

xy Granpa  
Fred Pratten

GREAT-GRANDFATHER PRATTEN.

Great-Grandfather Pratten - Hannah's husband,

his sister children McDermott  
were I think brought up by  
him with his  
family

very generous  
would give his  
meal to a beggar  
who came to door  
made his son  
Theophilus read  
by becoming  
a miser

aptd?  
could have  
been Wesleyan  
like some  
his family  
instinct  
ingswood  
revel  
at his wife  
and he buried  
Baptist chapel

Thomas, had been a local preacher of no mean merit.  
There were many times indeed when he could ~~have~~  
move his congregation to tears with his passionate  
Wesleyan elegance. He preached in chapels in and  
around the district, and after his sermons he liked  
to talk and yarn with his flock. He too was a  
good mixer, and he liked his pot of beer, perhaps a  
little more than he should have. He was fair.

(did not  
know this  
but could  
well be true

He died at an early age, of pneumonia, then  
called 'inflammation of the lungs', and left his he was over 60  
wife Hannah with a young family.

Foxy Granpa, of course, was too young to ever  
know him, but Hannah used to tell him of him. In  
the family of Hannah and Thomas Pratten there was  
Annie Pratten, who was born in 1835. She married  
Samuel Tyler. There was Herbert Graham Pratten,  
who was born in 1837; then came Theophilus Pratten  
in 1840. Then there was Edward Pratten in 1844; 1848  
(he had two sons, Edward and Clifford, Eliza Gertie  
and lastly there was Rose Pratten, who was born  
in about 1850; she never married.

?? Check  
for dates  
and people,  
rather con-  
fused.

he has  
have  
his  
table

and Murel  
Daisy  
missionary  
in Rhodesia  
good  
musician

Thomas He was a fine looking man, tall & big boned.  
Ann Palmer was calm & placid & like all the  
Palmer must have weighed 16 stone.  
Rebecca on the other hand must have been a  
small woman because all that side of the  
family were short & slim.  
cut strips of bacon in shop  
and eat raw

Uncle off  
was certainly  
tall

used to cut strips of  
fat off the bacon

GRANDMOTHER PRATTEN.

9/ Fry bible in possession of Douglas Pratten

Foxy Granpa's grandmother, Hannah Pratten nee Fry, was a very well educated woman.

She knew all the couplets from Shakespeare; she could recite her Milton as few can this day; she was well versed in her Bible, and knew Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress from cover to cover.

have her bibles

have her bibles

(?)

She died when she was about 86, and was buried in the Downend Baptist Burial Ground next to the grave of the Rev. ~~Burton~~ <sup>Foster</sup>, the celebrated Baptist preacher. She used to say she would like nothing more than to be buried beside him.

Foster

She was a gentle soul, soft and forgiving, and had none of the hell-fire and brimstone that a lot of the Baptists had in those days. She had no fear of death, in fact she looked forward to the day, when she could quietly join her Maker and fold her hands in rest.

my grand father remembered her as a formidable woman remember he taking her to chapel as a boy through deep snow

There was no knowledge of her early education, but she must certainly have had some lengthy tuition, otherwise it was impossible to acquire her knowledge from reading only. Besides, she spoke perfectly, without the slightest trace of an accent, which in itself was unusual in those parts. She must have been of good family, as Foxy Granpa remembers her maiden sister living in City of Bristol who was at Clifton, both of whom were well provided for.

but unlikely for Rose days even gentry had accents then

? Needs checking - not clear in M.S

Maybe she was self taught for a while she lived with her cousins Edward Godwin's family he was father of Ellen Terry's children He was and was described by Oscar Wilde as the wisest man in London

have her father will

she was a maid with a family possibly the Godwins

have silver spoon she inherited

have a silver spoon she inherited



Hers was the ring that brought the signet into the family ..

*interested  
to know this*

(drawing to go here)

the design of which in itself indicates that her family must have been somewhere in the vicinity of Bristol.

She was of the Foster Baptist Chapel under John <sup>Witt</sup>~~Witt~~field from the parish of Mangotsfield ???

It was what they termed a "closed" Baptist. The difference between "open" Baptist and "closed" Baptist was that in the "open" Baptist those of other denominations could enter the church and be baptised, thereafter becoming Baptists, where as in the "closed" Baptists, none but those who had originally been baptised Baptist could enter in.

She was a very handsome woman, dark and of medium height, although when Foxy Granpa knew her she was quite small. She must have shrunk with age, as she was old then, not a day less than 75.

She used to teach him to tell the time from the old Grandfather clock that stood in the parlour. It used to seem such a big clock to him, it reached right up to the low ceiling, in fact when they first tried to get it into the house they found it was too tall, and had to saw the bottom off it before it could be squeezed in. And so it stands today,

*we visited the  
grave. Here. ~~the~~  
the will my  
grandmother  
the chapel warden  
aw us here and  
embraced Uncle  
It had promised  
some money in  
us will for the chapel  
but failed to live up  
to his promise*

opposite his chair in the dining room at "Stapleton". Things were not easy for her, After Thomas died, and as a very young man. ~~his~~ His father, Herbert Graham Pratten, set out and helped support and guide the family. They lived in a small squarish house at Staplehill, with few of the creature comforts that the Palmers surrounded themselves with, but the p Prattens, being as they were of an entirely different mould, didn't seem to miss them. Their early responsibilities may have had a lot to do with this. But even so, they had no love of luxury, nor any great love of their stomachs. They ate to live, so that they could carry on with their business. They took themselves very seriously, and liked everybody else to take them seriously too. Many times they were scathing on the happy-go-lucky expeditions of the Palmers, pointing out scathingly how they earned and planned, while the Palmers played.

They were a hard-headed, brainy lot, and didn't and couldn't mix; they minded their own business, and expected others to mind theirs. They found their work quite absorbing enough without any outside pleasures or hobbies. They worked hard and cbhesively and planned shrewdly, and gained the respect and confidence of all and sundry. So much

Thomas was  
a card sharp



so indeed that very soon they found themselves shouldering other peoples' burdens as well as their own. They had no love of the small, silly, happy things of life, as had the Palmers. The sound of a hare stirring underfoot, the joy of sneaking off to fish on a warm sunny day, when work should have been attended to - no, they were not like that - but they were fine upright, responsible citizens. And could always be depended on. It is easy to see why the Palmers sometimes fell into disfavour in their eyes.

These Pratten men were big-boned and very tall, with well ~~formed~~ formed broadish features, and fine hands, and well shaped heads.

#### GRANDFATHER PRATTEN

Herbert Graham Pratten was the best looking of them all. He was a man of wide, clear vision, and a very level headed business man. On the death of his father, Thomas Pratten, his eldest son, Herbert Graham, naturally took over the bakery business, with his brother Edward, which they successfully carried on for some years.

When he married Mrs. Ford, nee Ann Palmer, he moved his residence and his children to Fishponds, and added to his responsibilities, grocery, hardware, drapery and butchery.

His brother Edward carried on the Bakery in transaction (??) with occasional help from Herbert Graham

ne Uncle Off  
my father  
were tall  
not my grand father  
or his father?

Thomas Pratten  
a cooper

staple  
well

In those days there was no delivery, and it was customary for anyone in the village who was entertaining to perhaps send their pies and their pastries to the bakery to have the crusts baked for them. Perhaps a pigeon pie, or perhaps an apple pie, crisp and steaming.

Then at the appointed time the servant from the house would go to the Bakery, collect their dinner, call at the Inn for a pot of porter, and speed home again. The general store of a village had to supply all manner of things in those days, and what a pleasant way of business it was. Everybody knew everybody else's business, and no one was too hurried to pass the time of day. All the men, both Palmer and Pratten, were storekeepers of one sort or another, but mostly general storekeepers. Way back to Great-Grandfather, Thomas Pratten, they were the same, and doing very well at it too.

Thomas GREAT-GRANDFATHER PRATTEN

was a well-educated man, far better educated indeed, than any of his children. It is told of him that he could attend a sermon, listen to a good preacher, and return home and repeat it word for word.

Great-grandfather Pratten was a man of originality and ideas. Tiring of working by himself, for himself, in the making of boots, he developed the

my Aunt Mace  
had all his  
sermons and  
but lost them  
in Africa

idea of employing others to work for him, whilst he took care of the selling. He used to employ four or five men and boys as cobblers. They used to make boots for him, entirely by hand, of course. Then when they had made him a batch of about 250 pairs, together with what he could purchase from the other bootmakers around and about, he would set off down to South Wales to the colliery districts and sell them to the retailers. At the same time he would take orders for delivery about three months ahead. He would go to Newport, Cardiff and Swansea, according to how his boots sold, and return home again with quite a tidy profit jingling in his pockets.

He was fond of his beer, and would spend a little of his money on that. Beer in those days, like everything, was a much better article than it is today, or so we are told. A little went a lot further, so if he was sometimes a little fuddled, it was for that reason, and not because he ever drank too much.

Travelling in those days was quite an adventure, for instance, he had to cross the Severn in a boat - there was no such thing as a tunnel, but he enjoyed it all.

He must certainly have been one of the first bootmakers in Bristol ~~xxxxxx~~ who conceived the idea of manufacturing in bulk. That was just about the



commencement of the manufacturing era. It was the custom before that, if a gentleman wanted a pair of shoes, to go to the local cobbler, be fitted, and in due course, according to the speed of the cobbler, the boots would be finished. Ordinary folk quite often made and repaired their own. There as no such thing as ready-mades. If a suit of clothes was required, those with little money ~~would~~ loom their own yarn, and the suit would be shaped by their women-folk. One didn't marry in those days unless one was sure that the lass was quick with her needle, and could turn a feather bed.

Any of the gentry that needed clothes, would ~~buy~~ buy their bale of broadcloth from London, and the village tailor would fashion it into garments as was required.

Suits of clothes cost from £6.6.0 to £8.8.0, an exorbitant sum for those days, but once made, they suit looked well, and at the end of its first life was usually cut down to fit the eldest son, and from him handed to the second, and so on. If you happened to be the last of six sons, you learnt to love the material right well before it came to you, and would ~~take~~ take a proprietary interest in it, and ~~would~~ watch it anxiously when threatened with disaster by the limb of a tree, or when stretched too tightly over the bottom of number 4 son.

Later on they came down in price and you could



buy as good a suit of clothes as any one would want for the modest sum of £2.2.0.

And so it was that you would see Father, Mother and little Willie, all in chapel of a Sunday in various shaped garments, all made of the same cloth. If a wedding was imminent, then the local drapery store was consulted, in deepest secrecy, and they would send to London for patterns of voile, and mouslin, and alpaca, for their customers to choose from. It was all very leisurely and easy, and as there was little to choose from - for who would be wanting French silks and suchlike extravagance ? - there weren't any headaches caused.

. So great-grandfather Pratten was quick to realise the great advantages of readymades, made in bulk. No doubt he cobbled his boots to the special requirements of the South Wales miners, to ensure a ready sale of his product. If he had continued in this way for a little longer, and installed a little machinery, he would have gone a long way, but unfortunately he died before that could be accomplished.

Theophylus Pratten, or Uncle Oph, as the Pratten boys knew him, followed in his father's footsteps, although without his enthusiasm or enterprise notwithstanding which however, he died of an age of over 90, leaving an estate of approximately £40,000.

86

£30,000

32,000

all made out of boots. It must here be admitted that he always saved far more than he spent. He was a sporting pal of W. G. Grace, and used to go <sup>Poaching</sup> shooting with the Somersets and the Cavendishes. Sometimes he would take young Gilbert Pratten or sometimes Foxy Granpa.

He was a cantankerous old man occasionally with a bark much worse than his bite. He would worry inwardly about the young lads getting their feet wet, but would ask them about it in a nasty kind of way. He could never joke or laugh, except with a sting in it. But his heart was in the right place. He never married, and ~~lived~~ lived in a small house with just enough of everything, neither more nor less.

He was a keen sportsman and a crack shot. He was also a keen pigeon fancier and flyer. He kept his pigeons in a loft, and would often get up in the night to catch the neighbour's cats attempting to enter the loft after the pigeons. He would only fire one shot and that would end all the nine lives of the cat at once.

His gun stood beside the old grandfather clock for many a long year. He must have been very careful and cautious taking it in and out, because there isn't even a dent to show where it stood. There was nobody who could track pussy like Uncle Oph. He had no eyes for the wild flowers in the thicket, he saw only

entirely a  
misleading  
misleading a  
Dal

yes he was  
once out  
poaching when  
he was nearly  
caught but had  
to hide in a  
shed all day

a miser  
on his death  
he cried out  
"oh mother"

Poaching

my uncle  
Flaunce  
had his  
old gun

not  
what  
my  
grand  
mother  
told  
me



where a hare had passed. He would never even notice the birds that flew about him, or the leafy arms laced above him in the woods. He didn't ~~he~~ love the smell of burning leaves in Autumn, nor the warm fields of corn in Summer - he didn't even notice them. He would never waste a shot on a stray partridge. He hunted pussy, and pussy only. He was no nature lover - like the Palmers - but he could track a hare to the bitter end; he knew by the fur left on the ~~brambles~~, he knew by the flattened grass where it had lain. He would walk ~~heavily~~ twenty or thirty miles, over the fields, through the hedges, by the brooks, into the woods and out again. He knew every farmer for miles around; his figure must have been a familiar one to them - tall and dark - with his gun under his arm, and his eyes glued to the ground with a true hunter's instinct. England was truly rural in those days, and there were a hundred places close by for him to hunt his pussy.

He may have been a little tight with his brass, but no one could think the worse of him for that. They tell the tale of the day Uncle Oph and his ~~near~~ near neighbour Harris were summoned to sit on the jury at the Assizes at Gloucester.

There were many things about that trip that Uncle Oph didn't like. To begin with he couldn't get a wink of sleep because the Town Hall clock boomed the hours, the half hours, and the quarter hours.

Uncle Oph stood it as long as he could, then having reached the limit of his endurance he bounded out of bed, threw open the window, shook his fist violently in the direction of the offending clock and roared, "You b.....". But the clock just kept on chiming, in spite of Uncle Oph's rage, much to Harris' amusement, who shared the room with him.

On top of this, next day he found himself in the position of having to shout drinks to the jury men, amongst whom was his near neighbour Harris. His having to pay for Harris seemed to add insult to injury. He grumbled about it for many a long year afterwards. It was the worst possible sort of a thing to happen to a man of Uncle Oph's stamp - an expensive trip indeed.

The two boys used to think of him as a bit of an old grouch. So he was - in a way - with his sharp words and his abrupt manner. But he was kind, and really loved them, and saw to it that their hungry boyish mouths were well filled when they came to see him. He would snarl and grumble at them, not able to help himself, watching them anxiously from beneath his bushy black eyebrows the while. And perhaps, with the intolerance of youth, the lads would tire of his grumbling, and would leave him alone for a while. Then he would be sorry for the sharp things he had said, and think to be kinder - next time. But next time

my grandmother used to collect his rents. One day she came back and said one woman could not pay. He took the woman's sewing machine even though her, lucky hood depended on it. My grandmother did not think him kind.

My grandfather used to act as odd job man for him. Gilbert Patten collected after his books

had made a will leaving £500 to each of his grandfathers and he came to that. Just before his death he said he could not face his brothers unless he shared it equally amongst his nephews and nieces. They all got £2000

he owned a row of houses parallel to High Street Staple Hill



would come, and he would be so pleased to see them that he would give them a bitter strafing with his tongue again, just to hide how pleased he was. That was all when they were very young lads; later on they grew to understand him, and made allowances for their odd old bachelor uncle who lived by himself. He had a very caustic sense of humour, and some of the tales of his sayings, although not fit for print, are nevertheless very funny. Especially was he witty at the expense of his relations, it was always at somebody's expense but especially his relations. And as his language was that of an untamed bachelor, he pretty soon offended all his nearer relatives. They said he was a nasty, coarse old man, which didn't upset him in the slightest. He was never a one for female company, although the boy's mother, Ann, had a strong influence over him. He and she seemed to understand each other. He was a man who was much misunderstood, never really loved by any of his relations. Kind underneath, but he would never permit anyone to get underneath if he could help it. He had no enemies, only his own tongue. Withal he had a wonderful smile, and although rare, or perhaps because it was rare, it came as a shock, and gave his face a softened charm that was lacking when in repose. One of the earliest recollections that Foxy Granpa tells,

not what  
I heard

not liked on  
Staple Hill  
learned

was the day Uncle Oph took him to the Landsdown Races, at Bath. It must have been the first and last time Foxy Granpa was ever on a race-course. Even then they didn't have a single bet, but just spent a few bob on the cocoanut shies. They walked all the way there and all the way back again, about twenty miles in all. It was a tired young lad that returned home that night, tired by happy. He had had a great day.

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He once said he would change his will because my father had been to a dance. He was not having his money frittered on dances

My grandmother was very friendly with Aunt Rose. Aunt Rose told her that when she died ~~at~~ my grandmother would find £500 in a chest of drawers. When Aunt Rose died Uncle Off said she couldn't have any money of her own because she had always lived with him so he kept the money

Uncle Off used to take a wheelbarrow full of boots down to Avonmouth docks (10 miles away) to sell to the sailors

As a young man my grandfather ~~he~~ carried a gun when walking through Fishponds to Staple Hill because it was dangerous



CHAPTER 2.

They were a very devoted family, and the young Pratten boys preferred to play with each other than anybody else.

EMILY CASELY, NURSE *Nursed Pa's Rebecca during her last illness*

They had a nurse called Emily Casely, who seems to have been with them almost from the beginning because Foxy Granpa says that she was there before he was born. She stayed on with them right through the years.

They seemed to be able to keep their servants in those days, though heaven's knows they had enough to do. The young family must have been a bit of a handful too. They were all high-spirited, to say the least of it. All save little Austin Leopold, ~~7~~ he was shy and quieter than the others. But the two others were no better than all little boys. Poor Emily tells the tale of how she used to wheel little Austin Leopold out in his pram, for the afternoon stroll, and young Gilbert and Foxy Granpa would walk by her side. At least that is what they did on the way out. But on the return journey, as small legs got tired, they would both climb into the pram on top of little Austin and stubbornly refused to budge. So the poor girl had no choice but to wheel all three of them up the hill and home again - no small effort, as they were husky youngsters, even in those days.

Received of Messrs Pratten Bros, Sydney  
the sum of Sixty pounds, being the amount  
of interest on One thousand five hundred  
pounds (£1500 "0"0) due June 24<sup>th</sup> 1898  
at the rate of four pounds per centum  
per annum

By Cheque  
June 28<sup>th</sup> 1898  
£60 "0"0  
H. G. Pratten

London  
Aug 11<sup>th</sup> 1898

Gentlemen

I have much pleasure

in sending you receipt, for

the sum of £1500 "0"0 at

the rate of four pounds

per centum per annum,

& you will kindly note

for the future, that the

interest becomes due on

the Quarter day, as you

will be pleased to see by

to my last receipt, kindly

note & oblige

Yours &c

H. G. Pratten

To Messrs Pratten Bros

Sydney