

Percy Edward Pinkerton (1855-1946)

Preface

This article is intended to uncover the biography of Percy Edward Pinkerton and thus concentrates on his family history and his life & times rather than any specific analysis of his literary works.

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Article

Percy Edward Pinkerton was an author, poet and translator. As a member of the late-Victorian Lutetian Society, a group dedicated to unexpurgated translations of the works of Émile Zola, Denise Merkle comments¹ that "history is largely silent on the sixth member of the group, Percy Pinkerton" clearly indicating that Pinkerton was somewhat elusive or perhaps reclusive in comparison to his fellow translators, Ernest Dowson, Havelock Ellis, Arthur Symons, Victor Plarr and Alexander Teixeira de Mattos.

But Pinkerton, clearly the least known of the group, was prolific and translated many other works from German, Italian, French, and Russian, famously to include the libretto to Puccini's *La Bohème*². And, apart from his work as a translator, Percy was an author in his own right, a poet and traveller, mainly in northern Italy where he became so captivated by Venice and the surrounding countryside that he apparently spent several years there. He wrote several articles for English magazines, in particular the "Magazine of Art" in which, during 1887, three of his works were published. These were about Venetian based artists such as Ludwig Passini (1832-1903) and Cecil van Haanen (1844-1914) and his seemingly beloved Asolo, a charming hillside town some forty miles north of Venice.

As if confirmation was needed of his ardent admiration of the beauty of northern Italy, I quote the initial and final paragraphs of "Asolo":

"WHY should I rashly, vainly exhibit its beauty and distinction to the world's cold eye? Who cares either to hear or to believe? None but the fool makes parade of his most precious things; wherefore, then, should I call others into my heart's garden, to use the shadow of its leaves, and take pleasure in one of its peerless flowers? Perhaps every man in his life at some time finds a little harbour, calm and lovely, and aloof from the tumultuous world. Then, does he quickly advise others of his angle of repose? Does he tempt other tossing ships to approach the haven? Asolo, reader, Asolo is my little harbour, my imagined port of peace."

And he concludes:

"As the sounds of morning tempted us to leave our chamber, so we are drawn out again into the cool atmosphere at night. Again we mount the grassy slope, slippery with dews, to survey the scattered lights of the houses below; fire-flies flit through the trees; cicadas [sic] shrill in the jasmine bower that flings around us its subtle perfume; for a moment, like a thin red flame on the crest of that dark mountain, the moon lingers. She sinks; and we are alone beneath stars."

¹ TTR [traduction, terminologie, rédaction Volume 16, numéro 2, 2003, p. 73-101,]

² Luigi Illica & Giuseppe Giacosa were the original librettists.

Percy published several volumes of his own poetry: *Galeazzo, a Venetian Episode: with other Poems* (F. Ongania, Venice and Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1886), *Adriatica* (Gay and Bird, 5 Chandos Street, London, 1894)³, *At Hazebro' and other poems* (The Cedar Press, Samuel Short, The Town, Enfield, 1909)⁴ and *Nerina, a lyrical drama in three acts* (Cambridge, 1927). *At Hazebro'* has particular biographical significance that I shall describe below.

Research Notes

Other than the official Birth, Marriage and Death records that were taken since the third quarter 1837 (the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign), an important source of research for the genealogist are the U.K. census records that, since 1841, were taken every tenth year during March/April. Prior to September 1837, no official records were taken and genealogical research needs to encapsulate Parish records and, in particular, the IGI (International Genealogical Index) compiled by the Mormons for religious purposes. Whilst these unofficial records especially the latter, cannot be completely relied upon, they are an invaluable resource for events preceding 1837 and occasionally offer supportive information for events thereafter.

These records do assist in the piecing together of a life history, but what happens in the intervening years is impossible to determine without the advantage of other, often private, random data such as family bibles, letters & journals etc.

I should state here that, what has otherwise complicated the issue of Percy's genealogy, is the fact that there are two George Pinkerton(s) [Percy's father] born at around the same time; one in Newington, Middlesex (often referred to as Stoke Newington) and the other in Newington Surrey. Both these parts of the counties Middlesex and Surrey are in London and separated by the Thames; Middlesex is north whereas Surrey is south. It is extremely easy to confuse these two families most especially when both families are, on occasion, proximate in Reigate, Surrey.⁵

Percy was seemingly somewhat reclusive during his life and tracing his life history has been made more difficult by his lack of being in the U.K. at the time of the census. So without additional information we can only make assumptions as to his whereabouts based on the few writings and letters we have available.

Whilst I will, elsewhere, give a full account of my analysis of Percy's genealogy, I will state the facts of which we are certain and, with what other details we know, I shall attempt observations as to why he may have trod certain paths.

Childhood & Youth

Percy was born on 19 June 1855, at Manor Road, Stamford Hill, Stoke Newington, Middlesex, London; the second child of George Pinkerton, a metal broker, & Mary, née Easum. He had four known siblings; Eustace b.1852, Algernon Robert b.1853, Godfrey b.1858 and Mary Ramskill b.1860; there may have been others that did not survive beyond the next census and therefore there is no certainty of their existence although this is unlikely as no other potential birth or Baptism records have been discovered.

So apart from the fact that Percy is found with brother Eustace on the 1861 census living with his widowed grandmother Dorothea Pinkerton in Reigate Surrey, we know little of Percy's

³ Of the 21 poems in *Galeazzo*, 18 (including the long "Venetian Episode") are reprinted in *Adriatica* which has an additional 21 poems.

⁴ *At Hazebro'* was privately published and thus probably had a very limited run and audience.

⁵ For the purpose of clarity, James Pinkerton (1766-1849) & Elizabeth Hanson (1789-1851), the parents of the Surrey born George (1822), are not related to Percy Pinkerton or his grandfather the Reverend Dr. Robert Pinkerton D.D., unless a family connection prior to the mid 18th century is discovered. It is possible that such a connection exists but there is neither proof nor any circumstantially convincing records at the time of writing.

childhood. Neither of his parents nor Algernon is found on the 1861 census so it is likely that they were abroad. Percy's other siblings', Godfrey & Mary, are found on the same census living with their maternal grandparents.

Percy was thirteen when his mother Mary passed away in 1868 aged 45. The 1871 census reveals little more, although maybe some assumptions can be made. Again, on this census neither Percy nor his father appear but the three other siblings are resident with their father's sister, maiden aunt Euphemia, at Kingston Surrey; "maiden aunt" though is misleading, as it appears that Euphemia had married Joseph Theakston in St Petersburg, Russia in 1829 and had three sons but by 1841 she had returned to the U.K. and assumed her maiden name. Dorothea had died in 1869 having survived her husband Robert by ten years.

At the time of the 1871 census Percy would have been fifteen years old and his widowed father, forty-eight and perhaps we can assume that his father then went abroad and had taken Percy with him. Of his siblings, Eustace was already working at the London Stock Exchange and the younger children, Godfrey and Mary, were still scholars.

Later in Victorian England, for those fortunate enough to have schooling, it generally finished early in a child's life and unless they were even more fortunate enough to attend a college or university they were expected to work soon after age thirteen. But the Pinkerton family of Euphemia, and her much younger sister Millicent, was evidently financially comfortable, living then at 19 Knight's Park, in the fashionable suburb of Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, and able to afford both a nurse and a servant. No doubt, therefore, George and Mary had been able to afford school for the children or, as was often the case, they may have been schooled at home. To add to their financial stability, whilst the Easum family was large (the late Mary had been the second of some fourteen children), Robert Hayes Easum had become very wealthy from his rope making business and after his death in 1866, his widow is found in 1871 living on an annuity, so perhaps there was some residual wealth available to be spread around the family.

Thus it would appear that Percy had probably finished whatever studies he had undergone and had the opportunity to accompany his father on whatever the foreign trip was. We have no way of knowing where specifically they went but we do know that the family had very strong Russian connections; his father George⁶ and grandmother Dorothea were born there as were all his paternal blood-related aunts and uncles except for Millicent & Robert junior.

Maybe Russia was where they visited family? Several of George's siblings seem to have remained in Russia as there is no indication of them ever being in the U.K. at any time. But with all this supposition we wonder where Percy had gained his understanding of languages and his evident writing ability. For genealogy we have only the census records to go by and for Percy these are precious few, as he appears neither on the 1881 nor on the 1901 censuses.

The Reverend Dr. Robert Pinkerton (1780-1859)

Evidence confirms that Percy's grandfather was the heretofore celebrated, and oft written about, Scottish missionary, Rev. Dr. Robert Pinkerton, D.D. [Doctor of Divinity] (1780-1859) who was a Principal Agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS). A respected missionary, linguist, translator and author of several books including; "The Present State of the Greek Church in Russia" (1816), and "RUSSIA or Miscellaneous Observations on the past and present state of that country and its inhabitants" (1833); Dr. Pinkerton travelled widely, especially in Russia, Europe and Greece encouraging the setting up of Bible Societies, writing copiously about his travels and translating other authors' works from Russian, Greek and other languages.

⁶ George Pinkerton was born at St Petersburg about 1822/3 but the family moved to London in 1823 remaining there until 1830 when they moved to Germany. Thus, except by learning from his mother, unlike his elder siblings he would have unlikely learned any Russian by residing there! It is more probable that he would have become proficient in German.

Given that official registration of births, marriages & deaths (BMD) only began in the U.K. upon the Reign of Queen Victoria in 1837, and that Parish & Foreign records are few, and none of the writings of neither Dr Pinkerton nor his biographers refer to his family life. Except for some entries in "The Gentleman's Magazine",^{7 8 9} we have no biographically documented evidence or official records (i.e. other than Parish) that confirm his birth, marriage or issue.

The birth of Robert Pinkerton, given as 1780 at Foulshiels near Selkirk, Scotland, is mentioned in several¹⁰ written accounts of his exploits and perhaps we can make the fair assumption that this is accurate; though possibly copied from an original unknown source.¹¹ From these same sources Dr Pinkerton's year of death is given as 1859 and we know for certain, from both a Probate record and a brief obituary¹² that Dr. Pinkerton passed away on April 7th 1859 at his home at 119 Wray Park Road, Reigate, Surrey which is where Dorothea is found on the 1861 census with her family. And, from census and Parish Baptism records, we can deduce many of the children of Robert & Dorothea,¹³ who was born at Sarepta, Volgograd, in southern Russia:

Children of Robert & Dorothea Pinkerton

Pinkerton	Birth	Death	Married	Issue	Proven-main
Euphemia	1809 Sarepta	1882	Joseph Theakston	3	1861 census
Helen	1811 Moscow	1893	Francis Trueman	0	Probate
Thomas	1813 St Petersburg	?	Ann Theakston	2	1861 census
Sophia	1816 St Petersburg	1897	Samuel Gurney Fry	0	1881 census
James	1818 St Petersburg	1841	unmarried	0	TGM [6]
George	1823 St Petersburg	1899	Mary Easum	5	1861 census
Millicent	1825 Newington Mx.	1900	unmarried	0	1861 census
Robert	1827 Newington Mx	1845	unmarried	0	Baptism
These below are very likely but in need of absolute proof					
Alexander	1805 Russia		Rebecca Jack	2	unproven
Ann	1812 Russia		James Theakston	4	Child's name
Helena	1815 Russia		Freid'ch Marquardt	2 or 4	unproven

Dr. Pinkerton left his Scottish home for the Caucasus Mountains in southern Russia in 1805 and remained there until 1808 when he moved to Moscow where he had Moravian in-laws.¹⁴ Later,

⁷ "The Gentleman's Magazine" Volume X for 1838; that comments on page 439; "On July 10th at Frankfurt-am-Maine, Samuel. Gurney Fry, Esq. Fourth son of Joseph Fry, Esq. of Upton Lane, Essex, married Sophia, third daughter of the Rev. Robert Pinkerton D.D of that place."

⁸ "The Gentleman's Magazine" Volume XVI for 1841; that comments on page 424; "On October 10th at Frankfurt-am-Maine, Francis Trueman Esq. of Walthamstow married Helen, the second daughter of the Rev. Robert Pinkerton D.D of that place."

⁹ "The Gentleman's Magazine" Volume XV for 1841 Obituary Page 110; Dr James N Pinkerton died at Bombay on 22nd October 1841 aged 23, eldest son of the Rev. Dr. Pinkerton of Frankfurt-am-Maine. [However, Thomas above is proven by being on the 1861 census with sister Sophia, thus James wasn't the eldest.]

¹⁰ One source is: Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions. Edited by Gerald H. Anderson. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 1998. (BiDChrM)

¹¹ The most likely candidates for Dr Pinkerton's parents are Thomas Pinkerton (b. abt. 1756 at Kelso) & Euphan(ia) Wilson (b. abt. 1759) who married at Selkirk on the 9th July 1779 (the year before the Rev. Robert's birth at Selkirk) and who baptised their child Robert at Selkirk on the 27th April 1784 (though on the record this date is given as the birth date). Given the strong Selkirk connection, the names of the Rev. Robert Pinkerton's earliest born and the frequent handing down of given names this, in all probability, is the case.

¹² "The Gentleman's Magazine" May 1859

¹³ We know Dorothea was born at Sarepta, Volgograd and of either total or at least part Moravian descent. We have no evidence for her maiden name.

¹⁴ According to the "Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions (edited by Gerald H. Anderson) Published 1999"; and thus we can deduce that he married before 1808 and probably at Sarepta.

in 1812, he moved to St Petersburg leaving his family there for almost two years from 1815 whilst he continued his missionary travels across Europe. We know too, from the same source, that he was in London from 1823 to 1830 after which he travelled to Frankfurt-am-Maine to take the post of Sole Agent for the BFBS in German-speaking Europe. If we examine the birth years & locations of his children they are consistent with the nomadic profile of this pious and dedicated man.

However, we have further convincing evidence. U.K. Parish records confirm George's father as being Robert (D.D.) upon his marriage to Mary Easum in 1851 (Percy's parents), but most significant are the two Baptism records for Millicent (1825-1900) & Robert¹⁵ (1827-1845) that both indicate Robert & Dorothea's London home address as Barrett's Grove, Stoke Newington. And in the latter case specifies, perhaps slightly incorrectly, Robert senior's profession as "Foreign Secretary to the B. & F. B. Soc." This of course means the British and Foreign Bible Society. Q.E.D.¹⁶

So there is no doubt that Dr. Pinkerton was Percy's grandfather and that may at least offer an explanation and understanding that Percy was naturally gifted even though he was only four years old when his grandfather passed away; and perhaps therefore his gifts were nurtured by his father and only required the honing of learning and time.

Thus perhaps we can surmise that Percy was used to travelling with his father who, as a metal broker, was no doubt in demand for services far and wide. With no records to otherwise assist, we may conclude that Percy did not attend university and that his talent for languages and prose was a natural ability honed by the experience of travel and visiting several countries, no doubt including Russia. But with no other records to confirm we have no way of determining the truth of his upbringing.

Percy's Aunts & Uncle

Percy had only one surviving uncle we can be sure of, as Thomas appears on the 1861 census visiting his sister Sophia with his wife Anne and son John. We lose trace of Thomas and family and must presume they returned to Russia.

On the 1881 census aunt Euphemia who remained at Knight's Park with her sister Millicent, was then joined by another sister Sophia who appears estranged from her husband Samuel Gurney Fry. Percy's father George was also in Kingston boarding at another address.

In September 1838, Sophia Pinkerton had married the Shipping & Insurance Agent/Merchant Samuel Gurney Fry. Neither appears on the 1841 census but they are found together on the 1851 census. On all later census records they are apart and on the 1871 census especially, Sophia is found resident with her sister-in-law whilst Samuel appears to be lodging with an unrelated family and a young Fanny Fry (thirty-three years his junior) said to be his wife! On the 1881 census Samuel is living with his married sister, Louisa Pelly (née Fry) & her Magistrate husband Raymond, and spinster sister Katherine, whilst Sophia is found with her sisters in Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey.

¹⁵ There is a report that there are many descendents of Robert Pinkerton DD in North America descended from his supposed son Robert (27 Jan 1828 - 12 Dec 1874). This is a false assumption. Robert junior died aged just eighteen at Newington, London in Q1 1845 (Vol. 4 Page 269) and no records contradict this fact.

¹⁶ It is proven without doubt that Millicent is the daughter of Robert & Dorothea and on her baptism record (at Fetter Lane [Moravian]) the family address is given as Barrett's Grove. Brother Robert born circa 1827 has an undated baptism record (at Fetter Lane [Moravian]), though all records are on the same page and dated 1827/8. The record shows Robert as parent (no mother shown), at [Barrett's - unfilled space] Grove as the home address and crucially associates Robert senior with his work at the "B. & F. B. Soc". Therefore, since we can prove that these children are siblings to George, who we know was Percy's father, the fact that Percy's grandfather was the Rev. Robert Pinkerton is proven.

It would seem likely that soon after marriage Sophia and Samuel became estranged; they were only ever found together on the 1851 Census and unsurprisingly there appears no issue from this liaison. Since however, perhaps more surprisingly, Sophia retained the name Fry; if Samuel did marry a "Fanny" then this was almost certainly bigamous. Having not found a suitable marriage entry, if this wasn't an enumerator's mistaken assumption, I suspect it was a falsified Census entry to hide the truth from the head of the household or otherwise placate him. On December 14th 1874 it seems that a "Samuel Gurney Fry" was Committed for Conspiracy at the Old Bailey with the trial postponed.¹⁷ Without being certain that this was one-and-the-same "Samuel" (though it is likely with the middle name Gurney) and without knowing the outcome of any subsequent trial, perhaps we can deduce from this that Samuel Fry was not averse to making such errata when needs required.

Whilst all this has little bearing upon the Pinkertons' I mention this fact as Samuel was the 11th child of Joseph & Elizabeth Fry (née Gurney). Joseph Fry was, a one-time wealthy tea merchant and nephew of the founder of the Fry's chocolate and Typesetting empire and Elizabeth was both a member of the wealthy Norfolk banking family and also a Quaker, a Christian philanthropist, humanitarian and prison reformer who spent her life dedicated to the interests of those less fortunate than herself.¹⁸ So against this backdrop, Sophia's marriage to a seemingly wayward Samuel is a rather sad tale that may have had some bearing on the Pinkerton family as a whole.

Euphemia passed away in 1882 and by 1891 both Millicent and Sophia were lodger and visitor in part of a house in Kingston, and George too was a boarder, also in Kingston, probably indicating that the family had fallen on harder times. George died in 1899 and both Millicent and Sophia had both died before the 1901 census. Helen, just widowed the previous year, died at Brixton on the 8th of January leaving her estate of £1461 2s 6d to her nephew Eustace.

The only other potential family would be Alexander, Helena and Ann but, whilst there is some circumstantial evidence they were family members it is far from proven.

Percy's Siblings & Families

On the 1881 census Percy's siblings remain in the Kingston area separately accommodated as lodgers or visitors. They are no longer resident with their aunt Euphemia who remained at Knight's Park with her sister Millicent.

Curiously, Algernon is missing off all census records and, without a record of a death, further investigation reveals that he is the same Algernon Robert who, aged eighteen, became an apprentice on board the Cornwallis that sailed from Liverpool to Sydney on March 3rd 1871 just before the U.K. census that year. He settled for a time in Fiji where he married, Irish born, Georgina Annie Newton King in 1885 and where his first two children were born; the rest of the family of eight being born in Tasmania. It seems Algernon's youthful adventure meant he was never to return to the U.K. and he died at Lindisfarne, Tasmania in 1935 his wife having predeceased him there by thirteen years.

In 1886 Eustace had married Eleanor Margaret Elizabeth Hill Williams whose maternal grandparents were General Sir Edward Nichols and Lady Elizabeth Nichols née Bristow. They were living in fashionable Greenwich, the other side of London to Kingston. Following his father's profession, and thus by now a stock dealer, Eustace and his family were clearly quite comfortable and by 1888 they had a son Cecil. Cecil later married Gwendolyn Woodman who blessed him with a son, George Eustace, in 1916; but upon his return from WW1 France as a Lieutenant Captain in the Royal Field Artillery (4th London [Howitzer] Brigade) they divorced;

¹⁷ England & Wales Criminal Registers: 15th December 1874; Samuel Gurney Fry, along with five others', Committed at the Central Criminal Court for Conspiracy; Trial Postponed.

¹⁸ Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845) was prominently figured on the back of the 2001 edition of the British £5 note.

leaving George Eustace that, on this line, would be the only opportunity for carrying on the Pinkerton name.

In the 1930's George Eustace is found residing with his father Cecil and Grandmother Eleanor in Skipton, Yorkshire where they remained for many years. But George Eustace married Doreen Tooley in 1938 whilst studying medicine at Cambridge. Having graduated in 1941 he joined the WW2 war effort and as a Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps (attached to the 1st Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry) he was awarded the Military Cross for exploits in Italy. Upon cessation of conflict he & Doreen briefly settled in Gunnesbury, Ealing before moving to Dunstable where he set up his medical practice as a prominent physician & surgeon. This he was able to achieve with ease as his mother Gwendolyn had bequeathed him over £38,000 upon her death in 1954. Though George & Doreen had three boys and one girl, there is seemingly only one remaining Pinkerton on this line.

Godfrey had become an architect and was lodging in the Kingston area on both the 1881 & 1891 censuses. Remaining unwed, by 1901 and through 1911 he was renting two rooms in a house in fashionable Surbiton, not far from Kingston, Surrey. He died at Kensington in 1937 and left his Estate of £419 0s 2d¹⁹ to his brother Percy.

Mary had married the solicitor Gilbert Mainwaring Robinson in 1882. Then moving to Watford Hertfordshire, they began a family of seven who are mostly found on the 1891 census without the second born, Janet, who had sadly died shortly before the census was taken. In 1893 the family immigrated to South Africa where Gilbert ran a successful legal business. None of the family returned to the U.K. except for occasional vacations. Gilbert died at Cape Town in 1920 and Mary died there in 1938.

Siblings of Percy Pinkerton

Pinkerton	Birth	Death	Married	Issue	Immigrated
Eustace	1852 Newington Mx	1939	E.M.E.H. Williams	1	No
Algernon	1853 Newington Mx	1935	G. Newton-King	8	Fiji & Tasmania
Godfrey	1858 Newington Mx	1937	unmarried	0	No
Mary	1860 Newington Mx	1938	Gilbert Robinson	7	Cape Town

Although Percy's siblings did well for themselves, the family became distant whilst the elders of the family became less well-to-do and, in my opinion, Percy's likely nomadic upbringing, similar perhaps to his grandfather's nomadic ways that his father and aunts were used to, added to this lack of cohesion, as we will see later.

Percy as a Young Man

Whilst his siblings were resident at Kingston, Surrey, in 1880, Percy, aged twenty-five had found employment as an English master at the Armenian College in Venice. Quite when he arrived in Venice is unknown but it seems he remained in and around Venice until at least 1887, during which year he published the articles in the Magazine of Art mentioned above. How long he was employed as a teacher is also unknown; neither is the way in which he came to obtain the post, but one has to believe that he had become well qualified enough to hold such an important position in such youth.

We know of this as he is referenced in the book by A. L. Rowse, "Homosexuals in History"²⁰ who attempted to read "between the lines" a mention made in the diaries of Lord Ronald Gower (1845-1916) of his meeting (in Venice, in 1886) with "the young poet Percy Pinkerton an English Master at the Armenian College in Venice". There is no actual evidence of Pinkerton's homosexuality however, even though the young Percy was well known to the homosexual poet

¹⁹ Note: Whilst Godfrey was an established architect with London based premises he was not a particularly wealthy man. However in 1937 £400 would have been sufficient to buy a comfortable house outright.

²⁰ A Study of Ambivalence in Society, Literature and the Arts (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1977, p. 156).

and literary critic John Addington Symonds (1840-1893), as he is referred to, sometimes as "Pinkie", in several of Symonds letters; and from these published letters we know too that Percy and Symonds both communicated and met.

Symonds critically acclaimed Percy's first volume of poetry (Galeazzo 1886)²¹, however such praise was not always the case and at least some of Percy's later translations gave rise to some quite stern criticism.

Nonetheless, due to information²² addressed to ----- REDACTED

In 1889²³ ----- REDACTED

`in so far as it indicates that his home address is perhaps far from salubrious.

This is borne out by his entry in the 1891 census, describing himself as a journalist & author, that has him resident as a boarder/lodger with the King family (a waiter and a dressmaker, with their two children), at number 56 Earls Court Road, Kensington; along with another lodger Edward Hyslop an Ironmonger's Assistant. It was often the case that tenants would take in lodgers to help pay the bills. Two other families also lived in the property, comprising widows "living on own means" which, in poor districts, was often a euphemism for their son's/daughter's keeping them.

There is some further evidence REDACTED -----²⁴ (1854-1925), are as follows:

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The Venice-based based historian, the friend and biographer of John Addington Symonds, was Horatio F. Brown (1854-1926).²⁵

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²¹ Ref: The Academy April 10th 1886

²² Information I am disallowed to mention due to copyright.

²³ Information I am disallowed to mention due to copyright.

²⁴ Information I am disallowed to mention due to copyright.

²⁵ Horatio Robert Forbes Brown (1854-1926) was born in Nice, France of Scottish parentage and spent most of his life in Venice writing about the city. It is without doubt that Horatio & Percy had met, perhaps on many occasions. Horatio was also to become John Addington Symonds biographer.

We know Percy was at 56 Earls Court Road in the 5th of April 1891 as that was the census date for that year. Situated at the north end of Earls Court Road near Kensington High Street it was not the best part of town by any measure.

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I think Percy was financially embarrassed on many occasions throughout his adult life.

In 1900 he takes furnished lodgings with a Mrs. Toft at number 9 Ranelagh Grove, Pimlico, comprising of just the first floor front room, but in 1901, yet again, he is missing off the U.K. census; abroad, no doubt, but where? In Italy perhaps, we do not know!

By 1905²⁶,

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Addresses, in west London, were in the new and growing, leafy, suburbia then becoming well supported by extensions to the London Underground that enabled commuting to the City practical. Indeed it was in 1905 that the Metropolitan line from Baker Street was electrified and so could be serviced by regular commuter trains. Both these addresses are within a third of a mile from the Harrow on the Hill station and would have offered significantly cheaper accommodation than to be found nearer the City.

So, up to this time, Percy lived in rented accommodation, was nomadic and seemingly unsettled, we find neither references to his siblings nor any meetings with them. He is treading his own path.

Marriage

On the 23rd September 1909, at St James Norlands Parish Church, Kensington, Percy married Emily Woodgates, the forty-one-year-old spinster and eldest child of the Rector James Richard Woodgates and Elizabeth née Moor. Percy was fifty-four and thirteen years Emily's senior although he gave his age as forty-four. There were three witnesses; Percy's younger brother Godfrey, along with Emily's mother Elizabeth and her uncle Edward Moor (Elizabeth's brother).

Clearly, Percy did not want to divulge his true age to Emily possibly in case she fled the courtship and, from the Parish record, Emily evidently did not, at that time, know Percy's true age. If she did I doubt she would have been a willing accomplice to the falsehood. Witness brother Godfrey must have been aware too of Percy's reticence to divulge that he was only ten years younger than Emily's mother; this fact perhaps was yet another reason to be untruthful about his age. But, even if Elizabeth suspected, it would have been hypocritical for her to disapprove, as Emily's father was sixteen years her senior; a fact probably unknown to Percy.

Percy was, at the time, resident at 34, Whitehall Road, Harrow, Middlesex; yet another Harrow based address indicating the likelihood of him being a lodger at this and his other erstwhile Harrow addresses. Emily's address was given as 30, Norlands Square, nearby the church in

²⁶ Information I am disallowed to mention due to copyright.

West Kensington, both then and today a fashionable district of 1840's built stucco-fronted houses surrounding a tree lined square.

But in 1901 Emily was living with her fifty-six year old widowed mother and forty-six year old maternal spinster aunt, in Chesterton, Cambridgeshire; both her younger siblings Katherine & William were already deceased (1889 & 1900 respectively) as was her father, the former Rector of Debden, who had passed away in 1886. Whilst they were then not living in the best of districts they were truly "living on own means" as none worked and they had sufficient income to employ a servant.

It seems likely that, until her marriage, Emily, by 1901 the only remaining child, stayed at home with mother and became the sad "on-the-shelf" daughter who missed out in her youth of finding the "love-of-her-life"; as often happened in such circumstances. She was no doubt well educated - but probably lonely. Can we imagine then, rather romantically, the attraction that she had for, the supposedly slightly older, Percy who was willing to "take-her-as-his-bride" and "off-the-shelf" at last; where otherwise she may have remained? And, compared to his age too, for Percy, his attraction to a much younger, and undoubtedly well educated, woman.

Tracing Percy & Emily's whereabouts

Whilst, on the 1911 census²⁷, mother-in-law Elizabeth is living in Ipswich, Percy and Emily are in Norfolk. Percy states he is in the "literary profession". His birthplace is London (Middlesex); this is correct but he also states incorrectly that he is forty-five. Wrong, he is fifty-five! So he continues to deceive Emily about his true age.

This fibbing about ages on Census records happened all the while for a variety of reasons, and I think we can surmise why it was in this case. Whilst we cannot question Percy's literacy, we might question his numeracy if it were not for his making this "mistake" on official records twice. It would not be surprising then if Emily remained unaware of Percy being thirteen years her senior rather than three; until perhaps the ravages of time made his true age become more obvious.

To complete the analysis of the record, Emily's birthplace is given as Putely (Middlesex). Putely is actually in Herefordshire within the environs of Ledbury where we know her birth was registered. We should note that the words "Middlesex" were added by the enumerator and he probably misread Percy's entry as "Putney" that is in Middlesex. Enumerators were well known for making such mistakes, or just being slap-dash. Emily's age was correctly given as forty-two.

But their address was: "Red Lodge, Happisburgh, Norfolk" - a place now infamous for much of its coastline being eroded by the North Sea.

The house had nine "living" rooms and thus quite spacious and worthy of Percy & Emily. And at that time they were certainly wealthy enough to afford a "live-in" servant/housekeeper; one Lucy Yallop. We suspect she was "live-in" although this census was different to previous census arrangements where a servant arriving on the Monday morning (April 3rd 1911 the day following the census night) could be included in the census unless they were denoted elsewhere.

But Happisburgh is particularly interesting as Percy's third book of poems "At Hazebro"²⁸ published in 1909 is clearly about Happisburgh. The frontispiece is a line drawing of the Happisburgh coastline and locally Happisburgh is pronounced Hazebro! So it seems likely that

²⁷ The 1911 census is particularly interesting; as this is the only census released containing the original records that were filled out by the head of the household and, significantly, signed by them. However, enumerators often added information that they believed to be correct without recourse to the signee.

²⁸ Printed by hand at the Cedar Press in Enfield.

Percy and Emily moved to Happisburg upon their marriage as it was that year that Percy published *At Hazebro'*.

The opening poem in the first eponymous cycle of poems in *At Hazebro'* is entitled "September Noon" perhaps an indication that the poem was written upon Percy & Emily's assumed arrival in Happisburgh shortly after their matrimony on the 23rd of September; and if so, Happisburg may have been their honeymoon destination and they desired of the place so much that they then decided to make it their permanent home securing Red Lodge soon after. Permanent seems a term somewhat missing from Percy's mindset though as he begins his "September Noon" with the line "The sea is like a Venice glass," immediately showing a nostalgic yearning for his time in his beloved Italy some thirty years previous.

Far be it from me to comment, but throwing caution to the wind, the poem is evidently about love and loves' loss but also clearly a commentary about someone who, with the benefit of maturity, whom, whilst lamenting lost years, to their surprise and delight, has finally found love and companionship later in life. Thus I suggest the poem is, in part, autobiographical, though such an analysis however is unlikely to have occurred to the poem's few readers²⁹ at the time of publication.

II. THE MILL AT MOON-RISE

"Above the shore the wind-mill stands,
A phantom in the twilight grey;
And all around are silent lands
Where scattered lights gleam far away.

Then, slowly from the tranquil tide
Emerging, in her shroud of fire,
The wan moon rises like a bride
Pale with unspeakable desire.

Beyond the sand-dunes, by the sea,
I hear the curlew's plaintive cry;
The mill, as though to menace me,
Spreads ghostly arms across the sky.

I trust; I doubt; and trembling wait
Here, in the moonlight and the mist.
Dear, is your love for me so great?
And will you dare to keep the tryst?"

Did Percy buy or rent homes? I think Percy's nomadic nature allowed him the luxury of not burdening himself with possessions or chattel, including property, for once again at Christmas 1914 he is resident, but possibly on vacation, at Marsh End, Cley-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, somewhat further north from Happisburgh.

However, the Marsh End address was probably a Christmas get-away and change of scenery as we know that Percy & Emily were living at Red Lodge through to at least 1916 as they are found on Kelly's Directory as resident there in both 1912 & 1916.

²⁹ As "*At Hazebro'*" was privately published, its readership was probably very limited.

On a photo-card,³⁰ a picture no doubt of himself on the seashore with a lady (must be Emily) and two dogs, he writes a greeting to his publisher Martin Secker; "Every good wish for 1915" from Percy Pinkerton! The handwriting and signature on this card definitely match Pinkerton's signature on the 1911 census as well as on the Parish marriage entry.

REDACTED

REDACTED

³⁰ This photo-card found in Pinkerton's publisher, Martin Secker's copy of *Sanin(e)* a novel by the Russian writer Mikhail Artsybashev, that Pinkerton translated, is very probably the only image available of Percy & Emily. Copyright: Tulsa University, Department of Special Collections, McFarlin Library. The image is reproduced on page 206 of the book *The Chinese Translation of Russian Literature: Three Studies* (ISBN:9004168443) by Mark Gamsa [DPhil (2003), University of Oxford; lecturer in modern Chinese literature and history in the Department of East Asian Studies, Tel Aviv University, Israel.] The image can be seen here (page down to find page 206 of the Google preview of this book): <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ffkU0KocpEYC&printsec=frontcover&dq=isbn:9789004168442&hl=en&sa=X&ei=3QWQVfbZNau07gaLy5WABA&ved=0CCIQ6wEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false>

REDACTED

At the time of writing we lose track of Percy and Emily until 1925 through 1935 when they are found on the Electoral Rolls at various lodging houses in Cambridge (though they probably arrived there well before 1925). Why they were there is unknown but we might deduce a likely reason. We know that, until Emily married Percy in 1909, she lived with, and no doubt looked after, her widowed mother Elizabeth; the 1901 census shows Elizabeth, Margaret and Emily living at the same address in Chesterton, a suburb of Cambridge. It's very likely (though unproven) that Elizabeth and her spinster sister Margaret Moor, the only one of Elizabeth's siblings seemingly to remain in East Anglia (the others having located themselves far away), continued living together. In 1930 Margaret is shown on the Electoral Roll at Tenison Road very close by to Percy and Emily's various lodgings and it's almost without question that Elizabeth lived there too until her death registered at Cambridge in 1927. So it seems likely that Percy and Emily resided at Cambridge to be near Emily's mother and aunt and to return to her caring duties; perhaps for the both of them.

We do not know exactly when Percy and Emily arrived at the opposite end of the country to Cambridge but they probably moved to Porthleven sometime between Margaret's death in 1931 and about 1935 when they took up residence at Yacht House on Breageside (the western side of the Harbour).

Emily predeceased Percy by almost eight years, passing away aged seventy at St. Michael's Hospital, Hayle, Cornwall, on the 27th November 1938. She was buried at Porthleven Cemetery on November 30th; where later Percy was laid to rest alongside her. Emily's Will, that was Probated on January 5th 1939, bequeathed to Percy her complete Estate of £1345 16s 7d (*a substantial sum – especially for Porthleven*). In early 1939 Percy vacated Yacht House, as it was undoubtedly too large for his needs, and temporarily lodged with the Allen family in Cliff Road before his move to Ealing House.

It is a reasonable assumption that his lodgings were a temporary facility and that Percy moved to Ealing House as soon as practicable. Certainly, Ealing House would have suited Percy's needs better being more compact than Yacht House and located in the heart of the village.

We again lose track of Percy until his death aged ninety-one on August 31st 1946 at Ealing House, Porthleven, Cornwall, which is stated in a three-line obituary in the September 5th edition of The Times³¹.

Ealing House

In an indenture:

"made the 28th of July 1926, between John Peverell Rogers (Squire of Penrose), a retired Captain Royal Artillery, and the recently married (3rd Quarter 1925) Thomas James Hocking of Peverell Terrace Porthleven, a Coal Merchant, and Emily Jane Hocking, née Turner, his wife, for the sum of £230, a conveyance occurred of a dwellinghouse, shop and premises late in the occupation of Harriet Kitto and other dwellinghouses and premises then in the occupation of Elizabeth Orchard and Eva Williams respectively, together with the two cellars at the rear thereof".

This indenture was for the sale of a number of properties that incorporated what we know today as "Ealing House". The front of these premises was the shop that had been used by Harriet Kitto as a grocery store and on May 12th 1930 the Hockings' sold all the premises, excepting the shop in the above conveyance, to one Cecil Orchard. By then the well-to-do Hockings had

³¹ The obituary simply reads: PINKERTON. - On Aug. 31, at Ealing House, Porthleven, Cornwall, PERCY EDWARD PINKERTON, aged 91 years.

moved into what today is the An Mordros Hotel in Peverell Terrace and had named the property "Ealing House" as Emily Hocking hailed from Ealing, a district in West London.

Thus the property, still known today as Ealing House, became a thus named separate property around 1930. It is for certain that the Hockings' remained landlords and rented the property and a later likely candidate was Percy. So once again Percy did not bother with property ownership.

Far from the nine-room luxury of Red Lodge some thirty years before, Ealing House was compact by comparison and during Percy's tenure it would have been very basic; possibly having electricity³² but definitely no gas,³³ having a scullery (now the shower room) rather than a kitchen, an outside toilet (if at all) in the yard behind and cooking on a wood/coal burner.

Porthleven

Porthleven is the little fishing village just south of Helston in Cornwall. A west-facing port it was built not only for fishing (pilchards in particular) but also for the transport of iron and other ores. It is the most southerly port on the U.K. mainland and would have been a thriving community at the time of Percy & Emily's tenure.

Why did Percy and Emily move to Porthleven? We do not know that either. Porthleven is certainly almost as far away from London, and even more so from Norfolk, as it is possible to be in western England. All we do know is that Percy was reclusive at Porthleven and is remembered by one, then youthful, local inhabitant as "the old man with his stick".³⁴

Apart from Emily's Will, their headstone, and The Times obituary, there appears little to confirm that Percy and his wife were ever at Porthleven. Unusually, there is no mention of Percy in any books or publications on local history. Unusual, in that authors of such documents are always keen to mention the residency of notable people and those that warrant such a mention, have invariably obtained it. So Percy, without doubt, kept his literary background to himself and the local inhabitants probably knew not of his literary past.

However, this leaves questions as to how the important obituary in The Times came about:

Did a friend who thought enough of Percy to make an announcement, possibly place it? August 31st 1946 was a Saturday and September 5th the following Thursday. Thus for a paid entry sent from Porthleven this would have had to be sent immediately on the Monday to arrive at The Times ready for Thursday's press. But reviewing the other entries on the page, some are even of the day before! So was it telephoned and payment sent later? There was, perhaps surprisingly, quite a number of 'phone lines in Porthleven in 1946, but no doubt with businesses or the wealthier! Perhaps it was a Telegram? Note that nothing was stated about funeral arrangements etc.

Was it someone in London who had heard from Porthleven about his or her relative? Apart from Godfrey being a witness at Percy & Emily's wedding, there is no evidence that Percy remained in touch with any siblings or their offspring and, in any case Percy had outlived them all. Godfrey had died in 1937; Eustace in 1939, the émigré Algernon in 1935 and Mary who had immigrated to South Africa had died in Cape Town in 1938. Percy's nearest relatives were Eustace's son, his divorced nephew Cecil, who was then living with his mother in Yorkshire and his son George Eustace who was at the time living in Ealing. Thus they are the only family members who might have submitted the obituary.

³² Electricity finally arrived in Porthleven in 1929 firstly at the chemist in Fore Street and was quickly extended reaching the outskirts by the beginning of 1930.

³³ Piped gas has never been introduced to Porthleven.

³⁴ Told to me by an elderly, Porthleven born, gentleman now living in Helston at the time of writing (2004).

Was it the new local Doctor who attended Percy? I imagine Percy was being attended for some illness and wasn't "found dead". He was probably being attended by Dr. Reeves who replaced Dr. Elliston in 1946 who had retired to the Isle of Man the previous year. Both were kindly gentlemen and Dr Reeves could well have placed, and paid for, an announcement.

Did an appointed Solicitor tasked with winding up Percy's Estate possibly place it? If Percy died intestate (or no will was found) and there were no obvious living relatives, an advertisement would have been placed in The Times so that any interested party might come forward before the Estate was passed to the Crown. The only problems with this analysis are that it is far too soon after his demise and why then no contact details were given? If Percy's Estate had limited potential value a Solicitor would spend little time or effort on it. Leaving contact details would invoke potentially more work and if someone considered it of interest then that person would have had to travel to Porthleven to investigate.

It would seem the most likely scenario is that Dr. Reeves arranged the obituary notice as it was performed with immediacy and only someone close to Percy, who would probably have been cognisant of Percy's literary history, would have done it.

Percy's valueless Estate is proven correct as Probate was completed on December 17th 1946 when Percy's effects, totalling just £169 16s 1d, was proven to Kenneth Vernon Woolnough, a London based Solicitor, operating from 9 Old Square WC2. This suggests that Percy was intestate and that a London Solicitor, probably appointed by the local Council, was tasked with administering the Estate and the proceeds were probably only sufficient to pay the Solicitor's charges. Percy and Emily had no issue; they had no immediate family to bequeath; and, with no known family at the time, any residue that made the *Bona Vacantia*³⁵ the government would most likely have benefited from. The only nearest family resident heir in the UK, and possibly aware of Percy's demise, was his nephew Cecil living in Yorkshire at the time.

Even with his seemingly frugal ways, Percy had spent most of Emily's legacy (and his brother Godfrey's) in the few years since their deaths and he was evidently running out of funds; even though his effects would likely have been sufficient to purchase a small terraced house. In his later years Percy probably had little income and had no choice but to spend what he had. He would undoubtedly never have wished to be the wealthiest man in the graveyard. Thus he clearly achieved both his literary and financial goals.

All we have to mark the Pinkertons' at Porthleven is their headstone; that reads:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF EMILY HARRIET BELOVED WIFE OF PERCY EDWARD PINKERTON. SHE DIED ADVENT SUNDAY XXVII NOVEMBER MCMXXXVIII. ANGELVS E COELO TERRAVM TRANSIIT ORBEM. ALSO TO THE MEMORY OF PERCY EDWARD PINKERTON WHO DIED XXXI AVGVST MCMXLVI AGED XCI YEARS.³⁶

Both Yacht House & Ealing House had been rented and Percy and Emily had, since the thirties, lived in frugal conditions. Whilst today both houses are comfortable homes with modern conveniences, during the Pinkertons' tenure both properties would have offered relatively basic accommodation. But Percy & Emily were probably happy in Porthleven and with Percy's erudite description of landlocked Asolo in mind perhaps we may conclude that Porthleven became his final "little harbour" and his real "port of peace."

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³⁵ Bona Vacantia means vacant goods and is the term given to unclaimed estates that may remain unclaimed for a statutory period before being passed to the Crown in entirety.

³⁶ The Latin inscription translates as: "An Angel from Heaven has crossed the Earth".