This is A Few Forgotten Women Story



This story was written, in November 2024, as one of a series resulting from the 'A Few Forgotten Women Friday' collaborative research project, investigating the lives of women who were found residing or working in various homes for Fallen Women in the census returns.

Alice Reeves' Story

It's the evening of the 5th April 1891 and 16-year-old Alice was alone¹. In the last 10 years, she'd lost her parents, her home and now had been separated from her remaining siblings. Alice Sarah Ann Reeves was born in Lichfield Road, Chasetown on the 1^{st of} June 1874 to Joseph and Fanny Reeves². Alice was the fifth of the couple's seven children, but the first of the siblings to be registered with the surname Reeves. Over the space of two years, her entire family switched from using the surname Haynes to the surname Reeves, with her father also changing his first name. This change in surname of the Haynes-Reeves family and the events of the 1880s are key to explaining what Alice was doing in the Staffordshire County Industrial Home for Discharged Female Ex-Prisoners and Friendless Women in 1891¹.

Before Alice

Thomas Haynes was the son of William Haynes and Alice Whitbread, who married in Hanslope on 6th September 1832³. Thomas was baptized at St James the Great church on 9th August 1835⁴. Thomas' father, William, was a labourer, and the family resided at Church End⁴. In 1841, Thomas was residing with his parents and two younger sisters in in Badby Road, Daventry, with his father working as a gardener⁵. By the 1851 census, the Haynes family had returned to Hanslope, living on the high street⁶. His father remained a gardener, whilst his mother and both sisters now worked as lacemakers and Thomas remained in school⁶.



Figure 1 – The village of Hanslope. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland, <u>https://maps.nls.uk/</u>, Buckinghamshire IV (inset I), Surveyed: 1881, Published 1885

Hanslope was the centre of Buckinghamshire's lace making trade⁷, so it's of little surprise that Thomas' mother and sisters became involved. In 1862, 500 women and children in the parish were employed manufacturing pillow lace⁸, with children's training starting from the age of five, so they may be independent makers by 12 years of age⁷. It is interesting that Thomas did not take up lacemaking, as boys were also trained in the craft, with Thomas instead following his father's path into gardening.

Fanny Anna/Hannah Gardiner/Gardner was the daughter of Henry Gardiner and Eliza Brinkler and baptised privately on 1st August 1841⁹, in Silverstone, Northamptonshire. Her mother died in January 1843¹⁰, and her father then remarried Eleanor King in 1850¹¹. Henry and Eleanor had a child, John Louis Gardiner, who was baptised on the 16th March 1851 in Silverstone¹². In the 1851 census, Fanny was now living with her uncle and aunt, Thomas and Sarah Shoulder, in Bradwell¹³.

In 1860, Thomas Haynes married Fanny Hannah Gardner in Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire¹⁴. In 1861, the couple were living at Whites Lodge, Wootton, where Thomas had commenced working as a gardener¹⁵. In 1862, Thomas and Fanny moved to the neighbouring village of Collingtree where their first son, Henry William Haynes was born. Henry was baptised on the 21st June 1862¹⁶. He was followed by a second son, Walter Thomas Haynes, baptised on 27th May 1864¹⁷. A third child, Agnes Fanny Haynes was then baptised in St Edmund Church, Hardingstone, Northampton on February 4th 1866, with the family residing at this point in Stockley Street¹⁸.

In 1863, a newspaper article details that Thomas was working as gardener to Pickering Phipps, Esq¹⁹, who would go on to be MP for Northampton and South Northamptonshire between 1874-1880, but in the 1861 and 1871 censuses was living in Collingtree²⁰. Presumably, the Haynes family moved to Collingtree from Wootton when Thomas was employed by Pickering Phipps in 1862.

The 1863 newspaper article¹⁹ details an incident that Thomas was involved in. On an evening in early February 1863, Thomas was walking home to Collingtree when he was robbed by a group of 3 men. The men held him down, stealing eleven sovereigns and cutting off his shoes so he couldn't pursue them. Whilst cutting the shoes off, his feet were cut. The three men were identified by Thomas as Richard Frewin, James Carroll and Thomas Smith. The three were tried at the Assizes in Northampton on the 25th February 1863, but were all found not guilty²¹. The defence argued that the robbery was "fictitious, and invented" by Thomas to "account for his inability to pay certain debts he owed"²². The year of 1862 was a wet and cold year across England producing a "terrible" harvest²³. Perhaps Thomas' work as a gardener suffered and he struggled to make ends meet for the family.

In 1865, Thomas again appears in the local newspapers. This time, rather than victim of a crime, he was brought before Northampton Borough Petty Sessions for being drunk and incapable after going to "buy some vegetables" and getting "a little too much to drink"²⁴. It was reported this was Thomas' first offence, and as such he was fined 5s, roughly equivalent to 1-day's wages²⁵. The article also reports that the family were now living in Far Cotton.

Between the birth of Agnes is early 1866 and early 1869, the Haynes family moved from Northampton to Huntingdonshire. In March of 1869, Thomas was brought before Cambridge Petty Sessions for stealing five plum trees from Mr James Howard²⁶. Thomas claimed that he had bought the trees from a man who had since died²⁶. The bench decided Thomas was guilty and sentenced him to 6 weeks imprisonment with hard labour²⁶. Thomas would have been released from prison in mid-late April of 1869. However, by the end of June, he was again in trouble again for obtaining fruit trees by false pretences²⁷. He was convicted and sentenced at the Quarter Sessions at Huntingdon on the 28th of June 1869 to 6 calendar months imprisonment with hard labour²⁸. Six months was a long time for Fanny to have to care for 3 children under the age of 10 without an income, it's likely that she received financial assistance from the poor law union, but no records have been found to support this theory.

Unfortunately, this still wasn't the end of Thomas' brushes with the law. In May 1870, he was brought before Caxton Petty Sessions for stealing eggs²⁹. Thankfully for Thomas, and the rest of the young Haynes family, the prosecutor did not want to press for a conviction, so Thomas just had to pay for the costs²⁹. In 1871, the Haynes family are recorded in the census residing at Church Causeway in Elsworth, with Thomas continuing to work as a gardener³⁰. In early 1872, the fourth child, Albert Richard Haynes was born and registered in St Ives³¹. This is the last record of the family going by the surname 'Haynes', or of residing in Huntingdonshire.

Alice's Childhood

The next time we come across the Haynes/Reeves family, is at the birth of Alice in Lichfield Road, Chasetown on the 1^{st of} June 1874². At this point the entire family commence using the Reeves surname and Thomas changed his name to Joseph. I haven't found any suggestion as to why such an event occurred. Given Thomas' history of petty crime, it's likely the relocation and name change happened in response to a crime for which he wasn't caught, so the family fled, or a new start was wanted.

Alice's birth was followed by a sister, Mary Ellen Reeves, born on the 15^{th of} September 1876³². Alice and Mary were both baptised at St Anne's Church, Chasetown on the 24^{th of} December 1876³³. Whilst living in Chasetown, Joseph was working as a miner Then in 1878, the final child of Thomas/Joseph and Fanny was born, Elizabeth Anne Reeves on 14th April 1878³⁴, followed by a baptism at Christ Church, Lichfield on 23rd June 1878³⁵.

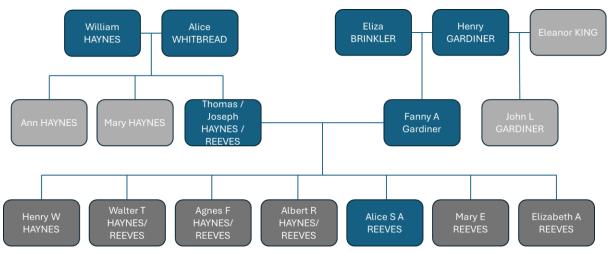


Figure 2 - The Haynes-Reeves Family Tree

In 1881, the family were living at Rose Cottage, Walsall Road in Lichfield³⁶. Joseph was now employed as a gardener again and Walter had obtained employment as a draper's errand boy³⁶. The eldest son, Henry, as well as the eldest daughter, Agnes, were no longer living with the family. Agnes was living on Walsall Road, but with Ann and Elizabeth Perks who she was a domestic servant for³⁷.

The 1880s

Also residing with the Reeves family in 1881, was a 61-year-old boarder, by the name of William West³⁶. William died on the 16th July 1881³⁸, and his death resulted in a coroner's inquest³⁹. During the inquest Fanny told the court that he had lodged with the family in Walsall Road for 2 years and that her husband and William has enjoyed fishing together³⁹. Joseph told the court that William has been a sergeant and that early on the morning of the 16th of July he had found William drowned at Sandfields Lock on the Lichfield Canal³⁹. William had served with the Grenadier Guards for 21 years prior to his discharge in 1861⁴⁰.

At the time of William's death, Alice would have been 7 years old, so likely would have remembered the change in having William boarding in the house; particularly as he lived with them for over 2 years. During the inquest, it was discussed that Joseph and William had been friends for a couple of years prior to him coming to board with the family, so finding his friend drowned likely had a major impact on Thomas/Joseph.

Unfortunately, the early 1880s continued to bring tragedy to the Reeves family. On 1st August 1882 at Pipe Hill, Lichfield; Alice's mother, Fanny, died aged 43-years-old⁴¹. She had been suffering with phthisis, or tuberculosis, for a year⁴¹.

Alice's father returns to crime

By 1883, Alice's father had returned to crime. I've found no evidence that Joseph Reeves had engaged in any criminal activities after changing his name and moving to Lichfield. However, 1883 brought evidence of three criminal acts.

In February of 1883, the Reeves family were still in Staffordshire, but by April, they had returned to Buckinghamshire. On the 12th of February 1883, Joseph stole a set of harness from Ann Maria Eglinton in Ogley Hay⁴³. He was apprehended in at the Plough Inn, Stony Stratford on the 2nd of April (on a different charge⁴²) and returned to Staffordshire by train for trial. On 25th April 1883, he was tried and sentenced at the Staffordshire Assizes for larceny^{43,44}. Joseph was sentenced to 3 calendar months imprisonment ⁴⁵ with hard labour at H.M. Prison at Stafford⁴³.

When Joseph was sentenced, this left his four young children with no carer. They were admitted into Newport Pagnell Poor Law Union and housed at the Newport Pagnell Workhouse between April and September of 1883. At the Newport Pagnell Petty Sessions on Wednesday 5th September 1883, the Relieving Officer "applied for the removal of the four children of Thomas Haynes, alias Joseph Reeves"⁴⁶. The four children would have been Albert (then aged 11), Alice (aged 9), Mary (aged 6) and Elizabeth (aged 5), and the application for removal was granted, meaning they were all removed from Newport Pagnell to Lichfield⁴⁶.

At the end of Thomas/Joseph's imprisonment for stealing the Harness in Lichfield, he was arrested and returned to Stony Stratford Petty Sessions for trial for the offence he was originally arrested for. He pleaded guilty to stealing an ornamental vase from a grave in Castlethorpe Churchyard⁴². The vase had been placed, filled with flowers, on the grave of the Vicar of Hanslope's wife⁴². He was sentenced to three months hard labour.

When Thomas was apprehended at Stony Stratford on 2nd April 1883, he was also found to have a large quantity of seeds on his person⁴⁷. In January of 1884, he was arrested and charged with obtaining flower and broccoli seeds, a basket and some peas and apples with intent to defraud on the 31st March 1883⁴⁷. The chairman of the court highlighted Thomas' history of petty convictions stating he was "good for nothing – a dangerous person to be let loose on society, and not only dangerous but clever"⁴⁷. As a result of this conviction, he was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment with hard labour^{47,48}. Thomas would have been released from prison in January of 1885.

The removal and separation of the siblings

The removal of the Reeves siblings to Lichfield occurred due to the family only having been in Buckinghamshire for 6 months; therefore, they were removed to the parish where they had settlement. The four arrived back in Lichfield Workhouse on October 3rd, 1883, "having been deserted by their father"⁴⁹. However, by the time of the 1891 census, only two of the four siblings (13-year-old Mary and 12-year-old Elizabeth) were still at this workhouse⁵⁰.

Albert was 19 years old in the 1891 Census, and was living with the Moore family at Ogley Hay⁵¹. Albert was apprenticed to William Moore, a tailor⁵¹. Meanwhile, Alice was an inmate in the Staffordshire County Industrial Home for Discharged Female Ex-Prisoners and Friendless Women¹.

The reasons for Alice being separated from her younger siblings and sent to the Industrial Home are reported on in the local newspapers. In June of 1888, Alice and 3 other girls, absconded from the Lichfield Workhouse and made it as far as Handsacre (~6 miles north of Lichfield)⁵². It was reported that the girls had wanted to find places in service, however, they were reprimanded for their escape⁵².

In 1889, Alice had got her wish. She was taken out of the Lichfield workhouse and trained as a servant, first placed in Carnforth and then in the employment of Mrs Charlotte Elizabeth Welchman⁴⁸. From her first placement, Alice stole several books; and then an additional 2s from Mrs Welchman⁵³. Alice was brought to trial by Mrs Welchman in the hope she could be sent to a reformatory, however, on finding out she would be sent to the gaol Mrs Welchman changed her mind⁵³. Instead, Alice was discharged to the charge of Mrs Welchman, and that she would find her new employment elsewhere⁴⁸. I haven't been able to find out what happened to Alice after this discharge. By 1891, she was an inmate at Staffordshire County Industrial Home for Discharged Female Ex-Prisoners and Friendless Women¹, but I don't know whether Mrs Welchman was able to find her another position prior to this. Women at the County refuge were expected to stay for two years, training in domestic skills, before moving onto employment in domestic service⁵⁴; therefore, it is possible given Alice was there in 1891, that she moved from Mrs Welchman's charge to the home.

Alice's life as an adult

Alice was difficult to locate in the 1901 census. There are no marriage registrations for an Alice Reeves between 1891 and 1901 that fit, and only two Alice Reeves born ~1874 in Staffordshire in the census. However, both these Alices are married. If I assume Alice's birthplace had been incorrectly reported in the census and that she was still in Staffordshire; there is only one census return that could be Alice. This census return states that 25-year-old Alice Reeves was a Barmaid at the Public House at 24 Park Street, Walsall, working for Mr William Plant⁵⁵. There are two discrepancies with what I know of Alice and this return. First, she is listed as 25-years-old, when Alice would actually have been 27 at the time of the census. However, it's worth noting that all three young women servants are listed as 25-years-old; so perhaps this age discrepancy is because of assumptions of William⁵⁵. Secondly, Alice's place of birth is given as "West Indies, Bermuda". I have no further information to confirm or deny that this Alice is our Alice Reeves; but it is possible if an incorrect age and birth location had been given.

From tracing out where some of Alice's siblings were in 1901; I have confirmed that she was not with them. In 1901;

- Walter Thomas Reeves, aged 35, a baker, living with his wife and 7 children at 13 Grove Street, Abercarn⁵⁶
- Albert Richard Reeves, aged 29, a hardware salesman, living with his wife and mother-in-law in Brownhills High Street, Walsall Wood⁵⁷
- Elizabeth Reeves, aged 22, living with her husband at 15 Popham Street, Islington⁵⁸

I have not been able to locate Henry William Haynes, Agnes Thomas Reeves or Mary Ellen Reeves in 1901, so it's possible she was with one of them.

Alice's family

In late 1907, Alice married Herbert Jarvis in Stafford⁵⁹. Herbert was born on the 8th April 1877 at 15 Fowler Street, Macclesfield to William and Sarah Jarvis⁶⁰. He was then baptised at Macclesfield Primitive Methodist Church on 2nd May 1877⁶¹. Herbert spent his childhood living with his parents, half-sister, and six siblings in Kirkdale^{62,63,64}. In both 1891 and 1901, Herbert's occupation was listed as a Railway Porter^{63,64}; marking the start of a life-long career working with the railway.

In 1911, Herbert and Alice were living at 10 Arvon Street, Orrell, Bootle, Liverpool⁶⁵. Herbert was now a Railway Goods Guard, and the couple are joined by their 2-year-old son, George⁶⁵. George Herbert Jarvis was born on the 3rd April 1909 in Orrell⁶⁶. Arvon Street was part of the now-demolished Klondyke Estate in Bootle, Liverpool. The estate was mainly comprised of terraced "two-up, two-down" houses⁶⁷. The family remained living at 10 Arvon Street for the 1921 census but are now joined by an adopted daughter, Irene Mawby Jarvis, and Herbert's brother⁶⁸. This census return confirms that Herbert was working as a Railway Guard for Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, whilst his brother, Walter, worked as a capstanman for the railway⁶⁸.

On the 27th January 1914, Maud Mary Mawby, a 17-year old tin factory hand living at 8 Mona Street, Bootle was admitted into Walton Workhouse⁶⁹. It was noted on the cause of her admission that she was "pregnant also mental"⁶⁹. On the 4th June 1914, Georgina Mawby was born to Maud at the workhouse, with the cause of Georgina's admission being "illegitimate"⁷⁰. On the 19th August 1914, both Maud and Georgina were discharged from the workhouse^{69,70}. In Maud's discharge entry, it notes the address of a friend was Alice Georgeson, who was actually Maud's mother, who was living with her husband, Alfred, and Maud's two step-brothers at 8 Mona Street⁷¹. By 1921, Alice and Alfred Georgeson are still living in Mona Street⁷², but Maud was not with them. Maud was instead working as a housemaid at the Fazakerley Isolation Hospital and was noted as having any children⁷³. So, what does Georgina Mawby have to do with Alice and Herbert Jarvis?

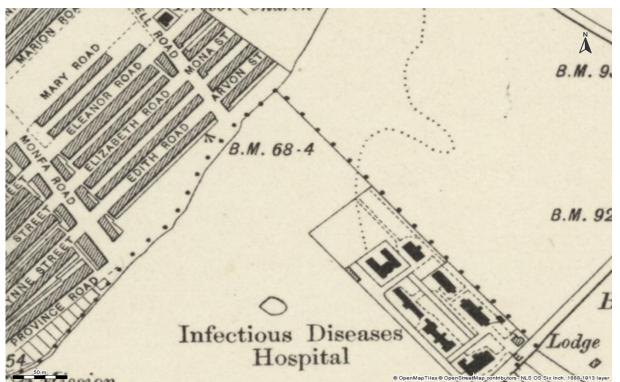


Figure 3 – Klondyke Estate showing Mona Street, Arvon Street and the Fazakerley Isolation Hospital. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland, <u>https://maps.nls.uk/</u>, NLS OS 6 inch, surveyed 1888-1913.

Georgina Mawby was adopted by Alice and Herbert Jarvis and they changed her name to Irene. The Jarvis family were living in Arvon Street⁶⁸, whilst the Georgeson family lived in Mona Street^{71,72}. These two streets are parallel to each other. In addition, Alfred Georgeson, like Herbert Jarvis⁶⁸ worked as a Railway Guard for Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway⁷². The two families likely knew each other. Perhaps the Jarvis' adopted Georgina/Irene as they wished for another child, or perhaps they wanted to help the very young Maud pursue work without a child to care for?

In 1939, Herbert and Alice were living at 29 Moss Lane, Bootle, West Lancashire⁷⁴. Herbert was continuing to work as a railway yard foreman⁷⁴. Their son, George, was living at 7 Upper Hope Place, Liverpool, and worked as a pipe fitter and welder⁷⁵. In April 1939, Irene married Robert Edward Mayman in Bootle⁷⁶, and the couple went on to have four children. By September, Irene and Robert had moved to 10 Belle View Road, Barnet, where Robert worked as a grocer's assistant⁷⁷ and Irene worked as a nurse⁷⁸

Alice died on 17th December 1953, aged 79 years at her home, 35 Gladstone Road, Seaforth⁷⁹. The first time I came across Alice in the 1891 Census, she was alone in the County Home for Friendless Women, but the end of her life found her survived by her husband Herbert, son George and adopted daughter Irene and her family.

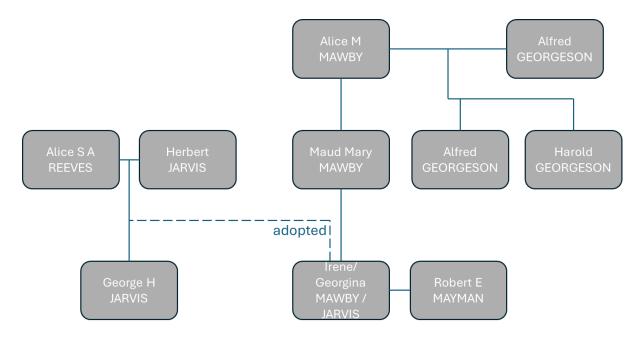


Figure 4 - The Jarvis-Mawby-Georgeson Family tree

Written and researched by Sophie Alexander January 2025

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⁵⁷ 1901 England and Wales census, Brownhills High Street, Walsall Wood, RG13, Piece 2707, Folio 120, Page 39, head of household: Albert R Reeves, Ancestry.com

⁵⁸ 1901 England and Wales census, 15 Popham Street, Islington, RG13, Piece 191, Folio 48, Page 46, head of household: George Warr, Ancestry.com

⁵⁹ Marriage of Alice Reeves and Herbert Jarvis, 1907, Christ Church, Stafford, Staffordshire County Council; Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire, England; Indexes of Births, Marriages and Deaths for the County of Staffordshire; Reference Number: Ce15/03/460

⁶⁰ Civil Registration Birth Index for Herbert Jarvis, 1877, Apr-Jun, Macclesfield, Vol 8A, pg 136

⁶¹ Macclesfield Primitive Methodist Circuit Baptism register of Herbert Jarvis, 2nd May 1877, Cheshire, Cheshire West and Chester Council; Cheshire, England; Cheshire Non-Conformist Records; Reference: EMC 1/20

⁶² 1881 England and Wales census, 22 Ninth Street, Kirkdale, RG11, Piece 3679, Folio 104, Page 36, head of household: William Jarvis, Ancestry

⁶³ 1891 England and Wales census, 25 Seven Street, Kirkdale, RG12, Piece 2962, Folio 80, Page 15, head of household: William Jarvis, Ancestry

⁶⁴ 1901 England and Wales census, 50 Garrett Avenue, Kirkdale, RG13, Piece 3468, Folio 52, Page 45, head of household: Sarah Jarvis, Ancestry.com

⁶⁵ 1911 England and Wales census, 10 Arvon Street, Bootle, RG14, Piece 22334, head of household: Herbert Jarvis, Ancestry.com

⁶⁶ Civil Birth Registration Index for George Herbert Jarvis, 1908, Oct-Dec, West Derby, Vol 8B, page 250

⁶⁷ 'Lost Estate where doors were always open disappeared without a trace' in the *Liverpool Echo*, 13th September 2024, Katie Westwood, available online: https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/lost-estate-doors-were-always-

29914392?int_source=amp_continue_reading&int_medium=amp&int_campaign=continue_reading_button#a mp-readmore-target, accessed 11th January 2025

⁶⁸ 1921 England and Wales census, 10 Arvon Street, Bootle, RG15, Piece 17646, Schedule 158, head of household: Herbert Jarvis, FindMyPast

⁶⁹ Maud Mary Mawby, Walton Workhouse, Liverpool, 1914, Ref: 353 WES/13/2, Index To Admission, Discharge and Religious Creed Register, Liverpool Workhouse Registers, Liverpool Record Office, FindMyPast

⁷⁰ Georgina Mawby, Walton Workhouse, Liverpool, 1914, Ref: 353 WES/13/2, Index To Admission, Discharge and Religious Creed Register, Liverpool Workhouse Registers, Liverpool Record Office, FindMyPast

⁷¹ 1911 England and Wales census, 8 Mona Street, Bootle, RG14, Piece 22334, head of household: Alfred Georgeson, Ancestry.com

⁷² 1921 England and Wales census, 8 Mona Street, Bootle, RG15, Schedule 188, head of household: Alfred Georgeson, Ancestry.com

⁷³ 1921 England and Wales census, Isolation Hospital, Fazakerley, RG15, Page 9, Ancestry.com

⁷⁴ 1939 Register, 29 Moss Lane, Bootle, schedule 87, Enumeration District Nzvn, Head of Household: Herbert Jarvis, Ancestry.com

⁷⁵ 1939 Register, 7 Upper Hope Place, Liverpool, schedule 180, Enumeration District Nhdw, Ancestry.com

⁷⁶ Civil Registration Marriage Index for Irene Jarvis, Apr-Jun 1939, Bootle, Vol 8b, pg 628

⁷⁷ 1939 Register, 10 Belle View, Barnet, schedule 39, Enumeration District Bhak, Head of Household: Robert E Mayman, Ancestry.com

⁷⁸ 1939 Register, 10 Belle View, Barnet, schedule 39, Enumeration District Bhak, Head of Household: Irene Mayman, Findmypast

⁷⁹ Death Registration of Alice Sarah Ann Jarvis, 17th December 1953, Seaforth, Crossby, General Register Office, Vol 10C, page 93