



Established in 1988 by James 'Jimmy' Moxon, Founding Editor and First President of The Moxon Society

# The Moxon Magazine

## *Our Annual Gathering 2022!*

John Earnshaw writes:

**The dates for this year's Gathering are Friday 2nd to Sunday 4th September 2022.**

We'll be staying at the Holiday Inn at Dodworth near Barnsley, close to both Cawthorne and Silkstone, the ancestral home of many Moxons. Planned visits on Saturday will take us to Cannon Hall, Cawthorne Victoria Jubilee Museum and All Saints Church Cawthorne. For those with an interest in Silkstone Church there will also be the option to visit there on the Sunday. Other arrangements currently include the AGM, and an evening talk.

The full cost for the weekend is still to be finalised, but it will be around £110 per person (sharing a double or twin room), and about £160 for single occupancy to include evening meals on Friday and Saturday nights, and breakfast on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

**To reserve your place(s) please let me know via email to [gathering@moxon.org.uk](mailto:gathering@moxon.org.uk), and I will add you to a mailing list so that you are kept up to date with details as and when they become available.**

*The Holiday Inn, Dodworth*



Annual Gathering 2022

We listed in our last issue of the Moxon Magazine a number of attractions local to the 2022 Annual Gathering, and that this is repeated here for your convenience. John would find it helpful if you'd let him know if you have a particular interest in visiting any one or more of these attractions, or indeed if you can suggest somewhere else it might be of interest to our members. He can be reached via email at [h15jse@gmail.com](mailto:h15jse@gmail.com)

**Churches with Moxon connections:** **All Saints, Cawthorne** The current building was begun in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century but retains features from earlier buildings; **All Saints, Silkstone**, "The Minster of the Moors", is a Grade 1 listed church and the current building is basically 14<sup>th</sup> century though altered and reshaped over time; and **St Peter's, Felkirk** which is unchanged in appearance since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Moxons were Parish Clerks there for over 170 years.

**Museums:** **Cawthorne Museum**, started in 1887 and officially opened in 1889. There are exhibits of domestic bygoners, local history and local industry and a collection of unusual items including a two-headed lamb. Noel Moxon was Secretary of the Cawthorne Museum Society for forty years until his death in 1979; and the **National Coal Mining Museum**, a unique place in which the whole history of coal mining is preserved both below ground and above ground.

**Other attractions include:** the **Yorkshire Sculpture Park**, the leading international centre for modern and contemporary sculpture; **Cannon Hall** Museum, park and gardens dating mainly from the 18<sup>th</sup> century though there were halls on this site in much earlier times. It is now run by Barnsley Council with collections of drawings, paintings, glass and ceramics; **Pontefract Castle** (visited at the Gathering in 2011) was left in ruins after its siege by Oliver Cromwell. Pontefract castle is perhaps best known as the site of Richard II's incarceration and death; and **Nostell Priory** is a Georgian National Trust property with Robert Adam decorative interiors and a world class collection of Chippendale furniture, set in 300 acres of parkland.

WELCOME!

We are pleased to welcome four new members, joined since the last issue of your Magazine:

Welcome to:		Tree
Anne Moxham	Australia	tbc
Simon Horsman	UK	MX01
James Moxom	USA	MX37
Frank Moxon	UK	MX04

Suggested menu item for our next Gathering!

Margaret Moxon wrote from Brisbane after our last Magazine issue saying that she had started to copy recipes to her computer from the **Moxon Cookbook** but had to return the original to its owner before she had finished. But she shared this page, and wrote, "I did think that No 16: "A shoulder of mutton forced" sounded absolutely delicious. It would include the staple diet of many Australian farmers & the Australian fishing industry of today as well as their UK counterparts & be part of one of the most desired staples when Oz was first established. I am sure any form of a mutton/lamb dish would be a desirable meal inclusion for your next Gathering."

What do you think?!

**13. TO MAKE OLIVES OF BEEF** Take some slices of a rump (or any other tender piece) of beef, and beat them with a paste- pin, season them with nutmeg, pepper and salt, and rub them over with the yolk of an egg; make a little forced-meat of veal, beef- suet, a few bread crumbs, sweet herbs, a little shred mace, pepper, salt, and two eggs, mixed all together; take two or three slices of the beef, according as they are in bigness, and a lump of forced-meat the size of an egg; lay your beef round it, and roll it in part of a kell of veal, put it into an earthen dish, with a little water, a glass of claret, and a little butter, and bake them in an oven about an hour; when they come out take off the fat, and thicken the gravy with a little butter and flour; fix of them enough for a side dish. Garnish the dish with horse-radish and pickles. You may make olives of veal the same way.

**14. TO FRY BEEF-STEAKS.** Take your beef-steaks and beat them with the back of a knife, fry them in butter over a quick fire, that they may be brown before they be too much done; when they are enough put them into an earthen pot whilst you have fried them all; pour out the fat, and put them into your pan with a little gravy, an onion shred very small, a spoonful of catchup, and a little salt; thicken it with a little butter and flour, the thickness of cream. Garnish your dish with pickles. Beef-steaks are proper for a side dish.

**15. BEEF-STEAKS ANOTHER WAY,** Take your beef-steaks and beat them with the back of a knife, strew them over with a little pepper and salt, lay them on a gridiron over a clear fire, turning them whilst enough; set your dish over a chasing-dish of coals, with a little brown gravy; chop an onion or shallot as small as pulp, and put it amongst the gravy; (if your steaks be not over much done, gravy will come there from) put it on a dish and shake it all together. Garnish your dish with shallots and pickles.

**16. A SHOULDER OF MUTTON FORCED.** Take a pint of oysters and chop them, put them in a few bread crumbs, a little pepper, shred mace, and an onion, mix

them all together, and stuff your mutton on both sides, then roast it at a slow fire, and baste it with nothing but butter; put into the dripping pan a little water, two or three spoonfuls of the pickle of oysters, a glass of claret, an onion shred small, and an anchovy; if your liquor waste before your mutton is enough, put in a little more water; when the meat is enough, take up the gravy, skim off the fat, and thicken it with flour and butter; then serve it up. Garnish your dish with horse-radish and pickles.

**17. TO STEW A FILLET OF MUTTON,** Take a fillet of mutton, stuff it the same as for a shoulder, half roast it, and put it into a stew-pan with a little gravy, a jill of claret, an anchovy, and a shred onion; you may put in a little horse-radish and some mushrooms; stew it over a slow fire while the mutton is enough; take the gravy, skim off the fat, and thicken it with flour and butter; lay force-meat balls round the mutton. Garnish your dish with horse-radish and mushrooms. It is proper either for a side dish or bottom dish; if you have it for a bottom dish, cut your mutton into filets.

**18. TO COLLAR A BREAST OF MUTTON** Take a breast of mutton, bone it, and season it with nutmeg, pepper and salt, rub it over with the yolk of an egg; make a little forced-meat of veal or mutton, chop it with a little beef-suet, a few bread-crumbs, sweet herbs, an onion, pepper and salt, a little nutmeg, two eggs, and a spoonful or two of cream; mix all together, and lay it over the mutton, roll it up and bind it about with coarse inkle\*, put it into an earthen dish with a little water, dredge it over with flour, and lay upon it a little water; it will require two hours to bake it. When it is enough, take up the gravy, skim off the fat, put in an anchovy and a spoonful of catchup, thicken it with flour and butter; take the inkle from the mutton and cut it into three or four rolls; pour the sauce upon the dish, and lay about it forced-meat balls. Garnish your dish with pickles. It is proper for a side or bottom dish.

\* inkle: linen tape, often coloured



# The sad history of Fanny Moxon – Arsonist

By Chris Moxon

**One thing leads to another:** last December Mary Ann Moxon from Virginia, USA, spotted on a website, “Lincolnshire Live”, a “news” item about Fanny Moxon (1858-1914). This quoted from Joan Rendall’s article which appeared in the April 2010 issue of the Moxon Magazine (*“which is full of family history”*). But there was something new – Joan had confessed in her article that *“If I knew her burial place, I would be tempted to place a posy on her grave”*, and the “Lincolnshire Live” piece carried a photograph of Fanny’s gravestone.

I contacted the “Lincolnshire Live” reporter who gave me the address of the photographer, David Clark. David Clark turned out to be a local historian as well as a photographer. And,

although the website had stated that *“nearly all”* of the medical records of the hospital had been vandalised when the hospital had closed down, David was able to provide six pages giving details of Fanny Moxon’s time there. So now we know a little more of the sad history of Fanny Moxon.

Fanny Moxon (1858-1914) was seventh of the fifteen children born to Thomas Moxon (1818-1887) and his wife Louisa who lived at Palace Farm, Witham on the Hill (MX01). But Fanny seems to have caused more problems than all the rest because she was *“slightly mentally frail”*, as Joan Rendall’s mother put it. Fanny needed to be watched all the time as she loved setting fire to the haystacks around the farm and



Palace Farm  
Palace Farm  
Witham On The Hill



# Fanny Moxon...

would roar with laughter when they blazed away. This was a serious danger in a farming community but Thomas and Louisa, according to family tradition, were persuaded by a friendly doctor that Fanny would be better kept at home rather than placed in an institution.

The problem came to a head in the first two years of the twentieth century. Thomas had died in 1887 and his second son, Nathaniel (1860-1961), who was born just two years after Fanny, acted as Farm Manager for his mother. At the time of the census in 1901, Palace Farm, which had housed such a large family, was occupied by just Louisa, Nathaniel and Fanny plus three live-in servants (two for work on the farm and one domestic servant). Louisa, by now 74, may have been distracted around this time because her eldest son, Thomas, whose farm had collapsed, had been forced to take up poorly paid clerical work.

On 27<sup>th</sup> June 1902 Fanny set fire to a stack of straw at the house of a neighbour, Mr Andrews. She was duly prosecuted, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour. This may well have involved her in making oakum for caulking on ships (untwisting old tar and dirt-covered rope to make a paste used to keep boats waterproof). But her imprisonment must have been a blessed relief for Nathaniel and Louisa and their servants, insofar as they no longer had to keep their eyes on what Fanny was doing.

On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1903 Fanny was released from prison and returned to Palace Farm. Within a few months Nathaniel took action. Fanny was



examined by Dr Gilpin and on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1903 he admitted her to Kesteven County Asylum (later known as Rauceby Hospital), over 20 miles from Witham on the Hill. This was a newly-built institution which had opened in July 1902 with a capacity for 490 patients. Fanny was registered as patient number 450. At the time of her admission Dr Gilpin noted that Fanny was *“exceedingly wild in her appearance and behaved and spoke in the most excited and incoherent manner”*.

In explaining the need for her to be admitted, Nathaniel reported that *“he has to sit up all night*



## Fanny Moxon...

*to prevent her wandering from the house which she does without reason..... she walks about her bedroom using foul language threats to an imaginary person."* A neighbour, Mrs Andrews – possibly the wife of the man whose straw had been set alight the previous year – added to the reports: *"the alleged lunatic is constantly abusing the neighbours without the slightest cause... she sends in imaginary bills and claims against her and threatens to cause her thousands of pounds damage"*. The managers of the asylum concluded that Fanny was *"deluded, irrational and suspicious of everyone. She complains that she is being persecuted and imagines that people are working against her and claims large sums of money for financial damages."*

Fanny, then aged 45, was recorded as being physically fit and healthy, weighing 9 stone and standing 5' 3" tall. When asked about her family history Fanny claimed that *"her mother was in an asylum"* but there is no reason to believe that this was true.

For the first month of her stay at the asylum weekly reports of Fanny's behaviour were noted. During the following year there were monthly reports and thereafter reports every quarter.

Within a week of her admission Fanny had started to work and was described as *"a useful help"* in the Laundry – which would have been very busy given the number of patients. Within a month she *"works away well.... and now seems a little more settled and to like her surroundings better. She is still vindictive against her friends."*

Over the next few years she was repeatedly praised for her work within the institution. In 1908 *"If left alone is no trouble but if crossed is*

*easily upset and becomes excited and quarrelsome"*. In 1912 *"Has been noisy and abusive of late and very excited since she came in for £300"*. This could have been an inheritance from her mother, who had died in 1909.

But in April 1913 an ovarian tumour was diagnosed and Fanny died on 11 December 1914, aged 63. The cause of death was listed as an ovarian cyst.

We do not know if any of the family visited Fanny during her final years. Given that Louisa and Nathaniel lived more than 20 miles away, it might have been difficult. Moreover, as visits might have upset Fanny and made her more quarrelsome, the managers may well have specifically asked the family not to visit. But someone from the family, probably Nathaniel since he was the closest to her for so many years, did pay to have a gravestone erected in her memory. The graveyard is now very overgrown, but Fanny's seems to have been one of the few graves that were marked by a gravestone.

Nathaniel, during Fanny's time in the asylum, continued to farm at Witham on the Hill. Within eighteen months of her admission, he had married a girl from Norfolk, who was twenty years his junior, and they had produced the first of three children. According to their eldest son, in the year that Fanny died, Nathaniel gave up running Palace Farm and moved the entire family to Sutton-on-Trent in Nottinghamshire where, in the 1921 census, he was listed as an out of work Farm Labourer. Thus more than 60 years of the Moxon family living in Witham on the Hill came to an end.

**Chris Moxon**

## Missing links

**Over the last thirty years or so, researchers have found many rebelowrences to a Moxon (or variant) who could not easily be fitted into one of the Society's Trees.**

Chris Moxon recently trawled through the Society's archives to find and to file what COULD be fitted in. But there is still a mass of odd information which COULD NOT so far be fitted in.

We put some of this information, which we call Missing Links, onto the Society's research website, hoping that members might recognise some of them, and provide information allowing us to add them to one of the Trees. We also printed some examples in our last, October 2021, issue of this Magazine, but sadly there has been very little response, so two more examples of the Missing Links are printed here, and we would be very interested and grateful for any information you can add.

This is just two of the Missing Links which we have, there are more on the website and more will be added as they are found, so please do visit [www.moxonresearch.org](http://www.moxonresearch.org) and have a look at them: you never know, you might meet an ancestor!

If you can offer any information, please contact Chris Moxon and quote the reference number (ML1, ML2... etc) of the person concerned so we can keep track in a sometimes complex tangle of names and relationships!

### ML5 : Agnes Helen Moxon's Tree

Agnes Helen Moxon wrote to us in 1987 and enclosed a family Tree going back a couple of generations. Her maiden name was Shanks but she seems to have recorded all the relatives of her husband, Harold.

Following disbelowussion at the Salford Gathering this has been further researched; Agnes's Tree has been corrected and now forms part of a new Tree, MX102. This Tree goes back to William Moxon born in about 1785 "on the sea" and he went on to become a professional rat-catcher.

We are still searching for how Tree MX102 fits into the wider Moxon family.

### ML6 : Moxoms of Buckinghamshire and the Protestation Oath 1641/2

In 1992 Graham Jagger received a letter from Val Lancaster. This gave some information (but no sources) for William Moxom (Muckson) and family from the late 18th century plus the Protestation Oath Roll of 1641/2.

William Moxom appears in MX01 as the son of Nathaniel Moxon 1710-1760. Can we find the source for his marriage? And for the children that Val listed? Is there any evidence for his daughter, Ann Muckson, marrying William Hardick in 1791?

The Protestation Oath Roll was the list of people pledging allegiance to the Church of England and against Papacy at the behest of the House of Commons. This particular roll relates to inhabitants of Carlton in Yorkshire. Three Moxons – John, Thomas and Raphe – are listed towards the bottom of the middle column. Can we identify who were these three individuals – remembering that Carlton was, then, part of the parish of Rothwell?

# Who was Cyllene Moxon? Part 1

By Philip Lord

## Who was Cyllene Moxon?

In the October issue of the Magazine, one of the items on eBay was a postcard featuring a photograph of Cyllene Moxon, a London Chorus Girl of the 1910s and 1920s who was renowned for her beauty and who featured on many postcards and cigarette cards of the era. But who was she? Was ‘Cyllene’ her real name or her stage name? The search for her identity has proved interesting and somewhat convoluted as both her mother and her father led unconventional lives. We finally established that Cyllene was in fact born “Selene” and belongs to the tree that the Society refers to as the “Mogsons or Moxons of Whitgift and Ousefleet”, tree MX16.



Signed postcard from the extensive collection of Cyllene memorabilia held by Christopher Albert Moxon

## Selene’s great-grandfather, William Parkin Moxon (1794-1864)

In 2009 the Society published a facsimile copy of an original Moxon memoir. Graham Jagger, in his introduction, explained that “The Memoir was written in late 1897 by Charles Frederick Moxon, an architect, and is a biographical sketch of his late father, Charles Moxon (1808-1890) – sometimes known as the Royal Decorator.” Charles, the “Royal Decorator” was the brother of Selene’s great-grandfather, William Parkin Moxon

William Parkin Moxon and Charles Moxon, as Graham outlined, were the sons of William Moxon (1767-1811), a mariner, and his wife Mary (née Foster). William Parkin was born in 1794 in the village of Kilpin Pike in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Kilpin Pike is approximately two miles north of Goole town centre, on the north bank of the River Ouse. The family later settled further down the river Ouse, in Whitgift, in the West Riding, where Charles was born in 1808. William Parkin moved to London, settling in the Bermondsey area, where he was a potato merchant in one of the Wharves off Tooley Street near London Bridge. Once Charles had finished his five-year apprenticeship as a painter and decorator, he went to live with his brother William Parkin and sister-in-law Sarah and nephews John and William in Bermondsey.

## Selene’s grandfather, John Moxon (1823-1895)

William Parkin Moxon’s son, John Moxon, was Selene’s grandfather. He was born 12 Feb 1823 and married Margaret Garlick in 1847 in Bermondsey, where they had three children; Charles born in 1848, Margaret 1850 and Anna in 1852. After the family moved to Edinburgh, a second son, John Edward, was born in 1856.

He was a painter and decorator by trade, his particular skill being Graining (painting to replicate wood grain) and Marbling (painting to replicate marble).

The family’s move to Edinburgh was prompted by a business partnership with his Uncle Charles, the Royal Decorator. In 1833 Charles had gone to Edinburgh to work for David Ramsay Hay (1798-1866), renowned Scottish artist, interior decorator and colour theorist. In 1842 he returned to



# Who was Cyllene Moxon? Part 1

London and within ten years was prosperous but maintained his links with Edinburgh. In 1853 he established a business partnership with nephew John to open a branch of his London business there. John moved to Scotland to run the business in Edinburgh, and in 1867 Uncle Charles withdrew from the partnership and the Edinburgh business became entirely John’s own.

## Selene’s father, Charles Moxon 1848-1933

Selene’s father was Charles born 1848, and he was also a painter and decorator, who became the ‘son’ in the firm ‘J Moxon & Son’ in Edinburgh. The records show that in 1881 estimates were received and accepted from ‘J. Moxon & Son’ and ‘Bonnar & Carfrae’ for painting the National Gallery of Scotland and the Royal Academy at the Mound. In 1884 John and Charles went into partnership with Robert Carfrae and established the firm ‘Moxon & Carfrae’, located at 77 George Street, in the central thoroughfare of Edinburgh New Town. “Robert Carfrae, (1820–1900) was Curator of the Museum of Antiquities of Scotland. He accumulated a large art and coin collection. By profession he was a furniture maker,

having been involved in the firms Bonnar & Carfrae and Moxon & Co.” [Wikipedia].

The company could produce a whole design scheme and their work was featured on a Royal Mail 1<sup>st</sup> class stamp in 2010 which depicted a detail from their 1897 stained glass window produced for the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh (see the accompanying illustration). Charles continued in the firm after his father’s death.

Charles was also well-known in Edinburgh music circles. In 1924 the Edinburgh Evening News reported on the Golden Jubilee of the St. George Quartette Club:

“The St. George Quartette Club, which celebrated its jubilee this week, is one of the oldest musical organisations of the kind in Edinburgh. Founded in 1874 by Mr Charles Moxon, the Club quickly attracted to its ranks business and professional men who were keenly interested in the study and practice of instrumental music. ... Mr. Charles Moxon, who for 60 years has taken a prominent part in stimulating the cause of amateur orchestral music in the city.

A talented ‘cello player, Mr Moxon, who is the Club’s president, has for upwards of half a century played at the concerts of the Edinburgh Choral Union, the Edinburgh Amateur Orchestral Society, which he founded, and numerous other amateur orchestral societies.”

The idea of founding the St. George Quartette Club came to Mr. Moxon through his association with the late Mr. William Croall, the coachbuilder in York Lane, a keen musician and excellent violinist, who was the possessor of a magnificent collection of violins. During the first few years of its existence the St. George Club met in rooms at 93 George Street. Here the proceedings were of a delightfully informal character. There was no set programme, and while the primary object of the members meeting was to practise chamber music, there was always a free and easy social side to the proceedings.

As years went on the Club acquired a handsome library containing some of the finest examples of chamber music. In 1886 the Club held its meetings in the large saloon at 77 George Street, the premises of Messrs. Moxon & Carfrae.”



## Who was Cyllene Moxon? Part 1

Charles obviously led a comfortable life; in Feb 1919, there was an advertisement in The Scotsman newspaper for a sale at Dowell's fine Art Gallery, "A collection of valuable antique furniture, oriental porcelain, curios and tapestry, the property of Charles Moxon."

Charles died of influenza / pneumonia in Edinburgh in 1933, aged 84. His personal life however, had not been straightforward.

In 1870 he married his first wife Helen Downie (1849-1897). Helen's family owned property in Melbourne, Australia, as her parents had spent some time there in the 1840s and some of Helen's siblings were born there. She and Charles had one child, William Moxon born in Edinburgh in 1876, Selene's half-brother.

William Moxon (1876-1940) married Hannah Jameson and they had twins, Selene's niece and nephew, Margaret Estella Orchardson Moxon (1908-1979) and Ian Martin Moxon, MBE (1908-1996). William and Hannah would in later life spend many years living in Tangier, Morocco, where William died in 1940. In 1934 daughter Margaret married David Jarvis Mill-Irving, a British Diplomat, and consequently spent many years living overseas. Amongst other things David was H.M. Vice-consul in Suez in 1937, the Ambassador to Haiti 1950-1955, the Consul-General for Algiers 1955-1956, and the Ambassador to Costa Rica 1956-1961. Ian Martin Moxon was for many years Pro-consul at H.M. Consulate General in Tangier and was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours' List in 1973.

Although William was born in 1876, his father Charles is found living alone in Edinburgh in 1881 in the census records, aged 32. On 5 Oct 1879, his wife Helen had been admitted to Slaughton Hall, a Scottish stately home-turned-asylum, a place for wealthy patients with mental illness to recover in a picturesque setting. She was admitted again in 1885 and died in 1897. In the intervening 1891 census, Charles is found lodging with a Janet McDonald Wilson, at an address in Edinburgh.

### Selene's mother, Janet Gilchrist (c 1856-1932) AKA Janet McDonald Wilson

Selene's mother, Janet McDonald Wilson, was a mystery. Selene's birth certificate said that she was illegitimate, the daughter of single-mother Janet, a Dress Maker. However, it became apparent that the name 'McDonald Wilson' was a complete invention!

Janet McDonald Wilson was born Janet Gilchrist c 1858 at Kingscross Point, on the Isle of Arran, the eldest of at least ten children born to baker William Gilchrist and his wife Sarah Ingram. In 1874 Janet married Irishman William Dundas Cowan, a worker in a yarn factory, but by 1881 she had disappeared from the census records. Husband William was living with Janet's parents and siblings in Bonhill, Dumbartonshire, but she was nowhere to be seen. William died aged 52 in 1896, leaving everything to his work-colleague James Small, who lived with him at the same home address, 6 Afton Place, Dumbarton. Janet was left nothing in William's will.

Had Janet and William's marriage foundered due to incompatibility? It appears that Janet left William early in their marriage and moved to Edinburgh under the assumed name of Janet McDonald Wilson, presumably so that her husband could not track her down, and ran a lodging house, where she met Charles Moxon, who, as mentioned above, was living there at the beginning of April 1891 when the census was taken.

### Selene McDonald Wilson AKA Selene Wilson Moxon AKA Cyllene Moxon (1890-1970)

Charles and Janet had formed a relationship and their daughter, Selene McDonald Wilson had been born just over three months earlier, on 30 Dec 1890. However, Selene (who would later be known by the stage name "Cyllene Moxon") was not with them in the 1891 census; she was found living with a completely different family. It is likely that she had been sent out to a wet-nurse.



## Who was Cyllene Moxon? Part 1

After his wife Helen died in 1897, Charles Moxon was able to marry Janet on 17 Nov 1898 in Glasgow. On the marriage certificate Janet had used her real name, Janet Cowan, widow, maiden name Gilchrist. The details of both of her parents were given, as was the custom in Scotland. By the 1901 census Charles's second wife Janet Moxon was still in Edinburgh and her daughter "Selene Moxon" was with her but Charles was living elsewhere. At some point before the end of the decade both mother and daughter made the move to London. Janet Moxon is in the electoral register in Edinburgh in 1908 but by 1910 she was living in Fulham with Selene where they are both found in the 1911 census: Janet Moxon and Selene McDonald Wilson, daughter. In the 1921 census Selene lists herself as Selene Wilson Moxon, an out of work actress living in Marylebone. Mother Janet appears to have split her time between England and Scotland but her final years were spent in Princes Square, Bayswater, with Selene, where she died in 1932, a year before her husband Charles died in Edinburgh.

In 1956 Selene contributed a chapter to "The Day Before Yesterday", a collection of "First-hand Stories of Fifty Years Ago," edited by her friend Noel Streatfield. In it she describes her time in Edinburgh and the reasons for leaving: *"I remember Edinburgh on Sunday in my early youth, clanging church bells, best clothes, starched and stiff, deserted streets, and very little relaxation. It was to me dreary and depressing. So my schooling finished, I decided to break away from this outmoded atmosphere, and I began to day-dream about the stage, and the lighter side of it at that. My parents might have forgiven me such an idea had I had the decency to be ambitious, they would have tolerated a great actress about the house; but alas, I had no ambition and said so. Not very wise under the circumstances! However, after endless warnings of the terrible pitfalls that awaited, that no good would come to me, I departed for London."*

So, what of Selene and her life after Edinburgh? We hope to take up the story - Part 2! - in a future issue... watch this space!

Philip Lord

## Another missing link...

Leonard Moxon in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, wrote: Our daughter Claire who lives in Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada has joined a widespread group of helpers who are dealing with the records of people who were buried in the vicinity of Euston Station and, I believe, are having to be moved due to planned construction in the area. It seems that it is quite a project. One of Claire's immediate findings was the details of the remains of Anne Moxon, aged 5 years, buried Sept 3, 1810 in "Bull Yard" and she is interested to know, as we are, whether this young lady forms a small part of Moxon history. Perhaps you already have this information.

### Chris Moxon added this information:

The closest we have is an Annie Moxon born "about 1901" in MX06. But she was born, and the whole family lived, in Pontefract so I am pretty sure that this burial did not relate to her.

Chris suggested that this could be a new Missing Link (see page 7 of this issue) and/or the basis for an article about the Euston Station reburial project which involves exhuming some 60,000 folk and reburying their remains in Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey, the site for many London reburials over the years as the city has been developed and redeveloped. Watch this space!

# Whimsey Moxon

If a member of The Moxon Society had been an early adopter of Google Alerts in 2003, they may have been alerted to a token inscribed with the birth date of Whimsey Moxon on 2nd December 1771. It was on sale for £30.

Instead, as outlined in an article in the **Moxon Magazine** No 37, dated April 2006, it was the keen eye of Christopher A. Moxon, a native of Cawthorne, Yorkshire but by then living in Witney, Oxford, which alerted the Society that it was again for sale through an eBay auction. The Society set an upper limit of £50, but it sold to an American for £256. **Such is life!**

So who was Whimsey Moxon? As outlined in the previous article, she was baptised on 15th December 1771 at All Saints Pavement and St Peter The Little, York, Yorkshire, and she was the daughter of John Moxon.

A John Moxon is recorded as marrying a Mary Marriot on 20th August 1770 at All Saints, Wakefield. These could have been Whimsey's parents.

She is next heard of, just prior to her marriage, as a tenant of William Thomas St Quinton at an address in Kensington, London, paying land tax of 17/6d. Her name is given as 'Wimsey Moxham', both names incorrectly spelt. Her next door neighbour was one

John Smith. Is this how she met her husband Charles Smith whom she married later the same year?

Whimsey married Charles Smith at St James, Westminster, London on 7th November 1810. This was fairly old for a woman (39) so Charles Moxon Smith born on 13th February 1813 may have been her only child. His baptism was wrongly transcribed as Maron rather than Moxon but later census records have it correctly as Moxon.

Her son's non-conformist baptism record in Kensington, London in 1813 states that his mother was Whimsey Smith whose mother was Mary Moxon. This suggests that Whimsey's father was deceased.

Charles Moxon Smith later married an Emma and by 1851 they had three daughters and three sons. The children were variously born in Kensington, Surrey and Suffolk.

Whimsey Moxon Smith's death was registered in Kensington, London in Oct-Dec 1858, vol.1a p.58.

The uncommon name Whimsey lived on in the Smith family. The 1945 electoral roll shows an Alice M. Whimsey Smith living in Chertsey, Surrey as well as two others in the same town with Whimsey as a third Christian name.

## Margaret Tucker Moxon

An image of Whimsey's birth token from issue 37 of *The Moxon Magazine*:

This birth token has been engraved on a worn George II copper halfpenny (28mm). The engraving on one side reads:

WHIMSEY  
MOXON  
NOV<sup>R</sup> 2nd  
1771

whilst the other side has an engraving of a lady with a bird on her hand.



# Where are all the bodies buried?

**LAST YEAR** the Church of England announced an ambitious new project: surveying and cataloguing the Church's 19,000 graveyards using the latest laser-scanning equipment and innovative software developed by the land survey company Atlantic Geomatics in Cumbria. As well as mapping the graveyards they will also take photographs of all the memorials in the churchyards and scan all the parish registers and create a digital index of the records in the registers – baptisms, marriages and burials.

Atlantic Geomatics are proud that this is the first time such a project has been tackled anywhere in the world and will become a unique resource for people around the globe. And all this information will be freely available to genealogists.

In 2020 a pilot survey was completed on two churches in the United Benefice of Kirburton All Hallows and Shelley Emmanuel, Diocese of Leeds, with support from the National Heritage Lottery Fund. Opposite we show a screenshot from the website for Kirburton All Hallows where a search revealed ten Moxons in all: what a wonderful resource this will be when it is finally completed.

Right: a screenshot from the website of Kirburton All Hallows Church after a search for 'Moxon.' There are also photos of the monument and a wealth of detail about the people named.



One of Atlanta Geomatics' staff surveying a churchyard



(<https://kirkburton.burialgrounds.co.uk/mapmanagement/#/>)

## Memory of a 'Queen Mother'

**MICK BRITTLE of MJElectronics in Ironbridge** recently removed a picture from a frame he wanted to reuse. The picture (*reproduced opposite from a scan which Mick kindly provided*) was on the front of a greetings card which described the picture as showing the "little Church of St. Mary Vedast against the background of St. Paul's. Painted in 1948 when the wildflowers among the ruins were one of the few touches of colour in the City of London. Reproduced by kind permission of the Artist E. Jessop Price." Mick wondered if we might be interested... well, we never miss a chance to write about members of the Moxon clan! And the Artist, E. Jessop Price, was a very prominent member of the Moxon clan.

When he was editor of The Moxon Magazine John Moxon Hill described her as "The Queen Mother of the Moxon Society" (see, for example, issue 21 of the Magazine, April 1988, which was approximately the time when she wrote this card).

Eileen was born in Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire, daughter to Joseph Nathaniel Moxon (1865 – 1963) and sister to Harold Moxon. She was a very early and very

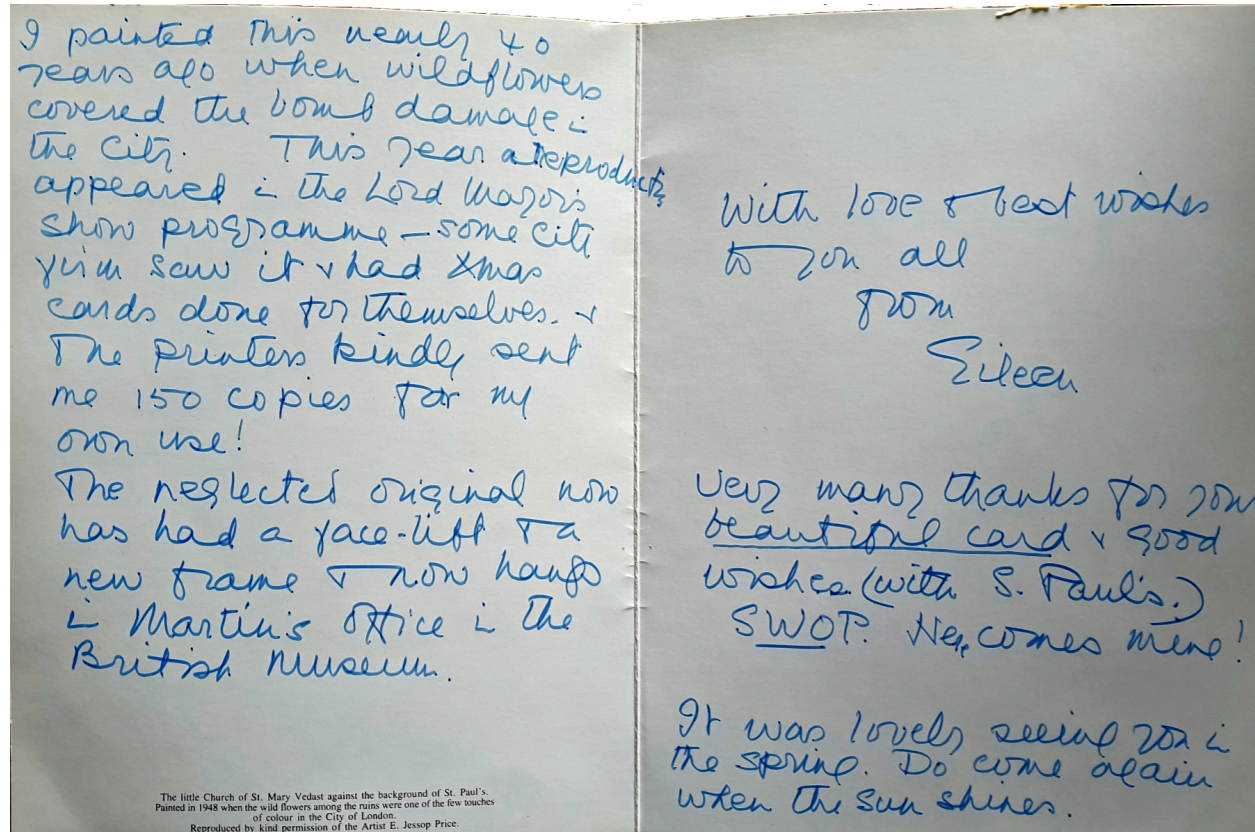
enthusiastic supporter of the Moxon Society, and a founder subscriber of The Moxon Magazine. She became the wife of the Reverend Albert Jessop Price, headmaster of Saint Paul's Cathedral Choir School and a Minor Canon of the Cathedral from 1938 – 1958. And she painted many views of St Paul's Cathedral, including the one shown here.

She says in the card that the original oil painting had been refurbished and gone on to hang in the office of her son Martin, Keeper of Coins at the British Museum.

Eileen died peacefully on 3 November 1997 in her 96<sup>th</sup> year, and was buried alongside her late husband, Albert Jessop Price, in the churchyard of St Georges Church in Benenden, Kent.

But thanks to findings like Mick's, and to her paintings, Eileen's story lives on as befits the Queen Mother of our Society.

**Trevor Jordan**



# Golfing Moxons DownUnder

The Indooroopilly Golf Club (I.G.C.) was established in 1926 in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia with the original 18 hole golf course situated at St Lucia.

In 1962, the Brisbane City Council leased the Club 180 acres of land at Long Pocket, Indooroopilly on the Brisbane River near St Lucia.

Following World War 2, Club Member numbers had grown which prompted I.G.C. to seek more land for extra facilities.

In 1973, the Club agreed to exchange the St Lucia Course & Clubhouse for 200 acres of land adjoining the Long Pocket course.

From the Brisbane City Council, I.G.C. have now secured an extension of the Long Pocket lease until 2058.

The current Clubhouse & extensive courses were constructed on this extra 200 acres of land adding to the already leased course at Long Pocket.

Jules Moxon, Tom Moxon's father, and Phil Moxon, Simon Moxon's father, were early members of the Indooroopilly Golf Club at St Lucia and with their children regularly played at the Royal Queensland Golf Club at Hamilton.

In 1930, Jules & Phil donated the Moxon Cup, an annual competition for two men.

Sadly they didn't ever actually win that Cup but Jules' grandson, Anthony, did win that Competition in 1979, and his name is on the Honour Board. Anthony Moxon is a current member of I.G.C.

In 1929, Jules & Phil did win the Iona Cup, a competition for four men. Their names are on that Honour Board too. A replica Iona Cup is still in the possession of Simon's family.

Margaret Moxon  
PO Box 236  
Albion Q 4010



Engraved Cup donated by Jules & Phil Moxon. Jules Moxon was a member 1928-57, pioneer aviator and co-founder of Moxon Timber Co. Event first contested in 1930. Handicap four ball match play event

Jules Moxon, was the son of Thomas Frank Moxon (MX05), and father to Tom Moxon's daughter, Anne Allen. . Above is a photo of the Moxon Cup and the words on the explanatory plaque where it is displayed.

Margaret has in her possession a replica of the Iona Cup which had been won in 1929 by her father-in-law, Philip Handyside Moxon. Sadly I could not retrieve a printable picture of that cup for publication here.

Trevor Jordan

# Another Brick Wall?

## Graham Jagger writes...

When family historians get together one often hears remarks to the effect that "I've hit a brick wall with my great-grandfather Smith!" Such brick walls are commonly encountered during attempts to trace ancestors who were, it is assumed, alive and kicking during the reign of Queen Victoria. This note is not intended to be a guide on how to scale brick walls but to describe some of them and how a particular one in my own family tree came into being and how, eventually, it was scaled.

The genealogist must rely largely on written or printed sources or, more likely these days, on their digitised versions where these sources have survived. The older the source the more likely it is to have ceased to exist. Parish registers, first devised in 1538, have particularly suffered from the depredations of time caused, for example, by mice, fire, clerical carelessness, or downright theft. Due to the dislike of the established church by Cromwell and his followers, very few exist for the period 1649-1660.

Even more modern records have ceased to be available. Parts of the 1851 census of Lancashire – containing details of more than 200,000 people, including a third of Oldham's population – were severely damaged when flood water engulfed a room at the Home Office in London where the documents were stored. Fortunately, very careful forensic work over the last decade or so by a small group of dedicated workers has managed to reconstruct the contents of perhaps half the damaged original pages. The service records, containing among other things details of parentage, of perhaps half of all members of the armed forces who fought in in the First World War were destroyed by bombing during the Second

World War and so tracing the ancestry of these individuals is often extremely difficult.

Common surnames often present mammoth obstacles to the genealogist. The maiden name of my wife Angela's mother was Evans. Richard Evans, Angela's great grandfather, was a grocer and provision dealer in Oswestry, Shropshire, where he spent most of his life. According to the 1881 census for Oswestry he was born in Merionethshire, Wales, in about 1845. Recourse to the Registrar General's returns indicates that in the period 1843-7 there were 17 births of Richard Evans in Merionethshire – not an easy job to untangle this lot, look you!

Attempts are sometimes made to trace the whereabouts of distant cousins. This involves trying to work forwards from a known ancestor, a great great ... grandfather, for example. Up until the seventeenth century a family would often have lived in the same settlement for many decades enabling a family tree covering several generations to be created. Tree MX01, the Moxons of Cawthorne, is a particularly good example of this kind of long-term settlement. The Agricultural Revolution, the unprecedented increase in agricultural production in Britain between the mid-17th and



Another brick wall

mid-19th centuries, was linked to new agricultural practices such as crop rotation, selective breeding, and a more productive use of arable land. Annual hiring fairs were held, during Martinmas week at the end of November in market towns throughout England. Both male and female agricultural servants would gather to bargain with prospective employers and, hopefully, secure a position for the coming year. The yearly hiring included board and lodging for single employees for the whole year with wages being paid at the end of the year’s service. These fairs attracted all the other trappings of a fair and they turned into major feasts in their own right, attracting poor reputations for the drunkenness and immorality. Later, when wage rates and conditions were no longer officially set, the hiring fair remained a useful institution, especially as much employment in rural areas was by annual agreement. Prospective workers would gather in the street or marketplace, often sporting some sort of badge or tool to denote their speciality. Shepherds held a crook or a tuft of wool, cowmen brought wisps of straw, dairymaids

carried a milking stool or pail and housemaids held brooms or mops; this is why some hiring fairs were known as ‘mop fairs’. Employers would look them over and, if they were thought fit, hire them for the coming year, handing over a shilling to seal the arrangement. There is no doubt that marriages would sometimes result from assignations originally made at hiring fairs and the family units so formed might settle down miles from the original parishes of the parties involved thus breaking the continuity of information in the parish records.

The nineteenth century saw a huge change in the social structure of society. Table 1 illustrates the marked difference between the rate of growth in the population of England and Wales as a whole and that of urban areas as exemplified by the population of Leeds, a typical Moxon stronghold, across the census points 1841 to 1891. This period, known as The Industrial Revolution, saw the transition to new manufacturing processes. This transition included going from hand production methods to machines, new chemical manufacturing and iron

Census year	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Population of England and Wales (000's)	15,914	17,928	20,066	22,712	25,794	29,003
Percentage increase since 1841		12.7	20.1	42.7	62.1	82.2
Population of Leeds	222,189	249,992	311,197	372,402	433,607	503,493
Percentage increase since 1841		12.5	40.1	67.6	95.2	126.6

Table 1. The population of England and Wales, and Leeds, in the period 1841-1891

Another brick wall

production processes, the increasing use of steam power and water power, the development of machine tools and the rise of the mechanised factory system. The Industrial Revolution led to an unprecedented rise in the rate of population growth of newly industrialised centres, of which Leeds was an example, due to unprecedented migration of labour from the agricultural hinterlands. Families became more mobile and would move perhaps many miles to a new location. Textiles were the dominant industry of the Industrial Revolution in terms of employment, value of output and capital invested. The textile industry was also the first to use modern production methods. It is not an exaggeration to say that the industry of nineteenth century Britain depended on coal and, *a fortiori*, on the availability of an adequate supply of miners.

The ancestry of my mother’s paternal grandmother, Janet Moxon (1867-1951), can be traced back with virtual certainty to John

Moxon of Silkstone, Yorkshire, in the reign of Henry VIII. The details can be found in MX27. But who was Janet’s husband, my mother’s paternal grandfather? Certainly he was not to be found in Yorkshire until the 1881 census. This document revealed that he was called William Bumpstead, a coal miner, living in Thorpe Hesley near Rotherham in Yorkshire and that he had been born in the village of Barking in Suffolk, midway between Stowmarket and Ipswich. He married Janet Moxon in Thorpe Hesley in 1884. The Bumpstead family, who were generally agricultural labourers, can be traced back many generations in the villages within a few miles of Barking; so how did they come to be in Yorkshire?

It has already been noted that the progress of the Industrial Revolution depended on a ready supply of coal and coal miners. The major coal owners in the area around Thorpe Hesley were the Fitzwilliam family. By the time of the Bumpstead migration from Suffolk

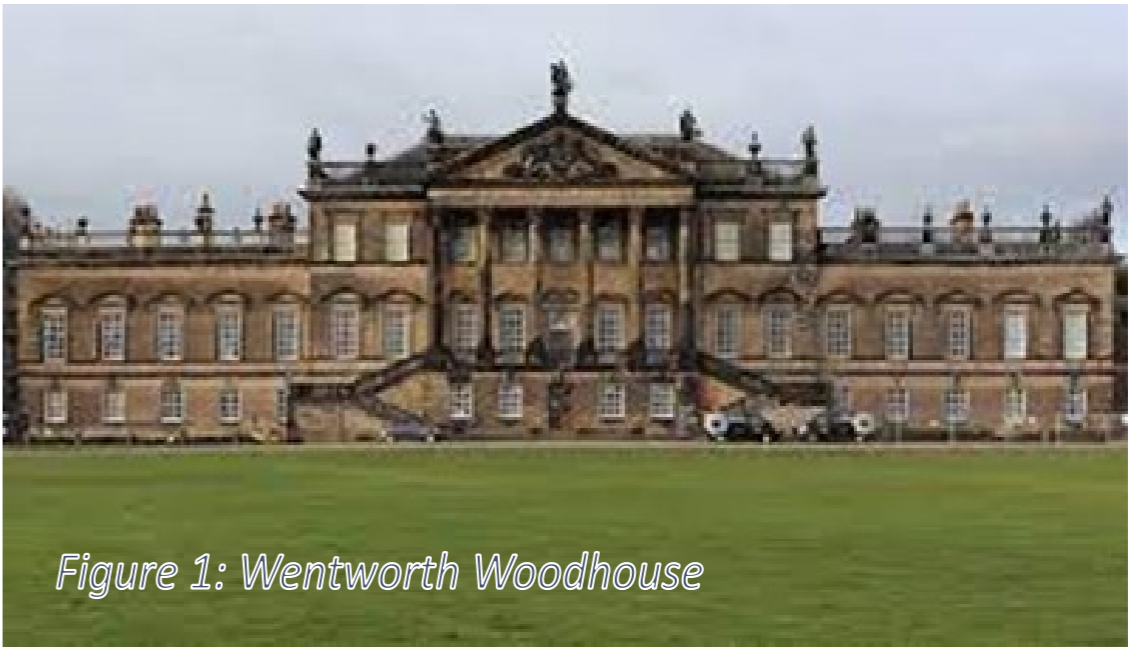


Figure 1: Wentworth Woodhouse

## Another brick wall



**Figure 2: The Sixth Earl Fitzwilliam 1815-1902**

this family had already become extremely wealthy from the profits of their coal mines having built Wentworth Woodhouse (Figure 1), one of the largest houses in Europe. Wentworth Woodhouse is a Grade I listed country house in the village of Wentworth in the Metropolitan Borough of Rotherham in South Yorkshire. The building has more than 300 rooms, although the precise number is unclear, with 250,000 square feet of floorspace (124,600 square feet of living area). It covers an area of more than 2.5 acres, it is surrounded by a 180-acre park, and an estate of 15,000 acres.

The original Jacobean house was rebuilt by Thomas Watson-Wentworth, 1st Marquess of Rockingham (1693–1750), and vastly

expanded by his son, the 2nd Marquess, who was twice Prime Minister, and who established Wentworth Woodhouse as a Whig centre of influence. In the 18th century, the house was inherited by the Earls Fitzwilliam who owned it until 1979 when it passed to the heirs of the 8th and 10th Earls, its value having appreciated from the large quantities of coal discovered on the estate.

So high was the demand for coal and so scarce the supply of miners in the 1870s that the Fitzwilliams had to resort to unique means of staff recruiting. The 6<sup>th</sup> Earl Fitzwilliam (Figure 2) had printed advertisements in the Suffolk newspapers inviting generally poorly-paid agricultural labourers from Suffolk to move to Yorkshire to earn vastly more in the Fitzwilliams' collieries. As an added temptation the Earl would pay the rail fare of any newly recruited collier and his family and provide accommodation in newly built cottages. This strategy worked and the late 19<sup>th</sup> century censuses for the Thorpe Hesley area contain many references to Suffolk families.

The Fitzwilliams' wealth continued to increase and when the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl died in 1902 he left an estate valued at £2,949,830, or some £378m in today's money.

So the Bumpstead brick wall had been scaled. Members of the family came to hold high office in the Fitzwilliam colliery empire until well after the nationalisation of the British coal industry.

**Graham Jagger**

## A query answered...

**WE REPRODUCE BELOW** part of some recent correspondence which helped a member of the public to find details of her family history via the Moxon Society website and the vast archives which the Society maintains. Not only could her ancestor be identified, we were also able to point her to an extensive article in a previous issue of this Magazine about that ancestor.

**RACHEL WHEELER** was exploring her family history, and as part of the exploration came across a listing for The Moxon Society. We reproduce below the entire content of her original enquiry, and Chris Moxon's detailed reply. Firstly, Rachel wrote as follows:

My grandfather was a medical doctor in the British army in India from the mid 1930s through early 1960s. During his time there he was given a gift from a patient in 1937. I think he saved her life. It is my understanding that she was one of the last known survivors from the infamous Siege of Lucknow during the Indian Mutiny, but I may have that part wrong. The item she gave my grandfather was an old brass piece placed on a wooden stand and she placed an engraved plaque on the base, and it states the following:

"Presented to Captain J.A. Hamilton R.A.M.C (at Poona, India in 1938) by a grateful patient Miss Moxen born at the Seige [sic] of Lucknow 1857 during the Indian Mutiny"

I am trying to determine who this Moxen might be. I did find a Letitia Christiana Moxon born on Nov. 28, 1957 that may be the same person, and it does list her as dying in India in 1938 at the age of 80, so it may be her, but am unsure, so hoping to find her family and see if this is her. When I did a search for her, it listed your society. Any help is greatly appreciated.

**Best Regards,  
Rachel Wheeler**

**Rachel then sent another message as follows:**

My mistake. It's Moxen not Moxon. Although the only births I've been able to find in India from that time through very simple online searches was of a Letitia Moxon. Perhaps it was a spelling error on the plaque by the person who engraved it, or this Miss Moxen was truly a Moxen not Moxon. It is a mystery I'd love to solve as to who she was. I was told by my mother that she thought Ms. Moxon was the last female survivor from the Siege of Lucknow. The plaque states that she was born during the siege. She gave it to my grandfather in gratitude for something he did for her with regards to her health. My mother believed the actual brass object was already old at the time she presented it to my grandfather in 1938. Perhaps the item came from the Siege or was given to her at birth. It's all a great mystery to me.

My grandfather was Captain J.A. Hamilton (John known as Jack). He was a medical doctor who rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel before he retired. He ran a hospital in India. My mother was actually born and raised there as it was very British back then. I will attach some pictures for you and would be happy for you to share the story. Perhaps someone might see it that knows who this would be? Thank you also for passing along the information to those that might be able to help.

**Rachel Wheeler**



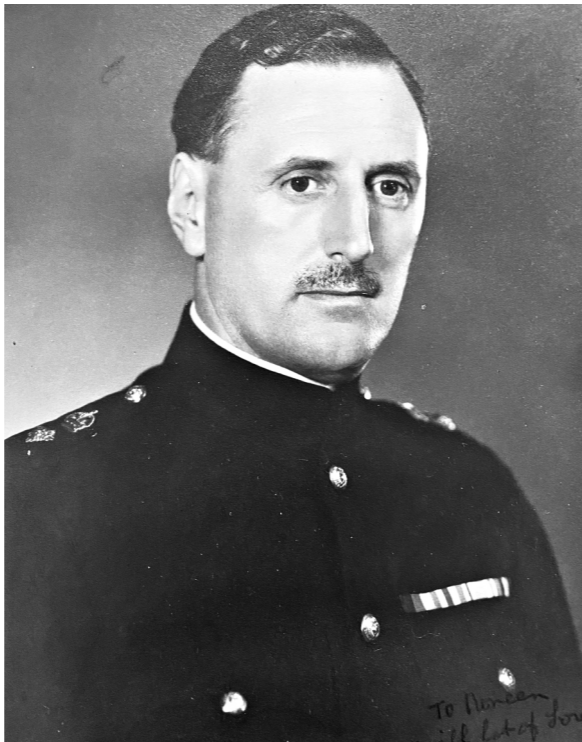
A query answered...

*Rachel's messages were passed on to Chris Moxon who replied:*

I don't think there is much doubt about which Laetitia Moxon/Moxen your Plaque donor is. We only have two Laetitias (out of more than 34,000 records) and the second was living in Australia a generation later.

Laetitia Christina Moxon was born in Rangoon, Burma on November 28th 1857 as her father Capt. Thomas Moxon was initially posted to Burma following his marriage. Her birth was just one day after the end of the Siege of Lucknow (which by road is approx. 1,900 miles from Rangoon). She was however, baptised in India, in Madras, the following year, 12 July 1858. She never married but worked as a governess for various families, but primarily to the children of the Raja of Akalkot (In England she can be found in Bournemouth in the Census in 1881 working as governess at Merivale Hall). I thought you might like the attached photograph of a wedding circa 1899 where Laetitia Christina (known in the family as "Tina") is in the front row with Saheb Raje Bhosle, Rajah of Akalkot sitting on her knee (a colourised close-up is also attached). He had become Rajah aged 4½ in 1898. "Miss Moxon" controlled his upbringing and education until 1907, his thirteenth year. She seems to have spent most of her life in India, dying 16 July 1938 in Kirkee in the Bombay Presidency (the town is now known as Khadki, in the state of Maharashtra), India, of "old age".

Best wishes  
Chris



Captain J.A. Hamilton



The cup which prompted Rachel's enquiry

A query answered...



Above A wedding circa 1899 where Laetitia Christina (known in the family as "Tina") is in the front row with Saheb Raje Bhosle, Rajah of Akalkot, sitting on her knee



Left A colourised close-up from the wedding photo: Christina with Saheb Raje Bhosle, Rajah of Akalkot, sitting on her knee

For more information there is a six-page article in issue 65 (April 2020) of The Moxon Magazine about Laetitia Moxon: The tale of Miss Moxon and the British Raj in India by Geoff Moxon.

# Surgical Innovation in the Nineteenth Century Elizabeth Moxon, 1810 – 1865

By Beth Wilkinson

**You never know** where family history is going to lead you! I started by wanting to find the answer to a simple question – what did my great great grandmother, Elizabeth Moxon, die from? I ended by discovering that, in a sense, she played a role in a remarkable tale of nineteenth century surgical innovation.

Elizabeth Moxon (nee Bingham) was born in Fishlake, Yorkshire, on 2nd August 1810; she married John Watson Moxon (MX10) in Doncaster on 14th March 1835. In 1851 they lived in Stainton, where the census of that year recorded him as being a farmer of four acres. By 1861 they were in Kimberworth, where John was now a corn miller. She died at the relatively early age of 54. I have a photograph of my great great grandmother's gravestone; she died, 4<sup>th</sup> August 1865 and she was buried at Stainton in Yorkshire. Locating her death certificate should have been a trivial matter. Instead, I ran up against a quite unexpected problem – the only entry in the GRO index for the appropriate time period was for Marylebone, in Central London. Looking later in the year only produced an entry for an Elizabeth Hannah Moxon in Huddersfield. Neither seemed awfully promising.

Feeling distinctly perplexed, I sent off for the Marylebone certificate. The excitement induced by a GRO certificate landing on the doormat doesn't seem to diminish over the years! What will it reveal? Is it even for the right person? Will it advance my research?

In this case I was far from disappointed. Elizabeth, aged 54, wife of John Moxon, a miller, died on 4th August 1865 at the Samaritan Hospital, Marylebone. The cause of death was given as "ovariotomy 10 days, peritonitis". This was totally unexpected. Obviously I wanted to know more, both about the hospital and the operation itself.

The Samaritan Hospital was originally founded in 1847 by Dr William Jones. It was then known as The Charitable Gynaepathic Institute and had declared its purpose as being "for the reception of poor women, afflicted with diseases peculiar to their sex". It had eight beds. By 1858, after several moves, it came to Lower Seymour Street, Portman Square. At this point the hospital erected a large sign describing the functions of the hospital. The white boards, with foot-high black letters, were hung on the front of the building from the garret to the basement, with scarcely an inch of wall to be seen. There was public outcry and the sign was described as "an outbreak of vulgarity". By 1862 the hospital had fifty beds. <sup>(1)</sup>

The first ever surgical removal of an ovary, or ovariectomy, was in America in 1809 and, by the 1840s after decades of sporadic experimentation, the operation was starting to be performed with a degree of consistency in Britain. However, not only was it a highly hazardous procedure, it was also extremely controversial; surgeons who performed the operation are said to have been called "belly rippers" by opponents. By the 1860s ovariectomy was still uncommon, mainly limited to patients in private practice or to those admitted to specialist hospitals for women, but it was beginning to gain wider acceptance from the medical profession. This was, in large part, due to the work of Thomas Spencer Wells. <sup>(2)</sup>

Spencer Wells was the elected surgeon at the Samaritan Hospital. He performed his first ovariectomy in 1858 and the following year published his *Eight Cases of Ovariectomy*, a meticulously detailed account of every aspect of each operation. He made his intention clear from the outset: "An impression appears to prevail that some of the advocates of ovariectomy have published their successful cases, and have not

## Surgical Innovation in the Nineteenth Century Elizabeth Moxon, 1810 – 1865

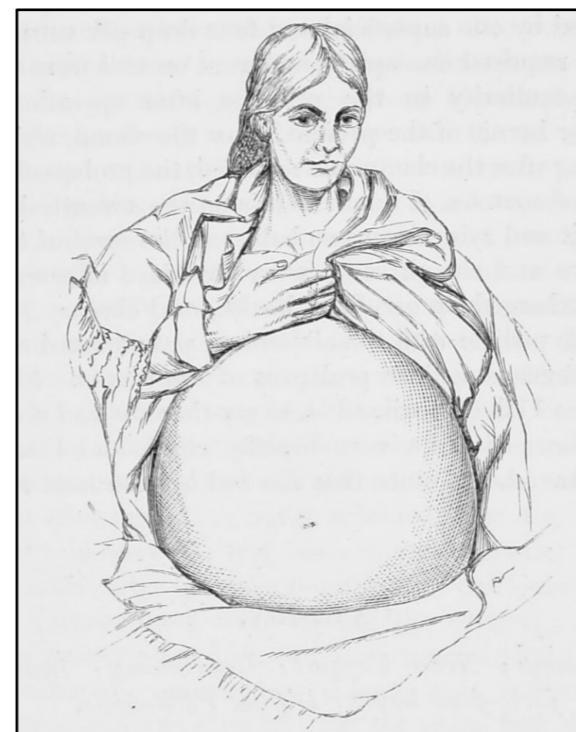
*published those which have terminated fatally. I therefore state at once that the eight cases which form the subject of the present paper are the only cases in which I have performed this operation.*" (1859,p.1) He followed this up with the publication, in 1865, of *Diseases of the Ovaries: their diagnosis and treatment*, in which he provided equally exhaustive details of the one hundred and fourteen operations he had conducted up to November 1864. He noted in the introduction, "When I began to test ovariectomy by personal experience, I pledged myself publicly to make the results fully known to the profession – to publish every case, whether it was successful or not – and I have scrupulously fulfilled this promise." (1865, p. xi)

Stating that ovariectomy was now being performed more widely, he looked back to the situation only seven years previously when "In some of the most recent of our standard works on surgery ovariectomy was not even alluded to;

*in the best works on the diseases of women it was severely condemned; and our most influential medical review had told us that the operation was one which, 'though it may excite the astonishment of the vulgar, calls neither for the knowledge of the anatomist nor the skill of the surgeon,' and that whenever an operation was performed 'so fearful in its nature, often so immediately fatal in its results, a fundamental principle of medical morality is outraged.'"* (1865, p.x) <sup>(3)</sup>

By 1867 Wells had completed another hundred cases which he detailed in a paper to the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London, *A third and fourth series of fifty cases of ovariectomy*. By 1872 he had performed five hundred operations. He noted in the Preface that "On the completion of 500 cases I felt that this experience ought to be made use of"; but that it "would have been impossible in any reasonable space to relate 500 cases in such detail as the 114 cases of the former volume" (1872, p. vi). Instead, the cases were presented in tabular form, as had been done in the 1867 paper. Seventy years later a history of ovariectomy concluded that Spencer Wells, "By his steadfast plan of publishing all his cases ... was finally able to break down all opposition to the operation, and to his success was largely due the general extension of abdominal surgery." (Spencer, 1934, p.52)

Spencer Wells' determination to put all his cases into the public domain was demonstrably of great significance for the development of surgery. On a somewhat less elevated level, it was also of great significance for my research! Elizabeth Moxon's operation came too late, sadly, to be included in the 1865 volume of detailed studies, but can readily be identified as case number 138, recorded in both the 1867 and 1872 studies. From these we learn that by making a 5-inch



Surgical Innovation in the Nineteenth Century  
Elizabeth Moxon, 1810 – 1865

incision, Spencer Wells drained and removed an ovarian cyst weighing an astonishing 75 pounds. To understand what her condition must have meant for her, it is instructive to look at one of Spencer Wells’ earlier operations. In his notes for case number 53, in which he had removed from a patient a cyst weighing 72 pounds, he had included an illustration of that patient’s pre-operative condition (1865, 139). This picture, included here, graphically illustrates what lay behind Elizabeth Moxon’s trip to the Samaritan Hospital. Sadly, she did not survive it. Spencer Wells’ first 114 cases led to 76 recoveries and 38 deaths (1865, xiii) <sup>(3)</sup>

So many questions remain. How did Elizabeth Moxon come to be referred to Spencer Wells? How did they travel to London? Presumably by train, as the railway network was expanding at that time, but it must have been an incredibly uncomfortable journey for her, given her condition. How was her body transported back to Yorkshire? Again, one imagines by train. Sadly, these are questions on which one can only speculate; however my original question, “what did my great great grandmother die from” has certainly been answered in surprising detail.

Beth Wilkinson

Footnotes (1) The information for this paragraph has been taken from <https://www.layersoflondon.org> and <https://ezitis.myzen.co.uk>

(2) The information for this paragraph has been taken from Frampton S. *Defining Difference: Competing Forms of Ovarian Surgery in the Nineteenth Century*. In: Schlich T, Crenner C, editors. *Technological Change in Modern Surgery: Historical Perspectives on Innovation*. Rochester (NY): University of Rochester Press. 2017. Available from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK441820>

(3) All of Spencer Wells’ publications to which I have referred in this brief essay can be read online at <https://wellcomecollection.org> References: Spencer, H.R. 1934, “*The History of Ovariectomy*” in *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 1934; Spencer Wells, T. 1859, *Eight Cases of Ovariectomy* 1865, *Diseases of the Ovaries: their diagnosis and treatment*; 1867 *A third and fourth series of fifty cases of ovariectomy*. 1872; *Diseases of the Ovaries: their diagnosis and treatment*. All the Spencer Wells books are available online at <https://wellcomecollection.org>



*Sir Thomas Spencer Wells, 1st Baronet was surgeon to Queen Victoria, a medical professor and president of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. He was born at St Albans, Hertfordshire and received his early education at St Albans School (then located in the Lady Chapel of the Abbey).*

*After a short time as a pupil of a surgeon in Barnsley (Yorkshire) he studied medicine at Leeds; Trinity College Dublin; and St Thomas' Hospital (becoming a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1841 and a Fellow in 1844); and later in Paris, France. He specialised in ophthalmic and in obstetric surgery.*

*He served as a naval surgeon in Malta, and then established his own ophthalmic surgery practice in London in 1853. In the same year he married Elizabeth Wright. In 1854, and from 1856 to 78, he was surgeon of the Samaritan Free Hospital for Women, London (serving in between as an army surgeon in the Crimean War). In 1877 was appointed Hunterian Professor of Surgery and Pathology at the Royal College of Surgeons of England (of which he was elected president in 1883, in the same year he was created baronet). From 1863 to 1896 he was surgeon to Queen Victoria's household.*

*In 1879, he invented an improved pattern of artery forceps, which prevented entanglement of surrounding structures by the handles of the implement when in use. He was also one of the earliest surgeons to make use of anaesthetics in operations.*

*He died after an attack of apoplexy on 31 January 1897 and is buried in Brompton Cemetery. His Hampstead estate was sold to the London County Council and turned into a park.*

*Editor: abridged from Wikipedia article*

Let Them Drink Ginger Beer!  
John Watson Moxon’s brush with the law

**My great great grandfather**, John Watson Moxon (MX10), was baptised in Darfield on 19th July 1812, the son of Thomas Moxon and his wife Elizabeth (*née* Watson). Over the course of his life he followed various occupations in different localities. In 1841 he was a publican in Stainton. Ten years later he was still in Stainton, but was now described as a farmer of four acres.<sup>(1)</sup> By 1861 he was a corn miller in Kimberworth, an occupation he was still practising in 1865 when his wife’s death was registered. In 1866. However, he inherited property in Ardsley from his late mother’s brother, George Watson; thenceforth he remained in that village, living in one of his newly acquired properties. In the census of 1871 he described himself as a landowner and retired miller but, perhaps, he became bored with a life of relative ease for by 1876 he had acquired yet another occupation, that of a mail contractor. Unfortunately this was to lead to a brush with the law, as can be seen from the following report from the Barnsley Chronicle of Saturday 21st October 1876:

CHARGE AGAINST A MAIL CART DRIVER – John Watson Moxon, the contractor for carrying the mails between Barnsley and Cudworth, was charged, on the information of Edward McClement, postmaster, with being drunk while in charge of a horse and gig upon a certain highway in Barnsley, on the 5th inst. Mr McClement said his attention was called to the defendant on the afternoon of the above day. He was quite unfit to have charge of a conveyance, and the wonder was how he could sit on the box at all. He was not then on duty, and witness did not allow him to go with the cart that night. George William Atkinson, borough accountant, spoke to seeing the defendant drive up Regent-street and down Back Regent Street. He was leaning over the cart, and seemed to be in danger of falling out. Witness went and gave information to Mr McClement. Defendant called a witness who had been in his company on the afternoon of the day in question. He admitted he was fresh, but he “talked quite rational all the way”. Defendant admitted that he might be rolling about a bit, but he had never neglected his duty in connection with the carriage of the mails. Mr Taylor said he must drink ginger beer in future. To Pay a fine of 10s. and costs.

By the 1881 census John Watson Moxon was simply described as a retired farmer. He died on 25th July 1882 and was buried, in Stainton, with his late wife.

Beth Wilkinson

Footnote (1) The 1851 census shows that there was an inn in Stainton called The Three Tuns. It was being run by John Watson Moxon’s sister, Sarah, and her husband William Athey. Whether this was the same inn that was in John’s charge ten years earlier, I cannot say. It is interesting to note that in the 1861 census John and Sarah’s widowed mother Elizabeth Moxon, who was by then living with the Atheys, was described as an “inn keeper’s widow”. Her late husband Thomas Moxon was described as a farmer in both the 1841 and 1851 censuses and also on his death certificate, but this entry does raise the interesting possibility that the inn was an on-going family concern.

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## THE MOXON MAGAZINE

THE MOXON MAGAZINE is published twice a year and is supplied free of charge to Members. Copies, and back copies, are also available in PDF on the Society's Research website.

THE MOXON MAGAZINE welcomes articles and submissions on any subject related to the wider Moxon family, past or present. It is published twice a year, in April and October; and the deadlines for submissions are therefore 1<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> September in each year. If space permits, articles will be published in the next issue after receipt but may be held over for a future issue at the Editor's discretion. The Editor may also, at his discretion, shorten articles when necessary though he will normally try to print them in full. Submissions may be sent by post or by email (postal and email addresses appear on the left of this page). Photographs are particularly welcome as illustrations and in the case of prints will be returned as soon as the issue in which they appear is published. Submission of articles or other material will be taken to indicate permission to publish the article or material on one or more occasions in the Moxon Magazine and on the Society's websites.

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