

## Private Ernest Reynolds

Ernest's grandfather was William Reynolds, born 4<sup>th</sup> April 1822. William was the son of Thomas, a wheelwright, and Elizabeth Reynolds (née Hood<sup>i</sup>) from Maney, Sutton Coldfield. The couple had seven other children: Thomas, (born 4<sup>th</sup> June 1818)<sup>ii</sup>, Joseph (born 6<sup>th</sup> January 1820), Mary Ann (born 6<sup>th</sup> June 1824), John (born 30<sup>th</sup> April 1826), George (born 11<sup>th</sup> April 1828) and James (born 28<sup>th</sup> August 1830). Thomas was baptised on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1819 but Joseph, Mary, John, George and James were baptised together on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1831 in the 'Parish of Sutton Coldfield'.<sup>iii</sup> Thomas and Elizabeth's last child, Vincent, was born in 1833.<sup>iv</sup>

1848. Marriage solemnized at <i>The Parish Church</i> in the <i>Parish</i> of <i>St Martin Birmingham</i> in the County of <i>Warwick</i>									
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.	
259	1848 December 26	<i>William Reynolds</i>	26	Bachelor	Horse Keeper	Temple Row	Thomas Reynolds	Wheelwright	
		<i>Hannah Bartlam</i>	27	Spinster		Temple Row	Philip Bartlam	Farmer	
Married in the <i>Parish Church</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <i>James Sayer B. B. Lewis Curate</i> or after <i>Banns</i> by me.									
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		<i>William Reynolds</i>			in the Presence of us,		<i>Thomas Reynolds</i> <i>Hannah Bartlam</i>		

Figure 1: Marriage certificate of William Reynolds to Hannah Bartlam, 1848

At the time of his marriage on Boxing Day 1848 at St Martin's Church in the Bull Ring, Birmingham, William, a horse keeper, lived in Temple Row, near St Philip's Parish Church (now Birmingham Cathedral) as did his wife, Hannah, daughter of Philip Bartlam, a farmer of 24 acres who lived at '1, Lady Pool Lane' (now Church Road), Moseley, Birmingham.<sup>v</sup> Lady Pool Lane provided a route from St Mary's Church to the Lady Pool (pool of Our Lady, St Mary) which was situated in the vicinity of Balsall Heath Park. The Lady Pool was owned by the church to provide a regular supply of fresh fish for the incumbent of St Mary's church.<sup>vi</sup>

In 1851, William and Hannah lived at No 8, Court 4, Cherry Street (off Corporation Street), in the Parish of St Philip's, Birmingham with their six month old daughter, Ann. Their first born daughter, Mary Elizabeth, born 8<sup>th</sup> January 1849 was staying with her grandmother, Elizabeth, in Maney, Sutton Coldfield, on the day the census was taken.<sup>vii</sup> William worked as a 'packer'.

By 1861, the family had moved to 1 Stanford Place, Mary Street, Balsall Heath, Birmingham. The family had grown to six children with the birth of Catherine, Hannah, John William<sup>viii</sup> and Tom Bartlan born in 1853, 1855, 1857 and 1861 respectively. William worked as a 'haberdashery warehouseman'.

In the next census in 1871, William had become a farmer. The family lived at Norton Cottage, Mary Street, Balsall Heath, but by 1876 they had moved to Cottage Farm, Moor Green, Moseley.<sup>ix</sup>



Moor Green lane, Moseley,  
Alcester road to Dog Pool  
lane, Tenacres.

SOUTH SIDE.

Whitfield Saml. (Hawkesley)  
Tustin James Lane (Heather-  
dene)

..... here is Russell rd .....  
Reynolds John, farmer (Cot-  
tage farm)

Bayley Arthur Lipscomb (Moor  
Green house)

Chamberlain Rt. Hon. Joseph  
P.C., LL.D., F.R.S., M.P., J.P.  
(Highbury)

Chamberlain Joseph Austen  
M.A., M.P. (Highbury)

Shepherd Herbert (Moor Green  
cottage)

NORTH SIDE.

..... here is Russell rd .....  
Holder John Charles J.P.  
(Pitmaston)

Chamberlain Arthur J.P.  
(Moor Green hall)

Lock James farm bailiff to  
Arth. Chamberlain esq. J.P.  
(Fir Tree cottage)



Figure 2

(Top) 1838 map showing the likely location of Cottage Farm outlined in red.

(Above and left) The red mark on this 1888 map indicates where Cottage Farm should have been located in relation to the description in Kelly's 1897 City and County Directory. Moor Green lane is highlighted in green, Russell road in yellow.

On 9<sup>th</sup> October 1876 William died and Hannah took over the 67 acre farm with the help of '2 men and 1 boy.'<sup>x</sup> Cottage Farm was rented, together with additional land and farm buildings on the Alcester Road, from Elizabeth Partridge. Hannah also rented farming land from the Vicar of Moseley on Vicarage Road from 1880 to 1881.<sup>xi</sup> She remained at the farm with her daughters Ann, Catherine and Hannah until her death on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1892, aged seventy-three.<sup>xii</sup> Hannah left an estate valued at £2499 4s 7d, about £305,000 in today's money.<sup>xiii</sup>



Figure 3: *Birmingham Daily Post*, 1<sup>st</sup> April 1892

A year before the death of his father William in 1876, John had married Elizabeth Roberts from Kings Heath, Birmingham. The couple started married life in Owen's Place, Pershore Road, Northfield, Birmingham, and by 1881 they had four children, William John (born 1887), Francis Arthur (born 1879) and twins Harry Bartlam and Leonard Howard born in 1881.<sup>xiv</sup> Sadly Harry died a few months after he was born. John's occupation was recorded as 'farmer's son', his mother being the 'farmer' in question and was quite likely one of the 2 men assisting her at Cottage Farm

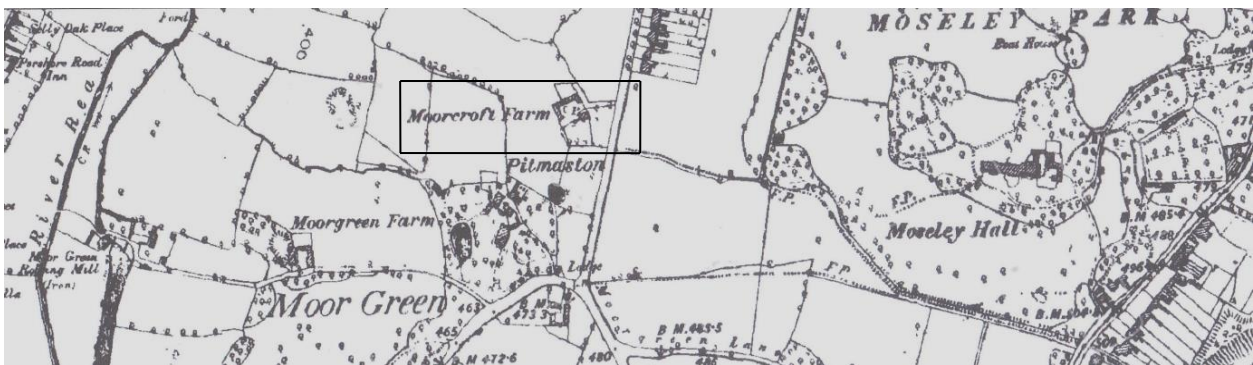
By 1891, John and Elizabeth had moved to 41 Birchwood Road, Balsall Heath. Their home was near Balsall Heath Park, ideal for their growing family of seven children that included Hannah, Ada, Reginald Ernest (known as Ernest) and Walter who had been born in 1883, 1885, 1887 and 1890 since the previous census.



After the death of his mother in 1892, John continued to run Cottage Farm.<sup>xv</sup> Around 1896, John Charles Holder purchased the farm which was eventually integrated with the Moor Green House estate in his ownership by 1901.<sup>xvi</sup>

Figure 4: Moor Green House, demolished in 1920 to make way for Britannic Assurance building

The integration of Cottage Farm into the Moor Green House estate necessitated John to look elsewhere for a new home and farming land by 1900.<sup>xvii</sup> In 1901 John's new residential address was noted as 'The Farm', Russell Road, Moseley. There is only one farm in Russell Road on the OS map for 1888, Moorcroft Farm. In 1838 the farm's lands extended northwards from Moor Green Lane to just south of Cannon Hill House (now NICE, the centre for movement disorders just inside Russell Road entrance to Cannon Hill Park). Moorcroft Farm was demolished sometime in the 1960s to be replaced by Torridon Croft, off Russell Road.<sup>xviii</sup> John's eldest sons William and Leonard helped out on the farm. The family had increased to nine children with the birth Thomas and Bertie in 1893 and 1896.



**Figure 5: OS map for 1888 showing the location of Moorcroft Farm off Russell Road**



**Figure 6: Moorcroft Farm, Moor Green**

By 1903, John had moved out of Moorcroft Farm and lived at Moor Green cottage, which was located on the south side of Moor Green Lane, past 'Highbury Hall' and 'The Lodge' and around the bend in the direction of Dad's Lane, (The previous Moor Green Cottage stood north of the junction of Moor Green Lane and Holders Lane.<sup>xix</sup> In 1838 the cottage was owned and occupied by John Arnold and was set in a landscaped garden with woodland and a pool. The house was later bought by John Charles Holder, who demolished it and built Pitmaston House in its place around 1870. The pool still survives today).<sup>xx</sup>

The 1911 census confirms Moor Green Cottage as John's family home. John was a 'haulier contractor' and it is likely that his son Ernest, whose occupation was described as a 'horse driver and general haulier', worked for his father.

In 1916, Ernest enlisted in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment, as Private E Reynolds, No 33163. The exact date Ernest left for France is not known, but he was with his battalion in early 1917 at the beginning of operations in the Somme region, commencing 11<sup>th</sup> January which led to the eventual withdrawal of the Germans towards the Hindenburg Line.

On 1<sup>st</sup> March 1917, after many weeks of preparation and a few nights spent in reserve billets at Vaux and Bray, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment marched to dugouts at Asquith Flats, on the heights above the Somme. The following evening, the battalion moved into trenches due east of Bouchavesnes. A quiet day in the trenches followed. Throughout the night of 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> March the men in the British trenches busied themselves in readiness for the next morning's assault.

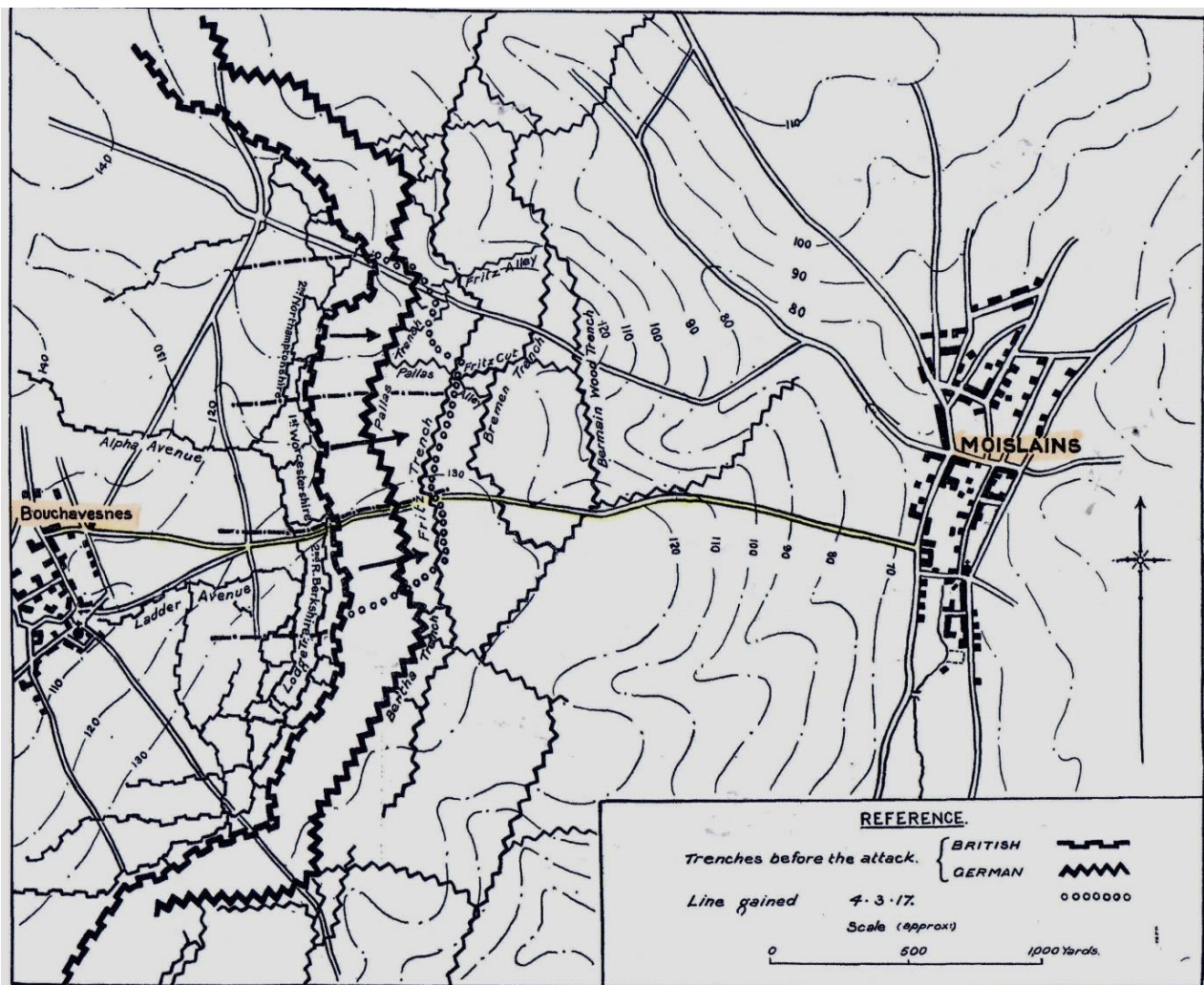


Figure 7: Map showing the position of Bouchavesnes and Moislains together with the British and German Front Line on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1917. The German Front Line trenches, Pallas Trench, Fritz Trench and Bremen Trench are also shown

As dawn broke on 4<sup>th</sup> March, the British artillery opened a barrage. All along the trenches the troops poured out in a series of waves. The right flank of the 1<sup>st</sup> Worcestershire Regiment was on the road from Bouchavesnes to Moislains. The attack was immediately successful. The German Front Line, the Pallas Trench, was easily overrun. The second line 'Fritz Trench' was also taken despite a desperate struggle, the Germans resisting to the last. For a few minutes a German machine gun held up the advance, but the gun was rushed and captured. The attackers pushed on down the slope towards the German third line, Bremen Trench. It was soon realised that British shells were falling closely around and that they had gone too far and the Worcesters fell back.

From Fritz Trench the observation over the whole of the Moislains Valley was good. It became the focus of the enemy's artillery and infantry. Despite many efforts by the Germans to regain the lost trench, their counter attacks were seen off and by nightfall, Fritz Trench was secured. The 1<sup>st</sup> Worcesters returned weary but triumphant back to Asquith Flats.

The casualties were very heavy, mainly due to the enemy's shell fire. Six officers and forty-four men were killed and four officers and one hundred and fifty-eight other ranks wounded with eleven unaccounted for. Ernest was one of those wounded in the action and died the next day 5<sup>th</sup> March 1917. He was buried at Bray Military Cemetery, a Casualty Clearing Station at the time.



Figure 8

(Above) Bray Military Cemetery near Bray-sur-Somme  
(Left) WW1 memorial at St Mary's Church, Moseley

Ernest is commemorated at St Mary's Church, Moseley, but his name does not appear on the Roll of Honour at Birmingham's Hall of Memory.

The 1939 Register records Ernest's brothers Leonard, Bertie and Thomas, landscape gardeners and sisters Esther, Hannah and Ada living together at 288 Moor Green Lane, Moseley. No 288 does not exist today.

Written and researched by Edwina Rees Moseley Society History Group

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## Endnotes

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- i England, Select Marriages, 1538–1973. Thomas Reynolds married Elizabeth Hood 8<sup>th</sup> November 1814, Sutton Coldfield  
David Bashford - Lucy Ward, Public Members Family Tree, Ancestry
  - ii Warwickshire, England, Church of England Baptisms, Sutton Coldfield 1813-1824
  - iii Church of England Baptisms for Sutton Coldfield, 1825-1849  
Thomas was baptised on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1819, Church of England Baptisms for Sutton Coldfield, 1813 -1824
  - iv Warwickshire, England, Church of England Baptisms for Sutton Coldfield 1825-1849
  - v 1851 census records Hannah's place of birth as Moseley  
1841 census records Hannah's father a farmer at 1 Lady Pool Road  
Andy Slater  
<https://andyunderscore.com/2018/01/20/moseley-1838/>  
1871 census records Philip Bartlam's address as 1 Lady Pool Lane  
The 1881 census records Hannah's birth place as Moseley
  - vi Moseley Village Walk  
<http://moseley-society.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Moseley-Village-Walk170913final.pdf>
  - vii Birmingham, England, Church of England Baptisms for St Philip's Parish Church, 1849.  
Mary is listed on the 1851 census for Maney, in the Parish of Sutton Coldfield  
Mary is listed on the 1861 census at the home address of her parents
  - viii England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, for Kings Norton, 1857,2/4, 6c, 390
  - ix Kelly's 1876 Directory for Birmingham
  - x Probate Calendar for England & Wales, 1876  
The 1881 and 1891 census describes John as a 'farmer's son'
  - xi Birmingham Rate Books 1880, 1881, 1886 and 1891

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- xii 1881, 1891 census  
*Birmingham Daily Post*, 5<sup>th</sup> March 1892
- xiii National Probate Calendar for 1892  
Historical Inflation Calculator  
<http://inflation.iamkate.com/>
- xiv England & Wales Civil Registration Birth Index  
Harry Bartlam Reynolds, Kings Norton, ¼, 6C, 485  
Leonard Howard Reynolds, Kings Norton, ¼, 6C, 485
- xv Kelly's Trade Directory for Birmingham and County Directory for Birmingham 1883 to 1900.
- xvi Kelly's County Directory for Birmingham 1900, p 188.  
There is no further mention of the existence of Cottage Farm in the County Directory for Birmingham after this date.
- xvii See xv
- xviii Andy Slater  
<https://andyunderscore.com/2018/01/20/moseley-1838/>
- xix Kelly's County Directory for Birmingham, 1903
- xx Moseley 1838, Andy Slater  
<https://andyunderscore.com/2018/01/20/moseley-1838/>

## Illustrations

- Figure 1 Marriage certificate of William Reynolds to Hannah Bartlam, 1848, Ancestry
- Figure 2 Moseley 1838, with the kind permission of Andy Slater  
<https://andyunderscore.com/2018/01/20/moseley-1838/>  
Kelly's County Directory for Birmingham, 1897  
1888 OS map of Birmingham, with thanks to Jan Berry
- Figure 3 *Birmingham Daily Post*, 1<sup>st</sup> April 1892
- Figure 4 Moor Green House, south elevation, The Britannic Magazines: Moor Green House and Estate and the New Chief Office, p 37. Janet Berry  
<http://moseley-society.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Britannic-Magazines.pdf>
- Figure 5 1888 OS map for Birmingham, MCD2, map 8, Moseley Society History Group collection
- Figure 6 Photograph of an oil painting courtesy of Geoffrey Collett, a descendent of George Edward Collett. People and Places around Moor Green, Moseley, p 6. Janet Berry and Nina Caddick, 2016



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<http://moseley-society.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/People-and-Places-around-Moor-Green-Allotments.pdf>

Figure 7 The Worcester Regiment in the Great War, 1914-19, Midlands Historical Data

Figure 8 Commonwealth War Graves Commission