

*WHERE DID YOU COME
FROM, JAMES TUTTY?
BY JANET CHOULES*

Was James a bit of a rogue or was there a reason he wanted to hide his past? I think he would have enjoyed seeing me hit so many brick walls while I researched his life, especially as he'd lodged the bricks!

What's in a name? Or a place?

Postal service records show James Tutty was a postman in Plymouth who retired in 1901. In theory it should be easy to find him, in practice it wasn't. Initially, I could not connect him to Plymouth at all.

I did find a James Tuttley (also transcribed as Suttley), a retired postman living in Teignmouth, Devon who, according to the 1901 census, was born in Withycombe, Devon. First brick wall – there was no trace of him! Fortunately, Tutty/Tuttley/Suttley had a wife and three children who proved to be more reliable sources of consistent information.

Frances Maunder married James Tutty in 1892 at St Sidwell's Church, Heavitree, Exeter. The marriage licence indicated they both lived in the parish. Frances had worked as a nurse for a family in Sidwell Street in 1881. James was also in Heavitree. A nineteen-year-old Gunner at The Royal Artillery Barracks, born in Tralton, Carlow, Ireland – there is no Tralton in County Carlow!

In 1891, the year before they married, neither of them lived in Exeter. Frances was employed as a parlour maid for a family near Dawlish and James, now a letter carrier, was lodging in Starcross, about four miles from Dawlish claiming his place of birth was Ealing, Middlesex – not true.

Marrying at one local of the local churches, such as St Mary's, Cofton where Frances was baptised, would have been logical. Perhaps Frances' family didn't approve so they eloped to St Sidwell's which had a long association with the military and was a church they had attended before.

So where was James Tutty born?

Having found a man with the correct name, age, and occupation I discovered that in order to join the postal service he was required to produce evidence of age. The document sworn and marked by his mother, Margaret Tutty, at Tullow Petty Sessions, Ireland in March 1889 confirms that James was born in Tullow, County Carlow on the 16th September 1862.

Tullow is also on the attestation¹ James signed when he joined the Army in 1880 although his Army records have 1861 as his year of birth as he claimed to be nineteen. Tralton was simply a clerical error.

Working for the Postal Service

From April 1889 James' delivery route was 'Starcross to The Warren'. The road from Starcross to Dawlish Warren, as it is known today, is about three miles along the western bank of the Exe Estuary. It passes through the villages of Cockwood and Eastdon and James' area would have included scattered farms and smallholdings plus the village of Cofton about one mile inland.

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/2uhe4wnk>

When their daughter, Grace, was born in 1893 James and Frances were living in St. Pancras, London. Grace's baptism record² gives her father's occupation as Letter Sorter PO. The births of George and Clara are also registered in St. Pancras. I was unable to find their baptism records in order to confirm when James began delivering mail again as his occupation is recorded as postman on Grace's admission to Manchester Street School, Camden,³ which she attended from March to November 1897.

By the following May the family were in Plymouth. James was a postman and they were living in the Mount Gould area fairly close to the city centre. Two more sons were born in Plymouth but sadly both Charles and Frederick died before their first birthdays.

James' employment with the Post Office ended in 1901 after eleven years of service due to ill health. He was thirty-eight.

Market Gardener

Frances grew up in Cofton where her father was an agricultural labourer and market gardener. George Maunder died before the Tutts returned but it is possible that James took over his father-in-law's land.

In 1911 James and eldest son George were working together as market gardeners at Westwood, Cofton, Starcross. James claimed Spalding, Lincolnshire was his place of birth and, as head of the family, signed the census form to 'declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.'

When James left the postal service I doubt he expected to live into his seventies, particularly when life expectancy for men born in the 1860s was only forty-two.⁴ So why might a former soldier and postman have beaten the odds?

It is possible that James' missed days of employment when he was a postman in Plymouth weren't entirely due to his own health issues. The births and deaths of two sons between 1898 and 1901 might indicate there were other health or sanitation issues which affected the whole family.

Perhaps an active life in a rural environment suited him better than living in cities. He was his own boss, spending all day in the fresh air (although let's not forget all weathers too!), eating fresh produce and no doubt enlisting the help of his family when necessary.

Between 1902 and 1907 Frances and James had three more children. Sadly, Reginald died aged three but Florence and Ernest (who also became a market gardener) along with their three older siblings all lived past the age of seventy.

James Tutty died in December 1937, aged seventy-four. His cause of death -- a ruptured aortic aneurysm -- can, even today, occur without warning having grown slowly and cause very mild or no symptoms. His place of death, Garastep Marina Estate, Dawlish suggests he may have been at work.

So, was James a bit of a rogue?

Inconsistent names, dates or places of birth on a document are quite commonplace in family research but I have never found anyone who claimed to have been born in four different places before. I'm intrigued as to why he felt it was necessary or did he simply forget what he'd written ten years before?

² <https://tinyurl.com/58wtvc4h>

³ <https://tinyurl.com/c4rpcwb3>

⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/cdr4vrne>

During his time in Cofton James Tutty's name appears several times in local newspapers. Often these are innocuous reports of attendance at a funeral or local event but there are also accounts of appearances before the Magistrates. Most are for driving offences. I have an image of a somewhat reckless pony and trap driver careering along without lights (cautioned), carrying passengers without a licence (dismissed), or causing a collision with a motor cyclist (fined).

An offence which occurred in 1913 followed an argument in the street with a Mr. Tarbet. James followed him into a pub and 'struck him a heavy blow on the mouth'.⁵ Tarbet was the Tutty's landlord and had complained about alterations which had been made to his property. As the pub landlord witnessed the incident James could not talk his way out of trouble this time. He was fined £5 and ordered to be of good behaviour for twelve months.

James Tutty may have been a bit of a rogue and piecing together his life has been challenging at times, but he is a likeable rogue. My biggest disappointment is that I don't have access to the 1921 and 1931 census returns because I'd love to know where else he claimed he was born!

⁵ Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, Saturday 17 May 1913

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000511/19130517/028/0006>

Fact Sheet: James Tutty

Pensioner Details
<i>Pensioner name:</i> James Tutty
<i>Person ID:</i> DV1020
<i>Your name:</i> Janet Choules
<i>U3A group:</i> South-West
Part One: Birth and Family
1: When and where was your pensioner born?
James Tutty was born 16 th September 1862 in Tullow, Carlow, Ireland. This is according to the official declaration made by his mother, Margaret Tutty, 9 th March 1889 prior to his appointment to the Post Office.
2: Who were your pensioners' parents? Record any details you can find out about them here (e.g. occupation, religious affiliation, whether they could read or write)
Father: possibly Richard Tutty c1830 – 1901? Unable to verify. Mother: Margaret Tutty. The declaration Margaret made about her son James' birth places her in Tullow, County Carlow in 1862 and 1889. She made her mark on the document.
3: Did your pensioner have any siblings? What were their names, and how old were they in relation to your pensioner? Use this space to record anything else you have found out about them (e.g. occupation)
The following names were found on Ancestry in 3 different family trees where they are shown as the sons of Richard & Mary Tutty and brothers of a James Tutty born 1862. My research confirms that place of birth, The Royal Artillery (R.H.A.) and/or Exeter and villages nearby link them so it is possible that James, Richard and Robert Tutty are related. I have not been able to make a firm family connection but have listed them with as much information as I could find. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brother: Richard Tutty, born 1857 in Tullow, County Carlow. Five years older than James? • Brother: Robert Tutty, born 1857 in Tullow, County Carlow. Five years older than James? • Brother: Thomas Tutty, born c1865 in Tullow, County Carlow. Three years younger than James? <p><u>Brother: Richard Tutty?</u></p> <p>1881 marriage: Marriage to Selina Urania Baker (age 24, born Starcross, Devon) at St Leonard's Church, Exeter, Devon. Age 24. There is no occupation listed for Richard or Selina, however, on the 1881 census taken a few days before their marriage she is listed as a Housemaid, Domestic Servant in Exeter.</p> <p>Unable to trace Richard before or after his marriage.</p> <p>Selina is listed on the 1891 census as a Domestic Servant in Cofton, Devon (married). In 1901 she is a Housemaid in Kensington, London (married) and in 1911 a Housemaid in Keston, Kent (widow). Her sister Rosalia Baker is the Cook at the same homes in London and Kent.</p> <p>Richard and Selina had at least 2 children:</p> <p>1882 birth: Q4 1882, birth of Frederick Richard Tutty in Dawlish, Devon. Aged 8 on the 1891 census he is living with his maternal grandparents in Starcross, Kenton, Devon. In 1901 and 1911, he is boarding with the family of Charles Warren a Post Office Clerk in Bristol. Frederick is a Flour Merchant's Apprentice (1901) and a Counting House Clerk, Corn Trade (1911).</p>

1886 birth: Q3 1886, birth of Selina Margaret Tutty in Starcross, Devon. In 1911, age 24, she is a Lady's Maid in Northamptonshire. Selina died in 1928, age 42 in Kent.

Brother: Robert Tutty?

1881 census: Listed as living with Sidney Stickley (age 27, Gunner, R. H. A.), Stickley's wife Louisa (age 24, no occupation listed), their son George (age 3), their daughter Mona (age 1) and their son Edward (1 month). Also listed are the following William Serls (age 24, Driver R.H.A.),

Charles Seogles (age 28, Driver R.H.A.), Alfred Stevens (age 20, Gunner R.H.A.), George Simpkins (age 23, Smith R.H.A.), George Taylor (age 24, Driver R.H.A.), Truman (age 29, Driver R.H.A.), Tucker (age 20, Gunner R.H.A.), Tragnor (age 23, Driver R.H.A.). Age 24. Gunner, Royal Horse Artillery. Address The Royal Artillery Barracks, Heavitree, St Thomas, Exeter, Devon

Brother: Thomas Tutty? No further information found to connect him with the people and places above.

Part Two: Marriage and children

1: Did your pensioner marry? What was their spouse's name, and when and where did they marry them? Use this space to record any extra details you can find out about their spouse (e.g. when/where they were born, their occupation)

Marriage

James Tutty (age 30) married Frances Maunder (age 26) on the 19th November 1892 at St Sidwell's Church, Exeter.

Wife: Frances Tutty (nee Maunder)

Born: 27th May 1865 in Westwood, Dawlish, Devon. Parents were George Maunder (age 48, Husbandman) and Mary Ann Maunder (age 35, no occupation)

Baptised: 11th June 1865 at St Mary's Chapel, Cofton, Devon.

1871 census: Listed as living with parents George (age 54, Agricultural Labourer), Mary Ann (age 41, no occupation), sister Ellen (age 15, Servant), brother Samuel (age 11, scholar), and sister Clara (age 1). Age 5, scholar. Address is Westwood, Cofton, Dawlish.

1881 census: Listed as living with Henry G Norrington (age 29, Manure & Agricultural Merchant), his wife Harriet (age 30, no occupation), their daughter Mary (age 6), daughter Annie (age 4) son Henry (age 1), Henry senior's mother Matilda (age 62, no occupation), Obana M Harvey (age 17, Cook), Isabella Gibbs (age 22, Housemaid). Age 15. Nurse. Address 11 Powderham Crescent, Exeter St Sidwell, Exeter.

1891 census: Listed as living with William Waterfield (age 58, Retired Bengal Civil Servant), his wife Matilda R (age 46, no occupation), their daughter Violet L (age 21, no occupation), son, William FH (age 4, scholar), son Alexander P (age 2), niece Rose Gay (age 32, no occupation), visitor Annie M Mackingie (age 68, own means), Annie Brown (age 53, Governess), Elizabeth Paddon (age 24, Cook), Emily Goodfellow (age 24, House Maid), Annie MM Hoare (age 17, Kitchen Maid), and Kathleen E Dyer (age 14, Nurse Maid). Age 25. Parlour Maid. Address Eastdon House, Eastdon, Dawlish.

1892 marriage: see above

1901 census: Listed as living with husband James Tutty (age 38, Retired Postman), daughter Grace Ellen (age 7, scholar), son George James (age 5, scholar), daughter Clara Mary (age 4, scholar), visitor William Pallison (age 26, Sorting Clerk), and visitor Albert John Upton (age 24, Sorter GPO). Age 35. No occupation. Address 2, Grove Crescent, Teignmouth, Devon.

1911 census: Listed as living with husband James Tutty (age 48, Market Gardener), son George James (age 15, Market Gardener), daughter Clara Mary (age 14, no occupation), daughter Florence Madeline (age 7, scholar), son Ernest (age 3). Age 45. No occupation. Address Westwood, Cofton, Starcross, West Dawlish.

1937 death: 9th December 1937 death of husband James Tutty, age 74. Buried at St Mary's Chapel, Cofton, Teignbridge, Devon.

1937 death: 22nd December 1937, death of Frances Tutty age 72. Buried at St Mary's Chapel, Cofton, Teignbridge, Devon.

2: Did your pensioner have any children? What were their names, and when they were born? Use this space to record any extra details you can find out about them (e.g. occupation, where they lived later in life)

Daughter: Grace Ellen Tutty, born 28th November 1893
Son: George James Tutty, born 8th September 1895
Daughter: Clara Mary Tutty, born 6th February 1897
Son: Charles Henry Tutty, born Q4 1898
Son: Frederick Thomas Tutty, born 25th February 1900
Son: Reginald Philip Tutty, born Q2 1902
Daughter: Florence Madeline Tutty, born 16th March 1904
Son: Ernest Tutty, born 25th August 1907

Daughter: Grace Ellen Tutty

Born: 28th November 1893 in St Pancras, London.

Baptised: Grace Ellen Tutty baptised 4th February 1894 at St Pancras Parish Church. Father James' occupation listed as Letter Sorter PO. Mother Frances recorded as having no occupation. Address 70 Euston Street.

See part 2 Q1 details for Frances Maunder for details of census return from 1901.

1897 school: 3rd March 1897 admitted to Manchester Street School, Camden. Father James is recorded as a postman. Address is 20 Charlewood? Houses. Grace left the school 4th November 1897.

1911 census: Listed as living with Florence Annie Bailey (age 43, Private Means), her adopted daughter Gwendoline M Bailey (age7), and Ethel May Gilpin (age 24, Cook). Age 17. General Domestic Servant. Address Belle Vue, Belle Vue Road, Exmouth, Withycombe Raleigh, Devon.

1938 marriage: Q3 1938 marriage to Philip G Whittle (age 57) in Portsmouth, Hampshire.

1939 register: Listed as living with husband Philip G Whittle (age 58, Royal air Force Retired). Age 46. Unpaid Domestic Duties. Address Garastep, Exeter Road, Dawlish, Devon.

1943 death: 23rd January 1943 death of husband Philip G Whittle. Buried St Mary's Chapel Cofton, Devon.

1980 death: 31st May 1980 death of Grace Ellen Whittle at Wilbraham Nursing Home, Higher Woodway Road, Teignmouth. Buried St Mary's Chapel Cofton, Devon. Age 86.

Son: George James Tutty

Born: 8th September 1895 in St Pancras, London.

See part 2 Q1 details for Frances Maunder for details of census returns from 1901 -1911.

1914-1920: Driver with the Royal Field Artillery. Service number 865180.

1926 marriage: April 1926 marriage to Ethel May Brooks (age 28). Marriage registered in Newton Abbot District (would include Teignmouth, Exmouth & Dawlish), Devon.

1939 register: Listed as living with wife Ethel May Tutty (age 41, Agricultural Labourer), daughter Sylvia Grace (age 9, at school), son Colin L G (age 7 at school), son Roland Arthur (age 6, at school), and brother-

in-law? Leonard W Brooks (age 39, Market Gardener [Assisting]). Age 44. Smallholder. Address 16, Port Road, Exmouth, Devon.

1970 death: July 1970 death of George James Tutty. Death registered in Exeter District. Age 74.

Daughter: Clara Mary Tutty

Born: 6th February 1897 in St Pancras, London.

See part 2 Q1 details for Frances Maunder for details of census returns from 1901 -1911.

1922 marriage: Q2 1922 marriage to Wilfred Vyvyan Gay (age 25, occupation Monumental Mason in 1916). Marriage registered in Newton Abbot District, Devon.

1939 register: Listed as living with husband Wilfred V Gay (age 42, Monumental Mason), son Keith G (age 13, at school) plus one officially closed record, a second child perhaps? Age 42, Unpaid Domestic Duties. Address Holne, Dawlish, Devon.

1981 death: 15th August 1981 death of husband Wilfred, Teignmouth, Devon.

1998 death: March 1998 death of Clara Mary Tutty. Death registered in Teignbridge District (would include Teignmouth & Dawlish). Age 101.

Son: Charles Henry Tutty

Born: Q4 1898, registered in Plymouth, Devon.

Baptised: No record found

1901 death: Q3 1899. Death registered in Plymouth, Devon. Age 0

Son: Frederick Thomas Tutty

Born: 25th February 1900

Baptised: 8th April 1900 at Charles the Martyr, Plymouth.

1901 death: Q1 1901. Death registered in Newton Abbot District. Age 1

Son: Reginald Philip Tutty

Born: Q2 1902 in Devon

1906 death: Q1 1906. Death registered in Newton Abbot District. Age 3.

Daughter: Florence Madeline Tutty

Born: 16th March 1904 in Cofton, Devon.

Baptised: 8th April 1904 at Cofton St Mary.

See part 2 Q1 details for Frances Maunder for details of census return from 1911.

1926 marriage: Q2 1926 Florence M Tutty married Arthur Harris. Marriage registered in Newton Abbot District, Devon.

1939 register: Listed as living with husband Arthur Harris (age 42, Mental Attendant), relative? George H Johnson (age 14, at school). Age 35, Unpaid Domestic Duties. Address Church Street, Starcross, St Thomas, Devon.

1982 death: 17th May 1982 death of Florence Madeleine Harris of Flora Glen, 10 Westwood, Cofton, Starcross, Devon. Buried at St Mary's Chapel, Cofton.

Son: Ernest Tutty

Born: born 25th August 1907 in Cofton, Devon.

Baptised: 27th August 1907 at Cofton St Mary.

See part 2 Q1 details for Frances Maunder for details of census return from 1911.

1929 marriage: Q4 1929 Ernest Tutty married Edith M Irish. Marriage registered in Honiton District, Devon.

1939 register: Listed as living with wife Edith May Tutty (age 31, Unpaid Domestic Duties), plus 4 officially closed records, probably daughter Audrey C Tutty (age 9), son Ian J Tutty (age 4), son Norman E Tutty (age 2), and 4th not found. Age 32, Market Gardener (Own account). Address 2 New Cottages, St Thomas, Devon.

1976 death: Q2 1976. Registered in Torbay District

Part Three: Work

1: What occupation was your pensioner recorded as doing in census years? Please make sure to state clearly which year you are referring to

1881: Age 19, Gunner R.H.A.

1891: Age 27, Letter Carrier

1901: Age 38, Retired Postman

1911: Age 48, Market Gardener

2: What occupations were people living with your pensioner (e.g. spouse, children, boarders) doing in the census years? Please make sure to state clearly which year you are referring to

Robert Tutty (brother)?

1881 Gunner R.H.A. Royal Artillery

Frances Tutty (wife)

No occupation recorded after marriage

George James (son)

1911 Market Gardener

1901 census

2 visitors are recorded: William Pallison Sorting Clerk and Albert John Upton Sorter GPO.
James Tutty is a Retired Postman at this point.

Part Four: Anything Else

Please use this space to record anything else you have found out about your pensioner

George Maunder, James Tutty's father-in-law was an Agricultural Labourer and later Market Gardener, living in Dawlish. He died before James retired from the Post Office but it is possible the family connection influenced James to become a Market Gardener in the same area after he left the Post Office in 1901.

In 1910 and 1914 Kelly's City and County Directories list James Tutty's trade as a Market Gardener at Westwood, Starcross. In 1919 he's listed as a Market Gardener at Cockwood, Starcross. Westwood and Cockwood are very close, they could be the same place or James may have moved or expanded his business. His sons George & Ernest were also Market Gardeners

When James Tutty died in 1937 Market Gardener (Master) is listed as his profession.

Part Five: Your Sources

Please use this space to record the sources you have used

James Tutty (Pensioner)

1881 census return: Class: RG11; Piece: 2143; Folio: 175; Page: 7; GSU roll: 1341517

1898 Civil service Evidence of age:

<https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=GBOR%2FCSEOA%2F00059681>

1898 Post Office Appointment Books: British Postal Museum & Archive; Series POST 58, Reference Number: 92

1891 census return: Class: RG12; Piece: 1686; Folio: 93; Page: 20; GSU roll: 6096796

1892 marriage: see wife Frances below

1901 census return: Class: RG13; Piece: 2048; Folio: 10; Page: 12

1911 census return: <https://tinyurl.com/2w4yb9x5>

Frances Tutty (wife)

1865 baptism record:

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/record?id=GBPRS%2FDEV%2F005843906%2F00005&parentid=GBPRS%2FDEV%2FBAP%2F195760>

1871 census return: Class: RG10; Piece: 2074; Folio: 11; Page: 13; GSU roll: 831777

1881 census return: Class: RG11; Piece: 2150; Folio: 44; Page: 33; GSU roll: 1341518

1891 census return: Class: RG12; Piece: 1695; Folio: 69; Page: 14; GSU roll: 6096805

1892 marriage: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-994M-YWYF?cc=1833719> 1901 &

1911 census returns: same as husband James above

1937 death record (BMD): Newton Abbot Vol.5b, p 150

