

A Liverpool Political Event

In the Heritage Centre in the Crypt of Liverpool's Metropolitan Cathedral I was interested to see a photograph of the laying of the first brick of the proposed Lutyens design for the cathedral in 1934 by the chairman of Doyle's, the building's contractors. Prominent amongst the cheering workers was my father's cousin John Oswald Tiernan (1905-1976), a woodworker with Doyle's. He worked at the site for over thirty years, eventually becoming foreman joiner and then the clerk of works for the project.

Some years ago I was intrigued to discover that my first cousin once removed (and namesake) had stood against Bessie Braddock MP in the Liverpool Exchange parliamentary division at the October 1951 general election. In the immediate post-war period, following the landslide Labour victory in the 1945 general election, there was considerable concern in British Roman Catholic circles that the Labour Party was unduly influenced by communists and atheistic infiltration. In July 1945 Braddock, who had a reputation as a left-wing firebrand, won the seat from Sir John Shute, a Liverpool cotton broker – the MP since 1933 (succeeding a fellow cotton broker, Sir James Reynolds, the MP from 1929 to 1932). Reynolds and Shute were prominent Catholic laymen in Liverpool, so Braddock's victory horrified the Catholic establishment.

One cause of Braddock's success was that the working-class Labour voters managed for the first time to outvote a Tory in a constituency where businessmen had the right to vote from their offices as well as in their home area, giving the Conservatives a possibly unfair advantage in a poor part of the city. Although Exchange had many Catholic voters, the fact that it had been represented for many years by patrician Catholic Tory MPs such as Shute and Reynolds was ignored in 1945 by war-weary voters impatient for change, as well as complacency by the businessmen (only 2,292 votes were recorded from the Business Premises Register out of a total of 26,732 registered to vote). This plural voting system, which also operated at Oxford and Cambridge universities, was abolished by Attlee's government in 1948.

When Braddock won again in the February 1950 election, without the impediment of the business vote – making Exchange a virtually impregnable Labour seat – the Catholic establishment showed its concern by announcing that at the next general election Alderman Austin Harford, a working-class Catholic and Lord Mayor in 1943-44, would stand as an independent candidate, thus hopefully appealing to the Catholic voters. After Harford withdrew from the contest, John Tiernan, Chairman of the Old Swan Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, was selected as its candidate by the Conservative Party for the election called in September 1951. In a city riven by sectarianism, where working-class conservatism was strongly identified with Protestantism, working-class Catholics generally voted Labour, so it was unusual for a Catholic trade unionist to identify with the Conservative Party.

Laying the first brick for the Metropolitan Cathedral in 1934, with John Oswald Tiernan second from the left. Image courtesy of the Dean of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral and Dr Meg Whittle, Archdiocesan Archivist.

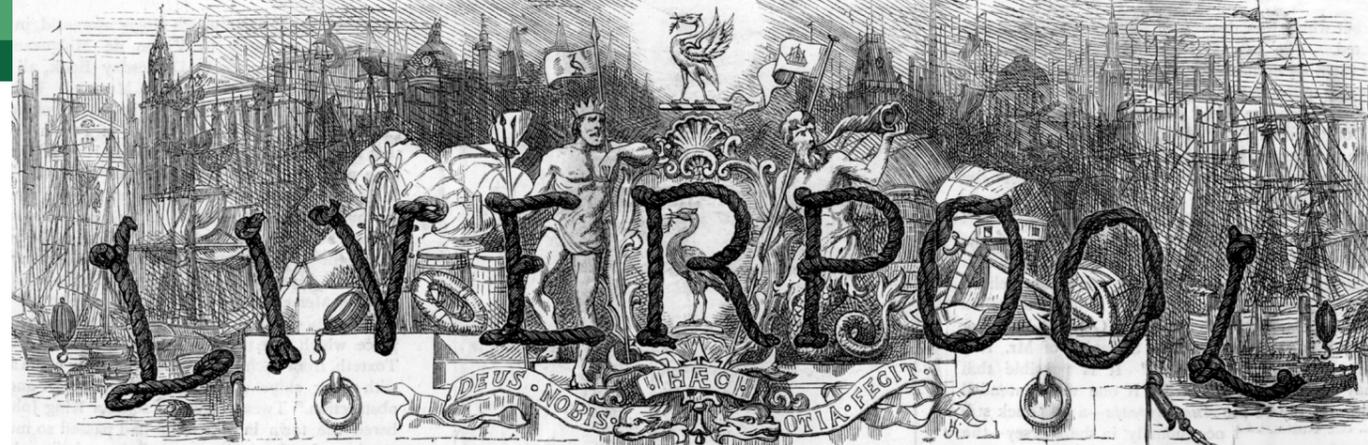
The result was not a surprise: Bessie was the victor with 19,887 votes. However John polled a respectable 13,052 in a 61.89% turnout (in a two-horse race). Apparently undeterred by the result John stood against Bessie Braddock for a second time in the City Council elections in 1952. The result of the poll in the St Anne's Ward was again predictable: Bessie polled 1,756 votes (80%) and John got 436 votes (20%) on a 41% turnout. This was the last attempt by my cousin to seek election.

John carried on with his work at the cathedral, eventually becoming assistant clerk of works and in 1964 clerk of works for the Frederick Gibberd design (which replaced the costly Lutyens proposal and its later scaled down revision by Adrian Gilbert Scott). He was conferred with a papal honour (the Cross pro Ecclesia et Pontifice) in 1960, by Cardinal John Heenan, Archbishop of Westminster, at a ceremony in the crypt, and in 1967 he was awarded a papal knighthood (in the order of St Gregory – the KSG); these honours recognised his services to both the cathedral and the Liverpool Catholic community since he started work there in 1933. On a personal note, as a member of the Liverpool Catholic Ramblers Association, I was thrilled to be able to visit the cathedral site before the building was completed and to ride up in a lift to the inside of the crown that surmounts "Paddy's Wigwam", with John O. Tiernan as our guide.

John Tiernan

John O. Tiernan in 1951.

Image courtesy of the Liverpool Echo.



HISTORY SOCIETY

SPECIAL 2017

Newsletter

#S1

A 1930 Rescue

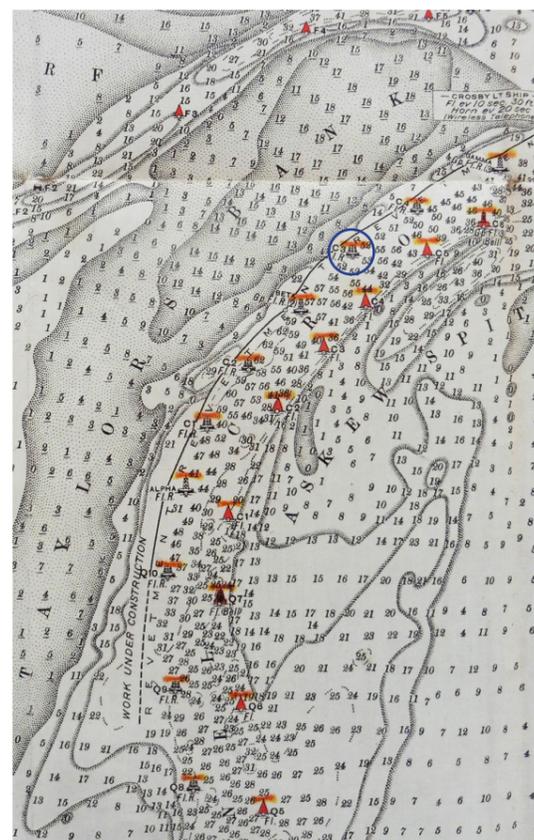
In November 1930 at a meeting of the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society at its offices in 5 Chapel Street, 'It was Resolved Unanimously that the thanks of the Committee be presented to Hugh Cunningham of the S.P.D. "Leviathan" who with others rescued the crew (four) of the Motor Yacht "Mirali" in distress on the Taylors Bank, River Mersey, on the 8th October, 1930.'

I discovered the beautiful certificate presented to my grandfather whilst researching my family history, and obtained a copy of the minutes of the Society's meeting in which the following account was given regarding the award of bronze medals to Hugh and other members of the Leviathan's crew.

'At 5-53 a.m., whilst "Leviathan" was outward bound to the deposit side, a red flare was observed from a vessel in distress on Taylor's Bank, close behind the revetment and West of C3 Black Beacon Buoy. As it could be seen that the crew of the vessel were in imminent danger of losing their lives, steps were immediately taken to render assistance. Volunteers were called for and all the men available at the time readily answered the call. At 6-15 a.m. "Leviathan's" motor-boat was successfully lowered into the water and then proceeded towards the yacht. An attempt was made to float a life buoy with a line attached down to the vessel, but this proved unsuccessful.

At 6-25 the Master in charge of "Leviathan" noted this, and turned his vessel back with a view to lowering the gig-boat. At 6-35 gig-boat was lowered and taken in tow by the motor-boat. After some very anxious moments – both boats took in quantities of water inboard and engine of motor-boat stopped a while due to this – the gig-boat eventually reached the Yacht and took the crew aboard, when both boats proceeded up channel to the river where the crews were landed at Woodside Landing Stage.'

Caroline Hughes



Position of the C3 Buoy, to the south of Taylor's Bank, on the 1929 Liverpool Bay Survey (with traditional orientation to the east).



Hugh Cunningham's certificate.

Model of the sand pump dredger Leviathan at the Merseyside Maritime Museum. The biggest in the world when built by Cammell Laird for the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board in 1909, she was sold for scrap in 1963.



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Liverpool Roots

I was born in Manchester in 1958 to a family with a strong local identity. My mother had been working in a printing firm just before I was born and heard the call to “Stop the presses”. It was the day of the Munich air disaster when so many Manchester United players lost their lives. My mum had been working on a commemorative newspaper to celebrate United’s successes in Europe. The paper was never printed. I grew up in a truly Red household – red for Manchester United.

In 1977, at the age of 18, I moved to Liverpool to study for my degree at Liverpool Institute of Higher Education (Notre Dame College) in the old buildings in Mount Pleasant. I lived in Halls at St Michaels in the Hamlet and spent many a happy hour down Lark Lane, in Sefton Park and around the city centre. The years moved on and I stayed in Liverpool, feeling very much at home. I had flats in Blythswood Street and Alwyn Street (behind Hogg’s Dairy), just off Aigburth Road.

In 1982 I met my future husband, (coincidentally also from Manchester), in the Razzmataz Club (previously the Blue Angel), known to 1980’s youngsters as a “Liverpool institution”. He’d had rooms in houses in Mossley Hill Drive and Ramilies Road as a student, and our first date was at the Vines Hotel (The Big House). We later had rooms in a big old family house on Ullet Road, where our lovely landlady was one of the midwives who had delivered the Walton sextuplets in 1983. Our favourite haunts were pubs such as The Albert on Lark Lane where up and coming young Liverpool band members would gather.

In 1986 we got married and bought a house in Port Sunlight Village, close to the railway, as I was working for Wirral Libraries before retraining as a teacher. My husband was an architect working in a building next to the Philharmonic Hall, where we had both had our graduation ceremonies. Children followed, and in 1995 we bought a large house, built in 1862, in Rock Park. In 1999, we decided to try a new life in the sun, and to give our children a more outdoors lifestyle, and emigrated to New Zealand. So both our children arrived there with strong Scouse accents! Although we missed our families in Manchester and our friends in Liverpool, it soon became evident that New Zealand was a good place for us.

Having always felt that Liverpool was my true home, in the past year I began to research my family tree in earnest, having more time on my hands. I knew that all my family was from Manchester, with some Irish ancestors on my Mum’s side. I didn’t get very far on my Mum’s side, mainly because of the Irish research problems, and so I began to look at my father’s side of the tree. My maiden name was Fogg but there was always a question over whether that was my grandfather’s real surname. Family lore had it that he had been adopted, and I was told that I would therefore never properly find out about him. However, after much digging and exploring on the commercial websites (and nothing to go on but that my grandfather was Joseph Fogg and he had been a stonemason), I uncovered a goldmine of information and a trail that led clearly back to the 1700s... and led clearly back to Liverpool!

My grandfather was in fact a Fogg, born to his unmarried mother, Elizabeth, in Manchester, who gave him her surname. Although she later married, Joseph chose to use his Fogg surname rather than that of his step-father.



Mary and Joseph Fogg (1885-1956), my grandmother and grandfather in 1909. Although Manchester-based, Joseph was a journeyman stonemason and spent time working on the construction of Liverpool Cathedral.

On further delving, I found that Elizabeth Fogg was living in Manchester with her sister but both girls had been born in Walton, Liverpool. Their father was James Fogg, born 1835 in Liverpool and baptized, as many of his ancestors before him, at St Peter. He was listed on various censuses as a cooper, and it was this occupation that led me back in time to James Fogg (1803-1864), James Fogg (1769-1845) and James Fogg (1725-1775), all born in Liverpool and baptized at St Peter’s Church. How convenient and forward thinking of my ancestors to give their sons the same name and occupation and make my search much easier! Searches online through street and business directories give addresses of their places of work and homes – Ranelagh Street, Cable Street, Elliot Street, Hart Street, Bridport Street, Washington Street, Copperas Hill. Many more street names occur when researching other related family members, many familiar to me from my time in Liverpool.

I have tried to research online anything to do with the work of coopers in Liverpool during the 18th to mid 19th centuries but little seems to be available. I know that wooden barrel making became less needed as the Industrial Revolution set in place more mechanized ways to produce storage and transportation goods.

A name linked closely with the Fogg name was Breckell. I was able to track my grandmother through her name, Elizabeth Breckell Fogg. As I researched the family tree I realized that it was the custom in the family to give a daughter her grandmother’s surname as part of her name. Hence, Elizabeth was named after her grandmother, Elizabeth Breckell. Similarly, her mother was named Elizabeth Lightfoot Fogg, after her grandmother, Martha Lightfoot. Ironically, it was this family tradition that also led me to discover Thomas Breckell Fogg, son of my great grandfather, who was imprisoned for larceny in Kirkdale for 12 months. In the Police Gazette of 1870, it gives a description of Thomas as “5’ 11”, light brown hair, grey eyes and light complexion” – an exact description of my own father!

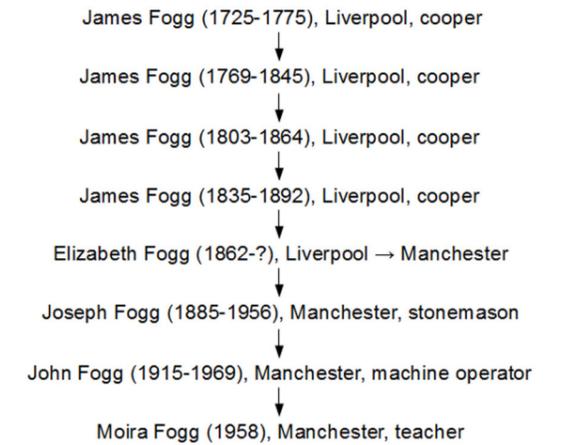
Although the first Breckell to be listed in the family (William Breckell 1776-1846) was listed in an 1828 directory as a chair maker of Derby Street, other Breckells and Fogs were listed over the years as watchmakers. The first recorded watch maker in the Fogg family was John Fogg (1773-1833), my 4th great grand uncle. He is listed in Gore’s 1821 Directory as working on the north side of the Old Dock, whilst the very first record I have of a Fogg and a Breckell is a marriage record from St Chad’s, Poulton, between James Fogg of Claughton and Mary Breckell of Poulton in May 1692.

And so the side of the family I thought would be most difficult to trace back in time has proved to be the easiest and most relevant to me. I am, after all, a Liverpoolian by blood. No wonder I felt so at home there for most of my life! I now look forward to my next trip back to Liverpool so I can walk in the footsteps of my ancestors.

Moira Flannery



John and Margaret Fogg, my father and aunt, ca. 1919.



Notes courtesy of information at the Athenaeum. Wakefield’s 1708 Directory is the earliest to list a Fogg name, that of Henry Fogg, Innkeeper in Hackin’s Hey.

Gore’s 1796 Directory is the earliest to list James Fogg (1769-1845), as a cooper at his home in Ranelagh St. The 1805 edition reveals his cooperage in Duke Street Lane, and in 1807 he is listed with Joseph Hill at their cooperage in Seel St., a partnership which lasted until 1813.

Initially continuing at Seel St., James is shown as moving his cooperage to Thomas St. (off Pool Lane) in 1821. The 1806 Poll Book shows that he voted for William Roscoe, whilst the 1826 List of Broadcloth shows that he was a Freeman of the town, still at Ranelagh St. / Thomas St.

In 1796 Joseph Fogg, an ironmonger, married Hannah Moncas, a widow whose son by her earlier marriage, John Moncas, became a famous Liverpool watchmaker.

Woodward’s 1804 Directory is the first to list John Fogg (1773-1833, the brother of James Fogg (1769-1845) as a watchmaker at his home in Paradise St., and Gore’s 1807 Directory shows his having established a shop on the north side of the Old Dock.

The List of Young Freemen Passed in 1826 shows that James Fogg (1803-1864) had joined his father as a cooper and in the ranks of Freemen. By 1829 they had moved home to Copperas Hill with their cooperage at Trowbridge St. and, by 1832, to Shawhill St (off Peter St).

In 1847, his father having died, James Fogg (1803-1864) began moving home several times until, in Gore’s 1862 Directory, both he and his son, James Fogg (1835-1892), are listed with a cooperage at Temple Lane (off Victoria St).

The last Fogg to be listed in the directories as a cooper is James William Fogg, first in 1867 residing at Bootle Lane (Kirkdale), and finally in 1875 with an address at Mile End (off Limekiln Lane).

Inspired to write?

The three members who have provided material for this special issue are Caroline Hughes from Shipley who joined the Society in 2016, Moira Flannery from Auckland who joined earlier this year, and John Tiernan our chairman until 2015. Everyone of us has a personal story to tell about Merseyside, whether our own or that of ancestors. If you are inspired to offer an article on aspects of your own family history for a future special edition (including assistance in preparing it if necessary) please contact Graham Jones at: newsletters@liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk