

## After Almost 60 Years Apart, a Family Finds Each Other In Malcolm Lewendon's Own Words

Email from Malcolm Lewendon to Cara MacDonald, Reference Services Manager:

Hi Cara

*As promised, the story as it unfolded, sorry it's a bit long, but it will give you an insight into what happened.*

*It all began about 2 years ago, when my son Alexander was out walking by the River Thames in Bray, England, when he noticed that one of the names on the War Memorial was 'O.Lewendon' and he phoned me to ask if he was a relation of any kind.*



*The War Memorial is in Holyport where William was born and grew up.*

### **The Answer**

*In the 1890's, there was only 1 Lewendon family living in that area, in a village called Holyport, which was a part of the Parish of Bray, in the Cookham registration district of Berkshire. The 1891 census*

*record (5th April 1891) showed no O.Lewendon in the family, and none of the family can be found together in the 1901 census (31st March 1901).*

*Checking the Cookham birth register showed that William Oliver was born to Job and Louisa Lewendon in the 4th quarter of 1891. Sadly, his mother died very soon after, leaving his father Job (an agricultural labourer, living in a tied cottage) with 7 children under the age of 11 to care for. My grandfather, George Percy, was born in 1875 and was William Oliver's eldest brother.*

*It looks like the family disaster and poverty of the early 1890's caused the break-up of the family. By 1901, the elder children have either joined the Army, entered service as domestics or put in pauper's schools. Some, I can't find. Of Job, the father, nothing is known after 1891, except that he is deceased by 1915. We have now been able to establish that William Oliver was 'fostered' by a Harriet Carew in Holyport (1901 & 1911 census records).*

### **The Links**

*It is thought that sometime after 1911, William moved to live with his big brother in Wembley, became a milkman and met Emily Edith Berry, whom he married on 15 June 1915. The marriage certificate bears my grandfather's signature as a witness. William's service number suggests that he volunteered for Army service in late 1915. He became a driver in the Royal Engineers. Sadly, he died in Salonica, Northern Greece, on 20th October 1918, his 27th birthday.*



*The Wedding, 15 Jun 1915 - No known pictures exist of my grandfather, Maurice Percy, so some of the identifications can only remain probable(\*).*

*Front seated row (left to right) - Lill Berry (sister), William Oliver, Emily Edith, Beatrice Berry (sister)  
 Little girl sitting left - Eileen Lewendon, \* my grandfather's youngest daughter  
 Young man far left in boater - almost certainly my father, Maurice Percy Lewendon  
 Soldier next to him - Henry (Harry) Berry (brother)  
 Soldier middle row on right - my grandfather, George Percy Lewendon\* ( RMP hat badge would be correct)  
 Short lady to left of George - my grandmother Catherine\*  
 Young lady to right of George - My father's elder sister, Kathleen\**

*It would appear that William preferred to be called Oliver. He and Emily had a daughter, Lily Evelyn, born Q3/1917. The young Lily would have been known to the Lewendon family. Her mother re-married William H Leadbeater in 1921. My grandfather, George died in 1926 and at that point, contact would have been lost. Very little, or in most cases, nothing is known of what happened to the other members of Job's family.*

*UK birth, marriage and death records show Lily married Albert E R Richardson Q3/1942 and had two sons, Ian M J and Peter A O, were born in 1948 and 1950 respectively. There the trail went cold for about a year.*

### The Find

*I searched phone books and electoral role entries for possible 'hits', and phoned a few of them without success, until a friend of mine in Australia discovered the passenger manifest of SS Nova Scotia that left Liverpool on 2nd December 1953, bound for St John's and Halifax. I knew about the Immigration Museum, having visited Halifax before. The rest of the story you know—My tentative email enquiry to you [Cara] last May and what you found resulted, without breaking Canada's privacy laws, in our meeting at Pier 21 on Friday 12th October...Thank you.*



*Cousins - from the left, Ian, Anne and Malcolm, October 2012*