

[Skip to main content](#)

University links

University links

For staff

- [For Staff](#)
- [Services A-Z](#)
- [Student Education Service](#)

For students

- [Minerva](#)
- [Mobile app](#)
- [For Students](#)

Faculties

- [Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures](#)
- [Faculty of Biological Sciences](#)
- [Faculty of Business](#)
- [Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences](#)
- [Faculty of Environment](#)
- [Faculty of Medicine and Health](#)
- [Faculty of Social Sciences](#)
- [Lifelong Learning Centre](#)
- [Language Centre](#)

Other

- [Staff A-Z](#)
- [Campus map](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Alumni](#)
- [Contacts](#)
- [Library](#)
- [IT](#)
- [VideoLeeds](#)
- [Leeds University Union](#)

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- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Medium](#)
- [Weibo](#)
- [The Conversation](#)
- [RSS news feed](#)

Close quicklinks

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Search Destination

[Living With Dying](#)

- [Home](#)

- [Home](#)
- [Blog](#)
- [Family Historians](#)
 - [Family Historians](#)
 - [Workshop: Family history and academic history.](#)
- [Leeds General Cemetery.](#)
- ['Remembrance' Exhibition](#)
 - ['Remembrance' Exhibition](#)
 - [Events Programme](#)
- [The Grief Series](#)

1. [Home](#)
2. [Blog](#)
3. My Grandad's Lost Regalia

My Grandad's Lost Regalia

Category

[Family Historians](#)
[Research](#)

Date

Tuesday 26 September 2017



A guest blog from Eric Songhurst

Who was this fine imposing looking business man? Is this where my willingness to serve on committees in various roles comes from?

I was away at college in 1960 when my paternal grandparents' house was cleared following the death of my Grandfather. At some stage I became aware of a presentation mirror hanging at my parent's home. There was also an inscribed plaque which had come off the mirror. These had been presented to my grandmother's father who had been in a Masonic Lodge. I was told that it was to go to my brother at some stage as he had 'the regalia'. I was never aware of what 'the regalia' consisted of.



My brother's died in 1985, his eldest son taking over the property and following my mother's death in 2007 I offered the mirror to him so that all could be kept together. He asked that I should keep the mirror. There is now no family contact with my brother's son and what happened to 'the regalia' is anyone's guess.

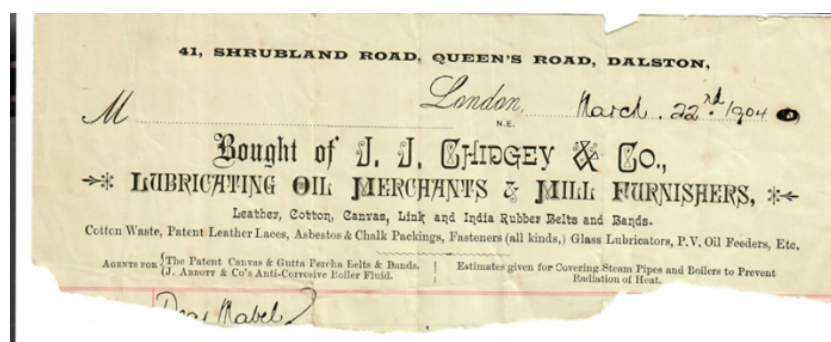


What we do have is the mirror and the plaque which says 'Presented to JJ Chidgey P.A. G.G. G.C.E. by the Bros. of the Auld Lang Syne Lodge 445 A.O.D for valuable services rendered, June 7 1894'. We believe that the Lodge was linked in to the Ancient Order of Druids.

We also have family photographs. One of John Joseph (JJ) Chidgey, A.C.D Grand Arch 1895-6 which he had signed and sent out.



Another photograph shows JJ with, presumably, his wife Elizabeth Mary Ann Slater and my grandmother as a baby in a rather fine pram.



I discovered a torn off heading for a bill of sale detailing his business. This was dated March 22 1904. He died in November 1904. An internet search found nothing and Google maps show a newer development on that street. The existing top end of the street shows property of an age which would be commensurate with the date of the firm.

THE SOUTH LONDON PRESS, Saturday, December 8, 1894.

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| <p>VELL.</p> <p>well, Peckham.</p> <p>Lordship-lane sinent member of donial Institute, s on the British further cement- ween the mother Mr. M. J. ing took place in Scientific and</p> <p>G. P. Wyatt, the George and ng the death of as, the son of an 30, Marlborough- und dead on its Friday morning. Old Kent-road, is accidental as- fect was returned</p> | <p>ANCIENT ORDER OF DRUIDS.</p> <p>The first open smoking concert of the Selborne Lodge (No. 488, Host Bro. Vogt) was held at the Selborne Arms, Denmark Hill, on Monday evening. The chair was taken by the Grand Master of the order, Bro. Wade, who was ably supported by his vice-chairman, Bro. Chidgey. Amongst those present were Bros. Gay, Ward, Stancombe, Straggsell, Timbrell, Hutchinson, Ayres, Nash, and many of the officials of the order in South London and their friends. The following brothers and gentlemen contributed to the harmony of the evening: Bro. Turner, Mr. A. White, Mr. H. Huntley, Mr. Comerford (encored), Bro. Simmonds (who took the honours of the evening with his comic songs), Bro. Straggsell, Bro. Timbrell, Bro. Nash, Mr. Catterall (encored), Mr. Harris, Bro. Chidgey, Bro. Screenwood, Mr. Farrington (violin solo), Mr. Newton (organ imitations on the violin), and others. Bro. Freeman was an efficient accompanist.</p> <p>LAMBETH.</p> <p>Norwood, Brixton, North Lambeth,</p> | <p>KENNINGTON SUNDAY SCHOOL.</p> <p>A very successful concert took place at the above schoolroom on Monday evening, under the direction of Mrs. A. E. Livingstone-Cox. The object was to help to defray the cost of the school repairs. Miss Marie Vagnolini kindly gave her services, and although she was suffering from a severe cold, had a very enthusiastic reception. A large proportion of those who entertained the audience are, or have been, pupils of Mrs. Livingstone-Cox, and the crowded state of the room testified to the popularity of that lady in the neighbourhood of Kennington. There were pianoforte solos by Miss Nicholls, Miss Hillier, Miss D. Grimsdale, Miss F. Tagg, and Mr. Knapman; duets by the Misses Lewis, Miss V. Carlisle and Miss A. Boorne; songs by Miss Marie Vagnolini, Mrs. Wickling, Miss Denning, Miss Golding, Miss Yates, Miss Baird, Dr. White, Mr. Vagnolini, Mr. Simmonds, and Mr. Divine; a violin solo by Miss Bacon; a cornet solo by Mr. Young; mandoline and banjo duets by Miss and Mr. Kempton; and recitations by Mr. J. C. Smith and Miss Fothergill. The accompanist was Miss Kay. The concert was under the patronage of Mr. T. Salisbury Price.</p> | <p>CLAB</p> <p>BA</p> <p>There we public meet consulting 2 examination</p> <p>C</p> <p>A number themselves t two concert The club is proposed by Clapham co committee Arthur Fay Turner, wh "Jim" Pri Clarks and</p> <p>TH</p> <p>Miss Rose A. Matthey ful concert: The concert Bowyer Sch Rev. C. H</p> |
|--|--|---|---|

Searching on [Find My Past](#) my wife, by chance, came across a newspaper item mentioning JJ at a lodge event - presumably the lodge to which he was attached.

Although born in London we have found JJ on the 1861 Census as a seven year old living with his parents in Liverpool. We found his now widowed mother, brother and sister back in London on the 1871 census. We cannot find him on the 1881 census but did find him on both the 1891 and 1901.

Trying to find out more about him I found a masonic lodge contact and emailed but got no reply. I have found a website giving details of masonic abbreviations but that has not helped so I have emailed a contact there to ask for help and am awaiting a reply - but not holding my breath!

We have JJ's marriage certificate and have found the wedding of his father, John Richard, in 1853, JJ was born in 1854.

There is a possibility that we have found JJ's Grandfather and Great Grandfather in that venues and dates fit in but this is where we need to start trying to prove some of the possibilities and being a Yorkshireman born and bred with short arms and deep pockets I feel that this is where I need advice before I start splashing the cash!

Footer navigation

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