

9.7.2007

Dear Mrs. Neal,

Thank you for your letter and for the interesting details about your ancestor, Mary Neal. I must apologise for not speaking to you when you telephoned last Thursday. My wife and I were rather busy at that moment, and that is why our daughter answered the phone while she was visiting with her children. The name Blanche Payling did not mean anything then, but on reflection, I realised that I did know something about her.

I began to research my family history in 1983 soon after I had taken early retirement. As I am the youngest of a very large family, and likewise both my parents, I was unable to trace back many generations. I soon discovered that my four grandparents were all born in the 1840's in Somers Town, which was situated between Euston and St. Pancras Stations.

As I had plenty of time on my hands, I was able to

record all the births, marriages and deaths of Paylings in the London area from 1837 until well into the twentieth century. This was not too ~~ish~~ some as this spelling of the name was not common in London, but appeared much more often in Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire. I found that my grandfather was a George Thomas Payling, the son of a George Payling, a tailor, who was born about 1820 and died in 1904. My great grandfather George was the son of a Thomas Payling, also a tailor, who died in 1838.

During this time I found what appeared to be another family of Paylings, again tailors, who appeared to be very prolific. I quickly became quite fascinated by them and I began to wonder if they were related to us. Most probably there is a link, but I am not one hundred per cent certain. I think that the eldest son of my great, great grandfather, Thomas, was a William Payling, a tailor, who founded the other 'dynasty' that I have called 'The Paylings of Pancras'. You will notice from the enclosed family tree that Blanche was a member of this family. The William Payling born in 1847, and who married Mary Wisby, was the son of the previously mentioned William. Prior to his marriage, he

had lived with his parents at several addresses in
Lumberland Market. He and Mary first lived at an
address in Somers Town, and then at No. 1 Glen Street.
William was still at this address when he died in 1928.
When William James, the son, married Mary Anne Cheesewright
they went to live at No. 10 Glen Street. It is interesting
to note that when Blanche was born in 1891 her father
had nine sisters and two brothers, the second of whom
died as an infant.

With the advent of the Internet, I was able to
establish that Blanche's brother died in France in 1918,
leaving just one daughter from his marriage to Alda Urban.
Blanche's uncle, Sidney Charles Payling, appears to have had
no children, despite being married twice. It seems that the
Payling name has died out from this branch of the family.

Returning to Blanche, the main subject of your interest,
it is quite surprising to think that she was such a skilled
teacher of country dancing, coming from such a humble
background. She would have been only twenty years old
when she travelled to Thaxted to teach classes there.
It says much for the tuition she herself received at Mary
Neal's Esperance Club. You will notice from the family tree
that she married someone called Lewis, and so she might

have had children who could still be alive today.

The name Cumberland Market interested me and I found it clearly marked on Ordnance Survey maps dated 1870 and 1894. The market was situated at the end of a basin at the end of the Regent's Park Canal, and was used for the sale of straw, hay and other products brought in by barge from outside London. Glen Street was a narrow road of tiny houses that led into the square. The 1870 map shows it as Henry Street. Some years ago I went up to town and had a stroll round the area, but clearly there was little evidence of what had been there in the 19th Century.

I trust that my ramblings have been of some interest to you.

Yours sincerely,

Clifford L. Payling.