

FURTHER ADVENTURES OF ANOTHER HUGUENOT FAMILY LE BLOND

**by Paul Le Blond
4th Edition**



St Pancras New Church, where several Le Blonds were christened in the 19th century

INTRODUCTION

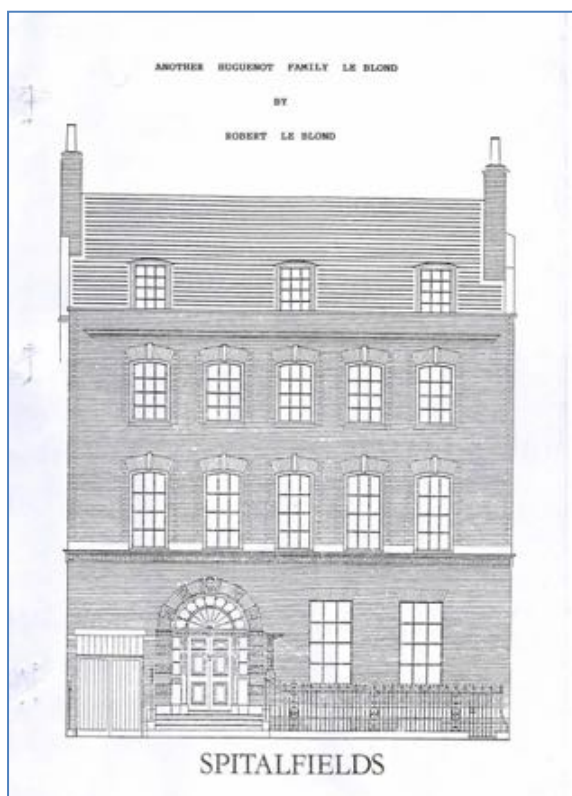
My father, Robert Le Blond (1916-1998) began looking at the family history in his retirement. This was before the internet, and so most of his research involved visiting records offices, writing letters, and studying documents. When he died he left me a filing cabinet of papers and the family bible. Now that I am retired, I have taken up the story of the Le Blonds. Although I have found out more detail about my ancestors, and the wide range of our family, I have not been able to go any earlier than Dad, which is a testament to his research skills.

After this introduction and some other brief background remarks, the main part of this book is a generation-by-generation review, each of which starts with what Dad wrote. I also add a couple of sections on my mother's family, the Lodge-Nuttgens, and on my wife Chris's, the Phillis-Gardners.

It is my intention that this book will grow as more research is done, with new facts about my ancestors when they are established, but also with additional chapters on key issues or interesting activities. The second edition included a number of corrections and additions and a new chapter on Spitalfields. This is the third edition which adds further information and a new chapter on the Regent's Park area where some of my ancestors lived.

A complete list of sources and references is provided at the end of this book, in order to provide evidence of the story.

ANOTHER HUGUENOT FAMILY LE BLOND



Before you read this book, you should read Dad's book (cover above)¹. He published it in 1994 and it was the result of his research, all done in pre-computer, pre-Ancestry.com times, at records offices, by correspondence and visits. It is called 'Another Huguenot Family Le Blond' because another book, 'A Huguenot Family Le Blond'² had been written by Marie Bennett, née Le Blond, which had provided Dad with inspiration and genealogical advice. The story of how they met, and of Marie's family, is also worth exploring. Another distant relative, Prinny Sherwin, had also provided Dad with a copy of a family bible which contained a number of details of the Le Blond family. Dad had the bible repaired and my brother and I keep it up to date.

The cover of Dad's book was part of my inspiration to continue the research, but was a bit confusing until I discovered that it was an illustration from a book and the building no longer exists (No 20 Spital Square, it was demolished in 1957³). Dad identified a house in Church Street Spitalfields in Generation 5 and I have researched this and other details of Spitalfields in a new section in the second edition. Dad's book starts with an explanation of the Huguenots and I add nothing to that, although there are of course many studies and books that examine their history in great detail⁴. After a short note on the origin of the Le Blond name, he then goes on to describe how he came to get started in genealogy, including the discovery of the family bible and the meetings with Marie Bennett. His next chapter looks at the generations, starting with himself, his children and grandchildren and going back to the first known Robert Le Blond. He then has a chapter on the will of Peter Merzeau Le Blond which reveals one of the main mysteries of our family. The final chapter is about what he called 'the distaff side' - his mother's family. There are then a number of pictures, press cuttings and a family tree, and a final statement that he hoped his descendants would continue with the research.

¹ For a good summary of Huguenot history, see Chater, K., 2012, *Tracing your Huguenot Ancestors*, Pen & Sword, Barnsley.

THE LE BLONDS FROM GENERATION 11 TO THE PRESENT DAY

Dad's book started with the then current generation (my brother and I) which he called Generation 1. I will stick to this numbering although it means that we now have Generations 0 and -1. I will turn the timescale around and look at the oldest first. Dad had found the family tree back to a Robert Le Blond about whom he had no details, other than that he was the father of the Robert Le Blond who was born in 1676. He had named the latter Generation 10, so I will call the former Generation 11. In the pages that follow, I start with a copy of what he wrote (in a box), then add the results of my additional research. In effect, I start with my eight times great grandfather and work down through the generations to me and my children and grandchildren.

My research has come from a number of sources. By Googling 'Le Blond' it is possible to make contact with others researching the genealogy, as well as finding other bits of information. One such researcher is Karen Furst and, although we are only distantly related, she has discovered some details of older generations. Other relatives have made contact from time to time to add to the tree. I joined Ancestry.co.uk in February 2018 and this provides access to all sorts of records. A third source has been the volunteer researchers at the Huguenot Museum in Rochester, who provide access to many relevant records, including those of the Huguenot Society. For the third edition, I have checked records at The National Archives (TNA).

For the Fourth Edition, I searched through the British Newspaper Archive⁴. The name Le Blond appears in particular in relation four people. First is Mrs Aubrey Le Blond who was an authoress, mountaineer, cresta runner, lecturer and Chevalier of the Legion. The second frequently noted Le Blond is a notorious murderer wanted by the French police, and the third is Jean-Baptiste Alexandre Le Blond, a Frenchman who became the chief architect of St Petersburg. Fourthly, there are stories about a Mr Robert Le Blond who seemed be involved with various Reform groups in the mid 19th century in London. Regrettably I cannot find any links between these Le Blonds or indeed, numerous others who appeared in various crime, entertainment, business and political stories, and my ancestors. However, there are some newspaper references to Le Blonds in my branch of the family. In 1867 advertisements in London papers seek creditors in relation to Peter Merzeau's estate (Generation 5). Abraham Le Blond appears under Generation 7 below (not my direct ancestor) and was a printer so there are many advertisements for his work, notices about his business and some stories about one of his employees who embezzled him. Some distant relatives established a machine tool business in the US and also appear in advertisements. Finally, I get a few mentions in the Hayes & Harlington Gazette and other local papers in 1989 and 1992 in relation to projects at Heathrow Airport that I was then involved with.

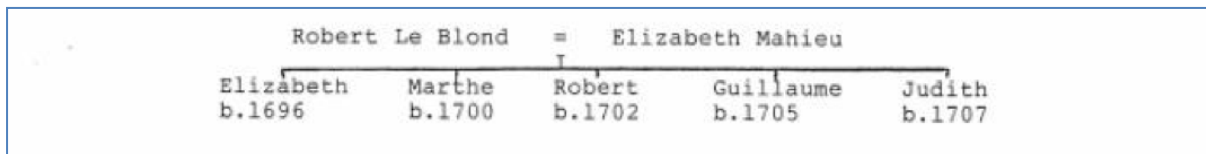
To give the generations some context, I include at the end of each section some of the key events of the time. Whether my ancestors were aware or involved in any of the events is not known, but it is interesting to know what was going on in the rest of the world when looking at an individual family.

Generation 11

Robert LE BLOND
d.1717
|
Robert LE BLOND
b.1676

Apart from noting Robert Le Blond's name, Dad did not provide any details of how he knew of him. It is presumed that this Robert would have lived in France. The Blackstone family tree indicates that Robert died on 21 May 1717 in Spitalfields⁵, which indicates that he was the first Le Blond to settle in England. It is this generation that is probably the link with the Le Blonds described in Marie Bennett's book. Although there is no direct recorded link, there are many coincidences in terms of names of children and godparents. Some of Marie's Le Blonds came from Dieppe and Étratat in Normandy and others from La Tremblade in South West France.

Generation 10



The assumption is that this Robert came to England from France with his father Robert. The first English record we have is of his marriage to Elizabeth Mahjou on 5 May 1695 at St Botolph, Aldgate⁶. They are described as 'both of Stepney' and he as a widower.

Robert Le Blond's denizationⁱⁱ is recorded as in the 1699-1700 year⁷, meaning that he becomes a denizen of England at that time.

Robert's will of 1708⁸ sheds more light. It suggests he had two children by a first marriage and notes that his brother-in-law is called James Doublet, implying that his first wife's maiden name was Doublet. James was from Dieppe, so the first Mrs Robert Le Blond may also have been from there, although there is no documentary proof, and this may match with the Le Blonds researched by Marie Bennett. There is a possible record of James Doublet's denization in 1687⁹. However, there is no known record of the first Mrs Robert Le Blond's death.

Robert Le Blond's will leaves the sum Thirty Pounds Sterling and some furniture to Jane, one of the children of the first marriage but 'one shilling only' to Mary, his other daughter from the first marriage. The will is difficult to read so it is not clear why there was this difference, other than a note that Mary was married. Some other family trees have Mary dying in 1702¹⁰, but none mention Jane. The rest of the estate is left to his second wife Elizabeth and their four children. The will does not mention Marthe (born 1700) so presumably she died before the will was written. The will also calls the second son William, a change from the christened name with the French spelling. A witness to Robert's will was Isaac Le Blond, who is recorded as an inmate of the French Hospitalⁱⁱⁱ¹¹. He entered the hospital on 2 September 1719 and died on 19 September.

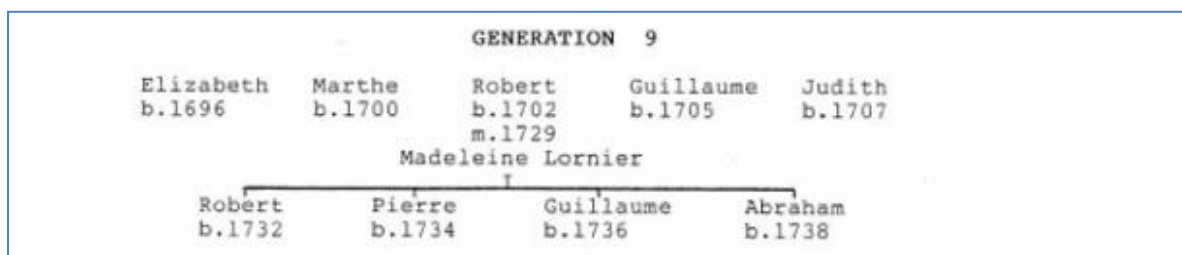
ⁱⁱ Denization is an obsolete or defunct process in England and Ireland and the later Kingdom of Great Britain, the United Kingdom, and the British Empire, dating back to the 13th century, by which an alien (foreigner), through letters patent, became a denizen, thereby obtaining certain rights otherwise only normally enjoyed by the King's (or Queen's) subjects, including the right to hold land. The denizen was neither a subject (with citizenship or nationality) nor an alien, but had a status akin to permanent residency today (Wikipedia, accessed 2 February 2018).

ⁱⁱⁱ The French Hospital, La Providence, was founded in 1718 in Finsbury on behalf of poor French Protestants and their descendants residing in Great Britain. It has moved several times and today provides almshouse accommodation for Huguenot descendants in Rochester, Kent. (Wikipedia,

None of this helps to confirm when the Le Blonds came over from France, from where and whether this Robert was married and had his first children in France or England. However, his short life (he was 36 when he died) was full, including two wives, emigration from France to England and seven children. My direct ancestor was the third child of the second marriage, Robert, born 1702. His daughter Mary's burial notice says that Robert's profession was a Weaver.¹²

France was the dominant power in Europe in the 17th century, with Louis XIV on the throne from 1643 to 1715 and it was he who revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685 that led to the Huguenots leaving France. Charles II reigned in England until 1685 and England had been relatively peaceful (although there had been naval battles in the Anglo-Dutch Wars of 1652 to 1674, but London had endured the Great Plague and the Great Fire. Charles was succeeded by James II but for only three years until he was replaced by William III and Mary II. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 established that monarchs could not rule without the consent of Parliament. The 17th century saw many scientific advances, including in physics, mathematics and astronomy as well as a period of development of culture with composers including Bach and Henry Purcell and artists such as van Dyck, Rubens and, of particular relevance to London, the architect Christopher Wren. It was also a period of further world exploration and the beginnings of colonisation, both in America and the Orient.

Generation 9



This Robert was born on 20 November 1702 and he was baptised at the Huguenot Chapel at the Artillery¹³. He was indentured as an apprentice to watchmaker Peter Lorimer (probably a misspelling of Lormier or Lornier) of Stepney, Middlesex, in 1717 for a premium of £15¹⁴. He married Madeleine Lornier, daughter of Pierre Lormier (and, presumably, his Master) and Magdeleine Bedford¹⁵. Preceding the marriage, Robert signed an 'allegation' that he knew of no impediment to the marriage¹⁶. This was done instead of banns (see also Robert in Generation 8 below). He died in August 1765 and was buried in the Old Artillery Ground in Spitalfields¹⁷.

In a document¹⁸ relating to his son (see Generation 8), this Robert is described as 'watchmaker to Edward Welch, 1 September 1748, Blacksmiths' Company'. Because tower or church clocks involved working in ferrous metal, many clockmakers in the City of London tended to belong to the Blacksmiths' Company. Domestic clocks and watches were mostly imported or the work of immigrants¹⁹. Many Huguenots who came to London were in the silk trade, but other skills such as watchmaking were also imported. There are other Le Blonds who certainly were silk weavers in Spitalfields, but not my direct ancestors.

accessed 31 March 2018). There is further Le Blond involvement in Generation 8 and it is a potential area for further research.

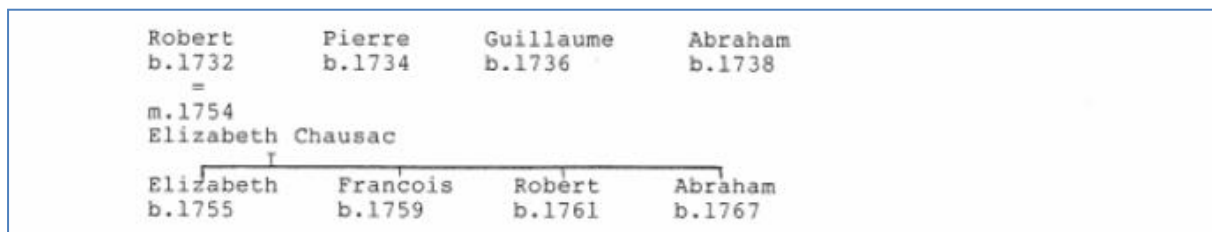
Robert's siblings were:

- Elizabeth, born 1696 and baptised at The Artillery French Huguenot church in Spitalfields²⁰, married Nicholas Bertrand in 1717 at St Mary Magdalen, Old Fish Street, London²¹ and had three children. The marriage record transcription of Elizabeth's maiden name is Le Bloue.
- Marthe, born 1700 and baptised at The Artillery French Huguenot church in Spitalfields²².
- Mary, born 1700²³, died in 1702²⁴. This may be the similarly named Marthe, born in the same year.
- Guillaume, born 1705 and baptised at The Artillery French Huguenot church in Spitalfields²⁵. One of the godparents was Marthe Doublet, possibly a relative of Guillaume's father's first wife (See Generation 10). Guillaume married Jane Renee in 1737 at St Botolph Aldgate²⁶.
- Judith, born 1707 and baptised at The Artillery French Huguenot Church in Spitalfields²⁷.

My direct ancestor was the first child, Robert, born 1732.

In the first half of the 18th century philosophy and science increased in prominence and this later led to the Enlightenment and the French and American Revolutions. The Act of Union was passed in 1707 establishing the Kingdom of Great Britain and George I became King in 1714, followed by George II in 1727. The Jacobite Risings of 1715 and 1745 ended with the Battle of Culloden in 1746. Britain became prosperous through manufacturing and trading, including the slave trade. St Paul's Cathedral was completed in 1708 and London spread beyond the City to Mayfair in the west, the port in the east and south of the river. The coffee house became an important place not just for social activity but also for discussing ideas and Fleet Street became the centre of the embryonic press industry. The Bow Street Runners were established in 1749 as a professional police force and Westminster Bridge opened in 1750.

Generation 8



This Robert was born on 7 February 1732 and baptised on 2 March 1732 at the Artillery-French Huguenot Church in Spitalfields²⁸. He was an apprentice in the Blacksmiths Livery company in 1748²⁹, although as noted above, this may have meant that he was also a clock or watch maker.

The marriage to Elizabeth Chausac took place on 24 February 1754 in Spitalfields³⁰. Elizabeth's parents were Marie Madeleine Hanrot and Francois Chausac, who was born in Melle, Deux-Sevres, France³¹. Witnesses to the wedding were his father Robert and mother Madeleine, aunt Elizabeth, uncle Guillaume, Janne Chausat, brother Guillaume and Jane Le Blond. Was this last witness his 'half aunt', the daughter of Robert Le Blond who is mentioned in the will of in 1708?

An interesting document relating to the marriage was provided by the staff at the Huguenot Museum. It is a marriage bond, by which Robert is bound to the Bishop of London in the sum of £200³². The marriage bond was a form of guarantee that, if it turned out that there was a legal reason why the marriage could not take place, the sum had to be paid. It was sometimes used when

the reading of 'banns' on three successive Sundays was not done, perhaps to avoid delay. There is no indication why it was done in this case.

The Poll register of 1768 notes that a Robert Le Blond of the Blacksmiths Company lived at Elder Street Spitalfields³³. Previous records indicate where people were baptised, married and died, but this is the first record of where they lived. The second and subsequent editions of this book has a separate chapter on Spitalfields. The Poll register is for Livery Companies, whose members were able to elect four Members of Parliament and it shows who they voted for (so, no secret ballot). A Robert Le Blond is also noted in a trade directory in 1790 as a 'weaver textiles' at 12 Spital Square³⁴, similarly in other trade directories, and had insurance at the address³⁵. However, a Robert Le Blond is also listed in the same year at White Lion Street, and a Samuel Le Blond at 4 Elder Street. Similarly, the Poll Book of 1796 shows a Robert LeBlond, Blacksmith, in Spital Square and Abraham Le Blond, also Blacksmith, in Princes Street, Spitalfields³⁶. These were almost certainly related to my direct ancestor.

Robert Le Blond was elected to be a Director of the French Hospital in 1787³⁷. There is a TNA file titled 'Le Blond v French Hospital'³⁸ which I have not yet viewed, but it is dated 1834, well after Robert's death, so it may not be him. The file will contain information about the complaint by the plaintiff (Le Blond) and the responses of the defendant (The French Hospital).

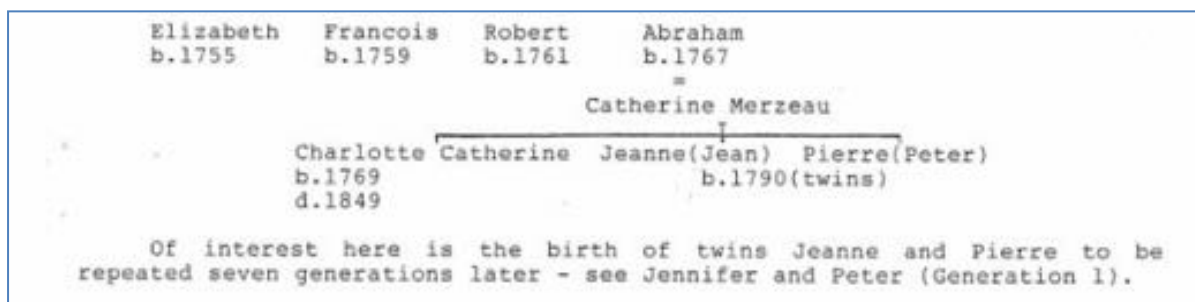
Robert's siblings were:

- Pierre, who was baptised in 1734 at The Artillery French Huguenot church Spitalfields³⁹. His baptism record is signed by Guillaume Le Blond and Judith Lormier, the latter possibly his aunt (Generation 9) who also married a Lormier (sibling marriages being quite common). There is a record from La Providence French Hospital of a Pierre as an inmate from 1750 until his death in 1759. I don't know if is the same person, but this record says that he was a sailor who lost his money through drink and had an argument with someone at the Hospital and was prohibited from going out for two months⁴⁰.
- Guillaume, who was baptised in 1736 at The Artillery French Huguenot church Spitalfields⁴¹. His godmother is noted as Judith Le Blond. Could this be the same Judith who signed Pierre's baptism record as Judith Lormier? Guillaume married Barbara Sherfield and they had three children, although the first born died age 3 or 4 and the third had the same name (Guillaume)⁴². He died in 1765 and is buried in Christ Church Spitalfields⁴³. His occupation was watchmaker.
- Abraham, who was baptised in 1738 in Spitalfields⁴⁴.

Robert died on 14 June 1806⁴⁵. Robert and Elizabeth had four children, Elizabeth, Francois, Robert and Abraham, the last being my direct ancestor. Robert's will⁴⁶ is very difficult to transcribe, but mentions his friend Peter Merzeau, his daughter in law Catherine and his son Robert. It seems likely that Peter Merzeau was the father of his daughter in law. As will be noted in Generation 7, Elizabeth and Abraham did not survive their father, and it is not known if Francois did.

The second half of the 18th century that Robert lived through included the French and American Revolutions. There may have been some family left in France to worry about, and some Le Blonds had emigrated to America and may have been involved in their revolution. Coincidentally, my daughter Jennifer and her family now live in Massachusetts and we have visited a number of the sites of the Revolutionary War, including where the first shots were fired at Concord, Ma. Despite the American Revolution, Britain became a major world power, including the conquest of large parts of India and the claim by Captain Cook of New South Wales. The Industrial Revolution began in the 1770s with improved steam engines. George III became King in 1760 and reigned for 60 years. London's population had reached around 600,000 by 1700 but grew to nearly 1 million by 1800.

Generation 7



Abraham was baptised in 1767 at The Artillery French Huguenot Church Spitalfields⁴⁷.

Abraham was indentured as an apprentice to his father, Robert, a blacksmith, in 1782. The certificate requires him to serve his master, keep his secrets and do his lawful commands⁴⁸. It also says that 'he shall not commit fornication, nor contract matrimony' and 'not play at cards, dice, tables or any other unlawful games' nor 'haunt play houses, taverns or alehouses'. Quite a strict requirement, especially as the consideration is not money but 'the natural love and affection which he hath for his said son'!

Abraham married Catharine Merzeau in 1788 at St Mary's Whitechapel⁴⁹, and his residence is noted also as Whitechapel. Catherine was baptised in 1767 at the Chapel of the Hospital, Spitalfields/Threadneedle Steet French Huguenot church. They had three children, Charlotte and twins Jeanne and Pierre.

Abraham died in 1801 and was buried at Christ Church Spitalfields⁵⁰, when he was 34 years old and 5 years before his father.



Abraham Le Blond 1767-1801 (Photo: Karen Furst)

Catherine died in 1850, but the estate was not administered until 1885, at the same time as those of Charlotte Catherine (her daughter) who died in 1862, Peter (her son) who died in 1865 and Jane (probably her daughter, Jeanne) who died in 1866⁵¹. The Administratrix (someone appointed by the court for a person without a will) was Mary Anne Le Blond Spinster of 75 Offord Road Barnsbury (probably her granddaughter Marianne). Catherine's personal estate was £80 and she was late of St Dunstan Stepney.

Abraham's siblings were:

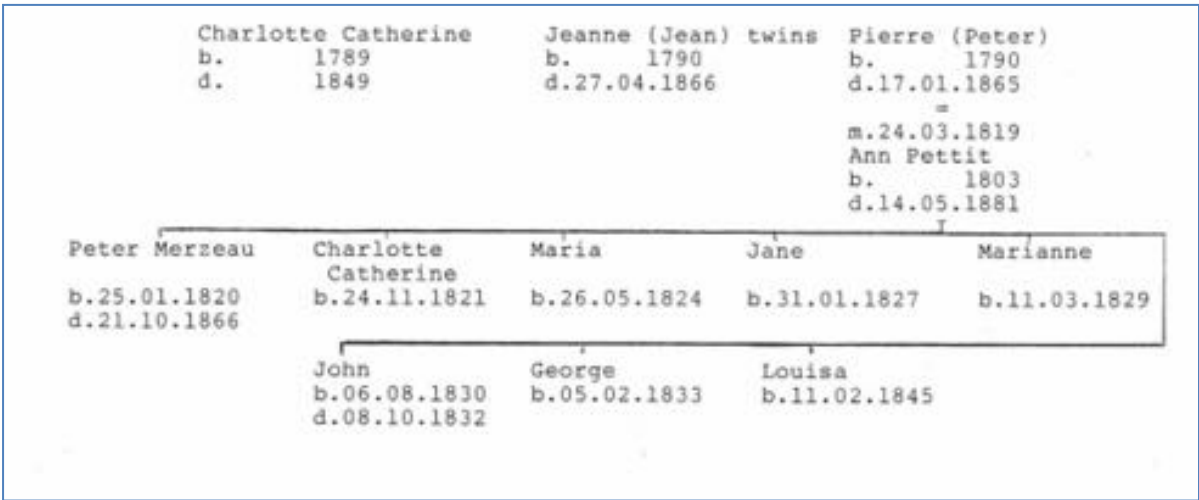
- Elizabeth, born in 1755 and christened at The Artillery French Huguenot Church Spitalfields⁵², died 1757 and buried at Christ Church Spitalfields⁵³
- Francois, born 1759 and baptised at The Artillery French Huguenot Church Spitalfields.⁵⁴
- Robert, born 1761. His descendants are fully described by Karen Furst⁵⁵. Some of them moved to America in 1856. Of particular interest in this line is that William H Le Blond (Generation 1 or 0) married Dorothy Bush, the daughter of former US President George H W Bush. Back in the UK, one of this Robert's grandsons is Abraham Le Blond 1819-1894 (so a great grandson of Abraham 1767-1801 and Generation 4) who established the engraving and printing firm of Le Blond & Co at 4 Walbrook London. The firm became a licensee for the Baxter printing process, and is particularly noted as producing the Le Blond ovals, a set of 32 colour prints. We now own four of these prints, which are on display on our stairs close to family portraits.



Le Blond ovals on display at our home.

My direct ancestor was Pierre.

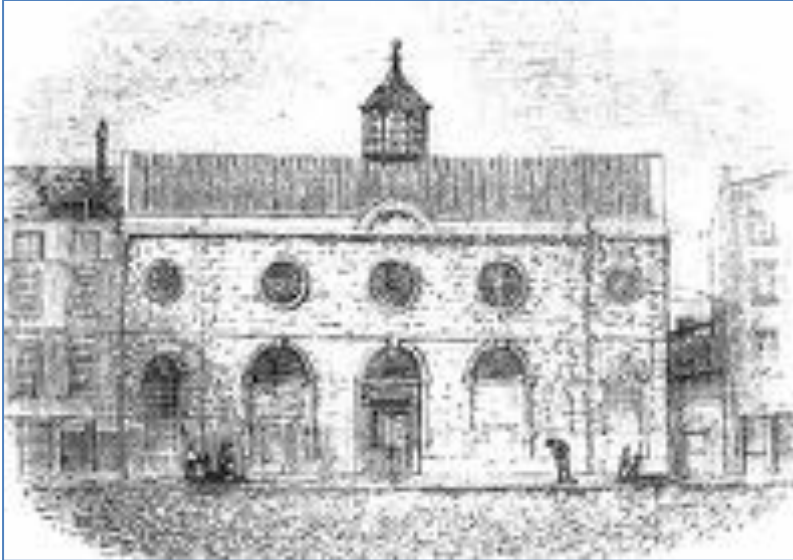
Generation 6



The family history initiated by Peter and Ann Le Blond allowed a tree to be devised. It was from the book 'A Huguenot Family Le Blond' by Marie Bennett that a connection was found between the Le Blond bible name of Peter and Mrs Bennett's Pierre. It is pretty conclusive that they are one and the same by the fact that both are shown as twins with the sister's name as Jane (English) and Jeanne (French). From Marie's family tree (f) it is possible to go back a further four generations.

The death certificate of Peter Le Blond in 1865 shows his occupation to be a labourer with cause of death as senile decay at age 74. The address is given as 20 Church Street Spitalfields, which later, in Generation 5, appears as property left in the Will of his son Peter Merzeau Le Blond. It doesn't seem to tie in, that 'labourer' properly describes his occupation and it may be that in his later years he undertook menial work.

Peter or Pierre was baptised on 21 December 1790 at the Threadneedle Street French Huguenot Church⁵⁶. The Threadneedle Street church was the largest Huguenot church in London and was built in 1669 (replacing one which had previously been St Anthony's Hospital Chapel which was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1667) and demolished in 1841 to make way for the Royal Exchange.



The French Huguenot Church in Threadneedle Street in the 17th century⁵⁷

Peter married Ann Pettit in 1819⁵⁸. Ann was born in 1803. They had eight children⁵⁹.

Tracing where Peter and Ann lived produces some interesting moves. When they married in 1819 they were noted as of the parish of St George Hanover Square which is somewhat posher than Spitalfields, where he was born. The family bible⁶⁰ says that their first two children were christened in 1820 and 1821 respectively at St Giles in the Fields, which is not far away, just off Shaftsbury Avenue. The third child was christened at St Leonards Shoreditch in 1824, back in the East End. Numbers 4, 6, 7 and 8 were christened at St Pancras New Church between 1827 and 1843 and number 5 at Trinity Church St Marylebone in 1829. St Pancras New Church is close to Euston Station and Trinity Church (no longer a church and now known as One Marylebone) is further west along the Marylebone Road near Regent's Park. More details of this area are set out in a separate section on St Pancras, Regent's Park and Primrose Hill.

In the 1841 Census, Peter is recorded as living at Mary Street (no house number), aged 48, occupation Oilman, with Ann and three children (Jane, Marianne and George) plus Elizabeth Pettit (possibly his sister in law)⁶¹. Mary Street was a road off Euston Road but was renamed Stanhope Street between 1851 and 1873⁶². In the 1851 Census, Peter is recorded at 3 Mary Street, aged 60, still as an Oilman, with Ann and four children (Maria, Jane, Marianne and Louisa) plus Charlotte, his sister⁶³. There appear to be three others living at the same address. In the 1861 Census, Peter is still at 3 Mary Street, aged 70, still an Oilman, with Ann, Marianne and Louisa, plus 12 others living at the same address⁶⁴. An oilman could have been someone involved in buying and selling oil but it is not know what Peter did or what sort of oil was involved.

It appears therefore that Peter and Ann moved from Spitalfields where they were born to the heart of what became the West End and then to the Euston/Regent's Park area. But it is not clear if he was wealthy and what sort of property they lived in.

One interesting source of information is the records of the Old Bailey, London's Central Criminal Court from 1674 to 1913. A case was heard on 29 May 1828 where Peter Le Blond was a witness to events which were part of a robbery of a watch. Peter is quoted as saying 'I was standing at my shop about thirty yards from the skittle ground.' The skittle ground was associated with a pub in Margaret Street near Regent's Park. The thief was found guilty and transported for 14 years⁶⁵. In another case in 1847, Peter Le Blond was the victim of the theft of two brushes, value 5 shillings. Peter says 'I am an oilman, and live in Mary-street, Hampstead-road—this brush I can swear to, it has my mark on it—this other has the mark nearly obliterated—I lost them on the morning of 15th Feb., about half-an-hour after I had put them out.' This thief (age 18) was found guilty and transported for seven years⁶⁶.

Peter died in 1865. As Dad had noted, the death certificate had given his occupation as Labourer⁶⁷. Administration of his estate was granted on 23 July 1885⁶⁸ (20 years after his death) when it was noted that he died at 20 Church Street Spitalfields and that he was an 'Oil and Colourman'. A colourman was a preparer and seller of colours, possibly mixing dyes in the textile trade. Administration was granted to Mary Ann Le Blond (his daughter Marianne) and the personal estate was £50.

It appears that Peter and his family moved back to Spitalfields from Mary Street to Church Street between 1861 and 1865. This address will reappear in the will of Peter Merzeau Le Blond (Generation 5).

Ann died in 1881 at 88 St James Road Islington, where she was also noted as living in the 1881 Census⁶⁹, along with Mary (Marianne) a Dressmaker and Charlotte, a Scholar age 9 (possibly a granddaughter). The Census notes Ann's occupation as Annuitant (ie. in receipt of an annuity). Her death certificate⁷⁰ notes that she was the widow of Peter Le Blond, Oilman, further adding to the mystery of Peter's occupation at his death.

Peter's siblings were:

- Charlotte Catherine born 1789 and baptised at the Threadneedle Street French Huguenot Church⁷¹. In the 1851 Census noted above when Charlotte was living with her brother in Mary Street, her occupation is noted as Annuitant⁷². She died in 1862 and administration of her estate of £99 was also granted to Mary Ann Le Blond in 1885. She was also noted as having died at 20 Church Street Spitalfields⁷³
- Jeanne, Peter's twin, born 1790 and baptised at the same time as Peter⁷⁴. She died in 1866 and her estate was administered, like her brother's, in 1885, although there were complications which are noted below when discussing Peter Merzeau's will. The record⁷⁵ shows that she was a spinster living at Bethnal House Lunatic Asylum. Her personal estate was £159. Some inmates of such asylums were paupers, but clearly this was not the case for Jane. The records of St Luke's Hospital for Lunatics show that she was admitted there in 1847, by the authority of her sister, the form of mental disorder being 'melancholia' which had endured for six years and that she was incurable⁷⁶. St Luke's was founded in 1751 and was the second such public institution in London after the better known Hospital of St Mary of Bethlem, otherwise known as Bedlam. The building was in Old Street, closed as a hospital in 1916 and was demolished in 1963⁷⁷. Jane was then admitted to the Bethnal Hospital in 1860⁷⁸. This hospital had started as a private madhouse and, in the early 19th century, conditions were very bad but, by mid century, it had become one of the largest and best run Asylums in the country. It closed in 1920 and most of the buildings were demolished (except for the male wing, which is now the Bethnal Green Library) to make way for housing, in what is now Cambridge Heath Road⁷⁹.

My direct ancestor was the first born, Peter Merzeau Le Blond.

Peter saw the new century in aged 10 and lived through a large part of it. It was a period of major social change with the abolition of slavery and the Second Industrial Revolution, leading to massive urbanisation, with the population of London growing from 1 million to 6 million, including many immigrants. The Napoleonic Wars took place in the early part of the century but ended at Waterloo in 1815. The first electronics appeared, morphine was isolated and anaesthesia first used. In culture, Jane Austen and Charles Dickens were published and van Gogh painted 'Starry Night'. The Great Exhibition took place in Hyde Park in 1851 and railways and new roads were built in London, including St Pancras near to where Peter lived. Raw sewage had previously been discharged into the rivers which led to The Great Stink of 1858 and a cholera epidemic in 1866, after which the system of sewers was built by Joseph Bazalgette (another Huguenot). The Metropolitan Police were established in 1829.

George III had been King at the turn of the century and was succeeded by George IV in 1820, and in turn by William IV in 1830 and then Victoria became Queen in 1837. George III suffered from mental illness in later life and George IV ruled as Prince regent from 1810. William Pitt (the Younger) was Prime Minister and was succeeded by various lesser known individuals until the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston and Benjamin Disraeli. The history of Disraeli is well covered in his house at Hughenden Manor, now in the care of the National Trust, near to where we live.

Generation 5

Peter Merzeau b.25.01.1820 d.21.10.1866	Charlotte Catherine b.24.11.1821	Maria b.26.05.1824	Jane b.31.01.1827	Marianne b.11.03.1829
		John b.06.08.1830 d.08.10.1832	George b.05.02.1833	Louisa b.11.02.1845
=		=		
30.06.1844		02.07.1857		
Caroline Sherwin(1)		Mary Sarah Butters(2)		
b. 1819		b. 1826		
d.19.08.1854		d. 1895		
└───┬───┘		└───┘		
William Henry	Emma Marie	Ada Matilda		
b.21.08.1846	b. 06.1845	b.14.12.1861		
d.14.12.1921.	d.26.08.1845			

The details of Generation 5 were all obtained from the Le Blond bible described earlier. Peter Merzeau was only 46 years old when he died of phthisis, a progressive wasting disease, especially pulmonary consumption (Concise Oxford). His first wife, Caroline, died at the age of 35., also from phthisis. Diseases must have been rife in the mid nineteenth century. Peter Merzeau and his sister Charlotte Catherine married a sister and brother Sherwin.

The marriage certificate of Peter Merzeau Le Blond and Caroline Sherwin gives the bridegroom's profession as a Brass Finisher and the address of both as Oxford Street. It is known that the Sherwin family lived in Uxbridge Middlesex and it must be assumed that the same address has been for the convenience of avoiding the reading of banns in two places.

The death certificate of Peter Merzeau Le Blond shows his profession as Retired Ironmonger which at the age of death of 46 years seems unusual. Retirement was obviously through ill health rather than reaching a normal retirement age.

Of great interest is the Will of Peter Merzeau Le Blond which was made on 19 September 1866., he died on 21 October 1866 and the Will was proved on 16 November 1866 - from the making to the proving of the Will just 58 days !

The estate comprised :-

"Property 10,11,12 & 13 St Georges Road,Regents Park."
"13 and 15 Carlton Road, Kentish Town."
"23 formally 155 High Street, Camden Town."
"2 Exeter Place, Walham Green. Fulham."
"19 Belle Vue Terrace, Seven Sisters Road. Holloway."
"20 Church Street (now Fournier Street - Ed) Spitalfields."
"Copyhold Farm in the Parish of Bobbingworth in the County of Essex called Muggins."
"Freehold land situated in the New Barnet Road in Hertfordshire."

The Will consists of some 2500 words with many requirements and requests - and it is hard to understand how the Will could have been proved in 26 days. Being of a superstitious nature I feel that more research here would be interesting.

The Will of Peter Merzeau Le Blond

Reference to the Will has been made in the pedigree 'Le Blond Generation 5' regarding the dates of signing and proving. The main beneficiary was his second wife Mary Sarah who was 40 years old at the time of his death, with a daughter Ada Matilda just five years of age.

The Will bequeathed the sum of £1.00 per week to his son (by first wife) William Henry saying 'this bequest is also conditional that he shall reside away from my wife and shall board and lodge himself'.

Noted earlier was the excessive speed in which the Will was executed - now, also some suspicion of father towards his son. Was William Henry, aged 20 too close in years to his step-mother aged 40 ? Did Peter Merzeau Le Blond know that he had a terminal illness ? - cause of death was progressive wasting disease of pulmonary consumption. He must have had to call in his trustees and executors fairly urgently to help him draw up his somewhat extensive and complicated Will.

The Will mentions property at 20 Church Street, Spitalfields and a visit to the area revealed that the street had been renamed Fournier Street and was in a state of deterioration. Created by the Huguenots, Spitalfields has, in it's time been the home of immigrant Jews and now of people from Bangladesh. No: 20 was dilapidated and no longer of interest to the Le Blond genealogy although the census of 1851 shows residence at no: 19 Church Street of Charlotte Le Blond, lodger age 71 Proprietor and Maria Le Blond aged 36 Milliner. A 20 Church Street lived Maurice Folk and wife. Death certificate of Peter Le Blond, father of Peter Merzeau, shows place of death as 20 Church Street, Spitalfields.

More research must be made into the intriguing circumstance of the hasty will making and grant of probate. Is there some skuldoggery here ? One of the Trustees and Executors of the estate is Edward Hammond and the death certificate names Edwin Hammond as informant. One of the witnesses to the Will is Elizabeth Hammond.

As stated the main beneficiary of the Will is his wife, Mary Sarah, with various provisos in the event of her death. Apart from the £1.00 per week payable to his son, William Henry, he could only benefit further in the event of the death of his step-mother Mary Sarah and of his half-sister Ada Matilda.

Could it be that Peter Merzeau Le Blond - suddenly struck down at 46 years of age with a deadly disease was persuaded to quickly make a will. His son William Henry was 20 years old at the time and perhaps a little recalcitrant. His father must have had some reason to limit his inheritance to £50.00 a year.

A pretty drastic decision to almost disinherit his firstborn unless some element of persuasion was used.

Peter Merzeau Le Blond married Caroline Sherwin in 1844 at St George's Church Hanover Square⁸⁰ and had two children. The first, a daughter Emma Marie, was born in 1845 and died at 3 months⁸¹. William Henry was born in 1847 and christened at St Pancras New Church⁸². After Caroline's death in 1854⁸³, Peter Merzeau married Mary Sarah Butters in 1857⁸⁴ and had a daughter, Ada Matilda, in 1861⁸⁵.

As noted for Generation 6, Peter Merzeau was not living with his parents at 3 Mary Street in 1841. Dad notes above that his marriage certificate to Caroline Sherwin gives his address as Oxford Street Uxbridge although he suggests that this is actually Caroline's home. The certificate gives his occupation as Brass Finisher However, the 1851 Census⁸⁶ and an 1856 Post office Directory shows Peter Le Blond Jun. at 37 Mary Street, occupation Gasfitter⁸⁷. His marriage certificate to Mary Sarah Butters also describes his occupation as Gasfitter and his residence as High Street (possibly Camden, one of his properties). It also shows Mary Sarah's address as Mary Street (either her parent's in law or her future husband's home). The 1861 Census shows Peter living at 155 High Street Camden Town⁸⁸. Peter Merzeau's will notes that his address in 1866 is 13 St George's Road Primrose Hill, one of the houses he owned (see below).

Peter Merzeau died on 21 October 1866⁸⁹. Dad had noted the speed with which the will was proved and suggested that more research would be interesting. The will was proved on 16 November 1866 by the oaths of Edwin Hammond, Thomas Bennett and Mary Sarah Le Blond⁹⁰. However, on 5 April 1867 a Bill of Complaint^{iv} was put to the Courts by Edwin Hammond and Thomas Bennett as Plaintiffs with Mary Sarah, William Henry and Ada Matilda as Defendants⁹¹. The document sets out the will in full and says 'By reason of diverse doubts and difficulties which have arisen respecting the construction of the said will and the rights and interests of the several persons interested under the same the Plaintiffs are unable to administer the estate of the said testator without the direction of the Honourable Court.' It then goes on to ask the Court to administer the will. It is not known what happened to this case. The value of the estate was £7000 which, with inflation, would be around £800,000 today. However, this does not seem to match the value of the properties, unless there were significant debts (for example mortgages) to be paid off. [Newspapers]

Edwin Hammond was also involved in a case which began in April 1868 relating to Jane (Jeanne) Le Blond, who had died in 1866 in the Bethnal Green Lunatic Asylum (see above in Generation 6)⁹². She had died intestate (ie. with no will) and the case seems to be based on the fact that Jane's nearest relatives were her nephews and nieces including Peter Merzeau and his siblings. Jane had died on 26 April 1866 when Peter Merzeau was still alive (he died on 21 October 1866). Hammond attested that he was the lawful Executor of the will of Peter Merzeau and should therefore be granted letters of administration for Jane's estate. For some reason the other siblings seemed to not want to be involved and, although they were served a number of papers, did not appear at the court. Why all

^{iv} A Bill of Complaint is a document submitted to the court by a claimant to start a civil legal action

this fuss is not clear, as the estate was eventually valued at only £159. In the event, when Jane's will was finally proved in 1885, it was noted that it had been left unadministered by Edwin Hammond. This only adds more mystery to the estate of Peter Merzeau.

Mary Sarah Le Blond is recorded living at 4 Pinner Marsh Middlesex in the 1871 Census (the name continues in Marsh Road), where her birthplace is given as Benniworth Lincolnshire, together with her daughter, sister, brother in law and nephew⁹³. The 1891 Census shows her living at 126 Tufnell Park Road with her daughter and son in law, Arthur Blessley⁹⁴. She died in 1895⁹⁵.

Peter Merzeau's siblings were:

- Charlotte Catherine, born 1821, married William Sherwin (Caroline's brother), a Butcher, in 1849⁹⁶, lived in Uxbridge⁹⁷ and died in 1862⁹⁸ or 1893⁹⁹.
- Maria, born 1824 and baptised at St Leonards Shoreditch¹⁰⁰, occupation Milliner and living at 3 Mary Street in 1851¹⁰¹, married Frederick Yeoman in 1864¹⁰².
- Jane, born 1827 and baptised at the New Church St Pancras according to the family bible¹⁰³. The fallibility of Ancestry.co.uk is apparent as the transcribed entry shows the christening at St Pancras Old Church. A visit to Old Church in March 2018 revealed that it was virtually derelict in the early 19th century, and so I am much more inclined to believe the family bible. In the 1841 Census, Jane, age 14, is living at Mary Street (no number) with her parents¹⁰⁴. In the 1851 Census Jane was noted as a Dressmaker living at 3 Mary Street¹⁰⁵, and later that year she married Henry Tunstill¹⁰⁶. Three of their children died young, at 14 days, 4 years and 2 days, but they went to have more children who lived longer¹⁰⁷. In the 1871 Census she and Henry are living at New Union Street in St Giles Cripplegate¹⁰⁸. By 1881, she had moved to Brighton Terrace, Hornsey¹⁰⁹, in 1891 she was at Nevill Road, Stoke Newington¹¹⁰ and in 1901 at Broughton Road¹¹¹. Jane Tunstill died in 1907¹¹².
- Marianne, born 1829, living at 3 Mary Street in 1841, 1851 and 1861¹¹³, the last as a Dressmaker. The 1871 Census has Mary Ann living at Howland Street¹¹⁴. In 1881 she is living in St James Road Islington¹¹⁵ and in 1891 at Roman Road¹¹⁶. Noted earlier was her role in the administration of her father's estate in 1885. There is also a record of Mary Anne Le Blond, dressmaker of 75 Offord Road, Barnsbury, appealing for assistance on account of failing health from La Providence French Hospital in 1888¹¹⁷. Mary Ann was a spinster and moved around a lot, and perhaps remained poor throughout her life.
- John, born 1830 and baptised at the New Church St Pancras¹¹⁸, died 1832¹¹⁹.
- George, born 1833¹²⁰, married Eliza Dalby¹²¹, recorded in the 1861 Census as a Gas Foreman living at 461 New Oxford Street with his Uncle, G B Pettit (presumably his mother's brother), a Gas Engineer¹²², died 1870¹²³. His death certificate notes his age as 27 years, but this is probably an error as all the other evidence points to 37 years. I had some correspondence with Susan Gardner, who is George's great great granddaughter¹²⁴. By coincidence another branch of her family lived in the next road to me when I was young.
- Louisa Ann, born 1845, recorded as living at 3 Mary Street in the 1851 and 1861 Censuses¹²⁵, the latter as a Dressmaker. Married John Frederick Gentry¹²⁶, lived at 23 Chenies Street in 1871¹²⁷. In 1891, she was the head of the household at 118A Roman Road Islington living with her sister Mary (Maria or Marianne?)¹²⁸. By 1901 she had moved to 46 Roman Road¹²⁹ and then in 1911 she is at 26 Sheringham Road¹³⁰. She died in 1919¹³¹.

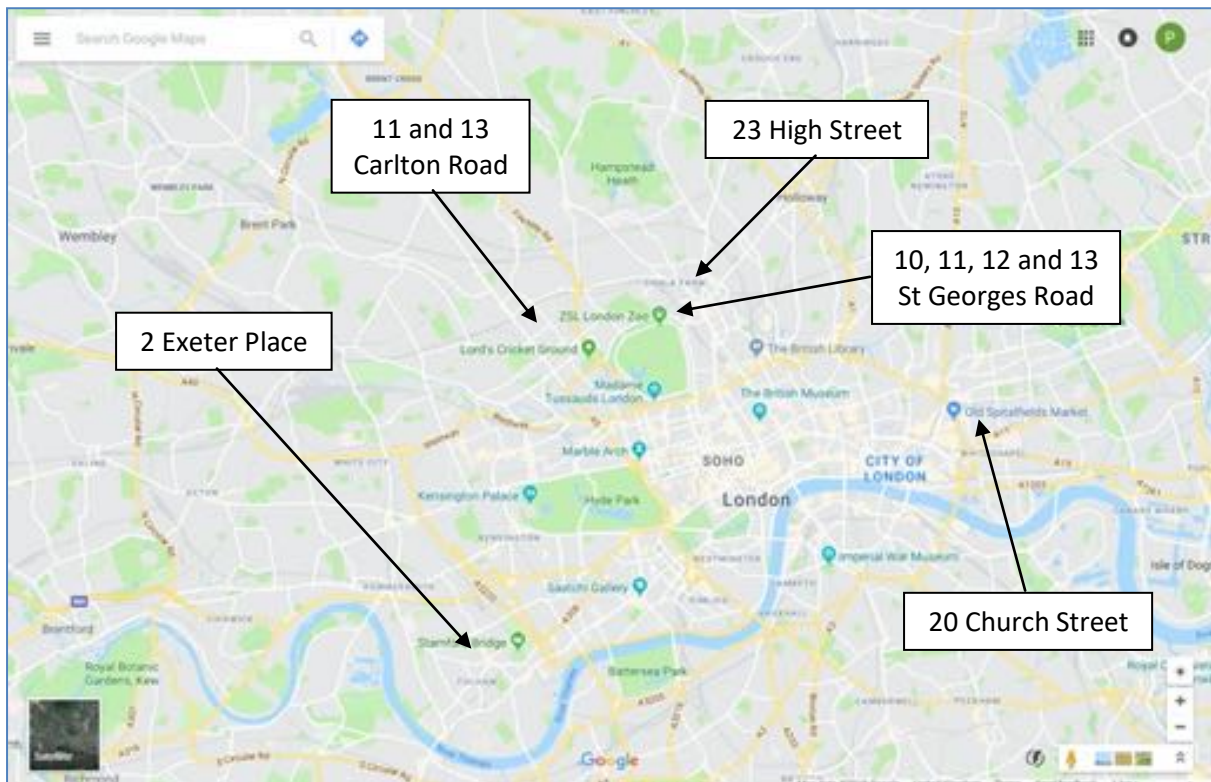
The 1861 Census shows Charlotte Le Blond age 71 living at 19 Church Street as a Landed Proprietor (meaning that she owned property) and Maria Le Blond age 36 as a Milliner together with two lodgers and a servant, with Maurice and Rachel Folk living at No 20¹³². Dad had noted this as the 1851 Census. Charlotte was Peter Merzeau's aunt, who died in 1862, although occupation in her previous address (see Generation 6) had been Annuitant and in the administration of her estate she

is noted as having died at 20 Church Street. There had probably been some moving back and forth between adjacent properties.

The properties listed in Peter Merzeau's will are plotted on the map below, with some guesswork. St George's Road is now Chalcot Road. More details about Primrose Hill are set out in a separate section of this edition. Carlton Road Kentish Town has probably be renamed as Greville Street and the area where odd numbered houses has been redeveloped as a local authority estate. 23 High Street Camden still exists and the ground level is occupied by a burger restaurant. Exeter Place Walham Green Fulham is now Vanston Place but No 2 no longer exists.

Bobbingworth is a village in Epping Forest in Essex and the farmhouse is now a Grade 2 listed building, dating from the 16th century. Bobbingworth is mentioned in a TNA file record of the Sun Fire Office of 1836 relating to insurance for Charlotte and Jane Le Blond¹³³, which may indicate that they lived here. Copyhold was a form of customary tenure held according to the custom of the manor. Copyhold land became freehold in 1926. The location of the land in New Barnet Road is not known. New Barnet was developed after the coming of the railway in the second half of the 19th century, so the land may have been a good investment for development.

It is not known how or when Peter Merzeau acquired his property portfolio, as it would be termed today. His occupations as Gasfitter and Retired Ironmonger certificate do not seem to align with owning so much property. It is also not clear what happened to the property as the will makes clear that he does not leave it to his son (although his son's address on his death in 1921 was 10 St George's Road). He was survived for some years by his second wife and their daughter, so presumably the estate went to them. It seems that neither was the wealth passed to his sister Mary Anne who had to appeal for assistance from the French Hospital. In any event, as noted above, some of the property has disappeared.



Peter Merzeau's properties in London

Peter Merzeau was therefore an interesting character. One of eight children, he married twice and was variously a Gasfitter, Brass Finisher and Ironmonger. He acquired a large property portfolio and made a will requiring his son to live away from his widow, and died at the young age of 46. His portrait hangs in our stairway. My direct ancestor was William Henry, the son from Peter's first marriage to Caroline. As he died only a year after his father, his life was in the same Victorian era.



Peter Merzeau Le Blond 1820-1866



Caroline Le Blond nee Sherwin 1819-1854

Generation 4

William Henry b.21.08.1846 d.14.12.1921	Emma Marie b. 06.1845 d.26.08.1845	Ada Matilda b.14.12.1861
m.30.07.1870	m.28.09.1876	-
Maria Edwards(1) b. 1847 d.05.09.1873	Agnes Jane Martin(2) b.24.12.1847 d.07.07.1895	Arthur Blessley
Edgar Henry Martin b. 1877 d.14.04.1942	Ernest Harold b. 1878	Caroline May b. 1881 d.27.04.1937
		William Cecil b.01.06.1882 d.22.05.1963

As we progress back the information is harder to discover. I did not know my paternal grandfather who died when I was five years old. My father told me that his father was a traveller for a hardware company called Nettlefolds. The marriage certificate to Agnes Jane Martin shows the profession of the groom as Ironmonger. The second marriage took place at Plympton St Mary in Devonshire and it would be of interest to know why William Henry from London found a bride from some distance away.

William Henry was born in 1846 and the family bible says he was christened at St Pancras New Church¹³⁴. It is not known where his parents were living when he was born but he is recorded as living at 37 Mary Street, aged 4½ in the 1851 Census¹³⁵ and 155 High Street Camden Town age 14 in 1861¹³⁶.



William Le Blond 1846-1921 as a young man

He married Maria Edwards in 1870¹³⁷ at St Mark's Church in St Pancras. His residence is noted as 18 Elm Street (Clerkenwell?). In the 1871 Census he and Maria are living at 25 Hamilton Street¹³⁸ (now Greenland Road, Camden Town) but she died only 3 years later, age 26, when they were living at 135 Gloucester Road (now Gloucester Avenue)¹³⁹. Up to the second edition of this book, I thought that this was the Gloucester Road in Kensington, but I have now realised that the name was changed and it was formerly Gloucester Road in Primrose Hill.

Dad did not note any children from this marriage, but a son, Frederick, is recorded as being born in 1871¹⁴⁰. In the 1891 Census, Frederick's occupation is given as Clerk to Wine Merchant¹⁴¹ and by 1901 he was living in Stratford Warwickshire as a Commercial Traveller¹⁴².

William married Agnes Jane Martin in 1876¹⁴³ and, as Dad noted, she was from Devon. The 1851 Census¹⁴⁴ shows her, age 3, residing in Yealmpton, a village about 8 miles from Plymouth. Plympton the location of St Mary's Church where they were married, is now a suburb of Plymouth. Ten years later she is still in Plympton¹⁴⁵, but her whereabouts in 1871 is not known. In 1877, at the time of their first son's baptism at St Mark's Regent's Park, their address is 4 Norfolk Terrace and William's occupation is Commercial Traveller¹⁴⁶, confirming Dad's father's recollection. By 1881, she and William are living at 74 Gloucester Road¹⁴⁷. At this time they had four children, Frederick (age 9), Edgar (age 3), Ernest (age 2) and Caroline (age 2 months). They were still at 74 Gloucester Road in the 1891 Census¹⁴⁸ with, by this time, the addition of William Cecil age 8, their fifth child and my Grandfather. Agnes died in 1895¹⁴⁹. By 1901 William is living on his own at 15 Bilton Road Willesden¹⁵⁰, his younger children having gone to live with his half sister.

I cannot find William in the 1911 Census. In a further strange twist William was admitted to the St Pancras House workhouse on 12 July 1920 when his 'calling' was recorded as 'Traveller' and his condition as 'not able bodied'¹⁵¹. He was discharged, still 'not able bodied' on 28 November 1921 to St Pancras Hospital¹⁵². He died on 14 December 1921 when living at 10 St George's Road St Pancras¹⁵³ (one of the properties owned by Peter Merzeau Le Blond).

Perhaps his occupation as Commercial Traveller was a reason for him choosing a wife from Devon and for not living with his children on her death. Nettlefolds had started with a hardware store in High Holborn and established a virtual monopoly in the British wood screw market. It was acquired in 1902 by Guest Keen and Co. to become Guest Keen and Nettlefolds which is now GKN plc with a turnover in excess of £8 billion.

William Henry's siblings were:

- Emma Marie, born 1845 and baptised at the New Church St Pancras¹⁵⁴ and died the same year.
- Ada Matilda (half sister), born 1861¹⁵⁵. In 1871, she was living at 4 Pinner Marsh with her mother¹⁵⁶. In 1891, she is at 126 Tufnell Park Road with her husband, Arthur Blessley, who she married in 1882¹⁵⁷ two children and mother¹⁵⁸. By 1901, the Blessleys had moved to 59 Hillfield Road Hampstead (where houses now sell for £1.5 million)¹⁵⁹. Her 1911 address was Woodlands, 8 Northwick Park Road, Harrow¹⁶⁰ (close to where my brother and I were at school). She died in 1944 in Hove, Sussex¹⁶¹, presumably where she had retired to. The remains of Ada Matilda's inheritance from Peter Merzeau may be apparent in the value of her estate, noted as £7245, now worth around £300,000, and therefore substantially less than Peter Merzeau's estate. The Blessleys reappear in Generation 3 as the stand in parents for Caroline May Le Blond and William Cecil Le Blond.

William Henry was born in the Victorian era but lived into the 20th century and the Great War, so he saw many big changes in the world, England and London. Nettlefolds must have been one of the companies that grew in the Industrial Revolution. The development of the railways may have been one of the factors in his occupation as Commercial Traveller, and may have enabled him to visit Devon where he met his second wife. London had expanded along with the railways and the Underground with many suburbs beginning to be developed after the First World War. Queen Victoria reigned from 1837 to 1901 and was succeeded by Edward VII and then George V. Many well known Prime Ministers served, including Disraeli and Gladstone. There were many social changes, such as the introduction of compulsory education and public health laws, and internationally the Empire grew, while the major event towards the end of William's life was the Great War.

Generation 3

Edgar Henry Martin b. 1877 d.14.04.1942	Ernest Harold b. 1878	Caroline May b. 1881 d.27.04.1937	William Cecil b.01.06.1882 d.22.05.1961
			m.09.08.1910 Florence Louise Challis b.08.07.1883 d.27.06.1969
		Winifred Agnes b.24.09.1911 d.19.05.1991	Robert George b.15.11.1916

Upon the death of their mother in 1895, Caroline May and William Cecil were placed under the guardianship of Arthur Blessley and his wife Ada Matilda (nee Le Blond). The two older boys are reported to have made their own way, being 21 and 22 years of age. My father told me that his upbringing was strict and he suffered from bullying from two older boy cousins and from a pampered girl cousin. It is not known whether the Blessleys' received any payment from Caroline and William's father but it seems very likely that they did. It is interesting to note that William Cecil did not marry until he was 28 years old, permission not given by Midland Bank employer until earning a sufficient salary to support a wife. Also it is believed that his uncle and aunt had some influence over his personal life.

He was educated at William Ellis School, Hampstead having entered at the age of fourteen. From a record obtained from the school it shows that another boy of the same surname was at the school at the same time. This boy was the father of Marie Elizabeth Bennett (nee Le Blond). Neither Mrs Bennett nor I had ever heard our fathers speak of another schoolfellow of the same name. It is believed that William Le Blond started his bank career at age 16 and retired around 1944.

His marriage to Florence Louise Challis took place at All Hallows Church, Hampstead on Tuesday, 9 August 1910. A wedding photograph shows a group of thirty six family and friends in the garden of 100 Mansfield Road, Gospel Oak, Hampstead..London NW3, the home of the bride's parents. In 1926 he moved his family to Harrow in Middlesex.

Florence Louise Challis was the eldest daughter of George and Charlotte Challis of Hampstead. Her youngest sister was only eleven years old when her niece, Winifred Agnes, was born in 1911. Before her marriage she worked for a food company name Walton, Hassell and Port. She is remembered with warm affection by the writer.

Ada Blessley presumably inherited Peter Merzeau's property portfolio after the death of her mother Mary Sarah (née Butters), which makes William's treatment in the Blessley household even more galling, given that his father was given such a small settlement from Peter Merzeau's will. Or could the treatment some hangover punishment for the sins of his father?

The first record of William (Grandpa) is the index of births in 1882¹⁶². The 1891 Census shows him as a Scholar living with his family at 74 Gloucester Road¹⁶³ and the 1901 Census shows him age 18 living with his aunt and uncle, the Blessleys at 59 Hillfield Road Hampstead¹⁶⁴. His occupation is recorded as Bank Clerk. The marriage certificate shows that in 1910 he was living at 100 Mansfield Road¹⁶⁵. Winifred's (Auntie Wyn) birth certificate¹⁶⁶ shows that in 1911 he lived at 4a Sedgemere Avenue East Finchley (also the 1911 Census¹⁶⁷) and by 1938 Winifred's marriage certificate¹⁶⁸ shows him living at 8 Lowick Road Harrow, where he lived until he died in 1963¹⁶⁹. I recall the house in Harrow and garden as a wonderful place for children to explore, with a fishpond, a shed full of stuff and, bizarrely, an assegai.



William Le Blond (1882-1963) and Florence Le Blond (1883-1969) in the 1920s (left) and 1940s (right)



Family and friends at Lowick Road in 1961: Tim, Grace, Grandma Mum, Joe, Joan, Grandpa, Reg

Dad's book provides some information on Florence Challis (Grandma), as well as the story of how he remembered the house in Mansfield Road as the home of his maternal grandparents and how he visited it during his research. Florence was born in 1883¹⁷⁰. In the 1901 Census, she is living in Ferme Park Road in Hornsey as a servant and in 1911 she is married and living at 4a Sedgemere Avenue, East Finchley¹⁷¹ before moving to Lowick Road, Harrow. When William died Florence then came to live with my mother (Peggy) and father (Bob) at 46 The Chase, Eastcote. Like Dad, I have fond memories of Grandma (also know as Aunty Flo). She loved to play the piano and had a small 6 octave upright which she brought with her when she moved. When she died in 1969¹⁷², I was given £500 from her estate with which I bought my first car (a Morris Minor Traveller, XGF 734).

Grandma's father, George Challis, died in 1949, the year I was born. He was known as Bompa, a name which I have inherited for our first grandson.

William's siblings were:

- Frederick, born 1871¹⁷³, half-brother as his mother was Maria. Interestingly, he was not baptised until 1877, at the same time as Edgar¹⁷⁴. At that time they were living at 4 Norfolk Terrace, Regent's Park but by 1881 he was living with his parents at 74 Gloucester Road¹⁷⁵. In 1901 he was a Commercial Traveller living in Stratford, Warwickshire¹⁷⁶ and he died in 1903, aged 32¹⁷⁷. As noted under Generation 4, Frederick was not on Dad's family tree.
- Edgar, born 1877¹⁷⁸, in 1881 living with his parents at 74 Gloucester Road¹⁷⁹, in 1885 admitted to Princess Road School, Camden¹⁸⁰, a Greengrocer, died 1942¹⁸¹. His will was administered by Bessie Peebles, his daughter, in Llandudno, in the sum of £837 2s¹⁸².
- Ernest, born 1878¹⁸³, in 1881 living with his parents at 74 Gloucester Road¹⁸⁴, in 1885 admitted to Princess Road School, Camden on the same day as his brother Edgar¹⁸⁵. Died possibly 1950¹⁸⁶.
- Caroline May, born 1881¹⁸⁷, living with the Blessleys in Hampstead in 1901¹⁸⁸, died 1937 in Hove Sussex. The index of wills indicates that she was a spinster and her effects were worth £5932 11s 4d¹⁸⁹. Dad mentions in his book visits to Aunt May in Hove who told him that his ancestors were Huguenots and that the family fortune had been acquired by the Blessley family. However, note above that the 'fortune' was only slightly more than Caroline May's estate in 1944. Aunt May also indicated that the family bible was with the Sherwin family.

Grandpa was born in Queen Victoria's reign and lived through Edward VII, George V and VI and Elizabeth II. His lifetime included both the First and Second World Wars, the Great Depression, and the Cold War. It can only be speculation, but did the Great Depression have anything to do with the decline of the 'family fortune' which had been inherited by Ada Matilda and presumably passed down through her family? Universal suffrage arrived and Prime Ministers included Gladstone, Lloyd George, Baldwin, Churchill, Atlee and Macmillan. The extension of London into the suburbs facilitated his moves to Hampstead, Finchley and Harrow. I never heard any mention of his involvement in the Great War and it is possible that his occupation as a Bank Clerk was 'reserved' meaning that he was not conscripted. Alternatively, he was age 32 in 1914 with a daughter and a son to follow in 1916, and so may have not been called up for this reason.

Generation 2

Winifred Agnes
b.24.09.1911
d.19.05.1991

=
m.03.09.1938
John Ronald Jones
b.22.10.1909
d.17.03.1984

†
Valerie May
b.11.12.1944

Robert George
b.15.11.1916

=
m.08.06.1940
Margaret Mary Lodge
b.03.11.1918

I
David Robert Robert Timothy Paul William
b.03.09.1942 b.30.04.1947 b.25.06.1949
d.11.09.1942

Winifred Agnes was born in East Finchley and on moving to Hornchurch, Essex she attended Romford County High School for Girls. Moving to Harrow, Middlesex in 1926 and after attaining some prowess in shorthand and typewriting she was accepted for employment by Lloyds Bank Limited working in the branch in Tottenham Court Road, London. Through a colleague in the Bank she met and married John Ronald Jones known as Ron Jones. At the start of World War 2 she returned to work with Lloyds at Harrow branch and continued until 1944. A serious operation in 1982 resulted in the loss of the lower part of her left leg which restricted her otherwise active life style. She died in May 1991.

Robert George was born at Hornchurch in Essex reportedly during an air raid (World War I). The house address was Colwyn, Rockingham Avenue, Hornchurch, Essex and the family lived there until 1926 upon moving to 8 Lowick Road, Harrow, Middlesex. School in Essex was the Gidea Park College and in Harrow the Quainton Hall School followed by the Lower School of John Lyon, Harrow. He obtained no academic accolades but did receive his football First Eleven colours. His first job was as a junior assistant to the architect of a large house builder in South Harrow, then as a clerk with the National Cash Register Company in London. Call up to the Army in 1940 changed life style completely. The widening of horizons and experience of a different way of life was probably, in itself, a beneficial break in what could have been a mundane existence. The end of the war and release from the Army in February 1946 was followed by return to NCR - selection and then rejection for an Emergency Teacher Training Scheme subsequently joining British European Airways at Northolt Airport in 1946. Promotions followed to become Duty Officer for BEA at Heathrow Airport, Senior Traffic Officer at West London Air Terminal, Cromwell Road, London and finally Passenger Services Superintendent dealing with British and European airport planning. Early retirement from British Airways was in July 1974.

Margaret Mary Lodge, renamed Peggy by her husband, is the daughter of Herbert Lodge and Marie Theresa Nuttgens. Born in Harrow she attended St Anselms School, and the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Harrow. Before World War 2 she worked for Kodak Limited in their Kingsway, London offices transferring to the Wealdstone offices at the commencement of the war. Marriage in 1940 was celebrated in the Roman Catholic church in Love Lane, Pinner and the reception was at the house of her Aunt May (Mabyn) in Lyncroft Avenue, Pinner. Robert Le Blond had 48 hours leave from the Army. After the death of her first child she was called up for war work and directed to an engineering firm in Harrow. It was there that she met Lois Thompson who later married Peter Lodge, brother of Margaret.

This generation is of course well remembered by Dad and events are documented as follows:

- Winifred Le Blond, born 1911¹⁹⁰, married John Ronald Jones 1938¹⁹¹, died 1991.¹⁹²
- Robert Le Blond, born 1916¹⁹³, married Margaret Lodge 1940¹⁹⁴, died 1998¹⁹⁵.
- Addresses: 14 Parkfield Avenue, North Harrow, 1948¹⁹⁶, 1949¹⁹⁷ and 1955¹⁹⁸.

I could of course add many personal recollections about Mum and Dad but I will say only that my childhood was very happy, and I was encouraged in so many ways. I am sure they sacrificed things for my brother and I, but we were well fed, clothed, looked after without being too strict and, of course, loved. They were happy together throughout their lives, eventually retiring and having the pleasure of grandchildren.

Dad was born during the Great War and, as he noted, he served in the Army in the Second World War. His childhood seems to have been happy, so he does not seem to have been badly affected by the downturns of the 1920s and 1930s (perhaps they just got on and didn't complain). However, he was away in the Army for most of the Second World War, in North Africa and Italy, which must have been tough, especially with the death of their first child. I am sure I once saw some campaign medals and there is correspondence from a posting at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Rome towards the end of the War. I remember him in British European Airways uniform as a Duty Officer at the Airport and of course this was brilliant as we had many holidays by air to Edinburgh, the Channel Islands and Spain. I don't recall any particular difficulties from the politics, economics or social trends of the time but, again, perhaps they just got on with it and made a good life for the family.

Generation 1

David Robert b.03.09.1942 d.11.09.1942	Robert Timothy b.30.04.1947 = m.17.08.1968 Christine Bell	Paul William b.23.06.1949 = m.05.04.1975 Christine Brenda Phillis
	Philip David Joanne Kim b.26.11.1976 b.05.12.1984 (adopted)	Peter Robert Jennifer Susan b.20.10.1982 (twins)

The loss of our firstborn after nine days of life is now just a memory but at the time it was hard to take. Peggy (Margaret) was in a nursing home and I was with the British Army in Scotland when the baby's condition worsened. I obtained special leave and arrived home to find David in Harrow Hospital where he died. I can vaguely remember having to arrange the funeral, console my wife and then having to leave her to return to my unit and subsequently embark for the Allied landings in North Africa. I was away for four years.

My biggest regret is that today an infant with the heart condition of our David can be operated upon with success. I believe I am right in saying that in 1942 it was thought that the life of an infant under two years of age was endangered by surgery and death could be considered as homicide.

Having moved into our home in Parkfield Avenue, North Harrow in February 1947.. our Tim was born the following April and in 1949, Paul arrived. They attended a small prep-school and later moved to Finner Park Primary School. It was in the days of the 11-plus examinations and both boys were accepted for grammar school education. They moved on to Harrow County School for Boys achieving in their individual ways their own successes. Tim obtained several passes at O level in the GCE examinations and was accepted for a training course with Post Office Overseas Telegraphs. After three years and qualification he joined British European Airways on the reservations computer side. Today he is a senior manager with British Airways at Heathrow Airport. The family live in Wokingham, Berkshire.

Paul progressed in a different way by achieving successes at school both academically and on the sports field. He seemed to find school life easy to follow and quickly received Warrant Officer rank in the RAF section of the school cadet force. A glider pilot licence followed along with O and A levels in GCE examinations. He attended Reading University obtaining a BSc(Hons) degree afterwards going on to Leeds University to gain his MSc. His career with British Airports Authority, now BAA plc, has progressed to executive status. The family live in Amsersham, Bucks.

This is me! But it begins with the sad story of my brother David. One particularly sad part is that Mum never knew what happened to his remains. Tim and I were typical brothers, always fighting, and I was envious of him because he is two years older. Here's our genealogical evidence:

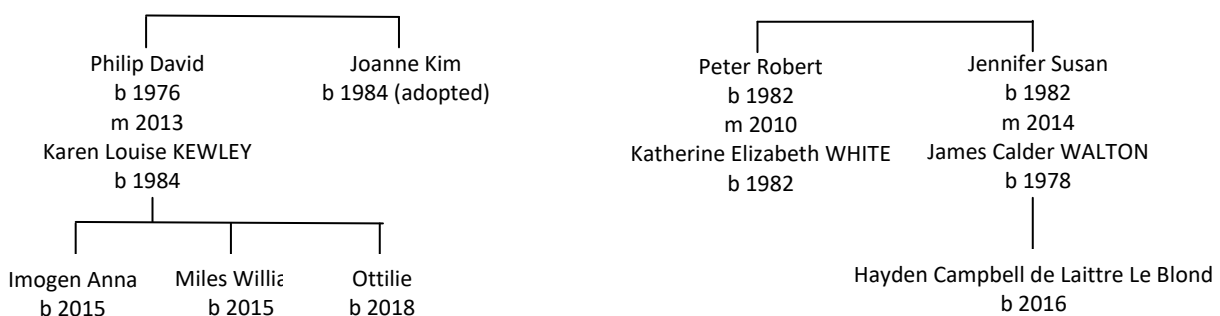
- David Le Blond born¹⁹⁹ and died 1942²⁰⁰.
- Robert Timothy Le Blond born 1947²⁰¹, married to Christine Ball in 1968 when his occupation was Engineer General Post Office²⁰², living at 1 Jasmine Close Wokingham, Berkshire in 2003-2006²⁰³.
- Paul Le Blond born 1949²⁰⁴, married to Christine Phillis in 1975²⁰⁵. living at Laburnum Lodge, Hammersley Lane, Penn, Buckinghamshire in 2003-4²⁰⁶.

Taking us to the present day, Tim and Chris now live in Beenham, Berkshire and are grandparents (See Generation -1). After retirement Tim became a magistrate and they make good use of their travel privileges from British Airways. Chris is involved with the local church and they are keen allotmenters.

Chris and I are both retired and are also grandparents. We occupy ourselves with the garden, walks, University of the Third Age and our friends and family. I am writing a book about the history of airports policy and I am an armchair rugby fan.

We were born in the post war period of rationing and the Cold War, but then benefitted from the economic and social changes of the 1960s. Tim was part of the latter, playing in a band, and I benefitted from the freedoms of University life. We saw high inflation and plenty of economic stress in the 1970s and 1980s but are part of the 'lucky generation' who benefitted from free education, good benefits, rising house prices and early retirement. We've seen rapid technology advances, in particular in computing, but also increasing concerns about environmental issues. We are Elizabethans and have lived through the Premierships of Macmillan, Wilson, Heath, Thatcher, Blair, Cameron and now May. London's population declined in the 1960s and 1970s as we and many others moved to the home counties, but has risen again in the last three decades and has also been regenerated in many areas.

Generation 0



Dad had noted his grandchildren in his book and their genealogical evidence is as follows:

- Philip David was born in 1976²⁰⁷ and married Karen Kewley in 2013²⁰⁸. Their twins, Imogen and Miles, were born in 2015²⁰⁹ and Otilie is the most recent addition. In 2008-2010 he was living at 40 Cirrus Drive, Shinfield, RG2 9FL²¹⁰.
- Joanne Kim, born 1984 and adopted in 1985²¹¹.
- Peter Robert, born 1982²¹² and married Katie White in 2010²¹³. Lived at 60 Norwood Road, SE24 9BH in 2006-7²¹⁴ and 12A Hubbard Road, SE27 9PJ in 2009-10²¹⁵.

- Jennifer Susan, born 1982²¹⁶, married Calder Walton in 2014²¹⁷. Lived at 3 Newnham Terrace, Cambridge in 2007²¹⁸, 24 Broad Street, Cambridge in 2009²¹⁹ and 77 Saltram Crescent, W9 3JS in 2010²²⁰.

Philip and Karen live in Reading, as does Jo, not far from Tim and Chris. Pete and Katie live in Berkhamsted, not far from us, while Jenn and Calder are in Sudbury, Massachusetts, USA.



Phil and Karen



Jo



Pete and Katie



Jenn and Calder

Generation -1

At the time of writing, the male Le Blond line is with Miles Le Blond, born in 2015. His twin sister, Imogen is the elder of the two. The newest arrival is Otilie, born in 2018. Our grandson Hayden, was born in 2016 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA.

The Male Le Blond Line

My male Le Blond line is as follows:

Generation	Name	Born	Died	Occupation	Address
11 (8xG Grand-father)	Robert	?	1717	?	France
10 (7xG Grand-father)	Robert	1676	1712	?	Stepney
9 (6xG Grand-father)	Robert	1702	1765	Watchmaker	Spitalfields
8 (5xG Grand-father)	Robert	1732	1806	Blacksmith/ watchmaker	1768: Elder Street, Spitalfields
7 (4xG Grand-father)	Abraham	1767	1801	Blacksmith/ watchmaker	1788: Whitechapel
6 (3xG Grand-father)	Pierre	1790	1865	Oilman, Oil and Colourman, Labourer	1841, 1851 and 1861: Mary Street 1866 (d): 20 Church Street, Spitalfields
5 (2xG Grand-father)	Peter	1820	1866	Brass finisher, Gas fitter, Ironmonger	1844 (m1): Oxford Street 1856: 37 Mary Street 1857 (m2): High Street, Camden? 1866 (d): 13 St George's Road Primrose Hill
4 (Great Grand-father)	William	1846	1921	Commercial traveller	1846 (b): Drummond St? 1856: 37 Mary Street 1870 (m1) 18 Elm Street 1877: 4 Norfolk Terrace 1881: 74 Gloucester Road 1891: 74 Gloucester Road 1901: 15 Bilton Road 1921(d): 10 St George's Road
3 (Grand-father)	William	1882	1963	Bank Clerk	1901: 59 Hillfield Road, Hampstead 1911: 4a Sedgemere Avenue, East Finchley 1916: Colwyn, Rockingham Avenue, Hornchurch 1926-1963 (d): 8 Lowick Road, Harrow
2 (Father)	Robert	1916	1998	Airline Manager	1916 (b): Colwyn, Rockingham Avenue, Hornchurch 1926: 8 Lowick Road, Harrow 194? 14 Parkfield Avenue, North Harrow 1963: 46 The Chase, Eastcote 197? (d): 10 Scots Drive, Wokingham
1 (Self)	Paul	1949		Airport Manager, Transport Consultant	1949 (b): 14 Parkfield Avenue, North Harrow 1963: 46 The Chase, Eastcote 1974: 21 Lea Crescent, Ruislip Gardens 1976: 10 Sylvia Avenue, Hatch End 1978: 16 Stuart Way, East Grinstead

					1984: 10 Chestnut Close, Amersham 1999: Laburnum Lodge, Hammersley Lane, Penn, Bucks
0 (Son)	Peter	1982		IT Systems Architect	1982(b): 16 Stuart Way, East Grinstead 1984: 10 Chestnut Close, Amersham 1999: Laburnum Lodge, Hammersley Lane, Penn, Bucks 200?: 2009: Hubbard Close, West Norwood 2012: 25 Hillside Gardens, Berkhamstead, Herts

LODGE-NUTTGENS

In much the same way as Dad's book described his mother's family, the Challises, this chapter looks at my mother's family, the Lodge-Nuttgens. I remember my maternal grandmother, Nana, (Maria Nuttgens) well but I never know my grandfather, Herbert Lodge, who died in 1936. However, Nana remarried Joe Cook and so we had a step grandfather, known as Uncle Joe. We had some contacts with the family of one of Herbert's siblings, Mabyn, which have been renewed through genealogy, and limited contacts with Nana's very large family. In my youth we had many happy times with Mum's brothers and their families, and retain contact with Jennifer, my cousin, and her brothers.

Lodge

The earliest record I have of the Lodges is Stephen, born 1786. The first document I have seen is a record of his marriage to Sarah Macey in 1809 in Salisbury, Wiltshire²²¹. However, other family trees show Stephen's parents as George and Edith, both born in 1750 and George's father as William, born 1716 and grandfather Thomas²²², so it is possible that the records go back almost as far as the Le Blond's. They all seem to hail from Wiltshire or Dorset.

Stephen and Sarah Lodge had seven children²²³, of whom Charles, born 1811 in Fisherton Anger, part of Salisbury²²⁴, was my direct ancestor. He married Clarissa Stagg in 1839²²⁵ and they also had seven children²²⁶, of whom George, born 1856²²⁷, was my direct ancestor. George married Eliza and they had nine children. The eldest, Mabyn, married Charles Prougthen and produced six daughters, all of whom were bridesmaids at my parents wedding.



Robert Le Blond and Margaret Lodge's wedding in 1942.

Mary Patricia, known as Pat, married Alan Caistor and their family was two girls, Celia and Ruth and I can recall meetings with them as they lived close by in Pinner. Ruth Caistor contacted me in 2012

and we have remained in contact since then and swapped details of our families²²⁸. Ursula, Paula and Angela emigrated to America and I visited Angela and her family on their farm in Wisconsin in 1971.

Ruth told me the sad story of George and Eliza. Apparently Eliza was an alcoholic which may have begun when two of her children died young. They had lived apart for some time and the 1911 Census shows Eliza with five of her children, but not George, in St Margarets Twickenham. George was a greengrocer with a shop in on the corner of Baker Street and Seymour Place and died in 1919 after he jumped off Hammersmith Bridge into the River Thames, and an open verdict was returned by the Coroner.

Ruth also told me the story of Charles Proughten, her grandfather who, after serving in the First World War and fathering six daughters, got a job on a P&O ship and then disappeared in Australia, where he bigamously married and died in 1966.

George and Eliza's eighth child was my grandfather Herbert, born in 1892, when the parents were living at 192 Miles Buildings Marylebone²²⁹. When he married Maria in 1918 he was described as a Railway Goods Clerk²³⁰. This occupation may have resulted in him not being called up during the First World War. Herbert and Maria had three children, Margaret (my mother) born in 1918²³¹, Anthony, born in 1921²³² and Peter born in 1924²³³.

I recall many happy holidays and other times with Uncle Tony who married Ruby Tucker and had two daughters, Jacqueline and Barbara (my first cousins), and Uncle Peter who married Lois Thompson and had a daughter, Jennifer and two sons, Stephen and Nicholas (also cousins). Uncle Tony and Auntie Ruby lived close to us in Carpenders Park (we were in North Harrow) and so we saw them quite frequently. Uncle Peter and Auntie Lois lived in Edinburgh where we spent many holidays, flying up as Dad was working for British European Airways and we got cheap flights. Peter and Lois divorced and Peter married Joan, and Lois came to live in Amersham Bucks. In 1999, we came to live in Chestnut Close, the same road as Lois, and we subsequently became close again in particular with Jen and her family. The Lodge family name continues with Stephen, Peter's elder son, and his two sons.

Nuttgens

My grandmother's maiden name was Nuttgens which, as it sounds, has origins in the Low Countries. With assistance from Robbie Nunn, who contacted me through Ancestry.co.uk, and various other family trees, the earliest Nuttgens I have is Johannes Leonardis who was probably born around the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries. He married Maria Kaefer and had a son also called Johannes in 1723. This Johannes then married Anna Baumann and their son born in 1770 was called Johann. Johann married Anna Noch and their son was Heinrich, born in 1797. Heinrich married Maria Dedoiar and they had two sons, Gerhard, my ancestor, born 1826 and Leo. Gerhard married Anna Wetselen and they had eight children, the eldest being my ancestor Heinrich, born in 1856. Heinrich married Theresa Canham in 1891 in Aachen²³⁴, in Germany near the borders with the Netherlands and Belgium.

However, the family had moved to England earlier as there are baptism records from the youngest of Gerhard and Anna's children, Albert, in 1874, at the Our Lady of the Assumption & St Gregory church, otherwise known as the Bavaria Chapel, Warwick Street, Soho, in London. The history of this Catholic church is interesting²³⁵ and it may be the German connection attracted the Nuttgens family. There are also baptism records of this time for other members of this family at this church and at St Patrick's Westminster (which had more links to Irish immigrants). The first Census record I have

found is for 1881²³⁶ where the family, including Gerard (having lost the 'h'), a Journeyman Tailor, as the head but whose wife was now called Theresa (her third Christian name), with seven children including Henry (again an Anglicised name), a Tailor, living at 24 Broad Street. Broad Street was partly what is now High Holborn at the north end of Shaftsbury Avenue²³⁷. Coincidentally, Peter Merzeau Le Blond was christened in St Giles in the Fields church which is only a few hundred yards from Broad Street, although his family lived further north in the late 19th Century.

After Henry married Theresa in 1891, the 1901 England Census shows Henry living in Moring Road Tooting but with his birth place in Germany. His wife Theresa is shown as born in England but three of the five children are German. The youngest German-born was Gertrude (born 1896) and the eldest English-born was William (born 1899). It seems that the family moved backwards and forwards between England and Germany for a number of years, perhaps returning to Germany for family events such as marriages and christenings. The Le Blond's Huguenot background meant that they emigrated from France because of the Protestant beliefs. It may just be an ironic coincidence that the Nuttgens' emigrated to England, as there is no clear history of intolerance towards Catholics in the 19th Century in Germany.



Henry Nuttgens in 1941

Henry and Theresa had six children altogether. Joseph Edward (known as Eddie) was the eldest son and became a stained glass window maker, with many of his works in cathedrals around the world. We have a small piece which hangs in our house. Eddie had 13 children including Patrick, an architect who was also a writer and broadcaster and Vice Chancellor of York University and Joseph, an artist who also continues the stained glass window making in a studio in High Wycombe, not far from where we now live. I have corresponded about genealogy with Flora and Damian Nuttgens in this branch of the family.



Uncle Eddie's stained glass in our dining room

Henry and Theresa's second daughter Maria or Mia was my grandmother. She was born in 1893 and married Herbert Lodge in 1918²³⁸. Her occupation is noted as Children's Nurse on the marriage certificate and she was living at 46 Oxford Road Harrow. She also appeared in the 1911 Census, aged 17, as a Nursemaid living in a house in Hampstead with five young children and three other servants. After Herbert died in 1936 she married Walter Cook (known as Joe) in 1941²³⁹ and died in 1987 in Sherborne, Dorset²⁴⁰. I remember Nana as a very proper and well dressed lady whose home in Northwood Hills was not ideal for children to play in (unlike my paternal grandparents). Nevertheless she was a kind and gentle lady.

PHILLIS-GARDNER

Chris, my wife, was a Phillis when we married, and her mother's maiden name was Gardner, so this chapter explores these families.

Phillis

The earliest name that I have is Frederick in the 1891 Census²⁴¹ shows a Frederick aged 49, making his birth about 1822. As The address is 4 Buslingthorpe Row, Leeds and Frederick's occupation is Labourer Quarryman. He was born in London. His grandson, Clifford, Chris's father, recalled that Frederick went to Wales for work. Frederick's wife was Elizabeth and there were five children, all boys, in 1891, including Chris's ancestor Harry, then aged 6. The 1901 Census²⁴² shows them still at Buslingthorpe Row but with only Harry living with them, although one of the sons, Arthur, seems to have moved to No 5 with his wife and young son.

Harry was born about 1883 in Bird Terrace, Trimsaran in South Wales²⁴³, presumably when his father was working there, but in 1891 he is living at Buslingthorpe Row. He is still there in 1901 and his occupation is noted as Labourer²⁴⁴ and by 1911 he is a Cart Driver. He married Beatrice Stephenson and they had nine children. He was called up at the age of 32 in 1915 to serve in the 18th Semier Battalion Welsh Regiment²⁴⁵, when his trade was noted as Haulier. He died in 1940. Chris remembers her grandmother Beatrice when she came to live with them after her grandfather's death. She died in 1962²⁴⁶.

Clifford, Chris' father, was born in 1925²⁴⁷. Cliff told us of his early life in Leeds, although his brothers and sisters were born in Wales. He left school at 14 and got a job in Galinskis the tailors, but was then required to work on the railways during the War. He married Ethel Gardner in 1948, when his occupation is noted as Soldier, as he was doing his National Service²⁴⁸, although his address is noted as 27 Wingham Place. When Chris was born in 1952, they had moved to 4 Wingham Place. He worked for Jackson's the Tailors, which became Burtons, rising to Transport Manager. The family moved to Swarcliffe in 1952, initially in a flat and then to Mill Green Place. After he left Burtons he worked for Michelin for about 10 years. After retirement he and Ethel came to live near us in Hazlemere, Bucks until he died in 2011²⁴⁹.

Chris has many memories of Cliff's brothers and sisters and their families. The Phillis line continues in several of these but the direct line from Frederick to Chris is shown below.

Generation	Name	Born	Died	Occupation	Address
4	Frederick	1822		Labourer Quarryman	4 Buslingthorpe Row, Leeds
3	Harry	1883	1940	Cartman Haulier	Bird Terrace, Trimsaran, South Wales Buslingthorpe Row, Leeds
2 (Father-in-law)	Clifford	1925	2011	Soldier Tailors Packer Transport Manager	27 Wingham Place, Leeds 4 Wingham Place, Leeds 12 Mill Green Place, Swarcliffe, Leeds Hanover Court, Hazlemere
1 (Wife)	Christine	1952		Laboratory Assistant	12 Mill Green Place, Swarcliffe, Leeds 1974: 21 Lea Crescent, Ruislip Gardens 1976: 10 Sylvia Avenue, Hatch End 1978: 16 Stuart Way, East Grinstead 1984: 10 Chestnut Close, Amersham

					1999: Laburnum Lodge, Hammersley Lane, Penn, Bucks
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Gardner

We can only get back to Generation 5 in the Gardner family. Gardner is a more common name and it is difficult to be sure about the evidence. Henry, a Bootmaker, is noted as the father at the marriage of his son, also Henry, a Mechanics Labourer, to Louisa Goodison in 1887²⁵⁰ The 1891 Census shows the junior Henry Gardner age 24, Newsagent, with wife Louisa and children Wilfred (3), Laura (2) and Henry (1 month) (presumably Harry was a version of Henry) living at 14 South Mount Street, Holbeck²⁵¹. The 1901 Census²⁵² shows Louise, widow, aged 35, living at 1 Hills Yard, Leeds, with four children Wilfred age 13, Laura age 12, Harry age 8 and Clifford age 4. The Death Index²⁵³ shows a Henry who died in 1892 aged 26, which could have been Louise's husband, but it would mean that he was not the father of the fourth child, Clifford. In any event, poor Louise was widowed very young with four young children and her occupation in 1901 was noted as Charwoman.

The eldest son Wilfred was Chris's direct ancestor. He married Gertrude Roberts in 1916²⁵⁴. He was a Labourer and lived at 2 Hobson Court. He was called up in 1915 to the Railway Operating Division of the Royal Engineers²⁵⁵. It is possible that he died in 1940²⁵⁶. Gertrude remarried Walter Townend and Chris remembers her as Nana before she died in 1956²⁵⁷.

Ethel was the fourth of five children of Wilfred and Gertrude. She was born in 1920 when the parents were living at 90 Peel Street, Hunslet²⁵⁸. She was a Tailoress when she married Clifford Phillis in 1948, by then living at 10 Roundhay Street²⁵⁹. At some stage she also worked on the Trams and also in Leeds Market. She died in 2007²⁶⁰. We remember her as a funny and very loving mother.

The Gardner line is therefore as follows:

Generation	Name	Born	Died	Occupation	Address
5	Henry			Bootmaker	
4	Henry (Harry)	1867	1892	Newsagent	14 South Mount Street, Holbeck
3	Wilfred	1887	1940	Labourer	2 Hobson Court
2 (Mother-in-law)	Ethel	1920	2007	Tailoress	12 Mill Green Place, Swarcliffe, Leeds Hanover Court, Hazlemere

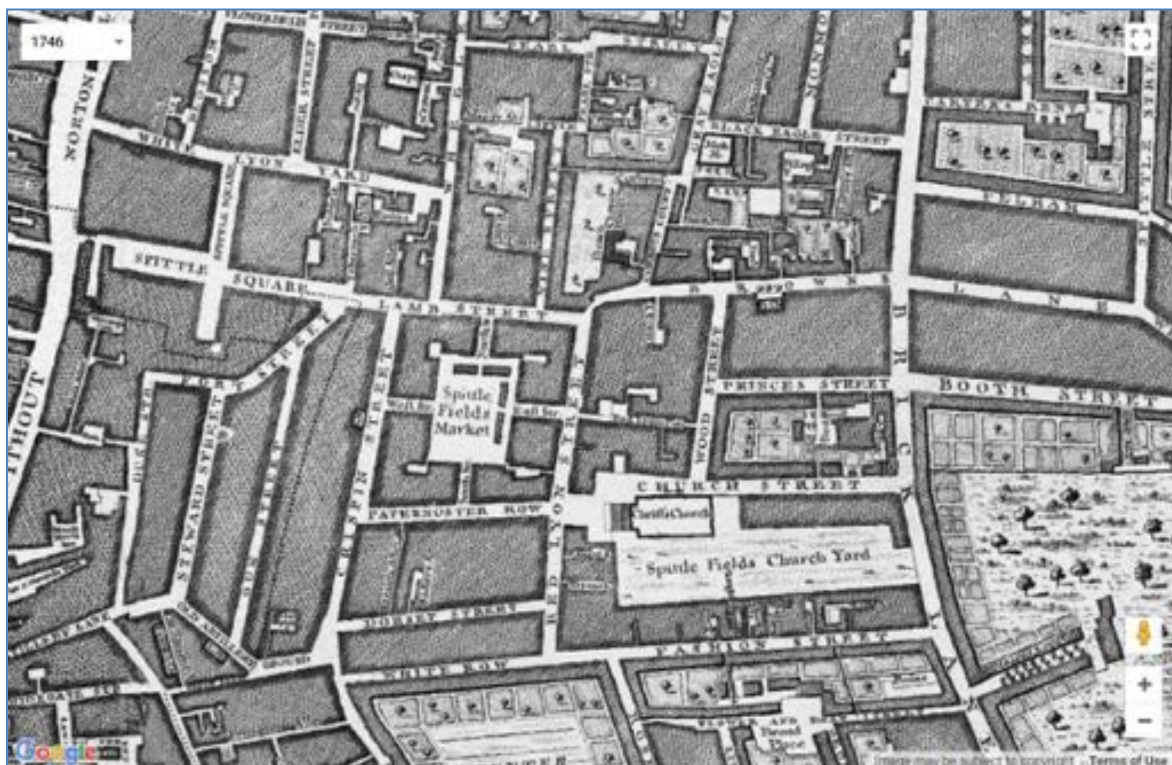


Cliff and Ethel Phillis at Wingham Street.

SPITALFIELDS

With all the references to Spitalfields in the various records, plus the cover of Dad's book, it was clearly worth exploring the relationship between the Le Blonds and this part of London.

I have visited Fournier Street on a couple of occasions with Blue Badge guides on a tour of Spitalfields. Dan Cruickshank's book 'Spitalfields: A History of a Nation in a Handful of Streets'²⁶¹ is a very thorough examination of the social and architectural history of the area. 'Spital' comes from the hospital which was one aspect of the Priory of St Mary which was first established in the 12th Century, just outside the City of London. The Priory itself suffered in the Reformation although some Catholic traditions continued for some time. The adjacent fields were associated with the Priory and hence 'Spitalfields' and became the site of the market which remains today. Another name which has remained is the Artillery Ground, an area used by various soldiers for practising their skills. As well as the Priory, there were other buildings along Bishopsgate, which was the Roman Ermine Street, most of which have been lost. However, as development proceeded, new buildings were built on the rubble of the old and the area has gradually been raised, by up to 2 metres. In turn this has meant that archaeological investigations have found traces of previous buildings. The area was not directly affected by the Great Fire of 1666 except that rubble was deposited and many people left the City to settle outside the boundary.



Spitalfields in 1746

The major expansion of Spitalfields began in the 18th Century coincident with the establishment of the Huguenot settlements from the late 17th Century. Some street patterns were retained, but many were removed when new estates were built. The alignment of Church Street was probably based on an existing alley with some buildings, which were no doubt removed when it was developed. The method of development was mainly that a landowner would offer leases to builders for plots for individual or groups of houses, often with a design guide as to how the houses should look. Many of the houses were built for both residential and industrial uses, with large windows or garretts (as is the case in Church Street) to provide sufficient space and light for silk weaving looms.

Since the area was first developed there has been constant change, but some of the houses and streets have survived, despite the pressures from industry, roads and railways and, more recently, the expanding commercial City.

The social history of Spitalfields, as implied by the title of Dan Cruickshank's book, is in part a reflection of the country's history. The Reformation was clearly a significant event, then followed the waves of immigration, first by the Huguenots, then by Irish, Jews and then Asians, in particular from Bangladesh. Each brought their own trades, customs and religions. The Huguenot Chapel (known as L'Église Neuve) built at the corner of Fournier Street and Brick Lane became a Synagogue and is now a Mosque. The Jack the Ripper murders in 1888 cast a dark cloud over the area. The first public housing was built at the turn of the Century and, after significant deterioration and some demolition, the area is now being revived.

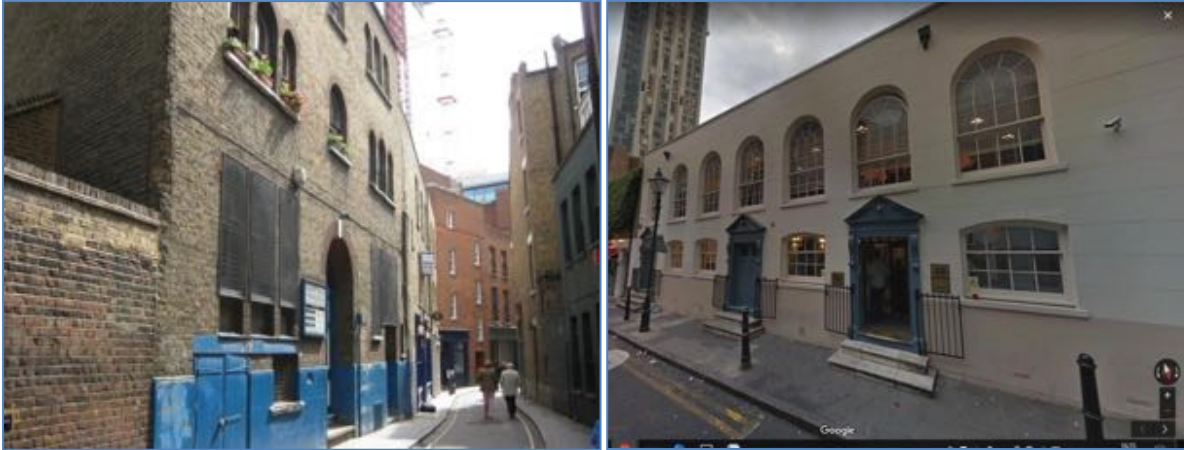


Spitalfields today (Bing Maps)

Le Blonds in Spitalfields

My ancestors appear to have been associated with Spitalfields from the time they arrived in England in the late 17th Century for about 200 years. Robert Le Blond (Generation 10) was married in 1695 in nearby St Botolph Aldgate and was described as 'of Stepney'. His son Robert (Generation 9) was baptised in 1702 in the Huguenot Chapel Artillery, as was his son Robert (Generation 8) in 1732 and Abraham (Generation 7) in 1767. Other siblings were also baptised there.

It is not entirely clear where The Artillery French Huguenot church was. The Sandys Row Synagogue which is in use today, was originally built by the Huguenots as 'L'Eglise de l'Artillerie' in 1766²⁶². However, another source says that the Church of the Artillery was established in Artillery Row in 1695 and then replaced by a new church also in 1766²⁶³. Further confusion arises because the road is called Artillery Lane, not Artillery Row, and there is no record of this street name change.



Left: The Sandys Row Synagogue in 2017. Right: The new church in Artillery Lane, now offices. Which was the church where the Le Blonds were baptised?

Marriages took place in various local churches until Pierre (Generation 6) who married at St George's Hanover Square in 1819. The only record of burial is of Abraham (Generation 7) in Christ Church²⁶⁴ in 1801. Christ Church, at the corner of Fournier Street and Commercial Road was built between 1714 and 1729 to a design by Nicholas Hawksmoor.

The first address on record is the Poll Register of 1768 for Robert (Generation 8) in Elder Street²⁶⁵. In 1790 a number of trade directories list Le Blonds at 12 Spital Square (Robert Le Blond, weaver textiles)²⁶⁶, White Lion Street (Robert Le Blond)²⁶⁷, and 4 Elder Street (Samuel Le Blond)²⁶⁸. An 1802 Directory includes a Robert Le Blond, weaver, at 17 Elder Street²⁶⁹. Other Directories around this time show various Le Blonds in streets in the area. In the 1861 Census Charlotte Le Blond (Generation 6) is living at 19 Church Street and 20 Church Street appears in the 1866 Will of Peter Merzeau Le Blond (Generation 5). Pierre (Generation 6) died at 20 Church Street in 1865 although in the 1841, 1851 and 1861 Censuses he is living at Mary Street near Regent's Park. Dan Cruickshank notes the occupants of many of the houses in Elder Street, Church Street and others, in particular by Huguenots in the silk trade, but none of these are Le Blonds.

Elder Street still exists, to the north of the Old Spitalfields market, and a full description of its history can be found in a British History Online article²⁷⁰. Building probably began in 1722. The house occupied by my ancestor Robert is not known but No 4 became No 30 and has a particularly fine doorcase, which were a feature of houses in this area. White Lion Street became Folgate Street and together with Spital Square and Elder Street were all part of the St John and Tillard Estate. No 12 Spital Square was demolished in the 1930s.

Undoubtedly a number of Le Blonds remained in Spitalfields in the 19th Century, but my ancestor Pierre (Generation 6) had moved to Mary Street Regent's Park by 1841. Nonetheless, Pierre died at 20 Church Street in 1865 and his sister Charlotte lived next door in 1861. Church Street became Fournier Street and the numbers also changed, such that 19 and 20 Church Street are now Nos. 29 and 31 Fournier Street. A lot of street names were changed at around this time, but there is an allegation that Church Street in particular was renamed to distance itself from the legacy of Jack the Ripper, whose activities took place in the area in the late 1880s. George Fournier was of Huguenot descent, and when the road was renamed, the numbers were changed from a sequence up one side and back the other to odds and evens.



Elder Street, Spitalfields, looking south, with No 30 on the right (Google Maps)

Most of the houses in Church Street Spitalfields were built in the 1720s, the last to be built on the Wood-Michell estate. Charles Wood and Simon Mitchell were Lincoln's Inn lawyers who, according to Dan Cruickshank, had acquired the land in somewhat obscure circumstances by a complex series of deals. It was developed in response to the settlement of a significant community of wealthy French Huguenots around Spitalfields, many of whom brought silk-weaving skills from Nantes, Lyons and other cities²⁷¹. Thus, although initially intended as domestic dwellings, many were immediately occupied by the silk industry. Together the houses form one of the most important and best preserved collections of early Georgian domestic town-houses in Britain²⁷².

Dan Cruickshank illustrates social history by looking at the occupants and occupations of residents and this can be done for 19 and 20 Church Street. The 1841 Census does not show house numbers in Church Street, but there appear to be no Le Blancs living there then. In 1851 No 19 had 8 occupants including a family and 4 lodgers. The head of the family was a carpenter and the lodgers were an optician, lithographer, shopman and unclear, all born in England. No 20 had a family of 5 and 2 servants²⁷³. So in 1851 these houses were not densely occupied and most of the occupants were more than first generation English.

By 1861, with Charlotte at No 19, there are 6 people lodging in the house all with different names. Their occupations were dress maker, milliner, landed proprietor (2), servant and unclear. They were all born in the UK, all but one in London. At No 20 live Morris and Rachel Folk, a shoemaker born in Russia²⁷⁴. So in 1861 these houses were still not densely occupied. The Folks were perhaps some of the first of the Jewish refugees but surprisingly were the only occupants of No 20.



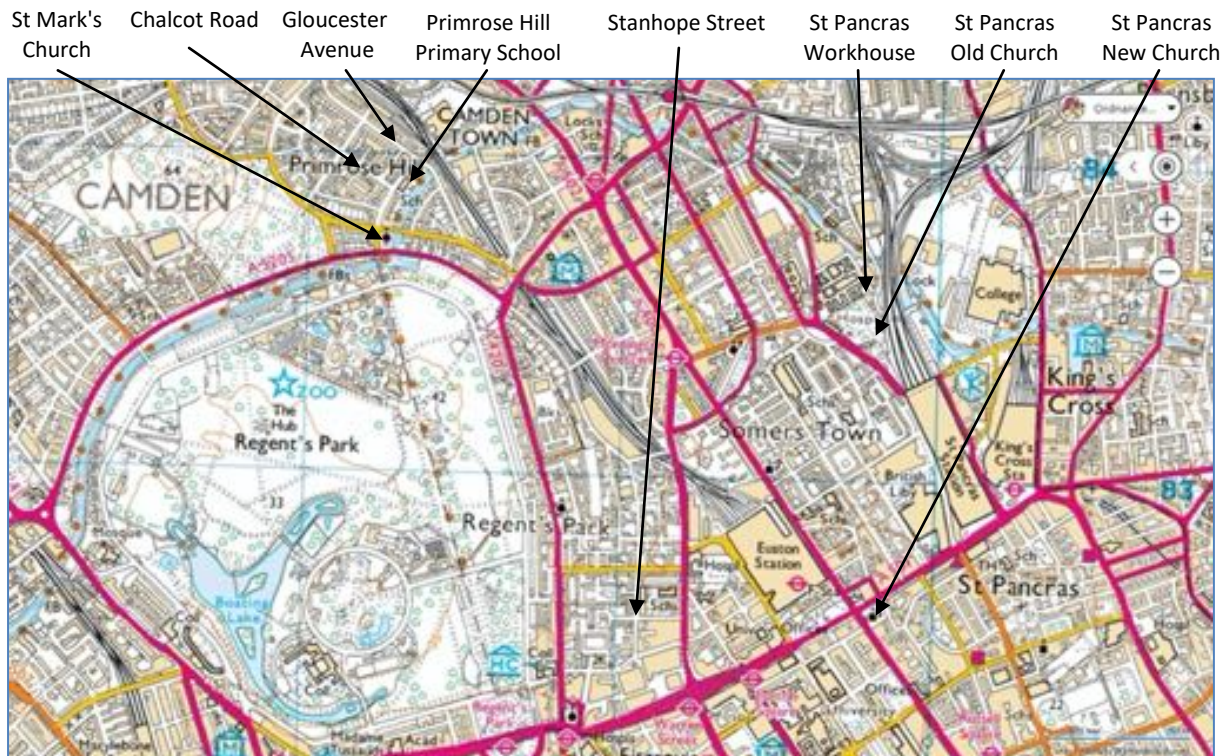
29 and 31 Fournier Street

By 1871, 19 Church Street had 13 occupants, with only two families and one other married couple. They had a variety of occupations from tobacconist and tailoress to cabinet maker and bootmaker. No 20 had one family of four named Geishon, the head being a tailor²⁷⁵. In 1881 there were ten people at No 19 with a mix of names and No 20 was unoccupied²⁷⁶. Jumping forward to the 1911 Census²⁷⁷, the most recent available, 19 Church Street is 29 Fournier Street and is occupied by the Bellon family of seven, the head Barnet Bellon, having been born in Austria and is a tailor machinist, the Cohen family of three, the head Israel Cohen being a watchmaker born in Russia and the Shenker family of seven, the head Lazarus being a fur deal born in Russia, a total of seventeen occupants. No 31 is occupied by Mr and Mrs Jacob Moss, a cabinet maker born in Russia and the Rosenberg family of six, the head Myer Gershon Rosenberg being a gents tailor born in Russia. In this period Jewish refugees retained some connection with the previous weavers, in what became the rag trade. The 1934 Electoral Register²⁷⁸ shows Jewish names still prevalent but, by 1952²⁷⁹, the names have no obvious link to any particular group.

So, the last evidence of any Le Blond in Spitalfields is 1865, and it is not known what happened to the properties owned by Peter Merzeau Le Blond (Generation 5), other than to assume that they were inherited by his second wife, Mary Sarah and their daughter Ada Matilda, who then married Arthur Blessley.

ST PANCRAS AND AND PRIMROSE HILL

The Le Blonds moved from Spitalfields in the 19th Century to St Pancras and Primrose Hill and so it is appropriate to look at the history of these areas and our places in them.



OS map of St Pancras, Regent's Park and Primrose Hill noting Le Blond locations

St Pancras

St Pancras is now best known for the railway station and I was initially drawn to the area by an Ancestry record of a christening at St Pancras Old Church, next to the station. We duly visited the Old Church only to discover that it was derelict in the mid 19th Century when the christening was supposed to have taken place. A further check of the original document led to the realisation that it should have been St Pancras New Church, which is close to Euston Station. That led to further visits and research which I report below.

Although St Pancras Old Church was rebuilt in Victorian times, there is evidence of a very old church on the site, perhaps in the 12th Century. However, until the end of the 18th Century the area was almost exclusively pastoral. Development began in the early 19th Century, large parts being occupied by émigrés from the French Revolution. The railways came in 1837 (Euston) and 1868 (St Pancras).

St Pancras New Church opened in 1822 to serve the new built up areas close to Euston Road. The picture on the front cover of this third edition shows it today, and we visited in June 2018 for a lunchtime concert and a walk around the area. The church has a Grade 1 listing and has a magnificent interior which can accommodate 2,500 people. The first Le Blonds recorded at the church were the christenings of the fourth, sixth, seventh and eighth children of Peter and Ann Le Blond in 1827, 1830, 1833 and 1845 respectively.

The first record of Le Blonds living in the area is the 1841 Census for Mary Street (now Stanhope Street) and they seem to have been there for around 20 years. Mary Street was located between Euston Station and Regent's Park. Much of the area was developed by John Nash, who also built the magnificent villas around the perimeter of Regent's Park, as markets associated with the canal and working class houses, but the houses in Mary Street and the surrounding area were developed in piecemeal fashion by many different builders with less adherence to the guidelines. Mary Street was renamed Stanhope Street at some point in the late 19th Century and, although Stanhope Street remains today, most of the area was redeveloped after then Second World War as the Regent's Park Estate following extensive bomb damage and in order to clear the remaining buildings which had become very dilapidated. The southern part of the street was redeveloped as part of the creation of the Euston Underpass on the Euston Road and the station and surrounding area is to be substantially altered by the High Speed 2 project. When we visited the area, we found a few of the original houses surrounded by flats and offices. A summary of the history of the area is included in a 2013 report for the Euston Area Plan.²⁸⁰



The few remaining original houses in Stanhope Street, formerly Mary Street. The Lord Nelson pub dates from the late 19th Century and the two adjacent houses date from 1804. All are listed as Grade 2.

It seems that Peter and Ann Le Blond lived in this area from some time in the 1820s (when it was relatively newly built) to the 1860s. Five of their eight children were christened in nearby churches. The 1841 Census shows four of the six then living children living with their parents. By 1851, the eldest, Peter Merzeau, then a Gas Fitter, was living a few houses away with his wife and son in the same street. The younger children were Scholars and then Dressmakers or Milliners. Peter was an 'Oilman' or 'Colourman' and was not wealthy, and the houses they lived in were ordinary and occupied by several families. The elder Peter died in 1865, although his address at the time of death was back in Spitalfields. His son Peter Merzeau had moved north to Camden by 1861 and he died a short time after his father in 1866 when living in Primrose Hill, the area which I will describe next.

Primrose Hill

The history of Primrose Hill is described in British History Online²⁸¹, The Story of Primrose Hill²⁸² and the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement²⁸³. Primrose Hill and Regent's Park were appropriated by Henry VIII as hunting grounds, with some land being gifted to Eton College and other to Lord Southampton (Charles Fitzroy). Regent's Park was designed by John Nash on a commission from the Prince Regent (later King George IV) and opened to the public in 1835. Eton College later swapped the Primrose Hill land for some in Eton, and the hill was designated as public open space in 1842. The Southampton Estate to the east of the hill was planned with a road layout similar to today's but the plots were to be for large mostly semi detached villas. However, the railway which marks the eastern and northern boundary was noisy and dirty, and the first houses were railway cottages, while most of the rest, except for those next to Regent's Park, were built as terraces, although the streets remained wide. The terraced houses quickly became multi occupied lodging houses and the mews behind provided stables, workshops and light industry. Shops were established in the ground floors of some of the terraces. Maps of the development shows that only a few houses had been built in Gloucester Road and none in St George's Road by 1860, but the area was fully developed by 1870. The road names were subsequently changed. Primrose Hill was designated as a Conservation Area in 1971.

We visited the area in November 2018, having walked along the canal towpath from St Pancras Station via Camden Lock, including a very nice lunch at The Engineer pub on Gloucester Avenue.



Nos. 10-13 (right to left) Chalcot Road, formerly St George's Road

Nos. 10-13 St George's Road were part of the estate of Peter Merzeau Le Blond, who died in 1866. It is probably a fair assumption that he bought the houses new, either 'off plan' as in modern parlance, or direct from a builder. How he funded them is one of the family mysteries. In the 1871 Census, they are in multi occupation, with two adults and four children in No. 10, eleven adults and three children in No. 11, seven adults and five children in No. 12 and nine adults and three children in No.13. None of these are Le Blonds, but Peter Merzeau's 1866 burial record gives his address as 13 St George's Road, while William Henry's 1921 death certificate gives his address as 10 St George's

Road. This is now a very expensive area, with flats going for over £1 million and houses for more than £3 million. A few doors down from nos. 10-13 is Utopia Village, a former piano factory now a creative studio and office complex.²⁸⁴

The houses in Gloucester Road (now Gloucester Avenue) are very similar to St George's Road but their location closer to the railway may have made them less desirable when they were first built. The first evidence in Gloucester Road is Maria Le Blond, first wife of William Henry, whose address at the time of her death in 1873 was 135 Gloucester Road. William Henry married again in 1876 (to Agnes Jane) and the entry for the christening of their first son Edgar in 1877 is 4 Norfolk Terrace, Regents Park, but it is not know where this road was. However, by 1881, the Census shows that they lived at 74 Gloucester Road, with four children aged between 9 and 2 months, sharing the house with three other adults. In the 1891 Census they were still at 74 Gloucester Road with, by then, five children including my grandfather, William Cecil, age 8, sharing the house with four other adults and one child. As noted earlier, the family was split after Agnes Jane's death in 1895, with William Henry living on his own in Willesden and the two younger children with their aunt in Hampstead.

There is further evidence of this area at St Mark's Church and the Primrose Hill Primary School. Edgar, William Henry and Agnes Jane's first son, was christened at St Mark's Church on 9 December 1877, alongside Frederick, William's son by his first wife, who by then was five years old. I have not found the christening records of the other three children, but they were all born at the time they lived near the church. St Mark's was consecrated in 1853 to serve the growing population. In 1940 during Battle of Britain it was set alight by incendiary bombs and then rebuilt and consecrated 1957, but was also damaged by fire in 1994 and then restored²⁸⁵.

William Cecil Le Blond was one of the first pupils of the Princess Road School when it opened in 1886²⁸⁶. Now the Primrose Hill Primary School, the building is listed as Grade II and more recent alumni have included the Millibands, Boris Johnson, Sam Mendes and Sadie Frost.



Primrose Hill Primary School

The last link with the St Pancras and Primrose Hill area is the records of the St Pancras Workhouse. William Henry Le Blond was admitted in 1920 and discharged in 1921 to St Pancras Hospital, which took over many of the workhouse buildings, occupying many of them today.

Finally, our visit to the area ended with a walk up Primrose Hill on a bright autumn day and we thought that my ancestors had probably also walked up the hill and wondered what the view would have been like then, presumably dominated by church spires instead of tall office blocks.



The view from the top of Primrose Hill

WHAT NEXT?

Research inevitably leads to more questions, and there are many lines of enquiry that I could follow, including:

- Where did the Le Blond's originate?
- What happened to the first wife of Robert Le Blond (b. 1676) and their children?
- How were the Le Blonds involved with the French Hospital, La Providence?
- What are the stories of some of the wider Le Blond family, such as Abraham (1819-1894) and his printing business?
- What's the real story of the will of Peter Merzeau Le Blond, and where did the family fortune go?
- What circumstances caused the Le Blonds to move from the East End to Euston/St Pancras, and what has happened to the houses where they lived and the churches where they were christened, married and buried? This has partly been answered in the third edition in the section on St Pancras and Primrose Hill.
- What other stories are there about the Lodge-Nuttgens and Phillis-Gardners will be revealed?

I hope that further editions of this book will explore these questions.

January 2019

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