

Fullers, Poulstens, Dodds and Whitmells

Appendix

The Fullers of Whitechapel

When researching the Fuller line some years ago, I was constantly frustrated by my inability to find anything out about the parents of Richard Fuller. I knew that he had been christened at St Andrew's Holborn in November 1783, from an address in Grey's Inn Lane, but the register only gave his parents' names as William and Ann Fuller, and there were no other children baptised to this couple at St Andrew's. Both William and Ann were common names, as was Fuller, and there were numerous candidates and no clue as to which might be the right ones.

I had noted from Richard's apprenticeship bindings that his father was a glass cutter from the parish of St George the Martyr, but there was no obvious sign of an earlier apprenticeship for William. I had also carefully noted that Richard Fuller's marriage to Phoebe Poulten in 1808 was witnessed by Joseph and Ann Woollard and William Franklyn, but couldn't see any obvious family connection in any of these names.

The only other clue I had was that the 1851 census¹ listed widowed sister-in-law Sarah Fuller in Richard's household, so I knew there had to be a brother surnamed Fuller. However, even with a search of 20 years either side of Richard's marriage in 1808, nothing appeared to fit.

By chance, a period of idle surfing turned up the marriage of William Fuller, bachelor to Sarah Franklin of Limehouse at St Sepulchre's on 3rd July 1829. The witnesses were Richard Fuller - with a signature clearly recognisable from other documents - and Ann Woollard. Suddenly, the penny dropped, and a quick check showed that Ann Woollard, as spinster Ann Fuller, had married Joseph Woollard at St Giles in the Fields on 6th April 1806. Her burial at St Sepulchre's took place on 8th November 1832.

Now I had a family unit to search: William and Ann Fuller with at least three children, William, Ann and Richard. Widening the search from Holborn, I discovered a William and Ann Fuller residing in Whitechapel, in the East End of London. William, their first child, was baptised at St Mary Whitechapel on 16th October 1774, and it was he who made the very late marriage to Sarah Franklyn in 1829. The next child was also a boy, and named Henry - which fitted as this was the name given by Richard to his first son; it was used by the Fullers in the next four generations. Henry was baptised at St Mary's on 23rd November 1777. Ann, the only girl as far as I know, was baptised on 1st August 1779, also at St Mary's.

¹ HO 107/1527, 1851 census, Holborn

The St Mary's registers helpfully gave addresses: Cable Street for William and Henry's baptisms and Church Lane for Ann's. In fact, Church Lane in Whitechapel runs into Cable Street, so the family may not have moved, or if they did, not very far.



St Mary Whitechapel or St Mary Matfelon

All this looked very positive, three children born in Whitechapel and two of them married in the same part of London as Holborn-born Richard. However, it was the Land Tax records which finally proved this was the right family. For five years, William Fuller paid this at Court Lane² in Whitechapel – the road entered before Church Lane:

		Rents	Charges
1774	15	Wm Fuller	1. 13/9
	10	Wm Fuller	1.2/6
1775	12	Wm Fuller	1. 10/-
1776	9	Wm Fuller	1.11/6
	9	"	1.11/6
1777	9	William Fuller	1.10/-
	9	"	1.10/-
1778	12	Willm Fuller	1.10/-
	12	"	1.10/-

and then the entries in Whitechapel cease. However, within a couple of years, they start again in the civil parish of St Andrew and George the Martyr. He may have paid tax earlier than the first available entry in 1781³, but some of the earlier volumes are unfit for production. The address given is Queenshead Court (off Grays Inn Lane).

Proprietor	Occupier	
Ann Wildon	William Fuller	8/-

² <https://ancestry.co.uk>, London England Land Tax Records 1692-1932

³ LMA, MR/PLT/ 2495, 6, 7 or 8

William continues to pay land tax⁴ at this address and at this rate until 1787.

William's baptism has not been found for sure, although William son of Robert and Elizabeth Fuller was baptised at St Mary Whitechapel on 31st August 1743. However, when he married Ann he was a widower. A marriage does seem to have taken place in 1763 between William Fuller and Mary Barnet, widow, as the banns were called in Whitechapel on 28th March, 4th and 11th April, but the marriage was not solemnised at St Mary's and has not been found elsewhere. The fact that a burial took place in neighbouring St George in the East (Cable Street runs through both parishes) of a Mary Fuller from Church Lane on 12th December 1765 would seem to fit nicely were it not for the fact that her age is given as 19, which would have made her an unusually young, though not impossible bride in 1763.

What is more certain is William's marriage to Ann Boyce. As a widower, he took out a licence⁵ for this marriage on 20th August 1773:

Appeared Personally William Fuller and made oath that he is of the parish of St Mary Whitechapel in the county of Middlesex widower
And intendeth to marry with Ann Boyce of the same parish spinster aged upwards of twenty one years.

The marriage took place at St Mary's on 22nd August 1773:

William Fuller of this parish widower and Ann Boyce of the same parish spinster...married ... by licence 22nd ... August ...

Both parties signed and the wedding was witnessed by Richard and Mary Hall. I have not been able to trace the burial of either William or Anne.

The licence shows that Ann must have been born before 1752, but in fact she was probably closer in age to her widower husband as she was baptised on 13th October 1742 at St Mary's Whitechapel, the daughter of Henry and Mary Boyce. Her father's name would explain the choice of Henry as a name for Ann's second son. Not much is known about Ann's family other than that she had one sister, named Mary and baptised at Whitechapel on 11th April 1744. I have wondered whether this sibling married a Richard Hall, and was the witness at Ann's wedding, but have not managed to find any proof of this.

Her parents celebrated an irregular marriage, something which was common before the Hardwick Marriage Act of 1754. On 9th February 1741, they went to be married at the Fleet Prison in London, where they are recorded as:

Henry Boyce of St Mary Whitechapel Chandler and Bachelor and Mary Albury of D^o Spinst^r

⁴ LMA, MR/PLT/ 2505, 2519, 1527, 2535 and 2543

⁵ <https://ancestry.co.uk> London & Surrey Marriage Bonds and Allegations 1597-1921, MS10091/129

And there, for the time being at least, the trail ends.

