

Notes relating to J H Angus



John Henry Angus 1846-1930



Adrina Agnes Drummond 1853-1930

John Henry Angus was born in 1845 in Gateshead County Durham where he was also brought up, the second son of George Angus who was working in the family leather currier business which had reputedly been established in 1788. (Tyne and Were archives service). George Angus took control of the company in 1855 and expanded it to include the manufacture of India rubber. They specialised in industrial applications such as leather belts for machinery. In 1861 John Henry was in St Andrews, Fife, probably as a scholar. By 1871 he had returned to Newcastle and is living in Benwell, a western suburb but is working in the family firm. His mother by this time had died and his father had remarried.

Two years later in 1873 John Henry marries Adrina Agnes Drummond of Stirling and they establish home in Gateshead where their first child Elizabeth and second child Esther were born. They moved to Liverpool in 1875 where John Henry established a branch of the family firm. Unfortunately they only just arrived when Esther died in 1876 aged 1.

However they soon had another daughter, Christine born in 1877, followed by a son George in 1879, another son Moray in 1880, and another daughter Minnie in 1882. The 1881 census shows that they are living at Toxteth Park Liverpool, this is probably where most of the children born. Sometime before 1885 they moved to Oxtan, a suburb of Birkenhead where they stayed for about 15 years. Whilst there they had four further children, Harold born 1885, Adrina born 1888, Marion born 1890 and their last child Joan born in 1896. (Everyone of their children had Drummond as a second christian name which I have omitted for brevity.)

Whilst I cannot find detail references, the company must have done well in Liverpool and it established a further manufacturing facility in that city presumably because of the need for large numbers of leather belts to drive the machinery in the cotton mills of Lancashire and other applications on board ships. The business was formed into a limited company in 1888, still run by George Angus until his death in 1890. John Henry Angus and his stepbrother, Col William Mathwin Angus the eldest son of George Angus's second wife, then became joint managing directors. (William Mathwin Angus joined the Newcastle Artillery in 1871, and was lieutenant-colonel at the age of 34. During the South African War he mobilised a complete battery and place it at the disposal of the Government. He was a prominent Freemason and a Past Grand Overseer of England.)

John Henry and Adrina Angus with at least four of their daughters moved to London around 1900 and in the 1901 Census they are living at 7 Portchester Gate near to Lancaster Gate in Bayswater. The company established offices in St Mary's Axe in the City of London.

One of the daughters, Christine was an artist and in 1901 is lodging in Torquay accompanied by a Mat Angus who is probably, from age and birthplace, an aunt acting as a chaperone. Christine is described as an Artist (black and white).

Jumping ahead but staying with Christine we learn from the Dictionary of National Biography that she married Walter Sickert the painter in 1911, he having divorced his first wife Ellen Cobden in 1899. Christine was a former pupil at Rowlandson House, the school founded by Sickert. They spent their honeymoon in Dieppe where Sickert sold his house at Neuville and purchased the Villa d'Aumale at Envermeu. They moved back and forth between London and northern France. After the war they bought a new house in France. Christine fell ill not long afterwards, in Dieppe, and they went to London for medical treatment. But in October 1920, having returned to Dieppe, Christine finally died of consumption. Sickert suffered the loss heavily, and for a while lived in Dieppe on his own but married again in 1926.

Returning to John Henry we know he purchased a part of the Vache estate at the sale in 1902. The wooden house he had built in 1904 was presumably a holiday home because he appears to have retained his house in London. As we have seen he did indeed have seven daughters but in 1902 only five of them were still alive, Esther dying in infancy and Minnie dying in 1897 before they came to London. It is curious that he sold the house and land so soon, in late 1904.

The only subsequent references I have found are, first in 1911 when they are still living at Porchester Gate but by now they have lost another daughter Joan dying in 1908 aged 12. Secondly John Henry's death on 19 August 1930 at 51 Victoria Street Kensington and probate. He is described as of 51 Victoria Street, 106 Weston Street Bermondsey, 7 Bury Street St Mary Axe, and of Angus Building Old Hall Street Liverpool. He left effects of £160074 0s 4d His executors were his son Moray Drummond Angus and grandson Douglas Drummond Angus.

The Company diversified into gears, oil seals, protective clothing and other products and generally continued to expand throughout John Henry's life and later the lives of his relations and descendants. It was taken over by Dunlop in 1968.