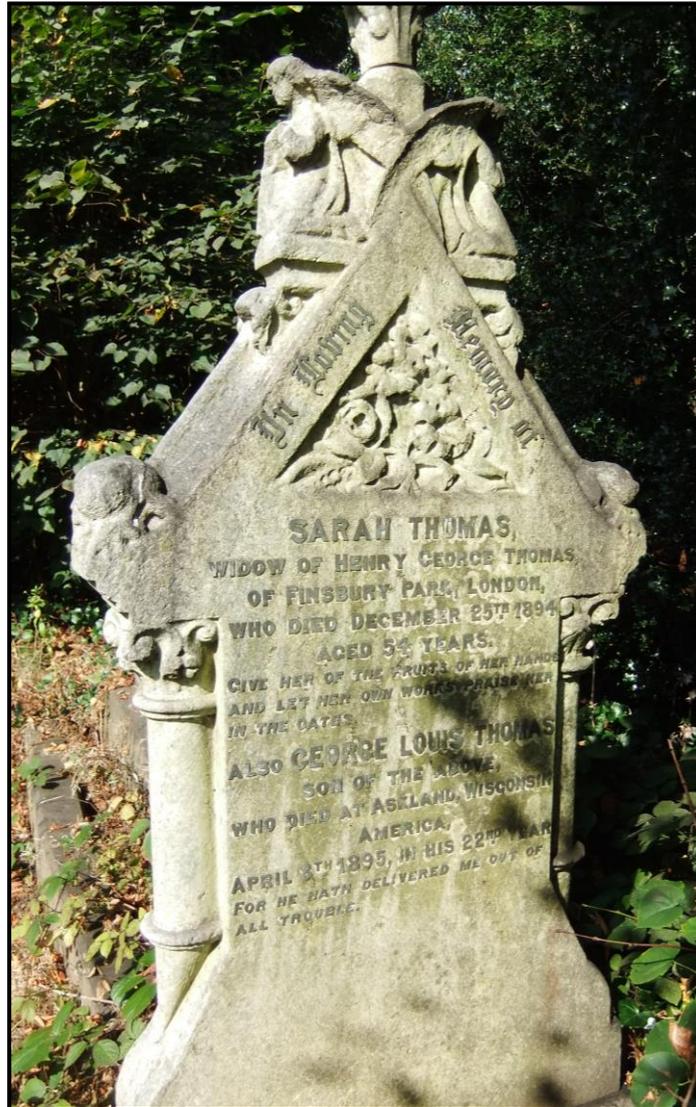


Sarah THOMAS



Born: 29 May 1840

Died: 25 December 1894

*née SARAH EDGE
wife of a Stone Mason*

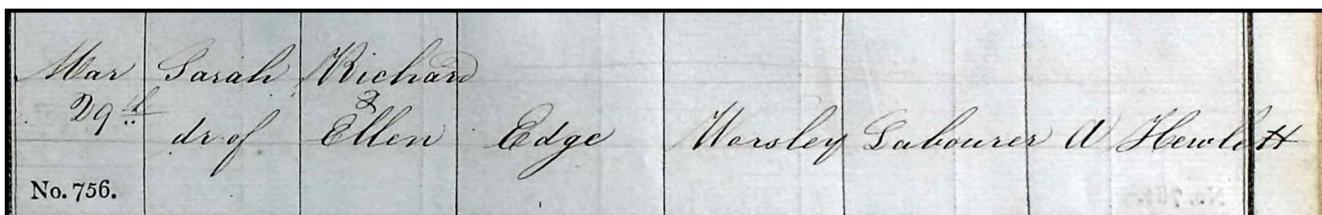
SARAH THOMAS



The headstone for **Sarah Thomas** contains a few points of interest. Firstly, it is an elegantly carved stone, with a striking top piece. Worsley Secondly, it was erected mainly to her memory, with seemingly no other family members buried there. And lastly, the inscription to her son, George Louis Thomas, who died in Askland (?), Wisconsin, America, on 8 April **1895**, in his 22nd year. The inscription beneath her name reads: "Give her of the fruits of her hands and let her own works praise her in the gates". The inscription beneath the name of her son George reads: "For he hath delivered me out of all trouble".

We learn that **Sarah** was the widow of Henry George Thomas, of Finsbury Park, London. **Sarah** died on Christmas Day **1894**, aged 54 years. But who was she? What was her maiden name? Did she originate for some reason from London herself? Who and what was her husband? How come she was in London? And yet she was buried here? The surname Thomas posed several challenges. There was not a great deal of information to go on. So, research had to begin at the end, with George Louis Thomas, and work backwards.

From information found in reverse, we can conclude that Sarah was born **Sarah Edge**. Her parents were Richard Edge and Ellen Smith, and they were married at St. Mary, Eccles, on 22 September **1833**. She was baptised on 29 March **1840** at St. Stephen, Astley. Her father was a Labourer



The first national record showing **Sarah** with her parents is the census of **1841**. Their address was given simply as Boothstown, and within the household were Richard (12, an Ag. Lab.), Ellen (also 25), Betty (4), and **Sarah** (1).

Ten years later, the family had grown and we find:

1851 census: Boothstown

Richard Edge	Head	M	38	Butcher	b. Worsley
Ellen	Wife	M	38		
Betty	Daur		14		

Sarah	Daur	11	Scholar
William	Son	8	Scholar
Mary	Daur	6	Scholar
Henry	Son	3	
Ann	Daur	1	

Richard was by now a Butcher and the discrepancy in age is because in the 1841 census, for anyone over 15 or 20 their age was rounded downwards to the nearest five. So his likely year of birth would have been 1813. All children were recorded as being born in Worsley. William, Mary, Henry and Ann was all baptised at St. Mary, Ellenbrook,. Betty and **Sarah** were both baptised at St. Stephen, Astley.

As the next ten years passed, Richard may well have moved to become a farmer of 6 acres, though it seems he continued working as a Butcher, a trade followed by his son, William.

1861 census: Wackers Lane, Worsley.

Richard Edge	Head	M	48	Butcher and Farmer of 6 acres
Ellen			48	
Betsey			24	Cotton Weaver
Sarah			21	Cotton Weaver
William			18	Butcher
Mary			15	Servant
Henry			13	Scholar
Ann			11	Scholar
Peter			9	Scholar

Peter was baptised at St, Mary, Ellenbrook. The two older girls, Betsey and **Sarah**, unsurprisingly were Cotton Weavers. And it is at this point that things started to become interesting. Richard had died just before the census of **1871** and was buried at St. Mark's. Ellen was head of the household, living at 23 Boothstown Lane, at Booth Villa. She continued her husband's work as a Butcher and of the family were living with her - Henry, Peter and Ann, all of whom were also Butchers. BUT Sarah was not there!

Burial: 28 March **1871**. St Mark, Worsley.

Richard Edge

Age: 58 yrs

Abode: Boothstown

Buried by: S. Vincent Beechey Vicar. (Plot C181).

Just to complete this side of the family's story, in **1881**, Ellen (68) was living at Rose Bank, Chaddock Road, Worsley, with Peter (29) married, his wife Annie (25 - born Anglesey), and on that day a niece Annie (2). Peter was still a Butcher but Ellen had retired. Ellen eventually died in **1888**.

Burial: 22 October **1888**. St Mark, Worsley.

Ellen Edge -

Age: 76 yrs.

Abode: Boothstown. (Plot C181).

The inscription on the Edge family headstone reads:

In affectionate memory of **RICHARD EDGE**, of Boothstown, who died March 24th **1871** aged 58 yrs. Also of **ELLEN** wife of the above who died October 18th **1888** aged 76 yrs. Also of **ANN** daughter of RICHARD & ELLEN EDGE who died February 20th **1876** aged 26 yrs. Also **HENRY** son of the above and beloved husband of SARAH EDGE who died July 10th **1917** aged 69 yrs. Also SARAH beloved wife of the above who died July 1st 192- aged 67 yrs. (C181)

So **Sarah** was not at the family home in Worsley in either 1871 or 1881. We know from the stone that she had been married to Henry George Thomas, of Finsbury Park, London. Details from the marriage certificate and from the 1871 census confirm that this was accurate. For they married at St. Luke, West Holloway, Islington, on 3 February **1864**, barely three years after the 1861 census. How she came to be there is a mystery. Her residence was given as 1 St. James Road and her father's name (Richard) and occupation (Farmer and Cattle Dealer) were both correct. Interestingly, **Henry George Thomas** was a Statuary Mason, like his father.

1864 Marriage solemnized at <i>St. Luke, West Holloway</i> in the <i>Porch</i> of <i>Islington</i> in the County of <i>Middlesex</i>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
59	<i>February 3rd</i>	<i>Henry George Thomas</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>Bachelor</i>	<i>Statuary Mason</i>	<i>125 St. James Road</i>	<i>George Thomas</i>	<i>Statuary Mason</i>
		<i>Sarah Edge</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>Spinster</i>	—	<i>1 St. James Road</i>	<i>Richard Edge</i>	<i>Farmer & Cattle Dealer</i>
Married in the <i>Church of St. Luke</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by _____ or after <i>Banns</i> by me,								
This Marriage was solemnized between us, <i>Henry George Thomas & his wife Sarah Edge</i>			in the Presence of us, <i>Charles Ford</i>		<i>William Gibbs Barton</i>			

[St. Lukes, West Holloway, Islington 3 February 1864. **Henry George Thomas** and **Sarah Edge**]

His father, George, was born in Churchill (or Churchend), Somerset, in c1805. He married Mary Ann Tabraham (of Tooting, Surrey) on 15 May 1826 at Old St. Pancras, London. They had 2 daughters and 3 sons, of whom **Henry George** was the eldest, born 1 July **1833**.

No. 1903.	Name		Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
<i>July 28th</i>	<i>Henry</i>	<i>George</i>			<i>Palmer</i>	<i>Mason</i>	<i>T. U. Fallow</i>
<i>Born 1 July 1833.</i>	<i>George</i>	<i>Thomas</i>			<i>Street</i>		
<i>No. 1961.</i>	<i>Son of</i>	<i>Mary</i>					

[Baptism of Henry George Thomas, St. Mary, Islington, 28 July 1833]

The other 4 children, Mary Ann (15 February 1827), Sarah (27 January 1830), William (1836) and George (1838) were all baptised at St. Mary, Islington. In each case, the father George was a Stone Mason, of Mason, or Statuary Mason.

In the **1851** census, we found the family at 12 Rutland Terrace, Islington.

George Thomas	Head	M	46	Master Stone Mason, employing 1 man
Mary	Wife	M	42	Laundress
Mary	Daur	Un	24	Laundress
Henry	Son	Un	17	Stone Mason
Willam	Son		15	Scholar
George	Son		13	Scholar
William	F-in-law		72	Coachman
+1 servant				

Moving forward another ten years, in the next census we found:

1861 census: 125 St.James Road, Islington

George Thomas	Head	M	55	Stone Mason
Mary Ann	Wife	M	52	
Henry Geo.	Son	U	28	Stone Mason
William	Son	U	26	Stone Mason
William Bowman Tabraham			87	Supported by relatives

[Just as an observation - it is interesting how ages can and do change over the course of the censuses!!]

So, having been married in 1864, we find **Henry George Thomas** and **Sarah** (Edge) with their young family living in Islington at the time of the **1871** census.

1871 census: 2 Hides Terrace, Islington

Henry Thomas	Head	M	35	Stone Mason	b. Islington
Sarah	Wife	M	39		b. Lancs
Henry	Son		6	Scholar	b. Islington
Percy	Son		4	Scholar	
Mary	Daur		2		
Charles	Son		1		

After seven years of married life, they had 4 children - Henry Edge was born 3 February 1865; Percy Brownwell was born 17 December 1866; Mary Ellen was born 4 September 1868; and Charles Richard was born 18 March 1870. All children were baptised at St. Mary, Islington. And **Henry George** was either a Sculptor or (Statuary) Mason.

When we look at the census for **1881**, we do not find Henry George. What we do see is that Sarah was the Head, a Widow.

1881 census: 45 Plimsoll Road, Highbury, Islington

Sarah Thomas	Head	W	41	Income from home property	b. Boothstown
Henry E.	Son		16	Railway Clerk	
Charles R.	Son		11	Scholar	
Sidney Herbert	Son		9	Scholar	
George L.	Son		7	Scholar	
Arthur	Son		4	Scholar	

Two distinct events clearly had occurred within the previous ten years. Firstly, three more children had been born. Sidney Herbert was born on 27 February 1872; **George Louis** was born on 15 September 1873; and Arthur was born on 30 May 1876. And secondly, **Henry George Thomas** had died. It is thanks to the *Index of Wills and Administrations* that we know the date of his death. He had died on 31 March 1880 at 27 Plimsoll Road, Finsbury Park, aged 47. To date, no trace had been found of where he was buried.

WILL:

***THOMAS** Henry (otherwise **Henry George**) 30 April. Administration (with the will of the Personal Estate of Henry, otherwise Henry George, Thomas late of 27 Plimsoll Road, Finsbury Park, in the county of Middlesex, who died 31 March 1880 at 27 Plimsoll Road, was granted at the Principal Registry to **Sarah Thomas** of 27 Plimsoll Road, widow, the*

relict, the Residuary Legatee for Life, if she remains a widow. Personal estate under £1,500.

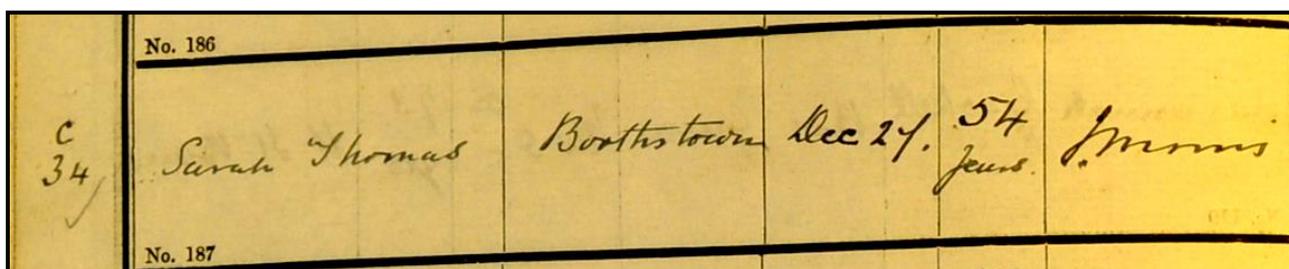
By the time of the 1891 census, Sarah was on her own, with just 2 sons.

1891 census: 45 Plimsoll Road, Highbury, Islington

Sarah Thomas	Head	W	51	
George L.	Son		17	Apprentice to gasfitter
Arthur	Son		14	Post office boy

On Christmas Day **1894**, **Sarah Thomas** died. Did she die in London? If so, how come she was buried at St. Mark's?

There lies another mystery. She was buried in plot C34. The church grave record states that the owner of the plot was '*Exors. of the late Sarah Thomas, of Greyhound Inn, Boothstown.*' Does this mean the Executors were of the Greyhound Inn, or does it refer to Sarah? Who then might the executors have been, since all her children had been born in London? Or if it was indeed Sarah of the Greyhound Inn, how and why did she manage to return to Worsley?



The burial record shows that she was buried just two days after her death; that this all happened over the festive period; and her 'abode' was Boothstown. So clearly, she must have relocated at some point in time.

Fortunately, she did leave a will and the index clearly states:

WILL:

THOMAS Sarah of the "Greyhound" Inn, Boothstown, Worsley, Lancashire, widow, died 25 December 1894. Probate LONDON 15 January to Henry Edge Thomas, Railway Clerk. Effects £741 1s. 8d.

But this does not answer how it was that she came back to her hometown. Surely not to manage an Inn?

The headstone is a fine piece of carving. It would have been fitting if one of the family had continued the work of a statuary mason, but there is no evidence of that. There has to be a reason for Sarah coming back north, and for the Greyhound Inn being linked with her. Work continues on that!.

[The stone stated that her son, George Louis, died at *Askland*, Wisconsin, America. That should have read *Ashland*. It is the county seat of Ashland County. The city (popn. 9,956 in 1900) is a port on Lake Superior. - Ed.]

