High Street, Lewisham, London

Married: 25 March 1972, aged 25 years, married Juliet Elizabeth Hammond; St. Mary of the Angels, Richmond Road, Worthing, West Sussex

Graham was the first of 3 children born to Joseph Blaker and Margaret Jackson. He was initially educated at St. Winifred's Catholic Junior School, Newstead Road, Hither Green, London.

St. Saviour's R.C. Church, Lewisham, London

When the family moved from 159 George Lane, Lewisham to Potters Bar in Middlesex, Graham moved to St. Monica's Roman Catholic Primary School, Cannon Road, Southgate, London.

Following a successful 11+ examination, he was accepted at St. Ignatius College, Stamford Hill, South Tottenham, London. St. Ignatius was a Catholic Grammar School, run by the Jesuit order of priests. The school closed in 1968, when it became a 2-tier secondary school. Most 'Old Ignatians' will recall the form of corporal punishment administered at the school. The cane was never used: instead it was the 'ferula' or 'tolly' (whale bone covered in leather), which was administered on one hand – the Jesuits were a masochistic lot!

In X the family moved to Hove, East Sussex and Graham's education moved to the Hove County Grammar School for Boys (HCGSB), Holmes Avenue, Hove.

1965, Hove County Grammar School for Boys: Graham Blaker 3rd row up & 2 from right

The HCGSB is now part of the Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College.

Although his school friends knew Graham as 'Joe', he was still known as Graham by his immediate family – plenty of opportunity for confusion! In 1966, 'Joe' met his future wife, Juliet, at a local dance.

In 1965, 'Joe' entered Queen Elizabeth College, University of London, Campden Hill Road, Kensington, to study Microbiology. In 1968, he graduated with a 1st Class Special Honours degree in Microbiology, and continued his education there, by taking a PhD degree, studying tissue culture/cancer research. His PhD Supervisor was Professor Stanley John Pirt (1923-2000). 'Joe's' research work was carried out in the Microbiology Department, Atkins Building, Campden Hill.

In 1985, the College became part of Kings College, University of London and was renamed the '*Kensington Campus*', focusing on biomedical sciences. The campus was closed and sold in 2000, and its contents were relocated to the Franklin-Wilkins Building, Stamford Street, Waterloo, London. Curiously, 'Joe's' son, Paul works nearby and sometimes delivers tutorials in this building.

In August 1971, after completing his PhD studies, 'Joe' joined Glaxo Laboratories Ltd. in Ulverston, Lancashire (now in Cumbria), working as a Scientific Officer. At that time, the Ulverston site was one of the largest fermentation factories in the world, producing a large range of antibiotics and pharmaceutical ingredients. This was the start of a long career with the pharmaceutical giant, Glaxo.

In March 1972, 'Joe' married Juliet Elizabeth Hammond.

6.27.1.1 Juliet Elizabeth Hammond (1948-)

Born: 11 April 1948, 21 Hillside Avenue, Thorpe St. Andrew, Norwich, Norfolk

Baptised: 26 September 1948, St. Andrew's Church, Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St. Andrew, Norwich, Norfolk

Married: 25 March 1972, aged 23 years, married Juliet Elizabeth Hammond; St. Mary of the Angels, Richmond Road, Worthing, West Sussex

Juliet was the younger of 2 children born to Herbert Lewis Hammond (1904-2000) and Marjorie Joyce Pearl (1908-2004). Her father was known as '*Lewis*' and her mother was known as '*Joyce*'. '*Lewis*'

Shortly after her birth, the family moved from Norfolk to 82 Beaumont Road, St. Albans, enabling '*Lewis*' to commute into central London, where he worked in the Middlesex Architect's Department. In 1951, the family

moved from St. Albans to 6 Downview Road, West Worthing, West Sussex, where they remained until 'Lewis' and 'Joyce' moved into a retirement flat in Windlesham Court, Grand Avenue, West Worthing.

'Lewis' and 'Joyce' were keen to afford their 2 daughters a good education, and, despite belonging to the local Presbyterian Church, they paid the fees for their daughters to attend a Roman Catholic independent school in West Worthing.

Juliet, and her sister, 'Sue' were educated at Our Lady of Sion School, West Worthing, West Sussex. Our Lady of Sion was originally a Roman Catholic Convent school, founded in 1862, and had a complement of teaching nuns and lay teachers. The school was a Catholic Foundation, which had always opened its doors to, and welcomed pupils from, all faiths.

After leaving school in 1966, Juliet studied at the Eastbourne College of Education – affiliated to the University of Sussex School of Education, gaining her Certificate in Education in 1969. After obtaining her teaching qualifications, Juliet's first teaching post was at West Hove Junior School, Portland Road, Hove, East Sussex, where she taught infant/juniors, and took music lessons.

In 1971, Juliet took up a teaching post in Little Urswick, Cumbria, and lived with Samuel and Jean McIlroy, in the adjoining village of Great Urswick, close to 'Joe' who was then living with Mr. and Mrs. Glaister in Ulverston – after all, in a rural community, it would not have been 'proper' for unmarried people to live together – especially if one was a teacher in the Church of England village school! In March 1972, Juliet and 'Joe' were married in Worthing, West Sussex.

St. Mary of the Angels, Worthing, West Sussex

'Joe' and Juliet Wedding: 25 March 1972, Worthing

6.27.1.2 Graham Joseph Blaker and Juliet Elizabeth Hammond

'Joe' and Juliet had 3 children:

- Jonathan James: b. 15 February 1976, Cumbria
- Paul Andrew: b. 2 January 1979, Cumbria
- James Joseph: b. 15 July 1983, Essex

Further information on their children is given in section 6.33.

James, Paul and Jonathan (left to right)

They began their married life in a rented bungalow at Westby, Great Urswick, Cumbria – a little village some 4 km from the market town of Ulverston. Juliet had obtained a post as a teacher in the small Urswick Grammar School, Little Urswick, Cumbria. This village school was the 2nd oldest grammar school in England, having been granted a royal charter

from Queen Elizabeth 1st in 1584. *Joe* worked in the Glaxo Laboratories Ltd. plant in Ulverston.

In 197X, *Joe* and Juliet bought their 1st property at 58 Glenridding Drive, Hawcoat, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria. Juliet initially continued teaching in Urswick, before moving to Dane Ghyll County Primary School, Skelwith Drive, Hawcoat, Barrow-in-Furness.

In 1979, *Joe* was promoted to the post of '*Deputy Factory Manager*', Glaxo Laboratories Ltd., Barnard Castle County Durham, as a result of which, the family moved to 4 High Garth, Richmond, North Yorkshire. After 2.5 years, the family moved again to 4 Patmore Fields, Ugley, near Bishops Stortford, Essex, as *Joe* had been appointed '*Factory Manager*' of Glaxo's site at Ware, Hertfordshire. Although *Joe* subsequently moved to Glaxo's site in Greenford, Middlesex, the family continued to live in Ugley. In X, the family finally moved to Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire.

Joe had a long career – spanning some 27.5 years - within the Glaxo/Glaxo Wellcome Group of companies and, prior to his early retirement, was '*Group Technical Director*', responsible for worldwide operations, procurement, engineering, quality assurance and product development, involving some 18,000 staff working in 52 factories across 32 countries. He retired from Glaxo at the end of 1998, and then developed a portfolio of Non-Executive Board and Consulting roles in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, fine chemical and healthcare sectors in UK, France, Germany and North America.

He also served on the Council of the UK Chemical Industry Association for 12 years, and was its President in 1997/1999. *Joe* chaired the UK Government's Foresight Panel on Chemicals between X and Y – a thankless task!

In addition to game fishing, *Joe* tries to play guitar and Irish tenor banjo.

Gordon Giltrap with 'Joe' Blaker; 2002, Beaconsfield

6.27.2 Anne Dolorosa Blaker (1953-)

Born: 4 May 1953, Lewisham Hospital, London

Married: 30 October 1976, aged 23 years, married Kenneth Leonard Cooper; St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Shelly Road, Hove, East Sussex

Anne was born in Lewisham Hospital some 10 minutes before her identical twin sister, Christina. She was the 2nd of 3 children born to Joseph Blaker and Margaret Marie Jackson.

Christina (left) & Anne (right), 1969

In 1976, Anne married Kenneth Leonard Cooper.

6.27.2.1 Kenneth Leonard Cooper (1951-)

Born: 24 September 1951,

Married: 30 October 1976, aged 25 years, married Anne Dolorosa Blaker;
St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Shelly Road, Hove, East Sussex

Kenneth was known as 'Ken'. He was one of X children born to Leonard Cooper and Kathleen X.

In 1976, 'Ken' married Anne Dolorosa Blaker. It was a double marriage ceremony, in which Anne's twin sister, Christina, married Maxwell John Hunter.

A 'Double Wedding': St. Peter's Church, Hove: October 1976

6.27.2.2 Anne Dolorosa Blaker and Kenneth Leonard Cooper

After their marriage, Anne and 'Ken' established their home in Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex. Anne and 'Ken' had 2 children:

- Andrew Stewart: b. 9 August 1977, Worthing, West Sussex
- Sarah Anne: b. 28 February 1982, Worthing, West Sussex

Anne works as a 'Carer' at a local Hospital, whereas 'Ken' works as a self-employed 'Domestic Appliance Repairer'. They live in Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex.

6.27.3 Christina Mary Blaker (1953-)

Born: 4 May 1953, Lewisham Hospital, London

Married: 30 October 1976, aged 23 years, married Maxwell John Hunter;
St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Shelly Road, Hove, East Sussex

Christina is a twin sister to Anne Dolorosa Blaker. She was the youngest of 3 children born to Joseph Blaker and Margaret Marie Jackson.

In 1976, Christina married Maxwell John Hunter.

6.27.3.1 Maxwell John Hunter (1953-)

Born: 31 August 1953,

Married: 30 October 1976, aged 23 years, married Christina Mary Blaker;
St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Shelly Road, Hove, East Sussex

Maxwell was known as 'Max'. He was the sole child born to Ronald John Hunter (1922-1984) and Pamela Doris Richardson (1928-2012). Ronald was the proprietor of a 'Surgical Supplier'.

6.27.3.2 Christina Mary Blaker and Maxwell John Hunter

After their marriage, Christina and 'Max' established their home in the little village of Upper Beeding, West Sussex.

Christina and 'Max' had 2 children:

- Iain John: b. 26 June 1979, Worthing, West Sussex
- Lorna Mary: b. 26 May 1981, Worthing, West Sussex

Following the collapse of his lithograph printing business, 'Max' obtained qualifications in chiropody, and established a business as a '*Chiropodist*'. Christina now works as a '*Receptionist*' in a Nursing Home. Christina and 'Max' now live in Lancing, West Sussex.

6.28 Children of Mary Ann Blaker (1904-1990) and John James Hart (1903-1964)

6.28.1 John James Hart (1932-)

Born: 25 February 1932, 107 High Street, West Norwood, London

Married: 1st: 27 September 1952, aged 20 years, married Pauline Dorothy Bonny; All Saints Church, Sydenham. London

2nd: 26 March 1965, aged 33 years, married Barbara Edith Blanter; The Register Office, Camberwell

6.28.1.2 Pauline Dorothy Bonny (1933-)

Born: Q4 1933, Lewisham, London

Married: 27 September 1952, aged 19 years, married John James Hart; All Saints Church, Sydenham, London

Pauline was one of 2 children born to Sydney Charles Bonny (1904-1959) and Dorothy M. Tingey (1911-). Sydney was a '*Butcher*'.

6.28.1.3 John James Hart and Pauline Dorothy Bonny

'Jack' and Pauline had 2 children:

- Linda Veronica: b. 12 September 1953, Lewisham, London
- Derek Robert: b. 28 March 1955, Lewisham, London

'Jack' and Pauline were divorced on 6 May 1964. 'Jack' subsequently married Barbara Edith Blanter. At the time of his 2nd marriage, 'Jack' was living at Flat 7, Fire Station, Eltham Road, London, and was working as a '*Fireman*' with the London Fire Brigade.

6.28.1.4 Barbara Edith Blanter (1938-)

Born: 28 October 1938, Camberwell, London

Married: 26 March 1965, aged 26 years, married John James Hart; The Register Office, Camberwell

Barbara was one of 2 children born to George Samuel Edward Blanter (1909-1986) and Vera Dorothy Quarendon (1912-1986). George was a '*Night Security Guard*' at a factory.

Barbara was known as '*Babs*'. At the time of her marriage, '*Babs*' was working as a '*Sales Assistant*' in a multiple store, and was living at 7 Glengarry Road, Southwark.

6.28.1.5 John James Hart and Barbara Edith Blanter

Jack and *Babs* had one child:

- Andrew James Hart: b. 6 May 1969, Woolwich, London

Jack sustained an injury whilst working as a *Fireman* and left the London Fire Service. The family then moved from London to Norfolk.

Jack and *Babs* currently live in Martham, Norfolk.

6.28.2 Mary Hart (1933-)

Born: 27 May 1933, 28 High Street, West Norwood, London

Married: 13 August 1952, aged 19 years, married Barry Boorer; The Register Office, Lambeth, London

Mary was one of 5 children born to Mary Blaker and John James Hart. In 1952, Mary married Barry Boorer.

6.28.2.1 Barry Boorer (1931-)

Born: 20 May 1931,

Married: 13 August 1952, aged 21 years, married Barry Boorer; The Register Office, Lambeth, London

Barry was born to Frederick Robert Boorer (1905-1983) and Constance Ivy Greves (1907-1989). Frederick was born in West Norwood, and worked as a *Painter and Decorator*.

6.28.2.2 Mary Hart and Barry Boorer

At the time of their marriage, Mary was living with her parents at 18 Robson Road, West Norwood, and Barry was living at 216A Gipsy Road, Norwood.

Mary and Barry had 3 children:

- Barry Anthony: b. 29 October 1952, Lambeth
- Elaine Mary: b. 30 November 1953, Camberwell
- Malcolm Richard: b. 26 November 1956, Lambeth

Mary and Barry currently live in Caister-on-Sea, Norfolk

6.28.3 Joan Hart (1935-)

Born: 25 June 1935, 2 East Place, West Norwood

Married: 17 July 1954, aged 19 years, married Alfred Robert William Biggs; St. Luke's Church, West Norwood, London

Joan was the 2nd daughter born to Mary Ann Blaker and John James Hart.

In 1954, Joan married Alfred Robert William Briggs. At the time of her marriage, Joan was working as a *Pricing Clerk* and was living with her parents at 18 Robson Road, West Norwood.

6.28.3.1 Alfred Robert William Briggs (1926-)

Born: October 1926, Camberwell, Greater London
Married: 17 July 1954, aged 27 years, married Joan Hart; St. Luke's Church, West Norwood, London

Alfred Robert William was known as '*Alf*'. '*Alf*' was one of 2 children born to Alfred Gilbert Briggs (1900-1974) and Rebecca Emma Penfold (1900-1982). Alfred was born in Kensington and worked as a '*Builder*'.

At the time of his marriage, '*Alf*' was working as a '*Welder*', and was living at 36 Livermore Road, Catford, London.

6.28.3.2 Joan Hart and Alfred Robert William Briggs

Joan and '*Alf*' had a single child:

- Alison: b. 1962, Dartford

Joan and '*Alf*' currently live in Caister-on-Sea, Norfolk.

6.28.4 Alfred Hart (1939-)

Born: 9 May 1939, Beadman Cottage, Beadman Street, West Norwood, London

Married: 4 July 1959, aged 20 years, married Sylvia Daphne Wilson; St. John the Evangelist, Wiltshire Road, Angell Town, Brixton, Lambeth

Alfred was the 4th of 5 children born to Mary Ann Blaker and John James Hart. He is known as '*Alf*'.

In 1959, '*Alf*' married Sylvia Daphne Wilson. At the time of his marriage, '*Alf*' was in the midst of his '*National Service*' and was living with his parents at 18 Robson Road, West Norwood.

6.28.4.1 Sylvia Daphne Wilson (1939-)

Born: 20 June 1939, Lambeth, London

Married: 4 July 1959, aged 20 years, married Alfred Hart; St. John the Evangelist, Wiltshire Road, Angell Town, Brixton, Lambeth

Sylvia was one of 4 children born to William Wilson (1906-1979) and Rosina Emmie Cooper (1907-1999). William worked as a '*Tree Feller*' – or a '*Tree Surgeon*' in contemporary terms!

Sylvia was known as '*Sylvie*'. At the time of her marriage, '*Sylvie*' was working as a '*Typist*' and was living at 99 Sussex Road, Lambeth – now demolished and absorbed into the Moorlands Estate development.

6.28.4.2 Alfred Hart and Sylvia Daphne Wilson

'*Alf*' and '*Sylvie*' had 2 children:

- Garry Robert: b. 23 December 1961, Lambeth, London
- Nigel Thomas: b. 9 March 1963, Sidcup, Kent

'Alf' and 'Sylvie' now live in Pennar, Pembroke Docks, South Wales. They have 5 grandchildren.

'Alf and 'Sylvie' Hart with Grandchildren; 2009

'Alf' and 'Sylvie' typically spend 3 to 4 months of each winter in Spain, avoiding the worst of the UK's winter weather.

6.28.5 Yvonne Hart (1945-)

Born: 17 October 1945, 18 Robson Road, West Norwood, London

Married: 21 August 1965, aged 19 years, married Leslie Gordon

Newcombe; St. Luke's Church, West Norwood, London

Yvonne was the last of 5 children born to Mary Blaker and John James Hart. In 1965, Yvonne married Leslie Gordon Newcombe. At the time of her marriage, Yvonne was working as a 'Clerk' and living with her parents at 18 Robson Road, West Norwood.

6.28.5.1 Leslie Gordon Newcombe (1943-2006)

Born: 30 December 1943, Hammersmith, London

Married: 21 August 1965, aged 22 years, married Yvonne Hart; St. Luke's Church, West Norwood, London

Died: June 2006, Lancashire

Leslie was born to Alfred Yardy and 'Unknown' Perry. Alfred was a 'Boilerman'. Alfred married Joyce G. Newcombe in 1956, and Leslie adopted his stepmother's surname – rather strange!

At the time of his marriage, Leslie was in the British Army, and was living at 59 Elm Park Gardens, Chelsea.

6.28.5.2 Yvonne Hart and Leslie Gordon Newcombe

One of the witnesses at Yvonne's wedding was 'Ernie' Caswell – the 2nd husband of Lily Blaker.

Very little is known about Yvonne and Leslie's life. Yvonne and Leslie had 2 children:

- Lorraine: b. 1966, Lambeth
- Dwayne Michael: b. 1969, Richmond, North Yorkshire

At an unknown date, Yvonne and Leslie separated. Leslie died in Manchester in 2006.

Yvonne currently lives in Brixton, together with her son, Dwayne.

Yvonne Hart wither Brother 'Alf' Hart & Son, Dwayne Newcombe; 2009

6.29 Children of Alfred John Blaker (1907-1978) and Ellen Grace Leslie (1915-)

6.29.1 Alfred Arnold Blaker (1933-2010)

Born: 5 September 1933, 72a East Dulwich Grove (Southwark Hospital), Dulwich, London

Married: 31 August 1957, aged 23 years, married Patricia Anne Davison; St. Matthew's Roman Catholic Church, Norwood High Street, West Norwood

Died: 8 October 2010, aged 77 years; Fuengirola, Andalucia, Spain

Alfred Arnold was the first child born to Alfred John Blaker and Ellen Grace Leslie.

In 1957, Alfred married Patricia Anne Davidson.

6.29.1.1 Patricia Anne Davison (1936-)

Born: 1936

Married: 31 August 1957, aged 21 years, married Alfred Arnold Blaker; St. Matthew's Roman Catholic Church, Norwood High Street, West Norwood

St. Matthew's Roman Catholic Church, Norwood High Street, West Norwood

6.29.1.2 Alfred Arnold Blaker and Patricia Anne Davidson

Alfred and Patricia had 3 children:

- Peta Ellen: b. 15 May 1958, Redhill, Surrey
- Andrew: b. 1963
- Celia Mary: b. 1966

At the time of the birth of their 1st child, Alfred Arnold and Patricia Anne were living at 2 Subrosa, Merstham, Surrey. Alfred was working as an 'Export Clerk' for a Distiller.

6.29.2 Maureen Ruth Blaker (1935-)

Born: 2 March 1935, 72a East Dulwich Grove (Southwark Hospital), Dulwich, London

Married: 26 May 1956, aged 21 years, married Patrick Phillip Stevens; St. Luke's Church, West Norwood

Maureen was the 2nd of 3 children born to Alfred John Blaker and Ellen Grace Leslie. No information has emerged about Maureen until her marriage to Phillip Patrick Stevens. At the time of her marriage, Maureen was working as a 'Dental Nurse', and was living with her parents at 98 Thurlow Park Road, Norwood.

6.29.2.1 Patrick Phillip Stevens (1934-)

Born: 1934, probably in Southern Ireland

Married: 26 May 1956, aged 22 years, married Maureen Ruth Blaker; St. Luke's Church, West Norwood

Although the records are not definitive, it is believed that Patrick was born in Ireland to Francis Phillip Pater Stevens and an unidentified mother. Frank Stevens worked as a *'Taxi Driver'*.

At the time of his marriage to Maureen, Patrick was working as a *'Chauffeur'*, and was living at 2 Victoria Villas, Elder Road, Norwood.

6.29.2.2 Maureen Ruth Blaker and Patrick Phillip Stevens

Maureen and Patrick had 3 children:

- Mark P.: b. 1956, Camberwell, London
- Ruth A.: b. 1958, Lewisham, London
- David A.: b. 1962, Lewisham, London

No other information has yet been discovered about Maureen and Patrick, or their family.

6.29.3 Josephine Leslie Blaker (1949-)

Born: 24 May 1949, Dulwich Hospital, Camberwell

Married: 15 May 1971, aged 21 years, married Keith Michael Proctor; St. Stephens Church, South Dulwich, London

Josephine was the youngest of 3 children born to Alfred John Blaker and Ellen Grace Leslie. Nothing is known about Josephine, until the time of her marriage to Keith Michael Proctor. At that time, Josephine was working as a *'Secretary'*, and was living with her parents at Flat 61, Crownstone Court, Brixton.

6.29.3.1 Keith Michael Proctor (1948-)

Born: Q4 1948, Lambeth, London

Married: 15 May 1971, aged 22 years, married Josephine Leslie Blaker; St. Stephens Church, South Dulwich, London

Keith was the youngest of 3 children born to Albert John Proctor and Ivy E. Easter (1905-1991). At the time of his marriage to Josephine, Keith was working as an *'Instrument Maker'*, living at 130 Turney Road, Dulwich.

6.29.3.2 Josephine Leslie Blaker and Keith Michael Proctor

Josephine and Keith were married at St. Stephen's Church, College Road, South Dulwich, a short distance from Dulwich College.

St. Stephen's Church, College Road, Dulwich

Preliminary searches have failed to identify any children born to Josephine and Keith.

6.30 Children of James Edward Blaker (1909-1979) and Eveline Isabella Williamson (1908-1980)

6.30.1 Marion Eveline Blaker (1938-)

Born: 25 July 1938, Kings College Hospital, Lambeth, London
Married: 1st: 4 April 1964, aged 25 years, married David Jonathan Howard; Chatsworth Baptist Church, Chatsworth Way, West Norwood, London
2nd: 27 April 1970, aged 31 years, married Edwin Victor James Bromige; Register Office, Wandsworth, London
3rd: 4 April 1995, aged 56 years, married Alan Douglas Stuart; Chatham Register Office, Chatham, Kent

Marion was the eldest of 2 children born to James Edward Blaker and Eveline Isabella Williamson. She was educated at the Sydenham County Grammar School for Girls.

In 1939, Marion married David Jonathan Howard. At the time of her marriage, Marion was working as an *'Assistant Accountant'* and was living at 15 Grenville Place, Kensington, London.

6.30.1.1 David Jonathan Howard (1939-1990)

Born: 14 December 1939, Rock Ferry, Liverpool
Married: 4 April 1964, aged 24 years, married Marion Eveline Blaker; Chatsworth Baptist Church, Chatsworth Way, West Norwood, London
Died: June 1990, aged 50 years; Enfield, Middlesex

In 1964, David married Marion Eveline Blaker. At the time of their marriage, David was working as a *'Joiner for a Maintenance Contractor'* and was living at 9 Richmond Way, Shepherd's Bush, London.

6.30.1.2 Marion Eveline Blaker and David Jonathan Howard

Marion and David had 1 child:

- Melanie Marion: b. 26 September 1967, Hammersmith

Marion and David separated, and their marriage was dissolved. Marion then married Edwin Victor James Bromige. After their marriage, Marion's daughter, Melanie adopted the surname of her stepfather.

Sadly, Marion has lost contact with her daughter and her 3 children.

6.30.1.3 Edwin Victor James Bromige (1932-1989)

Born: 31 March 1932, Medway, Kent
Married: 1st: Q4 1958, aged 26 years, married Daphne A. Langridge; Lambeth, London
2nd: 27 April 1970, aged 38 years, married Marion Eveline Bromige; Register Office, Wandsworth, London
Died: 2 December 1989, aged 57 years; Lambeth, London

Edwin was born to James Edward Bromige and Millicent D. Broadbent (1909-). Edwin's first marriage to Daphne Langridge (1940-) was dissolved. It is not known if there were any children from this marriage.

At the time of his 2nd marriage, Edwin was working as a 'Driver' and was living with Marion at 80 Latchmere Road, Wandsworth. Marion changed her surname to Bromige by deed poll.

6.30.1.4 Marion Eveline Bromige and Edwin Victor James Bromige

It is understood that both Marion and Edwin were enthusiastic supporters of classical music and opera and that they worked as volunteers at the Royal Albert Hall, London.

In 1985, Marion commenced studies at St. David's University College, Wales – a course that she completed in 1990, resulting in a Bachelor of Divinity degree.

Edwin died prematurely in 1989, leaving Marion as a widow. Some 6 years later, Marion married Alan Douglas Stuart.

6.30.1.5 Alan Douglas Stuart (1929-)

Born: 4 November 1929, Fulham, London

Married: 1st: 4 April 1964, aged 34 years, married Mary Nettlingham; Dartford, Kent

2nd: 4 April 1995, aged 65 years, married Marion Eveline Bromige; Chatham Register Office, Kent

Alan's 1st wife died in 1989. In 1995, Alan married Marion Eveline Bromige.

6.30.1.6 Marion Eveline Bromige and Alan Douglas Stuart

Marion and Alan currently live in Girne, Northern Cyprus (officially part of Turkey). Marion is a 'Wedding Celebrant' – deploying her Bachelor of Divinity Degree, and additionally works as a 'Freelance Journalist' and 'Teacher'.

Marion Eveline Stuart with her Dog: Fundraising Event, Northern Cyprus: 2012

6.30.2 Lewis James Blaker (1949-1996)

Born: 20 April 1949, Dulwich Hospital, Dulwich, London

Died: 2 January 1996, aged 46 years, 67 Auckland Hill, West Norwood

Buried: 30 January 1996, Grave O93 42446, West Norwood Cemetery

Lewis worked in the crematorium at West Norwood Cemetery. It is understood that Lewis was involved with the cremation of his father's body in 1979. Lewis appeared to be a very 'dark' person, as characterised by him keeping a full-sized coffin in his bedroom – that's taking your work back home with you!

After his parents were both dead, Lewis continued to live in the basement flat at 67 Auckland Hill, West Norwood. Lewis was a 'Registered Disabled

Person, as a result of his diabetes. He committed suicide by taking a large insulin overdose. He was found at his home in Auckland Hill, West Norwood on 2 January 1996. It is not clear exactly when Lewis died. He had established a pact with his girl friend that they would commit suicide together. However, only Lewis died; his partner survived. His death certificate records that he died as a result of an *'Insulin Overdose'* followed by the stark words: *'He killed himself'*.

6.31 Children of Emily Maud Blaker (1911-2003) and Archibald Ernest Garner (1908-1985)

6.31.1 Hilda Mary Garner (1935-)

Born: 27 February 1935, St. James' Hospital, Battersea, London
Married: 20 September 1958, aged 23 years, married Geoffrey Brooks; St. Andrew's Church, Streatham, London

Hilda was the eldest of 3 children born to Emily Maud Blaker and Archibald Ernest Garner.

By the time of her marriage, Hilda had changed her 2nd Christian name from Mary to *'Marie'*. She was then living with her parents at 147 Glenister Park Road, Streatham.

6.31.1.1 Geoffrey Brooks (1937-)

Born: 5 February 1937, Kent
Married: 20 September 1958, aged 21 years, married Hilda Marie Garner; St. Andrew's Church, Streatham, London

Geoffrey was born to James Robert Brooks and *'Unknown'* White. James was an *'Office Worker'*. Geoffrey was known as *'Geoff'*.

At the time of his marriage to Hilda Marie Garner, *'Geoff'* was working as a *'Clerk'* and was living at 15 Montacute Road, Morden, Surrey.

6.31.1.2 Hilda Marie Garner and Geoffrey Brooks

Hilda and *'Geoff'* had 2 children:

- David Richard: b. 16 August 1967, Sutton, London
- Michael Robert: b. 28 June 1970, Sutton, London

Hilda changed her name by Deed Poll to *'Marie'*.

'Marie' and *'Geoff'* now live in Carshalton, London, and also spent time at a holiday home in Florida, USA.

6.31.2 Gordon Ernest Garner (1938-)

Born: 13 May 1938, St. James' Hospital, Battersea, Surrey
Married: 9 September 1967, aged 29 years, married Teressa Collins; St. Michael's Church, Wandsworth Common, London

Gordon was the 2nd of 3 children born to Emily Maud Blaker and Archibald Ernest Garner. In 1967, Gordon married Teresa Collins. At the time of his marriage, Gordon was working as a 'Decorator' – like his father, and was living with his parents at 147 Glenister Park Road, Streatham.

6.31.2.1 Teresa Collins (1943-)

Born: 3 July 1943, Wells, Somerset

Married: 9 September 1967, aged 24 years, married Gordon Ernest Garner; St. Michael's Church, Wandsworth Common, London

Teresa was born to Alfred John Collins and Gladys E. Scholes (1915-). Alfred worked as a 'Decorator' might he have worked with Gordon's father, who was also a 'Decorator'? At the time of her marriage to Gordon Ernest Garner, Teresa was working as an 'Audio Typist' and was living at 26 Broomfield Road, Battersea, London.

6.31.2.2 Gordon Ernest Garner and Teresa Collins

Gordon and Teresa were married at St. Michael's Church, Cobham Close, Battersea.

St. Michael's Church, Cobham Close, Battersea: Contemporary View

Gordon and Teresa had 2 children:

- Allan John: b. 18 June 1968
- Collin Barry: b. 3 August 1971, Croydon, Surrey

Gordon and Teresa now live in Bridgewater, Somerset.

6.31.3 Patricia Garner (1940-)

Born: 19 May 1940, St. James' Hospital, Battersea, London

Married: 27 March 1965, aged 24 years, married Iginio Martino Brentini; St. Bartholomew's Roman Catholic Church, Ellison Road, Streatham, London

Patricia was the youngest of 3 children born to Emily Maud Blaker and Archibald Ernest Garner. She was known as 'Pat'.

In 1965, 'Pat' married Iginio Martino Brentini. At the time of her marriage, 'Pat' was working as a 'Clerk Typist', and was living with her parents at 147 Glenister Park Road, Streatham.

6.31.3.1 Iginio Martino Brentini (1932-2009)

Born: 1932, Italy

Married: 27 March 1965, aged 33 years, married Patricia Garner; St. Bartholomew's Roman Catholic Church, Ellison Road Streatham, London

Died: 2009, aged 77 years

In 1965, Iginio married 'Pat' Garner. At the time of his marriage, Iginio was working as a 'Baker's Salesman' and was living at 33 Symner Court, Lansdowne Green, Nine Elms, London.

St. Bartholomew's R.C. Church, Streatham, London

6.31.3.2 Patricia Garner and Iginio Martino Brentini

'Pat' and Iginio had a son:

- Neil Anthony: b. 3 May 1968, Lambeth, London

'Pat' and Iginio divorced in 1973. 'Pat' did not remarry. She now lives in Hookwood, Horley, Surrey.

Iginio died in 2009.

6.32 Children of Beatrice Blaker (1914-1999) and Leslie Harold Cook (1909-2000)

6.32.1 Valerie Lilian Cook (1936-)

Born: 8 May 1936, Middle House, Dorking Road, Epsom, Surrey
Married: 20 October 1956, aged 20 years, married Edward Joseph Attwater; The Register Office, Croydon, Surrey

Valerie was the first of 2 children born to Beatrice Blaker and Leslie Harold Cook. In 1936, Valerie married Edward Joseph Attwater. At the time of her marriage, Valerie was living with her parents at 18 Delamare Crescent, Croydon, and was working as a 'Clerk' in a Dairy.

6.32.1.1 Edward Joseph Attwater (1928-)

Born: 11 May 1928, Croydon, Surrey
Married: 20 October 1956, aged 20 years, married Valerie Lilian Cook; Croydon, Surrey

Edward was one of 6 children born to James Thorndal Attwater (1889-1950) and Mary ('Polly') New. James worked as a 'Pipe Layer'.

Edward was known as 'Ted'. At the time of his marriage to Valerie, 'Ted' was working as a 'Contact Pipe Layer', and was living at 106 Wentworth Road, West Croydon.

6.32.1.2 Valerie Lilian Cook and Edward Joseph Attwater

Valerie and 'Ted' did not have any children.

They now live in Wrangle, Lincolnshire. They are both involved in pigeon breeding and racing, and are 'leading lights' in the Boston and District Racing Pigeon scene.

6.32.2 Brian Leslie Cook (1942-)

Born: 11 February 1942, 43 High Street, Thornton Heath, Croydon

Married: 1st: 15 June 1968, aged 26 years, married Linda Stevens; Great Tattenham Methodist Church, Epsom Downs, Surrey

2nd: 3 August 1974, aged 32 years, married Beverley Denise Chapman; Townsville, Queensland, Australia

Brian was the younger of 2 children born to Beatrice Blaker and Leslie Harold Cook.

Brian was a gifted sportsman and signed as an apprentice for Crystal Palace Football Club. However, football was not a well-paid job in those days and, despite opportunities to play at a higher level, Brian pursued his training as a Civil Engineer. In 1968, Brian married Linda Stevens.

6.32.2.1 Linda Stevens (1947-)

Born: Q2 1947, Surrey

Married: 15 June 1968, aged 21 years, married Brian Leslie Cook; Great Tattenham Methodist Church, Epsom Downs, Surrey

Apart from her birth date and marriage, nothing more is known about Linda.

6.32.2.2 Brian Leslie Cook and Linda Stevens

When Brian and Linda married, he was working as a '*Civil Engineer*' and was living with his parents at 53 Gatestone Court, Central Hill, Upper Norwood, whilst she was working as a '*Student Nurse*', and was living at 48 Chapel Way, Tattenham Corner, Epsom.

Sadly, their marriage did not last. Brian and Linda divorced, and, in November 1971, Brian emigrated to Australia to work on the Greenvale Nickel Mine project, some 220 km northwest of Townsville, Queensland. Brian was employed as a Civil Engineer, helping to create facilities for the nickel mine and the vast workforce it employed. At its height, Greenvale accommodated some 3,000 people. When the nickel mine ceased operations in 1993, the Greenvale township almost became a 'ghost town'.

6.32.2.3 Beverley Denise Chapman (1950-)

Born: 3 October 1950, Ayr, Queensland, Australia

Married: 3 August 1974, aged 23 years, married Brian Leslie Cook; Townsville, Queensland, Australia

Beverley worked as a '*Swimming Instructor*'.

6.32.2.4 Brian Leslie Cook and Beverley Denise Chapman

Brian and Beverley initially lived in Townsville, Queensland – a city on the north-eastern coast of Queensland, adjacent to the central portion of the Great Barrier Reef. They had 2 children:

- Natalie Louise: b. 19 January 1975, Townsville, Queensland

- David: b. 15 February 1976, Townsville, Queensland

Natalie, Brian, Beverley & David Cook: 2008

Brian and Beverley now live in Sinnamon Park, Brisbane, Australia.

6.32.2.5 Natalie Louise Cook (1975-)

Born: 19 January 1975, Townsville, Queensland, Australia

Married: November 2008, aged 33 years, married Sarah Maxwell;
Queenstown Millbrook Golf Resort, Queenstown, New Zealand

Natalie is particularly noteworthy, as she is a professional, multi Olympian Beach Volleyball star.

She was the 'dux' (i.e. leader) of her school, Corinda State High (located in the western suburbs of Brisbane). She enrolled in pre-medicine college courses, and also took up volleyball, captaining the Australian Indoor Junior Team in 1992. In 1993 she began playing Beach Volleyball. In 1994 she became a professional Beach Volleyball athlete, and gave up her pursuit of a medical degree.

She has competed for Australia at 5 consecutive Olympics, a unique achievement in Beach Volleyball. The highlight of her career came in 2000, when, together with her then Volleyball partner, Kerri Pottharst, she won the Gold Olympic medal on Bondi Beach, Sydney in her 'home' Olympics. In recognition of this achievement, Natalie and Kerri were featured on celebratory Australian postage stamps – part of a 17-stamp Olympic Gold Medalist issue.

Commemorative Australian Stamp: 2000

An Amazing Achievement – The Best of the Best!

Natalie has a remarkable professional record, including:

- 1996 Olympic Games Bronze medal (Atlanta, USA)
- 1996 World Championships Bronze medal (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
- 2000 Olympic Games Gold medal (Sydney, Australia)
- 2003 World Championships Bronze medal (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
- 2004 Olympic Games 4th place (Athens, Greece)
- 2007 1st Place, Korean Open
- 2008 Olympic Games, 5th place (Beijing, China)

Natalie competed in the London 2012 Summer Olympics, with her Beach Volleyball partner, Tamsin Hinchley, but, unfortunately they did not progress beyond the pool stage of the competition. After the London

Olympics, Natalie retired from professional competition to focus on her 'Sandstorm' beach business, based in Nathan, and her promotional and public speaking activities. In August 2012, Natalie announced that she and her partner, Sarah Maxwell, each hoped to have a baby, fathered via IVF by Natalie's beach volleyball coach, Steve Anderson. Natalie broke the news via an interview with the Australian magazine 'New Idea'. Sarah and Natalie have been together for the past 10 years, and married in 2008 in New Zealand. Sarah was a Canadian Beach Volleyball champion before her retirement.

Sarah Maxwell (left) & Natalie Louise Cook (right): Wedding Vows, November 2008

6.33 Children of Graham Joseph Blaker (1946-) and Juliet Elizabeth Hammond (1948-)

6.33.1 Jonathan James Blaker (1976-)

Born: 15 February 1976, Risedale Maternity Hospital, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria

Baptised: St. Mary of Furness, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria

Married: 17 November 2007, aged 31 years, married Thiana Berthier da Cunha; Paroquia Nossa Senhora de Salete, Rua Longe de Morretes, Curitiba, Parana, Brasil

Divorced: 2011

Jonathan is the eldest of 3 sons born to Graham Joseph Blaker and Juliet Elizabeth Hammond. He was educated at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Richmond, North Yorkshire, followed by Henham Primary School, Henham, Essex, followed by St. Edmund's College, Old Hall Green, Ware, Hertfordshire. St. Edmund's is an independent Catholic day and boarding school, which transferred from Douai, France to England in 1793. It was originally founded by Cardinal William Allen in 1568, and is the oldest Catholic school in England. Its alumni includes 20 canonised saints and 133 martyrs – neither of which were criteria for selecting it for Jonathan's education! When the family moved to Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, Jonathan was admitted to the Sixth Form College of John Hampden Grammar School, Marlow Hill, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire.

Jonathan Blaker: Dad's Office in Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex; 1991

After completing his 'A' Level examinations, Jonathan studied Industrial Design Engineering at Brunel University, Runnymede Campus, Coopers Lane, Egham, Surrey. After obtaining his BSc degree, he started work with Dyson Ltd. at their Research and Development Centre, in Malmesbury, Wiltshire, before taking an MSc course at Imperial College, London. After completing that course, Jonathan took a PhD in Materials Science, and has continued with Post Doctoral research in the Materials Department. Whilst working for Dyson Ltd., Jonathan lived in a rented property at 3

Canal Side Cottage, High Street, Hungerford, Berkshire. In London, Jonathan lived in various shared rental flats.

Jonathan became interested in 'Capoeira' (a Brazilian martial art that combines elements of dance, ritual, gravity-defying acrobatics and music; it was developed in Brasil by descendants of African slaves) and has maintained this dance activity ever since. He also studied, and became fluent in, the Portuguese language of Brasil.

Jonathan Blaker: Capoeira Exercise, Grand Canyon, Arizona: August 2004

Whilst undertaking his PhD studies at Imperial College, Jonathan met Thiana Berthier da Cunha, to whom he became engaged and married in 2007.

6.33.1.2 Thiana Berthier da Cunha (1978-)

Born: 22 June 1978, Curitiba, Parana, Brasil

Married: 17 November 2007, aged 29 years, married Jonathan James Blaker; Paroquia Nossa Senhora de Saete, Rua Longe de Morretes, Curitiba, Parana, Brasil

Thiana was one of 3 children born to Danilo Marcos da Cunha and Carmelita Maria Berthier Silveira. She was educated in Curitiba, and the University of Sao Paulo, and held BSc, MSc and PhD degrees. She met Jonathan during a 6-month Research Internship in the Materials Department, Imperial College, University of London.

6.33.1.3 Jonathan James Blaker and Thiana Berthier da Cunha

Jonathan and Thiana married in Brasil, and, after her marital visa was approved, Thiana moved to England to join her husband. They initially lived in a shared rented flat in New Kings Road, London, before moving to a rented flat at 2a Pudding Lane, St. Albans, Hertfordshire.

Dr. Jonathan James Blaker PhD MSc BSc: Imperial College Degree Presentation

Sadly, their marriage was short-lived, and they separated in April 2008, becoming divorced in 2010. There were no children from this marriage.

Jonathan now lives in a modern flat in Canary Wharf, London, and works as a Post Doctoral Researcher at Imperial College, London, with a parallel consulting activity.

6.33.2 Paul Andrew Blaker (1979-)

Born: 2 January 1979, Risedale Maternity Hospital, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria

Baptised: St. Mary of Furness, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria

Married: 9 August 2008, aged 29 years, married Laura Clare Mawson; St. Teresa's Roman Catholic Church, Warwick Road, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire

Paul was the 2nd of 3 sons born to Graham Joseph Blaker and Juliet Elizabeth Hammond. Like his elder brother, Paul was educated at Henham Primary School, Henham, Essex, followed by St. Edmund's College, Old Hall Green, Ware, Hertfordshire. When the family moved to Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, Paul took the 13+ examinations, and was admitted to the John Hampden Grammar School, Marlow Hill, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire.

*Young Enterprise Presentation by Paul Blaker. M.D. of 'Elite' to Duke of Kent;
John Hampden Grammar School*

Paul Andrew Blaker: Kings College, University of London

Paul studied Medicine at Kings College, University of London, and now works in St. Thomas' Hospital, London. He is currently a 'Senior Registrar' and is studying for a PhD. He should become a 'Consultant' in 2014.

6.33.2.1 Laura Clare Mawson (1980-)

Born: 7 January 1980, Lambeth, London

Married: 9 August 2008, aged 28 years, married Paul Andrew Blaker; St. Teresa's Roman Catholic Church, Warwick Road, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire

Laura was one of 3 children born to David Charles Mawson (1947-) and Mina Mehrnoosh (1947-). David worked as a 'Clinical Psychologist'. He is now married to Linda Milner (1950-), and Mina Mawson now lives with her long-term partner, Anthony Owen. Mina was born in Tehran, Iran. David and Linda now live in France.

6.33.2.2 Paul Andrew Blaker and Laura Clare Mawson

Paul and Laura were married in Beaconsfield and celebrated their wedding at Stoke Park Club, Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire.

Paul & Laura Blaker, 9 August 2009, St. Teresa's Church, Beaconsfield

Paul and Laura have 2 children:

- Joseph Richard: b. 26 February, St. Thomas' Hospital, Westminster Bridge Road, London
- Charles Anthony: b. 23 January 2012, St. Thomas' Hospital, Westminster Bridge Road, London

After their marriage, Paul and Laura lived in Mennie House, Royal Herbert Pavillions, before moving to a flat in Blackheath Village. They have recently moved to a Victorian terraced house in the Ashburnham Triangle Conservation Area, Greenwich, London.

Both Paul and Laura are qualified doctors. Paul is a 'Gastro-Enterologist', whilst Laura is a trainee 'General Practitioner'.

6.33.3 James Joseph Blaker (1983-)

Born: 15 July 1983, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow Hospital, Essex
Baptised: 28 August 1983, St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Shelly Road, Hove, East Sussex

James was the youngest of 3 sons born to Graham Joseph Blaker and Juliet Elizabeth Hammond. He was educated at Henham Primary School, Henham, Essex, followed by Waterside School, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire. When the family moved to Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, James joined the independent Davenies School, Beaconsfield, followed by Berkhamsted Collegiate School, Castle Street, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire.

After leaving school, James was admitted to the University of Aston, Birmingham, where he studied Managerial and Administrative Studies.

James Blaker: Graduation from Aston University, Birmingham

After gaining a 1st Class Honours degree from Aston, James joined Barclays Commercial Bank, working on relationship management, credit analysis and leveraged finance deals in their Canary Wharf offices. He subsequently joined BTS Group AG, a global strategic consultancy group.

James Blaker, 2005

James now lives in Shooters Hill, London. In December 2012, he became engaged to Madelena Louise Wilders (1984-).

6.33.3.1 Madelena Louise Wilders (1984-)

Born: 1984, Winchester, Hampshire

Madelena was the youngest of 2 children born to X Wilders and Sally Francis.