

Trace your Ancestry

Report

On the Ancestry of Roland Higgins 1907-1983

A report on the life of Roland Higgins and his Ancestry based upon family information and genealogical records. Author Christine Wibberley Solicitor (non practising) Associate Member of AGRA, for Trace Your Ancestry info@trace-your-ancestry.com www.trace-your-ancestry.com Tel 07530481842 Data Protection Registration No Z2812323

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Roland HIGGINS and his ancestry

Roland HIGGINS was born on 12 July 1907 at Whitmore, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire¹. He was listed as son of George HIGGINS and his wife Emmeline nee BOWLER in the 1911 census at 1 & 2 Station Cottages, Whitmore, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire. In that census 1 and 2 Station Cottages was stated to have 3 rooms.²

Roland was educated at the village school at Whitmore and then at Crewe Academy, a private establishment, run by two spinsters.

Until he was four Roland was an only child but in May 1912 his parents had another son, Charles. Sadly Charles lived for only one month and died on 14 June 1912³ of meningitis. Roland's parents had no further children.



Wedding day picture

Roland's maternal grandmother, Hannah BOWLER nee CHAPMAN lived with Roland and his parents for some years till her death on 22 Sep 1931 and Roland attended the Register Office to register the death.⁴

He had been an insurance agent from leaving school and this is given as his occupation at the time of his marriage on 5 August 1935⁵ when he lived in Ilkeston Derbyshire. He married Mollie LINDSAY who on their marriage certificate was stated to be John LINDSAY, a Coachman. The wedding took place at Butterton, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire, the banns having been called the three previous Sundays⁶. Roland and his wife Mollie had known each other for most of their lives having been brought up in the neighbouring villages of Whitmore and Butterton.

¹ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Certificate of Birth.

² 1911 Census of England and Wales RG14PN16401 RG78PN1016 RD359 SD1 ED3 SN55

³ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Certificate of Death.

⁴ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Certificate of Death

⁵ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Certificate of Marriage

Mollie and Roland HIGGINS lived in Nottingham after their marriage but in 1936 moved to Hall Green Birmingham where Roland took up a post with Royal Insurance. Mollie, who had been a schoolteacher, under the regulations of the time, gave up work on marriage.



Corporal Higgins

When the Second World War broke out in 1939 Roland wanted to enter the RAF as an airman. His ambition was to fly. When he applied he was told that he was too old and so served for a time in the Fire Service. He began military service in the RAF in 1940 where he rose through the ranks to become a sergeant as a PT instructor. He took out a grant of probate to the will of his mother in law, Margaret LINDSAY in September 1943 when he was described as a Corporal in the Royal Air Force.⁷

During the War he took part in the Allied invasion of Italy and also served in Austria. Always interested in sport he ran competitively for the RAF. During his time in the RAF he went skiing in the Austrian Alps. He ended military service in 1945.

After the War he entered the Civil Servant and became an Inspector in the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance, as it then was. He retired in July 1972.

In retirement he gave his time to his extensive stamp collection, played flat green bowls and enjoyed watching sport. As a young man he had played cricket for Maer (Staffordshire) Cricket Club and had run competitively over a middle distance for North Staffordshire Harriers and Sparkhill (Birmingham) Harriers. He played badminton until he was past age 50, represented the Civil Service at Bowls and ran as a veteran till he was almost 60. He served as President of both Sparkhill Harriers and Birmingham Civil Service Bowls Club.

He died on 28 May 1983 in Birmingham aged 75 of a heart attack.⁸ At his funeral there was standing room only in the crematorium. He was survived by Mollie and a daughter.⁹

⁶ Parish Registers of Butterson

⁷ High Court of Justice Probate Records. Copy will and grant of probate

⁸ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death Certificate

The Ancestral Tree of Roland Higgins

Will HIGGINS

b. abt. 1803 Hinstock SAL
 bpt. 1 Jan 1804 Hinstock
 d. 4 Apr 1850 Hatton SAL
 occ. Labourer

=

Mary Ann OLDS

b. abt 1807 Waters Upton SAL
 bpt. 16 Aug 1807 Waters Upton
 m. 16 Jul 1832 Hinstock
 d. 14 Apr 1882 Hatton
 occ. Labourer

Charles MICKLEWRIGHT

b. abt 1825 Cheswardine SAL
 bpt. 18 Dec 1825 Cheswardine
 d. 17 Sept 1906 Summerseat LAN
 occ. Labourer

=

Elizabeth ARKINSTALL

b. abt 1831 Edgmond SAL
 bpt. 3 July 1831 Tibberton SAL
 m. 25 Sept 1850 Childs Ercall SAL
 d. 9 Nov 1910 Ramsbottom LAN

James BOWLER

occ. Hatter

Sarah

Edward CHAPMAN

b.c. 1818 Cheshire
 d. 24 Nov 1843 Dukinfield
 occ. Collier

Elizabeth DRANSFIELD

b.c. 1814 Ashton LAN
 bpt. 22 Jan 1815 Mossley LAN
 m. 11 Sept 1837 Mottram CHE
 d. 12 Jun 1891 LAN
 occ. Cotton weaver

Rowland HIGGINS

b. 27 Feb 1850 Childs Ercall SAL
 d. 24 Dec 1930 Stoke on Tern SAL
 occ. Agricultural labourer

=

Joanna MICKLEWRIGHT

b. 17 Oct 1852 Cheswardine SAL
 m. 4 Feb 1875 Stanton SAL
 d. 9 Sept 1935 Stoke on Tern SAL

James Howorth BOWLER

b.c. 1839 Stockport CHE
 d.c. 1896 Stockport
 occ. House painter

=

Hannah CHAPMAN

b. 17 Oct 1843 Dukinfield CHE
 m. 29 Aug 1866 Ashton under Lyne LAN
 d. 22 Sept 1931 Whitmore STA

George HIGGINS

b. 10 Dec 1880 Childs Ercall SAL
 d. 6 Jul 1950 Shrewsbury SAL
 occ. Engineer

=

Emmeline BOWLER

b. 2 May 1880 Ashton under Lyne
 m. 10 Oct 1906 Heaton Norris
 d. 10 Jul 1937 Whitmore

Roland HIGGINS

b. 12 Jul 1907 Whitmore STA
 d. 28 May 1983 Birmingham
 occ. Civil Servant

⁹ Many facts based upon family reminiscences

The parents of Roland HIGGINS



George; the only known picture

George HIGGINS, Roland's father was born on 10 December 1880¹⁰ at Child's Ercall, near Market Drayton, Shropshire, the fourth of his parents' seven children. He was listed as the son of Roland HIGGINS (also known as Rowland) and Joanna nee MICKLEWRIGHT in the 1881¹¹ census, living with his parents and siblings at Narrow Lane Child's Ercall; he was still living with his family, a scholar, at Narrow Lane Child's Ercall in the 1891¹² census.

He was listed as a member of the household of George and Ada DERBYSHIRE in the 1901¹³ census at 18 Farmer Street Stockport. Both he and George DERBYSHIRE were described as railway workers. Although George was described as George and Ada's DERBYSHIRE's lodger Ada was his older half sister who had married George DERBYSHIRE, a native of Stockport, in 1800.

Farmer Street Stockport was just around the corner from Hesketh Street where Miss Emmeline (or Emily) BOWLER lived with her widowed mother and younger brother.

George married Emmeline in 1906 at All Saints' Church, Heaton Norris, Stockport.¹⁴ After their marriage George and Emmeline went to live in Whitmore Staffordshire. George was described as head of household in the 1911¹⁵ census, living at

¹⁰ Records of Birth Marriage and Death – General Register Office. GRO Index and family Bible.

¹¹ RG11; Piece: 2676; Folio: 95; Page: 14; GSU roll: 1341641

¹² RG12; Piece: 2129; Folio 86; Page 11; GSU roll: 6097239.

¹³ RG13; Piece: 3286; Folio: 141; Page: 22

¹⁴ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Marriage Certificate

¹⁵ 1911 Census of England and Wales RG14PN16401 RG78PN1016 RD359 SD1 ED3 SN55

1&2 Station Cottages, Whitmore with Emmeline and their elder son Roland. George, though described as an engineer of waterworks in that census, still worked for the railway company which he did all his working life. At that time the railway companies produced all their own power and had control of their own utilities and employed their own engineers for the purpose of servicing them.

George rose in the railway service and by 1934 was chief assistant engineer at the engine works at Crewe. However at this time he suffered a head injury in an accident involving a railway turntable. After his accident he started having fits and was forced to retire.

George was widowed by Emmeline's death in 1937 and went to live with his youngest sister, Mary, (Polly) at Lilac Cottage, Tern Hill near Market Drayton. He suffered a further accident when he was knocked down by a motor car in Crewe. Thereafter his mental state deteriorated and eventually Polly was unable to care for him. In 1947 he was admitted to Quarry House Public Assistance Institution (formerly Market Drayton Workhouse) but after his mental state deteriorated further he was moved in late 1949 to Shelton Hospital Shrewsbury, the County Asylum. His health swiftly declined and he died there on 6 July 1950,¹⁶ aged 69.¹⁷

George suffered all his life from stomach ulcers. It may have been that which kept him from serving in the First World War in which two of his brothers and several of his cousins were killed.



Emily as a young woman

Roland HIGGINS' mother, Emily (the name registered at her birth) or **Emmeline BOWLER** was born in 1880 at Hurst Ashton under Lyne, Lancashire.¹⁸ She was the daughter of James Howorth BOWLER, a house painter and Hannah CHAPMAN. She was listed as a member of the household of her father in the 1881¹⁹ census living at 2 High Street Hurst Ashton under Lyne. Also in the household were her mother who was working as a

¹⁷ Clinical information from Post Mortem Report held by Shropshire Archives (some information closed till 2051)

¹⁸ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office

¹⁹ RG11; Piece: 4057; Folio: 121; Page: 48; GSU roll: 1341970.

cotton weaver and her twelve year old sister Annie. In 1891 the family was living at 1, Cotton Court, George Street Stockport. Emmeline's father was still a house painter; her mother a cotton weaver and Annie a towel weaver. There had been an addition to the family, nine year old James Edward BOWLER, and he and Emmeline are both described as scholars in that census.²⁰ In 1901 Emmeline was living at 108 Hesketh Street Heaton Norris Stockport with her widowed mother and her brother James. Her sister Annie had died in 1894 of lung congestion,²¹ possibly caused by conditions in the weaving sheds and her father had probably died in about 1896. In 1901 Emmeline was a sweet confectioner and her brother James a hatter,²² Stockport being at that time the centre of the hat making industry in England.



Emily with Roland's dog, Nip

After her marriage to George HIGGINS in 1906 she went to live at Whitmore Staffordshire. Her brother James, who had previously served in South Africa, was killed in November 1914 in Belgium on active service.²³ From a date which is not precisely known but probably around 1930 Emmeline's mother, Hannah BOWLER lived with Emmeline and George HIGGINS at Whitmore till her death in 1931.

Emmeline died in 1937 at 1 & 2 Station Cottages, Whitmore, Newcastle under Lyme; Staffordshire aged 57 of carcinoma of the groin.²⁴

She and George had two children, Roland 1907-1983 and Charles 1912-1912.

²⁰ RG12; Piece: 2797; Folio 66; Page 10; GSU roll: 6097907.

²¹ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death certificate

²² RG13; Piece: 3286; Folio: 92; Page: 20.

²³ <http://www.cwgc.org/>

²⁴ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death certificate

The grandparents of Roland HIGGINS

Roland's paternal grandfather, **Rowland HIGGINS** was born on 27 February 1850 at Hatton Childs Ercall, Market Drayton, Shropshire. He was the son of Will HIGGINS and Mary Ann HOWLES/ KNOWLES/OLDS, the youngest of their nine children.



Roland in old age

Though his registered birth²⁵ and baptismal²⁶ name was Rowland, perhaps as his mother was illiterate, this was at the choice of the Registrar or officiating clergyman and after he left home he adopted the spelling of his name as Roland. His father died when he was a few weeks old²⁷, whilst his mother was away from home registering his birth. In the 1851 census he was listed in the household of his widowed mother at Hatton Child's Ercall. Also in the household were his siblings Elizabeth, William, George and Fanny. In 1861 only he and his mother were in the household and were still living at Ercall, on Narrow Lane, when he is described as a scholar. His mother was working as an agricultural labourer.

On 9 February 1871²⁸ he was a witness when his older brother William married Martha JONES at St Michael's Church, Child's Ercall.

In 1871²⁹ Rowland, his mother, his older married brother William, his brother George with a nephew and niece, Thomas, aged 12 and Mary Newton aged 9 were listed in a household on Narrow Lane Childs Ercall. All the adults, including Mary HIGGINS,

²⁵ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office Birth Certificate

²⁶ Parish Registers of Childs Ercall Shropshire: Shropshire Archives

²⁷ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office Death Certificate

²⁸ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office Marriage Certificate

were agricultural labourers. Thomas and Mary were the children of Roland's sister Mary who in 1855 had married Richard Newton, a fellow servant in the house where she was working. In 1862 Richard NEWTON had died leaving Mary with four young children.³⁰

Rowland married Jo(h)anna MICKLEWRIGHT daughter of Charles MICKLEWRIGHT and Elizabeth ARKINSTALL on 4 February 1875 at St Andrew's Church, Stanton upon Hine Heath, Shropshire, Both bride and groom were stated to be servants A witness to the marriage was Johanna's older sister Emma ENDLEY nee MICKLEWRIGHT.³¹ On his marriage to Johanna Rowland took responsibility for her illegitimate daughter, Ada.

He was almost certainly not Ada's father. Ada was, till her marriage, always known as MICKLEWRIGHT and at her birth and marriage the name of her father was not given.³² Ada was already 18 months old at the time of her mother's marriage when Johanna was pregnant with Charles her eldest child with Rowland. In short when Johanna was expecting his child Rowland married her.

In the 1881 census Roland (having adopted a different spelling) was head of a household on Narrow Lane, Child's Ercall, a labourer.³³ Living in the household were Johanna Ada (described as 'daughter in law', a common indication at the time of a stepdaughter) and Roland and Johanna's children Charles, Elizabeth, Esther and George. He was listed as head of household in the 1891 census,³⁴ again at Narrow Lane an agricultural labourer. Apart from Johanna in the household were children

²⁹ RG10; Piece: 2803; Folio: 43; Page: 2; GSU roll: 838849.

³⁰ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. BMD Index

³¹ Do. Marriage Certificate

³² Do. Marriage Certificate

³³ RG11; Piece: 2676; Folio: 95; Page: 14; GSU roll: 1341641.

³⁴ RG12; Piece: 2129; Folio 86; Page 11; GSU roll: 6097239.

Esther, George, Mary, Roland and Francis. In 1901³⁵ the family was still living on Narrow Lane. Head of the household Roland was still an agricultural labourer living with Johanna and sons Charles, also an agricultural labourer, and Francis aged 11. In the next house or tenement were Roland's unmarried brother and sister, George and Hannah HIGGINS. By 1911 Roland and Johanna had moved and in the census of that year were living at Lilac Cottage, Stoke Heath, Market Drayton with their sons Charles and Roland. Roland and his sons are all described as farm labourers. In the census Lilac cottage was recorded as having four rooms, Roland and Johanna are stated to have been married 36 years and to have had 8 children born alive all of whom were then living.

Roland died on 24 December 1930 at Lilac Cottage, Stoke Heath, Market Drayton, Shropshire, aged 80, of valvular heart disease and epilepsy, described as a general farm labourer/agricultural labourer.³⁶ Though he could never have had much money at his death Roland left a net estate of £111 2s 1d and it was necessary for his widow Johanna to take out a grant of Letters of Administration.³⁷

Johanna (also Joanna) MICKLEWRIGHT, the paternal grandmother of Roland HIGGINS was born on 17 October 1852 at Chetwynd, Shropshire and was baptized there on 14 November 1852.³⁸ She was listed as daughter of Charles MICKLEWRIGHT and his wife Elizabeth ARKINSTALL in the 1861 census at Sambrook, Cheswardine. Also in the household were her siblings, Emma, Henry and Algernon and her maternal uncle John ARKINSTALL.

In 1871 Johanna was listed as a servant in the household of Mary Ann DICKIN a widowed farmer of 288 acres at Farm House Ellerdine, near Market Drayton. Also in the household were Mrs. DICKIN'S 21 year old son and two younger children.³⁹

³⁵ RG13; Piece: 2560; Folio: 75; Page: 10.

³⁶ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death certificate

³⁷ Letters of Administration

³⁸ Parish Registers of Chetwynd Shropshire

³⁹ RG10; Piece: 2805; Folio: 15; Page: 2; GSU roll: 838850

Johanna registered the birth of her daughter Ada MICKLEWRIGHT on 22 July 1873⁴⁰ at Child's Ercall, Market Drayton; she made her mark on the entry. The name of the father was not given.

After her marriage in 1875 she went to live with her husband, Roland HIGGINS and her daughter Ada at Childs Ercall. She died on 9 September 1935 at Lilac Cottage, Stoke Heath, Market Drayton, Shropshire, aged 82 of myocardial degeneration.⁴¹

Roland HIGGINS and his wife Johanna MICKLEWRIGHT had eight children, Charles HIGGINS 1875-1917, Elizabeth HIGGINS 1876-1929, Esther HIGGINS 1878-1938, George HIGGINS 1880-1950, Roland HIGGINS 1884-1963, Mary HIGGINS 1885-1969 and Francis HIGGINS 1889-1917.

George was the only one of their children to marry and several of their children, though reaching adulthood, died before one or both of them. Charles and Francis died within a few weeks of each other on active service in the First World War.⁴² Their grandson Roland HIGGINS recalled in the 1970s being on a visit to his grandparents' home at Lilac Cottage Stoke Heath when the news came of the death of Francis. Rowland and Johanna had a Family Bible and the names of them and their children with several the children's dates of birth including Ada's are listed in it.

It was in fact Ada who had custody of the Bible, probably till her death, when it was acquired by her sister Mary who handed it to her nephew, Roland HIGGINS. It is now in the possession of the Author. It may have been Ada who made the entries in the Bible particularly as she has wrongly stated the date of birth of her brother, George and has a failed to state the date of her mother's marriage.

⁴⁰ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Birth Certificate

⁴¹ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death Certificate

⁴² www.cwgc.org

James Howorth BOWLER, the maternal grandfather of Roland HIGGINS remains a somewhat shadowy figure. He was born in about 1839⁴³ in Stockport. He was the son of James and Sarah BOWLER. Certainly as appears from his marriage certificate he was the son of James Bowler, a hatter.⁴⁴ He was not listed in the 1841 census. He may be the person listed the 1851⁴⁵ census as son of head of the household, living with his parents, James BOWLER and Sarah at Market Street Droylsden, Ashton under Lyne described as a scholar. However his father's occupation is given as a shoemaker. He is possibly the person listed as son of the head of the household; the widowed mother Sarah at Mossley Road Ashton under Lyne in the 1861 census, though the James BOWLER in that census is a cotton weaver.⁴⁶

James married Hannah CHAPMAN daughter of Edward CHAPMAN and Elizabeth DRANSFIELD on 29 August 1868 at St James Church, Ashton under Lyne, Lancashire when he is described as a painter. He was listed as head of the household in the 1871⁴⁷ census living at 2 High Street Hartshead Ashton under Lyne with Hannah and his daughters Annie and Emmeline, when he is described as a house painter. He was listed as head of household in the 1881 census at 1 Cotton Court, George Street, St Mary's, Stockport. Also in the household were his wife Hannah daughters Annie, Emmeline and son James He died in about 1897.

Hannah CHAPMAN, the maternal grandmother of Roland HIGGINS was born on 17 October 1843 at Roland's Buildings Dukinfield, Cheshire. Her parents were Edward CHAPMAN and Elizabeth (Betty) DRANSFIELD.⁴⁸ Hannah's father, Edward died in November 1843 and she is listed in the 1851 census as niece (though in fact granddaughter) of head of the household, John DRANSFIELD at Hurst Ashton under Lyne. Also in the household were Hannah's grandmother, Kitty, Hannah's widowed mother Elizabeth, and Hannah's siblings Emma, Mary and John.⁴⁹ Hannah was shown in the 1861 census at Lower Fold

⁴³ Census records

⁴⁴ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Marriage Certificate

⁴⁵ HO107; Piece: 2234; Folio: 30; Page: 1; GSU roll: 87247.

⁴⁶ Class: RG9; Piece: 2981; Folio: 91; Page: 28; GSU roll: 543059

⁴⁷

⁴⁸ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Birth Certificate

⁴⁹ HO107; Piece: 2238; Folio: 325; Page: 29; GSU roll: 87250.

Ashton under Lyne as granddaughter of the head of the household John DRANSFIELD, an agricultural labourer and his wife Kitty. John and Kitty had a family named ANDREW lodging with them at this time. Hannah is described as a cotton weaver.⁵⁰

Hannah married James Howorth BOWLER in 1868 and was listed in the 1871 census living with her husband James and their children Annie, Emmeline and James as a cotton weaver.

She was listed as head of household in the 1901⁵¹ census at 108 Hesketh Street, Heaton Norris, Stockport, a widow living with Emmeline and James Edward her surviving children. No occupation is given for her.

She was listed in the 1911⁵² census as 'Mrs. BOWLER', widow, mother of head of the household, James, at 18, Hamilton Street, Stockport. The property had four rooms. James was an unemployed general labourer and also in the household was a boarder 36 year old plate layer on the Midland Railway from Northwich, James BERRY. James BOWLER has written on the return that Hannah had given birth to four living children of whom two had died and two were then living though this was unnecessary as Hannah was a widow. It does however indicate that James and Hannah BOWLER had four children in total. Hannah died in September 1931 at the home of her daughter Emmeline and son in law George HIGGINS at 1 & 2 Station Cottages, Whitmore, Newcastle under Lyne, Staffordshire aged 85. Cause of death is given as carcinoma of the pancreas. She is described as the widow of James Bowler journeyman house painter.⁵³

Whilst living with her daughter Emmeline in Whitmore Staffordshire in her old age Hannah told the future wife of her grandson, Roland HIGGINS, that somewhere there were BOWLERS who enjoyed considerable wealth.⁵⁴

James Howorth BOWLER and his wife Hannah had four children, Unknown BOWLER, Annie BOWLER 1868-1894, Emmeline BOWLER 1880-1937 and James Edward BOWLER 1882-1914.

⁵⁰ RG9; Piece: 2978; Folio: 8; Page: 7; GSU roll: 543059.

⁵¹ RG13; Piece: 3286; Folio: 92; Page: 20.

⁵² RG14PN21408 RG78PN1273 RD443 SD6 ED7 SN228

⁵³ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death certificate

⁵⁴ Personal reminiscences of Mollie LINDSAY 1907-1996.

The great grandparents of Roland HIGGINS

On his paternal side

The father of Roland's grandfather, also Roland HIGGINS, **Will HIGGINS**, was baptised in December 1803⁵⁵ at Hinstock, Shropshire. He was the son of Peter HIGGANS AND Eleanor FREEMAN.

Will married Mary Ann OLDS on 16 July 1832 at Childs Ercall, Shropshire.⁵⁶ He was listed in the 1841 census at Narrow Lane, Child's Ercall, Shropshire, an agricultural labourer.⁵⁷ Also present in the household were his wife Mary and their children Ann, Hannah Ellen and Elizabeth. He died on 4 April 1850 at Hatton Market Drayton, Shropshire, aged 46, described as a labourer of Hatton, of a diseased heart.⁵⁸

Will's death was registered by Margaret BROWN of Hatton, present at the death. Will died on the same day that his wife Mary had gone to Market Drayton to register the birth of their youngest child Rowland and Margaret BROWN travelled to Market Drayton the following day to register the death of Will. When registering the death Margaret BROWN made her mark.

Will's wife, **Mary Ann OLDS** (also recorded variously HOWLES, KNOWLES and AULS)⁵⁹ was baptised on 16 Aug 1807 at Waters Upton, Shropshire. Her baptismal name was Mary Ann OLDS and she was recorded as the daughter of John OLDS

⁵⁵ Hinstock Parish Registers

⁵⁶ Childs Ercall Parish Registers

⁵⁷ HO107; Piece 899; Book: 6; Civil Parish: *Childs Ercall*; County: *Shropshire*; Enumeration District: 9; Folio: 5; Page: 5; Line: 14; GSU roll: 474579.

⁵⁸ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death certificate

⁵⁹ Indicating that she and her parents were illiterate

and Hannah.⁶⁰ When she registered the birth of her youngest child, Rowland, at Market Drayton on 4th April 1850 she made her mark rather than signing.⁶¹

She was listed in various censuses up to his marriage with Rowland, her youngest child. In the 1881⁶² census at Narrow Lane she was described as a widow and charwoman living with her son George. She died on 14 Apr 1882 at Hatton Market Drayton aged 74 described as widow of Will Higgins a laborer (sic) of pericarditis.⁶³ The death was registered by her daughter Ann PALIN nee HIGGINS who made her mark rather than signing. It is not known whether Mary ever applied for poor relief but it is clear that she worked hard to keep herself and her large family after she was widowed.

Will HIGGINS and his wife Mary Ann had children:-

Ann HIGGINS 1832-1890, Hannah HIGGINS 1834-1908, Mary HIGGINS 1836-1913, Ellen HIGGINS b.1837 Elizabeth HIGGINS b.1839, William HIGGINS 1842-1915, George HIGGINS b.1844, Fanny HIGGINS b.1846 and Rowland (Roland) HIGGINS 1850-1930.

The father of Roland HIGGINS grandmother, Johanna MICKLEWRIGHT, was **Charles MICKLEWRIGHT** who was born in about 1825 at Cheswardine, Shropshire.⁶⁴ He was baptised at Cheswardine on 18th December 1825. His parents were given as John MICKLEWRIGHT and ESTHER.

In the 1841 census he was recorded as living in Madeley, Staffordshire as ML (manual labourer). He married Elizabeth ARKINSTALL daughter of Will ARKINSTALL (in the marriage certificate Will^m) and Sarah TURNER on 5 September 1850 at Child's Ercall. At the time of the marriage he made his mark. In 1851 he is recorded as head of household in Sambrook Chetwynd with his wife Elizabeth and their baby Emma He is described as a farm labourer. In 1861 he is again recorded as

⁶⁰ Parish Registers of Waters Upton Shropshire

⁶¹ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office

⁶² *RG11*; Piece: 2676; Folio: 95; Page: 14; GSU roll: 1341641.

⁶³ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Certificate of Death

⁶⁴ Various census returns

head of household at Sambrook Cheswardine an agricultural labourer living with Elizabeth and their children Emma, Johanna, Henry and Algernon Also in the household are Thomas REEVES a 17 year old lodger from Edgmond Shropshire, and Elizabeth's brother John ARKINSTALL both agricultural labourers. In 1871 Charles is again head of the household working as an agricultural labourer at High Hatton Hall living with Elizabeth Algernon and other children Fanny, Josiah, Francis, Jim (or Jem), and Alice. Again in 1881⁶⁵ he is head of the household, working as an agricultural labourer at High Hatton Hall. In the household are Elizabeth, Jim Alice, and Josephine.

Sometime between 1881 and 1885 Charles and Elizabeth followed their children, Henry Algernon and Francis to Bury Lancashire with Josiah, Jim, Alice and Josephine and in 1891⁶⁶ Charles is recorded as head of the household, a general labourer, at 75 Ingham Street Bury with Elizabeth, Jim, Alice, Josephine and ten year old Harry MICKLEWRIGHT, their grandson, son of Henry who had been widowed by the death of his first wife Emily HILL in 1882.

Josiah had made the journey to Bury but died there in 1885. By 1901⁶⁷ Charles was a retired labourer. He was still head of the household living with Elizabeth and children Alice and Josephine. Jim had died in 1896.⁶⁸

Charles died 17 September 1906 at 18 Beech Street Summerseat Bury the home of his then unmarried daughter Josephine and is buried in an unmarked grave purchased by Elizabeth in Bury Cemetery⁶⁹. At his death his age was incorrectly given as 77 and the cause of death senile decay⁷⁰. The death was registered by his daughter Josephine.

Charles MICKLEWRIGHT's wife, **Elizabeth ARKINSTALL**, was born in about 1831 at Edgmond, Shropshire. From the time of her marriage her history follows that of her husband Charles She died on 9 November 1910 at Ramsbottom Cottage Hospital of senile decay and a broken hip following an accidental fall at her home 18 Beech Street Summerseat Bury, which she shared

⁶⁵ RG11; Piece: 2668; Folio: 115; Page: 4; GSU roll: 1341640.

⁶⁶ RG12; Piece: 3136; Folio 126; Page 26; GSU roll: 6098246.

⁶⁷ RG13; Piece: 3646; Folio: 9; Page: 9.

⁶⁸ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death certificate

⁶⁹ Correspondence with Bury MBC

⁷⁰ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death certificate

with her youngest daughter, Josephine There was an inquest into her death. The Coroner's file is missing but the newspaper report of the inquest⁷¹ records that in July 1910, according to the evidence of Josephine, she had come home from working a night shift (she was a weaver) to find her mother on the floor complaining of a pain in her hip. Elizabeth had apparently fallen whilst going to answer the knock of the postman.

The Doctor was sent for who directed that Elizabeth be sent to hospital. Her hip was broken and due to age it failed to heal. The coroner, Mr. Butcher, returned a verdict of accidental death. Elizabeth is buried with Charles and other members of her family in Bury cemetery.⁷²

Charles MICKLEWRIGHT and his wife Elizabeth had children:-

Emma MICKLEWRIGHT 1851-1920, Johanna MICKLEWRIGHT 1852-1935, Henry MICKLEWRIGHT 1858-1914, Algernon MICKLEWRIGHT 1861-1935, Fanny MICKLEWRIGHT 1863-1933, Josiah MICKLEWRIGHT 1865-1885, Francis MICKLEWRIGHT 1866-1908, Jem or Jim MICKLEWRIGHT 1868-1896, Alice MICKLEWRIGHT 1871-1913, Josephine MICKLEWRIGHT b. 1876.

On his maternal side

Much less can be ascertained about the parents of James Howorth BOWLER, Roland HIGGINS' maternal grandfather than some of Roland's other forbears. When James Howorth BOWLER married his father is stated to be **James BOWLER**, a hatter. However James Howorth BOWLER himself cannot be clearly identified in the early census returns. Contrary to popular expectation not everyone can be traced in census returns and for various reasons many people were omitted in particular from the 1841 and 1851 censuses. All that can be safely said is that Roland HIGGINS' great grandfather was James BOWLER, a hatter. Possibly his mother was Sarah. She may have been a Sarah HOWORTH, accounting for her son adopting that name

⁷¹ Bury Times 11 November 1910. 'A Fatal Fall'

⁷² Bury cemetery records-Bury MBC

to distinguish himself from the very many other James BOWLERS living in the area of North Cheshire and Lancashire in the mid nineteenth century.

Edward CHAPMAN, the father of Hannah CHAPMAN, Roland's grandmother was born in about 1816. He married Elizabeth DRANSFIELD daughter of John DRANSFIELD and Kitty MARLAND, on 11 September 1837 at the Parish Church in Mottram Cheshire when his age is given as 21, his place of residence Newton Cheshire and his occupation as a collier.⁷³ His own father is stated to be James CHAPMAN, also a collier.

It was for some time believed that he was not recorded in any census. However on searching the 1841 census for Roland's Houses (or Building) Dukinfield where his daughter Hannah was born in 1843, the following entry in the enumerator's return for the census of 1841⁷⁴ was discovered:-

Edward NEWTON age 25 a miner born in Cheshire
Betty NEWTON age 25 a cotton weaver born in Cheshire
Emily NEWTON age 5
Mary NEWTON age 2

Apart from the name the profile of the family fits these descriptions. Perhaps the enumerator confused the place of birth of Edward with his name, assuming that he may have been born at Newton and lived there till the time of his marriage.

Edward CHAPMAN died on 24 November 1843 at Birch Street Dukinfield Cheshire. At the time of his death he was a collier. Edward died of 'natural disease accelerated by working in a coal pit.' The informant was Charles Hudson, Coroner for Bramhall, Cheshire.⁷⁵

⁷³ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Marriage certificate

⁷⁴ HO107; Piece 109; Book: 12; Civil Parish: Stockport; County: Cheshire; Enumeration District: 12; Folio: 12; Page: 18; Line: 10; GSU roll: 241242.

⁷⁵ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death certificate

Edward CHAPMAN's wife, **Elizabeth DRANSFIELD** was born in 1814 at Ashton under Lyne. She was christened on 22 January 1815 at Mossley, Ashton under Lyne⁷⁶ and was the daughter of John DRANSFIELD and Kitty MARLAND. Her age on marriage in 1837 is given as 23 and her occupation is a weaver. At the time of the marriage she made her mark. She was listed as a member of the household of her father John DRANSFIELD in the 1851⁷⁷ census at Green Hurst, Ashton under Lyne, a widow with four children, Emma, Mary, John and Hannah, and by occupation a power loom weaver. In 1861 Elizabeth is shown as a visitor to 4 Radnor Street Hulme Manchester at the house of a family called TURNER with her daughter Emma.⁷⁸ She is described as a widow. No occupation is given for her. She is listed in the 1881 census as a widow, 'was a cotton weaver', living with her daughter Emma and Emma's husband James DRAKE a tailor at 11 Nook Lane Hartshead, Ashton under Lyne.⁷⁹ In the census of 1891⁸⁰ Elizabeth was living with the widow of her son John, Sarah nee MARLAND (possibly a relation of Elizabeth's mother) and John and Sarah's daughter Sarah CHAPMAN at 29 Burlington Street Ashton under Lyne. Also in the household are Sarah's widowed brother, John MARLAND and his four children. Elizabeth is described as a widow and retired cotton weaver.

Elizabeth (on the certificate named 'Betty') CHAPMAN died on 12 June 1891 at 65 Blandford Street Ashton under Lyne. On the certificate her age is given as 80. She is stated to be the widow of Edward CHAPMAN, coal miner. Cause of death was chronic bronchitis of 4 months duration. The informant was Betty's daughter in law Sarah CHAPMAN present at the death also of 65 Blandford Street who made her mark.⁸¹

Edward CHAPMAN and his wife Elizabeth (Betty) had children:-

Emma CHAPMAN b.1837, John CHAPMAN 1842-1866, Hannah CHAPMAN 1846-1931, Mary CHAPMAN b. 1847.

⁷⁶ Parish Register of Mossley Cheshire Archives

⁷⁷ HO107; Piece: 2238; Folio: 325; Page: 29; GSU roll: 87250.

⁷⁸ RG9; Piece: 2898; Folio: 64; Page: 9; GSU roll: 543047

⁷⁹ RG11; Piece: 4058; Folio: 42; Page: 24; GSU roll: 1341970.

⁸⁰ RG12; Piece: 3279; Folio 37; Page 13; GSU roll: 6098389.

⁸¹ Records of Birth Marriage and Death- General Register Office. Death certificate

Possibilities for further research

1. The research undertaken to date indicates that there is likely to be information and records which would assist in taking the HIGGINS, ARKINSTALL, DRANSFIELD and MARLAND back to an earlier period. However it should be borne in mind that unless an ancestor did something particularly notable, was wealthy or extremely poor, the amount of personal information which can be found before the 19th century is unlikely to be great.
2. All the people in this study lived through turbulent times and witnessed historical events which would have directly affected their lives. It might be considered of interest to consider how the political and social upheavals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would have impacted on the lives of say, Elizabeth DRANSFIELD and her parents John DRANSFIELD and Kitty MARLAND.
3. Charles MICKLEWRIGHT and his wife Elizabeth in middle age went from being country dwellers to live in the industrial North West. Several of their children died at an early age. Why did they move and why did they not return despite the troubles they clearly encountered. What caused these apparently premature deaths?
4. Two of the sons of Roland HIGGINS and Johanna MICKLEWRIGHT died in the First World War as did the brother of Emmeline BOWLER. It is likely that even if their service records are missing⁸² interesting information can be uncovered as to how and where they died and their lives in military service.

Trace Your Ancestry would be pleased to discuss possibilities relating to these suggestions or any other research into family history.

⁸² Many WW1 Service Records were destroyed or damaged in the Blitz