

Leicester Goddard Families

Every Picture - A research exercise using the websites

When a framed copy of a lithograph "*The Roman Mile Stone, Belgrave Gate*" arrived as a Christmas present from my sister-in-law I thought for a short while that I had a problem, as it was not my style. But after looking at the picture closely I was almost certain that I had seen the name "GODDARD", above the door of one of the houses depicted, before. Until recently, being one of the Research Co-ordinators for the Goddard Association of Europe, the one name study group for those of the Goddard ilk and of quick wit to boot, I realised that this was why the picture had been sent to me.

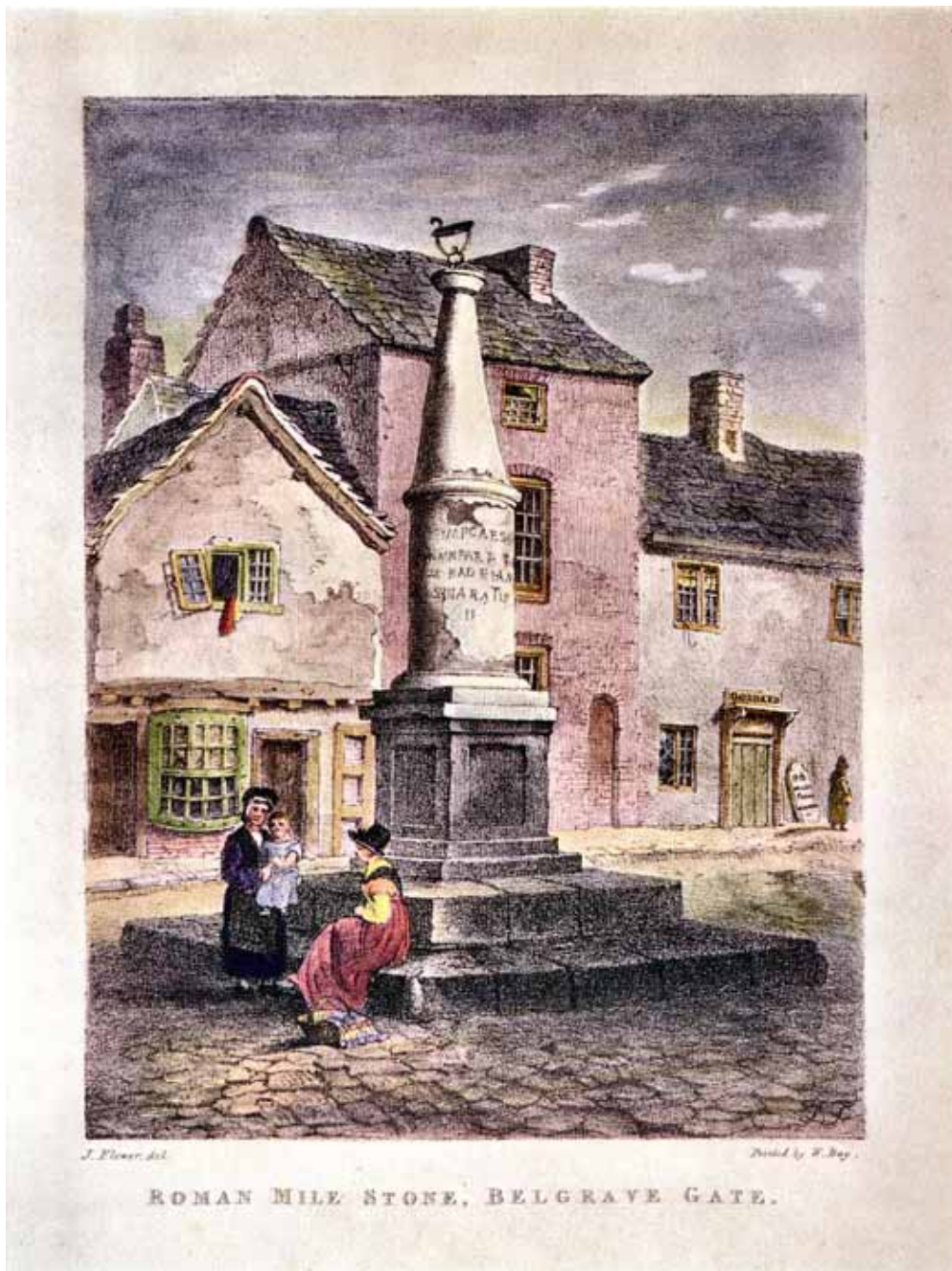
I thought I would spend a few minutes on the web to do some research on the picture, feeling sure that one question into the internet system would produce a full history of the artist and a view of all his pictures. Of course, the identity of the Goddard whose house is in the picture, together with his family tree back to Adam, or at least to a follower of William the Conqueror, would also come tumbling out at the same time.

My first mistake, in this exercise, was to neglect the power of the Google and the Yahoo search engines, mainly because one is usually overwhelmed by just too many irrelevant and improbable answers. Even when using the "advanced search" of these engines one fares little better, as their facilities for discrimination are relatively limited. But on this occasion I was let down initially by my favourite multiple search engines "*Copernic Agent Basic*"¹, and "*All-the-web*"², both are free and the latter has an excellent advanced search facility, but only if you ask the right questions. After a small prompt from said sister-in law, who had been doing her homework at her local library in Loughborough in a more disciplined manner than I, it was established that the "*John Flower del*" printed on the picture and the "*JF*" who had signed it were one and the same, a local artist. and that this lithograph was one of a collection of his work that had originally been published in 1826 a book entitled "*Views of Ancient Buildings in the Town and County of Leicester*".



In
affectionate
remembrance of
John Flower who died November 19 1861 aged
66 years.
*Blessed are they who live
and die like him.
Loved with such love and with such sorrows
mourn'd.*

John Flower³, the son of John Flower and Mary, nee Allsop, was baptised⁴ on the 14th October 1793 at St Mary de Castro in Leicester. At the age of 12, in 1806, he was apprenticed to a framework knitter. He came from a family which for generations had been the proprietors of the Castle Mill in Leicester, however, by this time the family had fallen on hard times and were now reduced to being only woolcombers. John was still young when his father died leaving the family in desperate straits. But fortunately his artistic talent came to the attention of two local worthies, Dr Alexander of Danets Hall, (Danet's Hall used to stand the junction of Fosse Road with King Richard's Road, so named because it had belonged to the Danet family from the 15th to the late 17th centuries), who encouraged the young man, and by the time that he was twenty, was proficient enough to be able to give lessons in drawing to others. His artistry also attracted the attention of Mary Linwood a Leicester musical composer, but who was more famous for her embroidery, both in England, and in Europe. Mary Linwood introduced John Flower to Peter de Wint (1784-1849), a Dutch landscape artist who was working in London. Mary Linwood knew de Wint through his wife, whom she had taught embroidery. Peter de Wint gave John free tuition in London for a year, after which John Flower returned to Leicester where he spent the rest of his life



ROMAN MILE STONE, BELGRAVE GATE.



The lithograph by John Flower circa 1825 and a contemporary map of Leicester with the position of the milestone shown by the arrow, centre-right, at the acutely angled junction of Belgrave Gate and Barkby Lane, (the latter now called Bedford Street). Since the pedestrianisation of Belgrave gate an aerial photograph shows the site of milestone to be covered by a island flowerbed. The Milestone appears to have been removed in the late 19th century according to later maps of the vicinity.

It is reported that, “*although Flower's landscapes are characterised by their fidelity to nature with inimitable foliage, rock scenery and excellent colouring, his main forte was architecture. John Flower's pictures of buildings are without equal. Indeed, were it not for Flower's drawings (published in Views of Ancient Buildings in the Town and County of Leicester in 1826) we would know little about the look of Leicester in the early 19th century.*” A copy of this book “*first edition, ... in good condition*” was advertised for sale on the web at a price of £225 at the time of writing this article.)

John Flower⁵ worked from a studio in Southgate Street. In 1851 he moved into a new house, in Regent Road, which had been designed for him by his friend Henry Goddard and who later also designed John Flower's memorial in Welford Road Cemetery which was carved by John Barratt of Canning Place. John Flower died November 19 1861 aged 66 years

This and much more information is from the Welford Road Cemetery web site⁶ and which in turn is taken from the book “*Grave-Matters: A Walk Through Welford Road Cemetery*” by Max Wade-Matthews (Heart of Albion Press⁷. 1992.) . This web site is dedicated to the cemetery and includes a history, many photos and a list of notable people buried there along with biographical notes or descriptions of their memorials, with some photographs of monuments.

Max Wade-Matthews is a Leicestershire local historian and genealogist who, in spite of being a 'foreigner' (born in Norwich and moved to Leicester in 1982), involved himself in the history of his adopted city. As a prolific and diverse writer who has written many books on the historical aspects of the city of Leicester he is also deeply involved in music and in steam trains In 2004 he moved to Riga in Latvia and is now immersing himself in that city's history. The website information has recently been supplemented by the release of a CD “*A VIRTUAL WALK AROUND LEICESTER*” (ISBN 1 872883 74 5. Published by Heart of Albion Press 2004). This is a huge collection of interesting historical information about the city centre detailing the histories of all city centre streets, and illustrated with over 1,800 images and nearly 800 biographies of notable citizens. Additionally included is the text of “*A Walk Through Leicester*” one of the earliest of all town guides, originally published anonymously in 1804, but attributed, after some 30 years, to the author Susanna Watts (1768 to 1842), Abolitionist and Bluestocking. She describes the scene on Belgrave Gate some 20 years before the picture thus:- “*...Roman mile-stone, forming part of a small obelisk It is about three feet long and between five and six in circumference..... The situation in which this stone is at present placed has often been thought improper; for it is undoubtedly exposed to injuries from the wantonness of play, and it is so little conspicuous from its place in the obelisk that nothing appears necessarily to attract the attention of a stranger.*”

It is obvious from the lithograph that the original intention of the obelisk had been to carry a lantern, but this aspect had obviously been abandoned and made derelict many years before.

Having found out about the artist and the main subject of the picture one turns to the minor item of the name *Goddard* inscribed above right hand door in the picture. This can only be the workshop of the artists friend, the architect Henry Goddard. But, his story can be traced on the IGI via the web back a further two generations with Jonathan and Hannah Goddard, (nee Biggs), of Kirby Muxloe and their son Joseph who had been baptised there on the 5th November 1751. This now begins the family of six generations of architects with great imagination and vision in everything, except when it came to naming their sons, many being given the first names Henry or Joseph, with this in mind this author has chosen to add an identifying number to each generation in a similar manner to that effective, but to some annoying, American habit.

So, Joseph 1 born in 1751 in Kirby Muxloe had moved to Leicester and married Ann Brown sometime before 1792 when their son Henry 1 was born. However, there is only a *William Gothard carpenter* listed in Belgrave Gate in the Leicester section of the Universal British Directory 1791⁸ edition, but it is probable that this was either a close relative of the family, or more likely, a printers error in the directory.

Joseph 1 taught himself perspective drawing and lettering which he later applied with some of his

other skills and called himself an architect before the term was used to describe a specialist trade. However, he was a skilled worker in timber, as a carpenter, joiner and cabinet maker, no doubt he also made the coffins for his part time trade as undertaker. Two of his larger structures in timber were frequently used, the gallows and the treadmill built for the local Borough Goal! In addition to the workshop and house, shown in the picture, he also owned a public house and a confectioners shop run by his sister, both in Belgrave Gate.

In the early 19th C. the United Kingdom was just becoming “industrialised”, the improving transport systems were found to be better utilised moving materials in bulk, rather than a small number items to a large number of destinations. What had been previously cottage industries were now being concentrated around locally available resources, especially where labour was required. Leicester in particular concentrated on the manufacture of foot-ware, both in the leather boot and shoe and in the hosiery trades, (stocking knitters), these items were now beginning to be made in factories and also spawning further supporting trades. From Joseph 1’s point of view this was an ideal opportunity to make money, not only by building the factories, but to him more importantly, by being the architect, builder and landlord of the finished houses to be used by these new factory workers, he was making money at every stage. This hard nosed, but now wealthy businessman, died on the 1st February 1839.

Henry Goddard⁹, Henry 1, the son of Joseph 1 was born on the 15th June 1792 and baptised two days later at St Margaret’s Church, Leicester on the 17th June. He started in the workshop in Belgrave Gate as an apprentice to his father. By 1841 Henry 1 had founded an architectural practice that is still in existence today and had moved to 6 Market Street, where his son Joseph 2 was born. Later Henry 1 worked from an office in Bowling Green Street, before, in the early 1860s, moving to 18 De Montfort Square where he died on the 27th July 1868.

In the early part of his life Henry 1 would have been a “*jack-of-all-trades*” like his predecessors, but in 1817 he designed some tenements in Belgrave Gate for his father, the start of the architecture that was later to dominate his life. The next major architectural project, for which he is known, was the Fish and Quart public house, in 1832, later architectural work in Leicester included: 100 Regent Road, (which he built for John Flower in 1851), and Alderman Newton's Boys' School, in St Martins in 1864. In 1840 a son was born to Henry 1 and his wife, (nee, ? Gardiner?- web research isn’t perfect especially from the IGI !), this was Joseph 2, apprenticed to his father in 1856 and made a partner in the family firm in 1862, he was the first specialised architect in the family. The apprentice to Henry 1, immediately prior to Joseph 2, was John Henry Chamberlain who left the Goddards in 1856 to become the leading architect in the development of the city of Birmingham.

Joseph 2 “..was neither unscrupulous like his grandfather, nor disinterested in business like his father, but ingenious, an innovator, and a very sociable person...”¹⁰. At the age of 21 he won an open competition to design the Leicester Clock Tower, built in 1868. Joseph 2 generally tended to work in the Gothic style as seen in his designs for schools of the 1860s and 1870’s, influenced no doubt by much of the practice's work which, at this time, was still church restoration. However, the work and the designs became more varied into the 1870s not only for Leicester’s major commercial buildings but also the first “mock Tudor” use of half-timbering in Leicester in domestic buildings. For many the 21-meter high Gothic Clock Tower is not only the centre of the city, but of the universe itself. Erected at the cost of about £1,000, three-quarters of which was raised by public subscription and the rest donated by the town council. In 1926 the tower was the centre of the England's first road traffic roundabout. In 1874 Alfred H. Paget became a partner in the practice, which became known as Goddard & Paget. Joseph became President of the Leicester & Leicestershire Society of Architects in 1879-81. In addition to the architectural practice Joseph 2 also made a substantial amount of money out of property development, especially in the then upmarket Highfields Street area of Leicester.

The commercial buildings of the practice were also being influenced by the arrival in 1888 of Joseph 2's son, Henry Langton Goddard¹¹, (Henry 2, born c 1866), in the practice, which then became known as “Goddard, Paget & Goddard”¹². Henry 2 who had toured European churches at

the request of a client, the Bishop of Peterborough¹³, and now brought a Renaissance enthusiasm resulting in the end of the Victorian Gothic style for this practice and their introduction of lighter more liberal building design. Joseph 2 died in 1900 and after this the practice came to specialise in large country houses until, in 1814, Henry 2 went to fight in the 1st World War, by which time his son Henry Gordon Goddard, (Henry 3), had entered the practice. Henry Langton Goddard, (Henry 2) died in 1944.

Strangely, the present Goddard incumbent of this family firm of architects is neither a Joseph nor a Henry, but Anthony Goddard who is the son of Henry G. Goddard and who with Don Manton formed the "*Goddard Manton Partnership*"¹⁴ in 1972. Although still active in its native Leicestershire, the present partnership has been mainly active in London's Docklands, they were based for many years in Oliver's Wharf, the first warehouse to change to residential use, and since then have worked on a wide range of projects in London, nationally and internationally. Gone are the strict design styles of previous generations, there is presently no 'house style' for the partnership, in the belief instead that good design should flow naturally from a careful study of each project, its context and the client's requirements.

So much for the lithograph by John Flower and the story of the Goddard family of architects, but there is a sting in the tail for the unwary. Several of the learned documents giving details regarding this particular Goddard family history have mixed up two totally unrelated Goddard families, "*Goddards the Architects*" with "*Goddard the Chemists, of Silver polish fame*". From the latter family Joseph Wallace Goddard, who was buried in Welford Road Cemetery in September 1877, was the son Joseph Goddard the pharmacist. He was educated privately and originally studied as an architect, being articled to Shenton and Baker of Leicester and for three years he was with Sir Gilbert Scott of London. But he was persuaded to join his father, the pharmacist and inventor of Goddards Silver Polish, to design the polish factory. Subsequently, he founded and was chairman of the Imperial Typewriter Co., and other major engineering firms in Leicester. He was, as a lifelong "non-conformist", buried in the un-consecrated ground of Welford Road Cemetery, his predecessors have been traced back through the non-conformist chapels of Leicester, Market Harborough and to Banbury in 1715, never a Church of England in sight. Meanwhile, the predecessors of the family of architect Henry (1) Goddard died July 27 1868 where all apparently religiously conformist and as a consequence his burial and memorial is amongst those in the consecrated ground of Welford Road Cemetery.

This exercise has shown that, given that at least if one generation of a family has achieved notoriety, for good or ill behaviour, there is a fair chance that least a skeleton family tree, can be generated using little more than the information available from the web today. There are now many more questions waiting to be answered about details associated with the Belgrave Gate picture now, than just the two I started with a few weeks ago. Not the least is, *where is the Roman Milestone today?*

Brian Goddard

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- 1 www.copernic.com
- 2 www.alltheweb.com
- 3 www.leicesterandleicestershire.com/Whose_Who4.htm
- 4 www.familysearch.org - (from IGI data)
- 5 "*John Flower 1793-1861*" J. D. Bennett – Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological Soc., vol. XLII 1966-7
- 6 http://uk.geocities.com/Wexford_road_cemetery/
- 7 www.hoap.co.uk - (*Heart of Albino Press*)
- 8 All 5 volumes available on CD (CD ref. 1134) from The Archive CD Books Project -www.rod-neep.co.uk
- 9 See "*Goddard of Newton Harcourt*" from "*The Visitation of England and Wales*" by FR. Crisp 1908
- 10 "*Architecture in Leicestershire 1834-1984*" R. J. B. Keene – ISBN 0 9502510 1 1
- 11 Leicester Record Office File No. DE1722 contains many family details including a paper by Henry L. Goddard
- 12 "*The Goddard Trail - Chronology to 1914*" - www.le.ac.uk/emote/Leicester/goddardchrono.html
- 13 "*Bringing them to their knees*" Geoffrey K.. Branded - ISBN 0 9542388 0 X
- 14 www.goddardmanton.com