

Emma Barron (The Lady who kept goats).

The plaque at the base of the tower of All Saints Great Holland reads - To be added.

Most ringers have heard of the Barron Bell Trust but not much about Emma Barron other than the story about her taking goats to church at Walton-le-Soken (Walton on the Naze) and having promised to pay for bells to be installed in the new tower there, then falling out with the Vicar only for bells to be installed in Gt Holland instead. She was also thought to be a 'bit' eccentric.

Having done some research (thanks internet) this is what I have discovered;-

She was born on February 27 1838 and Baptised July 19 1838 at St Sepulchre without Newgate Holborn London. The Baptism record gives parents as Frederic & Caroline Maria Barron living at 5

Giltspur Street and fathers occupation as Wholesale Druggist.

In the 1841 census she is living at 5 Giltspur Street in the parish of St Sepulchre with her mother Caroline (age given as 25) also her sister also Caroline (aged 5).

The next census I find her in is the census return of 1871 when she is living at Stamford Hill, Hackney along with her father Frederick (age 61 occupation - drug merchant), her step mother Mary Ann (age 50) and her sisters Georgianna (age 29) & Catherine (age 27). Also on this return is her Aunt Caroline (age 58 - occupation – Assistant) along with 6 domestic servants.

In the 1891 census her age is given as 38 (? suspect she was economical with the truth) and she is a visitor in to the parish of All Saints Walton le Soken, address Barnard Lee (*still standing*), place of birth given as St Sepulchre Holborn.

In the 1901 census she is now living at Veseys Farm in the parish of All Saints, Great Holland, her age is given as 45 (*if she had lived much longer she would have started to get younger !*), place of birth Smithfields, London.

In the 1911 census she is still living at Vesey's farm, her age is now given as 73 (*she aged 28 years from 1901*) she is now given as being blind.

She died in March of 1930 aged 93.

National Probate Calender (Index of Wills and Administrations) reads :-

Barron Emma of Veseys Great Holland Essex spinster died 1 March 1930 Probate London 15 May to Fred Hopkins manager and Conrad Montague Walrond bank manager. Effects £59375 11s. Resworn £60036 1s 6d.

Now back to the Goats !!

In 1895 she was taken to court for the offence of allowing her goats to stray onto the public highway after grazing on the Church hedge and she received a fine for this.

Some stories suggest that she took her goats to church, this however is not the case as she

kept her goats in a shed near to the church. It would seem that one day they strayed into the churchyard and the churchwarden was seen by Miss Barron removing them by the application of his boot. This incident involving the churchwarden probably leads to the story that she withdrew the offer of money to Walton church for the purchase of a peal of bells to go in the new tower. To say that she gave the money to Gt. Holland instead might not be wholly correct as before she died and the Barron bell trust gave the money for the new bells at Gt. Holland she had made donations to other bell projects such as the augmentation from 8 to 10 at Bocking near Braintree in 1926 (?). She had lived in Gt Holland for probably 30 years before her death.