

From Burslem to Trenton via Stoke and Belleek

The Life of WILLIAM WOOD GALLIMORE

By Paul Tubb

William Wood Gallimore was born in Burslem on February 7th 1841 and was baptised at St Paul's Church in Burslem on March 3rd in that year. Quite unusually we have on his birth certificate the precise time of his birth, 10 past 2 PM, as this was how the registrar interpreted the question 'When and where born'. As to the location within Burslem the father gives as his residence 'Furlong Cottage' Burslem and states that his occupation is an Engraver. William's parents were William Gallimore and Esther Wood who had been married in the parish church at Wolstanton on July 2nd 1832. Whether Esther was connected to the pottery family of Wood, famous for Woods Ware items of everyday crockery, I have not been able to establish with certainty.

Her parents, John Wood and Susannah Wood, had been married at the church of Norton in the Moors on January 19th 1807 at a time when numerous Wood surname entries are listed in the marriage registers there together with many other well known Potteries surnames such as Wedgwood, Bromley, Aynsley, Shufflebotham, Spode, and Tams. No doubt the somewhat cleaner air out on the Moors away from the smoke filled streets of the five/six towns was attractive to those who could afford to either live out of town or use its facilities for their ceremonial events.

William's paternal grandparents, Jesse Gallimore and Ann Faulkner, were also married at Norton in the Moors on October 12th 1797. Some years earlier on May 12th 1783 a Samuel Gallimore had married a Mary Faulkner, also at Norton in the Moors, but I have not yet been able to establish whether this is a case of brothers marrying sisters. The biblical provenance of the names Jesse and Samuel may well indicate that they are brothers but I have not found any documentary 'proof' of their being so.



Norton in the Moors, St Bartholomew's Church

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William and Esther, William Wood's parents, were married before the start of civil registration in July 1837 so we are dependant upon parish register evidence for any children they may have had between their marriage in 1832 and William's birth in 1841.

St. Bartholomew's Church. Picture reproduced from: <http://www.wishful-thinking.org.uk/genuki/STS/NortonintheMoors/StBartholomew.html>

The only likely baptism reference I have found is that of Jane Gallimore, born in late 1838 and baptised at Wolstanton on January 27th 1839. Unfortunately, I have no further certain reference to her from any source. At the time of the 1851 census the household consisted simply of William W Gallimore, the 10 year old son of William and Hester living with his parents at Buck's Lane, Burslem. The father, William, was aged 39 and is noted as an Engraver on Copper while all three give their place of birth as Burslem. Incidentally, in the light of William's subsequent career, the next door neighbour is an 'operative chemist' named Thomas Robotham who was born in Ireland and living with his south Staffordshire born wife, Elizabeth, but no children. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility to imagine a friendship between the neighbours and young William hearing tales of the Emerald Isle which helped him to decide some few years later that working in Ireland was something which appealed to him.

There is no sign of Jane, nor indeed any other children, still at home. There is a Jane Gallimore living at 6 Cobden Street, Hulme, Manchester with parents George and Jane and three brothers and a sister. The parents and the oldest children, including Jane, are all noted as having been born in Burslem, Staffordshire and my surmise is that this is the aforementioned Jane. I think, however, that she is a cousin of William Wood Gallimore as her father, George, is probably William's elder brother born in 1805 but baptised at St. Paul's in Burslem on the same day as William, September 25th 1808. Thus, it would appear that William and Esther only had the one child who survived infancy and there is no evidence that I have uncovered yet of any who may have been born but died young.

By the time of the 1861 census the family had moved to Rose Street in Hanley and the elder William is still an engraver and his son is noted as a Potter's Modeller a job designation that he would keep for the rest of his life. Once again, as with William Henshall, there is no indication of which pottery company he was employed by but the book "William Henry Goss" by Lynda and Nicholas Pine indicates that he was at that time a member of Goss & Peake's team in their John Street factory adjacent to the Cock Inn at Stoke. The same authority suggests that William was one of just two or three craftsmen engaged at that time on making parian portrait busts from which the moulds were made for the range of busts on which the factory, later just W H Goss, built its reputation.

The Pines clearly give 1863 as the date on which William Wood Gallimore, along with Bromley and some ten others, was induced to leave Goss & Peake and set off for Belleek. The authors give no indication as to the reasons behind this move. In 1862 William Goss had won the highly coveted medal at the Great International Exhibition for his display of parian and figurines and it seems clear that Gallimore and, probably, some of the other defectors had had a major input to this success. Could it be that their part in the success was not appreciated sufficiently? Or were the strains between Goss and Peake, which led to the dissolving of their partnership in 1868, already becoming apparent and casting a shadow over the working conditions? Or were Armstrong and McBirney so persuasive and offering such a good deal that even senior and trusted employees of Goss & Peake took the bait and went off to the west of Ireland and a lifestyle totally unknown to them? What makes men turn their back on current success in search of possible success elsewhere?

There is no generally agreed answer that I have seen to any of these questions. Possibly something of all these influences was at play. Somebody or something must have persuaded these talented, but nonetheless ordinary, working men that Parian ware was the coming 'thing' in pottery and that a factory towards the western edge of Ireland was best placed to reap the economic advantage in producing it. Then again, given the links between the Worcester porcelain factory and Belleek through Kerr, Dargan and Kirk why did Armstrong and McBirney come to Goss & Peake at Stoke to recruit their expert potters? There is room here for a thoroughgoing piece of historical scholarship to find an answer to this mystery.



Holy Trinity Church, Northwood

There is, however, common agreement that William Wood Gallimore came to Belleek in 1863 and was very influential in helping the factory there to produce high quality parian ware figures in quite a short time span, probably through a fruitful artistic partnership with Robert Armstrong's wife Annie. It is clear, too, that he was back in Stoke and with Goss & Peake again in 1866. During that summer he married Mary Elizabeth Stevenson at Trinity Church, Northwood, Stoke upon Trent and their first child, Flora Ethel was born in Hanley the following year and then Marian in 1868. His wife, Mary Elizabeth, had been born in Stoke in 1846, the second daughter of James and Caroline Stevenson who at the time of the 1851 census were living at Greville Street, Northwood, Hanley. By 1861 they had moved on to 1 Gill Street in Shelton and in both census returns her father is noted as an engraver. He is also stated to be an engraver on William and Mary's marriage certificate, as also is William's father. Her residence at the time of the marriage is given as Tinkers Clough whilst William's is Rose Street. On the certificate William's age is 25 and Mary Elizabeth's is 21.

It seems highly probable that William and his family were back in Belleek at the time of the 1871 census as there is no sign of them on the census returns for England and Wales. The 1871 census of Ireland is lost and so their presence in Belleek cannot be verified. I was at a loss to account for a Maria Gallimore, aged 3 and recorded as a niece, in the household of George and Mary Heath at 145 Waterloo Road, Burslem thinking that she may be the second child of William Wood Gallimore and Mary. But I could find no connection between George or Mary Heath and the Gallimore family and, with his parents living at 25 Vincent Street, Hanley, it must have been more likely to leave Marian with them

than with an aunt and uncle when the rest of the family went over to Ireland. It is much more likely that the whole family went to Belleek together and the Maria Gallimore recorded with the Heaths in Burslem is from another family entirely.

However by the time of the 1881 census of England the family is back in the Potteries and living at 9 Prospect Place, Hanley. All the children are recorded as being born in Hanley, apart from 11 year old Mary who was born in Ireland. This clearly supports the contention that the whole family was in Ireland and therefore probably in Belleek at the time of the 1871 census. They would have remained there for some little while longer as the 1881 census also records a William Gallimore aged 8 and born in Ireland living with William Wood's parents at 25 Vincent Street, Hanley and noted as grandson. In 1881, then, William was back in Stoke and had been since at least 1876 when his son Jesse Albert was born followed by Bertram in 1878 and Lawrence in 1880.



Rose Street, Northwood

I have not yet found the precise date of the accident with a gun which resulted in William Wood losing his right arm but I feel sure that it would have been in this second period in Ireland. The story of William Goss's daughter 'watching spell bound as things of beauty grew under Gallimore's magic touch' would relate to the period 1875 to 1881. She says 'He never appears to take any care, but a lovely form, or perfect portrait would appear to grow out of a series of hurried and apparently careless dabs with various tools at the wet clay'. It was in 1875/76 that William is credited with producing the large busts of Llewellynn Jewitt and the Prince of Wales for the Goss pottery. The Pine biography of William H Goss¹, the source of the above quotation, suggests that in 1881 William Wood Gallimore retired from the Goss pottery works and went to America. There is no indication of the nature of this 'retirement' and we are more than 20 years before the advent of old age pensions and Gallimore had only just turned 40 anyway. That he might not be able to continue with his work, given the nature of his disability, is likely but I have no evidence of the arrangements that pottery firms made for such employees, particularly when the injury occurred outside of work and was in no sense due to the working conditions. Added to which, Gallimore had at least twice walked out on Goss and gone off to Belleek. I think it is more likely that some sort of offer of work had come from America and induced him to up sticks again and take the whole family over to New Jersey. Miranda Goodby's article² on Staffordshire pottery workers going over to the potteries in New Jersey and the Ohio and Mississippi valleys in the mid 1840s shows that there was a long standing connection and movement of men and ideas between Staffordshire and the east coast of America. That Gallimore's reputation as a modeller would attract offers of employment from the American pottery industry, which was eagerly seeking to emulate Belleek quality wares, is only to be expected and was sufficient to encourage the whole family to book passage for America in the early 1880s.



Probably the house in Rose Street, Northwood where William Wood Gallimore was living in 1861

It might have been that at this juncture my pursuit of William Wood Gallimore would have come to an end but, fortuitously, Ancestry.co.uk offered a fortnight's free use of their American census records which helped to continue the story. At the same time an email buddy, Nan Brennan of Chicago, who shares an interest in some of my wife Pat's genealogical history names in county Down [although we have not yet established any certain link but have helped each other occasionally over the last few years] came up trumps with a mine of information off various US websites. So, thanks to Nan and to Ancestry we can continue the story starting with the 1900 census return which shows William and his family, now augmented with a further son, Archie, born in 1889 in New Jersey, at 471 Bellevue Avenue, Trenton, New Jersey. The father William W is noted as a Designer & Moulder [Pottery] as is the eldest son, William, whilst Bertram is noted just as a designer. Two of the girls are dress makers but neither Flora nor her mother state any occupation. Incidentally, the 1890 US census remnants contain no reference that I could find to the family and nor does the English census of 1891.

But there are also some interesting variances with other evidence we have been looking at so far. Initially there is the absence of sons Jesse and Lawrence born in 1876 and 1880 respectively but the presence of a son Victor born in England in 1883. The death of a child is understandable as is the birth of another and Victor's birth is duly recorded in the civil indices of births and deaths in England and Wales but there is no record of Jesse or Lawrence having died. It must be, then, that they died after the family went to America because in the census entry Mary says that the marriage has lasted 34 years and produced 9 living children only 7 of whom are still alive. In fact, Lawrence died in January 1899 as I discovered through another email contact, Faith Ann in Florida, who responded to a request on the message boards for information on the family.

Obit for Lawrence Gallimore - Trenton Evening Times Jan 9, 1899

LAWRENCE GALLIMORE

At 471 Bellevue Avenue, Lawrence Gallimore, son of William and Mary E. Gallimore, age 18 years. Funeral was held this morning.



The Gosshawk carving on the end of the shed at the Goss works in Stoke

The census entry does mean, however, that the family did not go to America in 1881 as reported by the Pines in their biography of W H Goss although William may well have left Goss's employ at that time. In the 1900 census return the whole family, apart from Archie of course, state that they immigrated into the USA in 1884. Not that this was William W Gallimore's last contact with England because he and his son, William, are recorded on a passenger list from the Cunarder R M S Etruria – was this a happy coincidence or done by design? – which berthed at New York from Liverpool in April 1886 and amongst whose passengers were Wm W Gallimore aged 48 from Hanley and Wm Gallimore Jr aged 18 also from Hanley. Travelling with them and also noted as an artist from Hanley was a man called J Chetwynd aged, like our William, 48. There is no sign of William W's wife or daughters or the younger boys on this section of the passenger list. For what purpose had they crossed the Atlantic again? Were they on a recruiting mission and Mr Chetwynd was their solitary capture?

There is another detail difference between the census returns of 1881 in England and 1900 in New Jersey. The son William was recorded as having been born in Ireland on the 1881 census and as we have seen this ties in with the time when William W was in Belleek. On the 1900 census in the USA he is said to have been born in England but there is a clear error on the form and his information has been confused with his sister Marion's details. Marion's birth in 1868 in England is recorded in the indices but there is no sign of a William born 1872 in England.

What, I wonder, was William Wood doing between leaving Goss in 1881 and setting off for America in 1884? He might, of course, have gone back to Belleek or gone to work in another Staffordshire pottery or gone to America to see what the prospects were before committing his family to the rigours of emigration. Did he in fact leave Goss in 1881? Was he actually employed by them or did he work in a free lance capacity from home during these years? As usual, more questions to be answered by further research.

The same sort of uncertainty surrounds his working life in the potteries of Trenton. Both Ott & Brewer and the Ceramic Art Company, later to become Lenox, were moving quickly at this time into the world of parian manufacture and it is generally thought that William Wood Gallimore, along with the two Bromleys, was a significant influence on this development given their experience at both Goss and Belleek. In the Eng's book on collecting American Belleek³ it is said that William Wood Gallimore was actually employed by the Ceramic Arts Company, formed in 1889, and the Bromley's by Ott & Brewer. The similarity between some of the early parian products of both factories and those of Belleek is striking and would appear to support the contention of their influence. But then there is the evidence arising from the Trent Tile Company history which states quite clearly that "a man called William Wood Gallimore an artist and modeller succeeded Isaac Broome as their leading modeller in 1886." Isaac Broome himself, originally from Quebec, had spent 8 years with Ott & Brewer before joining the tile company.

I think it is likely that from the time of his accident William Wood's career necessarily took a new direction into what we would nowadays call 'consultancy', offering his expertise and experience to the pottery industry in Staffordshire, Ireland and Trenton and training the next generation of modellers, which probably included his own son, William, in the craft and artistic licence the medium allowed.

What is certain is that, not long after the census was taken in 1900, William Wood Gallimore died at his home in Trenton on Saturday July 28th. The following notice is taken from the Trenton Times of Tuesday, July 31st 1900 and is clearly not that of an insignificant man within that community.

Gallimore Funeral Services

*Vast Concourse of Sorrowing Friends
Paid Their Last Respects-The Sermon and the Bearers.*

The funeral of the late William Wood Gallimore whose death occurred on Saturday morning took place this morning from the residence, No 471 Bellevue Avenue. Rv. Walter A. Brooks, pastor of the Prospect Street Presbyterian Church, conducted the funeral services, which were simple but impressive, and the sermon that followed moved to tears the large concourse of people that filled the house to overflowing.

The remains rested in a handsome casket, white silk lined and covered with astrichan. The trimmings were of silver and the plate bore the inscription "William W. Gallimore, 1842-1900." The casket is the first astrichan covered one to be used in Trenton. The interment took place in the family plot in Riverview Cemetery.

The bearers were C.H. Hansen, Jas. Barlow, Henry Darling, G. Holcombe, E. Swan and E.B. Sterling. L.C. Cougle was in charge of the arrangements.

It is interesting to note that, provided the reporter got his facts right, the date of Gallimore's birth is incorrect on his casket. One other question is; Who were the bearers? Were they work colleagues or employees of the funeral house? If colleagues, is E Swan the artist E W Swann who painted the Belleek bird cabaret set?

This report makes reference to the 'family plot' in the cemetery, so perhaps Jesse and/or Lawrence had been buried there. There is also an internet reference, reprinted below, to the death of William Wood Gallimore's father in 1891 so he too may have been interred in the family plot. William Wood's mother, Esther, had died at 25 Vincent Street, Hanley on February 21st 1883 about a year before the family set sail for America. His father was the informant of his mother's death and the cause of death was given as Chronic Hepatitis & Jaundice.

The Winterthur Library in Delaware is a world famous repository with many items referring to the history of commerce and design. It is a mark of the respect in which William Wood Gallimore was held that they were willing to accept the donation of his father's prints and drawings.

The Winterthur Library

The Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Creator: William Gallimore
Title: Transfer Prints
Dates: 1820-1892, bulk 1820-1840s
Call No.: Col. 216
Acc. No.: 71x166
Quantity: 1 box
Location: 4 A 13

BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

William Gallimore (1807?-1891) was a designer and engraver. He did considerable work for the Wedgwoods, Enoch Wood, John Alcock, John Ridgeway, and other English potters. He died in 1891 in Trenton, New Jersey at the home of his son, William W. Gallimore, who was also in the pottery business, as were his children.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The collection consists mainly of transfer prints and proofs from cooper (sic) plates engraved by Gallimore and others, together with some original drawings from which the engravings were made, for potteries in Staffordshire, England. Pastoral scenes, exotic landscapes, elaborate architecture, genre scenes, floral and geometric designs, and miscellaneous scenes are represented. Also included is a letter from the Johnson Brothers to Edwin A. Barber and a piece of cardboard marked "Old Proof Prints/Property of E.A.B./ Given by Mr. Gallimore [William W.] in 1892/ 50 prints (1820-1830) / Also from other sources 19 Prints 1830-1840."

ORGANIZATION

Prints are arranged by subject matter. An index to subject matter is available at this repository.

Following William Wood's death the family continued to make their way in their adopted country. William, the eldest son, did not long survive his father as this death notice from the Trenton Evening Times of February 5th 1909 shows.

Death of William Gallimore

"William Gallimore, one of the best known of Trenton potters, died this morning after a short illness at his home 578 Rutherford Avenue. He was the son of Mary E. and the late William Wood Gallimore.

The funeral will be held Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock. Interment will be made in Riverview Cemetery."

Bertram married a New Jersey girl called Clara in 1905 and at the time of the 1910 census they with their two children were living next door to his mother who still had Marian, Madeleine and Archie with her. Another example of the sort of error which creeps into the filling up of forms is that Archie is now said to have been born in England!! Interestingly, through the efforts of Nan in Chicago, I have seen Bertram's registration document issued to him in September 1918 which describes him still as an alien and with loyalty to England. It also says he works as a painter at J L Mott Co one of the best known of Trenton's pottery companies at that time.

Through the good offices of Faith Ann in Florida I have also discovered that Flora E Gallimore died at Trenton on December 22nd 1901 and Victor died there on May 31st 1921. Details are from the Trenton Newspapers Death Index at the Trenton Historical Society.

Synopsis of William Wood Gallimore's life.

- 1841 Born on 7th February at 2.10 pm at Furlong Cottage Burslem
- 1851 Living at Bucks Lane, Burslem with parents
- 1861 Still living with parents at Rose Street, Hanley - a Potter's Modeller most probably working for Goss & Peake
- 1863 First visit to Belleek and cooperation with Mrs Armstrong.
- 1866 Marries Mary E Stevenson in Stoke
- 1867 Birth of Flora at Stoke
- 1868 Birth of Marian at Stoke
- 1870 Almost certainly back in Belleek. Birth of Mary [Madeleine]
- 1873 Birth of William in Ireland
- 1876 Birth of Jesse Albert in Stoke
- 1878 Birth of Bertram in Stoke
- 1880 Birth of Lawrence in Stoke
- 1881 Family living at 9 Prospect Place, Hanley except William with grandparents

- 1884 Family emigrates to Trenton New Jersey
- 1886 William W and son return briefly to England
- 1887 Birth of Archibald at New Jersey
- 1891 Death of father, William, at Trenton
- 1899 Death of Lawrence at Trenton
- 1900 Family at 471 Bellevue Avenue, Trenton
Death of William Wood Gallimore on July 28th
- 1901 Death of Flora at Trenton
- 1921 Death of Victor at Trenton

References consulted

1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901 UK census returns per ancestry.co.uk.
1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930 USA census returns per ancestry.com.
Birth, Marriage and Death certificates from UK General Register Office

Bibliography

¹“William Henry Goss” by Linda & Nicholas Pine; Milestone Publications, Portsmouth 1987
²“Collecting American Belleek” by Loman & Petula Eng; Schiffer Publishing, Atglen PA 2003
³“Our Home in the West –Staffordshire Potters and their Emigration to America in the 1840s” – Article by Miranda Goodby from Ceramics in America 2003, Chipstone Foundation.

Web sites:-

“American Art Tile 1876-1941” by Norman Kartson; Michael Freedman Publishing, NY 1998
“A History of Belleek” by the Belleek Collectors Club on Collector’s Café website
Various Trenton Newspapers on-line