

HENRY AUSTIN (1838-1918)
BY RICHARD HORN

Henry Austin was born in Stoke Demerel, Devon, a village to the north east of Devonport, and was baptised in an Anglican service on 4th February 1838

His parents were Philip and Mary Ann Austin. The 1841 census shows that they were both born in 1811. Phillip's occupation is recorded as a sailmaker. The 1851 census records Mary Ann's birthplace as Devonport and also records her date of birth as being 1809. This census also shows her occupation as "keeping an infant school", though there is no record of her husband, Phillip. The 1861 census reverts to the original birth year of 1811 but records her place of birth as Stoke Damerel not Devonport and by then her occupation is shown as governess. Henry and the rest of the family continued to live in Stoke Damerel at this period.

Census records show that Henry had two sisters and one brother. Mary Austin was born in 1835 but might have died young since she is not recorded in subsequent census records. Lavinia Austin was born 1841. However, the 1851 and 1861 census record a Louisa Austin born in 1840, with no mention of a Lavinia. In the 1861 census her occupation is given as servant. Finally, John Austin was born in 1844. His occupation is given as messenger in the 1861 census. I cannot trace him in subsequent census records.

By 1871, it appears that Henry was living in Lynmouth and married to Eliza Jane Austin, who was the same age as him and who had been born in Devonport. The 1881 census shows them living in Williton and the 1891 in Plymouth. Only Henry is shown in the 1901 census. However, it appears that Eliza Jane died in 1905 with a death record for an Eliza Jane Austin in Plymouth in the period January-March.

It seems that Henry and Eliza Jane had three children. Although it has not been possible to find a record of their marriage, their son, James Henry Austin, was born in 1866 in Millbrook Cornwall. In the 1881 census he is listed as a paper finisher. I can find no subsequent records for him. Maud Amelia Austin was born 1871 in Lynmouth Devon and in the 1891 census she is recorded as being a dressmaker. In the 1911 census she is listed as Maud Amelia Baker daughter, living with her daughter Eva Maud, at her father's address. William Samuel Austin was born 1873 also in Lynmouth. In the 1891 census he is recorded as being a post office clerk.

The 1871 census shows that the couple were living in Lynmouth and that Henry now aged thirty-three was employed as a coastguard. By the time of the 1881 census his occupation is shown as a commissioned boatman coastguard in St Decuman's, Williton, Somerset. However, by the 1891 census Henry had taken up the occupation of letter carrier aged fifty-two. It may be that the physical demands associated with

being a senior coastguard prompted this change of career and that he joined his son, William, in the Post Office. It was not uncommon for families to have more than one member employed in the Post Office, though it was more usual for the son to follow the father rather than vice versa. Henry's occupation is shown as postman in the 1901 census but he retired from the Post Office later that year, aged sixty-three years .

Post Office records show that his salary before retirement was £81 12s 4d and that his pension granted on the grounds of old age in 1901 when he was 63, was £17 13s 6d. Since the pension was calculated at a sixtieth of the final salary, this suggests that Henry had been employed for around thirteen years – so had probably started work around 1888 when he was fifty years old. Presumably this small pension was supplemented by a pension from his service as a coastguard.

Henry died on 30th April 1918 in Stoke Demerel, his place of birth, from senility and cardiac failure aged seventy-nine years. He had survived to what would have been considered at the time a considerable age, having worked in different occupations but never having moved far from his place of birth.

Fact Sheet: Henry Austin

Pensioner Details
<i>Pensioner name:</i> Henry Philip Austin
<i>Person ID:</i> DV1001
<i>Your name:</i> Richard Horn
<i>U3A group:</i> Islington
Part One: Birth and Family
1: When and where was your pensioner born?
He was born in Stoke Demerel Devon and was baptised on the 4th February 1938 at an Anglican service.
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)
His father was Philip Austin and his wife Mary Ann. The 1841 census shows that they were both born in 1811. His occupation is recorded as sailmaker. He is not recorded in subsequent census records or death records. The 1851 census records her birth place as Devonport and also records her date of birth as being 1809. This census also shows her occupation as "keeping an infant school". The 1861 census reverts to the original birth year of 1811 but records her place of birth as Stoke Demerel not Devonport, her occupation is shown as Governess.
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)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Austin born 1835. She is not recorded in subsequent census records. • Lavinia Austin born 1841 as recorded in the 1841 census. However, the 1851 and 1861 census records a Louisa Austin born 1840, with no mention of a Lavinia. In the 1861 census her occupation is given as servant. • John Austin born 1844. His occupation is given as messenger in the 1861 census. I cannot trace him in subsequent census records.
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)
I cannot find any marriage record but the 1871 census for Lynmouth records a Henry Austin born in 1838 married to Eliza Jane Austin. She was also born in 1838, in Devonport. The 1881 census shows them living in Williton and the 1891 in Plymouth. Only Henry is shown in the 1901 census. However, it appears that she died in 1905 with a death record for an Eliza Jane Austin in Plymouth in the period January-March.
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)

- James Henry Austin born 1866 in Millbrook Cornwall. In the 1881 census he is listed as a paper finisher. I can find no subsequent records for him.
- Maud Amelia Austin born 1871 in Lynmouth Devon. In the 1891 census she is recorded as being a dressmaker. In the 1911 census she is listed as Maud Amelia Baker daughter, living with her daughter Eva Maud, at her father's address.
- William Samuel Austin born 1873 in Lynmouth. In the 1891 census he is recorded as being a post office clerk. I can find no subsequent records for him.

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

In the 1851 census he is recorded as being an errand boy, he was then living with his parents in Stoke Damerel.
 In the 1861 census he is still there but working as a labourer.
 In the 1871 census he is living with his wife in Lynmouth and was working as a coastguard.
 In the 1881 census they were living in Williton Somerset and he was a commissioned coastguard boatman.
 In the 1891 census they are living in Plymouth and he is employed as a letter carrier.
 In the 1901 census he alone is listed and his occupation is given as postman.
 In the 1911 census he is still living in Plymouth and his occupation is given as Naval Pensioner.

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

Eliza Jane is merely recorded as wife in all her census records.
 James Henry son in the 1881 census is listed as a paper finisher.
 Maud Amelia daughter in the 1891 census she is recorded as being a dressmaker.
 William Samuel son in the 1891 census is recorded as being a post office clerk.

Part Four: Anything Else

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

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Part Five: Your Sources

Please use this space to record the sources you have used

Census Transcript Household Devon 1911
RG14 - PN12962 RD276 SD2 ED4 SN357 (Genealogist)
Census Transcript Household Devon 1901
RG13/2091/F? (Genealogist)
Census Transcript Household Devon 1891
RG12/1729/F (Genealogist)
Census Transcript Household Somerset 1881
RG11/2355/F? (Genealogist)
Census Transcript Household Somerset 1871
RG10/2185/F? (Genealogist)
Census Transcript Household Somerset 1861
RG9/1452/F? (Genealogist)
Census Transcript Household Somerset 1851
HO107/1882/F? [Pages 378-379] (Genealogist)
Census Transcript Household Somerset 1841
HO107/0273/F? (Genealogist)
Death Record for Henry Austin in the District of Plymouth
Page 0137 Vol 5B (Genealogist)
Plymouth & West Devon Record Office Baptism Record Henry Austin
Archive Ref 166/16
Death Record for Eliza Jane Austin in the District of Plymouth Page 0174 Vol 5B
(Genealogist)