

Matthias Hunt and Family

Matthias Hunt, one of J&M's great-grandfathers, was born on April 21st 1835 in Wheatley, Oxfordshire. He was the second son amongst the seven children of Richard Hunt, a shoemaker, and his second wife Elizabeth Martha, nee Bussell. The other five were girls. (Two of them died young, one within a few weeks of birth, and the other at age seven.) Matthias also had a half-brother, Thomas, the only child of Richard by his *first* wife, Elizabeth nee Buckland.

Matthias at age 15 is found on the 1851 census as one of two apprentice wheelwrights at the home of a George Ilberry and his family, at Albury, about three miles from Wheatley. He's down as 'Matthew', and the same error is made on the 1861 census. Matthias must have been an unusual name until people associated it with him.

In 1859 in Wheatley, he was to marry Ellen Cullum, (whose brother William had married his sister Elizabeth Martha in 1856) and he had slightly varied his trade to that of carpenter. He was to continue in that calling for the rest of his working life, and became the 'estate carpenter' on the Addington Estate, about 17 miles away.

There is a more complete description of 'Addington' in another section.



Matthias and Ellen were together for 21 years before Ellen died, in 1880. In that time they had 5 children, William Richard born 1862, Frederick Matthias, (J&M's grandfather), born 1865, then Harry born in 1867 but who only lived for a few weeks, then Catherine Ellen (1868), and then Ada Emily (1871).

Matthias Hunt *m* (1) Ellen Cullum

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William Richard <i>chr 26-1-1862</i> Addington Carpenter & Joiner. <i>later builder's manager</i>	Frederick Matthias <i>chr 8-10-1865</i> Addington Carpenter & Joiner. <i>later technical building instructor</i>	Harry Herbert <i>chr 2-6-1867</i> <i>died age 6 weeks</i> Addington	Catherine Ellen <i>chr 7-6-1868</i> Addington Housekeeper	Ada Emily <i>chr 10-9-1871</i> Addington Postal worker



William Richard, born 1862

the eldest child. William and his brother Frederick Matthias (J&M's grandfather) probably worked together at some stage after they'd left home. On the 1901 census, they are both to be found, with their respective families, in the same part of Woking, which is too much of a coincidence for it to be otherwise. Both describe themselves as 'carpenters and joiners', but also as 'workers', i.e. they were *not* self-employed and must have worked for one of the local businesses. William and his wife are also to be found in Woking on the 1891 census. In late 1887 William married Laura Carey who hailed from Ottershaw, Surrey, not far from Woking, but perhaps more interestingly Ottershaw is the next village up the

road from Chobham, the home of J&M's mother at the time. William and Laura have two children on 'the 1901', 9 year-old William F, and 3 year-old Adeline T, both born in Woking. In January 1918, J&M's father wrote in his diary (he was out in Africa at the time) that he had noted the name of a W.F.Hunt among those killed in the Great War when he had received a Woking newspaper from home from Dorothy Puttick, (whom he would later marry), and concluded that he was "afraid it must be dear old Bill". In fact it wasn't on that occasion, but his cousin Bill was killed in action just a few months later.

William Richard was described on the probate of Matthias's will as 'a builder's manager'.

J.H.H., when he was working on a 'tree' from family letters some years ago, believed that William Richard married twice, his second wife being named Elizabeth. He also noted that Adeline later married someone named Albert and had a daughter named June, but these branches have not been investigated.

J&M's grandfather Frederick Matthias, born 1865, is the subject of the previous section.

Harry Herbert, born 1867

'died at 6 weeks' according to the parish register. He was baptised on June 2nd, and buried June 21st 1867.

Catherine Ellen, born 1868

was probably known as 'Kate', as that is how she appears on the 1871 census. She was a dressmaker on the 1891 census but is found working as a housekeeper for one of her uncles in Reading in 1901. Rather frustratingly, the uncle was 'out' on the night of the census, and Kate was alone in the house, so we don't know which uncle it was, unless the address, 12, Soho Street, reveals his identity in due course. Kate married Edward William Cross at Addington Church on June 7th 1905. Edward was a widower, from nearby Claydon, and was known as 'Ted'. Kate died ten years later. She is buried in the churchyard at Addington. J.H.H. believed they had a son named Edward.



Ada Emily, born 1871

was a postal worker. On the 1891 census she was in Heston, and on the 1901 she was a boarder at the family home of a postman named Sam Galpin in nearby Hounslow. Where she lived thereafter is not known, but it would not have been far away, and it's unlikely that she ever married because in 1931 she was still 'Miss A.E Hunt', as a newspaper cutting from that time testifies. That was on the occasion of her retirement at the age of 60, and she was awarded 'The Imperial Service Medal' for 43 years service to Hounslow Post Office. A copy of the newspaper article is in the appendix.

As for Matthias himself

.....all one can say is that we know he was an apprentice wheelwright to start with, (that was in 1851 when he was 15) and if one assumes that an apprenticeship would probably have started at around age 13 and would have lasted perhaps 7 years, he would have qualified at around age 20 in 1855. But he became a carpenter along the way, so did that mean he finished earlier than 1855 or later? Who knows? Where he was during those years has not been established, but circumstantial evidence from a letter suggests he was a lodger in the Cullum household, and may have worked at Addington prior to permanent engagement there in 1860. The catalyst could well have been 'G.E.Street', the diocesan architect, who designed and oversaw the building of the new *Wheatley* church (where the Cullums lived) in 1856-57, and then went on to redesign and oversee the building of the church at Addington in 1857-58. It could be that Matthias 'became a carpenter' to work on the *Wheatley* church, and then moved on to Addington with G.E.Street.

He married Ellen in 1859, and next appears on the 1861 census on the Addington estate, as a house carpenter. As noted elsewhere, Addington was bought by John Hubbard in 1854, and he embarked upon such a *massive* program of building and renovation that he must have 'sucked in' every tradesman for miles around. Matthias was one of them, moving to Addington and onto the permanent staff of the Hubbard family (as they were then) on July 3rd 1860.

In 1861, he and Ellen appear on the census at Western Cottages, Addington, and Ellen is down as a dress-maker, the only time she 'officially' records an occupation of any kind. We can be pretty sure of exactly where they were. On 'The 1866 Land Valuation List' for Buckinghamshire, Matthias again appears in one of the Western Cottages.



There were in fact four cottages, and, with a piece of land in front which the occupants probably cultivated, the total area covered '2 acres, 4 rods and 30 perches' and had a total rateable value for all four of £15 per annum. (This information is in a large ledger at The Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies archives in Aylesbury but it is not permitted to be photocopied for fear of damage).

The map on the facing page, however, was part of the agent's literature when the estate changed hands in 1970, and the numbers refer to descriptions in the text they produced at the time. Most of that is of no interest to us now, except that Number 11 was a lot known as 'Western House'. It is without doubt the four original Western Cottages knocked into one. Also worthy of note is the proximity to the school. That was completed in 1876 so at least the youngest three of Matthias and Ellen's children would have benefited from that. William Richard may have been too old by then, he would have been 14. The location of Matthias's later home on the estate, Moat Cottage, has not been established, although it was the 'next to be recorded' on one of the later censuses, so it can't have been far away. The church can be seen at the bottom right of the plan with the rectory alongside.



also came up for auction in 1921, having been used as a school during World War 1, and then as a hotel afterwards. The complete prospectus is included later, but one can extract from it those details which would have been relevant to Matthias. There was "a *Carpenter's Shop, [and] Adjoining is a Timber built Wood Shed*" on the "North Side of Archway" to "The Stabling", (a photo of which is on the left. One can see the archway, but the carpenter's shop is perhaps on the other side of the building). Then later under "Estate Workshops and Small Homestead" is found "....Comprising A substantial and modern red brick and tiled Electric Plant House, machine shop, engine and dynamo house, accumulator room, and Plant House containing a complete electric light generating plant, suction gas plant, pump etc." and then "*Timber and corrugated iron roof on three sides of stockyards. Carpenter's sawpit, and a four bay open wood and store shed. Range of fifteen-bay brick, timber and slated open stock sheds shop and timber store*".

Sounds like Matthias must have been a busy man. In amongst all his own responsibilities, he must have taught his sons William and Frederick *their* woodworking skills, as they both became carpenters and joiners in turn, but William seems to have left to work elsewhere at an early opportunity. He's there on the 1871 census of course, as a 9 year-old scholar, but on the 1881 census he's a lodger in London, at 38, Cold Bath Square. <

There's a little surprise hidden away on 'the 1871'. Living with Matthias, Ellen, William, Frederick and Kate, (Ada had not yet been born), was Ellen's youngest brother, Thomas! He was 22 at the time, also a carpenter, and one gets the impression that Matthias was 'bringing *him* on' as well as his sons. We don't know how long he had been at Addington by then and Matthias may even have taken him on as an apprentice, but there is no record of that. Thomas was later to be a carpenter at Adstock, the adjoining estate which the then Lord Addington eventually and finally acquired in 1893. (The Hubbard family had been buying up little pieces of Adstock land for years, but it wasn't until 1893 that they managed to buy Adstock House.)

So Matthias and Ellen brought up their children at Addington, and then sadly Ellen died, in 1880. Matthias was later to remarry, in 1887, to Elizabeth Coling, who had come to Addington sometime between 1871 and 1881 as a lady's maid at the Manor. (She was on 'the 81' but not on 'the 71'). When they married, he was 51 and she was 47. Rather sweet, really. On the 1891 census, she described herself as a 'dressmaker working at home'.

Apart from his carpentry duties of course, Matthias was quite obviously quite an important man at Addington, indeed it would appear that to call him 'a pillar of local society' at *his* social level would not be an exaggeration. Two letters that have survived 'in the family' give us an idea of the esteem in which he must have been held.

The first dates from April 1868, (just before Easter that year), and is a letter to Matthias from the Rector of Addington at the time, Arthur Baker, who was away in Ilfracombe, trying (unsuccessfully) to recover from an illness. (He died in the July, and is buried at Addington). The whole letter is reproduced later but Baker writes, *inter alia*...

"Dear Mr. Hunt,

I thank you very much for your kind letter, and the accompanying list of furniture which you have stowed in the loft. I hope that you took home the table which you would like to have, and which I will pay for with the rest, and will give you I am now, thank God, much better and I hope getting on towards recovery.

..... I hope that Mrs. Hunt and your children are well, and that William's cough is better. Remember me to them all very kindly..... Was anything done with the contents of the closet, where the Bishop's Throne was kept? I think you would find there some Easter Scrolls, which may be wanted, and also the black glazed calico which is laid on

the floor on Good Friday. Would you speak to Mr. Williams about this beforehand, and, if you find it there, show him

how we had it placed, covering the floor within the altar-rail and the greater part of the chancel floor? The several pieces are cut to fit their place.....Remember me very kindly to all inquiring friends, and believe me, my dear Mr. Hunt, your affectionate friend and Pastor, Arthur Baker"

The second letter is more recent, from 1952, and is from one of Matthias's son, Frederick Matthias (J&M's grandfather), to Harold Hunt (J&M's father). Where he refers to Addington, the subject matter can be dated to the very end of 1871. Francis Hubbard died on Christmas Day that year, at the age of 27.

1. 8. 52 2. Lou Newwood Garden
Dear Harold Hinchley Wood
The thought occurred to me that you might be interested in the history of that strange piece of furniture which May tells me you sent to Loughton. It was given to Dad by the Rev. Southey who was tutor to the young gents at the Manor. I remember as a boy in the Church choir spending a time in the Hall at the Manor at I think a Christmas celebration when this tutor spoke to us boys. I have an idea that he was related to Southey the poet who lived at Bassenthwaite in the Lake district for I think I believe the Coleridges & Southey lived in the same house not too happily I think. I think this tutor was mainly for

Mr. Francis Hubbard (uncle to the dear Francis you knew) he had been trained for the navy but bad health overtook him & he died when a young man in his twenties I think. I remember as plain as possible his funeral when we choir boys walked to the grave & we all wore a band of white linen round one arm. His mother who became the 1st Lady Addington copied Queen Victoria as regards her Albert by leaving his bedroom just as he left it when he passed on. Dad was the undertaker when he was laid in Addington Churchyard. Ada had a share in the Holiday Fellowship & spoke to me some time ago as she thought of asking them to place it in the good will fund. I suggested she passed it on to Kath as Kath was a member. I don't know if she did so?

Dear Harold,

The thought occurred to me that you might be interested in the history of that strange piece of furniture which May tells me you sent to Loughton. It was given to Dad [Ed. note: Matthias] by the Rev. Southey, who was tutor to the young gents at the Manor. I remember, as a boy in the church choir, spending a time in the Hall at the Manor at, I think, a 'Christmas Tree Celebration', when this Rector spoke to us boys. I have an idea he was related to Southey the poet, who lived at Bassenthwaite in the Lake District for a time. I believe the Coleridges and Southey's lived in the same house, not too happily I think. I think this tutor was mainly for

Mr. Francis Hubbard (uncle to the 'Mr. Francis' you knew). He had been trained for the Navy but bad health overtook him and he died when a young man, in his twenties I think.

I remember, as plain as possible, his funeral, when we choir boys walked to the grave and we all wore a band of white linen round one arm. [Ed note: Frederick Matthias was only 6½ at the time, but all 'Hunts' have always been blessed with excellent and precise memories]. His mother, who became the first 'Lady Addington', copied Queen Victoria as regards her Albert, by leaving his (Francis's) bedroom just as he left it when he passed on. Dad was the undertaker when he was laid in Addington Churchyard.

[Ed note: the next paragraph is not relevant to Addington]

Ada had a share in the Holiday Fellowship and spoke to me some time ago as she thought of asking them to place it to The Good Will Fund of the 'H.F.'. I suggested she passed it on to Kath, as Kath was a member. I don't know if she did so?