

HAMPDEN GURNEY JAMESON (1852-1939)

Mark Lawley

email: mrbyology@gmail.com

This is one in a series 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

Jameson's most important contribution to field-bryology was as an accomplished artist. He illustrated both of the two pocket-guides which 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 his *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.

Jameson discovered *Hypnum revolutum* on Ben Lawers, Perthshire in 1890.

Family background

Hampden Gurney Jameson 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.

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 (born 1781) in 1800, and his grandson William Gurney Jameson (1837-1892) – HGJ's elder brother - was an indigo merchant in London at the time of the 1871 Census.

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, as well as strongly supporting the London Missionary Society. Kingsbury married Mary Andrews (1744/5-1789), daughter of the Reverend Mordecai Andrews (1716-1750), an independent minister from Bocking, Essex, and later

Artillery Lane, Spitalfields, London, by his first wife Sarah Maydman, great-niece of Henry Maydman of Portsmouth. In 1777, Mary's younger half-sister, Hannah, (born 1750), daughter of Mordecai Andrews' second wife Sarah Fann (or Fair) of Sevenoaks married the Reverend William Jameson (died 1827/8) from Warminster, Wiltshire. William later held livings at Bocking in Essex, Horsham, and became rector of Clapham. William and Hannah begat William Jameson who died in 1836. So William Jameson and Sarah Kingsbury were children of different Andrews half-sisters. In addition, Sarah Andrews (1745-1818), daughter of the Reverend Mordecai Andrews married Walter Taylor, a close and long-term friend of William Kingsbury, and William's son Walter in turn married his cousin Sarah Andrews Taylor. Thus, the Kingsbury, Andrews, Taylor and Jameson families remained closely connected for at least two generations.

H.G. Jameson was also blessed with prominent, proselytising forebears on his mother's side of the family. Mary Ann (Hampden's mother) came from Gurneys who were Independents in religion. They were distantly related to the Gurneys of Norfolk, who 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 Quakers became ardent naturalists. Several Gurneys were also philanthropists, of which the most famous was Elizabeth Fry.

Mary Ann Gurney 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 c.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 own 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, HGJ 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 HGJ), and Eastbourne, along the south coast from Brighton where relatives of his wife lived. Eventually in 1894 HGJ became curate at St. Saviour's, Eastbourne, and then vicar of St. Peter's, Eastbourne (now demolished) in 1896, 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 (1806-1868) and Mary Winter (1825-1871). 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. Ada was a prominent supporter of liberal causes – Irish home rule, opposition to the Boer War, cremation, and the toleration of atheism (particularly supporting Bradlaugh) – and was on good terms with Gladstone.

Mary Winter was sister to John Newnham Winter (1830-1907), a physician who was much interested in filmy ferns (*Hymenophyllum* spp.). Perhaps Winter or even HGJ 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 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 c.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 HGJ had eight children, the first two being born in Kensington, London in 1879 and 1881. At the time of the 1881 Census Return 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. Theirs 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 (c.1887-1915), became a private in the Honourable Artillery Company and died in Belgium. However, the second child and eldest son, Hugh Phillip (c.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.

Hampden Jameson was a liberal and notable scholar of the New Testament, and wrote *The Origins of the Synoptic Gospels* (1922), which was regarded as late as the 1950s by Vincent Taylor as “the last scholarly attempt to argue the priority of the Gospel of Matthew”.

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