

Elizabeth Mudd, née Craddock.

(b. 1852)

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Elizabeth Ann Craddock was born in 1852 in Shoreditch, Middlesex, England, her mother's maiden name being Jarvis (1). Whilst her family has not been found definitively in census records, at the age of 21, Elizabeth is known to have married William Mudd on 1st June 1873 in Medway, Kent, with her father's name being recorded as Charles John Scott (2).

William Mudd was born in 1847, the second child of Thomas Mudd and Hannas Mudd, and was baptised in the chapelry of Bishop Thornton, Yorkshire on 2nd February 1847 (3,4). His father Thomas is recorded as a labourer. In the 1851 census, Thomas and Hannas were resident at High Mill Cottage in Bishop Thornton, with their 2 sons, Henry, aged 6, and William, aged 3 (5). At the time of the 1861 census, the family had moved to the nearby village of Clint, where Thomas Mudd is described as a farmer of 20 acres. Along with William aged 14, are two younger siblings, Thomas 9, and Mary, 5. The family also have a farm servant resident with them (6).

In 1871, only the youngest child Mary, 15, was living at home in Clint with Thomas and Hannas (7). By this time, William had joined the Royal Engineers, and was registered as Sapper 10164 in 34th Company of the Royal Engineers, stationed in Chatham and then in St. John's Wood (8,9). He was recorded in the 1871 census as boarding with fellow soldiers in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire (10).

Following their marriage in 1873, William and Elizabeth's first 3 children were born over the next four years, with their birthplaces apparently reflecting William's army postings: William Edward, born Medway, Kent in 1874, Thomas Henry born in Gosport, Alverstoke in 1875, and Jesse John born in Stoke Damerel, Devon in 1877 (11,12,13).

Their fourth child, a daughter, Elizabeth Hannas Mudd was born in 1879 in Pateley Bridge, the area of William's family, and was then christened in Holy Trinity Church, Ripon, on 9th May 1879 (14,15). The address on the baptismal record is given as The Union, Ripon, so it is evident that baby Elizabeth was already in the Workhouse.

Jesse John was also baptised in Holy Trinity Church, Ripon on 24th March 1880 at the age of 3 years, and again the address recorded is The Union, Ripon (16).

Thomas and Elizabeth (child) were admitted to Ripon Workhouse on 11th February 1881 (17,18), and in the 1881 census, taken on 3rd April, Elizabeth and her children William Edward, Thomas Henry, Jesse John and baby Elizabeth Hannas were all recorded as inmates of Ripon Work House (19). The Application and Report Book for

April 7th 1881 records that Elizabeth applied for outdoor relief, “as wholly unable to maintain family”(20). Elizabeth left the Workhouse on 2nd May 1881, by her own notice, taking Thomas, Jesse and Elizabeth, returning to collect William on 14th May 1881 (21,22).

Two days after leaving the Workhouse, Elizabeth again made application for continuance of 7/6 per week maintenance, and for the cost of outfits for children, including shirt material, boots and suits for the boys (23). She is recorded as returning at regular intervals for relief over the following months, at one point being recorded as a widow, and on another occasion being allocated 6 shillings a week for 26 weeks, this record noting that her husband was abroad in the Army (24).

Interestingly, her parents-in-law, Thomas and Hannas Mudd are to be found in the 1881 census living in Horsforth, where Thomas is now a farmer of 42 acres (25). Their daughter Mary resides with them, as does their granddaughter, Emily, aged 4. This child was the daughter of their eldest son, Henry Mudd, then a labourer in Bradford, living with his wife, Hannah and their four other young children (26). Thus, Thomas and Hannas’s situation appears to have improved, and they have one granddaughter in their care. However, the regularity of their daughter-in-law Elizabeth’s appearances in front of the Ripon Guardians suggests that she remained dependant on outdoor relief to maintain her family at this period.

William Mudd senior remained in the army, rising to the rank of Sergeant Major, but he passed away in 1889 at the Military Hospital, Haslar, Gosport, leaving Elizabeth a widow (27). In his will, William left his entire estate amounting to £103 5s to Elizabeth (28). Such a sum represented approximately a year’s wages for a skilled tradesman and was equivalent to some £8000 in today’s money (28), allowing Elizabeth some two years later to be recorded in the 1891 census as ‘living off own means’ (30). At this time, Elizabeth remained in Ripon living in Allhallowgate, with William, now 16, a shoemaker’s apprentice, Jesse, 14, a news vendor and Elizabeth, 12, a scholar. Her second son Thomas, now 15, was not living with the family but was recorded at Gordon Boys Home in Cobham Surrey (31). This was a school for teenage boys founded in memorial to General Gordon, and teaching various trades to prepare them for ‘a life of usefulness’ (32). Being sons of a soldier, William’s army service may have enabled Thomas’s (and later Jesse’s) admission to Gordon Boys Home.

There is no further record of Elizabeth Mudd in the Ripon area or in Yorkshire following the 1891 census, and a definitive death record for her has not yet been identified.

Elizabeth’s eldest son William Edward is recorded in the 1901 census as boarding in Allhallowgate, Ripon, with an elderly woman, and his occupation is given as shoemaker (33). William married Clara Elizabeth Richardson at Holy Trinity Church, Ripon in 1903 but died just a few years later in 1908, aged 34, also in Ripon (34,35). His widow, Clara, is recorded in the 1911 census as a charwoman living in North St, Ripon, with no record of children from the marriage; she remarried in 1912 (36,37).

Thomas Henry, Elizabeth's second son, was resident in North Street, Ripon in 1911, living on an army pension, and working as a postman, perhaps indicating a reasonable standard of education gained from his time at Gordon's Boys Home (38). He was unmarried and death was recorded in Ripon in 1914, at the age of 39 (39).

The third brother, Jesse John, recorded as resident in Ripon with his mother in 1891, joined the army in 1895, having also been a pupil at Gordon Boys Home (40,42). He served with the Royal Engineers at Devonport with service number 28838. His admission to the Army at age 18 states that he was 5'5" tall, had hazel eyes and brown hair. His profession is recorded as 'tailor' – presumably he learnt this trade at Gordon Boys Home. A comment from his Commanding Officer records that he was 'An intelligent man, will develop'. Jesse saw service during the Anglo-Boer war, and died of enteric fever at Ladysmith on 13th February 1900 (41). He was 23 years old, and was unmarried. His name is engraved on the memorial to former pupils of Gordon Boys Home who lost their lives during the Boer War (42).

Thus, all three of the Mudd boys died at a comparatively young age without issue. Their sister Elizabeth Hannas, however, married Albert Ramsbottom, a plumber, in 1908 in Leeds (43). The couple had a baby daughter, Edith, in 1910 and in the 1911 census, the family of Albert, Elizabeth and baby Edith were living together in Elford Grove, Leeds (44,45).

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