

ON HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE

111
WASC
2053
11141

Correspondence on the Knowlers

Handwritten	WASC 116A
used in	WASC 116B
handwritten	WASC 116C
stop from	WASC 116D
Handwritten	WASC 116E

~~JUNE / JULY 17~~

~~FILE E 1 - Essex County~~
~~Vol 7 No 32 - WICHAM 1703~~
~~ANOTHER PROSPECT / 100~~
~~111 / 2 1/2 PRINT OF 111~~
~~STATION.~~

Knowlers - Waltham Abbey and Faresham

~~Mr Pryor 10.5.79~~
~~Dr. Bascombe 10.5.79~~
Mr McLaren 21.5.79.
~~Mr Pryor 24.5.79~~
Mr. Luchan 25.5.79
~~Mr Pryor 4.6.79~~
Mr. Luchan 5.6.79
~~Mrs Eckwith 7.6.79~~
~~MR McLAREN 8.6.79~~
Mr Chapman 8.6.79
Mr Pryor 26.6.79
~~Mrs. Eckwith 27.6.79~~
~~DR BASCOMBE 27.6.79~~
~~Mr. Pryor~~
MR McLAREN 5.7.79
Mr RP Jones 6.7.79
Mr Chapman 7.7.79

Please return to Information Service PERME/WA

Mr Pryor J.P.

Is there not another copy which Mrs Eckworth can use? We did have a negative print (white on black) copy in the Library or WASC.

hwh of 4/6

Mrs. Buchanan

Please see enclosed notes on Knowler/Winters at E3. Also enclosed is a copy of Winters, should you wish to check refs.

E3
E4-7 YA

J.P. 5/6/77

Mrs Eckworth

Pl. type 1 + 2 of letter and a separate sheet, rearranging the details of E3 as indicated (omitting the numbers). Also please let me have a p/c of ~~this~~ the top copy letter and list, together with p/c of E1, E2 and E2A to send to Arthur Percival, See Faversham Soc. under covering letter which also pl. type.
Pl. pa WASC II.

hwh of 7/6

E8
E8A
E9

Mrs Chapman

Pl. identify actions taken and record on ENQ card
Pl. pa file.

18/6

E 10

~~Mr Fryor~~ ^{g.s.}
~~Mrs Eckworth~~ ^{g.s.}
~~Dr Baseonte~~ ^{MNB}

E 10
It is always rewarding to receive such a letter as this. It is obvious that your efforts were much appreciated.

Mhcf 26/6

MR Mc LAREN

5.7.79
S

as requested

JW

~~Mr Jones~~

We spoke briefly about this a little while ago. Would you please ensure that the requirement in my minute to IS of 8 June is carried out - and now up-dated to the present time. The importance of recording all the actions taken in an enquiry cannot be overstressed.

Mhcf 6.7.79

Mr Chapman

Re above.

RP 9/7/79

[Faint, illegible handwritten notes at the bottom of the page]

Mr. McLaren

I can add the following:

- (a) Kelly's Directory for Essex for 1890 includes among (W.A.) Private Residents:
"KNOWLER John Thomas, High Bridge Street". No Knowler commercial
entries. Under RGPF is given "J. Knowler, Master Refiner".
Turning the pages of the county TRADES section I noticed:
"KNOWLER Jnr., Little Bentley, Colchester" among the farmers.
- (b) Kelly's Directory for Essex for 1929 includes among (W.A.) Private Residents
"KNOWLER Arthur and Thomas, 75 High Bridge Street" and
among W.A. Commercial: Knowler Brothers, motor haulage contractors,
High Bridge Street. TN Waltham Cross 276". The farmers of Essex
include Knowler Alfred - Glebe Farm, Little Bentley, Colchester.
The "motor haulage contractors" probably became the Hazlewood Garage.
- (c) Other sources of information which occur to me are:

- 1) The Census returns as you suggest
- 2) The run of Kelly's Directories - there is one for Essex for every 2 or 3 years from c. 1870 to c. 1935. They are not complete - in general people who are neither private residents nor "in trade" etc. are omitted
- 3) The local parish registers
- 4) Rate books, etc.

Of these, 1) is of course at PRO. 2) is on shelf at Essex Record Office, County Hall, Chelmsford. 3) are in the church (at present) with a microfilm at Essex Record Office. Unfortunately there is no transcript or index after 1811. Under 4) there is a great deal of material at Essex Record Office which might give information on places of residence etc for people who were neither private residents nor "in trade". However I am not sure how much of this is yet available to students.

KN Bascombe.
21-5-79.

~~Mr Pryor~~ q.l.

Do you have the details from Winters p.?

Michael 24/5

Mr. McLaren

No. dws. Edworth was engaged on
the search then the book was taken
out for Dr. Newell.

S. J. S. Pryor
25/5

E1

E2 E2A

Note of requirement taken
for action.

J.P. 10/5/79

① ~~Mr Pryor~~

P1. see enclosures and arrange a search through Water's Memorial History of the RGPF 1887 for Knowlers, their names, dates, positions and incident/activity involved in the entry. The most cursory & glances revealed Samuel, Henry and J Knowler and that Samuel was engaged at Faversham in 1787 (p152). Mrs Eckworth is also aware of this requirement.

Mh of 10/5

② ~~Dr Bascombe~~

P1. see actions so far — are you able to help further p1.?

In my next letter I intend tactfully to enquire which sources of genealogical information she has tapped already. It would appear that she has not looked at (or may not even know about) the Census Returns. "Mr Knowler, father of the factory" should appear at least in those for 1871 and 1861 and even as a youngster in those for 1851 and 1841. The chance also exists that Samuel, engaged at Faversham in 1787, may have survived ~~not~~ until 1841.

Mh of 10/5

Mr McLaren
PTO

To

Mr R P Jones

From

M McLane

Date

25. 6. 79

Tel

Your ref

Our ref

ENQ 3158

Subject

KNOWLERS - ENQUIRY BY

MRS ELSON

Would you please pass
the individual folder for
this enquiry to me for
further circulation.



Charles

Will you please ^{enclosed} up to date folder
with various a/c's when the individual
folder returns from circulation.
Rlg 28/6/79

17 Cranborough Court
College Road
Dulwich
London SE21 7HT.

Malcolm Meharan Esq.
Head of Library Services
P.F.A.M.E. (Waltham Abbey)
Powder Mill Lane
Waltham Abbey
Essex EN9 1BP.

21st June 1979.

Dear Mr Meharan,

Thank you for your letter of the 7th inst and your previous letter with enclosures. Please accept my apologies for not writing earlier but I succumbed for the first time in my life to an awful bout of bacterial pneumonia and everything went out of the window - including my head & think!

Firstly may I thank you very much for your help and interest in the Knowles pursuit. I have yet to send, to Arthur Percival in Faversham, the copies re the exchange from or between Chast & Waltham Abbey. They are very pleased there because the Gunpowder Mills are ready for public inspection after a lot of hard work and since he says we had "the town tied up for 30 days" at least we had some ordinary fellows who worked at the Mills. I was thrilled with the sheet going back to (B) and Samuel - I thought we began with the Strand

Magazine entry. I also appreciate the list you have supplied from W. Winters 'Centenary Memorial' and to have more of them lurking on the premises, and for the additional information you have supplied re sources and addresses, I shall certainly follow these up. So far my Registers, census returns etc are in Kent and it will make a change to go to another County to say the least. Your help and comments have been invaluable.

Finally - may I congratulate you on your own workings of Waltham Abbey - when it was EADE and not PARME, I enjoyed reading it very much. Strangely enough whilst in USA on Eastern Seaboard I went through Wilmington, Delaware, and they said their first gunpowder factory came from English knowledge and expertise - in telling me this they were obviously only referring to the fact that at that time I lived in Wilmington, Kent. No one knew then that I would start on this genealogical research, let alone into knowlers in Gunpowder factories!!

Many thanks again for your help and interest which is greatly appreciated by all my family.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Elson

E9

256

Arthur Percival Esq
22 Stone Street
Faversham
Kent

ENQ 3158

7 June 1979

As promised earlier I am sending copies of the
correspondence with Mrs M H Elson concerning her
search for Kent and Essex Knowlers.

M McLAREN
Head of Library Services

ENCS

Mrs M H Elson
17 Gainsborough Court
College Road
Dulwich
London
SE21 7LT

ENQ 3158

7 June 1979

Dear Mrs Elson

After having had some further searches made for Waltham Abbey Knowlers I am now able to provide more details which may be of interest to you.

Several references to Knowlers appear in "Centenary Memorial of the Royal Gunpowder Factory" written in 1887 by a local historian, W Winters, who drew extensively on the Factory records which are now accessible through the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, in their "Supply 5" series of records. I enclose a sheet giving details of Winter's notes.

Known details from the PRO papers are:

Supply 5/695

- 11.9.1875 J Knowler, concerning the use of ink in time books
- 17.1.1876) J Knowler, Master Refiner of Saltpetre
- 26.3.1877)

Supply 5/696

- 1882-1886 J Knowler Master Refiner
- 30.9.1884 Edward Knowler less than 3 years' service (joined Gunpowder Dept 11.6.1883)
- 21.6.1890 J T Knowler - signature on notice concerning late Superintendent's funeral arrangements

Supply 5/712

June 1901 E Knowler - Danger Building Visitor £2.17.6d

In your letter you did not state which other sources of genealogical information you had consulted previously but if you have not done so already a search of the Census Returns for Waltham Abbey for the years 1841, 1851, 1861 and 1871 will give you details of the Knowlers addresses, ages, relations, employment and place of birth. The Census Returns are available for study at the Public Record Office, Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2.

/Other...

Other local sources of information include:

- (i) the parish registers of which the originals are in the Church here but microfilm copies are at the Essex Record Office, County Hall, Chelmsford.
- (ii) Kelly's Directories for Essex which appeared every two or three years from about 1870 to about 1935 - available at the Essex Record Office.
- (iii) Local rate books, etc - also available at the Essex Record Office.

Dr Bascombe of the Waltham Abbey Historical Society has given references from two of Kelly's Directories for Essex:

1890

Private residents:

Knowler, John Thomas - High Bridge Street

Royal Gunpowder Factory:

J Knowler, Master Refiner

Trades:

Knowler, J - Little Bentley, Colchester - Farmer

1929

Private residents:

Knowler, Arthur and Thomas - 75 High Bridge Street

Commercial:

Knowler Brothers, Motor Haulage contractors - High Bridge Street

Farmers:

Knowler, Alfred - Glebe Farm, Little Bentley, Colchester

Of course there is also the General Register Office for births, marriages and deaths from 1837 onwards, now transferred from its old site at Somerset House to St Catherine's House, 10 Kingsway, London, WC2, although the records here are far more easily searched starting with known persons and going back in time than trying to work forwards in time.

I do not think that there is much more that we can offer from here but I hope that we have given you sufficient details to lead you to success elsewhere.

Yours sincerely

M McIAREN
Head of Library Services

W Winter
Centenary Memorial of the Royal Gunpowder Factory
Waltham Abbey, 1887.

References to Knowlers

Samuel Knowler engaged at Faversham in 1787 and Waltham Abbey in 1789.	p	p 152
1787 Henry Knowler listed as employed.		p 152
S Knowler, lab, Faversham 1 Nov 1787 and Waltham Abbey 7 Feb 1789.		p 51
29 July 1793 Hen Knowler - chequered 1 day pay for going across Hoppit contrary to orders.		p 39
7 May 1794 Saml & Hy Knowler - volunteered for Volunteer Company.		p 41
26 Oct 1801 Henry & Sam Knowler - willing to go to Faversham rather than run the risk of discharge.		p 60
3 June 1811 Samuel Knowler - saltpetre refiner, apprentice to Master Refiner; salary £33.16s.		p 94
1813 Sam Knowler - Assistant Master Saltpetre Refiner.		p 75
1814 Sam Knowler - " " " " 6s 4d.		p 80
12 June 1818 Samuel Knowler - completed his apprenticeship, entered as refiner.		p 84
1822 Sam Knowler - in list of persons to form an Establishment		p 89-
1826 Sam Knowler - estimation of pensions, £22 17s 4d.		p 95
14 Oct 1828 Sam Knowler - paid 16s for travelling from Waltham Abbey to Woolwich for the purpose of instruction on a new gun (Epreuvette) 48 miles 4d per mile.		p 99
2 Jan 1846 John Knowler - Master Refiner of Saltpetre.		p 131
31 Dec 1850 John Knowler - be released from apprenticeship and placed on the Establishment.		p 110
1855 S Knowler - Master Saltpetre Refiner; J Knowler - Assistant Master T Knowler - Working Foreman All worked in the Saltpetre Refining Department.		p 112
May 1886 John Knowler - Trustee of the Provident Society.		p 129
1887 Thomas Knowler - Secretary and Librarian.		p 125
1887 J Knowler - mentioned as occupying a small room near refinery.		p 143

ACTION TAKEN ^{10.5.79}
~~Charles~~ b EYA

ENQ 3158

Pl. index enquiry
and pa card
pending further
action.

File papers as an
individual enquiry
for circulation and
pl return to me.

l/s

MAS

10.5.79
5

RE. FILE FOR
CIRCULATION AS REQUESTED.
APOLOGISE FOR THE
DELAY.

8

Supp. S/695

(Knowler ^{E6})

"lv. Knowler" — J. Knowler
dated at 11.9.'75 — memo
concerning use of ink in
vine baskets.

Sig. shown severally to 7.4.1981⁸

(Av 17.1.'76 shown as "Master
Refiner of Sulphate")
and again at 26.3.'77

Supp. 5/696

KNOWLER ES

- ① Loda Hospital Fund Letter
— signature of J. Knowler
dated 14.6.82

Shown as rep. from Prof
Depr., who was circulated the
letter proposing support of the
fund.

- ② J. Knowler's initials shown
between 3.4.82 and 26.5.86,
as Master Refiner, —
notices circulated.

- ③ Edward Knowler listed as
one of a group with less
than 3 yrs. service at 30.9.84
— joined 11.6.83, to Gunpowder
Dept.

- ④ 21.6.1990 — Signature of
J. T. Knowler on notice regarding
ex-Supt's. funeral arrangements.

Danger Edg. Victor E4
No. 47 Knowler, E £2/17/6d
[Edward]

Quarterly Labor Statement
from June 1901

Supply S/712

REFERENCES TO THE KNOWLER'S IN WINTER HISTORY.

1st reference on page 39

- ② 29 July 1793 Hen Knowler - chequered 1 day pay for going across Hoppit contrary to orders.
- ④ 7 May 1794 Saml & Hy Knowler - volunteered for Volunteer Co. p 41
- ② 24 June 1775 - S Knowler - lab, Faversham 1 Nov 1787 and here 7 Feb 1789. p 51
omit ?
- ⑤ 26 Oct 1801 Henry & Sam Knowler - willing to go to Faversham rather than run the risk of discharge. p 60
- ⑦ 1813 Sam Knowler - assistant/saltpetre refiner. p 75
master
- ⑧ 1814 Sam Knowler - " " " " 6s 4d. p 80
- ⑨ 12 June 1818 Samuel Knowler - completed his apprenticeship, entered as refiner. p 84
- ⑩ 1822 Sam Knowler - in list of persons to form an Establishment. p 89-90
- ⑥ 3 June 1811 Samuel Knowler - saltpetre refiner, apprentice to master refiner, salary £33.16s. p 94
- ⑪ 1826 Sam Knowler - estimation of pensions - £22 17s 4d. p 95
- ⑫ 14 Oct 1828 Sam Knowler - paid 16s for travelling from Waltham Abbey to Woolwich for the purpose of instruction on a new gun (Epreuvette) 48 miles 4d per mile.
- ⑮ 31 Dec 1850 John Knowler - be released from apprenticeship and placed on the establishment p 110
- ⑯ 1855 S Knowler - master saltpetre refiner; J Knowler - asst-master
T Knowler - working foremen
All worked in the Saltpetre Refining Department. p 112
- ⑱ 1857 Thomas Knowler - secretary and librarian. p 125
- ⑰ May 1886 John Knowler - Trustee of the Provident Soc. p 129
- ⑬ 2 Jan 1846 John Knowler - master refiner of saltpetre. p 131

Mrs M M Elson
17 Gainsborough Court
College Road
Dulwich
London
SE21 7LT

ENQ 3158

1 May 1979

Dear Mrs Elson

Thank you for your interesting letter of 23 April which was awaiting my return from leave today.

We have a copy of the 1895 Strand Magazine and are familiar with the bowler-hatted figure of Mr Knowler, the ^{father} of the factory, in the Saltpetre refinery, but unfortunately we do not have any immediately available record of his full name or address which would be helpful to you in tracing the family tree.

However, I have made several enquiries locally and I hope that the findings will help you fit some of the pieces of the jigsaw together.

1 A former employee, now aged 83 who was here at the Royal Gunpowder Factory in the early 1920s remembers two Knowlers in the Factory. One was a Danger Buildings Visitor concerned with the safety of the hazardous processes and the other worked in the Cordite Section. He does not remember their Christian names but recalls that the one from the Cordite Section lived in Eastbrook Street, Waltham Abbey.

2 A present employee who was here in the days of the RGPF remembers a Walter Knowler being here for many years and although he has since died Walter would have been at retirement age in the 1940s. Walter Knowler lived in Eastbrook Road [No 39?].

3 Until a few years ago a family of Knowlers owned the Hazlemere Garage in Highbridge Street, Waltham Abbey. The father, Peter, who died two or three years ago, used to own the Green Man Public House with a small engineering business at the back. None of the recent members of this family worked at the Royal Gunpowder Factory.

4 A list of men employed in January 1788 at the Royal Powder Mills, Faversham, to gain experience of gunpowder manufacture before employment at Waltham Abbey includes a Samuel Knowler. A copy of this list taken from Public Record Office Document No Supply 5/113 p 276 is enclosed but as you will see it is not clear whether these were waltham Abbey men who were sent to Faversham to gain experience or Faversham men being sent to Waltham Abbey.

5 The following is the list of the Knowlers in the local telephone directory (1978):

/Knowler, A J

Knowler, A J
16 Cowland Avenue, Enfield
Tel: 01-804 2382

Knowler, C J
Willow Cottage, Galley Hill, Waltham Abbey
Tel: Nazing 3246

Knowler, E R
12 Wyburn Avenue, Barnet
Tel: 01-449 7010

Knowler, J A
84 Cherrydown Avenue, London E4
Tel: 01-524 3046

Knowler, R
15 Briar Close, London N13
Tel: 01-807 5717

Knowler, R J
59 Lordship Road, Cheshunt
Tel: Waltham Cross 25655

I hope that these details will be of use to you. There are still one or two avenues to be explored and if anything comes from these I shall write to you again.

Wishing you success in your venture.

Yours sincerely

M McLAREN
Head of Library Services

ENC

01-693 8417

17 GAINSBOROUGH COURT,
COLLEGE ROAD,
DULWICH,
LONDON SE21 7LT.

Mr Malcolm Buchanan.
Information Division
Explosives Research and Development Establishment
Waltham Abbey
Essex.

April 23rd 1979.

Dear Sir

Mr Arthur Percival of the Faversham Society
has recommended your name (and records!) to trace
one of my ancestors. [Mr Percival MBE is at the helm of his
Heritage Centre, Preston Street Faversham Kent ME13 8NS]

My maiden name was KNOWLER and in the
Strand Magazine, Vol. IX Jan-June 1895 there is an article
on your establishment. In it there is a reference and
photograph of a "Mr Knowler - the father of the factory" on
p 308 bottom photograph. His stance is so like my father's
& Grandfathers - he was employed there at the time of 1895
for 43 years. At Chart near Faversham, you may know
there is a Gunpowder Factory - one of the first. All the
Knowlers from 1293 onwards were Kentish men and
most of them around Faversham.

Is it possible for you to let me know his
full name and address and if he moved from Kent to Essex.

Also, a difficult task to ask of you, whether anyone else from the family followed on & for if you know of any Knowlers that live in Waltham Abbey, from the Daily Telegraph I cut out an obituary notice of a John Knowler (a family name) died in his sleep on 5th March 1979 at Waltham Abbey. The wife's name was given as Mary and the son Paul - they may be descendants but I do not know how to approach the matter tactfully so soon.

Your help would be very much appreciated in helping me to compile the family tree, which is mind boggling at times and fascinating. I enclose a S.A.F. for reply.

Yours faithfully

Margaret H Elson (née Knowler)

Enc.

Royal Powder Mills -
Faversham 4. Janry 1788

A Return of Men Entered for

Waltham Abbey Powder Mills, and who are now employed
at this place to qualify them for the different Branches
of the Manufactory Pursuant to the Major Congreves
Order the 13. Oct. 1787

N^o. 1

- Rob^t. Wherrett
- In^o. Smith
- Cha^s. Globy
- Geo. Hicks
- W^m. Couchman
- Step^r. Sharp
- Tho^s. Doury
- Isaac Turner
- W^m. Mount
- In^o. Turley
- In^o. Ward
- Edw^d. Hart
- Tho^s. Birch
- Tho^s. Holmes
- W^m. Knock
- Sam^l. Knowler

N^o. 16.

N^o. 3.
Men who are desirous
of going from these
Mills to Waltham -
Abbey.

In^o. Terry
Clark Book

W.S.

F.S.

B.B.

Major W^m. Congreve