

Rev. Joseph Bede Cater



Arms of the Society of Apothecaries



Arms of Trinity College, Toronto



Symbol of the Geological Society



Arms of New College, Oxford



Curate - St. Mark's, Worsley: 1875 - 1879

Priest, Musician, Geologist, Author and Surgeon



Rev. Joseph Cater:
(1875-1879)

As is always the case when tracing the lives of clergy, a very good starting point is *Crockford's Clerical Directory*, the definitive guide to the clergy and churches of the Anglican Church. The first issue appeared in 1858 by John Crockford, a London printer and publisher whose father, also named John, had been a Somerset schoolmaster.

In relation to this curate, the edition of **1885** states:

CATER (formerly SAMUEL), Joseph, *St. Luke's Rectory*, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Manchester.- Ch. of Engl. Hall, Man. **d** 1872, **p** 1873 by Abp. of York. R. of St. Luke, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Dio. Man. 1879. (**¶**, Mrs. T. S. Bazley; Net 300l and Ho; Pop.6423.) Formerly C. in charge of H. Trin., Wicker, Sheffield, 1872-74; C. in charge of St. Luke, Chorlton-on-Medlock, 1874-1875; C. of Worsley 1875-1879.

A brief glance at this entry shows that there was nothing unusual or exceptional in his career path at this point - in fact, it shows his early years to be a succession of parishes in the north of England, with a reasonable number of years spent in each. However, when the *Crockford's* of **1898** is consulted, it tells us:

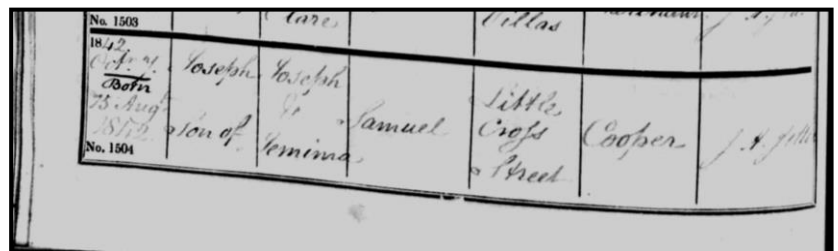
CATER (formerly SAMUEL), Joseph, *Kings College Hospital, W.C.* - C. E. Hall, Man; Trin. Coll. Tor; Mus. Bac. 1887. **d** 1872 **p** 1873 York; **f** C. of H. Trin. Wicker, Sheffield, 1872-74; St. Luke C-o-M 1874-75; R. 1879-86; C. of Worsley 1875-79; R. of Bisley 1886-95.

This seems to repeat some aspects of the earlier entry. But, on closer consideration, certain questions start to be asked: why is there a change of surname from Samuel to Cater? what is the significance of both? what is the reference to Tor. Mus. Bac.? and why is his current address given as Kings College Hospital, W.C.?

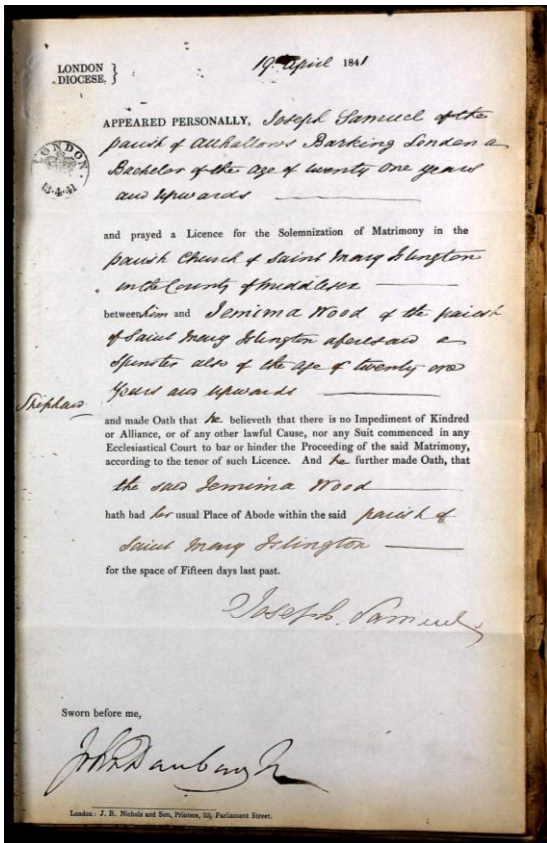
And yet, at the time of his death in **1926**, we can state that: He had changed his name; He had changed his wife; He had changed his occupation; He had changed denomination. And that he had been ... a Prisoner, a Priest, Bankrupt, a Divorcé, a Doctor and a Musician. So how did all this unfold?

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Joseph Cater was born on 15 August **1842**, to Joseph and Jemima (née Wood) **Samuel**, and baptised on 7 October 1842 at St. Mary, Islington. His father was a Cooper, and they lived on Little Cross Street, Islington. His parents had been



married on 7 October 1841 at St. Mary's, Islington, the marriage witnessed by James & Catherine Wood, Jemima's siblings. Their Marriage Bonds and Allegations had been drawn up on 19 April 1841, and shows that his father was a parishioner of Allhallows, Barking, East London. Joseph was the first born of ten children, with younger brothers John Samuel and Richard Wood-Samuel also becoming clergymen later in life. All were born between 1841 and 1860. The census of **1841** shows father Joseph living in the Allhallows district of Barking, aged 25, though this could be any age between 25 and 29, since ages at that time were rounded down to the nearest 5.



The **1851** census gives us clearer and more informed information about the young family. Joseph is now accurately aged 38 and Jemima 36. They were living at 1 Ruffords Row, Upper Street, in Islington, and Joseph was now a Timber Merchant. They already had 6 children - Joseph 8, Mary Ann 6, James Wood 5, John 3, Henry Horne 2, and Jemima 4 months. There was also a domestic servant living with them - Elizabeth Cobbett, aged 23.

Moving on ten years, to **1861**, and we find Joseph, now 44, and Jemima, 42, [notice the age discrepancy with 1851] living at 9 Park Place East, Islington. Joseph's occupation is once more a Cooper. Joseph is now 18, Mary Anne 16, James 15, John 13, Henry H. 12, Jemima 10, Elizabeth 9, Catherine 4, Richard 1, and a domestic servant Hannah Leroy, 40, born France but a British Subject. The tenth child, Lydia, who was born in 1854, died less than a year later. Joseph senior died within a year of this census, in **1862**.

The Post Office Directory for **1856** shows that Joseph had two addresses - Ruffords Row and 1 Church Passage, Islington. He was given as a Timber Merchant. To complete the family story, Jemima died in Sussex in early 1895. The lives of the other two sons who became clergymen were of great interest in themselves.

JOSEPH'S EARLY DAYS

According to that most recent census, young Joseph was a Stationer's Clerk. On 7 June of **1862**, he married Martha Ann Williams at St. Philip's, Clerkenwell. His profession was Stationer and he lived at 6 Lloyd Square. His father was a Timber Merchant, and although he died within that year, the term *deceased* does not appear below his name. Martha's father was William Williams, of 10 William Street, [yes, that is correct!], an Undertaker. Their first child, a son, Joseph Charles James Samuel, was born on 10 July 1863 and baptised at St. Philip's on 8 August. The father was named as a labourer, with the surname **Samuel!!!** and they were living at 3 Park Terrace, Highbury. Six other children were born in quick succession - Martha Caroline Samuel (1864), Lena Martha Cater (1865), Jemima Wood Samuel (1865-1866), Maud Mary Samuel (1867), Lydia Wood Cater (1868) and Rowland Wood Cater (1869). Note the appearance of the surname Cater.

| No. | When Married | Name and Surname | Age | Condition | Rank or Profession | Residence at the time of Marriage | Father's Name and Residence | Rank or Profession of Father |
|-----|----------------------|---------------------|-----|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 415 | June 7 th | Joseph Samuel | 21 | Bachelor | Stationer | 10 Lloyd Square | Joseph Samuel | Timber Merchant |
| | | Martha Ann Williams | 21 | Spinster | | William Street | William Williams | Undertaker |

Marrried in the Church of St. Philip's according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by us James by us J. H. Michal

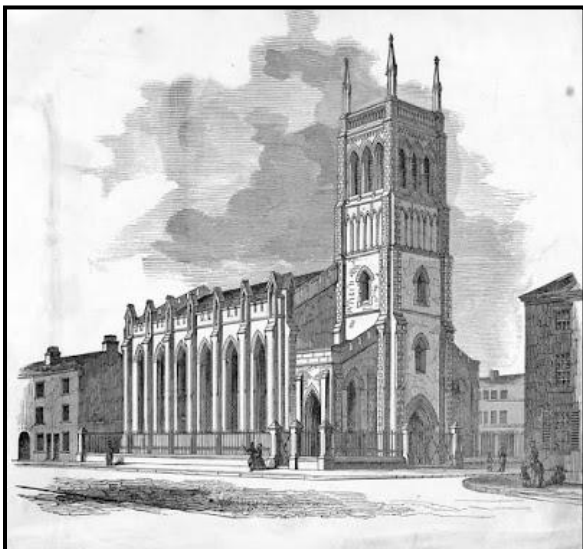
This Marriage was solemnized between us Joseph in the presence of us William Williams
Martha Ann Williams John Hill

By the time of the **1871** census, we find that he was using the surname Cater and that he was no longer a Stationer. He had become an Independent Minister in March, Cambs., and the family was living at Whittle End, March. Also at the home was Fanny May, 16, a Domestic. At a hearing in the Divorce Division of the High Court of Justice in Manchester in November 1882, evidence was given that *'the husband got into trouble and changed his name from Samuel to Cater. They have been living under that name since'*. In **1863**, he had appeared before a minor court to deny forgery, claiming that he did not obtain a cheque for £60 belonging to somebody else. Later, at the Epiphany Quarter Sessions held at Winchester, on 30 December **1867**, he was sentenced to 4 months for embezzlement as Joseph Samuel. At a second hearing before the same divorce court exactly two years later in 1884, it was stated that he was employed by Mr. White, an outfitter and the Army provider at Aldershot. The court sentenced him to imprisonment for 4 months on a conviction for embezzlement at Mr. White's. Joseph

(Samuel) Cater said the conviction was unjust. He took the surname Cater from his paternal grandmother Mary Cater (1792-1836).

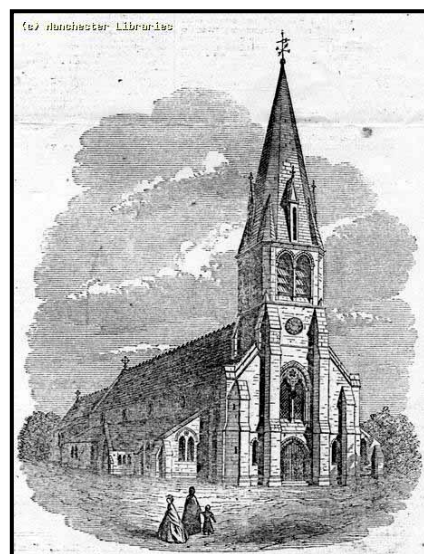
At some point of time after his imprisonment, he joined a mission with (General) William Booth, who subsequently became the head of the Salvation Army. Booth had set up his Christian Mission in the East End of London in 1865. Then, at some point, Joseph became a Congregationalist minister, which helps to explain his occupation in the census above. However, *The Manchester Guardian* for Tuesday 28 May **1872** reported that 'On Sunday, the Archbishop of York held an ordination service at the Minster. The gospel was read by the Rev. Joseph Cater, one of the newly-ordained deacons.' He was referenced in the article as *literate*, rather than attached to any college/institution. After the ceremony, the Archbishop 'licensed the Rev. J. Cater to the curacy of Holy Trinity, Wicker, Sheffield.'

MINISTRY



And so began his ministerial life. Already he had changed his name and had changed his occupation from Stationer to Minister. In addition, he had served a short time in prison and had at this stage eight children who were all living. (His wife and he eventually had twelve children). He was to spend two years as Curate in charge of Holy Trinity, Wicker, Sheffield, **1872-74**. Holy Trinity Church was consecrated in 1848. Set amongst a warren of back-to-back houses, alleyways and courtyards, it sought to be a church for the working man. The etching to the left shows how the church would have looked at that time.

From Sheffield he came over the Pennines to Manchester and became Curate in charge of St. Luke, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, **1874-75**, (sketch to the right) spending a little over one year there from January 1874. There is nothing of note that occurred at either of these two churches, other than conducting the services of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials.



The first entries signed by him at St. Mark's were burials in December **1874**, whilst he was still Curate at St. Luke's. The assumption here must be that this experience of St. Mark's eased his transfer here - either because he wished to move over, or because Mulgrave was impressed by him, knowing that Sillitoe was about to leave. The final entry in the church's registers shows Joseph Cater carrying out his last duty on 2 May **1879**. Again, there is nothing of particular interest about him whilst serving her, except for an advert in *The Manchester Guardian* on 23 December **1876** which read: *Trinity College, London: Manchester Branch - the next local exams. on Saturday 6 January at the Academy of Music 18 St. Ann Street. Hon. Sec. Rev. J. Cater.* So, he clearly had an interest in music during his time here. This coincided with the presence at St. Mark's of R. F. Coules as organist and choirmaster.

Four of his children were baptised at St. Mark's - Florence Amy, 27 January 1875; Harold Edward, 24 April 1876; Arthur Cecil, 22 May 1877; and Constance Evelyn, 13 July 1879. He baptised all these children personally, and by the time of the baptism of Constance he was Rector of St. Luke's.

The Alumni Records for Oxford University show that he matriculated at New College on 5 February 1877, aged 35.

The Whitsuntide Processions were an annual feature of the city of Manchester. Numerous schools and Sunday schools took part, sometimes in pleasant weather, and occasionally in terrible weather. On 11 June 1878, *The Manchester Guardian* reported:

WHITSUNTIDE FESTIVITIES: THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS PROCESSION

Under 'Church Schools not in the procession,' Worsley Parish Church featured, '*with Rev. the Earl of Mulgrave, rector. Rev. J. Cater and Rev. H. R. Hopwood, curates. Number of scholars on the books, 1,000; teachers, 34; Excursion: Saturday, Pennington by boats.*'

MUSICIAN

It will be remembered that the 1898 edition of Crockford's contained the following entry: *Trin. Coll. Tor; Mus. Bac. 1887*. So how can one reconcile these two pieces of information - Toronto and a music qualification? An enquiry made to the Trinity College Archives at the University of Toronto revealed the following:

Dear Mr. Speakman,

It appears that your Rev. Joseph Cater earned a Bachelor of Music from Trinity College, on 28 June, 1887. At this time we had a registrar and gave music degrees in England. I've pasted a description of this program below:

[The archivist provided this background information, which is summarised. In 1885, England's Musical Standard, with information gleaned from a United States journal, published Trinity's curriculum and examination papers. Practising musicians, deterred from pursuing music degrees in British universities which had arts prerequisites, requested that Trinity hold music examinations in England. Since Trinity's charter allowed it 'all such and like privileges as are enjoyed by the Universities of our United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,' Trinity felt entitled legally to decide in favour of simultaneous London and Toronto examinations.

In 1886, Trinity appointed an acting Registrar in London and named three examiners, all prominent English church organists on whom Trinity conferred honorary doctorates in that year.

In 1889 the College's Faculty of Music became affiliated with the Toronto Conservatory of Music. This affiliation exempted conservatory students from having to take some of the faculty's examinations. In 1890, a group of eminent musicians condemned Trinity's practice of granting 'in absentia' degrees in England. Under pressure, as of 1 February 1891, the University of Trinity College decided to discontinue the examinations in London.]

Cater is the second eccentric I'm aware of who took advantage of our English degrees, the other being William Coulson Tregarthen. I'd love to hear what else you find out about him. I'm afraid I don't have any other information here, and this doesn't fit very well with the apothecary business.

*Best regards,
Sylvia Lassam
Roth-Bell Archivist*

Trinity College of Music was established in 1872 as the Church Choral Society by the Reverend Henry George Bonavia Hunt and Sir Frederick A. Gore Ouseley. A year later, in 1873, the college became the College of Church Music, London. The college was incorporated as Trinity College London in 1875, and changed its name to Trinity College of Music in 1904. Initially, only male students could attend and they had to be members of the Church of England. Local examinations and diplomas were administered by the college from 1877 until 1992 when Trinity College London was established as a separate company

In 1879, he joined the Freemasons on 10 September 1879. His age was given as 39 and he became a member of the Caledonian Lodge. In doing so, he followed the Earl of Mulgrave. Trinity College of Music has an historical association with Freemasonry, with the Trinity College Lodge No 1765 being founded in 1878. In the past, freemasonry was an important though private feature of the life of the College, among both members of staff and the undergraduate and postgraduate men. This is not the case today.

RETURN TO CHORLTON - A PRIEST

Having spent some time at St. Mark's after a curacy at St. Luke's, he returned to that parish in the spring of **1879**. He was to remain there until **1886**, as Rector. And it was whilst he was there that his life took ever more bizarre turns. *The Morpeth Herald* on Saturday 22 March 1879 announced his preferment as follows:

The Rev. Joseph Cater has received substantial preferment in the church of St. Luke, Chorlton-on-Medlock, by reason of his liberal-minded and considerate demeanour whilst officiating at a funeral of a notable member of the Nonconformist community. The Patron of St. Luke's, Mr. Thomas Bazley, had received numerous requests from suitable candidates for the living and had read an account of Joseph Cater's courteous manner at the funeral. He resolved to appoint him forthwith.

His first registered Baptism was on 30 March **1879**, and his last was on 14 February **1886**. It was not too long before his parish was being mentioned in the national press. *The Manchester Guardian* for Monday 30 August **1880** reported:

St. Luke's, Chorlton-on-Medlock: *The anniversary of the day and Sunday schools connected with St. Luke's Parish Church, Bedford Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, was held yesterday. In the morning the children formed a procession from the schools into the church, where, after morning prayer had been said by the rector (Rev. J. Cater), a sermon was preached by the Rev. Charles W. H. Baker, vicar of St. John Baptist's, Newport, Monmouth. In the evening the same gentleman occupied the pulpit, and preached to a crowded congregation. The offertories, which were collected by four little girls, were in aid of the funds necessary to liquidate a balance due to the treasurer of the day schools for the past year, and to meet the expenses of the current year. Since the accession of the present rector, the schools, which had previously somewhat declined, have taken a more vigorous position. At present, the number of scholars, consisting of boys, girls and infants, in the day school is 300.*

And then, just four years later, on Monday 3 June **1884**, the same newspaper printed:

The Rev. J. Cater and the children of St. Luke's were among the 20,000+ who took part in the Whitsuntide procession of Sunday Schools in Manchester city centre.

From this, it might seem safe to conclude that all was going well for this young rector. Indeed, it would appear that his past indiscretions were behind him. The **1881** census revealed:

1881 census: St. Luke's Rectory, Chorlton-on-Medlock

| | | | |
|--------------|----|----------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Cater | 39 | Rector of St. Luke's | b. London |
| Martha | 39 | | b. London |
| Joseph C | 17 | Medical Student | b. London |
| Rowland W | 11 | | b. Suffolk |
| Percival | 9 | | b. Cambs |
| Florence | 6 | | b. Manchester |
| Arthur | 4 | | b. Worsley |
| Constance | 1 | | b. Manchester |

However, one intriguing article appeared in *The Times* of London on Thursday 3 November **1881**.

At the Manchester City Court, yesterday, Richard Kirby, commercial traveller, was charged under the 23rd and 24th Vic., chapter 32, section 2, with "indecent behaviour in the churchyard of St. Luke's, Chorlton, to the vexation of the Rev. Joseph Cater, the rector".

It was stated that on Sunday the 23rd. ult., the defendant was among the communicants at 8am. He knelt and received with the others a portion of the consecrated bread from the plaintiff, and afterwards had a conversation in the churchyard with a young woman to whom he showed a piece of the bread sticking against the binding of his Prayer-book. He asked her whether she called that bread. He also showed it to the rector's daughter. The rector had him brought to the vestry after morning service and then saw a piece of bread in the defendant's book. Mr. Nash, barrister for the defence, cross-examined the rector as to the composition of the "wafer" which he replied was pure wheat bread.

Mr. Nash: Is it because you have been threatened with proceedings that you have made this charge?

The Rector: I have not up to the present time been threatened with any proceedings whatever.

Mr. Nash: What evidence have you that this man ever belonged to any society or organisation? Had you any evidence but your own priestly suspicions?

The Rector: I believed from his manner he was a member of the Church Association, because he had been going from house to house asking about myself and the church.

Mr. Nash said the defendant had recently come to Manchester from Oldham, where he was a churchwarden, and he went to Mr. Cater's that morning by pure accident for the first time and the last. His conduct was simply that of a man who was astonished at what he saw. He tried to obtain from regular attendants an explanation of the antics and mummery.

Mr. Hedlam, the stipendiary magistrate, said a person going to communion, taking away a portion of the bread, and exhibiting it in the churchyard to a person who had just partaken of the same material, was guilty of indecent conduct within the meaning of the Act. A fine of 40s. and costs would be imposed. On the application of Mr. Nash, the stipendiary granted a request for appeal.

RETURN TO CHORLTON - A BANKRUPT

Amidst the encouraging news about the work of Joseph Cater at St. Luke's, there was another disturbing twist. On 17 December **1880**, under the headline 'First meeting of creditors held yesterday', *The Manchester Guardian* announced:

The first statutory meeting of the creditors of the Rev. Joseph Cater, of St. Luke's Rectory, Russell-street, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, late of Worsley and formerly of Sheffield, was held yesterday at the offices on Messrs. Nuttall and Son, solicitors, John Dalton-street. The statement of affairs read by Mr. J. Townley Trotter (Trotter and Scholfield), accountant, Brazenose-street, showed liabilities £1,085 and assets £234' Liquidation by arrangement was resolved upon, and Mr. Trotter was appointed trustee, with a committee of inspection.

This development was further reported on 30 January 1883 in *The Manchester Guardian* under the headline:

THE AFFAIRS OF THE REV. JOSEPH CATER

A general meeting of the creditors of Joseph Cater, of St. Luke's Rectory, Rutland-street, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, clerk in Holy Orders, was held yesterday at the offices of Messrs. Charles Nuttall and Son for the purpose of considering an offer made on behalf of the debtor of a sum sufficient, with the two dividends already declared, to pay 10s. in the pound in satisfaction of the sequestration of the profits of the debtor's benefice. After fully considering the offer made, the creditors resolved not to accept it, and the sequestration will therefore continue. The principal creditors were represented by Messrs. Nuttall and Son and Messrs. Parker and Stocks, solicitors, and Mr. J. Townley Trotter (Messrs. Trotter and Scholfield), accountant, trustee.

So the offer made by the Rector was not accepted and the sequestration continued. Just a couple of months later, on 21 March, it was announced that, at a general meeting of creditors, an improved offer was accepted and an order of discharge was granted. In summary, a general meeting of the creditors of the debtor was convened in John Dalton-street. *'Resolutions were passed authorising the trustee to accept a sum which will pay 15s. in the pound to creditors, payment of such sum to remove the sequestration of the debtor's benefice. The order of discharge was granted'*. This was confirmed at a court hearing two weeks later.

RETURN TO CHORLTON - A DIVORCÉ

By far the most distressing aspect of this man's life to-date unfolded during his time at Chorlton-on-Medlock, and in the midst of the events outlined above. The circumstances surrounding his separation from his wife were covered extensively across the national newspapers, and in places gave rise to some mirth! Nonetheless, the allegations were very serious and caused a great deal of anguish for his wife of twenty years. All the information surrounding the various court cases was printed in great detail and will be summarised in part.

The first part of this drama was reported in *The Manchester Guardian* on Monday 13 November 1882. In the Divorce Division of the High Court of Justice, on Saturday the 11th, the Rt. Hon. the President (Sir James Hannen) had before him the local suit of Cater (otherwise Samuel) v. Cater (otherwise Samuel), which was the suit of the wife, Mrs. Martha Ann Cater (otherwise Samuel) for a judicial separation from the respondent, the Rev. Joseph Cater (otherwise Samuel), of St. Luke's Church, by reason of his cruelty. Mr. Pritchard was counsel for the petitioner, and there was no defence.

The original petition was for a dissolution of the marriage, but there was some doubt as to the evidence of adultery. Hence, the petition for a judicial separation, purely as a result of cruelty. The parties were married in the name of Samuel on 7 June 1862 and there were nine children issue. Subsequently, the husband got into trouble and changed his name from Samuel to Cater. They have been living under that name since. By 1880, he got into financial difficulties and brought into the house a lady (against his wife's wishes) 'to contribute to the expenses of the household'. Quarrels developed and, in December 1880, Miss Cooper left for a short time. Martha disturbed him writing to her and he struck his wife. Quarrels continued until June 1881 and he fell more in love with the lady. He intended to have the marriage dissolved and then induce the lady to marry him. It was claimed that he said "I have committed adultery over and over again. It is necessary before you can get a dissolution of the marriage that there shall be cruelty also." He then struck her whilst she was ironing and with such force that she was compelled to leave him. He suggested that she should now be able to get a divorce and further suggested that she kept it out of the papers, since "nobody will be any the wiser and I shall think you a sensible woman". At this point, Martha Ann was merely looking for protection by a decree for judicial separation.

Martha Ann Cater was then examined by her counsel and, in answer to his questions, she confirmed the basic details of their lives to date. She clarified for the judge the reasons for the change of surname, namely "After my marriage my husband got into trouble, and changed his name from Samuel to Cater." She continued to outline the nature of the violence against her and her husband's liaison with the woman, as described above. She stated that claimed to have had adultery two or three times in London and would do again. She concluded by saying that she left the house on the next day, 23 June. Their daughter Lena (aged 17) was then called as a witness, explaining that she had been told to leave the kitchen before her father beat his wife. She had listened at the door.

Sir James Hannen said: "That is sufficient. I pronounce a decree for a judicial separation with costs". By order of the court, the younger children were to remain in the custody of the mother. Joseph was ordered to pay various sums of money to the court, to cover Martha's costs. Joseph was later granted access to the children under strict conditions, subject to a maximum of two hours.



This photo shows the Rev. Joseph Cater, centre seated and circled. Judging by the likely age of the little girl seated on her mother's knee, this was probably taken about 1880, when he was rector at St. Luke's. The smart young man to his left was probably his eldest, Joseph Charles James Cater who would have been about 17 years old. For anyone who might be interested in this family, his story is worthwhile looking at. It can easily be traced online.

It is hard to imagine, looking at this family group, that their lives would soon be thrown into turmoil.

Just after the first hearing, he was due to go to St. Albans on ecclesiastical business. However, *The Times* reported on Tuesday 18 November **1884** (and in other papers) that he came from Manchester to do some clerical duty in the diocese of St. Albans. The Bishop of St. Albans inhibited him "till everything was cleared up." That inhibition had not been withdrawn. Nonetheless, he was fully exercising his ministry in the Diocese of Manchester.

The background to this new relationship was roughly as follows. In **1879**, he went to Worcester to conduct a mission for servants. There he met Mary Elizabeth Beale-Cooper whom he brought to Manchester. In 1880, Martha Ann complained of his conduct with Miss Cooper and objected to her being in the house. Then in 1882, the petition brought by his wife named her in her adultery petition. He denied adultery, though he had had a meal with her and kissed her. In May 1882, Miss Cooper came to stay again at the rectory. She was rich. Mrs. Cater was jealous but still invited her to repeat her visit. Cooper and Cater exchanged photographs. She also helped to get his children into a school higher than their means would have allowed them to do. He had kissed Miss Cooper several times, even in front of his wife. Finally, in June 1882, he stayed at an hotel in London. His wife suggested adultery had taken place, but he seemed to deny this by saying "if you say it is true, then it must be true."

A further twist occurred two years later, when Joseph Cater himself petitioned for divorce. The hearing took place on 17 November 1884 before Mr. Justice Butt. The case was Cater (otherwise Samuel) vs. Cater (otherwise Samuel) and Stainer and the Suit was by the clergyman for dissolution of his marriage on the ground of her adultery with co-respondent William Stainer. Appearing for the

petitioner were Mr. Inderwick, Q.C. and Mr. H. Bargrave Deane; and for the respondent Dr. Pritchard and Dr. Pankhurst. The respondent denied the allegation and instead charged the petitioner with cruelty and connivance.

Joseph Cater was questioned by Mr. Bargrave Deane and stated that he was rector of St.Luke's, Chorlton-on-Medlock; that he had married Martha Ann Williams in 1862; they had 12 children of whom 9 were living. In November 1882, the court had granted a separation on the ground of his alleged adultery and cruelty, corroborated by their daughter. Adultery was dropped but there was one isolated case of cruelty, corroborated by their daughter. His wife was a woman of intemperate habits.

He was then cross-examined by Dr. Pritchard. He confirmed that he lived with his wife at 3 Park Terrace, Highbury, in 1863. In that year, he denied forgery before a court; nor did he obtain a cheque for £60 belonging to somebody else. Later, in 1867, he was employed by Mr. White, an outfitter and the Army provider at Aldershot. At Winchester Court, he was imprisoned for 4 months on a conviction for embezzlement at Mr. White's. He claimed that the conviction was unjust.

He then explained that he joined a mission with General Booth, at that time the head of the Salvation Army. Shortly afterwards, he became a congregationalist minister; and then he was ordained in the Church of England. In 1882, he went from Manchester to do some clerical duty in the diocese of St.Albans. The Bishop of St.Albans inhibited him "till everything was cleared up". That inhibition had not been withdrawn. However, he did point out that he was fully exercising his ministry in the Diocese of Manchester.

In 1879, he went to Worcester to conduct a mission for servants. There he met Mary Elizabeth Beale-Cooper whom he brought with him to Manchester. The following year, Martha Ann complained of his conduct with Miss Cooper and objected to her being in the house. Then, in 1882, the petition brought by his wife named her in it. He denied adultery, but did confess to having had a meal with her and kissed her. In May of that year, Miss Cooper came to stay at the rectory. She was a rich lady. Mrs. Cater was jealous but still invited her to repeat her visit. Cooper and Cater exchanged photographs. She also helped to get his children into a school higher than their means would have allowed them to do. He had kissed Miss Cooper several times, even in front of his wife. In June 1882, he stayed at a fashionable hotel in London. His wife suggested adultery but he seemed to deny this by saying "if you say it is true, then it must be true".

Joseph Cater was re-examined by Mr. Inderwick, for Mrs. Cater. He said that Miss Cooper had taken an interest in mission work among the poor of his parish. A certain Miss Smith then stated that Mrs. Cater told her she had spent a night with Stainer in a Liverpool hotel; and the barmaid, a chambermaid and the cook stated that Stainer and Cater had occupied a bedroom on 17 April (1884). Dr. Pankhurst agreed that they had spent a night there but no adultery had taken place.

Mrs. Cater was examined by Dr. Pankhurst. She firstly explained the early poverty of herself and her husband. She denied that her husband had kissed Miss Cooper in her presence but did admit that his demeanour towards that lady did excite jealousy in herself. On his return from London in June 1882, Joseph said he had committed adultery two or three times but did not say with whom. He took Communion and Martha spoke to him again about the adultery, which he admitted.

After judicial separation in Manchester, she had set up as a lodging-house keeper and Stainer came to stay there. He was connected to a silk merchant. Mrs. Cater had been unwell for some time with a fever and Stainer suggested that a good blow on the water would help. On 17 April, he asked her to go with him to Liverpool to see one of the great Atlantic steamers (City of Rome), but found that it was not there. They spent the day at New Brighton, and in the evening at places of entertainment - including waxworks and a music hall. He had her return ticket and, since it was 11pm, he said it was too late to catch a train home. He booked a hotel room, but she spent the night on a seat. She had tried to get out but he barred the way. She denied adultery had taken place.

Cross-examined by Mr. Inderwick, she stated that she had been to races with Stainer both before and after the incident. She denied telling her husband that she had been guilty of misconduct at an earlier time with another person, but not with Stainer. She stated that her husband knew what had happened and that there had been no misconduct between her and another man. This referred to a period in 1865 or 1866. Her husband had severely assaulted her and, on one occasion, she did strike him. Stainer and she had been to one or two hotels before 17 April and that he had tried to book a room. She concluded that he was trying to entrap her.

Questioned by the judge, she did not know at that time that there were two other trains to Manchester. She went to the Chester races with him the following day - after he had deceived her about the trains and after she had suspected him. She took money from him for the journey to Manchester.

Mrs. Green, her daughter Lena Martha, first met Miss Cooper in May 1880. She stated that her father and his guest seemed very close and that her mother was treated more like a housekeeper. They frequently had dinner together and drank wine, whereas mother and daughter were only offered water. They would adjourn to the drawing-room together. In June 1882, Mrs. Green was called by her mother and found her on the ground and hurt. She concluded by saying that her father's conduct towards her mother was always bad when Miss Cooper was in the house. Mrs. O'Brien, who had been a servant to the Caters, spoke of great intimacy between Cater and Cooper, and both she and Mrs. Green agreed that Mrs. Cater was not an intemperate woman.

After hearing arguments and counter-arguments from counsel, the judge found in favour of the petitioner, Joseph Cater, and that the marriage between Joseph and Martha Ann be *dissolved 'by reason that since the celebration thereof the said Respondent has been guilty of adultery with William Stainer, the co-respondent. ... And on the application of Counsel for the Petitioner it is ordered that the children, issue of the marriage between the Petitioner and the Respondent, do remain in the custody of the Petitioner until further order of the Court, but it is directed that such children be not removed out of the jurisdiction of the Court without its sanction'*.

On hearing of his involvement with divorce proceedings, Stainer left for America.

The UK Civil Divorce Records show:

Cater Joseph *or se* [= otherwise] Samuel versus Cater *or se* Samuel Martha Ann & Stainer William.

Petition filed 17 May 1884

Decree nisi 17 Nov 1884

Final Decree 19 May 1885

THE FIRST MRS. CATER

So what became of Martha Ann Cater after this hearing? In the census of **1891**, she was working as a helper at the school of the Sisterhood of St. Laurence, on Field Lane, Belper, Derbyshire. She was aged 50. Curiously, her status was recorded as married. The Anglican convent of the Sisters of St Laurence situated in Field Lane is a fine building of stone three storeys high erected in 1882/1885 at a cost of £12,000. The sisters were engaged in parochial visiting and nursing, though an orphanage and school were also run from the convent. The head of the school at that time was the founder of the order, Ellen Lee. There were twelve other nuns resident there. In 2001, the Community moved to a new purpose-built convent in Southwell, Notts.

In **1901**, she was living with her daughter Constance, now 21, at 4 May Street, Cottingham, Hull, and two boarders. In this record, her status was widow. In the census of **1911**, she was a boarder at the home of an electrician, William Riley, and his family, of 83 Worthing Street, Newland, Hull. Again, her marital status was married. She ultimately died in Hull early in **1915**.

BISLEY

Once the business of his divorce and custody of his children had been completed, he spent very little further time at Chorlton. *The Times* on Thursday 22 April **1886** announced:

Rev. Joseph Cater appointed to Rector of Bisley. Patron Mrs. M. S. Smith.



This was the church of St. John the Baptist on Church, Lane, Bisley, shown on the left. The church dates from the 13th Century and is a small building. The village of Bisley even today is small, with a population of barely, 4,000.

In the 2nd registration quarter of **1888**, he married Mary Elizabeth Beale-Cooper, at St. George's, Hanover Square. Her father had been Miles Manning Beale-Cooper of Worcester. She had inherited his estate in 1873. Joseph had three further children within this marriage: Francis Leonard, who became a Captain (born 1889), and Josephine Marie (born 1890). The Baptism register for the parish shows for 1889 ...

3 Mar Francis Leonard CATER, son of Joseph, Rector of Bisley & Mary Elizabeth of Bisley Rectory (b. 2 Feb 1889)

and for 1890 ...

16 Nov Josephine Marie CATER, dau of Joseph, Rector of Bisley & Mary Elizabeth of Bisley Rectory (b. 13 Oct 1890)

and for ... 1893

2 Violet Manning CATER, dau of Joseph, Clerk in Holy Orders, Rector of Bisley & Mary Elizabeth of Bisley Rectory
Apr (b. 21 Feb 1893)

and the Burial register for 1894 shows ...

16 Aug Violet Manning CATER, of The Rectory, Bisley 17 mths

In the census of **1891**, they were living as a family in Church Lane, Bisley. Joseph was the Rector, aged 49, and Mary Elizabeth was 39. With them on that occasion were Constance, aged 11, Francis, aged 2, and Josephine, aged 5 months.

He was clearly something of a polymath, since in the *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London*, dated 24 June **1891**, there was an entry stating:

Rev. Joseph Cater, of Bisley, Surrey, was elected Fellow of the Society.

And he also became an author! His work, 'Bisley Bits', can best be summarised by this:

The Rev. Joseph Cater (1886-1895) was the author of Bisley Bits (or Records of a Surrey Corner) which was published in 1892 by Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent and Co Ltd. Copies of this Victorian book are greatly treasured and it is illustrated with contemporary drawings throughout. Two sketches of particular interest show the tiny old Tudor chancel of timber, and brick which fell into disrepair and was replaced by the present chancel. Very few chancels of this timbered type can be seen today (the one at Mattingley, Hartley Wintney, being the nearest) and this is due to the fact that, in past times, the Rector was entirely responsible for the upkeep of the chancel whereas the parish was responsible for the upkeep of the nave. Bisley Bits gives a fascinating insight of the parish 100 years ago, as its nine chapters cover all aspects of village life from natural history to the opening of the N.R.A. ranges. There are historical notes, details of the various charities and

glebe lands, accounts of “perambulations” or Beating of the Bounds, descriptions of the old church, lists of Rectors and Churchwardens, etc., but the most valuable part of the book is in the details of the various documents, memorial tablets and objects which have since disappeared. Bisley is very indebted to the Rev. Cater for the wealth of detail which he has recorded, although certain inaccuracies can be found.

(From: St. John the Baptist Church, Bisley - Rosemary F. Cooper 1981)

However, an announcement in *The London Gazette* on both 17 and 31 March **1893**, and repeated in *The Times* on 22 March, showed that he was due to appear at Kingston Court on 14 April 1893 to hear an Adjudication under the Bankruptcy Acts of 1883 and 1890. So it would appear that his troubles of 12 years earlier had not left him.

So he spent nine years as Rector of Bisley, leaving the church in 1895. The next census for **1901** throws up a huge problem. There is no sign of him - or so it seems. His wife, [see below], appears to be living on her own. The only reference for a Joseph Cater shows this ...

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|----------------|------|----|---------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1901 | 130 | do | 1 | | | | | | | Joseph Cater | Head | 59 | Physician & Surgeon | own account | London, Islington |
| | | | | | | | | | | Charlotte Lane | Wife | 49 | Housewife | work | do |

The address is for 130 Kempe Road, Kensal Rise, Willesden, London. This man is aged 59, married, was born in Islington, London - all consistent with Joseph Cater, Clergyman. BUT the occupation is given as Physician and Surgeon, living on own account!! Surely not!!

THE SECOND MRS. CATER

By **1901**, she seemed to be living on her own, given that she was said to be 'living on her own means', at an address in Surbiton, Surrey, with Josephine. Her status, though, was married.

Now here is a conundrum. According to the **1911** census, she was living at 11 Wellington Square, Hastings, (now aged 59), with her daughter Josephine, now aged 20. She was living on Private Means - but she was recorded as being a widow! She certainly had the means to live privately. As will be seen later, that could not have been the case. This scenario is not unlike that of Martha Ann in 1901! Mary Elizabeth died in Solihull at the address Fairway, 640 Streetsbrook Road on 24 April 1940. Her small estate was left to Josephine Marie Tewson (daughter, and wife of Edward George Tewson).

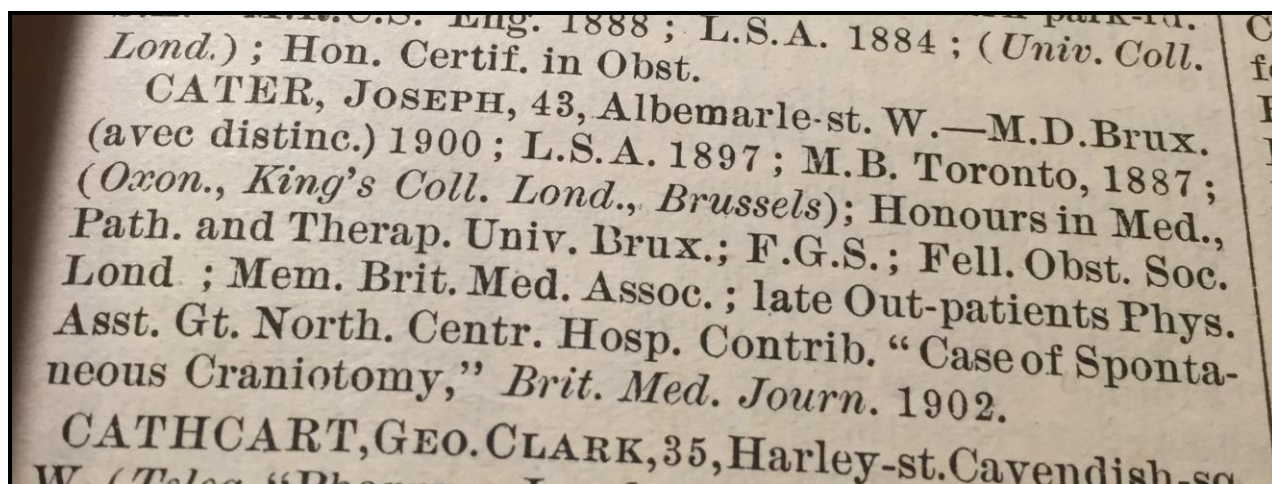
DOCTOR

On the first page, it was seen that the Crockford's of 1898 showed that CATER (formerly SAMUEL), Joseph, [was at] *Kings College Hospital, W.C.* Maybe he had been briefly a chaplain at the hospital? Was there a connection between this entry and the occupation given in the census of 1901? Could this account for the fact that husband and wife were no longer together, for some reason?

A series of UK medical registers provides an accurate summary and timeline of his life as a doctor. And it quite revealing!

- 1894: medical student at Kings College Hospital
- 1897: Lic. Soc. Apoth. London.
- 1899: 28 Tollington Place, Tollington Park, London. Reg. 15 Nov.
- 1900: MD Brussels: 356 West Green Road, London.
- 1902: GP in Brighton
- 1903: Albemarle Street - club member
- 1914: Lime Cottage, Sunbury on Thames.
- 1922: The Retreat, Kenninghall Road, E5.
- 1923: 8 Wolverton Road, Bournemouth.
- 1926: 75 Gains Road, Southsea.

The copy below of an entry in the *London and Provincial Medical Directory 1904* shows beyond doubt that the gentleman in the 1901 census is indeed the Joseph Cater, Clergyman. Note the reference to his music qualification from Toronto in 1887. In addition, the first entry for 1894 corroborates the address given for him in Crockford's. And a final piece of evidence is the F. G. S. - Fellow of the Geological Society.



The journal of the Society of Apothecaries of London for November **1897** shows that Joseph Cater passed in Surgery. Furthermore, he was granted the diploma of the Society, entitling him to practise Medicine, Midwifery and Surgery. Apothecaries were governed by the Apothecaries Act of 1815, which introduced compulsory apprenticeship and formal qualifications for apothecaries, or in modern parlance, general practitioners. The Society therefore had the power to license and regulate medical practitioners throughout England and Wales. The letters L.S.A. stand for Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries. The Society is one of the Livery Companies of the City of London. The first address given for him in the Society's records was at 28 Tollington Place, Tollington Park, Finsbury Park, London in **1899**.

It would appear that his first position may well have been at the Great Northern Central Hospital, as indicated above, since this hospital was at that time on Holloway Road, close to Tollington Way. This hospital was the result of a merger between two other hospitals in 1888 and it remained with that name until 1911.

Records at Kings College Hospital, London, show that he was already enrolled as a student there in **1894** - a year before he left Bisley. This entry in the journal also refers to Brussels, and that he gained 'Honours in Med., Path. and Therap. at the Univ. Brux'. In 1913, it was already known that the university of Brussels granted its MD to foreign students who were already qualified in medicine and surgery in their own countries, provided that they passed 3 examinations, conducted orally. The fees were £22 and the exams. were conducted in English. By this date, there were over 600 men with this degree in England and the colonies. The last year for this qualification was 1921.

A good example of how this system operated was told by Alfred T. Schofield in his book 'Behind the Brass Plate.' In the 1870s, he entered medical school as a mature student with a young family and was consequently under pressure to complete his training: "I was quite unable to spend three years at any University, and yet, requiring an M.D. degree I took refuge at Brussels. Let no one dare to despise the Brussels M.D. I am quite sure the examination is harder than any in our country, and for the following reasons. In the first place, the examinations that usually cover three years are all concentrated in one awful fortnight, during which you are continually examined from morning to night by thirteen professors. In the second place, you are not admitted to the examination at all until you have at least

two college qualifications". Although questions were asked in French, for Alfred Schofield they were "translated for me into English". His replies were then translated into French for assessment.

Joseph Cater was a member of the British Medical Association, formed in 1856, and it is the professional association and registered trade union for doctors in the United Kingdom. The following year they published their own journal known as the British Medical Journal, or *BMJ*. In a copy of the Journal in **1902**, he contributed an article entitled a 'Case of Spontaneous Craniotomy' - a copy of which is held here in the church archives. Not relaxing reading, though!

Fell. Obst. Soc. London. indicates that he was a Fellow of the Obstetrical Society of London. The librarian at the society confirmed this.

Following your call to the RCOG, I have checked our copies of the Transactions of the Obstetrical Society of London (OSL), and found a Joseph Cater listed as a Fellow in the 1901 and 1903 editions. I've attached copies of the entry pages, and they list his MD Brux qualification, but apart from his address there is no further information I'm afraid. He doesn't appear in any later editions.

The OSL was a forerunner of the Royal Society of Medicine, which formed in 1907 (the RCOG wasn't formed until 1929) and the RSM have the OSL archives, including a register of election of members, so they may be able to provide you with more information.

Elaine Garrett

Reader Services Librarian

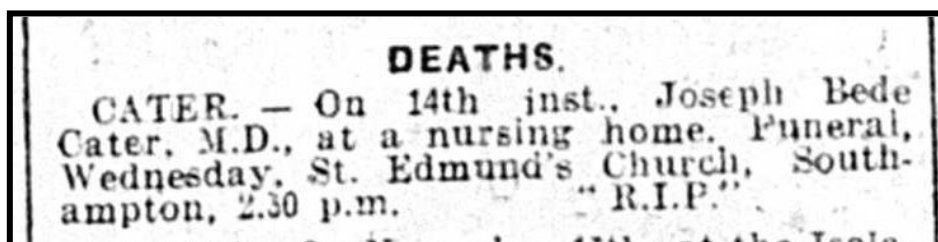
Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

Records also show that he lived at 43 Albemarle Street, London, for a number of years, certainly from 1903 to 1911. The register for 1903 also says he was a club member. It does not say which one, but the Albemarle Club was open at the time at number 13. Since that date, he lived at Lime Cottage, Sunbury-on-Thames, from 1914 to 1919. Thereafter, he spent some short periods of time in Bournemouth and Southsea.

The latest census that is currently available for public use in that of 1911. And it throws up yet more intriguing questions about this man. It shows that Joseph **Bede** Cater, aged 69, was living at Rosemary Road, Clacton on Sea, a Medical Practitioner. He was carrying on his occupation 'at home'. So he has now added a second Christian name, **Bede**, which has not been seen before this entry. Furthermore, he was **married**, and the lady who was living with him was Lydia Constance, (wife), aged 40. She was a midwife. So, that leaves a question which has not yet been answered - who was she? The census also tells us that they had been married for 17 years! In addition, there is no evidence of **either** another divorce **or** a second wedding. **And!** His first wife declared for that census that she was married, and the second wife that she was widowed!! Hopefully the census of 1921 will hold the answer, when it is published in 2021.

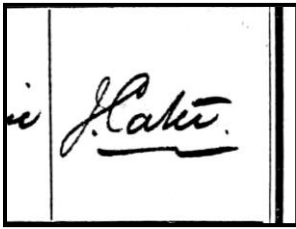
DEATHS

The Southern Daily Echo announced his death as follows: *CATER - On 14th inst. 1926 Joseph Bede Cater, M.D., at a nursing home. Funeral Wednesday. St. Edmund's Church, Southampton. 2.30 pm. R.I.P. (14 November was a Sunday; and St. Edmund's was a R. C. church).*

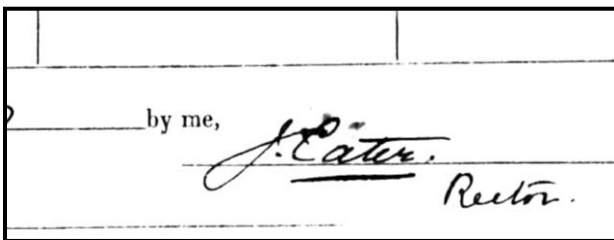


THE DECIDING PIECE OF EVIDENCE

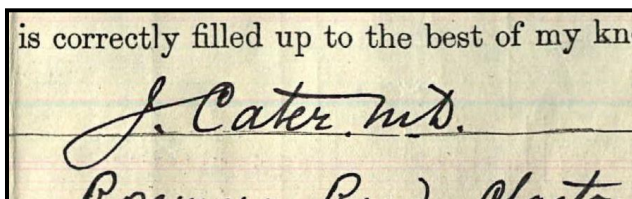
One final and conclusive piece of evidence comes from his own hand. His signature was at the foot of the 1911 census return and this was compared with his signatures in parish registers whilst at Bisley and at Worsley. And this is what was found:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature reads "J. Cater" with a horizontal line underneath the name. To the left of the signature, the letters "is" are partially visible.

Signature 17 June 1877 for a Baptism at Worsley

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature reads "J. Cater" with a horizontal line underneath. To the left of the signature, the text "by me," is written. To the right of the signature, the word "Rector." is written.

Signature 15 October 1893 for a Marriage at Bisley.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature reads "J. Cater m.d." with a horizontal line underneath. Below the signature, the text "Rector" is partially visible.

Signature in the 1911 census