

THE MURDUCK NET

&

Family Histories

of people who have used the surname MURDUCK through the ages

William Murduck, 1834 – 1895

William Murduck was born in his parents' home in Bethnal Green (London), England, probably very early in 1834. His parents – Thomas and Mary Ann [nee Coleman], crossed parish boundaries from Bethnal Green to Stepney when they had their son baptised at St. Dunstan's, the church of the Parish of Stepney, on 9 February 1834.¹ Thomas the father was a bricklayer/builder (born 1795) who had moved in to east London probably in the fall of 1825, a little more than eight years before William's birth. Thomas had been married to Mary Coleman in 1821, in the Parish of Writtle (near Chelmsford in Essex County, north and east of London about 40 miles). Two surviving children who had been born in Writtle – John (born 1822) and Eliza (born 1826) made the move with him. In Bethnal Green, Thomas (1829), Mary Ann Lucy (1831), then William, Elizabeth Sarah (1836), George (1839), Charles (1842), and Edward (1843) were born.

William came from a long line of bricklayer/builders who had lived in and worked out of Writtle ever since the late 1600s. His great, great grandfather John Murduck (baptised 14 January 1699) was a bricklayer. William's great grandfather John Murduck (baptised 5 May 1734) was a bricklayer. So was his grandfather Thomas Murduck (baptised 18 September 1765). William's uncle – his father's younger brother, Robert John (known as John, baptised in the parish of Hornchurch, Essex, on 29 April 1804), was also a bricklayer. It's probable that William's father and uncle operated a 'family style business' constructing and repairing residential buildings in east London and west Essex for many years.

In 1838 through to at least late June, 1839, Thomas Murduck's family occupied rented property at No. 2, Felix Street, Bethnal Green.² Felix Street was just west of the Cambridge Heath Road and north-west of the old village green of Bethnal Green. This may also have been the place William was born – the contemporary church baptismal records don't show a date or place of birth or residence for the parents.

Some time between late June, 1839, and early June, 1841, Thomas moved his family into quarters at Bates Place, one of a row of about 10 or more houses that ran north off Old Ford Road just east of Cambridge Heath Road, north-east of the village green, along the western side of Russia Lane. It was at this location that the family was enumerated during the 1841 Census of England and Wales (Census Day was Sunday, June 6).³

From December, 1840, Thomas rented part of a property owned by John Kelday, which was situated just a few doors west of Bates Place. It seems likely that shortly after this date Thomas built the row of a dozen or so houses on Kelday's property which became known as Peel Grove (otherwise Peel Terrace). When the ninety-nine year lease agreement for the parcel situated at Peel Grove was formally registered by the property owner, late in 1842, Thomas was said to be residing at No. 11, Peel Grove⁴. This same address was recorded when Thomas's sons Charles and Edward were born and died in 1842 & 1843. The agreement specified a recently erected tenement, and an inner yard – a luxury in east London labouring class contexts. John Kelday, a Hackney Road pawnbroker/financier, had purchased the property on which the houses at Peel Grove were built from the Moravian Brethren in 1839. The property had come to the Moravian Brethren as part of the Bates Trust, part of a bequest from Mrs. Elizabeth Bates that was conferred just after her husband had died. The Peel Grove properties faced on to the north side of Old Ford Road, almost directly north of the village green, and were immediately west of the row known as Bates Place. It's probable that Thomas Murduck and his crew built the entire row of houses that comprised Peel Grove.

William Murduck was, of course, enumerated as a seven year old boy within his father's household, when the English census enumeration of 1841 was undertaken on Sunday, 6 June. He was not described as a 'scholar', as most youngsters attending school daily would have been. Indeed, given the time, place, and circumstances of his parents' there's little likelihood that William ever received any formal schooling.

But William must have learned the bricklayer's trade under his father's and/or his uncle's tutelage, because on Census Day 1851 (Sunday, March 30) when the Murduck family was enumerated in Bethnal Green for the second time, he was described as a bricklayer, seventeen years of age.⁵

Within a few weeks of the 1851 census enumeration, William's mother Mary Ann fell, and she died unexpectedly in her bed a short while later.⁶ The coroner was called to certify her death. She was fifty-one years old at the time. Early the next year William's father Thomas was dead, too, at the relatively young age of fifty-seven years⁷ (his father's father Thomas also died quite suddenly at about forty-four years of age, in 1810⁸). Thomas's son-in-law Job Dilks told the registrar that Thomas had been suffering from epilepsy, gout, and paralysis, for a period of four months. Thomas had written a Will in early December, 1851. In his Will, he specified his wish that William and four other children then living (Eliza, Thomas, Mary Ann Lucy, and George) should each receive one fifth of the total value of his Estate after George passed his twenty-first birthday (24 June 1860).⁹ William's oldest sibling, John, was still living at the time, but for some reason – perhaps because he was well established himself, he was left out of the bequest.

When Estate Duty taxes were paid on Thomas Murduck's Estate, on 26 September 1855, the Estate was valued at £214 pounds, 11 shillings and 1 pence. Under the direction of Thomas Murduck's Executors – his brother Robert John Murduck and Job Dilks, his daughter Eliza's husband, and after lawyers' fees and estate duty taxes were paid, William would have received a lump sum of less than £43 in the latter half of 1860 when he was twenty-six years old.¹⁰

The census enumerator in 1861 found William, aged twenty-seven years, living within his older sister Eliza's home.¹¹ Eliza had been married to Job Dilks in October, 1846,¹² and in 1861 Job and Eliza had a home at No. 14, Marian Street, Bethnal Green. Enumerated within the household, along with William, were Job and Eliza's five children - Thomas, Eliza, Arthur William, Anne Louisa, and Frederick J; and William's & Eliza's youngest brother George and his new wife Sarah Elizabeth. Both William and George were described as bricklayers on Census Day in 1861 (Sunday, April 7)

Census records from 1871 show that much had changed in William's life in the preceding decade.¹³ Severe economic depression had hit east London in 1868, which ultimately led his brother George to emigrate to Canada with his family in August, 1869 (see "George and Sarah Murduck, in Canada Since 1869" for more detail). And, although no tangible trace of a record confirming the fact has been found, between 1861 and 1871 William had apparently married.¹⁴ An 1871 census enumerator found William and his wife Eleanor living on the south side of the Thames River on Census Day (Sunday, April 2), in one of the poorest and least healthy areas of greater London – Battersea, in the Registration District of Wandsworth. Their home was at No. 16, Stewart Lane, a structure shared by two other families – a boiler smith with a wife and 4 children, and a baker with a young wife and a one-week old son. The record shows that Eleanor was born in the city of Oxford, in Oxfordshire, about 1835. The enumerator recorded on his schedules that William was born in Hackney, Middlesex County, about 1834, which would be quite accurate if he was in fact born in a home on Felix Street. William was described in the 1871 schedules as being a bricklayer, as we have come to expect. Eleanor was described as a 'laundress'. Beyond these meagre facts we know absolutely nothing about Eleanor's origins or background (see "Eleanor Murduck – Who Was She?" for particulars pertaining to the search for knowledge about her).

Details about William and Eleanor appear in 1881¹⁵ and 1891¹⁶ census records. For each enumeration, they were shown as husband and wife, with no children in their household, and their ages, occupations and places of birth were consistently shown as in the record from 1871 (the only significant difference being in the way William's surname was recorded - Murdick in 1871, Murdoch in 1881 and 1891). In 1881, William and Eleanor were living at No. 61, Paradise Road, Lambeth, Surrey (London). This was on the south side of the road, between Larkdale Lane and Clapham Road.

In 1891, William and Eleanor were living at No. 8, Paradise Road in Lambeth (perhaps down the street in ten years, although many streets and houses in Greater London underwent significant re-numberings and re-namings in the 1870s and 1880s). In 1881 and 1891, as in 1871, William and Eleanor were one of three family groups living in the residential building in which they were enumerated.

The various census records created between 1841 and 1891 provide only slight glimpses into William's life. No other records have come to light which provide any additional details as to how, where, or with whom William passed his working days.

We can be rather certain that no children of William's and Eleanor's were born. No children had ever been listed within their household at census times, 1871, 1881 or 1891. Indeed, had any children been born they would have been remarked in a set of documents issued by the High Court of Justice, Chancery Division, following a suit brought by Frederick George Murrell against John Murduck and Samuel Green, Executors for the Estate of John Murduck in 1876.¹⁷ John Murduck, 1822-1876, was William's oldest sibling – the one who had not been mentioned in their father Thomas's Will in 1851. Mary Ann Lucy Murrell was the only one of John's siblings who was not bequeathed a portion of John Murduck's Estate. Mary Ann Lucy she was the wife of Frederick George Murrell, and he felt that she was unfairly left out of the Will, so he contested the Will in the Court. Otherwise, "all nieces and nephews living at the time of John's son John's death" were to receive equal shares of the Estate's value after certain conditions had been met. One particular court document from 1878 lists all of the nieces and nephews known to have been born to that time. Incorporated into the list of names are particulars about each person's birth, marriage and/or death. No children of William and Eleanor were named.¹⁸

William Murduck died in the Workhouse Infirmary on Brook Street in Lambeth, on 1 April 1895, when he was sixty-one years old.¹⁹ When his widow Eleanor registered his death on the 2nd of April, she said that William had been a journeyman bricklayer whose normal residence was No. 8 Paradise Road, South Lambeth. His death was caused by a cerebral haemorrhage – a stroke. As he was transferred to the local poorhouse infirmary where he died, it's probable that his death was not swift. No evidence has been found to suggest that a Will attributed to William Murduck was presented to the Probate Registrar between 1 April and 31 December 1901.²⁰

Eleanor Murduck lived another ten years, or so. She was enumerated in a home at No. 23, Paradise Road, Lambeth, in the 1901 Census of England and Wales (Census Day was Sunday, March 31).²¹ All six residents at this address were lodgers, but Eleanor was living in her own contained unit (probably just a room!). Three of the residents were widows, Eleanor at sixty-six years being the youngest. One resident was a widower aged seventy-one years. The other two were working men – one thirty years of age, the other fifty-four. In each of the previous census records where her details were recorded (1871, 1881 & 1891), Eleanor was said to have been employed as a ‘laundress’. In 1901 she was said to be a ‘washer and ironer’. Her surname was spelled by the enumerator in 1901 as Murdock.

Eleanor Murduck died in Lambeth on the 7th of January, 1905.²² At the time of her death she was said to be a 70 year old ‘ironer’, living at No. 45, Paradise Road, South Lambeth. She died in the Workhouse Infirmary on Brook Street, as had her husband William 10 years earlier, as T. Dean, Steward of the facility, registered her death on the 9th of January. Eleanor died of “Bronchitis, Cardiac dilatation, and Anasarca” as certified by one R. G. Brown. No evidence has been found that a Will attributed to Eleanor Murduck was proved before Judges of the Probate Registry between 1 January 1905 and 31 December 1910.²³

All traces of the home(s) in which William and Eleanor lived in on Paradise Road are gone. In place of what was probably a row of two storey tenements at 8 Paradise Road, is now a modern low level Travelodge.

We have no knowledge today concerning where the remains of William and Eleanor Murduck were buried, although the large Lambeth Cemetery is thought to have been the most probable place of interment.

No photographic images of William or Eleanor are known to exist today.

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Sources:

¹ Baptismal Register, 1833-1835, St. Dunstan's Church, Parish of Stepney (East London), County of Middlesex, England; Page 124, Entry No. 990; 9 February 1834; William Murduck. Record Office, County Hall, London: Volume P93 DUN 17; LDS: 596913.

² This address was given as the place of birth of two of William's younger siblings – Elizabeth Sarah Murduck, on 23 February 1838, and George Murduck, on 4 June 1839. See their respective English Birth Registration Certificates.

³ 1841 Census of England and Wales - England; County of Middlesex; Hundred of Ossulstone, Tower Division; Parish of St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green; District of The Green; Borough of Tower Hamlets; Superintendent Registrar's District of Bethnal Green; Registrar's District of The Green; Enumeration District 4; Folio 11; Page 14; Bates Place; The Thomas Murduck Family; M. Christian, enumerator. The National Archives: Public Record Office / Home Office 107, Piece 692, Book 2.

⁴ Indenture of Lease, Kelday to Murduck, No. 305 (1842). London Metropolitan Archives: Middlesex Deeds Registry; 1842, Volume 8, No. 305, Kelday to Murduck. See the respective birth & death registration indexes for information as to the places of residence at each event.

⁵ 1851 Census of England and Wales - England; County of Middlesex; Parish of Bethnal Green; Ecclesiastical Parish of St. John's; Borough of Tower Hamlets; Registration District of Bethnal Green; Sub-registration District of The Green; Enumeration District 20; Folio 588 (front & back); Pages 3 & 4; Schedule No. 12; 11 Peel Terrace; The Thomas Murduck Family The National Archives: Public Record Office / Home Office 107, Piece 1540.

⁶ Death Registration Certificate, England and Wales – Registrar General's Office, England; County of Middlesex, Registration District of Bethnal Green; Sub-district of The Green; 1851; Entry No. 178; 10 May 1851, 11 Peel Terrace; Mary Ann Murduck; True Copy Certificate issued 5 October 1989. Indexed as: September Quarter, 1851; Murduck, Mary Ann; District of Bethnal Green; Volume 2 Page 13.

⁷ Death Registration Certificate, England and Wales – Registrar General's Office, England; County of Middlesex, Registration District of Bethnal Green; Sub-district of The Green; 1852; Entry No. 114; 18 March 1852, 11 Peel Terrace; Thomas Murduck; True Copy Certificate issued 5 October 1989. Indexed as: March Quarter, 1852; Murdock, Thomas; District of Bethnal Green; Volume 1c Page 195.

⁸ Baptisms and Burials Register, 1796-1812; St. Andrew's Church, Parish of Hornchurch, County of Essex, England; Burials - 22 July 1810, Thomas Murduck. Essex Record Office: D/P 115 /1/5; LDS: 0857075. For more detail of circumstances surrounding the death of Thomas Murduck, 1765-1810, see "Death and Disruption – the Life and Death of Thomas Murduck, 1765-1810".

⁹ The Will of Thomas Murduck; Written 5 December 1851; Proved at the Bishop of London's Consistory Court, London, England, 15 May 1852 by [Robert] John Murduck (brother of the deceased) and Job Dilks (son-in-law of the deceased), the Executors; London Metropolitan Archives: Bishop of London's Consistory Court Records; Will Registers, May 1852, Volume 9, LDS: 94170.

¹⁰ Death Duty Registers, England – Inland Revenue, Volume 1938, Folio 89, Page 341. The National Archives, Public Record Office, Inland Revenue 26. LDS Film: 1817562.

¹¹ 1861 Census of England and Wales – England; County of Middlesex; Parish of Bethnal Green; Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Jude's; North Ward; Borough of Tower Hamlets; Registration District of Bethnal Green; Sub-Registration District of Hackney Road; Enumeration District 16; Folio 46 (back side); Page 48; Schedules No. 247 & 248; 14 Marian Street; The Job Dilks Family; The National Archives: Public Record Office / Registrar General 9, Piece 253.

¹² Marriage Register, 1846-1847; St. Dunstan's Church, Parish of Stepney, County of Middlesex, England; Page 18, Entry No. 35; Job Dilks to Eliza Murduck; 11 October 1846. Record Office, County Hall, London: Volume P93 DUN 85; LDS: 801587.

¹³ 1871 Census of England and Wales - England; County of Surrey; Parish of Battersea; Ecclesiastical Parish of St. George; Registration District of Wandsworth; Sub-registration District of Battersea; Enumeration District 40; Folio 38: Page 11; Schedule No. 53; 15 Stewart Lane; The William Murdick Family; G. Appleton, enumerator. The National Archives: Public Record Office / Registrar General 10, Piece707.

¹⁴ The search for William's marriage registration details has been exhaustive, but unsuccessful. See the side piece "Searching for William Murduck's Marriage Records, circa 1861-1871" for specific details about the search.

¹⁵ 1881 Census of England and Wales – England; County of Surrey; Parish of Lambeth; Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Barnabas, South Kennington; Borough of Lambeth, Vauxhall Ward; Registration District of Lambeth; Sub-District of Kennington 1st; Enumeration District 28; Folio 24; Page 41; Schedule No. 230; 61 Paradise Road; The William Murdoch Family; W. P. Fenwick, enumerator. The National Archives, Public Record Office, Registrar General 11, Piece 605.

¹⁶ 1891 Census of England and Wales; England; Administrative County of London; Parish of Lambeth; Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Barnabas, South Kennington; Parliamentary Borough of Kennington, Vauxhall Ward; Registration District of Lambeth; Sub-district of Kennington 1st; Enumeration District 25; Folio 22; Page 38; Schedule No. 262; 8 Paradise Road; The William Murdoch Family; George Thomas Nicholls, enumerator. The National Archives: Public Record Office, Registrar General 12, Piece 401.

¹⁷ Murrell vs Murduck, Case No. 1876 M 298, Chancery Division, High Court of Justice (England), the records of which are held in various series in the Public Record Office collection at The National Archives in Kew (London), England. For more detail see "John Murduck's Will, and its Aftermath, 1876-1884"

¹⁸ Chief Clerk's Certificate, 14 March 1878, Case No. 1876 M 298; High Court of Justice, Chancery Division, Reports and Certificates. The National Archives: Public Record Office, J 57 / 3487 ('Me' to end; Jan – Mar 1878; 18 pages).

¹⁹ Death Registration Certificate, England and Wales –General Register Office, England; County of London; Registration District of Lambeth; Sub-district of Lambeth Church 2nd; 1895; No. 71; True Copy Certificate No. DYA 3999417 issued by the General Register Office, 30 July 2004. This record is indexed as: June Quarter, 1895; Murdock, William; District of Lambeth (County of Greater London (Surrey), England); Volume 1d, Page 198.

²⁰ A negative search was made of the indexes at the Principal Probate Registry, in London, England, in January, 2007. A negative search was also been made, on 2 Sep 2009, of images of pertinent pages of Inland Revenue Death Duty Register Indexes, 1895-1901, inclusive (The National Archives, Public Record Office, IR 26, through www.findmypast.com; accessed through www.fhc.familysearch.org)

²¹ 1901 Census of England and Wales - England; Administrative County of London; Parish of Lambeth; Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Barnabas, Kennington South; Borough of Lambeth, Vauxhall Ward; Parliamentary Borough of Lambeth, Division of Kennington; Registration District of Lambeth, No. 24; Sub-registration District of Kennington, First, No. 4; Enumeration District 26; Folio 101 (back side); Page 40; Schedule No. 270; 23 Paradise Road; Eleanor Murdock; John H. A. Reay, enumerator. The National Archives: Public Record Office / Registrar General 13, Piece 416.

²² Death Registration Certificate, England and Wales – General Register Office, England; Registration District of Lambeth; Sub-district of Lambeth Church 2nd, County of London; 1905; No. 55; Certified Copy Certificate No. DYE 069591 issued by the General Register Office, 13 October 2016. This record is indexed as: March Quarter, 1905; Murdock, Eleanor; District of Lambeth (England); Volume 1d, Page 177.

²³ A negative search was made of the indexes at the Principal Probate Registry, in London, England, in January, 2007.