

West Family Notes

Author: Keith (with much assistance from Una)

Revised: March 7, 2016

Until recently, we had not been able to trace the West family farther back than our grandfather. However, we can now go back a further generation to our great-grandfather William Henry Wilson and his wife Sarah Wilson, formerly Sarah Bridle. The family name was changed to West shortly after the birth of Keith's mother, born with the name Eliza Florence Wilson on October 8, 1889. She was later named Florence Eliza West ("Florrie").

Based on the [1901 Census](#), the West family of seven was living at 80 Bravington Road, Paddington in only 3 rooms! Grandad Thomas West and Grandma Eliza West were reported as 37 and 34 years old, respectively and their five daughters were Florence (age 11), Emily (age 9), Ivy (age 7), Lilly (age 7) and Mary (age 2). Emily and Mary did not survive. According to [a page torn out from the family bible](#), Emily died when 15 years old on December 4, 1906 and Mary died age 2, later in the census year (April 5, 1901). From the same bible entry we see that the first born was a son named Thomas, born on October 7, 1888, but he survived less than 4 months.

There was some confusion regarding Grandad West's birth date. According to the 1901 census data, he was born in 1863 or possibly in early 1864, so when he died in September 1939 he would have been 75 or 76. His death certificate, however, recorded his age as 74. Una believes he was older than that - more likely 76. Up until recently, we had not been able to find any record of Grandad's birth. However, on September 2, 2015 I found a record of a Thomas Wilson born in the Medway registration district in the fourth quarter of 1861. I have now received a copy of the birth certificate from the General Register Office in Southport which records grandad West was born on 4th October 1861 establishing that he was nearly 78 years old when he passed in September 1939. A copy of grandad West's birth certificate is included at the end of this document.

Grandad West had two sisters Aunt Mary and Aunt Rye, both of whom remained spinsters all their lives. So far, I have not traced any records of these aunts.

We had known very little about Grandma West, except that her first name was Eliza and, according to Una, her maiden name was Shelvey. However, I recently found a record of an Eliza Shelvey born in Kensington in the fourth quarter of 1867 and have obtained a birth certificate for her also (copy appended). The birth certificate records grandma West's birth date as 10th November 1867, so she was six years younger than grandad. Una remembers that she and Grandad West celebrated their Golden Wedding on April 5, 1937. This is confirmed by entries in the Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths which records a marriage in Westminster between Thomas Wilson and Eliza Shelvey in the second quarter of 1887 - Grandad West would have been 25 and Grandma 19 at that time.

By searching in Genes Reunited I found that Grandma West was one of four children - Hannah (1866 4Q), herself (1867 4Q), Emma (1869 3Q), and Bertha (1872 2Q). At the same time, as a result of matches found with other trees in Genes Reunited I was placed in contact with a Brian Matks whose grandfather Charles had a brother William Marks who married Grandma West's eldest sister Hannah in 1887. The [marriage certificate](#) records that Hannah and William Marks were married in the parish of Kensington on July 10th 1887 when Hannah was recorded as being 21 years old. However, the birth registry shows that she was born in the 4th quarter of 1866 so she was still 20 at the time of the marriage. They had eight children - four boys and four girls - born between the years 1889 and 1902. These, of course, were all first cousins to my mother, auntie Lily and auntie Ivy. I don't know how many second cousins Una and I have from the eight children of Hannah and William Marks, but it must be quite a bunch! In 1891 the Census records show that Hannah (Shelvey) Marks and her husband Wiilliam, a wheelwright; were living at 72, WALTERTON ROAD, Paddington and that they had three children - George W aged 4, Annie E aged 2, and Florence H aged 6 months. Interestingly too, the record shows Hannah's birthplace as Plumstead, Kent.

Grandma West's elder sister Hannah, when her last child was only two, died of Epileptic Seizure and Coma in Paddington on 24th May, 1904. The [death certificate records](#) that Eliza West, sister, of 80, Bravington Road, was present at the death! Hannah was only 37 years old (38 according to the death certificate). This sad event was, of course, long before Una and I were born, but my mother would have been turned fourteen and it is strange that she never mentioned it. We have to ask the question also - "how did William Marks, widowed at an early age, manage to bring up his family?" Did he re-marry? Or hire a nanny? And, finally why was he not present at his wife's death? Maybe Brian Marks will be able to answer some of these questions.

Brian Marks had sent me a copy of Eliza Shelvey's baptismal register entry which identifies her parents as John William Shelvey, boatbuilder, and Hannah Mercy Henry. This same information is confirmed in Eliza Shelvey's birth certificate (q.v.). These are, of course, maternal great grandparents to both Una and me. I have subsequently found the marriage registry record of Hannah Mercy Henry and William John Shelvey which occurred in the 2nd. Quarter of 1884. The next step will be to obtain a copy of the marriage certificate, if possible.

Regarding grandma West's remaining sisters Emma and Bertha, there is little to report at the present time. Una understands that Emma emigrated to Canada so we would not expect to find much about her in U.K. records. However, I have found a reference to Emma Shelvey working as a kitchen maid in the Gaskell household in Chelsea. This was in the 1891 Census when Emma was 21.. It sounds feasible that she would move to Canada, she was obviously not having a very good life in the U.K.! However, although I have been able to find a record of an E. Shelvey leaving the U.K. bound for Canada in 1913, the birth dates do not line up, as listed below.

"E SHELVEY

Passenger Lists leaving UK 1890-1960
Collections from

Australasia, Great Britain, Ireland, United States
Country
CANADA
Ship Name
EMPRESS OF IRELAND
Birth Year
1874 (Note: Emma Shelvey was born in 1869)
Age 39
Ship Departure Port
LIVERPOOL
Destination Port
QUEBEC
Departure Year
1913"

Bertha, I cannot find other than an entry in the births, marriages and deaths registry recording the birth of a Bertha Shelvey in Kensington during the 2nd quarter of 1872. This is the same birthplace as the rest of the family but we cannot be sure that she was a sibling to grandma West until we obtain a copy of the birth certificate to confirm that her parents were John William and Hannah Mercy Shelvey.

Charles Shelvey

In a letter sent to me in March 1998, Una made the following statement about grandma West's family:

"Our grandma West was one of several children one of whom was Charles who emigrated to Australia and, I think, another was Emma who emigrated to Canada."

As stated above I have found two records relating to Emma showing that indeed she was one of grandma's sisters, but have found no confirmation of her emigration. Charles Shelvey is even more difficult. A search for Charles Shelvey in the available records brings up only one match namely the 1891 Census which identifies a Charles Shelvey living in Manchester Terrace, Chelsea, as part of a household of seven headed by a James E. Shelvey, gas stoker at the gasworks, born in Middlesex in 1844, and his wife Eleanor. The three boys in the family were employed by the railway (Charles was a van guard).

Charles Shelvey's age at the time of the 1891 census was 15, so he was born either in the first quarter of 1876 or in the last three quarters of 1875 and would have been eight years younger than grandma West. It could be he is the Charles that Una referred to but it is unlikely. A Charles Shelvey did emigrate from the UK in 1913 but to the United States and not Australia and again the birth year is wrong (see below).

CHARLES SHELVEY
Passenger Lists leaving UK 1890-1960
Collections from
Australasia, Great Britain, Ireland, United States
Country
United States
Ship Name
OLYMPIC
Birth Year 1887
Age 26
Ship Departure Port
SOUTHAMPTON
Destination Port
NEW YORK
Departure Year
1913

Cousin Jim (James Williams)

Both Una and I remember cousin James quite well. When I was a young boy - I guess about seven or eight, he visited with us at Bulstrode Avenue, Hounslow and arriving in his Morris 12 car, took me for a ride - I sat on his lap and he let me steer his car - a great experience for a young boy which I remember clearly to this day. Una asks was Jim Williams “a nephew to Grandma West and was his mother the sister with the fiery temper?” Yes, it could be, and we now know that the sister with the fiery temper would most likely be Hannah who married William Marks, died from epileptic seizure and coma, and had eight children. Among these children there were four girls, one of whom might have married a Mr. Williams. This certainly is not beyond the bounds of possibility and needs investigation. Hannah’s four daughters were the following:

Ann Edith Marks born 1889
Florence H. Marks, born 1890
Emily Mary Marks, born 1900
Millicent E. Marks, born 1902

If one of these daughters married a Williams that could indeed be Cousin James (the age is about right), He was apparently a wealthy man who, we are told, wanted to leave some of his fortune to Una’s son George and to me.

A search for marriages of the four daughters of Hannah and William Marks shows that Mary E. Marks married a William H. Williams in the district of Bedwellty, Monmouthshire, Wales during the fourth quarter of 1934. This marriage is NOT consistent with Una’s statement to me in her letter of March 1998, as follows:

“... in the thirties Auntie Ivy had attended Cousin James;s wedding - a posh affair at Croydon airport in the company of such people as Amy Johnson, James being keen on flying.”

Clearly, although William H. Williams was one of grandma West’s nephews he could not be identified with Cousin James. It is possible, however, that the two could be related, brothers perhaps, and that is worthy of investigation.

There could be a nephew of Eliza Shelvey from one of her other sisters namely, Emma or Bertha if either one married a Williams. If Emma did go to Canada she would not qualify because cousin James was certainly not Canadian. However, Bertha could qualify, if she was indeed a sister.

There is another possibility that should be mentioned. I have found a record of a marriage between an Eliza Amelia Shelvey and a John Williams in 1890. A male issue from that marriage could be cousin Jim and my estimate of age would be about right. So far, I have not found any further reference to the family.

Aunt Edith

Una remembers an Aunt Edie who lived two streets away from Grandma West (Kilravock Street). As noted above Ann Edith Marks was the eldest daughter of Grandma West’s sister Hannah. Checking in the births, marriages and deaths register I have found that an Edith Ann Marks married Alfred Henry Bailey in 1914. This is confirmed in Brian Marks family tree which also shows that Alfred Bailey died in 1918 (presumably a war casualty or a ‘flu victim). If this was so then Aunt Edith would hav been a widow and could quite likely have continued to live in Paddington. I have searched the Census records but can find nothing conclusive. If we can obtain a copy of the Bailey-Marks marriage record then we could at least confirm that Edith Ann Marks was the same person as Annie Edith Marks, daughter of Hannah Shelvey.

Our Great-Grandparents

The birth certificates of grandma and grandad West identify great-grandparents as follows:

Thomas Wilson parents:

Father:	William Henry Wilson	Occupation: Carpenter
Mother:	Sarah Bridle	
Address:	Hoopers Lane, Rochester, Kent	

The England & Wales Births, Marriages and Deaths Register records the marriage of William

Henry Wilson to Sarah Bridle occurring in the 4th Quarter of 1853 or eight years before the birth of our grandad in 1861. It seems likely therefore that aunt Mary and aunt Rye were born before grandad, making him the youngest of the siblings. Unfortunately, I have not as yet been able to find any reference to the family in the 1961 or 1971 census records.

Eliza Shelvey parents:

Father:	John William Shelvey, born 1840	Occupatiion: Boat Builder
Mother:	Hannah Mercy Henry, born 1839	
Address:	35 Woodchester Street, Paddington, Middx.	

I find records of two John William Shelveys, evidently involved in the same business. The second one appears in the 1891 Census living in Woodfield Place, Paddington with his wife Harriet. Stated age was 45 (five years younger than Hannah's husband) and occupation "boat proprietor." There was also a son aged 16 who was a "boat boy" with the same name as his father. Ten years later in the 1901 census the son had left the nest and John William Shelvey had downgraded himself to "boat builder." Whether the two John William Shelveys were brothers or not we do not know at this time. There's a lot more digging to do yet! One thing is for sure, the Shelveys were a very large family with many of them coming from The Isle of Thanet (Margate area).

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number 6856524-1

REGISTRATION DISTRICT **MEDWAY**
 BIRTH in the Sub-district of **Rochester** in the County of Kent

Columns:- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 No. When and where born Name, if any Sex Name and surname of father Name, surname and maiden surname of mother Occupation of father Signature, description and residence of informant When registered Signature of registrar Name entered after registration

409	Fourth October 1861 Hogan Row Rochester	James Bay	Male	William Henry Wilson	Sarah Wilson formerly Bridle	Carpenter	Sarah Wilson Mother Shooper Row Rochester 1861	Frederick Parrell Registrar		
-----	--	-----------	------	----------------------	------------------------------------	-----------	--	-----------------------------------	--	--

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 8th day of October 2015



BXCG 665834

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE ©CROWN COPYRIGHT
WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.

MAZ

728-633 84109 04/14 3M/TSSD 055203

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH



GIVEN AT THE **GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE**

Application Number 6856524-2

REGISTRATION DISTRICT **KENSINGTON**
 BIRTH in the Sub-district of **Saint Mary Paddington** in the **County of Middlesex**

Columns:-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
432	South November 1867 53 Woodstock Street	Elija	Male	John William Shelley	Samuel Shelley formerly Henry	Book builder	X The ward of Samuel Shelley, formerly of 53 Woodstock Street Paddington	South November 1867	Henry Ashley Registrar	

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 8th day of October 2015



BXCG 665795

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE ©CROWN COPYRIGHT

WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.

MS

7284633 84109 04/14 3M/TSSD 035203

