

The Diaries of Charlotte Grove / Diary Notes / People & Families

ELLEN

ELLEN – Mentioned within the period *1833-1839 are a “Mr ELLEN” and a “Miss Ellen”. References to Mr Ellen prior to 1837 may concern Mr Thomas Ellen, or possibly his son, William King Ellen. Thomas died on 18th April 1837 and entries after this event must necessarily refer to William.

Mr Ellen (either Thomas or his son William) appears to be a farming tenant of the GROVES, and attends several events, including dinner parties, tenants’ feasts and other social gatherings. As such, the Ellens appear to be of similar social standing to other Grove tenants, including LANE, MAFFEY, SHERE, PARHAM and LUSH. Diary entries dated 27th December 1834 - “*M’ Ellen is having my Father’s House repaired for the poor Women*” - and 4th January 1835, when Charlotte, visiting Ferne, tells us that her father “*has rode out on Horseback with M’ Ellen*”, both serve to reinforce this conclusion.

“Miss Ellen”, a younger sister to William King Ellen, is often in the company of the Miss Lanes, Miss Maffey and members of the Lush and FOOT families.

In 1839, on 22nd January, Charlotte reports that Mr Ellen (William King Ellen) “*was shot dead on the spot in Ashcombe whilst loading a double-barrelled Gun*”. Charlotte is deputed to inform Mr Ellen’s sister and her mother, who are at Mr Lush’s at the time. This indicates the Ellen family quite probably occupied Ashcombe, a Grove property. If so, it seems very likely that Miss Ellen and Mrs Ellen were also residing there in early 1839.

William King Ellen was buried four days after his fatal accident. The following day, Sunday 26th January, Mr DOWNES delivered a sermon at Berwick St John, in which he mentioned Mr Ellen’s untimely death. There is no hint of foul play or suicide and it appears to be an unfortunate accident. One source suggests Mr Ellen was loading the gun at the time. If double-barreled, it was probably a shot-gun.

Charlotte’s diaries provide no clue as to the identity of either Mr Ellen junior or his sister, but they are two of the children of Thomas Ellen and Mary KING. Three children of this couple are found in the internet baptismal records for Mustons Lane Independent Church, Shaftesbury, but there may be others recorded. Internet sources suggest the following about the family, although this information has not been verified:

Mr Ellen senior, Thomas Ellen (1777-1837), married first, in 1801, Elizabeth King, the daughter of George King and Honour Green, of Gillingham. Thomas and Elizabeth had one child, Elizabeth King Ellen. She married, in 1833, John Frederick

BARNES and died in Australia in 1886, having had nine children. She therefore cannot be the “Miss Ellen” in the diaries.

The mother, Elizabeth, died in 1802 and Thomas married again, to Mary King, Elizabeth’s younger sister. The couple had several children, the eldest being William King Ellen (1804-1839). His siblings include Thomas (1806), John (1809), Mary (1810), Samuel (1812-1815), Jane Selina (1815), James (1818) and Maria Louisa (1821). The most likely identity of the “Miss Ellen” in the diaries is that of Mary. She would have been about 29 in 1839 and of a similar age to the young women she is known to have associated with. Her sister, Jane Selina, was 24, so possibly her.

* The surname “Ellen” presents particular difficulties in the identification of individuals in the diaries because it is also a given name. During the period in question there is mention of Miss Ellen HELYAR and Miss Ellen FOOT, among others.

In the original diaries Charlotte occasionally spells the surname ELEN.

Although not confirmed, there are probably family connections between ELLEN / KING and LUSH / FOOT.