

FREDERICK ARNOLD LEES (1847-1921)

Mark Lawley
email: mrbryology@gmail.com

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

A Social and Biographical History of British and Irish Field-bryologists is also available on-line at <http://britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk/>

Bryological career

Lees became interested in botany about 1865, while at Leeds Grammar School, where the Reverend Frederick Gard Fleay, literary scholar and later a schoolmaster at Skipton Grammar School (see *Dictionary of National Biography*) first aroused Lees's interest in botany.

Lees founded the Botanical Locality Record Club and edited its journal from 1873 until 1886. He compiled several local Floras, and edited the second edition of the *London Catalogue of British Mosses* (1881).

His herbarium is at Cartwright Hall, Bradford, with further plants at Belfast. Some of his vascular plants were sent from Cartwright Hall to the British (now Natural History) Museum in London. Eight of his notebooks are Bradford Art Gallery and Museum, and cover the periods 1870-81, 1893-98, 1901-11, 1913-14, and 1918-20. His library went to Bradford Public Library.

Family background and biography

Lees was born at Burmanstoft Hall, near Leeds, Yorkshire on January 20th 1847. He was the son of Frederick Richard Lees (1815-1897), author and temperance lecturer, and Mercy Joanna (*née* Jowett, 1813-1870). Mercy Jowett was a daughter of Samuel Jowett (1784-1875) of Burmanstoft Hall, a letterpress printer who printed several of F.R. Lees's temperance pamphlets.

Frederick Richard Lees's parents were Joseph Lees (born 1790) and Anne (*née* Sanderson, 1796-1815). Anne was a daughter of Ephraim Sanderson (1749-1822), schoolmaster of Aberford, and reputedly descended on her father's side from Robert Sanderson (1587-1663), bishop of Lincoln and author of *Cases of Conscience* and *Logicae Artis Compendium* (1615), who merits an entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Joseph and Anne Lees went to live at Meanwood Hall, an academy for young gentlemen in 1814, but Anne died soon after giving birth to Frederick Richard in 1815. Joseph married secondly Isabella Bickerdike (born 1797) in 1816, by whom he had three further children.

Frederick Richard Lees corresponded about temperance with William Wilson (1799-1871) of Warrington, who was a member of the National Temperance League. In two such letters in 1858, Lees accused an opponent of his (the American John B. Gough) of being a secret drinker. Unfortunately for Lees, Wilson made the letters public, even sending a copy of one to Gough himself, who then successfully sued for libel.

In 1851, the Lees family lived in Pontefract Lane, Leeds. In 1861 they were living with Mercy's younger sister Martha Eliza Jowett at Stonegate, Chapel Allerton, Leeds (although Frederick Richard was away in Leicester at the time of the Census). By 1871, Martha was living in Frederick Richard's household, also in Stonegate, Chapel Allerton. Frederick Arnold was there at the time of the Census Return, listed as a medical student. He qualified later that year. Frederick Richard, his second wife Sarah (born 1829), and daughter Mary Eleanor were still living at Stonegate in 1881.

Frederick Arnold's younger sister, Mary Eleanor (born 1849/50) married Freeman Whatmoor, professor of music, who wrote songbooks such as *School Songs* (1889) and *Mazurka for the Piano* (1903).

Frederick Arnold was educated at Leeds grammar school, from where he went to Durham University. He qualified as a surgeon and physician in 1871. He practised in Hartlepool (c.1873), Market Rasen (1876), Walton-in-Furness (1877), Warrington and Wetherby (1881), Kidderminster (1882), Reading (1883), as poor-law surgeon for the Hawes district of the Hayworth Union (1883-87), Heckmondwyke, and then (apart from 1893-4 at Harrogate) in Leeds for the remainder of his life.

Lees married Mary Esther Bannister (1849/50-1906) at Leeds in 1871. They had a son, George Frederick W. Lees (born 1872), who married Edith Sarah Fithian in 1898.

Lees died on September 17th, 1921 at Meanwood, Leeds.

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