

# **The McCann and Associated Families in Lincolnshire**

by

Gwendoline and Alex Murray Latimer

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## **Introduction**

The idea of compiling this story of the family came to us late in 1976 when we saw the certificate of marriage of Matthew McCann and Ann Curley nee Pawson, great grandparents of our generation.

Delving a little we wondered how a daughter of the establishment of Grimsby, St James' Register Office in 1847 to become the wife of an illiterate Roman Catholic the son of a poor Irish immigrant.

Though the answer to the question posed still eludes us it was sufficient to whet the appetite and our genealogical study began.

Originally the aim was to provide our daughter and grandchildren with a history of their ancestry, but a family is not an island. Its branches spread out and embrace countless members and it is particularly to the younger generation of these that we offer our findings. We hope that some of them may be sufficiently interested to continue our markedly incomplete search.

The general structure of the family is interesting. We find the long established Grimsby family of Skelton being joined by a succession of others coming to the town in its rapid expansion. These newcomers hailed from the east side of the Kingdom generally, on a line from Boston to Fife including every county within those limits.

First we must consider the Skeltons.

## **The Skeltons of Grimsby**

From the time of the Tudor insistence on detailed church records reference to the family Skelton abounds in St James' parish registers. Indeed one of them, as rector, assisted in the compilation, another was the churchwarden and the Saxon cross today standing by the west door was dug up and erected in the churchyard by yet another. The edited records of the church were written by George Skelton Stephenson, second master at the Corporation School who was the son of a Skelton girl and printed by Albert Gait who had just acquired his business from William Skelton.

Not only in church life did the Skeltons make their mark. William, the printer, was also the first Postmaster of the town and influential in political and other spheres. As a builder it is simpler to leave ones mark on the environment and so we find that John Skelton demolished the Town Hall in the Market Place and built the new civic headquarters there in 1780. George Skelton leaves us his sketch of this together with his artistic history of the town which is currently housed in the Doughty Museum. (later Welholme Galleries).

There were one or two eccentric characters in the family of whom we shall touch on later, but in the main they were a hardworking, serious people who made a big contribution to their home town. The only position they never achieved was that of Mayor, though they married into the families of Kennington the brewer, Empson the builder and Joys, all of whom reached this height.

Unfortunately St James' registers are not comprehensive until the beginning of the eighteenth century and though we know of their long association with Grimsby the first proven entry we have is of James who married Ann Cooper in 1707. It is believed that they lived in Pasture Street and apart from the date of their deaths the only information we have is of their children. Of these John, the eldest, 1710-1772 provides us with much more detail.

The Pastures roll tells us that John became a Freeman by servitude in 1731 having completed his term of apprenticeship to Thomas Empson, joiner. Empson, who was a brother of the Mayor of the day, also lived in Pasture Street which extended in those days only as far as the present railway line. Becoming a Freeman was a huge step forward for John, for this select body ruled the town. In the eighteenth century the population was as low as 800 of whom a third were Freeman. They held all the important civic posts, had the great benefit of the franchise, intermarried to maintain a 'closed shop' of privilege and generally abused the power they held in a blatant manner. The Corporation School which was supported by the whole town, was restricted to Freeman's children, thus providing the literate section of the community.

Obviously a keen churchmen John was one of two church wardens at St James' in 1737. Nothing is known of his wife except her name, Elizabeth, and the fact that she would have known some of her great grandchildren Douglas before she died in 1796 at the age of eighty.

Two of the sons of John and Elizabeth also lived into their eighties., Pelham christened Pell and William 1733-1819 but it could be said that their family was of unequal merit. The second son, named John after his father was a builder and he it was who together with Alderman Empson built the new Town Hall in 1780, earning for himself two shillings and

sixpence per day, twice the sum paid to his workmen. The bricks used cost thirteen shillings per thousand. He became a J.P. and was something of an antiquarian. Whilst laying a new path in the churchyard he dug up the stone cross referred to above.

According to local historian Anderson Bates the next son James, or Jeminy as he was known throughout the town, was an itinerant match seller. He was a cripple, presenting an odd spectacle in his cocked hat, military coat, leather breeches and a large leather apron with huge pockets in which he carried his wares. In Bates' book is a cartoon of Jemmy clashing with the Town Crier who resented our tradesman's habit of shouting for custom.

The youngest son, Pelham, was also an oddity and was described as a singular old creature who wove hay bands around his legs in lieu of stockings. Pelham was struck off the Freeman's Room for Pauperism.

Returning to the eldest son, William, he appears to have been the first fisherman in the family but was later engaged as a gravel digger on the foreshore. In this latter roll he seems to have been self employed as were so many of the family, a probable reason for their relative affluence. He was a Freeman by birth something which was not to recur in our direct line for another century. Like his father William lived in Pasture Street and in 1768 married Frances Bachelor who owned a bonnet making business which, on her demise, was continued by younger members of the family. Their eldest son John (The graves of John's family and some of the Grimsby Skeltons may be seen in Stallingborough churchyard) was initially a shoemaker, but later became a customs official at Goole and Hull, retiring on a Government pension in 1840! John's son William, who was born in 1803 was one of the best known men in the area. He was quite a character. In his diaries he complains bitterly that he learned nothing at the Corporation School, castigating that establishment fiercely with a literary power he probably acquired at the same house of learning. His academic shortcomings did not seem to retard his progress for whilst he was still in his twenties he had established his printing business, married the Mayor's daughter, become overseer for the poor of Grimsby and been appointed Postmaster. Apart from amassing property and money his main interest was the temperance movement of which he was the guiding light of the town, a light that was slightly dimmed by his affection for his aunt Kennington, the brewer's wife. A further jolt to his total abstinence campaign came when his father in law Alderman Robert Joys, died of alcoholism, not the only one in this narrative to depart by this route. In 1831 William was called to the bar of the House of Commons by a Speaker's Warrant to give evidence on the corruption in the Grimsby Parliamentary Election of that year. William's papers are housed in the Public Library, Grimsby, with a summary by the present writer.

William's younger brother, George, was a druggist in the Market Place and when William sold the printing concern to Albert Gait in 1860 the latter also took over George's stock of medicines. We were told by an old employee of Gait's that they were still carrying stocks of printers' goods and patent medicines from the 1860 sale some eighty to ninety years later.

To return to the direct line we are more interested in Mary, the eldest daughter of William Skelton and Frances Bachelor. In 1790 she married Joseph Douglas who described himself as a heckler, which apparently was the job of dressing or separating the seed from the Flax plant in order to manufacture linseed. Prior to 1790 Joseph is somewhat elusive. Certainly he was resident in Grimsby before his marriage, certainly he was the first Douglas to live in

the town and almost certainly he was a Scot. He was the first of the clan to become a Freeman by marriage, subsequently the general manner.

The Douglas family lived mostly in East and West Streets and later in Eastgate. Their eldest son, William, was a bit of a fly by night, forever changing his occupation and he must have caused a stir in 1834 when he was convicted of felony and struck off the Freemans Roll.

Joseph used his right of Freeman most profitably than did his son. In the election of 1796 he was a Blue or Whig, a supporter of Pelham or Yarborough as he became that year. The ballot ended in a tie. Up to the Reform Act of 1832 Grimsby returned two members to parliament, perhaps a little extravagant for there were merely 280 Freeman entitled to vote. Even more extravagant was the attendant bribery for up to £80,000 was handed out to persuade this small number of electors to register for the Reds or Blues.

It became so corrupt that the 1831 ballot, referred to above was declared void by Westminster and a re-run ordered - it was said by some that Freeman could live comfortably from one election to another on bribes received. In addition to money the Freeman were able, for the nine months campaign leading up to an election, to have free drink at the local inns. Some sources maintain that many died from this over indulgence and indeed when Joseph died the cause of his passing was gout! It would appear that the electoral comforts offered to the Douglas family were too tempting. They were a poor lot who contributed little to their community, far removed from their kinsmen the Skeltons and doubtless our temperance advocate was greatly influenced in his crusade by what he saw of all these electoral orgies.

Joseph died in 1838 at the age of 71 and was the last of the family with his wife, to be buried at St James'. A few months before his death the registration of births, deaths and marriages was legally enforced so Joseph provides us with the first certificate in our history.

On the death of his husband Mary Douglas lived with her eldest son, William, and in her declining years she raised her grand daughter Betsey Pawson. We shall find more cases of children being brought up by their grandparents because of shortage of accommodation.

This brings to a close the story of the Skeltons and the Douglas' there being no more in our direct male line. The daughter of Joseph Douglas and Mary Skelton married William Pawson, blacksmith, their new home being established at 32 Flottergate in 1823.

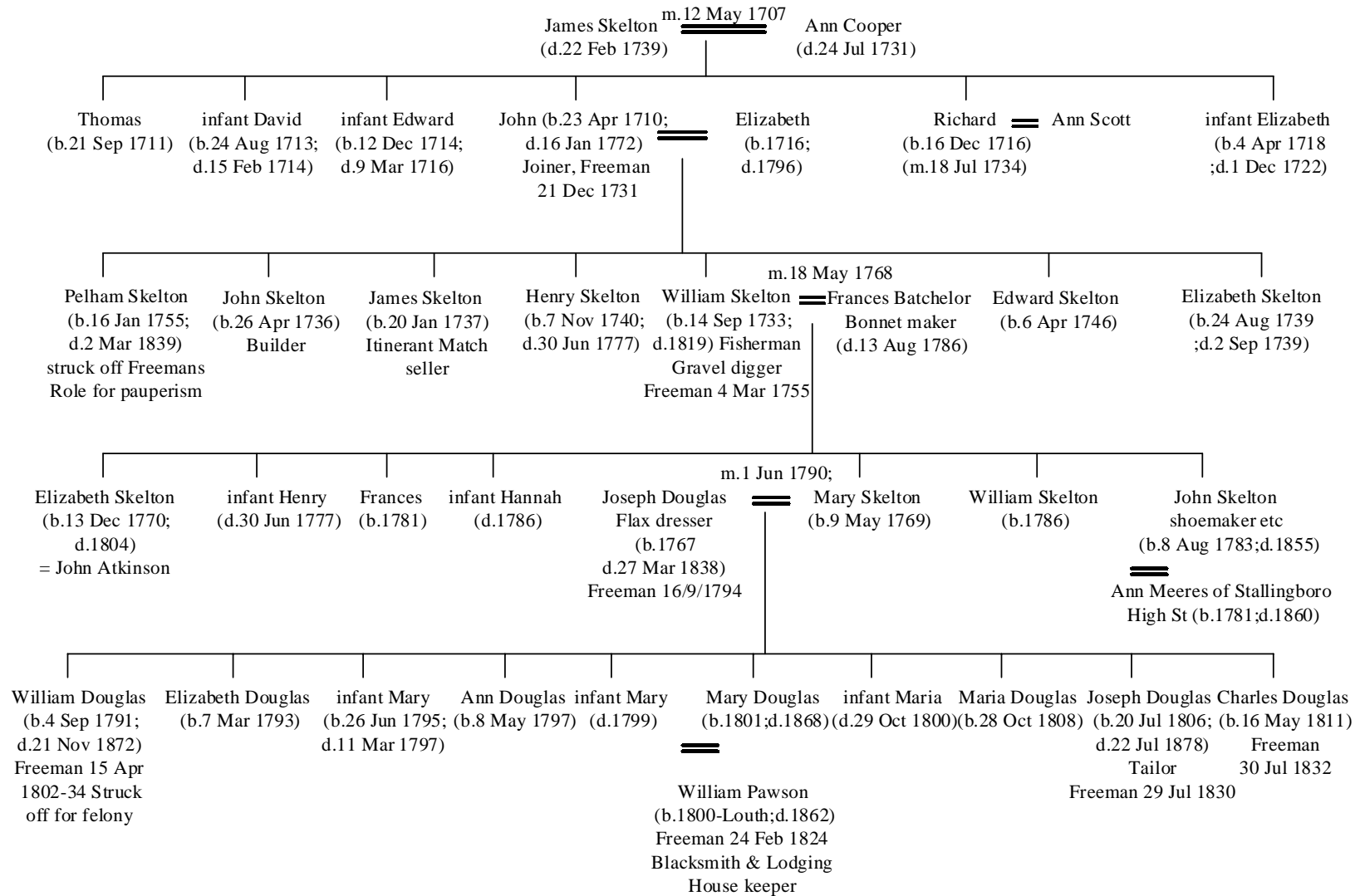
William Pawson misled us completely by stating in the 1851 Census for Grimsby that he was born in North Somercoates. It is understandable for that would certainly be his earliest recollection, but it is the market town of Louth that we must now visit to trace William's origins.

## References

St James Church Registers - Lincoln Archives  
- Church registry  
- edited G S Stephenson

A gossip about old Grimsby by Anderson Bates  
Grimsby Freeman, L Greenfield  
Old Grimsby by Rev Shaw  
Skelton Papers - Grimsby Library  
Ainslie St Cemetery Records - Grimsby Library  
Grimsby Census Returns - Grimsby Library  
Borough Poll Books - Grimsby Library  
Freeman's Roll - Grimsby Library  
Electoral Rolls - Grimsby Library  
Superintendent Register Grimsby  
Doughty Museum Grimsby  
Stallingborough Churchyard

## The Skeltons of Grimsby.



## **Louth, The home of the Pawsons and Makeys**

Almost coincidental with the granting of the Louth charter in 1551 was the founding of St James' Church and the Grammar School. This history of Louth is built into the growth of these establishments and as the family had no academic pretensions in those days we must look to the church records for evidence of their origins.

Though the parish registers are excellent in detail and preservation, benefiting a town which was once of far greater importance than Grimsby, there is, unfortunately a complete gap in the record for fifty years prior to 1685. As with the Skeltons in Grimsby we know that the Pawsons and Makeys were resident in Tudor times but the break precludes logical research so we must begin at the later date to find the first references to the Paulsons, as they were then known. The name changed over the years to Paulsen, Paussen and finally the modern spelling which we shall use.

We know that our first Pawson was William who was born in Louth about 1675. His wife, Mary, presented him with three children of whom the eldest, John, who was born in 1697, married twice. By his first wife Mary, the only son, Charles, lived in Louth all his life, his descendants being found in the town until the first half of the nineteenth century. The same may be said of the first child of John's second marriage, Richard who married Margery Horby in 1766.

Of the other children of John Pawson and his second wife, Ann, we are mainly concerned with the second son, William, who became a blacksmith and married Rebecca Whitesides in 1768. As there is no tree of any other Whitesides in the parish registers we must assume she came from a nearby village.

About 1770 William and Rebecca moved to North Somercoates where their family spread for about a century. Why they should leave an attractive spot like Louth for those desolate salt marshes is past belief. Presumably there was work for them and they worked or starved in those days. They suffered incredibly, only four of their seventeen children surviving infancy. The commonest sound in Somercoates must have been the passing bell.

Most of the family worked on the land, the last members, in the 1851 census, all being agricultural labourers. That they were poor is underlined by the fact that no gravestone to a Pawson can be found in the churchyard.

William's eldest son, Charles, was, however, a fisherman. He and the family must have combed the beach for wreckage from coasters that frequently foundered on the shore. The church records abound with details of seamen, lost from colliers plying between the Tyne and London, who were found dead on the seafront. Perhaps Charles moved to the Grimsby fishing industry for the last record we have of his second wife, Mary Whallow, was the notice of her death at 41, East Marsh Street in 1875.

It would appear that William Pawson retained his links with Louth for his funeral service in 1832 was conducted by the Rector of that town. He had long been a widower for Rebecca had died in 1788 shortly after the birth of her seventeenth child in twenty years of marriage. William's second son, also of that name was the fourth child to be so christened, the others

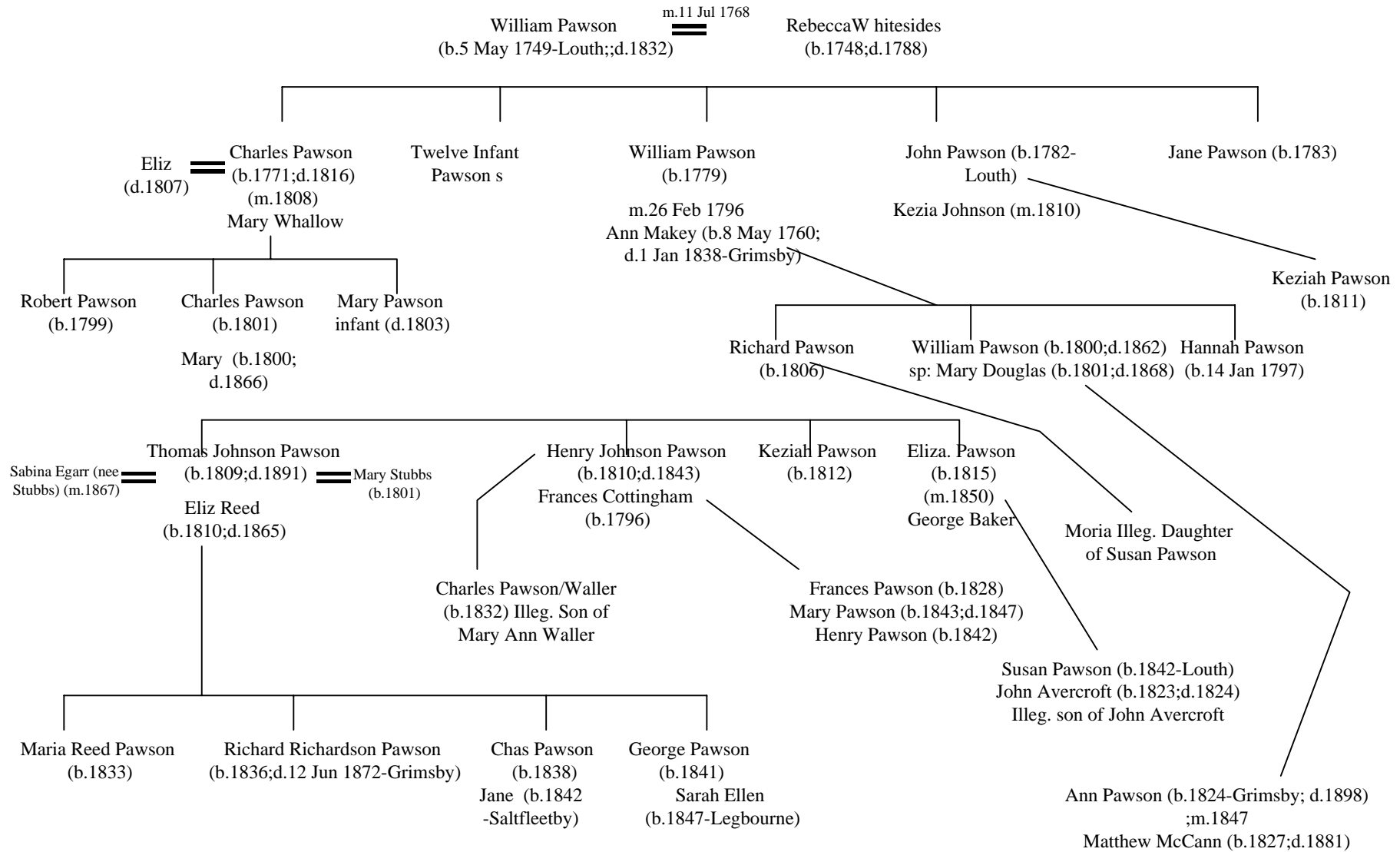
dying in infancy. This second son William returned to Louth where he married Ann Makey in 1796. Their first two children were born in Louth after which they must have returned to Somercoates for there the last child, Richard, was born in 1806. It is easy to visualise what Ann Makey saw when she arrived on the marshes. They would extend from the present coast line almost to the church. Nearby, slightly to the west stood the brickyard, a necessary industry in an area of no natural stone. It could be that some of the Pawsons were brick makers as were the Bradleys of Broomfleet in the next century. Certainly our Pawsons carried their grain to the windmill standing adjacent. The village shop seemed to prosper as the churchyard monuments to that family suggest, just as the names of the village lanes today indicate this picture. Why was one of these tracks called Cloddy Lane, a feature of all the byways. In the photograph of the old cottage, taken in 1977, there was still no firm path to the dwelling nor any hard standing around it.

Ann Makey was not the first of her family to know North Somercoates, her maternal great grandmother, Hannah Allenby having moved from the village to marry James Allenby in Louth in 1704. Apart from the dates given on the chart little is known of the Makey family of Louth. Our Makey men in direct line were all named Robert as were other children of related Makeys in the town at that time. With regard to the names of children the Pawsons mainly used the royal appellations; others took biblical names as did Ann's grandfather Isaiah Dunn whose brother was Ezekiel. Today we know of no Pawsons in Louth but the name Makey is well known.

Though Ann's father in law blacksmith William Pawson lost nearly all of his children, he would be comforted in later life by his eleven grandchildren and an almost equal number of great grandchildren. Death was a frequent caller at the Pawson home as we know, but also many of the adults had relatively short lives. Thus it was common for people to marry more than once. Williams grandson, Thomas Johnson Pawson had three wives two of whom came from the influential farming family of Stubbs.



## The Pawsons of North Somercoates



It is with William Pawson and Ann Makey's son William that we are now concerned. Doubtless he learned his trade of blacksmith from his grandfather Pawson. We know from the Freeman's Rolls that he was living in Grimsby in 1824 having married Mary Douglas. There is no trace of the wedding at Louth, Somercoates or Grimsby, the next entry showing the birth of daughter Ann in Grimsby in 1824. These Pawsons lived at 32 Flottergate which was to be William's home for the rest of his life. He could now feel that he was progressing. The salt marshes were behind him, Grimsby was beginning to expand and he now enjoyed the privileges of being a Freeman. William had two votes in parliamentary elections, the first Pawson to achieve this. The poll books show that he was a Whig, a supporter of Yarborough.

In later life was described as a whitesmith, showing the great demand for sophisticated metalwork needed by the more affluent community, and also as a boardinghouse keeper. With the rapid growth of population of the town the demand for accommodation must have been intense, so with this and with the change of direction of his other work William appears to display a keen business acumen we should not expect from country cousin from the marshes. When he was born Grimsby was a large village of 1500 souls; when he died the borough had expanded to 50,000. He was truly a son of the railway age. He died at 1862 of inflammation of the bowels and was buried in the old cemetery in Ainslie Street as was his wife, Mary, who succumbed to bronchitis some six years later.

If William had stepped up socially, either he or his wife kept the movement on course by marrying their eldest daughter Ann, a dressmaker, to Anthony the son of a local farmer Thomas Curley. This was in 1843.

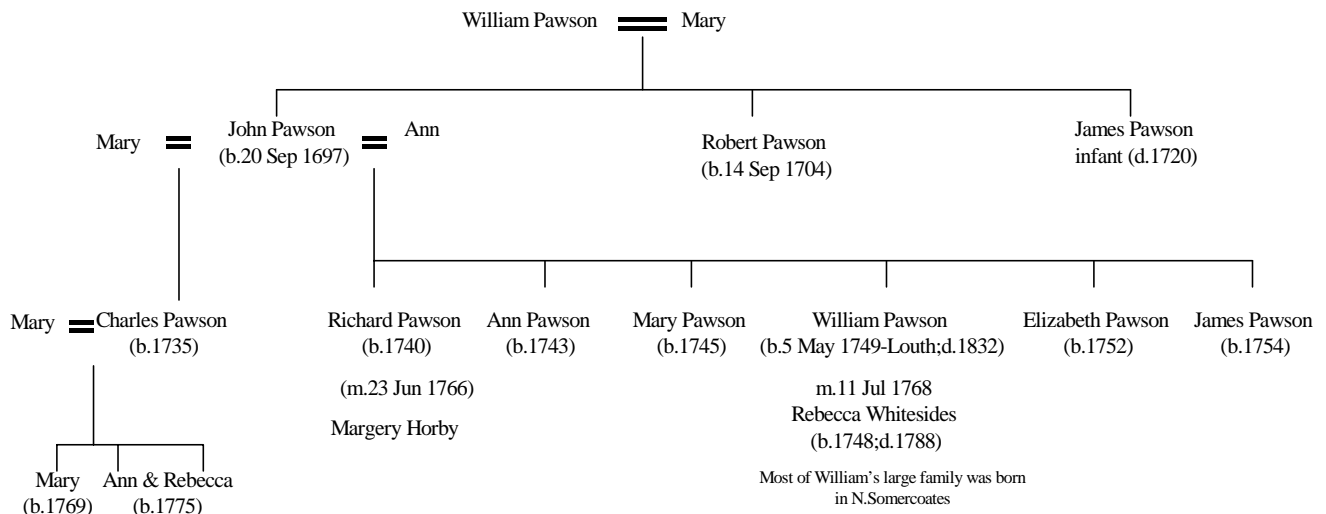
Anthony was described as a traveller but alas his matrimonial sojourn was brief for within two years of the wedding he was dead. It is likely that Anthony had a daughter posthumously for the child registered as Mary McCann was born to Ann Pawson in 1845 long before her second marriage.

We were initially misled here because the daughter and daughter in law of Hannah both married men named Curley.

So far we have been based on that small triangle in North East Lincolnshire, but with this second marriage of Ann Pawson in 1847 the story extends far beyond Louth - North Somercoates - Grimsby. Thus we leave the Pawsons at the point of the strange wedding mentioned at the beginning of our introduction.

As a postscript to the Pawsons two final points were noticed. In 1851 the Sabina Egar who married Thomas Johnson Pawson at Somercoates in 1867 was known to be living with her first husband Daniel Egar at 119 Pasture Street, Grimsby and Thomas Johnson Pawson's eldest son, Richard, died in Grimsby, at 11 Garibaldi Street in 1872. So the Pawsons gradually drifted away from the marshes; today their name is unknown in North Somercoates.

## The Pawsons of Louth



### The Pawsons – Census details

						Notes
Grimsby 1841 32 Flottergate	William Pawson Mary “ Ann “ Joseph “ Mary	Head Wife Daughter Son Daughter	Blacksmith  Dressmaker	40yrs 37 17 10 4	b.N.Somercotes b. Grimsby “ “ “	act. Louth nee Douglas
1851 32 Flottergate	William Pawson Mary “ Josua “ Mary	Head Wife Son Wife	Blacksmith  Blacksmith	50 50 20 28	b.N.Somercotes b. Grimsby “ “	(Louth) Ann had left and married Matt McCann
1861 32 Flottergate	William Pawson Mary “	Head Wife	Blacksmith and lodging house keeper	62 60	b.N.Somercotes b. Grimsby	(Louth)
North Somercotes 1851	Frances Pawson Fanny “ Henry “	Head Daughter Son	Pauper	55 10 8	b.N.Somercotes “ “	nee Cottingham widow of Henry Johnson
	George Baker Eliza “ Susan Pawson	Head Wife Step daughter	Agr labourer	29 35 9	“ “ b. Louth	* **
	Thomas Pawson Mary “ Elias Stubbs Richard Pawson Joseph Stubbs Charles Pawson Therza Stubbs George Pawson	Head Wife Son in law Son Son in law Son Daughter in law Son	Agr labourer  Shoemaker Agr labourer “ “ “ Scholar “	44 50 22 15 13 13 10 8	b.N.Somercotes “ “ “ “ “ “ “ “	2 <sup>nd</sup> wife Mary nee Stubbs stepson  stepson  step daughter
1851 Grimsby 119 Pasture St	Daniel Egar Sabina Egar	Head wife	Miller	27 26	“ “	m. Thom Pawson 1867

\* daughter of Chas Pawson & Mary Whatlow

\*\* illegitimate daughter of Eliza Pawson

### References

St James' Church Registers (Louth)	Lincoln Archives
North Somercoates Church Registers	Lincoln Archives
St James' Registers (Grimsby)	Lincoln Archives
St James' Registers (Grimsby)	Church Vestry
Rating demands – Louth	Louth Library
Census Returns Louth N Somercoates and Grimsby	Grimsby Library
Ainslie Street Cemetery Records	Grimsby Library

## **The Irish Branch**

The McCanns were a Catholic family hailing from Sligo. Simon was born there in 1796 and his wife Hannah two years earlier. We know nothing of their early life except that their eldest child, Hannah was born in Ireland in 1816. The next of the family, Edward, was born in Boston in 1823 so clearly the McCanns came to England between those dates. Indeed it is possible to make a more exact guess.

An Act of Parliament of 1818 had set in motion further extensive drainage work of the Boston area and to that end the labour required was recruited from the west coast of Ireland. When the task was completed these same workers became the backbone of the potato and cereal harvest labour force so it is no surprise to find Simon described in the 1841 census as an agricultural labourer.

The McCanns lived at 64 North Street, Boston. Today the street is marked by a narrow lane off the Horncastle Road to the rear of the Roman Catholic church but early in the last century there were several rows of small cottages and it was here that the Irish settled, well outside the main town area. The direct result of this settlement was the building of the Catholic church nearby in 1827, one of the first in Lincolnshire.

Two further children were born to the McCanns in Boston, Matthew and Mary. The 1841 census also records another child, an infant, Hannah, who was the daughter of the elder McCann girl and William Curley.

From the church history we learn that the Irishmen of North Street were a wild lot, residing much too close to the Kings Arms which still stands on Horncastle Road. the police were often called in, to little avail, and chaos frequently reigned until the Father was called from his Presbytery.

It is said that the McCanns were known as the feather pluckers this is explained in the sheets overleaf.

The year 1847 saw the marriage of Matthew McCann as we have seen and later than year Simon died. Not only does Simon fade from the scene, it looks as if no one wanted to remember him for neither his sons, their sons, or the later family ever used the name Simon.

In the 1851 census Hannah was head of the household with eight of her family around her. She is described as a pauper, because she was a widow without means, and a lodging housekeeper which presumably gave her means.

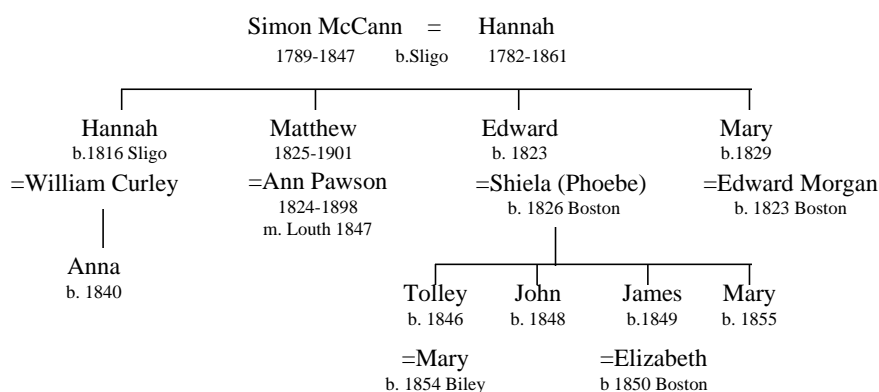
So we come back to Matthews marriage. What was he doing in Louth where he lived in James Street. The marriage certificate may give the answer for though it seems that none of the Pawsons or the McCanns attended the ceremony, of which they would mutually disapprove, the witness was one Michael Morgan. This Irishman at one time lived near the McCanns in North Street, his son, Edward marrying Mary McCann. The Morgans worked on the construction of the Boston Grimsby railway line, so it is probable that Matthew was similarly employed and actually came to Grimsby much earlier than his first known residence in 1851. There seems no other way he could have met Ann.

The venue of the wedding is another puzzle, but we know that there was no Catholic church in Grimsby or Louth at that time, so the Register Office was probably a fair compromise. The differing religious backgrounds of Matthew and Ann were quickly resolved. Ann became a Catholic to the end of her days. In addition to the addresses on the marriage certificate we saw an entry on the Louth Rating list for 1850 which read Mrs McCann, The Yard, James, Street.

Where the first children of the marriage were born is also difficult to decide, for they are not registered at either Louth or Grimsby. However the less literate of the community and of such was Matthew, often failed to register children as required by the 1837 Act. Then there was the enormous prejudice against the Catholic Irish in England, which the Emancipation Act of 1829 had done little to alleviate, so Paddy tended to steer well clear of anything smacking of the establishment, basing himself firmly on his community and church. It happened universally and just as the North Street settlement was known as Irishtown, Grimsby had its immigrant area, Irish Green, and in a delightful area on the outskirts of Louth we find today Irish Hill.

So much conjecture, but the railing must have been completed by 1851 when we find Matthew and Ann McCann living in King Edward Street, Grimsby. In the same year, belatedly, he became a Freeman.

## The McCanns of Boston



As we know Simon McCann came to Boston from Sligo with his wife Hannah shortly after 1818. Their eldest child, Hannah, married William Curley in Boston. The only child of this marriage, Anna, was brought up by her grandmother, Hannah. Matthew, the second son married Ann Pawson at Louth in 1847 and founded the Grimsby branch of the McCanns. The youngest child of Simon and Hannah, Mary, married Edward Morgan, son of an Irish family living nearby in North Street.

Edward, Simons elder son, born in 1823, worked with his father as an agricultural labourer when the Boston drainage was completed. He married Sheila, sometimes known as Phoebe, their family being Tolley, John, James and Mary.

Edward, like his brother Matthew died young, for in 1881 we find Sheila, then a widow living at Maud Foster Drainside, following her old work of dressmaker. Daughter Mary was then working and living at the Roper Arms 34 Horncastle Road, which was very close to North Street and probably a regular haunt of the local Irish.

### Boston Census 1841

64, North Street	Simon Mican	Head	Agr.Labourer	45 yrs	b. Ireland	
	Hannah “	wife		50	“	
	Hannah “*	daughter		25	“	m Wm Curley of Boston
	Matthew “	son		15	b. Boston	
	Mary “	daughter		12	“	
	Anna “	“		1	“	Probably the daughter of the younger Hannah
	Edward “	son		15	“	

NB The 1841 Census required ages to be given to the nearest 5 years

### Boston Census 1851

64, North Street	Hannah McCann	Head	Widow, Pauper lodging house keeper	57	b. Sligo Boston	
	Edward “	son	Agr Labourer	28	“	
	Shelia “ [sic]	d.in law	dressmaker	25	“	Note 1
	Hulley (Tolley)	grandchild		5	“	
	John “	“		3	“	
	James “	“		2	“	Note 2
	Ann Curley	relative	daughter of Hannah*	11	Grimsby	
	Edward Morgan	son in law	Rly labourer	26	Boston	
	Mary “	daughter		22	“	

Note 1 Founder of the Billingham bedding factory

Note 2 Partner of Tolley

### References

Superintendent Registrar, Boston

Superintendent Registrar, Louth

Census Returns Boston 1841, Public Library Grimsby

Census Returns Boston 1851, Public Library Grimsby

Census Returns Grimsby 1851, Public Library Grimsby

Freemans Roll Grimsby Public Library Grimsby

Electoral Rolls Grimsby Public Library Grimsby

Louth Rating List Public Library Louth

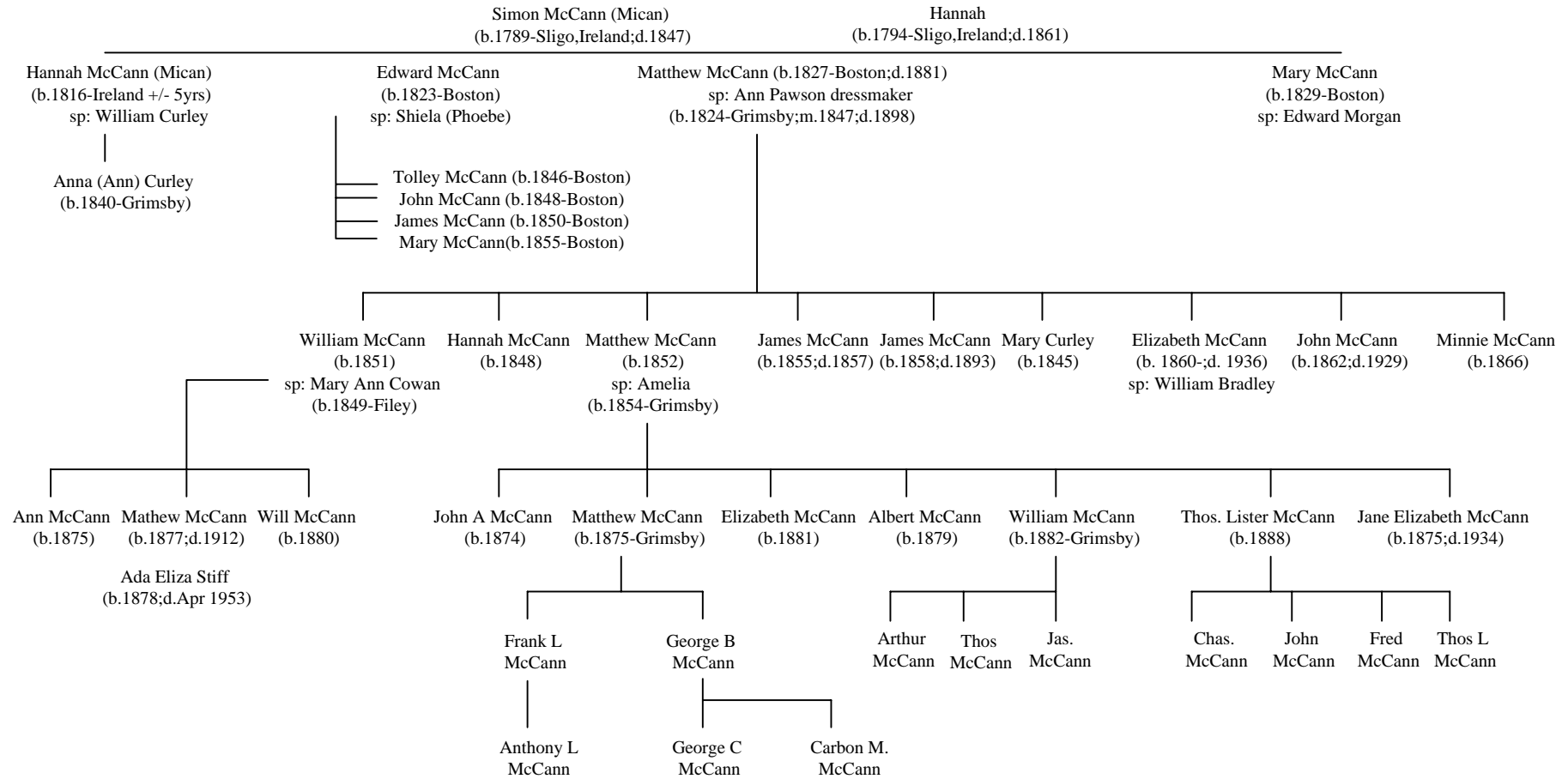
The Catholic Church in Boston by Martin Middlebrook

Census Returns Boston 1881, Public Library Lincoln

Census Returns Billingham, Sleaford 1881, Public Library Lincoln

In various documents the family name was Mican, Macan, McCan and McCann

## The McCanns 1794 - 1940 (Freemans Roles)





## **The Yorkshire Connection**

The family association with Yorkshire stems from the Bradleys, who lived on the marshland of the north bank of the Humber in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the Beans who lived in the York area about the same time. The families were united in the marriage of Robert Bradley and Elizabeth Bean in 1844.

Today the motorway stretches from the beautiful village of South Cave to the equally attractive Howden, the extremities of the Bradley scene in those days, and a matter of a few minutes car drive today. If you take the low road along the riverside you have a half hours run through rich farmland and treelined villages whose names were established in the Danish invasions. But today's view is illusory.

The high dyke, the afforestation and the mechanised farming are all relatively recent innovations for the area was once an unhealthy fen. A glance at the map shows that Blacktoft Grange was some miles inland from the riverside village of that name. Yokefleet Grange was also built on drier land and sited a similar distance from its village.

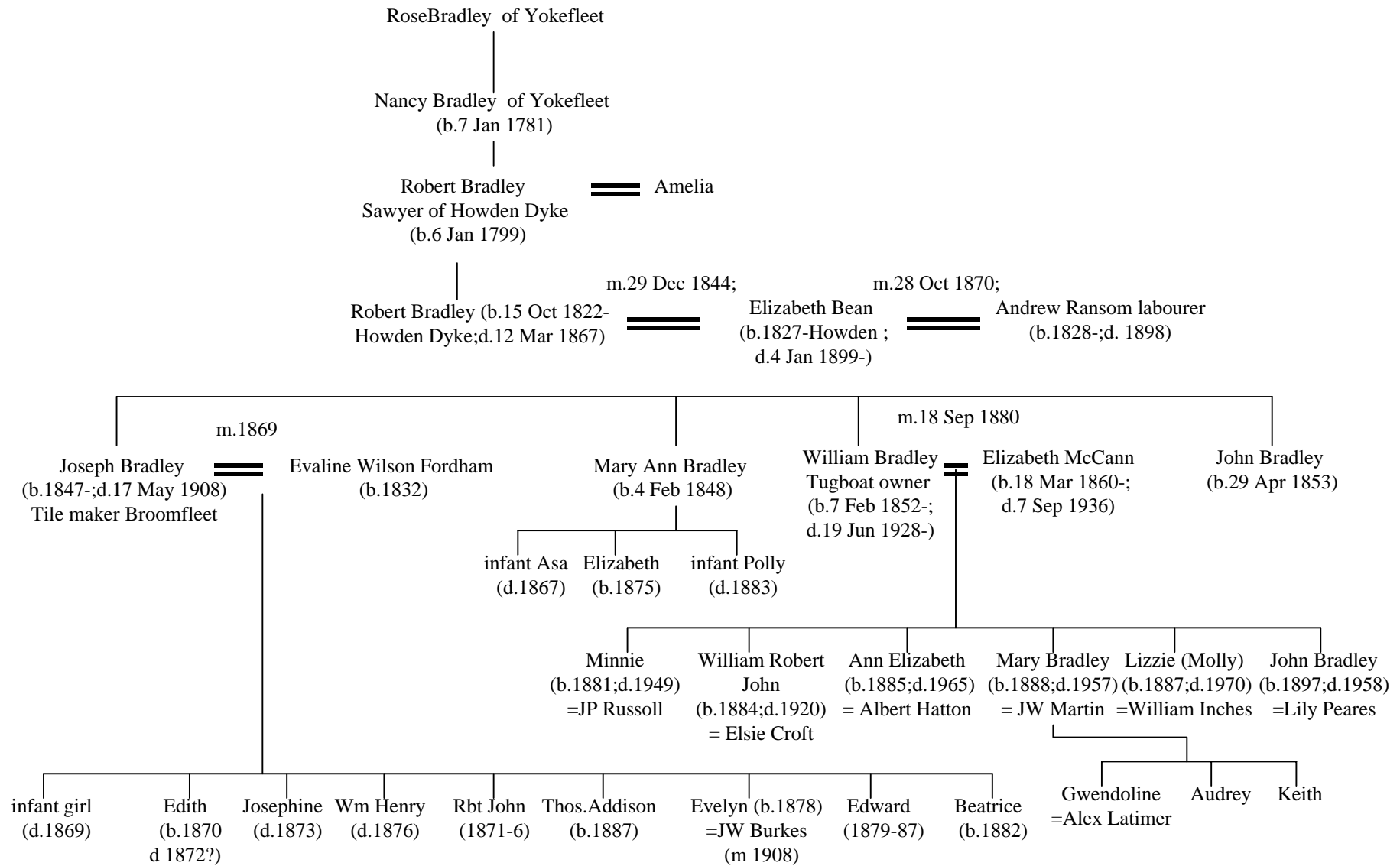
It is the Yokefleet that we go to find our first Bradley. Nothing is known of Rose apart from her residence in the village and her illegitimate daughter Nancy whom she took for baptism to the tiny chapel at nearby Laxton in 1781. She may well have been the daughter of Nicholas Bradley who married Dorothy Gillison in 1741 and who lived with his large family in Yokefleet. That is conjecture, the next fact being that Nancy also had an illegitimate child, Robert, who was born in 1799 and christened at the Minster of Howden. As neither Rose nor Nancy gave any indication of paternity we have no idea of the true male line.

The final Bradley entry in the Laxton Registers was of Anne who also produced an illegitimate Robert Bradley in 1805. Without doubt all these Bradleys were related, but the records they left were few. Robert the son of Nancy is typical in that we only learn that he was a sawyer at Howden and his wife, Amelia, produced the only child we know of in 1822. There is a row of old cottages standing in Howden Dyke, which may have been the family home, behind which is a derelict brickworks which may have been where Robert junior learned his trade.

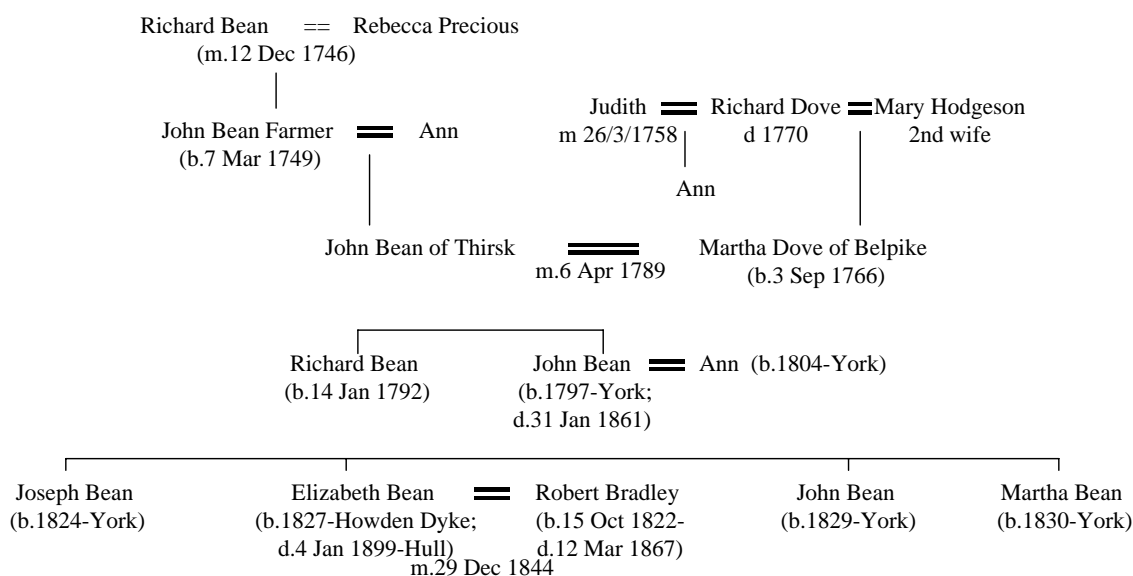
We wonder which of the two Roberts brought the family to Broomfleet where they were firmly established by the middle of the century. From the 1841 census we find no Bradley family in Broomfleet, but there were two girls of that name, Jane and Elizabeth, in the domestic service of local farmers. Could it be that these girls were the children of Robert and Amelia. If so Elizabeth must have inherited some of the liveliness of her grandmother by giving birth to a son William, in 1841. Notification was made by William Emmanuels, but as there were two villagers of that name we can choose between a youth of fourteen or a tiler of fifty - or neither!

Returning to the registers we then know that Robert junior, brickmaker of Broomfleet, married Elizabeth Bean of Faxfleet at South Cave on 29 December 1844.

## The Bradleys of East Yorkshire and Grimsby



Elizabeth Bean, like her family before her, was born in York. Of Richard Bean who married Rebecca Precious at St Marys Church, Castlegate, York in 1746 we know that his son, John, was the first of three so named in direct line. John born at Farwater Lane in 1749, became a farmer at Thirsk. His wives name was Ann, their son being a wheelwright, Son John married the twin daughter of Richard Dove a York butcher. Undoubtedly the Beans, at this time, were much more a middle class family than the Bradleys struggling for existence on the Humber bank.



Here Robert and Elizabeth raised their family, Joseph, mentioned above, who seemingly always lived at Faxfleet, Mary Ann born in 1848, William in 1852 and John a year later. Robert died in 1867 at the age of forty four. His was the first of many premature deaths in the family on that dreary marsh. Of the nine children of his son, Joseph and Evelina Wilson Forham only three survived infancy. The picture was so similar to the experiences of the Pawsons of Somercoates a century earlier.

In the year of Robert's death Elizabeth had baptised an infant which she claimed to be hers and she repeated the exercise in 1875 and 1882, by which time she was fifty eight, so we must look further for the real mother who was most probably daughter Mary Ann, who never married. Two of these children died in infancy, the younger Elizabeth later moving with May Ann to Hull, where they attended Elizabeth senior in her last year 1898.

Three years after Robert's death Elizabeth remarried. Her second husband Andrew Ransom, a labourer, was a widower. The couple lived in Broomfleet until Andrew's death in 1898. Less than a year later Elizabeth died in Hull and was brought back to Broomfleet for burial.

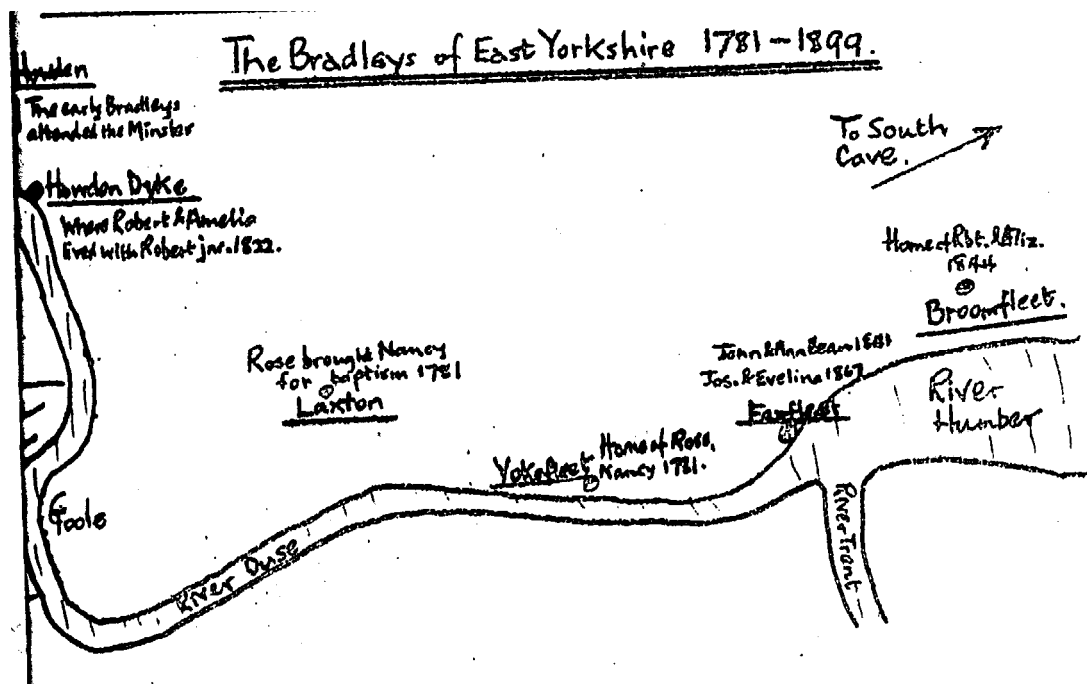
Her eldest son, Joseph, died in 1908 and the Bradleys drifted away from Broomfleet. There are none of that name in the area today, nor is the name remembered. No gravestone stands to their memory, the only visible reminder being the memorial of the 1914-1918 war on which are two Bradleys.

All the Bradleys lived out their days in East Yorkshire except for William. It appears that he moved away about the time of his mother's second marriage. He said in later years that he came from Brough, but whether he specifically meant Brough or the general area, which would include Broomfleet, is not known. He is next found to be in Grimsby, living at 132 Kent Street at the time of his marriage to Elizabeth McCann in 1880.

#### East Yorkshire Census Returns 1841 and 1851

<b>1851</b>				
Broomfleet Landing	Rbt. Bradley Eliz. " Mary Ann " John Watson	Head married 29 Wife " 24 daughter 3 lodger " 23	brickmaker  tile maker	b.Howden " (York) Broomfleet Howden
<b>1841</b>				
Faxfleet	John Bean Ann " Joseph " Eliz. " Martha " John "	Head married, 46 wife " 37 son 17 daughter 14 " 12 son 11	Ships Carpenter	b. York " " " "
<b>1851</b>				
Faxfleet	John Bean Ann " Joseph " Joseph Bradley	Head married, 56 wife " 47 son 27 grandson 5	Ships Carpenter	b. York " " Faxfleet (Broomfleet)

a)



The brickworks cottage at Broomfleet Landing where the Bradleys lived from 1844

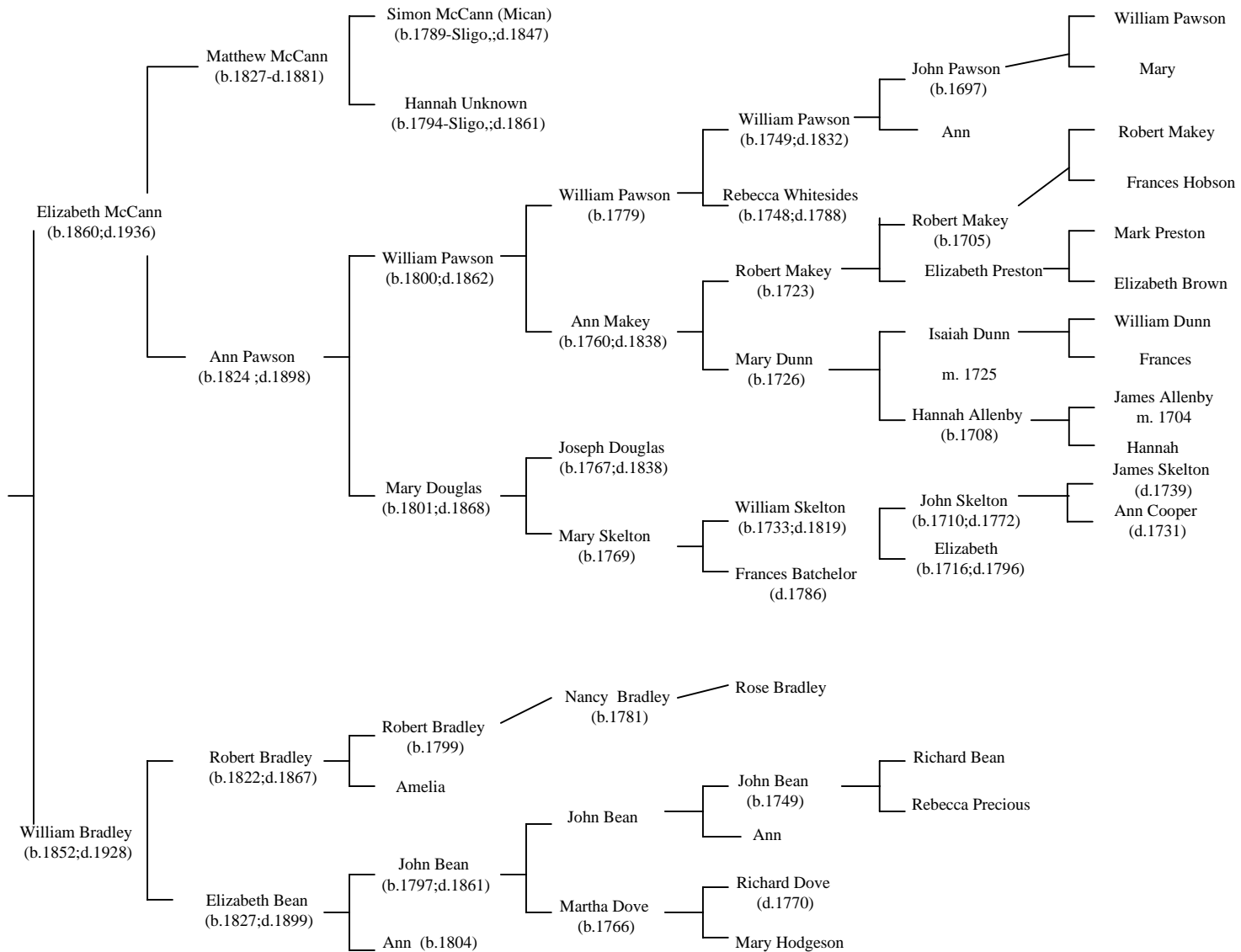
#### References

Parish Registers	Howden Minster	Census returns 1841, 1851 Howden (Bev. Lib.)
	Laxton Chapel	County Record Office Beverley
	St Marys York	St Andrews Church
	South Cave	Freemans Rolls Grimsby Library
	Broomfleet	Electoral Rolls Grimsby Library

Edited version of Howden Minster - Public Library Beverley



## The Bradleys-McCanns 1675-1936



## **Grimsby, the gathering point.**

Early in the nineteenth century the rapid expansion of Grimsby began, raising the population from that of a large village to a sizeable borough in a few decades. The people required to effect this level of growth would be invited by advertisements sent far and wide. Several of the various strands of our ancestry answered the call. An interesting point of this influx is that no branch came as a family unit. It was invariably a young man leaving the family fold to seek his fortune in Grimsby.

An early immigrant was Joseph Douglas, believed to have been a Scot. then followed successively William Pawson from North Somercoates in 1820, Matthew McCann from Boston in 1850 and William Bradley from Yorkshire in 1880 and there were others who appear later in our narrative.

Of Matthew McCann's stay in Louth we know nothing and it could well be that he moved directly from Boston to Grimsby though we then have to find a reason for his not becoming a Freeman until 1851, four years after his marriage to Ann Curley. Matthew worked at the new dock as a coal porter and was living in King Edward Street in 1851, 1856, by which time they had four children, finds the McCanns in Eastgate which marked the eastern boundary of the town. The eldest of the four children was Mary who was born in 1845. Though she was given the McCann name she could not be the daughter of Matthew and was probably the child of Ann's marriage to Anthony Curley as we have already noted.

Elizabeth was born in Haveloc Street in 1860, two years before the family moved again to the newly built property at 19 Church Street where John was born. This house was later to be the first home of Elizabeth McCann and William Bradley.

Ann McCann was a dressmaker by training but was now to find a new occupation, for she and Matthew moved into 10 New Dock Street at Lock Hill to take over the Packet Inn. (In one directory of Grimsby the inn is called the Fisherman's Arms and later still the Forrester's Arms. When the last name appears the Forrester's was owned by Matthew son of Matthew and Ann).

This was in 1873(?). It would appear that Ann ran the pub while Matthew continued his work on the docks. In later life Ann described herself as a coalporter's widow, though in the Cleethorpes Cemetery records Matthew is shown as an ale house keeper.

Being close to the dockside the Packet was more than a pub; it was a business centre. Settlement for all types of dock work and dues would be made at the bar and it was more than likely that here young William Bradley met Elizabeth M<sup>c</sup>Cann, the publicans daughter, when he was being paid for the work of his tug boat, Speedwell.

The M<sup>c</sup>Cann women used to say that none of their menfolk lived long, all being deficient of some vital part. It was true of Matthew who, like his father and his brother Edward in Boston, died in his fifties in 1881. His is one of the first graves in Cleethorpes Cemetery where local Catholics were then buried. It is also the resting place of his wife and son James.



At the time of his death Matthew was one of four M<sup>c</sup>Cann Freeman and many more were to follow, though the list is small today. A few months after his death was born his grandson William who was to become the leader of the Freeman as Chairman of the Pastures Committee. The M<sup>c</sup>Canns had advanced steadily since the arrival of Simon from Ireland.

After Mathew's passing Ann ran the Packet Inn herself for some years. She would be assisted by her sons James and John, who never married. James died in 1893 and John lived with his mother until her death and then with his sister Elizabeth. Towards the end of her life Ann moved closer to her family most of whom were living in the new West Marsh development of Ayscough, Ravenspurn and Charlton Streets. The M<sup>c</sup>Canns were mainly employed in the timberyards around the Alexandra Dock and it is believed that they bought their new houses, quite an innovation in 1890. In 1902 we find Matthew's son Matthew, installed in his father's old pub, then called the Forrester's Arms.

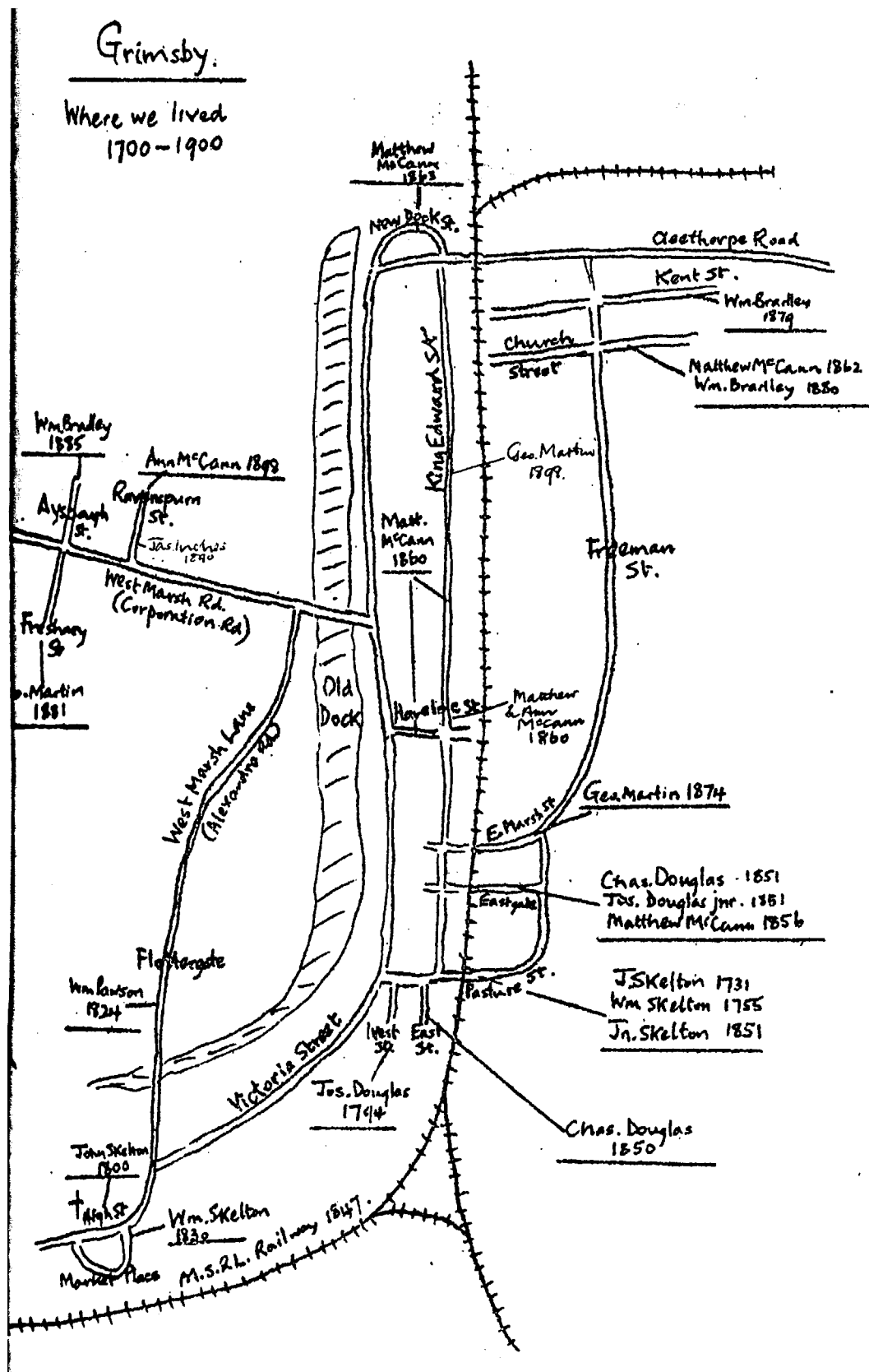
It was at 76 Ravenspurn Street that Ann died in 1898 in the presence of her daughter, Elizabeth Bradley. Hers had been an eventful life spanning the complete growth of the town. She had many grandchildren and saw the establishment of a large family. As mentioned above, Ann's gravestone can be seen in Cleethorpes Cemetery. She was the last of the family to have been baptised and married (to Anthony Curley), in St James Church. From 1847 till her death she was a Roman Catholic. The development of the town seeing the rise of churches of varied denomination, the Anglicans, Catholics, Presbyterians and Methodists all playing their part.

When Elizabeth McCann married she was living at the Packet Inn, her husband at 132 Kent Street, now part of a car park. They were married at St Andrews Church standing at the corner of Church and Freeman Streets. The church, the shops, the houses and the bridal pair all new and full of hope for a bright future. How different from the scene of desolation on the spot today. The venue of an Anglican church fitted into William's upbringing, having been baptised at the parish church of South Cave and later taken to Broomfleet church. To Elizabeth the wedding signalled her breakaway from the Catholic church. She patently had spirit for at the time she was nineteen (though on her wedding certificate she says for obvious reasons, 21). Whether or not this caused friction in her family is not known, but she never wavered and in time she and William became Methodists in which faith they raised their family, who were almost all strongly anti-Catholic.

For the first five years of their marriage the couple lived at Matthew McCann's old home, 19 Church Street where Minnie was born in 1881 and William Robert John in 1884 and the following year they moved to 81 then 114 Ayscough Street which had previously been the house of Elizabeth's brother, William. Further down the street at No 45 and then No 71 lived her other brother Matthew. For the next twenty years the Bradleys living in Ayscough Street were surrounded by many of their McCann and Hawley relatives, James Hawley having married into the McCann family. The clan stuck close together just as they had done in Boston.

The rest of Elizabeth and William's family were born on the West Marsh, Ann Elizabeth in 1885, Mary 1887, Lizzie (Molly) 1889 and lastly John in 1897. During this time Elizabeth had a shop, selling confectionery and groceries, in Ayscough Street. William remained self-employed, but some time after 1900 the Railway Company which controlled all dock

services decided to close down on all private operators and bought out William and his tug boat. So he became an early victim of nationalisation or the take-over bid. Thereafter William worked in the employ of the Railway Company.



On the death of Ann McCann her son John went to live with the Bradleys. This John, a coal porter like his father, was known to younger members of the family as big Uncle Jack to differentiate between the Bradleys younger son, little Uncle Jack. In 1906 we find the entire Bradley family, plus big Uncle Jack McCann, nine souls in all, looking for larger accommodation. This they found at 460 Cleethorpe Road which stood on the site now occupied by Ramsden's Supermarket. The bigger house was necessary as at the time none of the family had left home. It is clear that the Bradleys were financially stable for they bought their various properties. As with the Skeltons and to a degree with Matthew McCann this stability may well have been based on self-employment.

Though there were few opportunities educationally the Bradleys were far seeing. Molly having a musical training and Minnie taking a cordon bleu course at Leeds School of Cookery. Molly was a pianoforte teacher when living at the next house, 32 Park Street, Minnie using her culinary skill as a cookery adviser in a stately house near Otley, whilst Mary worked as a tailoress and dressmaker.

When Minnie returned home her father bought her a jewellery business in Alexandra Road, Cleethorpes, facing the entry road to the pier, where she was helped by her younger bother, John. John carried on alone on Minnie's marriage to Perce Russell. The sales shop of Perce's hairdressing saloon at 59 Grimsby Road, Cleethorpes, now a cafe, was managed by Minnie.

One of the Bradley children, the twin brother of Mary died in infancy, so not only was there a preponderance of girls in the family, but almost all married later than was usual. Marry they all did, though Minnie was then forty, Ann Elizabeth and Mary both being twenty seven. The remarkable feature of the crowded household is that the parents not only maintained control and poise but were held in such high esteem by their family.

From Cleethorpe Road the Bradleys moved first to 32 and then 52 Park Street where they lived until 1918 when their house was taken over by their daughter Ann Elizabeth and her husband Albert Hatton, just as the Church Street house had changed ownership in the last century. William and Elizabeth went next to Spring House, Laceby, where William worked his large garden, almost a small holding. The house stands at the southern edge of the village just on the village side of the stream and to the right. The garden has been reduced in size and the house renamed. Big Uncle Jack McCann spent most of his weekends at Spring House. He was then living with his niece Mary Martin.

In 1928 William Bradley died. Later that year his son in law John Wight Martin passed away, whereupon Elizabeth left Laceby to spend her remaining years with her daughter Mary Martin at 12 Humberstone Road. Jack McCann died there the following year.

In the company of her daughter and grandchildren Elizabeth Bradley lived until 1936. She enjoyed the visits of her children and grandchildren and one of her particular pleasures was to be taken to the nearby Rialto Cinema to see Western films. On 7 September 1936 she died. The grave of Elizabeth and William Bradley at Scarthoe Cemetery is marked by a stone; only Elizabeth's parents are similarly remembered.

## References

Superintendent Registrar,  
St James Church Registers  
Freemans Rolls  
Victorian Poll Books  
Electoral Registers  
Scarthoe Road Cemetery  
Cleethorpes Cemetery  
Grimsby Census 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881

Grimsby  
Grimsby  
Public Library Grimsby  
Public Library Grimsby  
Public Library Grimsby



The graves of Ann McCann (Pawson) and Matthew McCann with Claire Smith a great,great,great,grandchild at Cleethorpes Cemetery

## The Marshites

As the West Marsh development was the last of the enormous building boom by the Victorians the people of the area were regarded as newcomers, as many of them were, and semi derisively known as Marshites. It is interesting that so many branches of the family fell into this category in the 1890s.

George Martin, police sergeant, and future father in law of Mary Bradley, lived at 46 and later 58 Freshney Street.

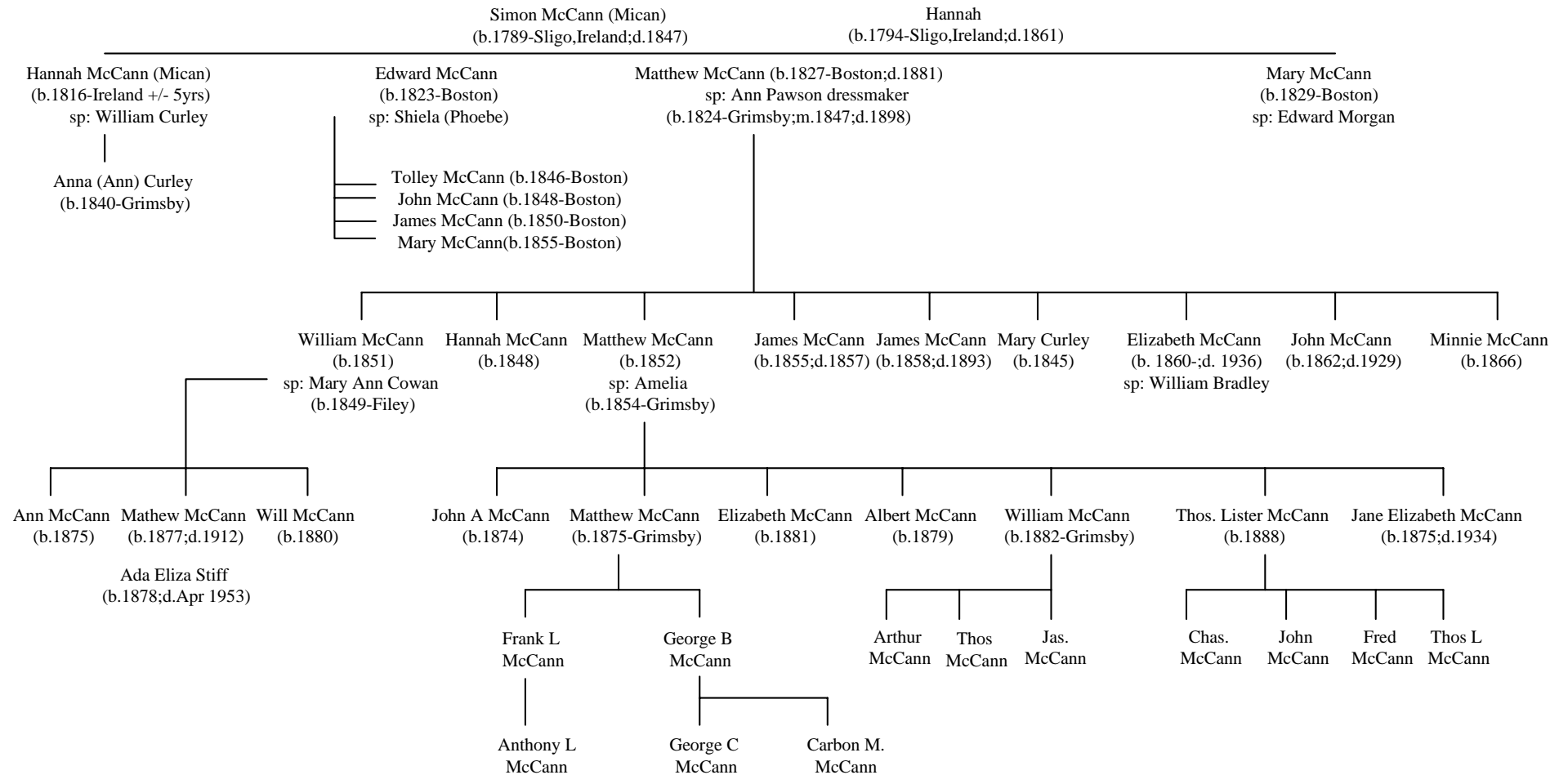
William McCann, coal merchant, and son of Matthew lived at 37 Charlton Street.

William Bradley, Captain, was at 114 Ayscough Street.

Ann McCann (Pawson) died at 76 Ravenspurn Street.

James Inches, Marine Engineer, and future father in law of Molly Bradley, lived at 37 Ravenspurn Street.

## The McCanns 1794 - 1940 (Freemans Roles)



## Grimsby Census Returns 1881

						Notes
10 New Dock. St (The Packet)	Matthew McCann Ann James John Minnie Robert Antcliffe Edward Tierney Jane Harrison	Head wife son  dau lodger niece	55yrs 57 23 19 15 63 30 7	BeerHouse keeper  Tailor Shipwright  fisherman	b. Boston Grimsby    Newark Burgh Broomfleet	a)      b)
13 (19) Church Street	William Bradley Lizzie	Head wife	28 21	Sailor	Broomfleet Grimsby	b) i)
63 Freshney Street	George Martin Alison Helen Janet Henry John	Head wife dau  son brother	34 29 5 3 1 24	Sgt of police    Labourer	Scotland  Grimsby  Scotland	
45 Ayscough Street	MatthewMcCann Amelia John Albert Jane Elizabeth Albert Elizabeth	Head wife son dau son dau	27 27 7 6 2 8mon	Labourer	Grimsby	h) k)
125 Ayscough Street	William McCann Mary Ann Ann Matthew Edward Curley* William	Head wife dau son	30 28 6 4 2 1	Coal merchant	Grimsby Filey Grimsby	g)  l)
75 Annesley Street	William Douglas Dinah	Head wife	30 29	Labourer	Grimsby Waltham	c)
78 Ayscough Street	James Inches Agnes	Head wife	29 28	Marine engineer	Scotland	d)
1 Douglas Blgs Eastgate	Maria Douglas	Widow	70	Laundress	Louth	e)
39 Browns Buildings Bath St	Charles Pawson Jane John Thomas Lucy H Richard Matthew Mark	Head wife son  dau son	41 39 17 15 12 9 6 2	Labourer	N.Somercotes Saltfleetby Grimsby	j)
43 Pasture Street	John Skelton William George	u/m	34 29 28	Schoolmaster unemployed clerk banker clerk		f)
Manor House Brighowgate	George Skelton Charles	u/m	76 72	retired druggist JP retired printer		

### Notes

- a) nee Pawson
- b) Same place link?
- c) G/son of Jos Douglas & Mary Skelton
- d) Future father in law of Lizzie Bradley (above)
- e) Widow of Jos. Douglas.
- f) Son of John Skelton, Danish V.Consul
- g) Son of Matthew above.
- h) Married James Hawley 1872-1914
- i) Daughter of Matt McCann above.
- j) Chas was cousin of Ann McCann above.
- k) 2 or 8 months old -
- l) Curley or Casey middle name

## Grimsby Census Returns 1841 – 1851

1841					Notes
32 Flottergate	Mary Douglas William Joseph Betsey Pawson	70yrs 40 30 15	Head Son “ g/child	Widow Labourer	b. Grimsby “ “ “ 1

1851						Notes
Flottergate	William Douglas Mary “	59 82	Lodger Mother	Porter Widow	b. Grimsby “	2
95 Eastgate	Joseph Douglas (Jnr) Maria	44 39	Head wife	Tailor	b. Grimsby b. Louth	3
97 Eastgate	Charles Douglas Mary Charles William	39 38 2 1	Head wife son son	Labourer	b. Grimsby b. Wintringham b. Grimsby “	3
High Street (Market Place)	John Skelton Ann (Meeres) George “ Charles “	77 70 46 42	Head wife son son	Retired customs officer  Druggist Painter	b. Grimsby Stallingborough b. Grimsby b. Grimsby	4
124 Pasture St.	John Skelton Harriet “ John “	50 30 4	Head wife son	Retired bond merchant	b. Grimsby b. Grimsby b. Grimsby	5
12 Market Place	William Skelton Mary “ Mary Ann “	48 46 24	Head wife daught.	Postmaster and Printer	b. Grimsby b. Grimsby b. Grimsby	5
32 Flottergate	William Pawson Mary “ Josua * “ Mary “	50 50 20 28	Head wife son wife	Blacksmith  Blacksmith	N. Somercoates b. Grimsby b. Grimsby b. Grimsby	6 7 8
95 King Edward St	Matthew McCann Ann “ Mary A “ Hannah “ William “	25 26 6 3 <1	Head Wife daughter “ son	Dock Labourer	Boston Grimsby “ “ “	9)

1. Daughter of Wm Skelton 1733-1819
2. These were lodgers in the house of ?Dan Rembelay?
3. Son of Mary (above)
4. Brother of Mary Douglas (above)
5. Son of John (above)
6. Actually born in Louth
7. Daughter of Mary Douglas (above)
8. sic\* Joseph Douglas
- 9) Probably the daughter of Anthony Curley

## Grimsby Census Returns 1861

1861					
Haveloc St	Matthew McCann	Head	36	Coal Porter	b.Boston
	Ann “	Wife	37		b.Grimsby
	Mary “	daughter	16		“
	Hannah “	“	13		“
	William “	son	9		“
	Matthew “	“	7		“
	James “	“	3		“
	Elizabeth “	daughter	1		“
32	William Pawson	Head	62	Blacksmith and	Louth (Somercoates)
Flottergate	Mary “	Wife	60	Lodging house keeper	Grimsby a)

a) Parents of Ann McCann above