

INTRODUCING THE PODMORES of GRANGE OVER SANDS



Let me introduce you to the Podmore family, whose names are so familiar to us from the memorial plaques along the north wall of St Paul's. We see these names every time we are in church and I am now delighted to be able to show you the faces of these people who once worshipped regularly in our church many years ago.

The above photograph was taken circa 1896 at Charney Hall Preparatory School for Boys. George Podmore is standing on the left, he and Matilda (known as Mattie), seated centre, married in 1882 in St James', London and immediately came to Grange in order to start the school which was situated in the Eden Mount area of Grange-over-Sands.

Their first son, George Conrad (known as Conrad) was born in Grange in 1883. He is not pictured in this photograph as he had moved on to Charterhouse School. Their second son Eric, is standing in the back row in front of the drainpipe. Eric died aged 11 years in 1898 and his memorial plaque is situated by the meeting room door. Their third son, Hubert, known as Bertie, was born in 1887 and is pictured seated beside his mother. As you know, Bertie lost his life in 1917 when he was killed, along with six of his men, by a mortar explosion in Flanders. His parents took up the offer from the British Government to have Bertie's battlefield cross sent home when the War Graves Commission were erecting permanent headstones for the fallen. They gave the cross to St Paul's where today it hangs on the wall near his brother Eric's memorial plaque.

In 1889 Mattie gave birth to their first girl, Enid, who is pictured standing next to her mother. The following year Mattie gave birth to another son, Edgar, who also died young and their last child, Freda, was born in 1895.



This photograph was taken at Rugby School, when Bertie was working as an assistant master at his alma mater from 1910 until the outbreak of war. Mattie and George are seated centre with Conrad standing behind Mattie and next to the much taller Bertie. Enid is standing behind her father and Freda is seated front.

Both George and Conrad were Churchwardens at St Paul's, George from 1885-91, 1892-93 and 1902 and Conrad from 1921-24. George was a very keen amateur meteorologist and regularly wrote weather reports for the church magazine.

Mattie Podmore died in 1928 and George died in 1933. Their plaques are positioned in the centre of the north wall. Conrad returned to Grange after the Great War and taught at Charney Hall School. He married and had three children; one son was killed in WWII.

Enid Podmore married Sir William Palin Elderton and in 1921 gave birth to a son, named Hubert in honour of his late uncle. Charney Hall School closed in 1973.

I was recently given the opportunity to look through one of the Podmore family photograph albums. It was obvious that they were an exceptionally close and loving family. They all seemed to be very sporty and athletic, with Mattie enjoying golf and tennis, and they all made good use of the school's sports facilities. They also had a much loved family dog, who appeared somewhat spoilt as he was rather large to be a lap dog!

Frances Limbrey
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