

## **Courtney/Coutts/Cooper**

**Anne Courtney**, my G. G. Aunt, was born in 1843 in Chichester SSX. Baptised Anne but known as Annie at some point she appears to have gained Constance as second forename. Her father died in 1850 at the early age of 36 and I would assume the family were left in somewhat difficult financial circumstances as a result.

By 1861 Annie was working in England as a milliner's apprentice and this may well be why she travelled to India and her connection with the Coutts family and their tailoring business (definitely no connection with the banking Coutts family). It appears that the business was probably more extensive than just tailoring and they were general merchants as well. I have not found any further trace of Annie in England or India until she marries William Scott Coutts on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1872 in Anarkullee, Lahore, Bengal, India.

**William Scott Coutts** was a widower 23 years her senior. He had three sons by his first wife, **Mary Hannah Arnold**, who died in 1871. William Scott born 9<sup>th</sup> February 1860, Alexander R born ca. 1862 in Simla and John George b. ca 1864 in Simla. The three brothers were all educated in England and can all be found in in the Derby School registers where they seem to have excelled at sports. There may have been other children who died as there is a certain amount of conflicting evidence of birth dates. William Scott Coutts snr. died 1<sup>st</sup> June 1886 at St Thomas' Home, Lambeth SRY and was buried in the Brompton Cemetery, London. Wife Annie returned to India and died 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1897 in Simla and is buried in Park Cemetery Simla.

**William Scott Coutts jnr.** married Edith Ann Spreckley in 1893 in Bloomsbury, LND and appears in the 1911 census in England in St Albans, described as a merchant, born Punjab (resident) India. He travelled extensively during his career but retired to England and appears in the electoral registers from 1927 to 1934 in Guildford SRY and dies in 1941 in Haslemere SRY. He had five children, one of whom had a rather colourful career.

**Alexander Coutts** is described as Tailor to the Viceroy of India, so presumably took over the family business. He also planted the first apple orchard near Simla and established the Horticulture Research Station of Mashobra in 1887. Thacker's Indian Directory 1895 has:

COUTTS, Alex.: Civil & Military Tailor: Brunswick House, Simla & Umbala  
COUTTS, Mrs: Milliner & Dressmaker, Simla & Umbala

As Alexander was not yet married in 1895 I assume Mrs Coutts was his mother Annie. Alexander married Mildred Johnson on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1898 at Christ Church Simla, and they had two daughters Jean Elaine Scott Coutts (1902) and Diana Ailsa Scott Coutts (1904). Alexander died at Simla in 1930 aged 65 and Mildred returned to England, living at Wandsworth Common, probably with her daughter, and died in 1947. Daughter Diana died unmarried at Wandsworth in 1981. Daughter Jean was at school in Walmer, Kent in 1911 but I have no knowledge of her after that date.

**John George Coutts** became a brewer, firstly at the Solon Brewery and then the Naini Tal Brewery. He was unmarried and was buried in 1900 age 36 at Naini Tal, Bengal.

William Scott Coutts senior's second marriage with Annie produced two daughters Ethel Emily born 28<sup>th</sup> September 1873 Simla, and Marguerite Isobel born 1<sup>st</sup> October 1875 Simla.

**Ethel Emily Coutts** remained in India, unmarried, returning to England on 21 5 1950 at the age of 77. She died in 1955 in Telscombe Cliffs SSX.

**Marguerite Isobel Coutts** married **William Francis Bruce Cowmeadow**, a draper, (born in Calcutta in 1875) on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1904 at Christ Church Simla. They had two daughters Eileen Constance (1907) and Mona Aylmer (1909) in Umbala. William died in Lahore in 1926 and Marguerite a year later in 1927 in Simla.

**Eileen Constance Cowmeadow** rather oddly appears to have had two baptisms, or possibly there were two children with the same names, at Umbala, on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1907 and 5<sup>th</sup> December 1928, and remained a spinster. She appears to have been resident in England from the 1930's but travelled several times to Bombay.

**Mona Aylmer Cowmeadow** married **Ernest Victor Williams**, a soldier, on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1927 in Umbala. I do not know whether they had any children. Mona Aylmer Ford was mentioned in the Administration of her Aunt Ethel Emily Coutts, and appears in the passenger lists travelling to Bombay, so I would assume that this indicates a second marriage.

**Emily Elizabeth Courtney** (Annie's sister) was my Great Grandmother. She married **Alfred Cooper**, and their eldest son **John Alfred Kempster Cooper**, my Grandfather, was born in 1869. He started out as a schoolteacher, although his lifelong passion was music. In early 1889 he was appointed to Burton Latimer School NTH (moving from Kibworth LEI where I assume he was assisting his father who was head of the National School there) but in October of the same year it was reported that he was leaving Burton Latimer to go to India. This seems very sudden having just taken a new post, but he may have made the move for family reasons (his mother died in March of that year), or perhaps he was recruited to cover the position of organist at Calcutta Cathedral while the incumbent was on leave. He may also have been offered a clerical position with his uncle's tailoring business.

Judging by his testimonials he appears to have given satisfaction as an organist, but I think he probably returned to England at some point in the latter part of 1891. He was certainly back by 1892 and was employed as Assistant Master at Chetham's College, Manchester. He gave up teaching on his marriage in 1897.

According to family information he returned to England because the heat of India made him ill. Although these stories are notoriously unreliable this could well have been true as he and his brothers were all fair skinned and red-headed, probably not well suited to a hot climate.

## Testimonials

Testimonial 1: Edward R Calcutta – I believe he is Edward R Johnson, Bishop of Calcutta

Testimonial 2: Welbore MacCarthy – according to entry in Wikipedia : Welbore MacCarthy, DD was the inaugural Bishop of Grantham from 1905 until 1920. Born in 1840 and educated at Trinity College, Dublin, he was ordained in 1868. His first post after ordination was as a curate in Preston. From 1872 to 1898 he was a missionary priest in India, rising in time to be Archdeacon of Calcutta. Returning to England he was Rector of Ashwell then Rural Dean of Corringham until 1905 when he was elevated to the Episcopate. He died on 21 March 1925

Testimonial 3: H O Moore Chaplain – I know nothing more about him