

A NOTE ON THE ORIGINS OF JOHN LELLO (1775-1847)

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April 15, 2014

The origins of this John Lello (1775-1847) are now established.

At last, evidence on his baptism shows where he was born and who his parents were. The trouble was that we could find nothing at all in the Shrewsbury records regarding the Lellos in Bridgnorth in the early- to mid-18th century. After 1740, Paul Lello was the only Lello to baptise children in Bridgnorth, until the children of John and Mary Townshend (1799-1856). The family story for years — the name Paul goes down the family — was that the ancestor of the Tasmanian and many English Lellos was a “Paul Lello, Quartermaster to Fairfax’s army”. Is this true? No, but we do know from Bridgnorth records and those at the National Archives at Kew that Paul was a serjeant quartermaster. Not, though, to Fairfax who was long dead when Paul Lello was around, rather in the King’s First Foot Dragoon Guards.

How did we establish this fact? The only Lello admitted as a Burgess between 1727 and 1819 was Paul himself in 1783 — after his retirement from the army, meaning he was not a Burgess at the point when John Lello was born. So John could not be admitted through the patrimonial route. In the same collection are books showing names of non-resident Burgesses in the 18th century.

There is nothing about Paul Lello and his wanderings except at the point of his admission as a Burgess, when he was described as a quartermaster, not even retired at this point! Searching the regimental records in the National Archives at Kew showed that Paul Lello was not a commissioned officer (unsurprisingly, as the son of a blacksmith with no family wealth behind him). All commissioned officers were named. Paul Lello’s name did not appear, but we know that there were two serjeant quartermasters.

So was our John Lello really the son of Quartermaster Paul Lello? An accidental discovery put us on the trail. Paul Lello married Betty Castleman on the 25th January 1774 in Stalbridge, Dorset. Betty was the widow of John Castlemain, and daughter of John Hobbs and Elizabeth Northover.

John Lello was billeted at the garrison in Dorchester at the time. He moved on soon, as the couple baptised a son (Thomas) in Devon in 1780. Paul then retired to Bridgnorth where several other children were born. But where was he in between? What do we know about John Lello?

Pigot’s Directory of Shropshire and Staffs 1834 has John Lello, High St, Bridgnorth, ‘currier’. In Robson’s directory of 1840 he is again shown in High Street, Bridgnorth. The key entry is to be found within the 1841 census at Bridgnorth, where John says he is 66 years old and his wife Mary 62, meaning his date of birth must have been 1775 or closely thereabouts (with Mary’s four years later).

However, it is important to bear in mind that ages were supposed to be rounded down to the nearest 5 years for adults. This means that John could have been born anywhere between 1771 and 1775. As we know his mother was with John Castlemain from October 1771 on, John Lello could just have been his son, later adopted by Paul Lello and taking his surname.

Raising a considerable complication, on the census form, his place of birth was indicated as outside the county of Shropshire. Sadly, he died before 1851, when the census form would have said exactly where he was born. Attempts to discover where the King's First Foot regiment was in 1775, when John Lello was born, proved fruitless.

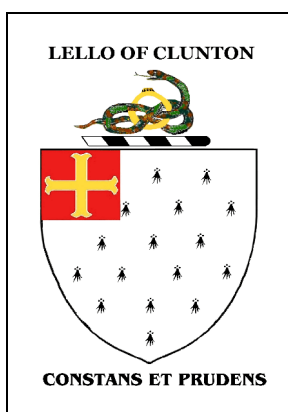
The breakthrough came when the christening records (transcribed from the Mormon fiches) appeared online for Lewes (www.ancestry.co.uk). In fact, we now know John was baptised on 3 March 1775 at Arundel, Sussex. The father was given as Paul Lello and the mother as Betty.

John died 26th June, 1847 at Aston Street in Shifnal where some of the Lellos practised as tanners and carriers. Aston Street runs from the junction between Cheapside and Victoria Street and leads into Aston Road. It is in the shadow of the high viaduct carrying the railway through Shifnal. He was '72'. This means he was indeed born in 1775. He was said to be a 'Gentleman', meaning he no longer worked but lived on his own income. The cause of death was given as 'Apoplexy a few Hours', meaning he had a stroke.

So what was John's ancestral line? Where the forenames are common such as John, Thomas, William, there can be no certainties in the absence of supporting information, such as family Bibles or wills with evidence on occupation. It should be noted that no researcher has ever been able to prove a link with the knighted Sir Henry Lello, although Sir Henry (born in Clunton) hailed from the area in the Welsh Marches around Clun, where he held land and it is thought John Lello, who had a coat of arms, was born in the same village.

Indeed, John Lello's will states he was born in Clunton. The most likely line back from our John almost certainly is rooted in the parish of Clun which covers, Clunbury, Clunton and Clunungford.

The Clun records show that there was a John Lello born 1596 in Clunbury. There is, in the Hereford archives, a copy of the coat of arms of a John Lello of Clunton. The crest is a gold gem ring with an interwoven serpent. The coat of arms is in an ermine pattern on a golden background. There is a *canton gu* in the top left quarter, comprising a gold cross moline. The coat of arms, as is usual, could be claimed down the male line. Sir Henry Lello not only had his own coat of arms, but was entitled to claim that of his father, whose ancestry he shared with the descendants of John and Johan née Macklyn Lello.



The coat of arms was described in *The Visitation* of 1634 when the College of Arms Herald and the local Bishop's men checked all local gentry's claims to arms.

Notes on this document say that John Lello married Joane, daughter of George Macklyn of Clunungford. Presumably, when John Lello died, she remarried as there is a note saying she married Charles Wall. We know that all of this came about in the 1500s. As this John Lello coat of arms and crest is not identical to the Coat of Arms of Sir Henry Lello who was related. His own coat of arms was granted by James II for his services to the Crown. John Lello's was inherited. Nothing is known about the Macklyn family.

Details on the Lellos can be seen on this url:

<http://www.lendingtheway.com/LELLO/>