

The family of Frederick Murrell and Catherine Chapman.



St Osyth, Roath approx. 1905

*back row – Catherine Murrell, Frank Murrell, Alice Murrell, Mary McCormick and Hamilton Murrell
front row – Wilfred Murrell, Catherine Chapman, Frederick Murrell and Florence EA Murrell*

Frederick and Catherine had 7 children; Frederick William Hamilton (1862-1916), Florence Elizabeth Alice (1869-1934), Harry Arthur Alfred (1871-1899), Frank Edric Joseph (1874-1931), Emily Fanny (1876-1940), Wilfred Hooper (1877-1952) and Catherine Lillian (1878-1946), of these Hamilton and Florence were born while the family were still living in Wivenhoe.

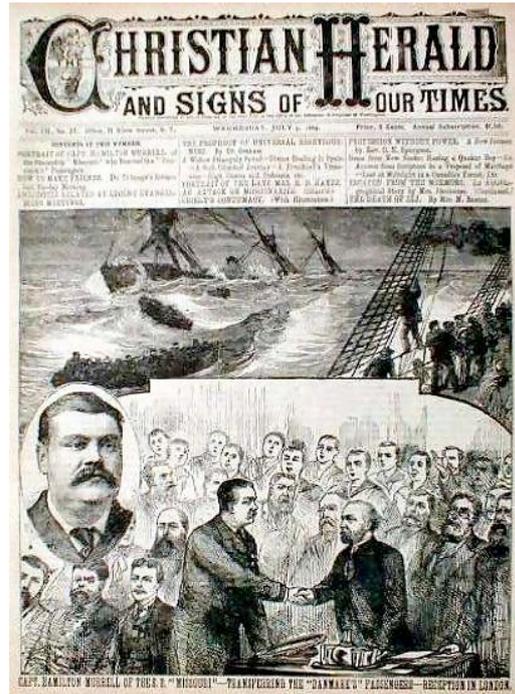
Frederick William Hamilton (1862-1916), always known as Hamilton, was born on the 15th June 1862 while his parents were still living on the High Street in Wivenhoe. Aged 8 he is recorded in the 1871 census as staying with his grandfather William Chapman in Colchester and at the age of 14 he spent 5 months at sea as ships boy under his uncle Joseph Edward on the *Valetta* before starting his apprenticeship on the 6th June 1877. He served his 4 year apprenticeship with William Gray and Sons sailing under his uncle Joseph on the *Valetta*, *Blytheville* and *Helen Pembroke*. Completing his apprenticeship in June 1881 Hamilton sailed on the *Helen Pembroke* as 3rd mate before transferring to the Atlantic Transport Line (Hooper, Murrell & Williams) ship *Surrey* in 1883 as 2nd mate. In 1884 and 1885 he sailed on the J H Murrell & Co ships *Deer Hill* and *Thornycroft* as 1st mate.

Having gained his Masters Certificate (CN 10956) on 28th May 1885, his first command was the *Maine* followed by the *Surrey*, *Missouri* and *Massachusetts* all Atlantic Transport Line ships.

It was during his command of the *Missouri* that Hamilton rose to fame when he rescued the 735 passengers and crew of the *SS Danmark* on the 6th April 1889. The *Danmark* had shaft failure in mid Atlantic and was in danger of sinking. Hamilton was feted on arriving in Philadelphia and received a knighthood from the King of Denmark amongst many other plaudits. M M Hemy recorded the rescue in a painting 'Every Soul Was Saved' and the story is told in a book written by Hamilton's mother 'A Narrative of the Rescue of the Passengers of the *SS Danmark* by the *SS Missouri*' (Cardiff 1899).



'Every Soul Was Saved' M M Hemy 1889



Hamilton resigned from the Atlantic Transport Company on the 1st June 1896 having married Mary Cottman McCormick (1869-1959) in Baltimore on the 1st June 1890 and taking US citizenship in April 1903. They had 6 children; Frederick (Eric) John Hamilton (1894-1981), Alice Catherine (1894-1918), Archibald Arthur (1897-1954), William Alan Hamilton (1901-1999), Winifred Mary (1907-1908) and Enid Rosemary (1909-1985).

Prior to emigrating to the United States Hamilton had moved to Cardiff where he joined his father as a marine surveyor on Mountstuart Square and was the representative for the West Hartlepool Small Damage Association. He also was elected (unopposed) to the Glamorgan County Council as the Conservative councillor for Barry in 1901



CAPT. HAMILTON MURRELL, K.D.

The family are recorded in 1903 as living in Brookline, Boston and in the 1910 US census as living in Winthrop, Massachusetts where Hamilton's occupation is shown as 'retired'. He died on the 9th June 1916 at the age of 53 and is buried in Loudon Park Cemetery, Baltimore.



Florence Elizabeth Alice Murrell (1869-1934) Born on the 1st October 1869 when her parents Frederick and Catherine were living on The Quay, Wivenhoe, she was staying with her grandmother Eliza in the 1871 census whilst her parents undertook the move to London. Florence married John Hilton Stowell (1863-1934), a Congregational Church clergyman, at Star Street Church, Cardiff. The family then moved to Lightcliffe in Yorkshire when John took up the position of Congregational Minister. They had 2 children; Catherine Elizabeth (b1894) and Leonard Hamilton (1899-1982), born in Lightcliffe. The family then moved to Hornsey, North London, where in the 1901 census they are living at 102 Mount View Road where their children Enid Florence (1900-1984) and Donald Frederick (1901-1976) were born.

This was followed by a move to Battersea in 1911 where the family were living at 77 West Side, Clapham Common. John was the vicar of St Denys, Northmoor, Oxfordshire from 1927 – 1933. They both died in 1934, Florence in Northmoor on the 9th February and John in Sheffield on the 16th November. They are buried together in Northmoor.

Harry Arthur Alfred Murrell (1871-1899) born in Tottenham, London on the 26th March 1871 when his parents Frederick & Catherine had just moved into 1 Portland Place. He is recorded in the 1881 census as a boarder at College House, Upper Fore St, Edmonton, North London. He followed his father and brother in going to sea, his original certificate appears to have been lost in 1896 but records show him as 2nd Mate on the *Thyra* (reg no 98523) and Chief Officer on the *Thornycroft* and then as Chief Officer on the *Haslingden* from December 1895 to February 1896; these latter 2 ships were owned by J H Murrell & Co. Harry gained his Masters Certificate (CN 23822 re-issued as CN 30451) in August 1894. He is recorded as the Master of the *Fastnet* and *Kinsale*. Harry married Beatrice Mary Barter (1872-1948) at the Charles Street Congregational Church, Cardiff on the 17th March 1897 and they had one

child, Harold Frederick (1898-1970) who was born on the 18th October 1898 in Cardiff.

Harry drowned at sea on the 12th February 1899 when he was washed overboard from the bridge of the *Kinsale* at approximately 20.30hrs. Contemporary reports are that the ship was bound for Glasgow where his wife was going to meet him. In the days before radio she wouldn't have known about the tragedy until the ship docked and one can only surmise the shock that the news brought. Beatrice remarried Edward Charles Parsons in April 1903. Harold married Phyllis Cooper in 1923 and spent his latter years owning and managing the Dragon's Tail Hotel in Brixham, Devon where he died in September 1970.

CAPTAIN WASHED OVERBOARD.

Captain H. Murrell, master of the s.s. Kinsale, who was washed overboard while crossing the Atlantic, as reported in Monday's South Wales Daily News, was received with deep regret in the Barry district. Captain Murrell was a son of Captain F. Murrell, a member of the Barry District Council, and a brother of Captain H. Murrell, hero of the Danmark and member of the Glamorgan County Council. Deceased was highly respected, and a sad incident in connection with his death was the fact that his wife, to whom he had only been married about 12 months, had proceeded to Glasgow to meet him, where the painful news awaited her. Much sympathy is felt at Barry with Captain and Mrs Murrell (father and mother) and the whole family in their bereavement.

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[**Frank Edric Joseph Murrell \(1874-1931\)**](#) was born on the 17th March 1874 when his parents Frederick and Catherine were living in Northumberland Park, North London. Moving to Cardiff with his parents Frank started a career in the paper and box industry, in the 1899 Cardiff & District Trades Directory he is listed as the manager of the Cambrian Box & Paper Company in Penarth Road and by the 1909 Cardiff Directory was advertising as Murrell Richards & Co, wholesale stationers 41-43 Penarth Road where they are still in 1914. On the 1st September 1919 Frank formed a partnership with Messes Caxton-Davies and Harvey to found the London paper merchants Davies, Harvey & Murrell, a company that is still trading in 2019. Frank was enrolled as a Freemason in the Glamorgan Lodge on the 16th October 1916 and a Freeman of the City of London on the 16th November 1920.

From 1908 - 1915 Frank was elected a member of Barry Urban District Council and he was selected to fight the Weston-Super-Mare constituency at the 1922 General Election. Although listed in contemporary records as a member of the Liberal faction led by Lord Asquith, he preferred not to be associated with either of the two factions of the Liberal Party. He called himself an 'Independent Liberal' and stated he would work with either faction if in agreement with their policies; he failed to take the seat at the 1922 election. However the Liberals were reunited at the 1923 General Election and Frank again stood in Weston-Super-Mare. He won the seat with a majority of 905, defeating the Conservative MP, Lord Erskine.

In Parliament he proposed and received a Second Reading on a bill giving to local joint industrial councils compulsory powers of enforcement of their decisions. The bill did not pass. Subsequently the Liberal Party in their industrial policy programme

formally took up his industrial proposals for the 1929 General Election contained in the 'Yellow Book'. Frank was heavily defeated at the 1924 General Election did not stand for parliament again.

Frank married Mary Gwendoline Howell (1872-1952) on the 26th June 1906 in Bethany Baptist Chapel, St Mary's Street Cardiff and they had 3 children; Kenneth Frank Hywel (1908-1984), Katherine Alison (1912-1992) and Barbara Gwendoline (1913-2004). He is shown in the 1901 census living with his parents at St Osyth with his occupation described as a Paper merchant and on the 1911 census he, Gwendoline and Hywel are living at Romilly Park with his occupation shown as merchant – timber and paper. By 1930 the family were living in Croydon, Surrey however Frank died on the 1st April 1931 whilst staying at the Angel Hotel, Cardiff. Gwendoline died on 6th May 1952.

Emily Fanny Murrell (1876-1940) was born in Edmonton, London on the 11th April 1876 and moved with her parents to Wales. In the 1901 census, aged 24, she is still living with her parents and is recorded as a paper merchant on her own account. Fanny married **Frederick Ninnis Pearce (1879-1950)** in Cardiff on the 7th July 1903; Fred was a shipbroker living in Liscard, Cheshire where he and Fanny moved after their marriage. The 1911 census sees them at 7 Beresford Road, Wallasey with her mother and sister Catherine living next door at St Osyth, 5 Beresford Road. These were substantial dwellings with 8 and 9 rooms respectively. Fred is now shown as a Master Stevedore, the 1914 Kelly's Directory still sees both families together and Fred is working at the company his father (James Ninnis Pearce) started.

In 1920 Directory's they are still showing as living on Beresford Road but by 1925 have moved to 'Kinburn', on Chester Road, Hinderton. In the 1939 records they are still there with Fanny's sister Catherine and Fred's sister Cecilia Cunningham, who was now a widow, living with them. Fanny died on the 1st November 1940. When he retired Fred moved to Cheltenham where he died on the 13th March 1950.

James Ninnis Pearce (1837-1903) was born in Flushing, Cornwall, to parents Abraham Pearce and Celia Rowe on the 14th September 1837 and is recorded as being baptised on the 22nd October 1837 at St Melorus Church, Mylor Bridge, Cornwall and he appears on the 1841 Census living with his parents at Tregew St, Flushing.

At the age of 13 he joined the Royal Navy, serving on *HMS Penguin* (June 1850-December 1850), *HMS St George* (May 1851 – May 1852) and *HMS Dauntless* (May 1852 – May 1853). Leaving the Royal Navy he began a career in the Mercantile Marine sailing on the *Jane Lowden* of Padstow as an able seaman (December 1852 – October 1855), *Cock o' the Walk* of Falmouth as mate (November 1856 – April 1857); *Prosperous* of London as mate (April 1857 – October 1857), *Penelope* of Bristol as

mate (November 1857 – March 1858). He then rejoined the *Jane Lowden* as mate (May 1858 – October 1858) and then sailed on the *Euphrosyne* of North Shields (December 1858 – November 1859).

James then sailed as mate on the *Caduceus* from February 1860 – June 1861. He gained his Masters Certificate (CN15735) in Plymouth on the 20th July 1861 and became the ships captain in 1863, a position he held until 1873. The painting below, attributed to Michelle Funno, would appear to be a souvenir of James's first voyage as Master of *Caduceus* in April 1863.



"Caduceus sailing into Naples Commanded by James Pearce April 20th 1863"

James married Elizabeth Brandwood in the summer 1870 and they had 3 children; Cecelia May (1872– 941), born New Brighton, Cheshire Brandwood James Lemon (1877–1923 born in New Brighton Cheshire, and Frederick Ninnis (1879–1950) born in Birkenhead Cheshire. Frederick (Fred) married Emily Fanny Murrell on the 7th July 1903.

On leaving the sea James became a Master Stevedore, forming James N Pearce & Co, Master Porters and Stevedores in George's Dock Passage, Liverpool, and is recorded in the 1881 census as living in Liscard, Cheshire, the 1891 Census and the 1901 Census at 'Haven' 103 Seabank Road, Wallasey where he died on 14th Feb 1903 and Elizabeth on the 1st January 1923.

Wilfred Hooper Murrell (1877-1952), the sixth child of Frederick and Catherine, Wilfred was born in Edmonton on the 7th March 1877 and moving with the family to South Wales. In the 1901 census he is still living at home and his occupation is 'box manufacturer', presumably with his brother Frank at Cambrian Box and Paper Co in Penarth Road. He appears to have paid a visit to his brother Hamilton in August 1903 and by the 1911 census is living in Yeovil, Somerset as Managing Director of a Leather Board and Cardboard Box factory.

Wilfred enlisted in September 1914 joining the 6th Somerset Light Infantry and undertook his basis training at Aldershot. He is recorded in the Western Gazette as being among the first 698 Yeovilians who had signed up prior to the 1st December 1914. He served with the Motor Machine Gun Service of the Royal Artillery in France from the 9th April 1915 and was attached to the 6th Somerset's. Wilfred was then appointed Temporary 2nd Lieutenant with the West Yorkshire Regiment on the 9th April 1916.

Having been injured during the Great War he married Mona Nicholls, one of the nurses who had tended him, on the 14th February 1918 in the Parish Church, Whitley Bay, Northumberland before the couple returned to Yeovil and Wilfred resumed running Somerset and Dorset Paper Company.

By 1932 the name of the company had changed to the Somerset & Dorset Box Company, still operating from South Street in Yeovil and both Fred and Peter joined the company having completed their armed forces service after the Second World War.



This view of South Street, Yeovil dates to about 1920. The three-storey white building at centre was the initial Somerset & Dorset Paper Co factory.

Wilfred and Mona had 3 children, Helen born on the 1st January 1919, Arthur Frederick (Fred) born on the 19th March 1920 and Peter Hamilton born on 7th February 1928. Wilfred died in Yeovil on the 17th September 1952 and Mona died at Peters home in Yeovilon the 5th March 1966 aged 75.



Wilfred, Mona and family, photo taken in May 1928 at Priestlands, Sherborne.

Catherine Lillian Eliza Murrell (1878-1946), the last child of Frederick and Catherine was born in Tottenham, North London on the 25th August 1878. Catherine appears to have lived with her family for the whole of life, moving from London to Cardiff then when her father died she moved with Catherine with her mother to live in the adjacent house to Emily & Fred. The 1939 register records that she was living in 'Kinburn' with Emily & Fred Pearce along with Fred's sister Cecilia. Catherine moved with Fred moved to Cheltenham when he retired, she died on the 28th March 1946 at 21 Royal Parade, Cheltenham however the address on her probate shows that she was living at Fred's address in Battledown, Cheltenham and that she left her estate to him.

Catherine had remained a spinster and had apparently lived on 'private means' for the whole of her life.