

Brislington Community Museum News

2026 June

(Issue 17)
ISSN 2753-7773

Contents

John Garratt - biographical notes	2
John Garratt's postcards	3
James Lawrence - postcards	6
Harry Jones - postcard	8
Martin Ridley - postcard	9
Credits	11

Photographs by Garratt, Lawrence, Jones and Ridley

This collection consists of five postcards by Bristol-based photographer John Garratt, two by James Lawrence from Gosport, Hampshire, and one each by Harry Jones from Neath, Glamorganshire, and Martin Ridley of Bournemouth, Hampshire. All but the last were published as real photographs, preserving a wealth of detail from a century ago.

Ken Taylor, chair



Just 14mm wide in the postcard of the tin church of St Cuthbert by Harry Jones (see page 8), this enlargement shows the bellcote.

Contact us

Email us - secretary@brislington.org - to enquire about any of our community museum's exhibits, to provide feedback or new information etc about them, or to contribute items for this newsletter. Our publication schedule is flexible so we can react quickly to important events (also, during quiet times we can focus on other matters such as out-reach activities and sourcing and researching new exhibits).

John Garratt - biographical notes

This publisher produced real photograph postcards of Brislington, including a series of photographs set in St Anne's Wood, and featuring its holy well, soon after its opening as a public park in 1924.

John William Garratt was born to Jane and William Garratt in July 1865 and baptised the following month in the parish church of Leeds, Yorkshire. At the baptism his father's occupation was recorded as a county court clerk.

The census of 1871 shows the family at the same location, and records the arrival of a baby girl. John's father was working as clerk in a registrar's office.

The 1881 census shows John had moved into his uncle's household in Dewsbury, south of Leeds. His uncle, also called John was a self-employed photographer employing one boy - presumably his nephew John, now aged 15, who the census shows was employed as a photographic printer.

In 1891 the census shows John, 25, had moved to the parish of St James, Bristol, where he was a lodger working as a photographer.

In January 1893, at All Saints, the parish church of Heaton Norris, Lancashire, John married Mary Eccles, a 27-year-old spinster from Saltford, Lancashire, whose late father had worked as a gardener.

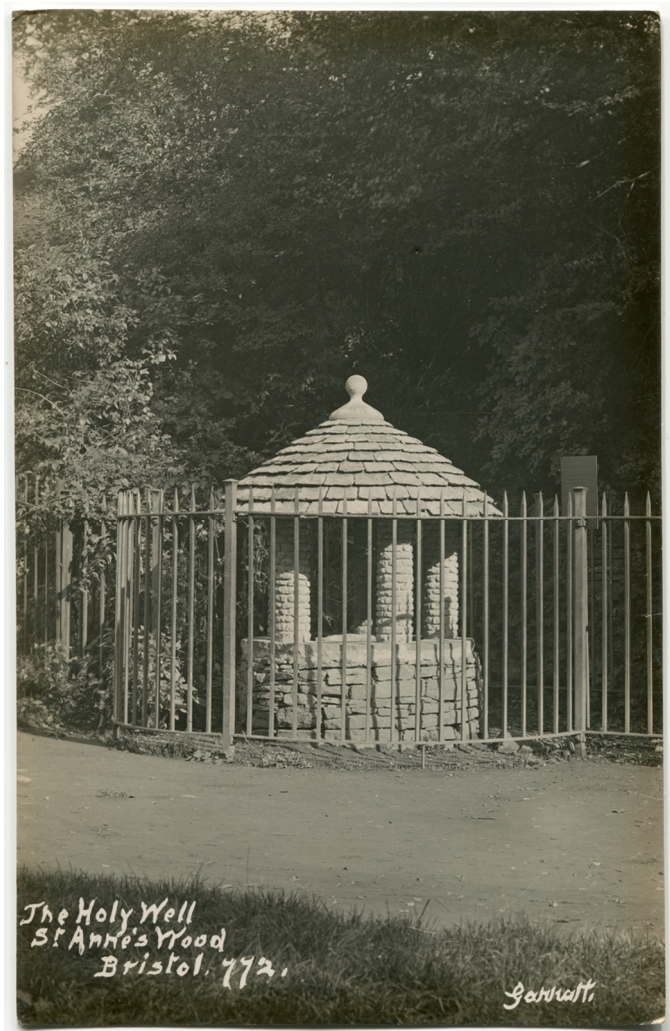
The 1901 census shows the couple living in Station Road, Ashley Down, Bristol, where John was self-employed, working from home as a photographer.

A decade later, the 1911 census shows the couple at the same address with a

young daughter who had been born in Stapleton, Bristol. John was still self-employed and working from home as a photographer.

The 1939 register shows the three members of this family still living together at the same address: John was still a professional photographer, his wife was occupied with domestic duties (unpaid), and their daughter was a school teacher.

In 1946, while still living at the same address in Ashley Down, John Garratt died, leaving an estate valued for probate at more than £1,700.



This postcard is titled 'The Holy Well St. Anne's Wood Bristol.' and carries the series or reference number 772.

The photograph was taken in or around 1926. An enlargement of the patch of ground immediately to our right of the well can be found on page 9.

John Garratt's postcards

In addition to the five of his postcards illustrated here, two more of St Anne's Wood are known, but copies aren't available to us at this time. Fortunately, both are currently online.

'St, Anne's Park Near Bristol,' is numbered 763 in a series, and is published by Bristol City Council at the Bristol Archives (<https://archives.bristol.gov.uk/records/43207/9/40/41>). A variant is also published by them (<https://archives.bristol.gov.uk/records/43207>

/9/40/39).

'Waterfalls St. Anne's Wood Brislington Bristol.' is numbered 765 in the series, and is online (<https://archives.bristol.gov.uk/records/43207/9/40/42>), again published by Bristol Archives.

Known examples of the St Anne's Wood series are numbered in the range 763 to 772, so it's tempting to think there may originally have been a set of twelve celebrating the new public park.

It seems likely all these known postcards still represent less than half the total John Garratt would have produced following his visits to Brislington and St Anne's.



This postcard is titled 'The Holy Well St. Anne's Wood Bristol.', and shows the gated enclosure around the well (only the railings immediately around the well survive, and the pillars and canopy are demolished.) The postcard carries the series or reference number 770. It was taken in or around 1926.



This postcard is titled both 'In St. Anne's Wood Brislington.' and is numbered 766. A variant is published as 'In St. Anne's Wood Nr. Bristol.' by Bristol City Council, at Bristol Archives (<https://archives.bristol.gov.uk/records/43207/9/40/43>).



This postcard is titled 'BRISLINGTON CHURCH BRISTOL.' The darker right-hand side is not on the original, where the tone is even throughout. A variant is published with the same title by Bristol City Council, at Bristol Archives (<https://archives.bristol.gov.uk/records/43207/9/40/9>).



'This is titled 'BRISLINGTON HILL. BRISLINGTON.' and shows how the A4 (Bath Road) once looked (the building on the near right still stands).

It includes a two-horse cart loaded with hay, making its way down the hill. Behind them a man is pushing a buggy in a way that's not commonplace today - he's holding the left-hand side of the handle with his right hand, apparently so the child might enjoy a clear view behind them.

The sign high on the wall of the White Hart is truncated by the edge of the postcard but clearly proclaims this establishment was part of the Bristol United Breweries. A large advertisement on a boundary wall uphill of the White Hart urges the reader to always order Camwal soda water, lemonade and ginger ale, alleging 'they are the purest and best', adding they're on sale here. Camwal was a national brand with a branch in Bristol, and had been around since 1900.

Earliest known postmark: 8 September 1920.

James Lawrence - postcards

Postcards of Brislington by James Charles Lawrence cite his address as 22 Elmhurst Rd, Gosport, a coastal town in Hampshire. What drew him to Brislington isn't currently known but further research may resolve this mystery. How many other photographs he took (and published as postcards) while he was here is, likewise, unknown.

He was baptised in the church of St Peter, Preston (now part of Brighton, East Sussex) in January 1875. He was the son of Louisa and James Lawrence, the family lived in the parish, and his father's occupation was hosier.

The census of 1891 shows the 16-year-old in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. He was part of a large household (consisting of eleven family members plus five live-in workers) whose head was Henry Jenkins, a 52-year-old photographer and

hairdresser. James' occupation is cited as photographer's assistant.

In the spring of 1896 James married Cecilia Byrne, a 20-year-old spinster from Sandgate, Kent. The 1891 census shows her parents as Mildred and John Byrne (at the time of the marriage he worked as an upholsterer). The groom was also living in Sandgate and was working as a photographer, while his father now worked as a draper.

The 1901 census shows the couple with two sons, both born in Sandgate, living in Wandsworth, London. He was employed as a photographer.

A decade later in 1911 the census shows James with two more sons and a domestic servant living at 22 Elmhurst Road in Gosport (where the new children were born). He is self-employed and working from home as a photographer, and his eldest son - Louis James Lawrence (aged 14) is assisting his work. Cecilia is absent.



This postcard is titled 'TRELAWNEY RD. BRISLINGTON.' Trelawney Road was renamed Trelawney Park. The shop half way down on the right-hand side carries advertisements for both Lipton Tea and Nectar Tea (at time of writing this premises is a residential property). The earliest known version of this postcard was printed before 3 June 1918.

In 1914, while living at the same address in Gosport, James filed for divorce, which was granted.

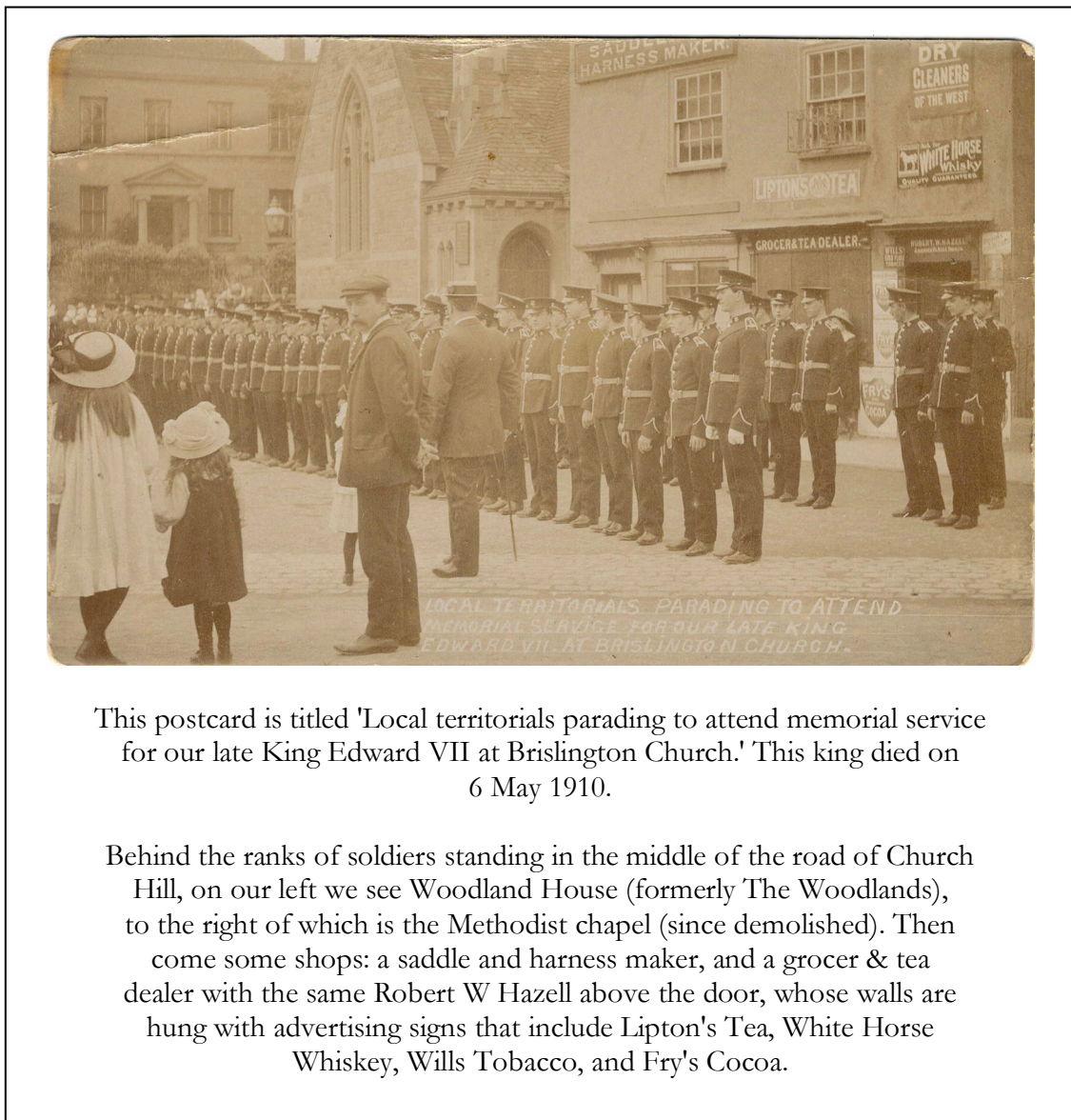
In the spring of 1917, he married Eleanor Willett. She was the daughter of Maria and Arthur Willett and was baptised in June 1887 when the family lived in Ashford, Middlesex, where her father worked as an artist. In the 1891 census her father's artwork included both oils and watercolour. In the 1901 census she was living with her grandmother in Ditchling, Sussex; and in the 1911 census she was a domestic servant

living with the family of an architect in Sutton, Surrey.

Between 1919 and 1926 the couple had five children.

While living at St Edward's Road in Gosport, in 1933, James died.

The register of 1939 shows Eleanor living with two of their adult sons, still in Gosport. In 1972 the death of Eleanor Lawrence was registered in the district of Lewes, Sussex.



This postcard is titled 'Local territorials parading to attend memorial service for our late King Edward VII at Brislington Church.' This king died on 6 May 1910.

Behind the ranks of soldiers standing in the middle of the road of Church Hill, on our left we see Woodland House (formerly 'The Woodlands'), to the right of which is the Methodist chapel (since demolished). Then come some shops: a saddle and harness maker, and a grocer & tea dealer with the same Robert W Hazell above the door, whose walls are hung with advertising signs that include Lipton's Tea, White Horse Whiskey, Wills Tobacco, and Fry's Cocoa.

Harry Jones - postcard

The only known postcard of Brislington by Harry Jones cites his address as 8 Windsor Road, Neath, which is northeast of Swansea, Glamorganshire, Wales. It seems unlikely he would produce only one postcard of Brislington but, at the time of writing, this is the only one of which we may be sure.

He was born in or around 1866 at Pontardawe, north of Swansea, the son of Evan. The 1891 census shows him living in Gold Street, Neath, with his wife Sarah (aged 22, from Pontrhydyfen, east of Neath). At this time Harry was known as Henry and, like his father, was a self-employed weaver. Evan (aged 56) was head of the household.

The 1901 census shows Harry and Sarah with their two children living in the same street as before. Harry was employed as a postman, and

Evan, who was self-employed as a woollen weaver, lived with them.

In 1911 the census shows Harry and Sarah at 8 Windsor Road, Neath, with four children - who were all born in Neath - and a domestic servant. Harry worked from home as a self-employed photographer, and Hannah, the oldest of the children (19), worked as his assistant.

On 12 May 1917 the Herald of Wales and Monmouthshire Recorder carried an advertisement with the headline: 'Harry Jones, Photographer, 8, Windsor Road, Neath.' It continued:

We beg to announce that the Business of the late Mr. Harry Jones is now being carried on as usual. We earnestly solicit the continuation of your kind support. Photographs taken at your Residence by Appointment. Children's Portraits a Speciality. Mrs. Harry Jones, Proprietress.
(Page 4, column 1.)



The title of this postcard is 'ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH BRISLINGTON.' The sign outside the church names it as St Cuthbert's Mission Church (precursor to the red brick church at the top of Sandy Park Road). This building stood between Wick Crescent and what is now Allison Road. Sometimes referred to as a tin tabernacle, this was the building before it was extended (for an enlargement of the bellcote, see page 1). Earliest known postmark: 12 August 1911.

Martin Ridley - postcard

Only one postcard is so far known by photographer and publisher Martin John Ridley. He identified himself on his postcards by his initials MJR, to which he appended the initial letter of Bournemouth (Dorset), where he was based. He published postcards of many places in the south of England, particularly Bristol and South Wales. He was a prolific photographer, leaving around 6,000 glass photographic plates when he died.

The 1861 census shows three-month old Martin living with his parents Mira (aged 28) and William (27, working as a timber and slate merchant) with two older siblings and a domestic servant, in Reading, Berkshire.

In 1881 the census shows the family living in the Liberty of Earley, Wokingham, Berkshire. Martin now has three younger brothers and the household includes two domestic servants and a governess. Martin was working as a merchant's clerk, presumably in the family business - his father's occupation was timber merchant.

Martin's marriage to Alice Browne was registered in Blything, Suffolk, in 1888. She was a year younger and was born in the Suffolk village of Wrentham. The 1871 census shows her as the third daughter of Mary (50, born in Bermuda) and John (48, born in Norfolk), an independent minister of Wrentham Chapel.

In 1891 the census shows Martin and Alice at Holdenhurst, northeast of Bournemouth. They had a son, a daughter and a domestic servant. Martin was now working as a photographer.

The 1901 census shows the family in Boscombe, Bournemouth, where Martin was an employer working as a photographic artist. Although they still had two children - a daughter (11) and son (4), their first son was no longer with them. A decade later the census shows the four of them living at the same address and confirmed that one child had died. Martin was an employer working as a photographic publisher. Their

daughter Winifred was now 21 (she was born in Margate, Kent), and worked from home at photo printing and as a colourist.

In June 1936, while living at the same address, Martin died. The register of 1939 shows his widow Alice at the same address, along with Winifred (whose occupation now was stated as housework), her (Alice's) sister-in-law, and four others including a housekeeper. Alice died at the same address in February 1950.

Winifred, while living at a different address in Bournemouth, and still bearing her birth surname, died in July 1969. This is the only postcard of Brislington so far known where it's possible we may actually be able to identify the artist who painted the colour onto the black and white printed postcard - Winifred Ridley.

The postcard was printed using the collotype technique where the photographic image was captured on a printing plate, and transferred to the card in black ink. All the colour on this postcard was carefully added by hand - a task usually performed by a woman (or team of women) who rarely had time to blend the colours in the way an artist in a studio might (this is why the technique is often referred to as tinting, rather than painting). They used a palette with a range of colours, and each was added separately to the appropriate place in the picture.

On top of the black printing, the artist here used four colours which, to the casual observer at least, appear as yellow, blue, red, and green. The hues of blue and red, however, are close to cyan and magenta, respectively, as their percentages show:

	cyan	magenta	yellow
blue	18	1	7
red	22	68	51
yellow	2	2	27
green	50	20	70

Each percentage shows the dilution of the fully saturated colour (which would be 100%).



This postcard by Martin Ridley is titled 'Old Brislington, Bristol' and numbered 2666. It's likely the colour was added by his daughter Winifred Ridley. Earliest known picture: 1907.



These are the colours in the artist's palette that were added by hand to the picture above (which was printed in black ink). Hand tinted postcards such as this often show a wide variation in the position of the colours, the reason for which is unclear. It may reflect the different temperaments of the women in a team, or of one woman on different days, or perhaps it was a marketing strategy to give the buyer the choice to pick the postcard they felt was most attractive. Because of the skill and time needed to produce these miniature works of art, they were more expensive than other colour postcards in which colours were mechanically printed.



This enlargement of a 15mm wide section of John Garratt's postcard on page 2 ('The Holy Well St. Anne's Wood Bristol.'), shows what appears to be a couple of stones on the ground just to the right of the well. It's implausible such trip hazards were left inside the gated enclosure without good reason, so these are likely to be two of the stones that once lay around the well before the walled and canopied cover was erected for the new public park (which officially opened on 16 June 1924).

Credits

Contributors of text and images retain copyright of their work.

We're particularly grateful for the following scans of postcards that have been provided by Andrew Palmer: pages 3, 4 upper, 5, 6, and 7; and also for permission to photograph and publish the postcard on page 4 lower, which was kindly provided by Jonathan Rowe (chair, Brislington Conservation & History Society). Text and other illustrations by Ken Taylor.

If you wish to use text and/or images from this newsletter in ways not otherwise permitted in law, please contact Brislington Community Museum (secretary@brislington.org). Please see our online Terms and Conditions, and Privacy Policy for full details (www.brislington.org).