



# THE MOXON MAGAZINE

The Magazine for the Moxons, Established by James Moxon in 1988  
Founding Editor and First President of the Society  
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## Editorial:

HOW TIME flies! This is my 20<sup>th</sup> editorial, since our Founding President and Editor, Jimmy Moxon, died. The years just flash by - getting faster and faster. When I was 7, the previous year had been one seventh of my life: the last year less than one seventieth!

Family historians write a good story (and we try to report parts of them in this magazine). We are told that a good story should have a beginning, a middle, and an ending. This presents family historians with a problem! They attempt to tell a good story, but how can they start at the beginning, when tomorrow, further research reveals earlier history? How can they end, when the events of today become history tomorrow? So they can only write the middle part of the story - a story which is never complete, and can never be completed, but it is hoped, a good story nevertheless. .

This is good news for our magazine! We should never run out of material! Getting that material from our members into this magazine has, on occasions, been problematical. However, since my pleas of a couple of years ago, we are now receiving a much more regular input. Thank you all! But do not think you can now rest on your laurels!

We look forward to our Gathering in Canterbury in September - there is so much to see and do - you may want to extend your stay!

If you have never attended one of our Gatherings, then please consider joining us in Canterbury: we will make you most welcome. And to our regulars, we look forward to re-uniting with old acquaintances.

This year the Gathering is being organised by Rosie and Graham Turner, who live just outside Canterbury. We thank them in advance. Please help them by booking in good time - late bookings can result in a lot of extra work!

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following New Members to the Society:

Karen D Bhowal of Anstey, Leics.  
Christine Senior of Honley, Yorks.  
John K Kemmery of Peterborough  
Helen C Gazeley of Ashstead, Kent.  
Richard E Pope of Horsham.  
Laraine Rissel of Budina Queensland, Australia.

## WHAT TALES WILL WE HEAR IN CANTERBURY?

### GATHERING 2009 in CANTERBURY 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September

GRAHAM AND ROSIE (née Moxon) Turner have volunteered to plan and organise our 2009 Gathering in Canterbury. We will be staying at The Chaucer Hotel in Canterbury. *see photo on page 3.*



*Chaucer*

*Reproduction of picture in William Caxton's  
First Edition of  
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales  
probably printed in 1476  
[http://www.bl.uk/treasures/caxton/  
homepage.html](http://www.bl.uk/treasures/caxton/homepage.html)*

**WE TRIED to get this man to give our after dinner talk on Saturday evening - but unfortunately he was unavailable!**

An application form is included with Member's copy of this magazine.

The historic Chaucer Hotel stands opposite Canterbury's ancient city walls and is only a five minute walk from the city centre.

The general outline of the programme is as follows:

We check into the hotel during the afternoon of Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September. At 5-30pm there is Sung Evensong with the Choir in the Cathedral, for those wishing to attend.

After dinner, the AGM will be held in the Conference Room at 9-00pm.

On Saturday we will meet outside the Cathedral for the group photographs at 10-15am, followed by a conducted tour of the Cathedral, in two groups, lasting about 1½ hours. The rest of the day is your own, and there are a number of options available:

1 Explore the City and/or shop 'til you drop!

*continued in column 2 on next page*

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

I AM REALLY rather proud of the fact that my paternal great grandfather (not a Moxon!) died in a lunatic asylum whence he had been committed because of a certain malady of the brain brought on by over exuberant indulgence at the shrine of Bacchus – nothing new there then, I hear you say. Again with pride I recall the fact that my thirteenth great grandfather (again, not a Moxon) was hanged for murder in York gaol in 1726 and was, I maintain, the first felon ever to have been convicted on the basis of forensic evidence. But that's another story...

Many actual or would-be family historians are afraid that a too enthusiastic digging at the roots of the tree might exhume an ancestor who perhaps fell somewhat short of the standard of rectitude we naturally expect of our forebears. For me this is half the fun; 'unfortunate' incidents in a past life generally tell us much more about the social milieu of our ancestors than the dry statistics of hatched, matched and dispatched. In my examples cited above, the study of the treatment of the mentally ill in Victorian times, or the system of law and order at the beginning of the eighteenth century, have provided endless fascination.

Of course one must be careful about 'dishing the dirt' on the living – one doesn't want to be disinherited, does one? – or indeed on those who, though dead, might still be remembered by the living; the 'hundred year rule' is perhaps a good guide. But don't be afraid of finding skeletons in the closet; they will tell you more about your ancestors than you ever thought you could know.

You might think that it is perhaps fortunate that the founding fathers of the Society had the wisdom not to bestow upon the President dictatorial powers; I am therefore prevented by our constitution from commanding your attendance at this year's Gathering to be held in Canterbury on the weekend of 18-20 September. I am, though, greatly looking forward to seeing you there. No doubt many of you reading this have been to Gatherings in previous years and are looking forward to the next with keen anticipation. For those of you that have not been before, why not give this one a try? It will be lots of fun; new friends to meet, distant cousins with whom to gossip, and new beers to try. (*"Why do you always mention 'beer' in your column?" asks the Editor!*)

I realise, of course, that membership of the Society is widely spread across the face of the globe and that travelling to England may be a great strain, both financially and physically. For those of you who live in the UK, Canterbury might well be within striking distance. So no excuses: fill in – or out, depending which side of the Atlantic you come from – the form which you will find enclosed with this *Magazine* and post it back without delay. But hurry! This event is bound to be a sell-out, so book quickly; otherwise you might find yourself accommodated in a stable.

Graham Jagger

*Gathering continued from page 1*

2 Visit the Chaucer Canterbury Tales Experience, St. Augustines Abbey, and/or some of the Museums. (*consider purchasing a "Passport Ticket" at one of the Museums*)

3 As an alternative, Graham and Rosie will arrange transport in their cars to Dover Castle, (about 25 minutes) leaving the hotel at 1-30pm, returning by 6-00pm. The Castle, the Roman Pharos, the underground tunnels, Admiral Romsey's HQ and the Wartime Hospital, together with the spectacular views over the English Channel to France are not to be missed.

4 Bill Moxon, member of Weatherby, Yorkshire, has a time share at Broome Park (*see photo on page 3 and "box" on page 7*) about 10/15 minutes from Canterbury. Bill writes, "I would be very happy to organise an outing for anyone interested during the Sunday morning and hopefully include coffee and a talk about the interesting history of the place." (This would NOT be a timeshare sales pitch!)

### The Chaucer Hotel:

Their website says, "From here you can visit the world famous Canterbury Cathedral, experience Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, take in the sites at St Augustine's Abbey or even take a trip up the river in a punt. Canterbury also has a fabulous selection of shops, cafes and restaurants to explore and all are within easy walking distance from the hotel"

### Canterbury Cathedral:

We hope to arrange a guided tour of the Cathedral at 10-30am. The time is subject to there being no organised event being arranged between now and then!  
Entry (including guide) Adults £11-00, Concessions £8-50. (Book on Application Form)

### Dover Castle:

Set high above the famous white cliffs, Dover Castle boasts a colourful and fascinating history. Re-live the turbulent war years as you discover the labyrinth of Secret Wartime Tunnels built deep within the cliffs. Walk through the rooms where Sir Admiral Ramsay planned the "miracle of Dunkirk" and tour the underground hospital as you follow the story of a wounded wartime pilot. Above ground, don't miss the recently refurbished Admiralty Lookout, where you can learn about the techniques used to detect enemy ships and even try your hand at Morse code! Also imagine life as a medieval soldier under siege as you walk through our sound and light exhibition – the 1216 Siege Experience – open for a limited time only. Also take time to explore the atmospheric medieval underground tunnels, see one of Europe's best-preserved Roman lighthouses and walk the extensive battlements.  
Entry: £10-00 Adults £8-00 Concessions. Book on Application Form.

**NOTE:** If you are a member of English Heritage - bring your card and get in free!

### The Canterbury Tales:

Ever wondered what it would be like to step back in time and experience the sights, sounds and smells of a bygone era? A visit to The

Canterbury Tales, one of Kent's most popular attractions, with its stunning reconstruction of 14th century England, you can do just that.

Inside the historic building of St. Margaret's Church you can step back over 500 years to join Geoffrey Chaucer (England's finest poet) and his colourful characters on their magical pilgrimage from London to the shrine of St. Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral.

Along the way, their stories of love, romance, jealousy and trickery are vividly recreated with all the fun and excitement of Chaucer's famous tales. Steeped in the rich history of this medieval city, at The Canterbury Tales you really can visit another world.

The Canterbury Tales is a stunningly accurate recreation of medieval life. With new audio guides, it provides an excellent introduction to the City and its famous literary connection.

Entry: £7-75 Adults, £6-75 Concessions

### St. Augustines Abbey:

This great abbey, marking the rebirth of Christianity in southern England, was founded shortly after AD 597 by St Augustine. Originally created by Augustine to be used as a monastery, it is part of the Canterbury World Heritage Site, along with the cathedral and St Martin's Church. The impressive abbey is situated outside the city walls and is sometimes missed by visitors. At the abbey, you can also enjoy the museum and free audio tour.

Entry: £4-10 Adults, £3-30 Concessions

**NOTE:** If you are a member of English Heritage - bring your card and get in free!

### Museum of Canterbury:

Formerly known as the Canterbury Heritage Museum - the Museum of Canterbury is a 21st century interactive museum, whose theme is the city itself and its often turbulent story.

Entry: £3-50. Adults £2-35 Concessions

**Rupert Bear Museum:** (at the Museum of Canterbury) Come and join Rupert and his Chums in their very own museum - full of adventure and surprises!

**Canterbury West Gate Towers:** After the Cathedral, the West Gate is Canterbury's next eye-catching landmark. It has stood for six centuries on guard over the road to and from London.

Entry: £1-25, Adults £0-75 Concessions

**Canterbury Roman Museum:** The Roman Museum is underground at the level of the Roman town. It's an exciting mix of excavated real objects: authentic reconstructions; and preserved remains of a Roman town house with its famous mosaics.

Entry: Free

**Canterbury Royal Museum and Art Gallery:** This splendid Victorian building houses decorative arts and picture collections - including a gallery for T. S. Cooper, England's finest cattle painter.

Entry: Free

If you can manage all this on the Saturday, then, "You're a better man than I, Gungha Din!"

JMH



*Chaucer Hotel*



*Canterbury Cathedral*



*Aerial View of Dover Castle*



*Broome Park. For the opportunity to visit see "box" on page 7.*



**ABOVE:** *St. Augustine's Abbey*



*West Gate Towers*

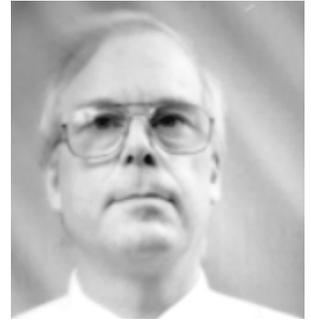


**RIGHT:** *Canterbury Tales display*



# THE DEATH OF DR. WALTER MOXON

By Graham Jagger



DR. WALTER MOXON, one of the leading physicians of his day and the first to recognise that multiple sclerosis was a specific disease, died in his consulting rooms at 6 Finsbury Circus, London, sometime in the late evening of Wednesday, 21 July, 1886, not quite a month after his fiftieth birthday.

Finsbury Circus, now a Conservation Area, is in the north of the City of London, close to Liverpool Street station.

The Finsbury Estate, situated within the London Borough of Islington, was laid out on the fields north of Moorgate as a residential suburb by the City Surveyor, George Dance the Younger, between 1775 and 1800. He was the first to introduce formal, planned crescents and circuses to London. The Estate was constructed on land leased by the City from the Prebendary of Finsbury in 1768 and had Finsbury Square as its centrepiece. Dance's plans for Finsbury Circus were not implemented until Bethlehem Hospital, which was designed by Robert Hooke for the treatment of mentally ill patients and famously known as 'Bedlam' was demolished in 1814 and relocated to St George Fields in Lambeth to what is now the Imperial War Museum.

None of the Georgian houses that once stood on Finsbury Circus remain. The area became the focus for several important British companies who designed and built headquarters around the Circus. Lutyens designed the lavish Britannic House, 1-6 Finsbury Circus, with a Westmoreland slate roof between 1921-5 for the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, later to become known as British Petroleum (BP).

The garden within Finsbury Circus is maintained as a public open space protected by statute and is listed as a Registered Garden – grade II on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens.

Following the establishment of the Estate, many doctors and surgeons set up practices in the area around Finsbury Pavement and in Finsbury Circus, generally occupying ground floor rooms while the owner and his family lived on the upper floors. These doctors served the wealthy professionals and their families that lived in the area. Rising rents from the increased pressure for financial services in the City in the late 19th century led to the removal of both wealthy residents and the medical profession to the West End, particularly Harley Street.

The inquest into Walter's death, before a jury and Samuel Frederick Langham, Coroner for the City of London, was held at his consulting rooms on Saturday 24 July 1886 in the presence of – as was then the custom – the body of the deceased. Four witnesses were summoned to appear; Richard Clement Lucas, Louisa Cotton, Frederick Gordon Brown and Mrs Selina Moxon, Walter's widow. The records of the inquest do not include any evidence from Selina and she may not in fact have attended.

The first witness to be called was Richard Clement Lucas,<sup>1</sup> a surgeon of 18 Finsbury

Square, who testified that he had known Walter Moxon intimately for 23 years. He last saw the deceased alive at about 2:30 pm on Tuesday 20 July, the day before Moxon's death, at 6 Finsbury Circus, the visit lasting between 15 and 20 minutes. During their conversation Moxon complained very much of intense pain in his head, giddiness and a feeling of numbness down his left side and bleeding from his kidneys. In the weeks before his death Moxon had been very much overworked and had always been very delicate. During his life Moxon had been retained as a medical consultant by a number of life insurance companies and between 8 am and 9 am on the morning of his death he had sent a telegram to Lucas asking him to do his work at the Star Life Office at 11 am. Lucas went there and found Moxon trying to look over the papers. Moxon said to Lucas that "I am so ill I can't go on with it". Moxon then left saying that he would meet Lucas at the Metropolitan Life Office at 1 pm. When Lucas arrived there a letter from Moxon awaited him stating that he intended to be quiet for the rest of the day as he got rather anxious about his attacks.

Lucas stated that there was nothing in Moxon's private or professional life that would depress him and that the bleeding from the kidneys would be likely to affect the brain and cause the depression. For some time Moxon had been in the habit of taking chloral to cause sleep.

The next witness was Louisa Cotton who was the cook to the Corney family who lived on the upper floors of 6 Finsbury Circus. She testified that at about 1:25 am on the morning of Thursday 22 July she went to Moxon's rooms. He had always left for his home in Highgate by 11 pm in the evening and the fact that on this occasion he had not done so caused some anxiety. Having knocked at the door a great many times and getting no answer she asked her mistress, Miss Corney, if she should go in was directed to do so. She found the deceased lying on the couch, took hold of him and called him by name but he made no reply. Miss Corney sent for Dr Gordon Brown who came very quickly and found Moxon dead.

The last witness was Frederick Gordon Brown,<sup>2</sup> a surgeon of 17 Finsbury Circus, who testified that he had been sent for a little before 2:00 am on the morning of Thursday, 22 July. Brown found Moxon lying dead on the couch in his consulting room; he had been dead some few hours. Near the couch was a table on which Brown saw a tumbler with two drops of fluid in it, two small bottles with the stoppers out, one of which was empty, the other being half full of hydrocyanic acid. Brown tested the drops in the tumbler which he found to be hydrocyanic acid. The quantity missing from the bottle was sufficient to account for Moxon's death which was therefore due to poisoning by an overdose of hydrocyanic acid.

On Moxon's writing desk on the table was a paper printed in his own handwriting. Moxon had been to his mother's grave at Finchley that afternoon and brought some

flowers away which were by his side on the chair.

The paper which Brown found, and produced at the inquest, was a Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death on which Moxon had certified his own death. In the space reserved for the Cause of Death he had written 'Bad arteries. Giddiness and severe attack of headache and sickness with sense of weakness and coming paralysis of left side. Resolve not to live in this state.' This certificate is reproduced in Figure 1 on the next page.

After hearing the evidence the jury returned the verdict the formal record of which reads as follows:

*An Inquisition Indented, taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen, at a certain place called of known by the name of [blank] situate No. 6 Finsbury Circus in the Parish of St Stephen Coleman Street within the City of London the Twenty Fourth day of July in the Fiftieth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria by the grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith; before Samuel Frederick Langham, Esquire, Coroner of our said Lady the Queen, for the said City of London, on view of the Body of Walter Moxon now here lying dead, upon the Oaths of the several Jurors whose names are hereunder subscribed, and seals affixed, good and lawful men of the said City of London, who being now here duly chosen, sworn and charged to enquire for our said Lady the Queen, when, how, where, and by what means the said Walter Moxon came to his death, do upon their oaths say, That the said Walter Moxon not being of sound mind memory and understanding but lunatic and distracted on the Twenty First day of July in the year aforesaid in the parish and City aforesaid did take drink and swallow down a certain deadly poison called hydrocyanic acid by means of which said poison so by him taken drunk and swallowed down he the said Walter Moxon did then and there poison himself And the said Jurors aforesaid by their oath aforesaid do further say that the said Walter Moxon not being of sound mind memory and understanding but lunatic and distracted in the manner and by the means aforesaid did kill himself And the Jurors aforesaid further say that the said Walter Moxon was a male person, and at the time of his death was of the age of Forty Nine years and was a Physician.*

*In Witness whereof, as well the said Coroner as the said Jurors, have to this Inquisition set their Hands and Seals, on the day, month, and year, and at the place first above written.*

Sam F Langham, Coroner  
 Francis B Marrin  
 William Pope  
 Joseph Cottle Green  
 F Bracher  
 Henry Richardson  
 J N Selman  
 Tom Cartwright  
 A Webster  
 J Quinton  
 J T Millns  
 T Taylor  
 R Crichton Layng  
 W Heeps  
 Geo J Woodman  
 Henry Tracey.

The Coroner duly recorded that Dr Walter Moxon had committed suicide by taking hydrocyanic acid whilst in a state of temporary insanity. The cause of death given on the General Register Office Death Certificate was a little more specific: 'Suicide by taking hydrocyanic acid whilst in a state of temporary insanity following kidney and brain disease'. No report of a *post mortem* examination of Moxon's body is present among the inquest papers and it seems that the existence of kidney and brain disease was inferred from his own report of 'intense pain in his head, suffering from giddiness and a feeling of numbness down his left side and bleeding from the kidney'.

Immediately after the inquest, Moxon's body was conveyed to Highgate where it was interred in grave number 27136, square 10, in the Western Cemetery.<sup>3</sup> The imminence of the funeral may well explain the apparent absence

of Selina Moxon, Walter's widow, from the inquest. Selina was buried in the same grave on Wednesday, 13 February 1901.<sup>3</sup> Selina Jane Moxon, Walter's daughter and only child, also had the right of burial there but in fact she was buried elsewhere, probably in Falmouth where she died at the age of 75 on 14 August 1939.

In Victorian England suicide was still a crime and it brought shame on the memory of the victim and his or her family. Because of Moxon's high standing in the medical profession it is not surprising therefore that suicide was not referred to in two fulsome obituaries published shortly afterwards.

In the nineteenth century hydrocyanic acid was sometimes used as a treatment for vomiting and giddiness. The anonymous writer of the obituary in *The Lancet* explained that Moxon had been self-medicating with hydrocyanic acid and suggested the he had injudiciously taken a carelessly large dose.

After a glowing account of Moxon's life and work the following extract from this obituary contains details which seem to have been taken from the inquest in addition to this new material.<sup>4</sup>

... Slight in figure and of a very delicate constitution, which showed signs of breaking even when he was a student, Moxon always worked to the extreme edge of his strength, but was buoyed up by a natural vivacity and an indomitable will. For years, when overworked, he was liable to attacks of haematuria, apparently dependent upon an excess of oxalates, and of late albumen had been noticed in the intervals of the attacks. Six years ago he on two occasions suffered from haemoptysis, and was compelled to go abroad

and rest for a term of three months. His delicacy of fibre also showed itself in attacks of ulceration of the cornea, whereby one eye became per-manently defective in refraction. Of late he began to suffer, too, from periodic attacks of vomiting, occurring suddenly, for which he used to take hydrocyanic acid. Chloral also became frequently necessary to obtain sleep. But before the outside world he worked on as cheerfully as before, under an ever-increasing weight of practice. Still more recently another symptom appeared in the form of giddiness, with a feeling of numbness and weakness on the left side. He was suffering from one of these attacks in March last, but it passed off after a rest by the sea. To him they meant thickened arteries and impending paralysis or apoplexy. On the morning of July 21st he telegraphed to a friend to relieve him of his life-office work, but he nevertheless came to town in a state of suffering. At 1 o'clock he asked to be relieved of another appointment, and his friend, calling a little later, found him suffering from the symptoms before detailed. Afterwards he drove out to his mother's grave at Finchley, and, returning to finish his cor-responce, appears, whilst suffering in the manner de-scribed, to have injudiciously taken a carelessly large dose of hydrocyanic acid, which in his low state of health doubtlessly precipitated the end....

The obituary in the British Medical Journal covers much the same ground as that in *The Lancet* but does include some details of the funeral.<sup>5</sup>

continued on next page

**BIRTHS AND DEATHS REGISTRATION ACT, 1874.**

**MEDICAL CERTIFICATE of the CAUSE of DEATH.**

[To be given by the Medical Attendant to the Person whose duty it is to give Information of the Death to the Registrar.]

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended Walter Moxon  
 whose age was stated to be five years; that I last saw him on the 21 day of July 1886; that he Died as I believe on the 21 day of July 1886, at 6 Finbury Green; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief the Cause of his death was as hereunder written.

	Cause of Death.	Duration of Disease. †			
		Years.	Months.	Days.	Hours.
(a) Primary...	<u>Bad arteries: Giddiness, &amp; severe</u>				
(b) Secondary..	<u>attack of headache &amp; sickness with</u>				
(c).....	<u>sense of weakness &amp; coming paralysis of left side. unable not to live in this state</u>				

Witness my hand, this 21 day of July 1886.

Signature W Moxon  
 Registered Qualification MD  
 Residence 6 Finbury Green

\* Should the Medical Attendant not feel justified in taking upon himself the responsibility of certifying the fact of Death, he may here insert the words "as I am informed."  
 † The duration of each form of Disease or Symptom, is reckoned from its commencement until death occurs.

N.B.—THIS CERTIFICATE IS INTENDED SOLELY FOR THE USE OF THE REGISTRAR, to whom it should be delivered by the Person giving information to him of the particulars required by law to be registered concerning the Death. Penalty of £2. for neglect of Informant to deliver this Certificate to Registrar.  
 \*. \* The Registrar General cautions all persons against accepting or using this certificate for any purpose whatever except that of delivering it to the Registrar.

Figure 1. Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death on which Dr Walter Moxon had certified his own death (Reproduced by the kind permission of the City of London, London Metropolitan Archives. Document reference CLA/041/IQ/03/061).

continued from page 5

... [Moxon] had suffered severely on several occasions from headache, and had also endured much suffering by reason of sleeplessness, for which he had resorted to the use of chloral. On the day of his death, he had one of these attacks; and, in addition, had persistent vomiting, and some hemiplegic weakness. It would seem that, while in this condition, he took a dose of hydrocyanic acid, careless whether the result might not, in his then state of health, prove actually fatal.

The funeral took place at Highgate Cemetery on Saturday, July 24th; there was a very large concourse of mourners, including Sir William Jenner, President of the College of Physicians, the majority of Dr. Moxon's old colleagues, and many students....

Walter Moxon made his will on 22 December 1881, some four and a half years before his death, so there is no evidence to suggest that he did so in contemplation of his suicide. The will, a one sentence document, was proved on 13 August 1886 and in it Moxon devised "that all I possess shall be at the disposal of my wife after my death." One of the witnesses was Richard Clement Lucas who testified at Moxon's inquest that he had known Walter Moxon intimately for 23 years.

NOTES:

- 1 Richard Clement Lucas was born on 16 April 1846, the son of William Lucas of Oaklands, Midhurst, Sussex. He was educated at Queenwood College, Stockbridge, Hants; Guy's Hospital, and the University of London. He passed in the First Division at every examination; was awarded a gold medal at MB, Honours at BS, and FRCS. Lucas was appointed Assistant Demonstrator of Anatomy at Guy's in 1872, Senior Demonstrator in 1874 and Demonstrator in Practical Surgery in 1877. In 1875 he was elected Assistant Surgeon and was Surgeon from 1888-1906. He also lectured in the Medical School on Anatomy from 1888 to 1900, and Surgery from 1900 to 1906 when he retired. Lucas served as a member of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons from 1901 to 1914, and as Vice President of the College from 1909 to 1911. He was the Bradshaw Lecturer in 1911. He married Kathleen Emma Pelly in 1895, and died on 30 June 1915.
- 2 Dr. Frederick Gordon Brown (1843-1928), the City of London Police surgeon, became best known for his extensive 1888 post mortem report on Catherine Eddowes, one of the victims of Jack the Ripper.
- 3 Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust, 13 March 2008, private communication.
- 4 *The Lancet*, 7 August 1886, pp. 273-276
- 5 *The British Medical Journal*, 31 July 1886, pp. 234-236.

## ANOTHER MOXON MYTH?

SINCE THE FIRST EDITION of the Moxon Magazine, some of the more questionable claims to ancestral distinction made in the pages of "The Moxons of Yorkshire" have been the subject of more detailed research. The book itself made it clear that the Coat of Arms featured on the cover was really a 19th Century construct and lacked genuine armorial authenticity, whilst the authors' conjectures regarding the origins of a certain Sir Samuel Moxon of Pontefract who had reputedly risen to the dizzy heights of being Surveyor-General to Charles II were clearly speculative. It was not surprising that that subsequent research by Graham Jagger, Hilda Clarke and myself demonstrated that "Sir" Samuel was only the figment of a the very fertile imagination of 19th Century Moxons in London who wanted to carve out a distinguished ancestry for themselves to impress their high society friends.

Last October's Moxon Magazine article "Vicarius Filii Dei" prompts me to question details of another section in "The Moxons of Yorkshire". The article quoted an extract from the book stating that the William Moxon who was born in Stanley in 1691 "left home and went to Leeds where he may have joined a distant cousin as a baker. That he joined someone who was already prosperous is evident for we find him shortly so successful as a Master-Baker that he was able to bring up his son to be an Attorney. William married in 1722 Elizabeth Shaw who had large experience as a first-class confectioner's cook and wrote a book of valuable recipes.." Those words seem to be a mixture of fact and unsubstantiated conjecture.

First the facts; the registers for both Wakefield and Leeds record the marriage on 19th April 1722 of a William Moxon to Elizabeth Shaw, and an Elizabeth Moxon first published her book "English Housewifery" in 1740: it ran to 13 (enlarged) editions in Leeds, plus two further editions in London and one more in Hull, between 1740 and 1800. It is also true that John, the son of William and Elizabeth (Shaw), became an Attorney, and joined his cousin, also an Attorney in Wakefield. But so far I have found no evidence that William was a "master-baker", nor that Elizabeth had large experience as a "first-class confectioner's cook". If any reader of the MM has any such evidence I would be delighted to hear from them.

The Leeds Parish Registers provide the basic details about the family, as follows:

- 29th Apr 1722 William Moxon of Stanley m. Elizabeth Shaw (the marriage is also recorded in the Wakefield registers).
- 21st Feb 1722/3 Mary, daughter of William Moxon, Kirkgate, bapt (born Dec 1 ?)
- 19th Jun 1724 child of William Moxon, Kirkgate, buried
- 10th Jun 1725 John, son of William Moxon, Kirkgate, bapt
- 19th Jun 1729 infant daughter of Mr Moxon, Attorney, buried
- 16th Dec 1731 William and James, twin sons of Mr William Moxon, Kirkgate, bapt
- 13th Apr 1732 infant son of William



**DON MOXON is a founder member of the Moxon Society and lives in Beccles on the Norfolk-Suffolk border. In this article he explores another Moxon myth...**

- Moxon of Kirkgate buried
- 23rd Feb 1738 William, son of William Moxon, buried
- 6th Jun 1748 Mary Moxon of Kirkgate buried
- 12th Jul 1751 Elizabeth, daughter of Mr John Moxon, Briggate, bapt
- 30th Aug 1759 Ann, daughter of John Moxon, Kirkgate, bapt
- 14th Feb 1761 wife of John Moxon of Kirkgate, buried
- 20th Oct 1761 wife of Mr William Moxon of Kirkgate, buried
- 30th Jun 1762 Mr William Moxon of Kirkgate buried.

The fact that Mary, d. of William of Kirkgate, was baptised 10 months after William and Elizabeth's wedding is a strong indication that all the Kirkgate Moxon references come from that marriage, and the linkage between William of Kirkgate, the use of the formal title of "Mr" (invariably the mark of respect accorded to one who was a "gentleman") and the clear reference to him being an Attorney must surely mean that the William who married Elizabeth Shaw was an Attorney, and not a master-baker. That John Moxon, Attorney of Wakefield, was the son of the deceased William of Leeds, is attested to in an administration of 1770. But the only indication that I have personally been able to find in regard to William being a baker comes in a list of Leeds Moxon references which was sent to me years ago by a friend, now deceased, the reference in question reading, "1762 Oct 29th: Admin: John Moxon of Leeds, heir to William Moxon, late of Leeds, Baker (Wakefield)". But that document is not listed in the Moxon Society's list of wills and administrations, and despite exhaustive enquiries at both the Borthwick and Wakefield, I have been unable to locate it. In the absence of corroborative evidence, I wonder how reliable the reference is. Perhaps the word "baker" was not actually in the document, but was inserted by someone who chose to add the word in order to try to clarify that William was the husband of the author of the cookery book; perhaps it was John rather than William who was a baker (though that seems unlikely in view of the clear fact that John was already an Attorney); or perhaps - as Graham Jagger has suggested to me - the word may have been a misreading for "banker" (though that too seems unlikely for the same reason).

I turn now to the uncertainty about William's wife Elizabeth nee Shaw being the author of the cookery book. In the Dictionary of National Biography, the article about the author of "English Housewifery" states that what is definitely known about her is gleaned from her book. However, we know that Elizabeth Shaw who married in 1722 was born in Wakefield (Stanley) in 1701. We also know that the first edition of the book was published in 1740/1, and on the title page the author claimed that her book was "the result of 30 years' practice and experience." That claim leads the writer of the Dictionary of National Biography article to question whether the author could be identified with Elizabeth Shaw. But we are at liberty to ask what Elizabeth really meant by her claim: after all, a girl would be expected to learn culinary skills from a very early age, and Elizabeth's "practice and experience" could quite legitimately be taken to stretch back a full ten years before she married and became mistress of her own household.

The successive editions of "English Housewifery" give various details and lots of clues about the author's circumstances and whereabouts. The story of the book begins in September 1740 when the Leeds Mercury carried an advertisement that the book was "ready for the press": it was to be printed by James Lister of Leeds, and could be purchased from the printer, from a Mr Swale, a bookseller of Leeds, and from the author at her house in Pontefract. The title page of the first edition stated that it was printed by J. Lister of Leeds, and sold by J. Swale, J.Ogle and S. Howgate at Leeds, J. Lord at Wakefield, and the author at Pontefract. (It is therefore clear that in 1740 Elizabeth had strong links with both Leeds and Pontefract, and also something of a connection with Wakefield; we also remember that the William and Elizabeth who married in 1722 both originated from Wakefield). The second, third and fourth editions of the book (1743, 1746, 1749) were obtainable through J. Lister, J Swale, and the author at Pontefract. The title page of the fifth edition, probably dated 1752, referred to a Mr William Moxon as now selling the book, with no longer any reference to Elizabeth herself doing so. Are we then to suppose that Elizabeth had died between 1749 and 1752? If so, neither the Leeds nor the Pontefract registers record her burial. Perhaps Elizabeth died and was buried elsewhere. Perhaps it was that Elizabeth had become incapacitated through illness - a stroke perhaps - leaving William to take over the responsibility for the marketing of the book. Or perhaps the register entry of the death of "the wife" of Mr William Moxon in Leeds in 1761 referred to William's wife by a second marriage.

Clearly there remains considerable uncertainty about Elizabeth's actual life and death. But it is obvious that as almost certainly the wife of an Attorney and as the author of a best-selling cookery book, she must have been a woman of considerable substance. Not without justification, someone has referred to her as the Mrs Beaton or the Delia Smith of her day, and she deserves rather more honour than she has been accorded - whatever myths may have been attached to both her and her husband.

## MOXON FOB WATCH

*Christopher Moxon, Member of Witney, Oxford,  
saw this fob watch for sale on E-bay.*



THE DIAL shows "MOXON RYE LANE".

The watch was advertised as going intermittently, and suggested it would be suitable for breaking down for spares. The Society did not consider buying it!

The watch was described as an Antique Continental .800 Solid Silver Key Wind Open Face Fob Pocket Watch.

The item measures approx 1.5" (3.6cm) in diameter, not including crown. The movement is un-marked, all the covers close tightly. The dome is base metal. The Swiss .800 hallmarked, Solid Silver open faced case is in a good order, and the rear cover is still sprung. The inside of the rear cover has a full set of Swiss hallmarks, and a serial number "41031."

The advert on E-bay suggested the watch had been owned by a "Moxon" in Halifax.

Graham Jagger writes: *Watches of the kind described were imported from the continent in large numbers in the later Victorian and Edwardian eras. This watch, which has on the dial "Swiss made", is one of these. Such watches were then "badged" by the British retailer. The Moxon whose name appears on the dial was one such seller. By reference to the Post Office London Directory for 1908 I have been able to identify this Moxon as George John Moxon of 150 Rye Lane, Peckham. So the Moxon on the dial was nothing to do with the owner and certainly nothing to do with the Moxons of Halifax! You may be interested to know that the watch was sold for £28.55 on eBay.*

Many Thanks, Graham.

JMH

## JOHN MOXON - CONVICT

Extracted from <<http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/fh/convicts>>

IN MOXON MAGAZINE No. 23 (April 1999, Judith Ayre, Member of Beverley, reported on John Moxon, who with an accomplice Charles Robinson, turned to highway robbery to earn some money. Due to their amateurish methods, they were soon apprehended. Both were convicted and sentenced to death.

However, John escaped the gallows in favour of transportation for life, and by early May 1817 he was on his way to the prison Hulk 'Retribution' at Sheerness.

At that point the trail went cold.

In a recent 'Family Tree Magazine' I spotted the above website, so had a look.

There was a 'John Moxon', one of 250 convicts transported on the Larkins, which sailed 24 July 1817, bound for New South Wales. John had been convicted at York Assizes for a term of life. This sounds like the above John Moxon. So what happened to him once he landed? Can any Oz member help?

Judith was not able to determine John's origins.

The website listed two other Moxon convicts:

John Moxon, one of 158 convicts transported on the Lord Sidmouth, 20 September 1818, bound for New South Wales. He was convicted at Nottingham (Town) Assizes for a term of 7 years.

Robert Moxon, one of 144 convicts transported on the Adamant, 26 March 1821, bound for New South Wales. He was convicted at Nottingham Town Quarter Session for a term of 7 years.

Since both were convicted in Nottingham, we wonder if they were related. The IGI does not show either baptism in Nottinghamshire.

JMH

## BROOME PARK

There will be a chance to visit Broome Park on Sunday morning. Member Bill Moxon of Weatherby has a time share there, and has offered members the opportunity to meet him there to see the hall and hear about its history. **THIS WILL NOT BE A PLUG FOR BUYING A TIME SHARE!**

So that Bill knows numbers, please fill in your requirements on the application form.

See photo on page 3

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The second child of William Moxon and Elizabeth nee Shaw, John, married Mrs. Ann Horncastle. They feature in 'Another Problem Solved' elsewhere in this issue.*

## TIM JOINS THE RAF - Part 1 of 2

*The late Timothy Napier Moxon, member of Jamaica, left this account of his early days when he joined the RAF during WWII. His niece, Judith Zakka, and his sister, Rosie Turner, both members, sent this to us. Timothy died 21<sup>st</sup> December 2006.*

*See obituary in MM39 April 2007.*

*Also see "Knowing our Moxons" and "Ballooning" in MM26 October 2000.*



*Timothy Moxon in 1944*

1941 WAS A YEAR marked by a succession of brilliant failures. In spite of the heroics of the Royal Air Force and the fortitude of the Londoner against constant night bombing, we were losing the war. Then two things happened in rapid succession. Hitler mounted a massive attack across the Steppes of Russia and the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December.

That same month, I also failed my school certificate, the result of too much Pamela and too little industry, but by March 1942, thanks to the efforts of an aged crammer in Deal, I scraped through with two credits and five passes. Singapore fell to the Imperial Army on February the 15<sup>th</sup>. Merchant seamen were drowning by the thousands in the freezing North Atlantic and the butter ration was reduced to two ounces a week.

A grim grey populace dug for Victory and padded out the meager rations with whale steak, nettle soup and something called snoek. The latter was a fish that nobody had ever heard of, until word got around (undoubtedly spread by the ever present Fifth Column) that it was dogfish. Actually, it encompassed everything that emanated from tropical waters, including barracuda, cobia and basking shark. Whale steak was like a well-seasoned bath sponge dipped in a bucket of blood.

In April, to the euphoria of the academic staff of Greshams, (*Tim's School*) I said a fond farewell to Pamela and she promised to write once a week until we met again. It was two years before we actually held hands once more at her twenty-first birthday party in Colchester, near to Earl's Colne where I had attained the dizzy heights of sergeant pilot.

I had bicycled the twelve miles to Maidstone Town Hall and joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. Two corporals were standing behind a counter, peacetime regulars, grizzled and cynical. "Yes, sir. May I be of assistance?" "I want to join the air force, as a pilot." "Ow old are you, son?" "Well, I'll be eighteen in two months time." "Blimey! You are an old man and no mistake. Fred, get the gentleman a 'Awker 'Urricane at once." "Righto, 'Arry. You want the elastic model or the clockwork?"

The second corporal reached into a filing cabinet and pulled out a form. "Ere you are, captain. Application for aircrew enlistment. Got a pen, 'ave you? No. Well you can borrow mine, but don't nick it, there's a good lad."

I filled in the form and handed it to him. "Right! You'll be called for a medical and selection board in ten days time. Adastral House in London, that is. Travel warrant will be enclosed and then, if you ain't got the pox, you'll be all set. Good Luck, son."

I bounded down the stairs and cycled home in a flushed state of excitement. The days passed and I was in an anguish of expectancy. Every morning I would greet the postman and

he took a fatherly interest in my plight.

"Nothing today, young Tim. These things take time. Letter from Bourmemouth though for your mum; that would be from Master Oliver, (*Tim's elder brother*) I suppose. See you tomorrow."

At last the buff envelope came and Mr. Simpson stood by while I ripped it open. "You are requested to attend at Adastral House at 1100 hours on the 20<sup>th</sup> May for the purpose of aircrew medical training, posting will follow to Aircrew Receiving Center. A travel warrant is enclosed." Simpson took the letter and read it through. A green railway warrant from Sandwich to Charing Cross was enclosed; He slapped me on the back and pedalled off down the drive.

I had never spent any time in London, other than well-escorted visits to the Christmas Pantomime with various aunts and cousins, when we would all stay at Brown's Hotel in Dover Street, which was the base of the Napier clan in the capital. The orbit of these visits had never extended beyond the West End and visits to the Science Museum in the Exhibition Road. I only knew Euston as the terminal from which we were entrained by the same dotting aunts on our way back to Norfolk for another term of hockey sticks and masturbation.

Mother gave me ten shillings (two dollars and forty cents in those days), some sandwiches and a cake made with the last of the sultanas and raisins. Sally had bid me a tearful farewell in the vast kitchen at Upton the evening before and presented me with a tin of her homemade fudge. I was going to war with a plethora of goodies. I was up early and made some porridge and at nine mother walked me through the churchyard. "You'll be able to see Judy in Wood Green. She says her 'digs' are quite nice and perhaps when you get your first pay you can take her out for a meal."

"Fish and chips, maybe," I replied, as I opened the gate for her. "We only get paid two shillings a day." Judy was, as this time, working in an aircraft factory in the north of London and Rosalind was spending part of the summer on John Napier's apple farm in Sussex.

We stopped by the village pond and I put down my small suitcase and gave her a kiss on the cheek. "Good-bye, dear. I put some writing paper and stamps in your suitcase so you've no excuse."

I walked a hundred yards and looked back. Mother was standing by the ghastly war memorial to the dead of the First World War, which had been designed and built by my grandfather. I think he must have been influenced by his trip down the Nile with Rosa, for he had, from granite, constructed a pyramid. I waved and turned to plod the two miles across the field path, past the dykes where we had ice-skated but, which were not covered in duckweed. The rooks cawed overhead, wheeling and soaring, oblivious to

the war and suspicious of my intrusion upon their domain. The Lombardy poplars bent, a long line of candles stooped by the Channel winds.

London. Bomb damage everywhere, lavatories hanging indecently from exposed second floor bathroom walls. Wallpaper, carefully chosen at Harrod's or the Bon Marche, the roses or the Regency stripe now torn and water stained. Polish officers in funny hats, Americans in smart pink trousers and olive tunics bemuddled and aware, but mostly the drab, pale-faced, pinched men and women of the city. I presented my warrant to the ticket inspector and decided to take the underground to Euston. The platform was a mass of bedding and some, homeless and shocked, still slept so that one had to pick a way over the tousled heads of thin children, oblivious to the cacophony of the trains.

There were dozens of young men milling around the reception hall at Adastral House. I presented my letter to a Flight Sergeant with burn marks all over his face and the single wing rounded with the letters AG on his left chest. An air gunner. He handed the letter back and told me to stand in the queue. I seemed to be the only one with any luggage. A tall, good looking boy with dark, curling hair and dressed in Harris tweeds turned to me. "What do you want to be?" "A pilot, of course. What about you?" "Same. I hear they're washing a lot of chaps out now and making them bomb aimers. By the way, my name's Potter, Johnny Potter. What's yours?" "Tim Moxon. If we get through this, where do they send us?" "ACRC, vulgarly known, I believe as Arsy Tarsey. It's the Aircrew Receiving Centre in St. John's Wood. Two weeks there getting kitted out, and then on to Initial Training Wing." We had arrived in a small room.

"Drop your pants and shorts." We did so. The man in a white coat shone a torch up our posteriors as we bent down and touched our toes. A pimply youth in a black leather jacket and green shoes was behind me. He bent down. "Looks pretty dirty up there, mister." said the man in the white coat. "Should do, riposted the dulcet tones of Glasgow, "I been shitting through it for eighteen years." Definitely officer material!

We blew up tubes of mercury, breathed in and out, gave some blood into a hollow blunt needle and read out letters on a wall. Later, we were ushered singly into a room in which an Air Commodore and two Group Captains sat behind a large desk. They all wore pilot's wings and the Air Commodore boasted the medals of the Great war. It was getting near lunchtime and one of the Group Captains looked at his watch as I entered.

I can't remember what questions they

asked, but I think there was something about playing rugby football and who did I think were the three greatest air men of the Royal Air Force? There is an apocryphal story of the aspirant at this interview, who, on being asked this same question answered, "I would say, sir. That the three greatest were Marshall of the Royal Air Force, Lord Dowding, Air Chief Marshall, Sir Charles Portal and, er, I'm sorry, sir, I didn't catch your name."

Potter had been guarding my suitcase and I came out and waited for him in another room. My name was called. "Moxon, you have passed your medical and selection board. You will report to Viceroy Court at 1200 hours on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, that's one week from today." I was too dumbfounded to remonstrate. One week from today! I had been under the impression that I would be whisked off immediately. I had no return ticket to Sandwich and ten shillings less the tube fare in my pocket. I didn't wait for Potter, but walked out into the sunny noon, the exhaust fumes and the smell of hot tin. I had never hitchhiked in my sheltered life and, in any event, the thought of going back to Ilex and the moist embrace of Sally was an anticlimax too mortifying to entertain. I walked down Euston Road to Great Portland Street and beyond to Hyde Park. It was about four miles and, by the time I took my place next to an old lady on a bench, I was hungry. The sandwiches that mother had made were fish past and I topped off the meal with a piece of fudge. I re-packed the sandwich paper and bag of sweets in my suitcase and turned to the old lady who was reading *Picture Post*. "I'm sorry to trouble you, but I wonder if you could help me? I'm looking for a place to stay in London that's very cheap. Would you, by any chance know of such a place?" She put down her magazine and lowered her glasses to the end of her nose. "Well now, let's see, I think your best bet would be the YMCA or the Salvation Army. There's a Red Shield Club right by Euston Station. Do you know how to get there?" I told her I had just walked from Euston, thanked her and picked up my suitcase.

The Salvation Army Hostel with the red shield over the doorway was housed in an ugly brick building off a side street in a cul-de-sac. The old man in charge was smoking a Woodbine, which dangled from the corner of his mouth, and, with a hand cupped behind one ear, was listening to the one o'clock news on the wireless. I waited patiently until the news was over and he didn't seem in any hurry to call the bell captain to take my luggage. "Excuse me," I shouted, "can I get a room for six nights?" He opened the big book with a red cover and turned it towards me. "Put your name down there and it's a shilling a night, payable in advance."

My spirits soared; at least I wouldn't have to sleep in the park. I gave him two half crowns and a shilling and wrote down my name and address. I had three shillings and eightpence left for a week of gluttony. "Bunk number 16, through that door," he wheezed and went back to Vera Lynn singing *The White Cliffs of Dover*.

The dormitory had about twenty double decker bunks and I found a lower one with a 16 scrawled on the post. There were two blankets and a striped sausage-shaped pillow. Various half clad bodies, wrinkled and sagging, festooned the other bunks, sleeping, reading

The *Daily Mirror* and staring at the ceiling. I made my bunk neatly with the two brown blankets, being careful to put the pillow under my lower blanket. There was a small locker at the head of the bunk and I carefully unpacked my few things and laid them neatly out with the cake in one corner. Not quite Brown's Hotel, but I was too happy to care. One of the incumbents broke wind gently.

I went to explore the rest of the hotel and found a lounge with cracked leather armchairs and through a door could hear the sound of plates being washed and smell boiled cabbage. A man with wispy hair and thin almost to the point of emaciation was coughing his heart out in one of the chairs. "What time do they serve supper?" I asked. He pulled out a large colored handkerchief and spat a glob of sputum into the folds, examining the results of this operation with interest. "There's tea at six o'clock," he broke into another spasm of coughing. "Tuesday today, so that'll be sausage and chips, best meal of the week, I always think."

He fumbled in his jacket pocket and pulled out a pack of ten Woodbines. "How much do they charge for tea?" I asked. He lighted a crumpled cigarette to the accompaniment of a paroxysm of retching. "Shillin'..." he gasped, "except on Sundays and then it's one and six 'cos they 'ave pudding'.....roly poly, fills up a spot if you fancy it." I sensed that he didn't want to waste any more of his foetid breath and leaned back.

I had already decided to squander a shilling on supper. On the morrow I would have a piece of cake and a sup of tea for breakfast. It was only four o'clock so I had another two hours to wait until supper. At the age of eighteen one has a healthy appetite. I had always looked like the kind of boy that shopkeepers gave biscuits to. After all the walking and blowing up tubes of mercury I was tired and went to lie down on bunk 16 and soon fell asleep to the roar of the London traffic. It was dark when I awoke and there was only a dim light at the end of the dormitory. The bunks had filled up and on the one above mine I could distinguish a shapeless form. I had missed supper and I was thirsty. I had no watch but I guessed it must be about ten. As I undid my shoelaces and reached into the little cupboard for my pyjamas, one of the old men began mumbling in his sleep....." Alice, that's not right....well, I think it was Blackpool, ya stupid old bitch."

I folded up my clothes and laid them on the end of the bunk and got under the blanket, soon to fall asleep again. I became aware of the hand creeping under the blanket to rest on my leg and sat up with a start "Don't be frightened, pretty boy," a sibilant hissing voice, "just feel down there, it's hard you know and all for you." His face had drawn close and he reeked of second hand whisky. I would like to write that I caught him a swinging blow on the side of his unshaven jowls. I didn't. All I could stutter was "Go away, I don't want to do anything like that."

Six years at an English public school should have inured me to any shock of nocturnal groping but then at least, one knew that the hirsute torso of Arbutnot Major had been amply scrubbed with Lifebuoy after the match with the old boys. My new found admirer climbed back into the upper bunk muttering imprecations and by the time I got up

in the morning he had flown the coop for greener pastures.

I washed and cleaned my teeth and put on a clean shirt and went in search of a cup of tea. The brew in the nearly deserted dining room was strong and sweet and served in a large tin mug, the moment that I passed threepence to the blowsy woman behind the counter there was the most gigantic bang from somewhere close at hand. She handed me the mug, "Delayed action bomb, dearie. Nothin' to worry about. Hope no poor bugger from the bomb disposal squad bought it though. Could 'ave been one of them Jerry duds. I don't think they know 'ow to make the bloody things really." Some people might disagree. The tea did much to revive my flagging spirits and I decided to have a piece of cake and go for a walk.

I walked and walked, to the city. St. Martin's, The Strand, Trafalgar Square, at St. Paul's I stopped and looked up at the Wren masterpiece and marveled that it was undamaged. Much later I was to marvel that the cathedral at Cologne had not been demolished. Not through lack of trying; they built well in those days. I got back to the hostel in time for lunch. Rissoles and cabbage and boiled potatoes, all swimming in a sea of gravy.

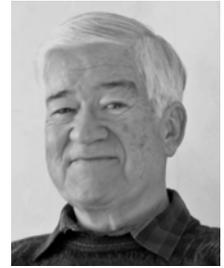
"That'll be two shillings, dear," said the lady, as I held out my plate with an Oliver Twist-like supplication for a generous helping. Two shillings! I was too shy to remonstrate and handed over the coins. How come that old fart had told me it was a shilling? Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we starve. What I didn't know was that the Salvation Army charged a deposit of a shilling on the knife, fork and spoon, refundable at the end of the repast. I learned this ten minutes later when I met the bronchial patriarch I the lounge and dashed back to my place only to find the tableware had gone.

For the next few days I lived on cake, carefully rationed, a cup of tea and a piece of fudge for breakfast and large amounts of water. I have since then had a pathological dislike for candy in any shape or form. The evening before I was to report to St. John's Wood I found myself walking down St. James's and remembered that the Overseas League had premises in that august street. The Overseas League had been set up as a kind of Rainbow empire as Kenya, Basutoland and Tanganyika. The Australians and New Zealanders each had their own clubs. By that time I had visited the Tate Gallery, Westminster Abbey, The Natural History Museum, Buckingham Palace and had been accosted several times in Soho. The Overseas League had granite steps, which led to the porticoed entrance. There were several young men and women sitting on the steps drinking beer, one or two in khaki and one of the girls in a WAAF uniform. It was almost nine and the shadows of the stately building formed a jigsaw puzzle of sharply etched outlines in the street. Inside it was a gay scene of a bar and everyone drinking pints of beer and a scratchy record of *Moonlight Becomes You* playing.

*The final part of Tim's account of joining the RAF will be continued in next October's Magazine. He stays with his brother, meets an American nymphomaniac and is posted to Aircrew Training in Torquay.*

# THE HALIFAX EXPLOSION, A TRAGIC DAY FOR A MOXON FAMILY

*A chance discovery leads Len Moxon, member of Nova Scotia, to some heartbreaking research.*



IN THE THIRTY YEARS that Penny and I have lived in Halifax, Nova Scotia, we have visited the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic many times. There are sometimes visiting exhibits, interesting lectures to attend, work in progress and changes to permanent exhibits. In July of 2008 an addition to a permanent exhibit drew my attention. The exhibit tells the story of the catastrophic explosion in Halifax Harbour on December 6<sup>th</sup> 1917, a day which is etched in the minds of Haligonians and remembered every year. The additional item was a remembrance book listing almost 2000 names of those who died as a result of the explosion. It seems that this was my day to visit the museum because the book was open at a page of surnames that began with the letter 'M' of which there are many but this particular page had a story to tell and propel me into some research. With a feeling of disbelief I began to count, one, two, three . . . . . ten. Ten Moxons were recorded as dying in a conflagration that is believed to be the largest explosion caused by humans before the atomic bomb.

The Moxons lived in four houses on two adjacent streets which I knew were close to the site of the explosion. They would have died within minutes, if not seconds, of each other. It seemed very likely that they were all related. My subsequent research confirmed this and reduced the number to nine because of an apparent duplication. Their ages ranged from 62 years to just eight months.

Halifax has been the major port and naval base on the east coast of Canada since the city was founded in 1749. It's harbour has seen the comings and goings of navies and merchant ships of all stripes, the arrival of immigrants, the transportation of troops, the arrival of Titanic victims and today the regular presence of magnificent tall ships and monster cruise ships. During both world wars the geography of Halifax harbour was well suited to the assembly of convoys. It has a long, slowly narrowing entrance that is moderately wide as the south end of the city and main harbour appear on the port side of a ship. Dartmouth is on the starboard side. The narrowest point, appropriately called The Narrows, is reached at the north end of the city where the harbour is only 550 yards wide but then it opens to Bedford Basin, a natural inner harbour that is some four by two miles and 250 feet deep at the centre. During both world wars this basin accommodated hundreds of ships as an arrival and assembly location for convoys.

The morning of December 6<sup>th</sup> 1917 was crisp and sunny when a ship that had been held at anchor in the outer harbour overnight was allowed to proceed towards Bedford Basin. It was the Mont Blanc, a French freighter loaded with some 2500 tons of explosives and ammunition as well as a deck cargo of benzene. It had arrived from New York and its holds were lined with wood held together with copper nails to eliminate the possibility of

sparks. For security reasons the Mont Blanc was not required, while under way, to fly a flag showing its dangerous cargo. As the Mont Blanc approached The Narrows a ship began moving out of Bedford Basin. It was the Norwegian SS Imo, much bigger than the Mont Blanc, about to cross the Atlantic carrying relief supplies to Belgium. The Imo had had to veer close to the Dartmouth side to avoid another ship and this put it in the way of the Mont Blanc. The captain and pilot of the Mont Blanc wanted to stay on their course on the Dartmouth side and gave a whistle to indicate their intention. This was followed by a confusion of ship's whistles as time ran out and a collision occurred.

The deck cargo on the Mont Blanc caught fire immediately and within minutes the captain and pilot realised that it would be impossible to extinguish and ordered all hands to the boats. They rowed with all the strength they had to the Dartmouth side of the harbour. There, they had no way of communicating the danger to the crowds gathering on the Halifax side.

The Mont Blanc drifted closer to shore at the north end of Halifax, a mixed residential, industrial and commercial area known as Richmond. The spectacular sight drew many onlookers, citizens on their way to work or school, dock workers, firemen who were wondering how they could fight the fire and residents who just came out to get a better view. Many were vying for the best vantage points. Others stayed at home on this cold morning but were drawn to their windows, a viewpoint that would prove to be disastrous. News about the Mont Blanc's cargo began to circulate but not quickly enough for it to reach the people in the most dangerous locations. Crews on other ships in the harbour became aware of the danger and took some precautions. Staff at a railway yard heard the news and began to move away. One employee however stayed in his office to send a telegraph message down the line to get incoming trains stopped. He was never seen again.

At just before 9:05 a.m. the Mont Blanc disintegrated with a shattering roar that destroyed or severely damaged everything over an area of at least 325 acres including homes, schools, factories, shops and churches. In the immediate vicinity of the explosion, docks and dockside structures simply disappeared along with anybody in or on them. Ships in the harbour were damaged, some severely, and deaths occurred on them. The Imo was lifted and dumped aground on the Dartmouth side. Huge waves swept up the shorelines on both sides of the harbour. Since it was a cold day, furnaces and fireplaces had been stoked up causing many houses that were only partially damaged to burn to the ground with injured victims still inside. Windows were broken up to 50 miles away and the shock wave went much further. Parts of the Mont Blanc were found widely dispersed including a broken

section of its anchor shaft weighing some 1100 pounds that was found more than two miles away. It's still there, mounted on a low pedestal with a memorial plaque attached.

As the huge cloud created in the explosion began to disperse, it revealed a scene of horror. At the same time, a "rain" of a dark, sticky, oily substance came down, remnants from the explosives. Some 1600 people died that day with hundreds more to follow. About 9000 people were injured, many having hundreds of glass shards embedded in their flesh. Deaths and injuries amounted to some 18 per cent of the population. To add to the misery, the next day would bring a severe snowstorm making further rescue and recovery efforts all the more difficult.

These are the circumstances in which our Moxon family members died. They lived on Duffus and Roome Streets which are still there and run parallel up a hill away from the harbour, close enough to the exploding ship to be a completely devastated area. Photographs, taken in the days after the explosion, show those two streets and others almost devoid of standing houses.

The Nova Scotia Archives Halifax Explosion Remembrance Book shows details of those who were lost. I have listed our Moxons below and added other relevant information from census records and other sources.

At 17 Roome Street:

Richard Benjamin Moxon, 62. Body identified by son, Charles Moxon.

Census results show that Richard was a truckman or teamster and was born August 7th 1855 in Rawdon, Hants County, Nova Scotia. Ellie E. Moxon, 58, formerly Cann, wife of Richard, born in Prince Edward Island. Body not identified.

The children of Richard and Ellie in 1917 were Charles, 36; Alex, 28; Fred, 26; Roy, 23; and Lily, 20. None of them died in the explosion but the wives of Fred and Alex did, see below.

At 23 Roome Street:

Cora Evelyn Moxon, 24, formerly Manning, wife of Fred A. Moxon (son of Richard and Ellie). Body, charred remains, identified by Fred Moxon.

Richard William Moxon, 4, son of Fred and Cora. Body identified by Fred Moxon.

Albert Charles Moxon, 3, son of Fred and Cora. Body identified by Fred Moxon.

Fred Gordon Moxon, 1, son of Fred and Cora. Body identified by Fred Moxon.

Ruby Evelyn Moxon, 8 months, daughter of Fred and Cora. Body identified by Fred Moxon.

At 22 Duffus Street:

Mrs. Mealie (Amelia) Moxon, 19, formerly Veniot, wife of Alex Moxon (son of Richard



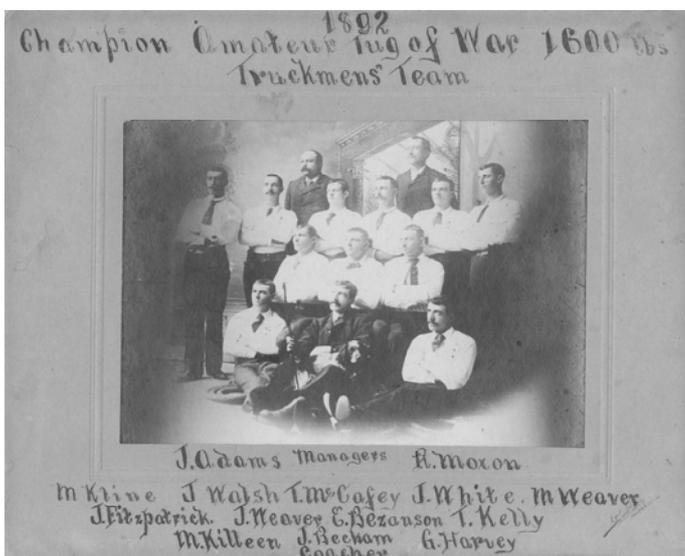
Richmond School was between Roome Street on the left and Duffus Street on the right. Some 80 pupils of this school were killed in or close to the school.

Anonymous photographer, 1917 or 1918. Courtesy of Halifax City Regional Collection, 1983-212 (N-1263)



Norwegian steamship *Imo* beached on Dartmouth shore after the explosion,

Anonymous photographer, 1918. Courtesy of NSARM Photographs Collection: Transportation and Communications: Ships:Imo



Richard Moxon, a manager of the Tug of War team, is at top right, wearing a jacket, in this photo. He would have been about 37 at the time.

Courtesy of NSARM collection, Tom Connors: *The Old Sport*, 1987-218, no. 541



This is typical of the irreparable damage to houses slightly farther away from the centre of the explosion.

Courtesy of Maritime Museum of the Atlantic collection.

and Ellie). Body not identified.

Alex and Amelia were married in March 1916. Alex, also a teamster like his father, died of influenza and pneumonia in October 1918. It is believed that they had no children. Another record for this address shows a Mrs. "Alex" Moxon with all other details similar to Amelia's. I believe that this is essentially a duplicate record and should be ignored, taking our total Moxon death toll to nine instead of ten. There was no doubt a strong possibility for errors in recording such a large number of deaths in a short time.

At 24 Duffus Street:

Blanche L. Moxon, 32, single, daughter of Thomas Moxon and Agnes, formerly Eisenhaur. Burned to death.

Blanche, a niece of Richard and Ellie, was living at this address with her cousin Clifford Driscoll and his wife Annie Kane. In her book *Shattered City*, Janet Kitz tells us that Clifford was working on an engine at a railway workshop when the explosion occurred. Damage to the workshop was

extensive but the massive engine shielded him. He made his way home as quickly as possible, meeting people along the way with blood pouring off them and finding the devastation worse the farther he went. At Duffus Street he found that the house containing his apartment was on fire but he had a hunch that Annie had gone to his parent's house. Sure enough, she was there, huddling by the wreckage of the house with other family members. Blanche Moxon was not so lucky, probably dying in the house or perhaps she had gone down to the dock to see what was happening.

In the official records, burial locations are given for some of the victims but the at time of writing I have not determined whether they are in individual or mass graves.

Remarkably, I found a photograph of Richard Moxon in the archive. In 1892 he is shown as a manager of a champion Truckmen's Tug of War team. There are also two similar photos of a "Rough and Ready" team, from 1891 and although his name is mentioned he is not in the photographs.

Having researched the names and relationships of those who died as well as others in the family my task was to determine their ancestry. That was simple. I was sure they were descendants of one of the families that emigrated to Nova Scotia in the early 19th century, see Roots 5 in MM22 of October 1998, The Moxons of Ebbesborne Wake and their descendants, a result of extensive research work by Natasha Moxon of Truro, Nova Scotia and the late Gaylord Moxon of California. Everything knitted together thus adding just a bit more to MX37. I am not a member of that family tree, just call me a Moxon interloper in the Nova Scotia scene!

Readers may be wondering what happened after this terrible event. In spite of the chaotic situation, rescue efforts started spontaneously and the injured were taken to medical treatment centres that seemed to spring up wherever they could be established such as in schools, the YMCA and other institutional buildings outside the affected area. Calls went out to other provinces and to the national capital of Ottawa for medical supplies, doctors and nurses. The military became heavily involved. Within that first day the local

*continued on next page*

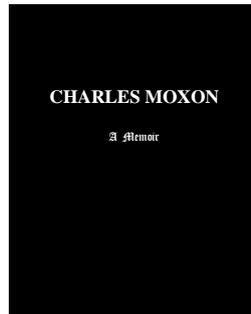
# CHARLES MOXON 'The Royal Decorator' MFRT TO PUBLISH HIS 'BIOGRAPHY'

AT THE WELLS Gathering, last September, Rosie Turner, member of Canterbury, brought along a copy of the book her grandfather, Charles Frederick Moxon, had had printed about his father, Charles Moxon. It appears that only three copies were ever printed, and Rosie's copy is the only one known to have survived. The book was in poor condition and in desperate need of restoration.

The book was written for the benefit of his children who never knew their grandfather.

At the cost of the Moxon Family Trust, President Graham Jagger has had the book professionally restored. While the book was "in pieces" all the pages were scanned and, with Rosie's permission, the MFRT intends to publish a facsimile edition for sale to members.

The original book had 36 pages, plus some photographs. Graham has extensively researched Charles Moxon's life and has



*A facsimile of the cover of  
Charles Frederick Moxon's book*

unearthed some 'skeletons in the cupboard!' The results of this research are described in an Introduction to the new edition.

Charles Moxon has featured in two articles in past Moxon Magazines - MM34 (October

2004 and MM25 (April 2000). If you no longer have your copies, you can look at them on our website (see box on page 16)

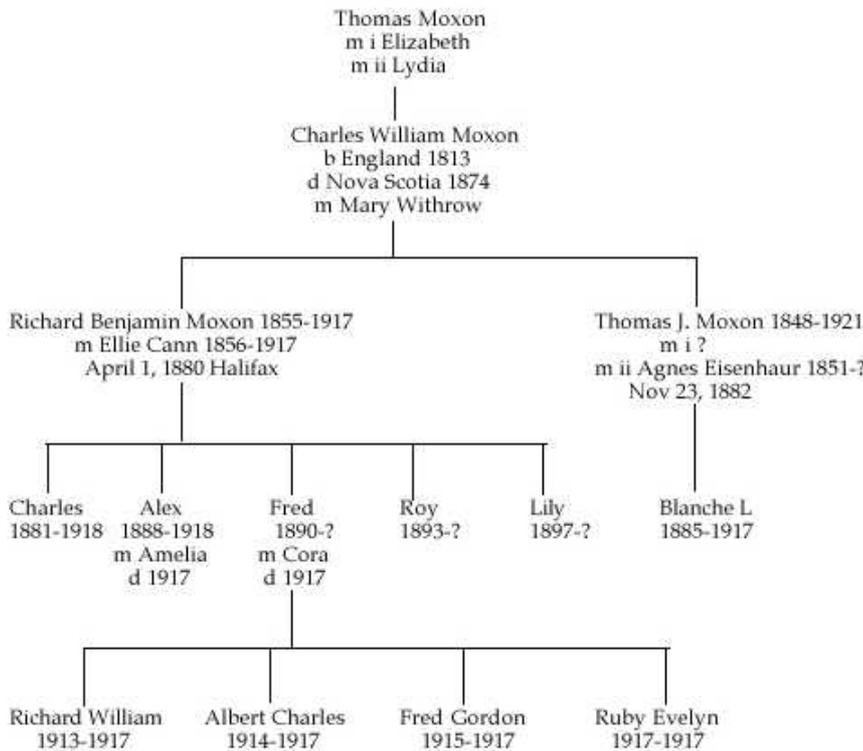
When the MFRT has published books previously, it has always been difficult to judge how many should be printed - resulting in either too few (leaving some members disappointed) or too many (resulting in copies remaining on the shelf.

This time we are asking members to pre-order. The price will be no more than £4-00, plus postage (UK or airmail) or collect at the Gathering. If more than 25 are ordered, then price will be a bit less e.g. if 50 ordered then price would be only £3-20 each. Payment will be requested **IN STERLING** by invoice sent when the book is posted in September.

**If you wish to pre-order, then e-mail or write to Graham Jagger, to be received by him no later than 31 July 2009. (see contact details on back page). Remember to give your name and full postal address! Say if you intend to collect at the Gathering. Printing will be ordered early in August.**

**DO IT TODAY!**

*continued from previous page*



Richard Benjamin, Ellie, Amelia, Cora, Richard William, Albert, Fred Gordon, Ruby and Blanche all died in the Halifax Explosion on December 6, 1917. Charles, who remained single, and Alex died in 1918 of influenza.

authorities had set up groups to deal with different aspects of the disaster including medical services, temporary housing, transportation, repair of essential services etc. There was a world-wide reaction with donations flowing in from many countries and fund raising events held in many places. Whenever the explosion is discussed here in Nova Scotia the city of Boston and the

State of Massachusetts are remembered. The reaction there was quick and generous with a train ready to leave within hours of the explosion. Doctors, nurses, volunteers, medical equipment and supplies were on board. As the train steamed through the province of New Brunswick more doctors and nurses climbed aboard and more equipment was stuffed into the train. Massachusetts

stayed involved in relief work well into 1918. That is why, every December, Nova Scotia sends a Christmas tree to Boston.

St. Paul's Church in downtown Halifax is the oldest Anglican Church in Canada, built in 1749. On entering the church one may look up into its wooden tower and see an iron rod projecting through the wall, an ever-present reminder of that fateful day in 1917.

The explosion, experiences of individual families, short and long term relief, and the public inquiry are given complete coverage by Janet F. Kitz in her excellent book *Shattered City*, published by Nimbus of Halifax, Nova Scotia. On-line resources can be found on the website of Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm>. Click on Virtual Exhibits and then on the various links. Use a map website to find Roome and Duffus streets and zoom out to see The Narrows and Bedford Basin.

The photographs included in this article are part of the collection of Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management.

**Len Moxon**

**Editors Notes:**

The first man to emigrate to Nova Scotia from Ebbesbourne Wake was Lt. James Moxon RN. John Moxon, member of The Isle of Wight, and a former President of the Society, researched James Moxon's navy history. (See 'An Update on Roots 5' in MM25 - April 2000).

James was soon followed to Nova Scotia by two of his brothers - it was said by the family that they could not get on with their stepmother!

At around the same time, we do not know exactly when, their cousin Thomas Moxon also emigrated to Nova Scotia. This was the Thomas shown at the head of the above family tree., who lost nine descendants in the explosion.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES



Rev. Charles St. Denys Moxon  
1820-1881

Son of Thomas Moxon of Leyton

## IS ANYONE ABLE TO "CLAIM" THOMAS MOXON OF SHEFFIELD Died 19<sup>th</sup> March 1836?

*Beth Wilkinson, member of Orpington, obtained details of Thomas's Administration, believing he was one of her ancestors. He wasn't. Beth sent in the details in case he might be another member's relative.*

ALTHOUGH ONCE PROVED, a person's will/administration becomes general knowledge. However, as in this case, the actual documents are copyright, so we are not able to reproduce them here. If a member can "claim" Thomas Moxon, then we could forward the documents to them.

Thomas's next of kin were his four nieces, Ann Ellis, Sarah Glossop, Elizabeth Broughton and Ann Slack, the last two being widows.

This period was before the *Married Women's Act (1875?)*, so the Bond (binding the nieces to administer) "of all and singular the Goods Chattels and credits of the deceased" had to be undertaken by men where possible.

Matthew Ellis, William Glossop, Thomas Broughton, presumably Elizabeth's son, and Ann Slack were bound in the sum of £3000.

Administration was duly passed on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1836, when Thomas's estate was valued at £1500.

Was Thomas a bachelor, or had his wife and any family pre-deceased him? His nieces were the children of his brothers and sisters, and/or the children of his wife's brothers and sisters - makes tracking his relatives rather difficult.

Matthew Ellis married Ann Moxon 5 September 1822 in St. Peters, Sheffield. So Ann must have been his brother's daughter.

## ANOTHER PROBLEM SOLVED!

*Derek Mason, Member of Cottingham, has traced his ancestry back through William Eyers Moxon born 1753 in Leeds, and has found some odd 'goings on'! Two past members were also descended from William Eyers Moxon, but had been unable to find his origins. This article is based on Derek's research.*



JOHN MOXON, an attorney, was born 29 May 1725 and baptised 10 June 1725, son of William Moxon in St. Peters, Leeds. He married Mrs. Ann Horncastle on 12 July 1750 in Leeds. According to Moxon Family Tree MX12, they had two children: Elizabeth Moxon and Ann Moxon.

Derek has found two more relevant baptisms, where he believes the mother is Ann Moxon, formerly Mrs. Ann Horncastle (see later for his justification). The children of Ann Moxon would therefore be:

- Elizabeth Moxon "Mr John Moxon's (of) Briggate (Leeds) born 13 June 1751, baptised 12 July 1751.
- William Moxon son of John Eyers (of) Upper Headrow (Leeds) born 8 July 1753, baptised 30 July 1753 in Leeds. (He believes this is William Eyers Moxon)
- John Moxon son of John Eyers of Headrow, born 17 June 1755, baptised 18 August 1755 in Leeds. (John appears to have been the witness at brother William's marriage - see below)
- Ann Moxon 1759 Leeds PC "Ann daughter of John Moxon, Kirkgate, born 16 August 1759, baptised 30 August 1759

William's marriage record reads, "William Eyers Moxon of this parish, Plaisterer (sic) and Esther Crampton of this parish, spinster, married in this church by banns 23 October 1775. Signed Wm Moxon, mark of Esther Moxon (née Crampton) . Witnesses Jno Moxon, Jno Moxon junior". NOTE: He is shown as William EYERS Moxon.

As stated above, William had a brother and a father, both called John - as per the witnesses at William's wedding - and William Moxon, son of John Moxon/Eyers, is the only one who fits the bill in this regard.

William Moxon died 1820 at Headingley, Leeds aged 66 i.e. born about 1754. His wife Esther died 1827 at Headingley, Leeds.

A number of members of the Society (according to their trees) have a DNA record which goes back to at least the parents of William Eyers Moxon, but Robert Moxon from Canada, who can trace his tree to William Eyers Moxon, has a unique DNA. Similarly, Leslie Moxon, who can trace back to the same William Eyers Moxon, has DNA similar to Robert Moxon.

Derek takes the view that there is no conflict between the Moxon trees and the DNA results. His thoughts are that, as stated in the parish register, William Moxon is the son of John Eyers - i.e. William's father is John Eyers and his mother is Ann Moxon (formerly Horncastle). This is why there is a unique DNA - it is of the male, John Eyers.

Derek writes, "I have searched parish records for Yorkshire extensively for some ten years and I have never come across a situation

where the Register says William (surname) son of John (different surname). In my experience this is unusual. Generally, if the female has a child out of wedlock, you would get for example "bastard child of Jane Moxon" or sometimes "Joan bastard child of Jane Moxon, by Tom Dickandarry". I believe that the circumstances here are different. The entry in the parish register is, effectively, a public written statement of guilt: "William Moxon son of John Eyers". The child is not a bastard born out of wedlock. The parents are still married. The lady (Moxon) has, for whatever reason, been made pregnant by someone (Eyers) who is not her husband. I think that the statement was made deliberately in the parish register and was not a written accidental error.

The MX12 tree indicates that he was an Attorney. This occupation perhaps gives an answer to the puzzle. Firstly, being an Attorney, he may have been away frequently on business in London attending the Court of Pleas where attorneys regularly represented debtors in pleadings for repayment of monies. This would give opportunities for his wife to have an affair. Secondly, suppose that after the birth of the first child, husband does not want any more children. His wife meets someone else and becomes pregnant by him. Husband cannot really divorce - divorce was not common in the mid 1750s. However, if his wife should die suddenly, husband does not see why he should support and feed a child that is not his own. It is the natural professional instinct for a solicitor or attorney to want to take legal action to try and make sure that the father of the child will be made financially responsible if needs be. One way of achieving this is to name the father in the parish register so that there is no doubt, should there be an argument at a future date.

The above would explain the relationship between Moxon / Eyers and the use of Eyers as a middle name. It also an explanation of why the name Eyers is dropped sometimes. It is also an explanation of the DNA evidence - which simply confirms that descendants of William Eyers Moxon hold a unique DNA (Eyers DNA) compared to the rest of the (wider) Moxon family.

### EDITOR'S NOTES

*Further research. The Oxford Ancestor's website includes an Eyers' DNA. It is sufficiently different to that of Robert Moxon's DNA for them not to be related.*

*John Moxon, who married Mrs. Ann Horncastle, features in 'Another Moxon Myth?' in this issue.*



No.1 John, John and Graham.



No.2 Two John Moxons



No. 4 Ed Moxon and John Moxon

These photos relate to "A Downunder Moxon Explores His Roots" - see pages 15 and 16.



No. 4 And another two John Moxons!

## OUR INTREPID TRAVELLERS

NOT CONTENT with touring the UK and Ireland last year (see article on adjacent page) John and Margaret Moxon of Winston Hills, near Sydney, were off again! This time visiting their son, Ray and daughter, Karen in Brisbane, where they met up with Simon and Margaret Moxon.

Pictured below are Ray, Simon and Karen, with John in his electric wheelchair, photographed by Margaret Moxon.



## MADDOX ADAM



## CLARE McKEOWN AND



Clare, Joshua and Chris.

# A DOWNUNDER MOXON EXPLORES HIS ROOTS

*John Bruce Moxon, Member of Winston Hills, near Sydney, NSW, and his wife Margaret, recount their visit to the UK, April to July 2008.*

*John is descended from the Moxons of Silkstone (MX26)*



IT SOUNDED innocuous enough when my wife, Margaret, suggested – “Let’s go to England and visit the places where our ancestors lived, and, if possible, meet some distant relatives”. “Okay” I said.

That was early 2007. The planning almost caused divorce several times – when to go, where to visit, whom to meet, how to travel, where to stay, how long can we afford to be away?

Not much of a problem for most people – fly cheaply on Discount Airlines, hire a cheap car, stay in B&Bs or with friends. But I use a wheelchair (I have quadriplegia due to a spinal cord injury sustained some 38 years ago when I was young and fearless). So what? I hear you say. Isn’t every thing required to be accessible now? Well, yes (it’s required) and no (it isn’t actually).

The El Cheapo airlines in Australia place all sorts of restrictions on air travel with a power wheelchair, B&Bs throughout the world rarely offer truly accessible bedrooms and bathrooms (and nor do most hotels and motels in the UK, we discovered), cheap cars are a no go (how do you get an 85Kg wheelchair into the boot of a little Renault?), and how many

friends have wheelchair accessible homes?

We finally settled on a supposedly wheelchair accessible motor home (car and motel all in one) – the only one in the UK, as it happens. Then we planned an itinerary that would take us to London and the south (Wiltshire, Hampshire and Kent for Margaret), Yorkshire, Cheshire, Scotland and Ireland for me. Three months should do it.

We made contact with John Moxon Hill who was incredibly helpful. And we emailed Ed Moxon and John and Jacqui Moxon (Southampton) with a view to meeting up.

We flew out on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April. The flight over was not too bad – although we arrived 5 hours late. And then Heathrow ground staff managed to be unable to find a wheelchair to get me off the plane for two hours – we almost found ourselves on our way to Hong Kong! And then the Hammersmith hotel where we had booked six months previously, greeted us with “Sorry, your room is broken and we don’t have a vacant disabled room”. I would have thought a broken room would qualify as disabled, but not so on this occasion. Eventually, they enticed someone else out of their accessible room (they only wanted the extra space for convenience) and gave us a free night to boot.

Then we discovered that the Tube has access to (many of) the platforms but not onto the trains. Fortunately we could catch the bus to St Pancras for our train journey to Derby to pick up the motor home.

I won’t bore you with all the features of our “accessible” motor home that made it almost impossible for me, and a veritable nightmare for Margaret. Suffice to say that, although huge on the outside, it was extremely cramped on the inside – to the point where Margaret had to help me with many tasks that, at home, I do unaided. The morning routine took up to three hours (instead of one).

Anyway, off we went. We knew, of course, about narrow streets in villages and narrow lanes. What we weren’t prepared for was the width of the motor home – about a lane and a half. And we weren’t prepared for people parking where ever they feel like.

The day after we picked up the motor home we were in Coventry to meet John and Dymps and to park the motor home in their driveway. Such splendid hospitality. Dinner with John, Dymps, their daughter, Fiona, and Graham and Angela Jagger was a treat. It really got our adventure off to a great start. I’m not sure what they thought of we heathens from the antipodes though.

*see photo No.1 on page 14*

A few days later we were in Banbury to catch up with Margaret’s cousin and I fell ill and ended up in hospital for a couple of days with a kidney infection. I can report that the NHS worked a treat. I found myself in a ward with none other than Lord Tweedsmuir – one

William Buchan, son of John Buchan who wrote the spy thriller *The 39 Steps*. Unfortunately, a few days before we left the UK we read of his passing. Perhaps the NHS had used all its available resources on me.

The trip to hospital and my subsequent convalescence had us reassessing our itinerary – out went Scotland, maybe Cheshire too – oh well, and slow down the rest.

But we managed to visit Southampton to meet one of Margaret’s distant cousins (whose husband also has quadriplegia) and Salisbury (where Dot Gurd, yet another wheelchair user, showed us around – we just loved the cathedral) before heading for Horsham to catch up with another of Margaret’s distant cousins.

From Horsham we caught the train to London and did all the usual touristy bits – our guides being a lass who stayed with us in Sydney when she was a back packer some years ago.

Finally, I was able to find some family connections in Hoddesdon. My great grandfather, Joshua Middleton Moxon married Louisa Mary Wilkinson who was a descendant of a George Cheffins (1739 – 1821) of Hoddesdon. Other names in that line are Martha Vears (m Geoge Cheffins 1766), Anthony Thorpe (m Martha Cheffins 1799), Louisa Thorpe (m Joseph Wilkinson 1843) – the last being Louisa Mary Wilkinson’s parents. Many of the men in this line were builders.

Louisa Mary Wilkinson was a dressmaker and family folk lore has it that she worked for the Royal Household – yet to be verified.

Next we headed for real Moxon territory – Yorkshire. We camped on a farm at Ingbirchworth, with wonderful views of the countryside around Penistone, including a large wind farm.

We ventured into Penistone by bus – yes wheelchair accessible buses in the wilds of Yorkshire. We tried to venture further by bus – all the way to Grenoside to attend a Family History Expo but got stuck in Chapletown where the accessible buses went to everywhere but Grenoside and no accessible taxis were operating on that Saturday. Next day we drove the motor home there and spend hours trying to find evidence of Isaac Moxon’s inn keeping, as claimed on his son’s birth certificate (1840). Alas, no luck. We took photos of the three extant inns, so if we ever do find he truly was an inn keeper, we’ll have the photo.

Of course we visited Silkstone and Hoylandswaine. Both very nice but no real evidence of any of my forebears actually living or dying there. Birth certificates state “Silkstone” for several people, but perhaps that is the parish, not the town.

We tried to visit Barnsley but made the

*continued on next page*

## BIRD

DIANE NYGAARD, Member of Aurora, Colorado, sent us this photo of her sixth grandchild, grandson, Maddox. He was born on September 29<sup>th</sup> at 2:41 pm weighing 9lbs 11 oz and was 21 ¼ in long.

Maddox is the 4<sup>th</sup> child of Michelle, (her daughter) and Adam Bird.

He is pictured far left, and left with Tor (6), Cayden (4) and Ayla (2).

## CHRIS DAVIES

CLARE MCKEOWN, daughter of Members John and Gillie McKeown, married Rev. Chris Davies on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2008 in the magnificent Vicky-Gothic St. Saviour’s Church, Forest Hill..

250 friends from all over the world attended the service.

In 2004, Clare adopted Joshua, a Guatemalan boy *see Moxon Magazine No. 35, April 2005*.

The photograph shows Clare, Chris and Joshua.

We wish Clare and Chris a long and happy life together.

*continued from previous page*

mistake of taking the motor home instead of the bus and could not find a parking spot. And we'd run out of time and energy, so gave it a miss. Pity really, as we have addresses for Isaac Moxon in Barnsley and it would have been nice to see if the houses are still there. Maybe next time.

So we packed up, said goodbye to Gordon, our farm host and his sheep, and headed north to Harden near Bingley in northern Yorkshire for lunch with John and Betty Moxon. John is a descendant of the George Moxon who was an architect and was featured in the April 2008 issue of this august journal. John and I share a great great great grandfather Joshua Moxon (b1751 d?). Again we were hosted by experts – lunch was delightful, the house one to kill for, and the view simply stunning.

*see photo No. 2 on page 14/*

Next stop was Kirkby Wharfe (near Tadcaster) where Isaac Moxon married Sarah Middleton in 1836. We actually stayed at Ulleskelf where the nearest caravan park was located. Sarah's family lived around the Tadcaster/Kirkby Wharfe/Ryther area but the only possible sign we found was a row of terrace houses in Ulleskelf which apparently used to be known as "Middleton Terrace".

We took the opportunity to catch the train from Ulleskelf to York for market day and thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience.

And that, unfortunately, is almost all the Moxon research we had time for.

After Yorkshire we headed for Holyhead in Wales to catch the ferry to Dublin where we spent two glorious weeks chasing my Fitzpatrick and Quaine ancestors – with some success.

We really loved Ireland – the people were unbelievably friendly and "laid back" (where we Aussies get it from, I guess) and the country quite beautiful.

We returned via Pembroke and spent a few days in Cardiff catching up with a good friend

who is there working for the Assembly.

As we headed back to Horsham we spent a few days in Lacock and spent a day touring the Abbey – again a lovely place and a great day. Caught the train to Bath – yet another wonderful day! While in the area we caught up with Ed Moxon who is related to me (and we have the DNA results to prove it!).

*see photo No.3 on page 14*

We just had to visit Stonehenge, so we did. I wheeled around three times but it didn't work – I still can't walk. Maybe I went the wrong way.

In Southampton we finally met John and Jacqui Moxon. We are not related but share a passion for VWs – which is how we first found each other on the net. We had dinner in a nice pub and John kindly fixed a strap on my wheelchair so I could go home.

*see photo No.4 on page 14.*

From Horsham we drove to Derby to return the motor home and caught the train back to London a few days before we were due to fly out. In London we went to the National Archives in Kew and I found out that my great great grandfather Fitzpatrick had not been a Superintendent in the Irish Constabulary but rather a Constable and what's more he had been dismissed. So much for what's on death certificates.

So we flew home on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July (3 months from leaving) and then I spent two weeks in bed recovering from broken skin on my bottom caused by being left in airport wheelchairs for two hours instead of 10 minutes as promised. And Margaret got a gastric virus and had to be taken off the plane in Sydney in a wheelchair. We were quite a sight!

So. Was it worth it? You bet! Would we do it again? Maybe – but not in a motor home!!

Overall impressions of the UK and Ireland? Lovely people – great countryside – awful roads (apart from the motorways) – too much to see and do – inter city trains are great

– buses very usable - terrible weather (I had to say it!).

Our blog is still up (<http://johnmoxon1.blogspot.com/>) and it has a link to lots of photos – just under the top photo – click on Photo Gallery - UK & Ireland Trip.

*Thanks, John.*

*We obviously need to be much more "wheelchair friendly" in this country. The motor home, specially built for wheelchair use and fitted with a wheelchair lift, had just one 13A power point, hidden away under a shelf! John could not charge the wheelchair battery and have an electric shave at the same time!*

JMH

## PAST MOXON MAGAZINES and DOWNUNDER NEWSLETTERS

ALL PAST Moxon Magazines (MM1 April 1988 to MM42 October 2008) and Downunder Newsletters (2003 to 2008) are now available in the Members only section of the web site. [www.moxonsociety.org](http://www.moxonsociety.org)

So, if you are a recent member, or you wish to refer to a past article, they are there to be perused at your leisure. (*Upwards of 500 pages of Moxon family history - there at the click of a mouse button"!*)

There's lots more, with information about our DNA testing, Research, Publications, and links to other Moxon sites.

Most is available to the general public, but for members to gain access to the Member's only area, contact the Web Master - see contact information below.

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