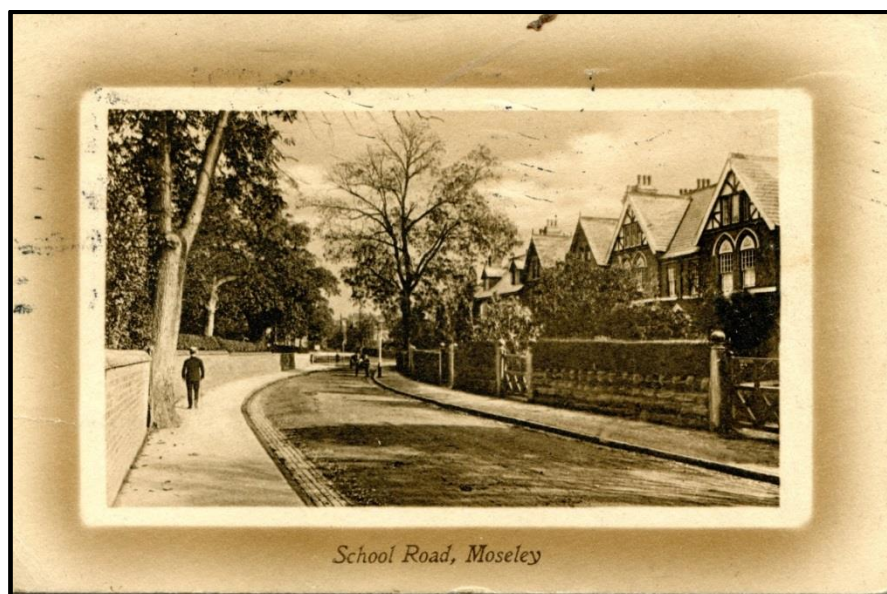


## Edward Holmes: A Victorian Moseley Gentleman (1832-1909)



Edward Holmes was a well-known local architect and sportsman who lived in the Moseley area all his life. In November 1894 he was described as ‘a striking personality, both in appearance and character, and I doubt if there is a man in Moseley better known and more highly respected’.<sup>1</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> Library of Birmingham Archives, (BCLA) *The Moseley Society Journal*, 1894.

**Edward Holmes** was born on 17 February, 1832 at Laurel Cottage, School Road (now part of the car park of Cambridge Road Church). He was the son of Edward Holmes (1778-1862) and Elise Henriette Roulet (1798-1873), and was christened at St Mary's Church, Moseley, on 7 September 1832. He was educated at Birmingham Free Grammar School, New Street. He walked to school every day. Writing in 1894, he remembered the 'Good old days ... when Moseley was noted more for its green pastures than its villas' and when walking to Birmingham's Free Grammar School about 1844 School Road was a 'narrow bye road, and bounded by holly hedge; it was innocently rustic, and the houses were then few and far between on Alcester and Moseley Road.'<sup>2</sup> He served two apprenticeships in architects' offices in Birmingham and in 1852 set up a practice in 4 Waterloo Street. He moved to 25 Temple Row in 1858 and also practised from his home at 2, Wellington Terrace, Balsall Heath. He designed many buildings including All Saints Church Kings Heath with Frederick Preedy (1860), St Mary's Church, Selly Oak (1861), Moseley Independent Congregational chapel (1862), the former Midland Bank at the corner of New Street and Stephenson Place (1867-69), the Masonic Hall and Curzon Hall, Kings Norton Workhouse (1870) as well as other churches, chapels and every kind of public and private building.



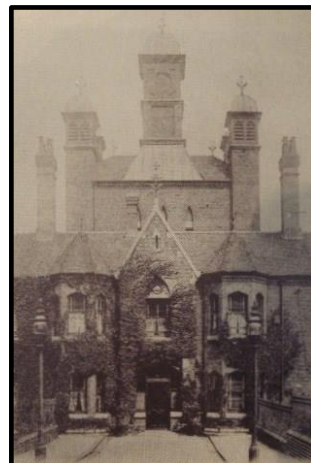
**The Former Midland Bank,  
New Street, Birmingham**



**All Saints Church,  
Kings Heath**



**St Mary's Church, Selly Oak**



**Entrance, Kings Norton Workhouse**

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<sup>2</sup> BCLA, *The Moseley Society Journal*, 1894.

**Edward Holmes** was very involved in civic endeavour. He was a member of the Kings Norton Board of Surveyors and chairman for a period, when 'he filled the important capacity of chairman with an impartiality and success which is truly enviable'.<sup>3</sup> He was instrumental in the widening of Woodbridge Road and some 'very needful improvements at Moseley Station'. He took great interest in labour disputes especially those connected with the building trades and he acted as a very successful arbitrator many times.<sup>4</sup> He was a subscriber to Moseley, Kings Heath and Balsall Heath Horticultural Society. A Public meeting in 1827 consisting of freeholders, householders and occupiers formed a committee and set up a General Subscription for donations and annual subscriptions for the Moseley National School.<sup>5</sup> Within a month there were about fifty names on the subscription list, including Edward Holmes. In 1852 Mr Holmes was the chairman of the committee. In April 1883 he attended a St Mary's Church Vestry committee meeting at Mr Cattell's home, Carlton Lodge, School Road. The committee was appointed to consider the claims of Mr Edward Holmes' plans for altering the church. He was an inveterate letter-writer to the Birmingham newspapers, for example, writing to the Birmingham Mail promoting the 'Relief of General Gordon' in 1884, to encourage the setting up of a Moseley Assembly Rooms in 1890 and in 1891 to protest against the prohibition of bible teaching in Birmingham Board Schools.<sup>6</sup> The newspaper referred to him as 'that tiresome gentleman' and asked him to 'give his pen a rest' as he was 'becoming a bore'. Edward Holmes was a land and house entrepreneur. The 1885 and 1886 plans of the sales of plots on the Grove Estate show Edward Holmes owned a great deal of the land. He also bought plots on the Anderton Park Estate in 1877 when it came on to market following the death of Rebecca Anderton and newspaper adverts show he was involved in selling land and houses elsewhere in Birmingham, particularly Kings Heath.

**Edward Holmes** was an enthusiastic sportsman. He was a keen cricketer and was a member for forty years of Old Victoria Cricket Club that played at a ground now Highgate Park.<sup>7</sup> He was vice president of Moseley Football Club in 1894 and he appeared on the Reddings in 'his characteristic white top hat'. He was very instrumental in the success of the club and became a leading referee in International Games and a writer on rugby union football.<sup>8</sup> He was a member of the old Solihull Bowling Club in 1894 and also played billiards.<sup>9</sup> He enjoyed hunting, shooting and fishing. He ran with the Worcestershire Hounds and helped form the Birmingham Rifle Volunteer Corps. He had a favourite muzzle-holder which he preferred to all the more modern firearms.

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<sup>3</sup> Personalities Booklet Vol 11:pp.27-29; 'The Moseley Society Journal', Vol1, No. 10. November, 1894.

<sup>4</sup> The Birmingham Library Archives, 'Moseley Society Journal', Vol 1. No 10. November 1894.

<sup>5</sup> Price, F., *The Moseley Church of England National School: A History 1828-1969* (Birmingham: Woodcraft Print & Design Ltd., 1998), pp.1, 6 & 13.

<sup>6</sup> *The Birmingham Mail*, Friday 9 May, 1884, Saturday 12 April, 1890 and Monday 2 November, 1891.

<sup>7</sup> Moseley Society Journal', Vol.1. No 10. November, 1904.

<sup>8</sup> [www.moseleyrugby.co.uk/history](http://www.moseleyrugby.co.uk/history) *The Reddings: The Home of Moseley Football Club (Rugby), A History 1880-2000* (Souvenir of 120 Years at a Rugby ground). A Souvenir History, a limited edition print by Brian Flinders (Birmingham; Francis Lomas Ltd., 2000), p.7.

<sup>9</sup> Moseley Society Journal', Vol.1. No 10. November, 1904.

## The Holmes Family over the Decades

**Edward Holmes** was born and died in School Road. He married twice, firstly to **Mary Ann Briggs** (1830-1861) with whom he had three children and then, following Mary Anne's death, to **Mary Lavinia Hemming** (1837-1921) with whom he had ten children. Census returns and other documentation provide a wealth of information about the Holmes family and where they lived.

### 1841- 1860

In **1841** at the age of nine, **Edward Holmes** was living at home in Kings Heath with his parents, his father, *Edward*, aged sixty, his mother, *Elise Henriette*, aged forty, his sister, *Sarah* (1831-1868), eleven, and his brothers, *John* (1829-1885), twelve years of age, and *George*, seven years old (1834-1910). They had one servant. They had another daughter, *Julia Margaret* (1827-1908), aged fourteen, whose residence was Wolston, Rugby, Warwickshire. She was attending a school, Manor House in Rugby, presumably boarding there. The school was run by Harriet Thrupp. Miss Charlotte Thrupp had a boarding school on the south side of School Road at this time suggesting a connection.

In **1851**, **Edward Holmes**, aged nineteen, was living at home in Moseley with his parents, his father *Edward*, described as a land proprietor, aged seventy-three, and his mother, *Elise*, aged fifty-two. At home also were his sisters *Julia*, aged twenty-two, *Sarah*, twenty, and *Fanny Louise* (1843-1933), aged seven, and his brother *George*, seventeen years old. They had one servant. Edward's brother, *John*, aged twenty-two, was living at 150 Moon Street, Birmingham, and was a wine merchant. In **1854** *John* arrived in Melbourne, Australia; he died in Ballarat, Victoria, in **1885**, aged fifty-six years. During the nineteenth century many people left for the colonies. Thomas Ellis of Sorrento emigrated to New Zealand sometime after 1850 and succeeded in business there.<sup>10</sup> He was the first proprietor of the Golden Fleece Hotel, Christchurch, and also lessee of the Ashley Gorge Station near Oxford. He returned to Moseley in 1878 to educate his family and built Sorrento, a large, well-to-do establishment on Wake Green Road. Spinsters were encouraged to emigrate because of concern about their numbers in the population and the lack of marriage opportunities.<sup>11</sup> These women were seen as having an important maternal civilising role and the colonies provided middle-class women with opportunities for employment, freedom and self-fulfilment.

## Marriage and Children

**Edward Holmes** married **Mary Ann Briggs** (1830-1861) on 7 October **1856** at St Mary's Church, Moseley. She had previously lived with her family in Birmingham and Balsall Heath.

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<sup>10</sup> Griffiths, A., *The History of the Ellis Family: The Sorrento Connection* (Studley: History into Print, 2013), p.5.

<sup>11</sup> Midgley, C., *Women against Slavery: British Campaigns, 1780–1870* (London: Routledge, 1992), p.264.

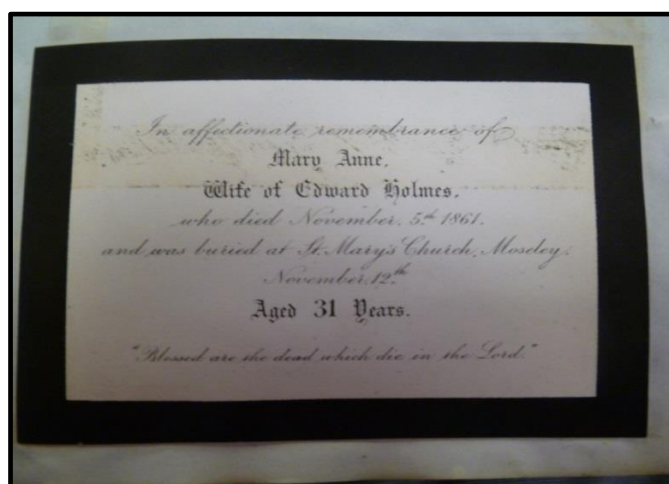


Edward and Mary Ann had three children. **Elizabeth Henriette Holmes** (1857-1944), was born on 6 September **1857** in Moseley and baptised on 13 November, **1857** at St Mary's Church, **Edward Briggs Holmes** (1858-1920), on 21 October **1858** in Moseley and baptised on 17 November **1858** at St Mary's Church and **Gertrude Fanny Holmes** (1861-1938), on 25 October, **1861**, and baptised on 22 November **1861** at St Mary's Church. In **1860**, Mary Ann's father, Samuel Briggs (1806-1879) commenced building St Mary's, Selly Oak, with Edward Holmes as architect.

Edward Holmes' Children from his First Marriage to Mary Ann Briggs (1830-1861)			
Children	Dates	Spouse	Grandchildren
<b>Elizabeth Henriette Holmes</b>	(1857-1944)	<b>John Bright Browett</b>	<i>Sybil Gertrude</i>
<b>Edward Briggs Holmes</b>	(1858-1920)	<b>Evelyn Frances Seymour Price</b>	
<b>Gertrude Fanny Holmes</b>	(1861-1938)	<b>George Baker Birch</b>	<i>Elsie Gertrude George Douglas Briggs</i>
Edward Holmes' Children from his Second Marriage to Mary Lavinia Hemming (1837-1921)			
<b>Mary Elise Georgina</b>	(1865-1932)		
<b>Alice Annie</b>	(1867-1954)	<b>Alfred Henry Halse</b>	<i>Maud Keneda Jeffreys Marold Keneda Jeffreys</i>
<b>John Boulton Brewin</b>	(1869-1918)		
<b>Constance Louise</b>	(1870-1906)	<b>William Percy Willis</b>	<i>Ursula Florence Sylvia Constance</i>
<b>Walter Sydney</b>	(1871-1920)		
<b>Margaret Jessie Holmes</b>	(1872-1962)		
<b>George Henry</b>	(1874-1958)		
<b>Helen Frances Holmes</b>	(1876-1952)		
<b>Dorothy</b>	(1880-1957)	<b>Cedric Percy Type</b>	<i>Helen Jill Holmes</i>
<b>Catherine Millicent</b>	(1885-1972)		

## 1861-1870

### A Mourning Card: Mary Ann Holmes<sup>12</sup>



<sup>12</sup> Library of Birmingham Archives, MS 559, *In Memoriam Cards*.

In the **1861** census **Edward** and **Mary Ann** and their family lived on the Moseley Road. **Edward** was aged twenty-nine years, **Mary Anne**, thirty-one years, **Elizabeth**, three years, and **Edward**, two years. They had a domestic servant and a nurse. Many middle class in Moseley had servants. Nursing help was crucial to middle-class mothers when they gave birth, but most nurses listed in the census were young which suggests their role was assisting mothers in caring for babies. Sadly **Mary Ann Holmes** died aged thirty-one years on 5 November **1861**, ten days after **Gertrude** was born. There is a brass plaque in St Mary's Church, Selly Oak, to the memory of Mary Ann Holmes aged thirty-one years, wife of Edward Holmes (Architect of this Church) who died 5 November 1861 and is buried in the Family Vault at St Mary's Church, Moseley. **Edward Holmes senior** died on 6 February, **1862** and is buried there too. **Edward Holmes** married his second wife, **Mary Lavinia Hemming** on 27 May **1863** in Alvechurch, and they had ten children. Four children were born by **1871**: **Mary Elise Georgina** (1865-1932), **Alice Annie**, (1867-1954), **John Boulton Brewin**, (1869-1918) and **Constance Louise**, (1870-1906), all born in Yardley, Moseley.



The Holmes Family Vault, St Mary's Church Graveyard, Moseley.

## 1871-1880

In **1871** **Edward Holmes**, aged thirty-nine, and **Mary Lavinia Holmes**, thirty-three, lived in Showell Lane, Yardley, with one daughter, **Constance Louise**, aged one and two sons, **John Boulton Brewin**, aged two, and **Walter Sydney**, (1871-1920), three months, along with a cook, a nurse and a housemaid. The three children from his first marriage, **Elizabeth**, **Edward** and **Gertrude** were living elsewhere in **1871**. **Elizabeth Henriette**, aged fourteen, was a pupil at a girls' school in Spring Hill, Yardley, **Edward Briggs**, aged thirteen, was a pupil in Rugby and **Gertrude Fanny**, aged ten, was living with her maternal grandparents, Samuel and Elizabeth Briggs and two servants, at 352 Moseley Road. Two daughters of this second marriage were also living away from home: **Mary Elise Georgina**, aged five years, was living

as a visitor with William T. Henning (aged sixty-four), a bookseller, stationer and printer, Elizabeth A. Henning (aged thirty) and Albert F. Henning (aged twenty-five) at 87 Prospect Hill, Tardebigge, Redditch; **Alice Annie**, aged four years, was living with her uncle and aunt, William and Elizabeth Shaw (aged sixty-seven and fifty-seven) and Ellen Shaw (thirty-four) in Chebsey, Ecceshall, Stone, Lichfield. Children living with grandparents, family and friends following the illness or death of the mother or, as here, a new born and two very young children, was not unusual in the Victorian era. **Margaret Jessie Holmes** (1872-1962) was born in April in Moseley, **1872**, **George Henry** (1874-1958) in **1874**, **Helen Frances Holmes** (1876-1952) in October **1876** and **Dorothy** (1880-1957) in **1880**, all born in Yardley.

## 1881-1890

In **1881**, the family were living at Saxonhurst, Greenhill Road, Moseley. **Edward Holmes** was aged forty-nine years and his wife, **Mary Lavinia** forty-three. **Edward Briggs Holmes**, aged twenty-two and an architect, and **Gertrude Fanny**, aged nineteen, from Edward's first marriage were now living with them. **Elizabeth Henriette**, the eldest child of the first marriage, now twenty-four years of age and with an annuity possibly from her mother, lived at 352 Moseley Road in **1881** with her seventy-eight year old maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Briggs, in a household which had three servants. In July **1881** **Elizabeth Henriette** married **John Bright Browett** (1859-1929) of Wick, Warwick. He and his parents, six sisters and three brothers lived in Aston. In **1871** **John** was a scholar in Leamington and in April **1881** a surveyor staying at the Craven Arms Hotel, Stokesay, Shropshire. **Elizabeth Henriette** and **John Bright Browett** had a daughter, **Sybil Gertrude Browett** (1882-1961) in **1882** at Yardley, Solihull. They were living at 25 Pershore Road in **1884**. In **1881** **Mary Elise Georgina Holmes**, aged fifteen, and **Alice Annie Holmes**, aged fourteen, were back home with their parents in Greenhill Road. Living at home too were three other daughters and three sons from the second marriage: **John Boulton Brewin**, aged twelve, **Constance Louise**, aged eleven, **Walter Sydney**, aged ten, **George Henry**, aged seven, **Margaret Jessie**, aged eight, and **Dorothy**, aged one. In **1881**, then, there were ten children living at home, which, together with a governess and two servants, made a household of fifteen. Such large households were not typical in Moseley. **Helen Frances Holmes** (1876-1952), born October **1876** in Showell Green, Moseley, was not living with her parents. She is listed in **1881** as a visitor, aged five years, staying with George Birch, a House Agent at 351 Moseley Road, close to her maternal grandmother's home. Also living there were George B. Birch aged twenty-five and Catherine Birch, twenty. Two other Holmes children married and left home in the **1880s**: **Edward Briggs Holmes**, aged twenty-four years, married **Evelyn Frances Seymour Price** (1859-1926) on 24 October **1882** at St Phillip's, Birmingham. Aged twenty-two years in **1881**, **Evelyn** was living with her parents, her brother and two servants at 138 Hockley Hill, Birmingham. **Evelyn** and **Edward Briggs Holmes** did not have children. **Gertrude Fanny Holmes**, aged twenty-one years, married **George Baker Birch** (1855-1932) in **1882** in Kings Norton. George Baker Birch, a brass founder, was the son of the household at 351 Moseley Road where **Helen Frances Holmes** was staying in **1881**. **Gertrude** and **George** had a daughter, **Elsie Gertrude** (1883-1973), on 26 August **1883** in Moseley and, on 7 July **1888**, when they are recorded as living in Edgbaston, a son, **George Douglas Briggs Birch** (1888-1972). In 1885 **Edward Holmes** and his wife, **Mary Lavinia**, had the last of their children, **Catherine Millicent** (1885-1972) born on 29 July, **1885**, at Moseley.

## 1891-1900

In **1891**, **Edward Holmes**, aged fifty-nine years, and **Mary Lavinia**, fifty-four years, were living at 16 Mayfield Road. They had four daughters and three sons at home: **Alice Annie**, aged twenty-four, **John Boulton Brewin**, aged twenty-one, **Walter Sydney**, twenty, **Margaret Jessie**, eighteen, **George Henry** seventeen, **Dorothy**, eleven, and **Catherine Millicent**, aged six years. They had one servant, Helen Goldsby. In **1891** **Edward Briggs Holmes**, aged thirty-two years and an architect and surveyor, was living at 3 Mayfield Road, with a visitor aged fifteen years and a servant. His wife, **Evelyn** was visiting a member of the family, Mary Briggs, a thirty-three year old widow household head living on her own means, at 5 Kings North Gardens, Folkestone, Kent. Mary Briggs was Edward Briggs Holmes' aunt: her second husband, William Barwell Briggs, was **Mary Ann Holmes'** brother. **Gertrude Fanny** was living at 4 Priory Road, Edgbaston, with her husband **George Birch**, a brassfounder and employer, their daughter, **Elsie**, aged seven, their son, **George**, aged two, a visitor and two servants. Their second son, **Neville Holmes Birch** (1895-1954) was born in **1895**. In **1892** **Elizabeth Henriette** and her husband, **John Bright Browett**, and daughter, **Sybille Gertrude Browett**, were living at 22 Tankerville Road, Streatham, Wandsworth. In **1895** **John** was part of the firm, Seagrave, Browett and Taylor, Surveyors and Valuers of London. **Constance Louise** married **William Percy Willis** (1869-1929) in April **1899** and their daughter, **Ursula Florence** (1900-1973), was born at Moseley in **1900**.

**Alice Annie Holmes** left home in the **1890s**. She married **Alfred Henry Halse** (1855-1923), aged forty-three years, in **1898**. She was thirty one years of age and his second wife. **Alfred** was born at the Schoolhouse, Ide, Devon, in **1855** and was living in **1858** at 21 Union Terrace, Exeter, and in **1861** at Exeter Street, Sidwell, Devon. In **1871** he was at Aston. He married Caroline Emily Moore (1856-1887) in **1879** and they had a son **Alfred Kenedon Jeffreys Halse** (1881-1937), born in **1881** in Yardley, when they were living on the Warwick Road, Yardley. He was a house agent at that time. Later in **1881** they were living with his parents at Warwick Road. His first wife died in **1887**, his mother in **1888** at Lee Bank Road, Edgbaston, and his father in **1897** at School Road, Moseley. **Alice** and **Alfred** had a daughter in Oxford Road, Moseley, **Maud Keneda Jeffreys Halse** (1900-1976), and another daughter, **Marold Keneda Jeffreys Halse**, in **1900** in Moseley. The name Keneda references Kenedon, an historic manor situated in the parish of Sherford, Devon, which became the seat of the Hals, Hales and Halse family.



**Arms of Hals of Kenedon: Argent, a fess between three griffin's heads erased sable.**

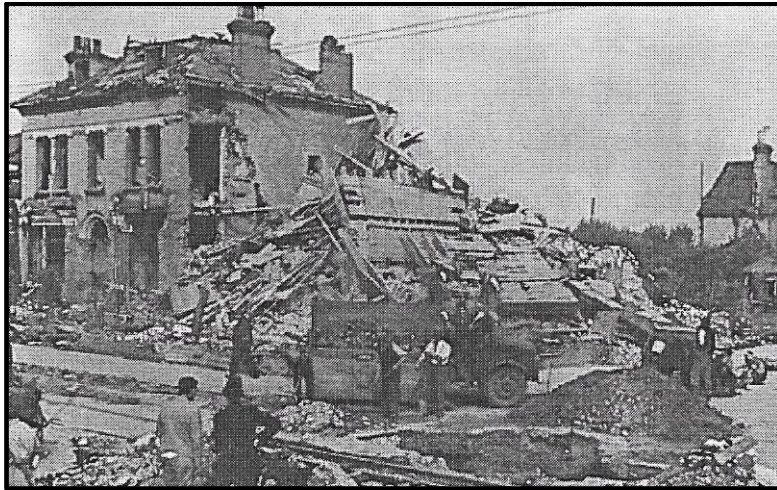


## 1901-1910

In **1901** **Edward Holmes** was living at Wyndcliffe, School Road, aged sixty-nine years, with his wife, **Mary Lavinia**, and five daughters, **Mary Elise Georgina**, aged thirty-five, a governess teaching morning pupils at home, **Margaret Jessie** aged twenty-eight and a music teacher, **Helen Francis**, aged twenty-five, **Dorothy** aged twenty-one and **Catherine Millicent**, aged sixteen, and two sons, **John Boulton Brewin** aged thirty-two, an architect, and **George Henry**, aged twenty-seven years, an assistant architect, plus two servants. **Mary** had returned and **Helen** was listed on the census living with her parents for the first time. **Elizabeth** and her husband and daughter were living at Dulwich in 1909 and 34 Jasper Road Upper Norwood, London in 1910 and 1911. In **1901**, **Edward Briggs**, aged forty-three years, was staying at the Grand Hotel in Durham, West Hartlepool, but his home was Avondale, Mayfield Road, where he lived with his wife, **Evelyn**, aged forty, and one servant. In 1907 **Edward** was in Taunton. He received a medal for umpiring soccer matches every weekend for fifteen years. He supposedly designed Aston Villa grounds. **Gertrude Fanny** was still living at 4 Priory Road, Edgbaston, now aged thirty-nine years, with her husband, **George Birch**, aged forty-five, a brassfounder and employer, their sons, **George**, aged twelve and **Neville**, aged four and two servants. **Constance Louise**, aged thirty-one, was living at Rock House, Greenhill Road (next door to Saxonhurst where her parents had lived) in **1901** with her husband **William Willis**, aged thirty-two, a manufacturer of church furniture and an employer, her daughter **Ursula Florence**, aged one, a visitor and one servant. They had another daughter, **Sylvia Constance**, (1901-1982) in **1901** in Moseley when **Constance** was aged thirty-one years, and a daughter, **Ella Margaret** (1906-1906) in **1906**, who did not live long. Constance died in October **1906** in childbirth having twins, **Margaret** and **Marjorie**, who also died. In **1901** **Alice** and **Alfred Halse**, an Auctioneer and Agent and an employer, were living in Salisbury Road at a house they named Kenedon in honour of Albert's heritage with their daughter, **Maud**, aged one, and three servants, including a nurse. They were still there in 1907 and he was a J.P. and a member of the city council. In **1901** **Walter Sydney** was thirty years of age, a clerk in the cycle trade in Coventry, boarding with Elizabeth Clarke, aged fifty-one, and John Clarke, aged four, at 19 Meriden Street, Coventry. **Edward Holmes**, the father of this dynasty, died of pneumonia at Wyndcliffe, School Road, Moseley, on 30 December, **1909** and his funeral was held in Moseley parish church on 3 January **1910**. He was buried in the family vault in St Mary's churchyard.

## 1911 and beyond

In **1911** **Mary Lavinia Holmes** was living at Wyndcliffe, 1 School Road, with her sons **John Boulton Brewin Holmes**, single, aged forty-three years and an architect, and **George Henry Holmes**, single, aged thirty-seven and a clerk to an Estate Agent, and her daughters, **Margaret Jessie**, single, thirty-nine years of age, and a music teacher, **Helen Francis**, single, aged thirty-five years and **Catherine Millicent**, single, twenty-six years, a school teacher, and Mary Lavinia's sister, Elizabeth, single, aged seventy-one. They had two servants - a cook and housemaid. **Mary Lavinia Holmes** died on 17 July 1921, aged eighty-four years and is buried in the Holmes family vault, St Mary's Church graveyard.



**Bomb Damage, Brigstock Road, 1944.<sup>13</sup>**

In **1911 Elizabeth Henriette**, fifty-three, was living with her husband, **John Bright Browett**, fifty-one, an auctioneer, surveyor and valuer, and their daughter, **Sybille Gertrude**, twenty-eight, at Jasper House, further along Jasper Road at number 43, Upper Norwood, London. In **1919** they lived at 27 Stradella Road, Half Moon Lane, Camberwell. **John Browett** died on 29 November **1929** at 3 Sydenham Road, West Croydon. He left Elizabeth £1,139 7s 0d. In **1939 Elizabeth** was living at 67 Brigstock Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon, a widow with her own means. She died there on 16 July **1944** - a civilian war death resulting from enemy action. She was killed when a flying bomb (VI bomb: the Doodlebug) flattened six houses and badly damaged twenty others including the fire station and the library in the early hours of the morning.<sup>14</sup> She had ignored advice to take shelter and insisted on remaining in the upstairs bedroom. The bomb damage report stated that 67 Brigstock Road was unstable. Years later a large area was cleared to make way for the creation of gardens by the council. They were originally called Brigstock Gardens, but were renamed Trumble Gardens in 1950 after Alderman Trumble, a Thornton Heath man who became Mayor of Croydon. **Elizabeth** was buried in Croydon and left £1,926 18s 6d to **Sybille Gertrude Browett**, spinster, her daughter.



**Trumble Gardens, Thornton Heath, c.1947.<sup>15</sup>**

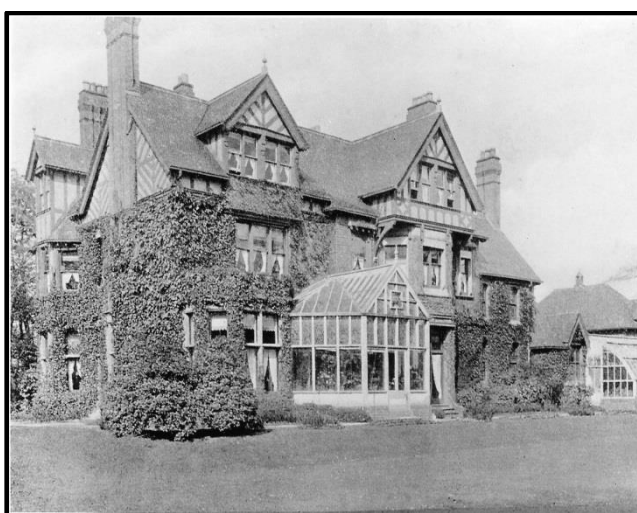
<sup>13</sup> <https://thorntonheathchronicle.co.uk/the0story-of-trumble-gardens/>..., December 2017, *Thornton Heath Chronicle*, 'The Story of Trumble Gardens', Croydon Museum, Borough Engineer's Bomb Damage Photographs.

<sup>14</sup> *The Croydon Advertiser*, 21 July, 1944; *Thornton Heath Chronicle*, 'The Story of Trumble Gardens', <https://www.thorntonheathchronicle.co.uk/the-story-of-trumble-gardens/>

<sup>15</sup> [francisfrith.com/thornton-heath/thornton-heath-trumble-gardens-c1947\\_t262019](https://francisfrith.com/thornton-heath/thornton-heath-trumble-gardens-c1947_t262019)

In **1911** **Edward Briggs Holmes**, aged fifty-two years, was a retired architect living at 69 Mayfield Road, Moseley, with one servant - a cook. He had been married for twenty-eight years. His wife, **Evelyn**, aged fifty-one years, was visiting Blackpool and staying at the Hotel Metropole, Promenade, North Shore. **Edward Briggs** died on 9 April, **1920** in Moseley and was buried at Brandwood cemetery, Birmingham. He left his effects to **Evelyn**. She died on 30 November, **1926** in Birmingham leaving effects of £1, 048 6s 1d to be administered by Samuel Nock Thompson, retired major H.H. Army and solicitor, Arthur Hugh Adcock. In **1911** **Gertrude Fanny Birch**, aged forty-nine years, was still living at 4 Priory Road, Edgbaston with her husband, **George**, fifty-five years of age and a brassfounder, her daughter, **Elise Gertrude**, aged twenty-seven and single, and her son, **George Douglas Briggs**, aged twenty-two years and a clerk. They had two servants and a lady companion. **Gertrude's** husband, **George**, died on 11 March **1932** in South Birmingham. **Gertrude** died 14 April **1938**, in Birmingham, aged seventy-six years.

In **1911** **Mary Elise Georgina**, aged forty-five and a spinster, was living, following her sister **Constance's** death, as housekeeper at the **Willis** home, 41 Grove Avenue. She was looking after her brother-in-law **William Percy Willis** and her nieces **Ursula Florence**, aged eleven, and **Sylvia Constance**, aged nine. They had two servants. **Mary** was also a Private School Principal. She died in **1932** at the Dingle Nursing Home, Wake Green Road (formerly the home of James Smith, Lord Mayor of Birmingham, then Gracie Hall, and currently flats). She left £1,048 16s 8d to **George Henry Holmes**, Estate Agent, and **Margaret Jessie Holmes**. **William Percy Willis** remarried and had further children, including *Barbara Mabel* (1913-1997), *Cynthia Eastcourt* (1914-1998), *Mary* (1916-1995), *William Eastcourt* (1920-1923). **William Percy Willis** died in **1929**. **Sylvia Constance Willis**, **Constance's** daughter, married **Arthur A Burfoot** (1894-1974) in **1937** aged thirty-six. In **1937** and **1938** they were living in Kensington. When **Sylvia Constance** was seventy-one years of age in **1972** they were living in Bath, but they were living in Surrey when her husband died in 1874. **Sylvia Constance** died in **1982** in York aged eighty. **Ursula Florence** died in Bath in 1973 aged seventy-three.



The Rear of the Dingle, c 1900



The Dingle today.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Photograph courtesy of Anthony Collins.





**Alice Annie Holmes**

In **1911** **Alice** and **Alfred Halse** moved to 42 Cotton Lane, also naming their house there Kenedon. **Alice** was forty-four and **Alfred** fifty-six years and an Auctioneer and Estate Agent. Their daughter, **Marold Keneda Jeffreys Halse**, aged eleven years, and three servants, including an Estate Agent's Secretary lived with them. **Albert** died on 8 December **1923** at 48 Oxford Road, Moseley. **Alice** died aged sixty-eight on 13 December **1954** at the Calthorpe Nursing Home, 4 Arthur Road, Edgbaston. Her home address was 46 Taylor Road, Kings Heath. She left £9,527 10s 6d.



**Church Stretton Lunatic Asylum.<sup>17</sup>**

**John Boulton Brewin Holmes** is recorded in a 1913 Trade Directory at 47 Exchange Buildings, New Street, Birmingham. He died on 31 August, **1918**, aged forty-eight, at Stretton House, Church Stretton, Shropshire. He was interred at Church Stretton, but

<sup>17</sup> [www.picclick.co.uk](http://www.picclick.co.uk)



memorialised on the Holmes family vault in St Mary's Church yard, Moseley. He left £686 16s 1d to **George Holmes**, Estate Agent and **Mary Elise Georgina Holmes**. Stretton House was a lunatic asylum one of two such established by Dr S G Bakewell.<sup>18</sup> One, The Grove, All Stretton, was for women. Dr Bakewell's other asylum established in 1854 was the Retreat, or Stretton House Asylum for men built where the Talbot Inn had stood at the south end of the town. It was first licensed for sixteen patients later, in 1856, for eighteen. On Bakewell's death William Hyslop bought it and in 1868 it was licensed for twenty-eight patients. In 1869 Hyslop enlarged and reconstructed it and added new 'Gothic' buildings designed by Thomas Tisdale, thus allowing for the reception of forty patients. Patients were classified socially as well as clinically: in addition to cricket, gardening, billiards and music richer patients could ride or enjoy 'carriage exercise'. The grounds, like those of Bakewells' earlier establishments in Staffordshire, had always been spacious, and the asylum was supplied from its garden and model farm and, in the mid-1930s continued to provide, 'the comforts of a first-class home'. It closed, evidently in 1948 when it was divided into flats. **In 1911 Walter Sydney Holmes** was living aged forty as a boarder at the home of Annie Moore, fifty-five, Ellen Mabel Moore, twenty-five, Ralph Edward Moore, twenty-two and George William Moore, seventeen, at 31 Northumberland Road, Coventry. He was single and a clerk at a cycle manufactory. He died in December **1920** aged forty-nine in Islington, London. **Helen Francis Holmes** died, aged seventy-six years, on 8 September, **1952**, in Birmingham. She left £756 12s 11d to **Margaret Jessie Holmes**, spinster, and **George Holmes**, Estate Agent.

In **1911 Dorothy Holmes**, aged thirty-one, was living at 47 Oxford Road with her husband, **Cedric Percy Type**, aged thirty-nine, a chartered accountant, whom she had married two years previously. They had one servant. In **1939** she was a widow aged fifty-nine living at 2 Oxford Road. The **1932** and **1940** Trade Directories have her as a resident of 2 Oxford Road. She had a daughter in 1922, **Helen Jill Holmes Type**. **Dorothy** died on 23 June, **1957**, at Ravenstone Nursing Home, Droitwich, Worcestershire, aged seventy-seven. Her address was given as the Raven Hotel, Droitwich, Worcester. She left £24,915 4s 7d to her daughter, **Helen Jill Holmes Craddock**, wife of **Colin Victor Craddock** whom **Helen** had married in 1944. He died on 12 February 1961 when they were living at Patchway, New Wood lane, Blakedown, Nr., Kidderminster. He left **Helen** and Geoffrey, an architect, £75,202 13s 0d.

**George Henry Holmes** died on 18 November **1958** at 198 Old Birmingham Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire. He left £16,767 7s 7d to Midland Bank Executor and Trustee Co., Ltd., and **Catherine Millicent Holmes**, Spinster. **Margaret Jessie Holmes** died on 6 December, **1962** at 198 Old Birmingham Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, the same address as for **George Henry Holmes**. She left £2,498 7s 0d to **Catherine Millicent Holmes**, Spinster. **Catherine Millicent** died aged eighty-six on 7 October, **1972** at Ravenstone Nursing Home, Droitwich, Worcestershire, the same establishment where Dorothy died. She left £25,035. **Fanny Louise**, Edward Holmes' sister, died in 1933 aged ninety years.

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<sup>18</sup> A P Baggs, G C baugh, D C Cox, Jessie McFall and P A Stamper, 'Church Stretton', in *A History of the County of Shropshire: Volume 10, Munslow Hundred (Part), the Liberty and Borough of Wenloch*, ed., G C Baugh (London, 1998), pp.72-120. British History on line <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/vol10/pp72-120> (accessed 3 May 2021).

This is a fascinating story of one Victorian Moseley resident who established a family dynasty and the many family members who stayed in Moseley and nearby and others who moved further afield.

**Janet Berry**

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