

The Moseley Society History Group

2020

Sadly we have not been able to meet on Thursdays, 10.00-12.00 at the All Services Club Moseley, since March, though we have at times been able to access our room to consult documents. However, we have been working at different projects over the year and here we present a snapshot of what we have been doing. Take a look at our website for more information.

Our World War I team have uncovered fascinating information about Moseley men who served. One member of the team has been seeking the back stories of soldiers with a Moseley connection who were killed in World War I, but do not appear on any of the memorials around the Moseley area. These are snapshots of some of the rather interesting research he has done (the full versions will appear in due course).

- Henry Augustus CHEESEMEN: His family lived in Dovey Road, Moseley. He emigrated to Canada to seek his fortune, joined the 10th Canadian infantry and was killed in the aftermath of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. He was 22 years old.
- Sidney and Laurence DAWSON: These were two brothers from a very large family living in Oxford Road. Sidney the elder emigrated to Canada in 1905, his brother followed in 1906. They had a farm near Calgary and enlisted at the same time. They served together in the same unit and were killed within 3 days of each other in the Battle of The Ancre in November 1916. Sidney was 30 and Laurence 26. It was subsequently discovered that the Dawson brothers are remembered on the memorial in the Calvary Church of God in Christ in Oxford Road.
- Wallace WINTER: This man had a rather colourful life. He was a bookkeeper/clerk, but was convicted of embezzlement and served 6 months hard labour in prison. After a few other scrapes, he emigrated to Canada and settled in New Westminster, British Columbia where he again worked as a bookkeeper. He enlisted in June 1915 and, after service on the Western front, was killed at Passchendaele in November 1917, leaving a very sad young wife at home in Coppice Road, Moseley, to which he had hoped to return. Wallace was 35 when he died.
- John Frederick Lewis HORNSBY: John and his family lived in Mayfield Road, Moseley. He emigrated to New Zealand to farm near Wellington. He joined the Wellington Regiment in June 1915 and spent some time as an Anzac in Gallipoli before going to France. He was killed on September 17th 1916 at the Battle of Flers Courcellette aged 26. (This was the battle when tanks were deployed for the first time).

The team works with others to secure the most detailed picture they can of these men and their families. A contact who is writing a book on Dr Edward Bach has brought additional information on Maurice Hobson. (Edward Bach developed a holistic approach to medicine including the development of plant-based cures and lived in Moseley.) The Bach and Hobson

families were friends and Maurice Hobson was unofficially 'engaged' to Edward Bach's sister.

Dr Edward Bach



Maurice Hobson



More information has also come to light on the family of the great-nephew of Lt. Henry Arthur Matthews, a 1917 St Mary's memorial name. Several people who live in Moseley have contributed to their family history and WW1 associations, including a resident at the Lenches on the maternal history of her family, a resident of Ascot Road on her great uncle who was killed in Gallipoli in 1915 and a great niece on her maternal great uncle, Private Edward Clement Lewis, who was killed in the Battle of the Somme 1916. Two years of research has been completed on the Clifford-Goldenburgh father and seven uncles who served in WW1 which has given a context to an amazing collection of artefacts and family memorabilia. A special event was the publication by the family of the poetry of Lt. T. Ewart Mitton as a memorial to him and a copy was presented to us for our collection.



**Trooper Horace George
Turner**

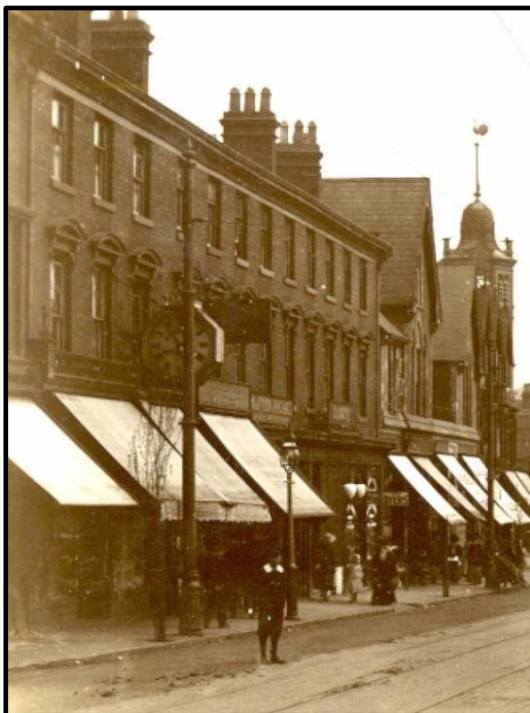
This year's Remembrance Day at Brandwood End cemetery highlighted the life of Trooper Horace George Turner who was killed in Gallipoli in 1915. A wreath was laid in his honour at his family grave in Brandwood End Cemetery by a representative of the Gallipoli Association.

As part of this year's commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings, research is being undertaken on George Heath's younger son who served as a Wing Commander in WW2. George donated a spitfire named the 'Grahame Heath' in memory of the son he lost in 1918 in a flying accident. A small local get-together on 6th June to mark this event, (wine bottles and glasses suitably socially distanced!) revealed that a local lady had a father who served in 2nd Battalion Royal Warwicks. Even better,

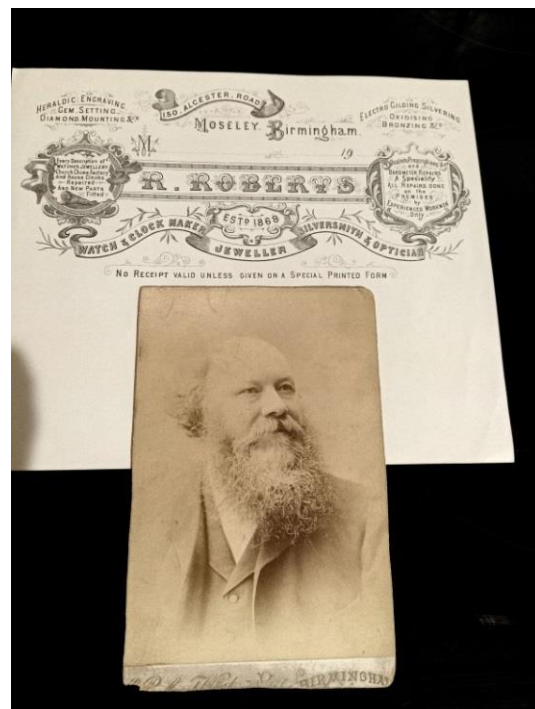
she had his WW2 service records so a very personal story of someone who served although injured driving his Universal Carrier a few weeks after arriving has been put together. Trooper Horace George Turner's wife was the cook to Arthur Chamberlain junior's daughter after she had married. Their stories will form the subject of the Moseley Society History Group's first zoom talk on 28th January 2021.

Another member of the WWI team has given a talk to the Moseley and Kings Heath U3A History Group on WW2 and a talk on Field Marshall Slim for the Fusilier Museum, Warwick and has been involved in doing the publicity and the hosting for other talks. He did two on-line talks on Gallipoli for Heritage Open Day in conjunction with the Fusilier Museum and the Warwickshire Yeomanry Museum and two other talks on Gallipoli for different U3A groups focussing on the regiments local to the area. He organised an on-line conference for the Waterloo Association including a one hour talk on the French army in the battle. When the Fusilier Museum Warwick was open he volunteered for one day a fortnight and did two new displays and he edited and distributed the newsletter for the Friends of the Museum. He produced a video clip on Armistice Day and the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and distributed details to local schools, an on-line lesson on Gallipoli for secondary schools, which was posted on their new YouTube Channel, and two recordings for a group of partially sighted people on Slim and the Duke of Cambridge (the one before last!). He is drawing up plans for Gallipoli Association activities post-Covid including a conference in March 2021.

**The Roberts Clock and Jewellery Shop
In about 1900**



Richard Roberts and a Shop Receipt



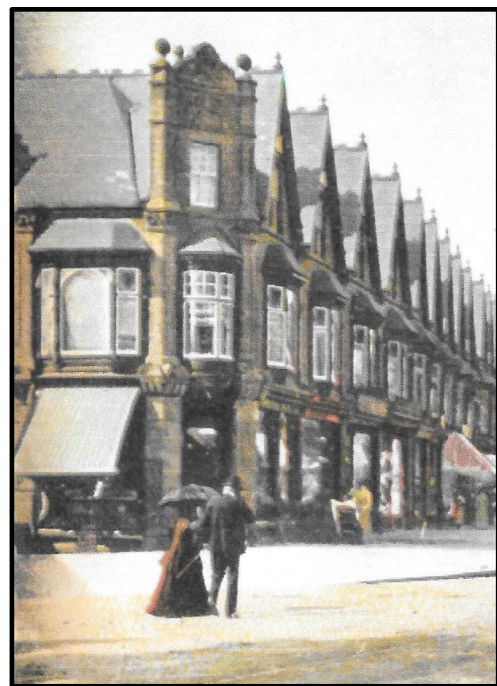
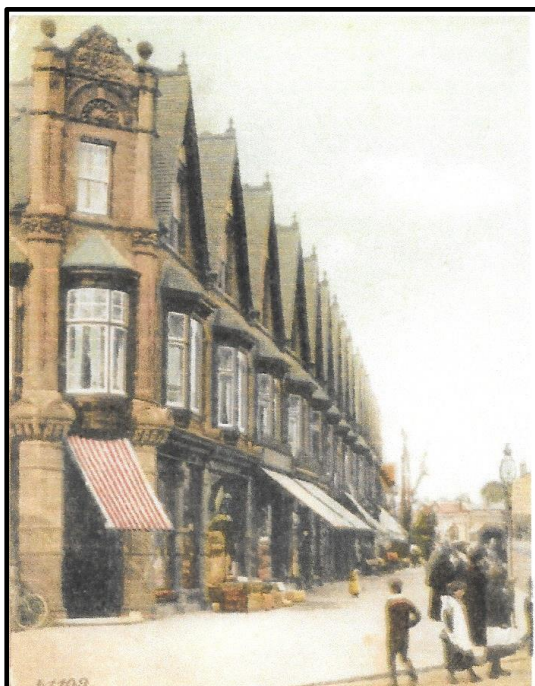
We have continued to respond to many queries about people who lived in Moseley. For example, one enquiry related to Richard Roberts, who had a clock makers and jewellers in Moseley from 1868. Clarence Roberts took the shop over and lived there until Tesco's bought it from him in 1974. His son worked there too. Clarence Roberts wound the clock at The Fighting Cocks until he was aged 90. We were able to send on an image of the original shop.

We have transcribed the deed of a Victorian house in School Road, researched the names mentioned in the deed and provided information on the house, including the sale of the land on which the house was built. We have researched houses in the Alcester, Woodbridge, Wake Green and Ascot Roads to locate building plans and identify residents and also Bank House School which was located on Alcester Road near King David School in the Victorian period.

We were contacted for information on John Arnold a solicitor who owned Moor Green Cottage which was bought by John Holder in 1884 following John Arnold's death. The house was demolished to make way for Pitmaston House. The interest in John Arnold is related to his possible relationship with one branch of the Vaughton family of Birmingham.

Boots, the Chemist, now sadly gone, was the focus of another enquiry. Boots were the first chemists on the site by the traffic lights and were there from about the 1910s. Previously the corner shop was occupied by Frederick Hallam, corn merchant. He died in a drowning accident in 1904. The first advertisement for Boots at that address was 1916 so that his son, also called Frederick, might have taken over the business.

Before Boots, early 1900s



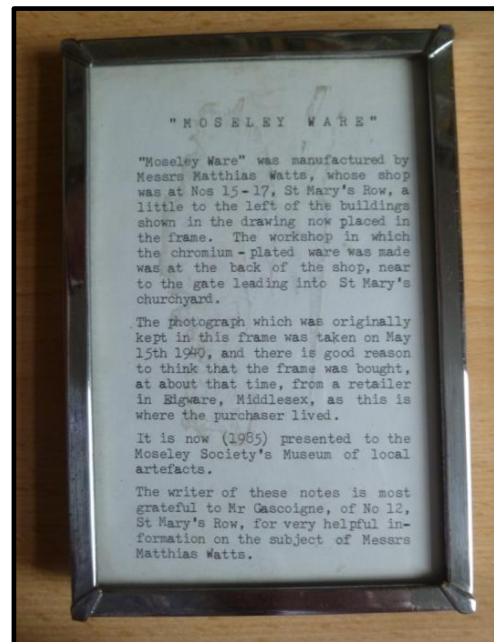
The shop was a grocer's on the 1911 census, until it was taken over by Boots. We have postcards that clearly show items displayed on the forecourt when Hallam was there, and the subsequent images show the various alterations to the building over time.

One enquiry came from Krsitine Lidaka who lives in a village called Pilsrundale, in the Rundale region of **LATVIA**. She found a mirror with the mark 'Moseley Ware' in her local second hand shop and contacted us. We have 'Moseley Ware' chromium plated-ware picture frames in our 'Collection'. They were manufactured by Messrs Matthias Watts, an Art Dealer and framer who had a shop at 15-17 St Mary's Row, a little to the left of the Bull's Head. The workshop was at the back of the shop, near to the gate leading up to the churchyard. One frame was presented to us in 1985 and two others in 2019. Ornate labels show that Matthias Watts had showrooms in Moseley, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

Krsitine Lidaka's 'Moseley Ware' Mirror



A Moseley Ware Frame in The Collection'



The founders of the Midland Aircraft Preservation Society asked us for images and memories of the Gloster Meteor F.4 EE531, the oldest surviving example of Britain's first jet fighter to enter service, which was re-assembled on the forecourt of the Meteor Ford Garage (where Marks & Spencer Food Hall now stands) in 1973. Meteor Ford resprayed its camouflage paint scheme and transported it to Moseley for re-assembly. The aircraft is now displayed in the Museum's Sir Frank Whittle Jet Heritage Centre and the society was detailing the jet's history following the celebration of its 50th anniversary in 2017. The aircraft attracted a great deal of attention and was accompanied by a Spitfire from the RAF Exhibition Flight for some of the time. This request stimulated memories of the Billesley Common Air Show in 1973 and the Vulcan Bomber there.

The Gloster Meteor F.4 EE531 on the Forecourt of the Meteor Garage



We have been involved in a number of other activities. We have contributed articles to Bham 13 Magazine, on, for example, Britannic Assurance, Sir John Holder, a Victorian Moseley Wedding, Victorian Building Plans, three articles on Sorrento and a Christmas Quiz. Four large posters on 'Victorian Moseley' are almost ready for printing and these will be displayed at the Exchange and elsewhere next year. One of our group has studied a range of subjects for her MA in West Midlands history at Birmingham University, including the role of the aristocracy in the socio-economic development of the region, 1750-1900, Joseph Chamberlain's significance for local politics, and the impact of the Boer War on the area. We have also received and published a number of personal stories of life in Moseley. Do let us have your memories and photos of your family and living in Moseley so that we can build up a bank of memories about life in Moseley.

We welcome donations of archival material relating to the locality and this year we have received two generous donations. Firstly, we received a large collection of Victorian bills from a family who lived in Park Hill and Chantry Road which reveal, for example, what Moseley's middle class bought for their homes and gardens, what leisure activities they were involved in and where and how they spent their holidays. They also show a wide variety of firms and shops in operation in Moseley, Birmingham and elsewhere. Some of the bill heads are very attractive and detailed. The donation also included an extract from a diary supposedly by a Moseley Matthew Boulton, whose life we are currently researching. The second donation is a significant and extensive archive of a Moseley resident, Miss Lilian Daisy Murcott, which includes letters, memorabilia, photographs, business records etc. We are cataloguing these archives and will report on them and the diary on the website next year.

We were also involved in setting up a Cycle Tolkein Trail around the area as well as Walking Trails and hope both of these will be developed further in 2021.

'Mrs History' takes history into primary schools. We were happy to lend them our WWII archive materials to work with a local primary school before the March lockdown. This proved very successful and they have been asked to return in 2021 with their 'show'. We are hoping that the situation will allow us to loan out our items to them again.

Our stained glass project is ongoing so do keep sending us photos of any stained glass in your home. We plan to do a project on ceramic floor and wall tiles in Moseley in 2021. We would appreciate photos of any Victorian tiles you have in your home.

This year has seen the addition of many new items to the website resulting from our latest research. Derived from the contributions to Birmingham 13 Magazine, articles have been added about Sorrento House and Gardens exploring the architectural preferences and social life of Victorian Moseley residents and about transport and housing developments in Victorian times told through (often amusing) extracts from local newspapers and magazines. An article on Moseley Ware manufactured by Matthias Watts Art Dealer tells the story of the business with photographs of Moseley Ware items from our Collection. A full and comprehensive account of the life of John Avins, the owner of Highfield House, explores his business career and considerable philanthropic achievements. Memories of growing up in Moseley 70 or more years ago and of working as a midwife at Sorrento Maternity Hospital are vividly described in articles contributed by local residents. Another major source of articles for the website has been the ongoing World War I project. The series of stories of men killed in WW1 and commemorated on the St Mary's War Memorial was completed with accounts of men who died in the last year of the war or soon afterwards as a result of the 'Spanish Flu' pandemic. We are continuing to research and add articles to the website about men commemorated on other memorials, such as the Dawson brothers, who emigrated to Canada and were killed in the final days of the Battle of the Somme, and Trooper Turner, who was killed in the Gallipoli campaign, and other prominent members of his family.

We hope you have enjoyed reading about what we have been doing over the year. We look forward to meeting up again soon. Why not join us in the future? You can follow up personal researches, or help with research or cataloguing.

Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year

Chairperson: Ray Tier

Committee: Fiona Adams, Janet Berry, Gill Binnie, Ian Binnie, Roy Cockel, Frank Gresham, Jim Hone and Edwina Rees

Website: moseley-society/local-history.org.uk

Email: moseleyhistory@gmail.com

Meeting Place: The Green Room, The All Services Club, Church Road, Moseley, 10.00-12.00 on Thursdays.