



Brighton and Beyond

A History of the Cowley Family

George Percival Jones - A Coincidental Cowley Reconnection?

George Percival Jones was born in 1919 at 38 Kensington Place in Brighton, the home of his grandmother, Louisa Searle, who became the widow of Ernest Walter Souch when he died in 1907. Also living in the house was Louisa's second husband, as well as George's mother, May Louise - the eldest child of Ernest and Louisa - and his father, George Meredith Jones of Newhaven.

Tragically, May Louise died from tuberculosis around three weeks after the birth of George, aged just 26. Five years later, his grandmother, Louisa, also passed away. Despite his father still being present, George was adopted by Thomas and Katie Lovegrove of Denton, near Newhaven. They were related to Ralph Reader, of the Scouts and Gang Show fame, and George grew up in his old childhood cottage.

In 1947 George married Betty Mary Richardson, who was the adopted daughter of Eva Eliza and Albert Richardson, a master baker who owned a bakery on Railway Road in Newhaven. This bakery was latterly sold to Vernon Cowley, who is also mentioned on this website. It is unknown if George knew that he, himself, was a descendant of the Cowley family; his great, grandmother, Louisa Cowley (Ernest Walter Souch's mother) died around 20 years before he was born.

George's adoptive parents owned the Denton Pig Farm Estate, which he worked on and eventually inherited. But, sadly, the livestock was struck by swine fever twice, which saw the demise of the farm in the 1960s. George remained living in Denton until the death of Betty in 1988, himself passing away in Eastbourne in 1994, aged 74.

It is interesting George became a farmer, given his Cowley ancestors' farming heritage. It is also interesting his wife's family's bakery was sold to a member of the Cowley family. This may have been a coincidence he never was aware of, as following the death of his grandmother, Louisa, in 1924 and his subsequent adoption, it is not known if George remained in touch with any Cowley and/or Souch family members.

Steve Jones

February 2016