

## **MOULTON METHODIST MINISTERS AND MORE!**

Moulton is not an uncommon surname and is known as a locational name, where the place of birth or residence was given to a family. But there were several places called Moulton and so we find clusters of Moulton families in various counties including Cheshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Northamptonshire and Yorkshire. Our Moulton family are first found in Chester, Cheshire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and it was not possible to trace them further back in time. From this time there is quite a good deal of information about the family often recorded by contemporary members of the family. The first Moulton we can identify was Robert Moulton who married Susannah Griffiths in 1766 at Chester where they had at least five children. The second of their children was William Moulton born in 1769 at Chester and it was not very long before he was giving his parents cause for concern.

Robert and Susannah were staunch Anglicans and became increasingly perturbed by William's affinity for the Wesleyan Methodist Society. The Methodist movement derived from the teachings of John Wesley and the first Society was formed in 1738. By the time William was a young man the movement was well organised into circuits (groups of societies). His parents did not approve of the emotionalism of the Methodists and warned young William that he would soon change his mind and then regret becoming a turn-coat. But William remained firm in his resolve and it was not long before he was a Class Leader, unusually for such a young man, and soon after he was welcoming his parents as new members. He became a Wesleyan Methodist Minister in 1794, the first of ten members of the family over four generations to do so.

The family connections to the Wesleyan movement extended beyond the immediate family and so we should look at the wider family. William married Maria Henrietta Egan in 1802 at Southwark after he had moved to London. Maria's grandfather was Rev John Bakewell, a contemporary and friend of John Wesley, who wrote several hymns including "Hail, thou once despised Jesus" and was a Wesleyan local preacher for 70 years. William and Maria had 15 children in all, although only nine survived to maturity, and the second of these was James Egan Moulton born in 1806 at Bedford. In 1828 the Rev James Egan Moulton began a career as a Wesleyan Methodist Minister and in 1833 he

married Catherine Fiddian at Birmingham. Before continuing with the Fiddian connection we should review the other children of William and Maria.

Their oldest child was William Moulton born in 1803 at Yarmouth in Norfolk who didn't appear to let the family's new found religious zeal influence him unduly. He married Elizabeth Lane in 1823 at St Pancras and they had 8 children in that part of London. This William was a Tailor as were two of their three sons, William Bateman Moulton (born 1826) and George Joseph Moulton (born 1835), although the former later took to French Polishing. The youngest son was Edward Henry Moulton born in 1841 who became a Cheesemonger and was the only one who appears to have had children. Edward Henry married Julia Ann Christy at Marylebone in 1868 and they had two sons before Edward Henry died aged only 34, but the youngest of these Arthur Moulton born in 1871 died aged three months. Their other son Edward Henry Moulton was born in 1869 at St Pancras. He was a Clerk, a Tram Conductor and then a Tram Driver, but by 1911 he was unemployed and in 1913 he died aged only 43.

Edward Henry II had married Ellen Elizabeth Hand at St Pancras in 1891 and they had had 7 children before his early death, including two sons. The oldest of these was another Edward Henry Moulton born in 1890 at St Pancras (ten months before they married). Edward Henry III lived somewhat longer than his namesakes but still died at the age of 52 and both his wife and mother also died young, at 41 and 47 years respectively. The children of all three of these generations must have become quite used to getting by without one or both parents. The third Edward Henry was employed as a Railway Carman, which was actually a person who drove a horse-drawn carriage for the Railway delivering local goods and parcels. He had one brother Herbert Percival Moulton who was born in 1894 at Hampstead. During WW1 Herbert served as a Corporal in the Royal Field Artillery and in 1915 was gassed in the trenches in France. This led to his early discharge from the army and may have contributed to his early death aged 47.

Herbert married Amy Laura Hodges in 1918 at St Pancras where they had 7 children and he worked as a Saddler. Two of his sons, Herbert Charles and Frederick James Moulton were born in 1919 and 1924 and worked as a Postman and Black Cab Driver respectively. Meanwhile Edward Henry III had married Annie Florence Cleave in London in 1914 and they 5 children there and a sixth at Romford in Essex. Their eldest was Edward Alfred Moulton born in 1916 at St Pancras who married Kathleen Cunningham in Essex in 1939 and they had a

son and daughter who are still alive. Edward and Annie had only one other son, Alexander P Moulton born in 1923 at St Pancras but he died in care at Hampstead before the age of two. Annie was ill for a long time with tuberculosis and died in 1935 aged 41. From all this it can be seen that this branch of the family had to struggle quite hard during their time in London.

Returning to William and Maria with their 15 children, they had 8 sons that I can identify and so I will deal with the others of these in turn before coming back to James Egan. The third son was John Bakewell Moulton, named for his great grandfather, who was born in 1807 at Newark-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire and was ordained a Wesleyan Methodist Minister in 1830. By 1835 he was working at Lincoln where he met and married Sarah Harrison Dixon. He was an evangelical and hard-working preacher but died from influenza when he was only 30 before they had had any children. The fourth son was Ebenezer Moulton born in 1809 at Nottingham and he too became a Wesleyan Methodist Minister in 1835. The Rev Ebenezer Moulton was an active preacher for 50 years and moved around the country quite a lot. He married Elizabeth Parkes in 1842 at Yardley in Birmingham and they had three children in three different counties. Their only son was James Ebenezer Moulton born in 1844 at Bristol who started work for a Manufacturing Optician and eventually became one himself. He married Mary Jane Wildman in 1882 at Colne in Lancashire and they had three daughters so ending the line.

Three more sons of William and Maria were Robert, Samuel and Samuel Ananiah Moulton born in 1812, 1814 and 1816 respectively but I can find no evidence that they survived childhood. Their final son was Joseph Moulton born in 1820 at Norwich who was a Druggist and Grocer but also worked as a Wesleyan Local Preacher (a layman authorised to lead worship on a regular basis). I can find no evidence that he was ever ordained but the Methodist records are incomplete as they claim only 8 members of the family were Ministers whilst I have found 10. Joseph married twice, firstly to Mary Squance who was born in Ceylon the daughter of Rev Thomas Hall Squance who was a Wesleyan Methodist Minister and Missionary. They married in 1848 at Whitechapel and had three children, though Mary died aged 43 at the birth of the third. Joseph married again in 1871 to Mary Ann Knight at Nottingham but had no further children. Joseph's only son Thomas ST Moulton born in 1848 at Islington appears to have died in childhood.

So, we can return to Rev James Egan Moulton and Catherine Fiddian who married in Birmingham in 1833. For some time I was quite at a loss to fully understand why Catherine's father William Fiddian who is my 3x great grandfather was apparently such a central figure to both the Fiddian-Green and Moulton families. Of course he was the father of Elizabeth and Catherine who married into these families, but why did his son Samuel suddenly emerge as the first Wesleyan Methodist Minister in the Fiddian clan and another of his daughters Mary also have a Wesleyan Methodist Minister for a son. The answer is really quite simple, for not only was William Fiddian a very successful Brass Founder with his own business but he was also a Circuit Steward for the Methodist Church. This is a very important role in the teams which lead local churches within the Methodist circuits and William would have seen a great deal of Methodist Preachers especially the younger unmarried ones who would often stay at his house in Great Hampton Street, Birmingham.

So, William's oldest daughter Mary Fiddian married Richard Peart who was actually a Printer and Stationer with his own business and their first son James Peart ran this family business. Their second son Rev William Fiddian Peart was an Anglican Priest, as was his son Rev Fiddian Edward Peart, and their youngest son Rev Richard Peart was a Wesleyan Methodist Minister. William's oldest son William Fiddian died aged 24 but his next son Joseph Fiddian continued the family line in Brass Founding. Joseph's son John Gill Fiddian was an executor of his cousin, James Peart's will and so all these families were close. William's daughter Elizabeth Fiddian married Richard Green another successful Brass Founder and their first son Rev Richard Fiddian-Green was a Wesleyan Methodist Minister who married the daughter of another Wesleyan Methodist Minister and was the first of the Fiddian-Greens. William's son Rev Samuel Fiddian was another Wesleyan Methodist Minister whose daughter Catherine Fiddian married the Rev John Colwill Reddaway yet another Wesleyan Methodist Minister, though he died aged only 33.

Finally we have William's daughter Catherine Fiddian who as a young woman was noted for saying that she would never marry a Methodist Preacher such as the ones who frequented her father's house, but she clearly relented as she married the Rev James Egan Moulton. Indeed she was a devoted wife and mother to their seven children, which included four remarkable sons (all four have Wikipedia entries). The first of their children was the Rev William Fiddian Moulton, MA born in 1835 at Leek in Staffordshire, a third generation

Wesleyan Methodist Minister who was also a Biblical Scholar and Educator. He was the first Headmaster of The Leys School, Cambridge and in 1890 was elected President of the Methodist Conference at Bristol. In 1898 on his way to visit a sick parishioner he had a heart attack in the grounds of the school where he was still headmaster and died shortly afterwards. He was buried at the Histon Road Cemetery, Cambridge and has a memorial in Wesley's Chapel, London. The second son of James Egan and Catherine was the Rev James Egan Moulton born in 1841 at North Shields. He was educated at the Wesleyan Kingswood School, Bath but asthma prevented him going to university and he worked as a Clerk for a Shipping Company until he was accepted into the ministry. He left England shortly after bound for Tonga but stayed in Sydney, Australia whilst awaiting his posting. There he founded Newington College, a boarding school for boys and was its first Headmaster.

He had married Emma Knight at Melbourne in 1864 and they had three sons and three daughters, the first of these was another Rev James Egan Moulton born in 1871 on Tonga. James Egan II presided over the Methodist Church on Tonga, established Tupou College there and translated several works into Tongan, including Milton's Paradise Lost and the Bible. He returned to Sydney in 1891 and took up the Presidency of Newington College and we will return to his Australian descendants at a later point. The third and most noted son of James Egan I and Catherine was born in 1844 at Madeley in Shropshire and became Lord John Fletcher Moulton, Baron Moulton, GBE KCB QC PC FRAS FRS. John Fletcher was a Mathematician, Barrister, Judge and Politician, said to have been one of the twelve most intelligent men in Britain and who corresponded with Charles Darwin. He won a scholarship to St John's College, Cambridge where he graduated Senior Wrangler in 1868 and won the Smith's Prize. He then became a Barrister specialising in patent law and experimented with electricity for which he was elected to the Royal Society and awarded the French Legion of Honour.

An advocate for medical research he was appointed as the first chair of the Medical Research Council. Moulton then became a Liberal MP for Clapham, South Hackney and then Launceston and in 1906 was made Lord Justice of the Court of Appeal and Privy Councillor. In 1912 he entered the House of Lords with a life peerage as Baron Moulton of Bank. From 1914 to 1916 he was Chairman of the War Committee advising on explosives and then Director-General of the Explosives Department expanding production 20-fold (in WW1

there was always more explosives than shells to hold them). In 1917 he was directed to produce poisonous gas though he believed that to be a departure from civilized warfare. He was awarded the Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath in 1915, the Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire in 1917, Le Etoile Noir of France, the Order of Leopold of Belgium and the Order of the White Eagle from Russia (the last person to receive the latter before the collapse of the Russian monarchy). After the war he resisted pressure to lead the expansion of the British Chemical Industry and instead returned to his first love – the law. He died in London in 1921.

The final son of James Egan I and Catherine was to become Prof Richard Green Moulton, PhD. Richard was born in 1849 at Preston in Lancashire and went to Kingswood School in Bath and Clevedon College in Northants before going to Christ's College, Cambridge. He got his MA at Yale University and his PhD from Pennsylvania State University. After several trips to the US he finally settled in Chicago in 1890, where he became Professor of Literary Theory and Interpretation at the University of Chicago. He was also a Lawyer and Author of several books including 'The Literary Study of the Bible' and 'Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist'. His wife Alice Maud Cole whom he had married at Sheffield in 1896 joined him in America but they had no children. After his retirement in 1919 they returning to England and he died at Tunbridge Wells in 1924, the last of this remarkable generation.

If we now look at the families of each of these four sons of James Egan Moulton and Catherine, we should begin with the Rev William Fiddian Moulton who married Hannah Hope in 1862 at Stoke-on-Trent. Hannah was the daughter of a Wesleyan Methodist Minister and had spent most of her life on Jersey where her father had died in 1850. She had remained there with her American mother until she had reached maturity and then they returned to England to find her a husband. Hannah and William had two sons, the Rev Prof Dr James Hope Fiddian Moulton born in 1863 at Richmond, Surrey and the Rev Prof William Fiddian Moulton born in 1866 at Westcott, Surrey. James was a Wesleyan Methodist Minister, Tutor at Didsbury College, Professor of Hellenistic Greek and Indo-European Philology at Manchester University, Fellow of King's College Cambridge, Doctor of Letters from the University of London and author of numerous books.

James married Eliza Keeling Osborn in 1890 at Portsea Island and they had two sons and two daughters. Eliza also came from a staunch Methodist background,

her father, both of her grandfathers, a maternal great-uncle and two cousins were Wesleyan Ministers. Sadly she died at Manchester in 1915 aged only 47 and so the following year James went off to India as a Missionary and also to do research and lecture there. Returning by boat in 1917 they were torpedoed off the coast of France and although James and several others were able to escape in a lifeboat he died the day before they could reach Corsica and was buried at sea. Their eldest son William Ralph Osborn Moulton born in 1892 at Cambridge was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the Manchester Regiment during WW1. In 1916 whilst his father was in India he was killed in action in the French trenches at the Battle of the Somme. Their other son was born in 1903 at Chorlton in Manchester and became the Rev Prof Dr Harold Keeling Moulton, the tenth Moulton Wesleyan Methodist Minister. He was educated at the Leys School and King's College, Cambridge before training for the ministry at Didsbury College.

For 30 years from 1927 he was a Methodist Missionary in South India, first teaching at Findley College, Trichinopoly and then as Professor of New Testament Studies at the United Theological College, Bangalore. In 1957 he returned to England and was the Translation Secretary at the British and Foreign Bible Society. He married Marjorie Ireland in about 1930 and they had four daughters all born in India so ending this Moulton line. The eldest of James and Eliza's daughters was Edith Hope Moulton born in 1894 at Cambridge who died in 1902 at Didsbury in Manchester. Their other daughter Helen Hope Moulton was born in 1905 at Chorlton in Manchester. In 1929 she married Dr George William Hollings who was a Medical Missionary (and son of a Wesleyan Methodist Minister) and shortly after they left England, living first in Ceylon, then China, Japan and Canada. Eventually they settled in New South Wales, Australia, where George worked as a Medical Practitioner.

The other son of the Rev William Fiddian Moulton was his namesake born in 1866 at Westcott, Surrey who became the Rev Prof William Fiddian Moulton. After securing a MA at St John's College, Cambridge the younger William taught at The Leys School as an Assistant Master before entering the ministry in 1897. He served in the rural circuits for 13 years as a Wesleyan Methodist Minister then taught at Cliff College, Derbyshire first as a Lecturer then Professor of Theology and Classics. He was also an organist and found time to write several hymns. He married Jessica Collins in 1901 at Leeds and they had a son Raymond Fiddian Moulton born in 1905 at Birkenhead, Cheshire who sadly died within a few weeks of birth. This William wrote a book entitled 'William

Fiddian Moulton – A Memoir’ about the life of his father which was published in 1899 a year after his death (it is readily available online).

Returning to the Rev Dr James Egan Moulton, the second with that name, who went to Tonga and had three sons there, the eldest became the Rev James Egan Moulton III born in 1871. He was a pupil at Newington College, founded by his father, and the ‘crack man’ of the College’s first fifteen Rugby team. James was selected to play a representative game for the State whilst still at school and played against England and the first British Lions touring side when only 18. He then followed in the family tradition and became a Wesleyan Methodist Minister and was Headmaster of the Wesleyan Tupou College from 1893 to 1905. In 1921 he published a book about his father called ‘Moulton of Tonga’ which recalls the life of this great man (it is also available online). In 1896 he had married Fanny Alice Corner in Cootamundra, New South Wales and they had seven children, including four sons.

Their eldest son was James Egan Moulton IV born in 1898 at Sydney, but he died aged 6. The next son was Kirton Bakewell Moulton born in 1903 at Bowral, NSW who was a Clerk and later a Local Government Officer at Broken Hill, NSW. He married Vera May Hardman in 1928 at Marrickville, NSW and they had a son Dr John Egan Moulton born in 1930 at Molong, NSW. John went to Newington College, playing only once for the first fifteen Rugby team and then to the University of Sydney where he was a resident at Wesley College. In 1954 he graduated as a Doctor of Medicine and then went to England to complete his surgical training. He became a Consultant General Surgeon and Chairman of the NSW Institute of Sports Medicine, then in 1986 he was Medical Adviser to the Australian Rugby Union and Team Doctor to the Wallabies during their Bledisloe Cup win in New Zealand and the first two Rugby World Cups, including Australia’s maiden win in 1991. In 1994 he was elected to the Council of Newington College and became Honorary Secretary in 1998. He was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for services to surgery, medical education and sports medicine in 1997. Married twice he had three children, including one son, and five grandchildren. He died on the Gold Coast in 2012.

The third son of James Egan Moulton III was James Egan Moulton V born in 1904 who worked for most of his life as a Farmer in NSW but later in life was a Signing Teacher. He died in 1967 and does not appear to have had a family. The final son was Frank Kelvin Moulton born in 1908 at Parkes, NSW who was at

different times a Chemist, a Sugar Refiner in Fiji where he met and married Catherine Elizabeth Harper and a Clerk. He died on the Gold Coast in 1998. The second son of James Egan Moulton II was John William Richard Moulton, born in 1872 on Tonga but lived and worked later in life in the suburbs of Melbourne. He married twice and may have had a son and a daughter but Australian records are pretty sparse. John worked as an Accountant and died in Melbourne in 1931. The final son of James Egan II was Alfred Vuna Moulton, born in 1875 on Tonga. He worked as a Secretary and for much of the time he lived in Manly, Sydney. In 1899 he married Lily Hague at Newtown, NSW and they had two sons.

The first of these was Alfred Vuna Moulton II, born in 1900 at Petersham, Sydney. In 1918 he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force having spent 4 years in the Senior Cadets. He worked as a Clerk but was also unemployed on some occasions. In 1925 he married Alice Edith Bullivant and they had a son Geoffrey Bullivant Moulton who was born in 1926 but was killed in an accident aged only 19. The other son of Alfred Vuna I was Harold Fiddian Moulton, born in 1907 at Marrickville, NSW. Harold worked as a Clerk initially and then a Purchasing Officer. He married Annie Sophia Baker in 1927 at Manly, Sydney and they had a son Sidney Harold Moulton, born in 1927 (six months after the wedding). Sidney worked as a Watchmaker and in 1949 he married Thelma May Tipping at Parramatta, NSW. He died in 2005 at Port Macquarie, NSW but I don't know if he had any children.

We return now to Lord John Fletcher Moulton who married Clara Thomson in 1875 at Hanover Square in London. Clara was born in London but her parents were both German. Her father Bram Hertz was a Diamond Merchant and in the 1850s he and his family were in Java, Indonesia. In 1858 Clara met there and married Robert William Thomson who was a Scottish inventor and engineer, most famous for inventing the pneumatic tyre. A few years later Clara and Robert returned to Scotland and had four children, whilst Robert continued inventing. Robert died in 1873 aged only 50 leaving Clara with two sons and two daughters aged 12 and under. Still she married John Fletcher two years later and gave him a son Hon. Hugh Lawrence Fletcher-Moulton born in 1876 at London but sadly she too died early in 1888 aged only 52. It was not until 1901 that John Fletcher married again, this time to Mary May Davis from Boston, Massachusetts who was 25 years younger than him. May as she was known, gave him a daughter Hon. Sylvia May Fletcher-Moulton, born at London in

1902, but then she also died early in 1909 aged only 38. In 1911 John Fletcher was living alone at Onslow Square, South Kensington with Sylvia and 10 servants, including a Child's Nurse and a French Governess.

Clara's children from her first marriage were not adopted by John Fletcher but did well for themselves anyway, particularly the youngest Courtauld Greenwood Thomson born in 1865 at Edinburgh. He was a very successful businessman holding several public and charitable offices and ended up as Lord Courtauld Greenwood Courtauld-Thomson, Baron Courtauld-Thomson of Dorneywood, CB, KBE. During WW2 he turned his country seat of Dorneywood into a hostel for allied air force officers and then in 1943 he gave it to the nation for use by Ministers of the Crown. He died unmarried in 1954 at Midhurst in Sussex. His sister Elspeth Thomson married Kenneth Grahame author of 'The Wind in the Willows' and 'The Reluctant Dragon'. The other sister Winifred Hope Thomson was an artist and amongst her paintings is a portrait of Thomas Hardy, the author as well as one of her brother as a young man. His brother Harold Lyon Thomson was Alderman and one time Mayor of Westminster as well as the Consul-General of Albania.

Hugh Lawrence Fletcher-Moulton was a Barrister (like his father), an Author and briefly a Liberal MP for Salisbury in 1923. He served as a Major in the Royal Garrison Artillery during WW1 from 1915-18, spending most of his time in France, then remaining in the army until 1921. Hugh married Isabel Tredwell Boydell Houghton, the daughter of another Barrister in 1902 at Bayswater in London. They had no children and Isabel died in 1933 (the 1911 Census states that a Registered Surgical Nurse was living with them and so she may have been ill for quite a while). He married again in about 1936 and his second wife became Marie Josephine Fletcher-Moulton, but they had no children either so this line ended.

Hugh's half-sister Sylvia May Fletcher-Moulton went to school in the US and then St Paul's Girls School in London before reading History and Law at Girton College, Cambridge. She also became a Barrister in 1929 and worked in the Chancery Division (High Court of Justice) until 1937. During WW2 she was Regional Administrator in the West Midlands for the WVS. Sylvia returned to Barcombe, near Lewes in Sussex, after the war where she created a beautiful garden and a small business in flowers which she sold to Covent Garden. In 1947 she was appointed to the Lewes Bench as a Magistrate, which she continued until her retirement in 1973. She held numerous official and

charitable positions and in 1961 was awarded the CBE. She never married and died at her home in 1989.

The remaining son of James Egan Moulton and Catherine Fiddian was Prof Richard Green Moulton who spent most of his working life in the USA. As we have already seen he had no children and so this line too came to an end. So of the four brothers, children of James Egan and Catherine, only the line of James Egan II who went to Australia has persisted through male heirs. The only other line of Moultons that has persisted derived from the elder brother of James Egan I and they are not actually related to us. So what seemed a quite large and generally very successful family has rather petered out, leaving only a small branch in Australia. Although we have met some pretty remarkable characters the most surprising finding for me was just how many Wesleyan Methodist Ministers we can lay claim to as members of our extended family. My wife is still struggling to come to terms with this revelation.

Paul Fiddian – April 2015