

A 'Coughman –Webb' Family History and connections to Lindale

George Coughman (1856-1929) was believed to be a Lindale resident from 1891-1929. **Census records** and a birth certificate give the following picture of his life.

George Coughman (great-grandfather of Angela Shrimpton, née Webb, now resident in Crewe) was born and baptised in Blackburn, Lancashire in 1856. His father John Conrad Coughman was German, born in 1820. His mother Ellen Brown was born in Ireland in 1828. They married in Blackburn, Lancashire in 1848. At the age of 5, in 1861, he was recorded as residing in Clitheroe, Lancashire, living with his father, John, who was a musician, mother Ellen, and 5 other children; two older sisters, Ellen aged 12, Mary 8, and with three brothers, William 10, James 2 and Peter 6 months. Between 1861 and 1887 there is no trace of the Coughman family.



George Coughman and Mary Ann Southworthⁱ (photo) married in 1889 in Penrith, but the surname was different as it now showed the spelling as George Coughman. In 1891 he was recorded as a **musician** residing in '**Copper Lane, Upper Allithwaite, Lindale, Lancashire**'. The location of Copper Lane in present day Lindale is not known for certain, although the local name for Smithy Hill was 'Capper'ⁱⁱ. His son, George Henry Coughman is recorded as being born in Whitehaven in 1887. (If this is correct this is 2 years before his father married Mary

Southworth).

Column	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10*
No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
311	Helena Margaret 1896 Lindale Ulverston 14th Dec 1896	Helena Margaret	Girl	George Coughman	Mary Ann Southworth	Travelling Musician	Mark Coughman, Brother, Lindale, Ulverston Upper	14th August 1896	William Stacey Registrar	

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.
Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 29th day of March 1993

His daughter Helena Margaret Coughman (grandmother of Angela Shrimpton), was born in 1896, with the location recorded as Lindale on the birth certificateⁱⁱⁱ, and her father noted as a travelling musician.

In 1901, still residing in Lindale, (address unspecified, but possibly no 5 Tower View^{iv}), he was recorded by the Census as 'Head General Dealer'. By 1911, now resident in **Back Road, Lindale**, he was an 'umbrella repairer at home', aged 54. In 1929 his death, aged 72, was recorded at Ulverston Registrar's Office. This bald story told by Census records leaves many questions unanswered.



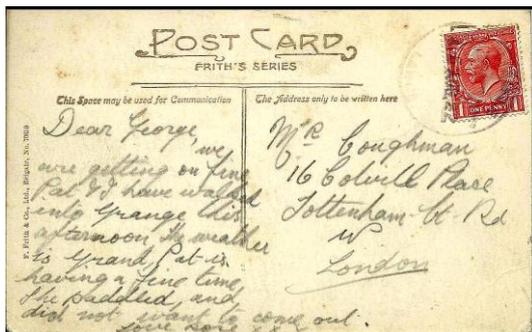
His daughter Helena Margaret Coughman, who was **born in 1896 in Lindale**, met her husband, John



Francis Webb around 1919, at Meathop Sanatorium, where she was working as a nurse^v. J F Webb was a non-combatant with the 1st West Riding Field Ambulance in France and Belgium. From 1914 he had witnessed many awful things as a stretcher bearer. In 1918, while carrying a wounded man with his "oppo," he had been hit in the back by shrapnel. His partner was killed outright and John Webb was left with shrapnel injury that

took 2 years to heal. He spent these two years at Meathop, lying on his stomach, unable to lie on his back. He told his grand-daughter Angela that he had been at 'Wipers' and Paschendale, but nothing more. After the war he moved to Rotherham, and worked in a coal mine. He didn't mention his wartime injuries^{vi} until much later in life.

In Angela Shrimpton's collection of family photos are **two postcards**, both sent in 1922 to Mr Coughman, 16 Colwell Place, Tottenham Ct Rd, London. This refers to the son George Henry Coughman, 35 years old, who had moved to London. He married Rose Emma Martha Murray in April 1919 at Hendon, London, and Pat was their first child. Rose Coughman and their daughter Pat were **on holiday at Grange-over-Sands in 1922**. The



postcards recount a visit to Lindale and Grange. One sepia postcard, of *Grange-over-Sands, Ornamental Grounds*, was franked, sideways over a one penny stamp, in Lindale, 15 Aug 22. It read

*Dear George,
We are getting on fine Pat and I have walked into Grange this afternoon The weather is grand Pat is having a fine time She paddled and did not want to come out
Love Rose xxx*

The other postcard (4117) is a very dark photo of *Ravensbarrow, Lindale in Cartmel*. Written in pencil, it has been annotated three times, probably by different hands, Lindale-in-Cartmel, Cartmell Fell and Hill at Lindale. It reads

*Dear George,
We have got another lovely day, we are at Grange-over-Sands for the day. Pat is enjoying herself she wont go in the water this morning. She does look well. Mother says she is fatter than when she came. Had a letter from Mother this morning. They are enjoying themselves. She sent another ten shillings for ...
Love Rose xx*



The reference to mother would mean George's mother Mary Ann Coughman. These offer a delightful glimpse of life in Lindale when **Lindale Post Office franked letters**, there were several postal collections and people wrote and sent several postcards a day.

It is interesting to reflect on the **places** where George Coughman was recorded as living and working throughout his life. Current perceptions are that people moved around less in the past, but this is not so in this case. He was born in Blackburn, then moved as a young child to Clitheroe with his family. He was married in Penrith, though why he moved there, or how he met his wife, Mary Ann Southworth, is not known, though her name does suggest she might have been local to Penrith. Two years later he was living in Lindale, and may have died there, his death being recorded in Ulverston.

A second issue relates to his **occupations** and employment types. Again current thinking is that changing careers is a modern phenomenon. A common view of the past is that people had only one career which lasted all their lives. This is not the case for George Coughman. When he married, he was a musician, as was his father. Times may have become harder, as five years later, as a travelling musician, he was perhaps having to look further afield for work. Five years later again, a sudden switch records him as 'Head General Dealer'. Ten years later, as 'umbrella repairer at home', in Lindale, suggests a further decline in job opportunities.

A whole series of questions are thrown up by the research behind this family history^{vii}. Many will never be answered, which is one reason why the topic is so fascinating.

Sylvia Woodhead, October 2014

ⁱ Photo in a doorway, Lindale, date & address unknown. Mary Ann Coughman, nee Southworth

ⁱⁱ Joan Garnett, 15 Nov 14

ⁱⁱⁱ Copy of birth certificate of Helena Margaret Coughman

^{iv} Photo, from 1950s, labelled Great Grandmother Coughman's 1930s house, Lindale

^v Photos of nursing staff at Meathop Sanatorium, Helena Margaret Coughman second from right on back row. Also as nurse on the right in front row, with future husband John Webb, to the right, looking sideways at her

^{vi} Angela Shrimpton, as told to Sylvia Woodhead 3 September 2014

^{vii} There are no mentions of George Coughman in any local directories or Grange Red Books held in Grange library (SW)