



James and Rosa Pratten c1944

Old Soldier's Golden Wedding

Mr. James Pratten, of 19 Church Street, Bradford on Avon, who served his county in India, the Boer War and finally in the Great War, on Friday of last week celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his wedding, which took place at Holy Trinity Church, only a stone's throw from his doorstep. The wedding was conducted by the Rev. S. G. Collinson and the bride was Miss Rosa Andrews, who like her husband, is a native of Bradford.

A "Wiltshire Times" reporter called on Mr. and Mrs. Pratten on Monday afternoon, which was Mrs. Pratten's 71st birthday, and saw the couple, who both enjoy good health. Mr. Pratten will be 75 in June. He was, in the last century, a member of the Regular Army and with the 2nd Wilts Regiment saw over seven years service in India, being stationed for a long period near the famous Khyber Pass, where the wild tribesmen were far from being on the best terms with soldiers and took a delight in sniping at them at night!

After his service in India Mr. Pratten was placed on the Reserve, but on the outbreak of the Boer War was re-called to the Colours and sent to Africa, where he served under General Clements. He was engaged continuously in the fighting which took place there, and he shewed our representative and interesting old photograph taken of himself, and other Bradfordians who fought against the Boers, sitting on a waggon at celebrations held in the Victory Field, better known to old residents of Bradford as Pound Close, to welcome the soldiers home. The waggon belonged to Lord Roberts, who used it in the campaign in South Africa.

On leaving the Army again Mr. Pratten worked for a time for Mr. Isaac Jones at the quarries in the town, but left later to take up employment at Spencer-Moulton's rubber factory, where he has worked now for about 39 years. When the Great War began Mr. Pratten immediately volunteered for service again, and was stationed with the Wilts Regiment on defence batteries, but after three years received his discharge, being unfit for further service.

Two Sons and Ten Daughters

Mr. and Mrs. Pratten have had two sons and ten daughters. One of the sons, Trooper Sidney Jack Pratten, a cornet player in the band of the Royal Wilts Yeomanry, was unfortunately killed in a motor-cycle accident in Nottingham in 1939. The other son Gnr. William Pratten, who is serving with an anti-aircraft battery "Somewhere in England", is a well-known local sportsman, being a former Secretary of Spencer-Moulton's Football Club. The surviving daughter are:- Mrs. W. Pearce and Mrs. L. K. Elliott, both of Bristol.; Mrs. H. Baker, of Southville Gardens, Bradford; Mrs. P. Neale, of Stroud; Mrs. I. Bush, of Wine Street, Bradford; Mrs. E. Peglar of Falmouth; and Mrs. M. Griffiths, of Brown Street, Trowbridge.

Wiltshire Times, date unknown, 1944

OPC Notes:-

According to the 1871 James Pratten, Jnr., was recorded as living with parents James and Elizabeth at the Crown Inn, Woolley Rank, Bradford-on-Avon. His father was a lime burner born in Bristol and his mother a laundress born in Rode. James is recorded as being the youngest of seven children:- Joseph, 17; Frank, 15; Emma, 13; Frederick, 11; Ellen, 8, John, 5; and James, 1.

By 1881 the family were recorded at Woolley Road, Bradford-on-Avon with James Pratten as head of the family aged 50 and a lime burner, his wife Elizabeth, aged 49 and a laundress. The children now listed are:- Ellen, 19 a laundress born in Rode; John, 17 a lime burner born in Winkfield; James, 11; Hester E., 6; Henry C., 5 all scholars and born in Bradford-on-Avon; Hubert G. aged 2 is now the youngest son and also George Millard is recorded a grandson aged 2.

The 1891 census records the family still at Wooley Street with children Hester, Henry and Hubert living at home. There being no record of James in the 1891 census it is possible he was serving in India with the army at this time.

In 1894 we know that James Pratten married Rosa Andrews at Holy Trinity, Bradford-on-Avon

In 1901 Rosa is listed on the census as aged 27. She is listed as married but her husband James was in South Africa with the army and is not listed as being at home. The couple's children Dorothy Rose, 6; Winnifred May, 4; Lillian Kate, 3; Hilda Blanche, 2 and Florence Pretoria, an infant under 1 year are all recorded as having been born in Bradford-on-Avon.

In 1911 the family are re-united and living at 23 Bridge Street, Bradford-on-Avon. James is recorded as age 41 and a stoker at the rubber mills. His wife Rose is 37. Their children have now increased:- Dorothy Rose, 16 and Winifred May, 15 are recorded as working in the Milk Factory; Lilley Kate, 13; Hilda Blanche, 11, and Florence Pretoria, 10 are listed as scholars. Ivy D., 6; Elsie Beryl, 4; William James, 2 and Olive Mary, infant under 1 year are listed as having been born in Bradford-on-Avon.

Further details of the families may be found in the article above.

If anyone has a connection to this family, the administrator Teresa Lewis would like them to get in touch via the Contact Us Option on the home page - she has this family recorded as part of her extend family tree and would be happy to share information.