

BALDWIN

of

Loughborough

and

SHARMAN

of

***Market
Harborough***

APRIL
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A short narrative by
Jonathan Wilshire

BALDWIN of Loughborough
and
SHARMAN of Market Harborough

INTRODUCTION

This account of two Leicestershire families does not pretend to be a full genealogical work. Rather, it is a short narrative compiled from three independent sets of notes with a little of my own research added. The now deceased relatives whose notes I have used were those of my father, H. Owen Wilshire, M.B.E. (1884—1963), my aunt, Miss Marjory V. Wilshire (1881—1970) and her aunt, Mrs. Jessie B. Bolton (née Wilshire) (1869—1959). The last-named was the youngest and longest-living daughter of Thomas and Jane (née Sharman) Wilshire, dying 136 years after her father was born. From this it may be deduced that Thomas Wilshire (1823—1891) was my great-grandfather.

The present paper is an extended version of a duplicated pamphlet which appeared in June 1966 and has been prepared to coincide with the National Federation of Family History Societies' weekend Conference at Loughborough University in April 1986.

February 1986.

JONATHAN WILSHERE.

BALDWIN
of Loughborough

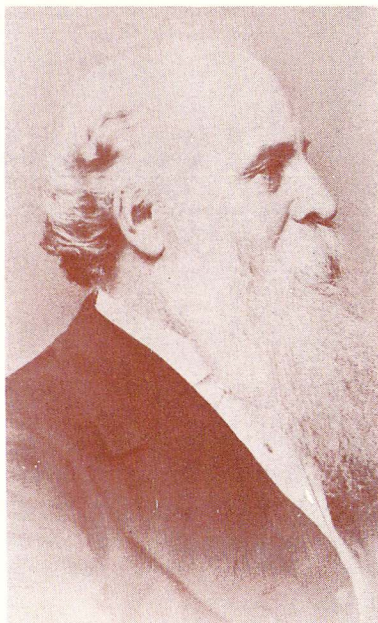
and

SHARMAN
of Market Harborough

Benjamin BALDWIN, the son of George, gentleman, and Frances (née Smith), was born in Nottingham on 19th November 1826, his parents being married at St. Mary's, Nottingham, on 28th March 1824. Benjamin, a widower, married Sarah Susannah SHARMAN at the Independent Chapel ("Top Chapel"), Market Harborough, on 9th August 1854. "Susie" was the youngest daughter of Joseph and Mary (née Scott) and was born on 5th December 1828.

Benjamin Baldwin kept a shop in Market Place, Loughborough, and on an 1890 billhead describes himself as "Watch and Clock Maker Jeweller Silversmith and Optician." He offers "Watch Clock and Jewellery Repairs Promptly and Cheaply Done, Old Articles Replated, Valuations Made, Antique Silver and Curiosities. Orders by Post or Carrier Carefully Executed. Wedding and Birthday Presents. Engraving." He also dealt in quality chinaware and was an agent for several Insurance Companies. A watch by him is in the Newarke Houses Museum collection, Leicester.

Benjamin Baldwin was Secretary of Loughborough Wood Gate Chapel from 1865-78 and was also associated with that chapel's Sunday School from 1841, becoming Superintendent in



BENJAMIN BALDWIN



SUSAN BALDWIN

a few weeks before her death in 1882

1853, a position he held until his death forty years later. He was a member of Loughborough School Board from 1878, being chairman from 1887 until his death on 25th January 1893. He was also a Governor of Burton's Charity and a Trustee of Storer's Charity and played a leading part in Loughborough's daily life. It was said upon his death that "the whole town mourns."

Benjamin and "Susie" had five children, all boys: Benjamin *Sharman*, Ernest, George J., Percy and Leonard L.



SHARMAN BALDWIN

1. *Sharman Baldwin* (B.S.B.) became a bank cashier in Asby-de-la-Zouch, living in Tamworth Road, but in 1892 he was called in, by his cousin Herbert William Wilshire, to assist in the Stock and Insurance Broking business of Thomas Wilshire and Sons of Leicester. The reason for this was two-fold: Herbert's father, Thomas, had died the previous year and Herbert's brother, Sharman Judson, had had his business career cut short by a complete breakdown in health, due to poliomyelitis. Until his death in 1926 Sharman Judson Wilshire had to be maintained at the well-known Holywell Sanatorium, Virginia Water, Surrey.

B.S.B. moved to 20 Alexandra Road, Leicester, and in late 1894 moved again to St. Cuthbert's, 16 Clarendon Park Road, the architect of which was G. Lawton Brown. Later still he was to live in Central Avenue.

In 1901 the name of the firm was changed to Wilshire Sons and Co. B.S.B. became a partner in the firm on 1st January 1904, when the name became Wilshire Baldwin and Co. (a title that has persisted ever since) or "W.B. and Co." for short. The business had been established by Thomas Wilshire in 1867. The need for the change in 1904 was due to Herbert William Wilshire, an incorporated accountant, becoming full-time Secretary of Freeman, Hardy and Willis Ltd. on that date. He relinquished not only his partnership in the family business, but also sold the accounting side to David Mentor Gimson to form the firm Wilshire Gimson and Co. B.S.B. had as his only partner in the Stock and Insurance business, H.W.W.'s eldest son, Herbert *Owen* Wilshire, then in only his 20th year. This partnership was to last until B.S.B.'s retirement at the age of 75 years on 31st December 1931. B.S.B. had struggled on somewhat reluctantly and virtually single-handed during H.O.W.'s absence on war service from 1916-19, the latter pressing for early demobilisation on the grounds "my partner needs me." B.S.B. died only a few months after his retirement.

B.S.B. had married a Scot, Helen Cameron "Nellie" Aitken, and they had three children. Regrettably they had no grandchildren. "Susie," a Domestic Science teacher, never married, living on into her eighties in retirement in Bournemouth, in her last years at the Chesterwood Hotel. "Dave," a clever artist and a keen scouter, was killed in World War I when he saved many lives in 1916 by picking a bomb out while serving with the London Scottish. Vera, a dog-breeder, married but was divorced from Guy Abel. She had no children.

2. *Ernest Baldwin* worked with Henry Hughes of Loughborough on the first steam trams, but later emigrated to Wellington, New Zealand.

3. *George James Baldwin* became a chemist in High Street, Loughborough, and was well-known for his own brand of Lavender Water. His son, George Joseph, was also a chemist, but the business closed in the 1920s. There was also a daughter.

4. *Percy Baldwin* became a solicitor in Bristol. He had no children.

5. *Leonard Baldwin* became Surveyor to Coalville U.D.C. and lived at Nanpantan. He gave fifty seats at Queen's Park, Loughborough, Beacon Hill and other vantage points on Charnwood Forest in memory of his brothers. He had no family.

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Joseph SHARMAN senior, a butcher of Clipston, Northamptonshire, left a will (sub £1,000) which was proved 31st March 1795 (among the Northamptonshire wills at the County Record Office, Delapre Abbey). Reference is made to his son Joseph and four daughters, Esther, Elizabeth, Sarah and Mary. In addition to his own dwelling, garden and orchard, he appears to have owned two other houses and a small close. Joseph junior had been baptised at Clipston on 16th May 1785 and after his father's death became a ward in Chancery. He became quite well off but lost money in a ship that sank. He married Mary SCOTT by banns at the parish church of St. Dionysius, Market Harborough, on 1st April 1818, taking delight in being married on such a day! The details of their children are taken from a copy of the fly-leaf of Joseph Sharman's Family Bible:

Elizabeth, born 16th March 1819.

Ann, 13th January 1821.

Sarah, 20th November 1822, died 7th January 1823.

Jane, 23rd February 1824.

Mary Scott, 27th April 1826.

Joseph, 31st January 1828, died 2nd April 1828.

Sarah Susan, 5th December 1828 (Susannah in Joseph Sharman's will).

Jo. Sharman (as he signed himself on his wedding day) was a wholesale grocer with premises in High Street, Market Harborough, and a small fleet of wagons covering the county. He took Thomas Goodwin Goward (baptised 10th May 1799 at the Independent Chapel, Market Harborough), the son of Thomas Goward and Sarah (née Hurlbut) into partnership, but seemingly after the death of his wife in 1829, Joseph branched out as a Wine and Spirit (and Hop) Merchant. This was some-

what surprising in view of his non-conformist sympathies. The partnership with Goward was not a success and was dissolved with his ex-partner being described in time as a tea dealer, grocer, foreign fruit "Spanish" warehouse, postmaster and agent to the Phoenix Fire Insurance Co. and railway agents to Pickfords. The deed of dissolution had attempted to prevent Goward restarting in the same line, but seems not to have been 100% effective.

Joseph Sharman's 14-folio will was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on 21st September 1846, he having died on 18th June that year aged 61 years. His executors were Thomas Flavell (also in business in Market Harborough as a Wine and Spirit Merchant), Thomas Goodwin Goward, and Samuel Viccars (of the then well-known wool-stapling firm) in Leicester. They were required *inter alia* to continue the business for the benefit of the children until it could be disposed of at a fair price. However, Rowland Goward, who was to marry Mary Sharman, not without a certain amount of family friction, seems quickly to have taken over. Joseph's aunt, Ann Falkner of Clipston, is also mentioned in his will and the Sharman children were among the reversionary legatees of *her* will. (Joseph Sharman senior had married Elizabeth Falkner at Clipston on 10th April 1777). Joseph Sharman junior had left each of his daughters an income and it is known that Jane's was invested in the Liberator Building Society, a highly speculative banking concern, which crashed in the early 1890s.

After their mother's death, the Sharman girls spent much time in Dunstable, Bedfordshire, where they had several cousins and a wealthy great uncle, Joseph Gutteridge, J.P., who had a brother who was a doctor on London Road, Leicester. After their father's death and possibly before the four younger children were involved in running a Ladies' School. In 1847 Ann and Jane are in charge, but after these two married, an 1850 Bedfordshire Directory discloses that Mary and Susan had a Boarding and Day school. Among the Sharmans mentioned in Dunstable at this time are John, grocer, High Street; Joseph, tailor, of Church Street; and James, baker, and Ellen, also of Church Street.

Further known details of Joseph and Mary Sharman's children:

1. *Elizabeth*, as the eldest sister was the confidant of her younger sisters. She married William Humfrey, a hosier, and they lived at 16 Fargate, Sheffield. Their first son was named Joseph. The 1851 Census shows two servants, a shopman, a shopwoman and an apprentice in the household. Edwin Edward died a young man and William, father of Gladys, died leaving his daughter to be brought up by Alice Daws (?), whose husband was a gentleman's outfitter near Park Lane, London.

2. *Anne* married William Henry Hockett, keeping the old house at Harborough. Their children were Walter, an interesting and vivacious Congregational Minister and Missionary in Samoa and Madagascar. Of his three sons, the eldest went to America at the outbreak of the 1914-18 war and became naturalised and the other two were killed in France in 1915 and at Gallipoli in 1916. A daughter married and lived abroad. William and Anne's second son, William, lived in Bournemouth but their daughter, Fanny Sharman, who never married, lived in Torquay as Companion to Mrs.

Rylands, the widow of the famous Manchester industrialist. Both Fanny and Walter were beneficiaries under Mrs. Rylands' £3½ million will. Fanny was left the residence Northwood, Buxton, and all effects therein, £30,000 in cash and £50,000 in Ordinary Shares of Rylands Ltd., plus a share in the residuary estate. Walter received £6,000.

Their next daughter, Lucy, married into the famous de Beer family of Manchester. Two of her sons, including Dr. Sharman de Beer, were both killed at Gallipoli. Their third daughter Marjory's eldest son, became an American citizen.



THOMAS WILSHERE c. 1860



JANE WILSHERE c. 1860

3. *Jane married Thomas Wilshire (1823-91) on 5th January 1848, at the Independent Chapel, Market Harborough. She had met Thomas in Dunstable, where he was training for the Baptist ministry with the Rev. Daniel Gould, Minister of the Ebenezer Chapel there. The students were often invited to the Gutteridge household and in going there they had to pass the Sharmans' school, where the girls watched from a window during their sewing-work. Before his marriage, Thomas, born in 1823 at Melksham, Wiltshire, had already taken up his duties at Athlone, Ireland, where he became interested in relieving hunger and poverty at that time of potato famine. His new bride returned with him and their first two children, Mary Sharman (1849—1926) and Herbert William (1851—1931), were both born at Athlone before the family moved south to Waterford, where Thomas ministered from 1851-61. While at Athlone Thomas had taught the Irish maid to read the Bible, an unheard of thing. Three children were born at Waterford, Sharman Judson (1853—1926) whose second name was after the missionary and Annie Salter (1856—1929) but John Howard died aged only 10 days. This prompted Thomas to decide to return to England. Waterford was a damp place, being on the coast, and he feared for his wife's health. The Baptist cause at Waterford was stagnating in the face of Catholic*

domination, Catholic children even sat on their doorsteps wishing Protestants were dead. Thomas was presented with a cheque and an inscribed pocket watch (wound with a key) which is still in possession of the family. The Wilsheres therefore returned to England, making their way to the Baldwins at Loughborough, where their next child was born, Lucy Jane (1863—1948). The Baldwin and Wilshere boys went to Loughborough Grammar School and seemed good friends. Thomas for a time helped out serving local Baptist churches, but his income was really insufficient to support his large and growing family.

Thomas next moved to Essex, where the family lived at Crown Villas, Plaistow. He became involved with Harper Twelvvetrees Ltd., starch manufacturers, but within a year or two, the firm was in liquidation. At this time, the Wilshere boys appear to have gone by train to school at Gravesend. Thomas had been a pupil schoolmaster at the British School, Little Baddow, Essex, in 1842-43 and presumably had contacts there. Once again, the family returned to Loughborough before moving to the house of the Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society at 43 London Road (later to become the well-known dress shop of Leah Marks Ltd.), demolished in 1972 for a new road, Waterloo Way. He again followed a business career, advertising himself as a Mortgage broker in 1866 and moving to 50 Evington Street. He then became the first local Superintendent in Leicester of the Union Fire and Insurance Co. (now part of the Commercial Union group). In time, other agencies came his way, although the "Scottish Equitable" were concerned at the lack of business he was producing in comparison to the size of his travelling expenses! He also became Secretary of the Oakham Gas works and that family connection remained until nationalisation in 1948. Thomas added a stock-broking side in 1867, most of his clients being non-conformists indulging in speculative Gold Mine and Railway investments! Business premises were taken at 42 (old numbering) Belvoir Street and the family seem to have moved back to 43 London Road where their last child, Jessie Beatrice (1869—1959) was born. She married John Adams Bolton of Chilprufe Ltd. The other Wilshere daughters remained unmarried, acting as governesses and also for a time running a school at Chelmsford, Essex. Thomas was a deacon of the Victoria Road Baptist Church in its earliest days, and from 1870 to 1891 he was Hon. Pastor of Oadby Baptist Church, where he preached his last sermon ("Look up, go forward") only days before his death. Thomas and Jane had moved back to Evington Street (No. 15) but in 1881 made their last move to Knighton Drive (No. 30—now demolished), a house built by a near-neighbour, the architect, Arthur Hardy, who was to become a distant relative with the marriage of Herbert William Wilshere and Maud Sophia Bark in 1880. That house was convenient for the Stoneygate tram terminus and for Oadby, where Thomas walked to for his services twice on Sundays, wearing wellingtons in inclement weather. It is said he worked a six and a half day week. After returning from business at mid-day on Saturdays, he had lunch on a tray upstairs, over which he prepared his Sunday sermons. He set Wednesday evening aside for church visiting. There is a memorial to him in Oadby Baptist Chapel. Jane died at Knighton Drive on 22nd August 1904, aged 80 years.

4. *Mary* married Rowland Goward (died 25th December 1904, aged 79), son of Thomas Goodwin Goward, and they are said to have had five children, Ernest, Sydney, Sharman, Lucy and Ethel. However, there is mention

also of Amy, unless she was a daughter of Ernest. Amy apparently married a Mr. Hutton ("not an abstainer"). It is said Rowland Goward put the following inscription on her memorial stone in Market Harborough Cemetery:

"Amy"

"A flower bright and beautiful

A wife devoted and dutiful

Now in the better land."

Apparently, this Mr. Hutton had a good income which dwindled "due to drink."

Ernest had three children, spending much of his life in India before returning to Heathfield, Sussex.

Sydney became a bank manager, marrying a Miss Bates (of the Dunlop Rubber firm) and he had one daughter.

Sharman entered the family business before 1904, carrying it through to the 1930s. A bachelor, he lived at Ashfield, Market Harborough. He had been born on 3rd June 1856 and became a Captain in the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the Leicestershire Regiment from September 1885, being in command of M (= Market Harborough) Company. He was also instrumental in obtaining a new rifle range on Earl Spencer's land at Theddingworth. He was a member of Market Harborough U.D.C. from 1895.

There is a window in Market Harborough church on the south side of the chancel (behind the re-sited detached organ console) in his memory. This window depicts the Parable of the Good Samaritan: "And when he saw him he had compassion on him"; the traditional ass has been replaced by a "local" hunter. The inscription reads: "This Window was given in memory of Sharman Goward and his brothers and sisters by his brother, Ernest Goward."

Lucy married a Mr. Broadfoot of Glasgow, interested in ship-building and well off. They had one boy (Rowland, killed in World War I) and three daughters. Winifred married a Vicar, the Rev. Farmer, whose first wife had died, the second daughter lived abroad after marrying a Mr. Grey, and Mabs, never married, died before her mother and had lived with Mrs. Latchman in Clarendon Park, Leicester. Lucy lived for many years in a flat at the Burlington Hotel, Eastbourne.

Ethel married Harry Grant of Kibworth Beauchamp, farmer, and a capable wood-carver. He lived at The Laurels and was born at Tur Langton, the son of William, in 1851. He was a J.P., Chairman of Market Harborough R.D.C. and Chairman of the Market Harborough Gas Company for over 20 years. He was a member of Kibworth Parish Council and Burial Board, Manager of Kibworth C. of E. School and was for over 40 years a Kibworth Churchwarden and Guardian. He was also a member of the Market Harborough Board of Guardians. He carved the reredos in Kibworth church in his wife's memory after she had "gone off her head" and died after their only son, Alan (born 1899), was killed in France in 1918. He had been through Sandhurst.