

Bygone Bryologists

This is the third article in a series about prominent British and Irish field-bryologists of the past. The author would be very pleased to learn of any information that supplements its content.

A more general and at present unfinished *Social and biographical history of British and Irish field-bryologists* is available on-line at <http://ralph.cs.cf.ac.uk/HOB/HOBBintro.htm>.

Hampden Gurney Jameson (1852-1939)

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Summary of bryological career

Jameson's most important contribution to field-bryology was as an accomplished artist. He illustrated both of the pocket guides that were widely used during the first half of the 20th century: Dixon's *Student's handbook of British mosses* (1896, 3rd ed. 1924) and MacVicar's *Student's handbook of British hepatics* (1912, 2nd ed. 1926). Before these books appeared, Jameson had also written a 'Key to genera and species of British mosses' (*Journal of Botany* 1891), and in 1893 brought out an *Illustrated guide to British mosses*. Many of these drawings were subsequently incorporated into Dixon's *Handbook*. His herbarium and original drawings are preserved at the Natural History Museum in London.

Family background

Hampden Gurney Jameson (Figure 1) was the third son and eighth of ten children of William Kingsbury Jameson (1806-1864) and Mary Ann (*née* Gurney, 1812-1871). His father was a wealthy indigo merchant in London, and the family lived in opulence at their house at Camberwell, then a district of large and luxurious residences. His elder brother, William Gurney Jameson (1837-1892), was also an indigo merchant in London at the time of the 1871 census.

William Kingsbury Jameson left estate worth approaching £70,000 when he died. He in turn was helped on his way in life by his father, William Jameson (died 1836), who built up and bequeathed him the family business in Laurence Pountney Lane. William Jameson the elder was a druggist when he married Sarah Kingsbury in 1800.

Sarah Kingsbury was the daughter of William Kingsbury (1744-1818), a dissenting minister of Southampton who was friendly with John Newton (Cowper's friend) and John Howard the philanthropist, and strongly supported the London Missionary Society. William Kingsbury married Mary Andrews (1744/5-1789), daughter of the Reverend Mordecai Andrews (*ca* 1715-1800), an independent minister in London. In 1777, Mary's younger sister, Hannah (born 1750), married a Reverend William Jameson, and they may have begat the William Jameson who died in 1836. If so, William Jameson and Sarah Kingsbury were children of different Andrews sisters.

H.G. Jameson was also blessed with prominent, proselytising forebears on his mother's side of the family. The Gurneys were Quakers, a sect whose creed encouraged them to understand God by study of His creations rather than through the priesthood, which is why many

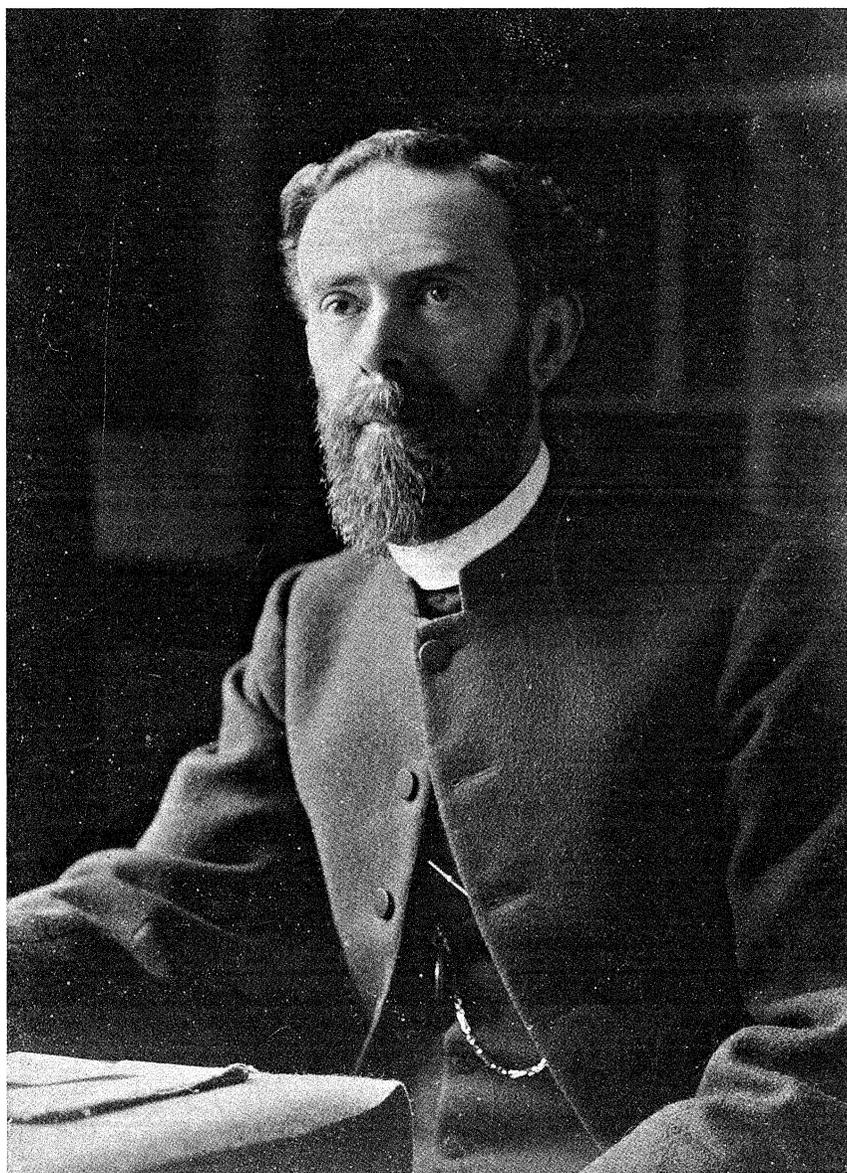


Figure 1. Hampden Gurney Jameson, about 1892. From the BBS photographic archive.

Quakers became ardent naturalists. Several Gurneys were also philanthropists, of which the most famous was Elizabeth Fry.

H.G. Jameson's mother was a daughter of William Brodie Gurney (1777-1855) and Ann Benham (1780-1830). William Brodie Gurney, his father Joseph (1744-1815) and grandfather Thomas (1705-1770) were prominent shorthand

writers. Thomas worked at the Old Bailey, and William Brodie Gurney was appointed shorthand writer to the Houses of Parliament in 1813, often travelling round the country in order to record important trials, speeches, libel cases, etc.

Outside his stenographical career, William Brodie Gurney was a zealous Christian who

opened a Sunday school at Walworth, Surrey in 1795, and became a founding member of the Sunday School Union in 1803. He also assisted with running the London Female Penitentiary, and preached there. Like his father, he was prominent in the anti-slavery movement.

William Brodie Gurney's elder brother, Sir John Gurney (1768-1845), was a lawyer and judge who became Baron of the Exchequer. He married Mary Ann Hawes (born *ca* 1772), daughter of Dr William Hawes (1736-1808) who was a founding member of the Royal Humane Society. Sir John and Mary Gurney's son, John Hampden Gurney (1802-1862) became a priest and wrote miscellaneous tracts, and one of John Hampden Gurney's sons was the philosophical writer Edmund Gurney (1847-1888). The name of Hampden stems from the family who were such prominent Parliamentarians at the time of the English Civil War.

Biography

With so many proselytising and philanthropic antecedents on either side of the family, Jameson would have found it difficult to avoid a career as clerk in holy orders. He did his best to buck the trend, having become a medical student at the University of London by the time of the 1871 census. But like many others before and after him, he abandoned his medical training for the call to holy orders. While at Exeter College, Oxford (1874-1877), he may have met the older bryologist Henry Boswell. Boswell was in trade at Oxford, and befriended Augustin Ley (who later recorded the flora and bryoflora of Herefordshire) while he was a student at the university not long before Jameson went up.

After Oxford, Jameson became curate successively at Norlands (St James's Gardens, London), Lincoln (where his wife's elder sister had married the canon of the cathedral, who perhaps found a position for Jameson), and Eastbourne (along the south coast from Brighton where relatives of his wife lived).

Eventually in 1896 he became vicar at St Saviour's, Eastbourne, where he remained until he retired in 1917. He spent his last years at Leatherhead, Surrey, not far from in-laws who lived at Farnham.

Jameson married Amy Agnes Bayly at Lincoln in 1877. Amy was an elder sister of Ada Ellen Bayly (1857-1903), who wrote popular novels under the name of Edna Lyall. Their parents were Robert Bayly (died 1868) and Mary Winter (died 1871). Ada lived with the Jamesons in London from 1880 until 1881, then in Lincoln for three years, and after 1884 at Eastbourne until her death.

Mary Winter was related to John Newnham Winter (1830-1907), a physician who was much interested in filmy ferns (*Hymenophyllum* species). Perhaps Winter or even Jameson himself inspired the character of the fern-loving Mr Henderson in Ada's first novel, *Won by Waiting* (1879). More remotely, the Winters may possibly have been descended from the Roman Catholic Winters of Huddington in Worcestershire, of which the brothers Robert and Thomas were executed in 1605 for their roles as Gunpowder Plotters. Amy's other ancestors included Captain Richard Rundle Burges (born *ca* 1756) of HMS Ardent, who was killed at Camperdown in 1797 during the French Revolutionary War, and is honoured with a memorial at St Paul's Cathedral. Another prominent ancestor of Amy's, Thomas Bradbury (1677-1759), was a non-conformist divine known as 'Bold Bradbury' during the reign of Queen Anne.

Amy and H.G. Jameson had eight children, the first two being born in Kensington, London in 1879 and 1881. At the time of the 1881 census the family were living at 41 St James Square, but their third child was born at Lincoln in 1883, and the family had moved to 6 College Road in Eastbourne by the time their fourth child was born in 1886. There was a happy home, with the children given free rein. Ada tells of one Christmas when the presents were hidden in a

haystack in the sitting room, 'causing a frightful mess'.

But the early years of the 20th century were unkind to the Jamesons, as four of their children died. One of them, Maurice Gurney (*ca* 1887-1915), became a private in the Honourable

Artillery Company and died in Belgium. However, the second child and eldest son, Hugh Phillip (*ca* 1881-1956) taught at Eastbourne College until 1915, moving to Charterhouse from 1919. He inherited his father's artistic ability, and was renowned as a gifted artist and craftsman.

Reports of BBS meetings

Throughout the following accounts of BBS meetings, nomenclature follows Paton (1999), *The liverwort flora of the British Isles*, and Smith

(2004), *The moss flora of Britain and Ireland*, 2nd edition.

Extreme arable bryology: a brief visit to the cereal fields of Caithness

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A tantalising glimpse of the arable bryophytes of Caithness is provided by David Long's (1975) report of the BBS meeting there in August 1974. On this meeting, 'one member concentrated on the ubiquitous oatfields of the county', continuing even on one day when the fieldwork of the rest of the party was curtailed by heavy rain. Students of the history of arable bryology will recognise this dedicated member as Dr H.L.K. Whitehouse. His discoveries included *Bryum riparium*, *B. sauteri*, *Ditrichum pusillum* and *Poblia lescuriana* new to Caithness (v.-c. 109) and *B. tenuisetum*, *D. pusillum* and *P. lescuriana* new to the adjacent vice-county of West Sutherland (v.-c. 108). These records suggested that Caithness arable fields might support a suite of unusual species, and should therefore be surveyed for

the current Survey of the Bryophytes of Arable Land (SBAL). With this in mind we contacted Ken Butler, the Botanical Society of the British Isles vice-county recorder for Caithness, who confirmed that oats are still grown in the county and that a visit in January might be feasible. Setting aside reservations about the wisdom of visiting NE Scotland at this time of year, we booked a small cottage near Wick for 28-31 January 2005 with a view to exploring the arable fields of the region. Fortunately, this period proved to be mild, and we were able to spend three days bryologising in almost ideal conditions in Caithness and West Sutherland.

The geology of Caithness is dominated by the relatively soft and fertile Old Red Sandstone.