

Generation 2

Joseph Ortiger

Joseph is the only known child of Pierre Ortiger and his first wife Margaret Whitfield and his birth was registered at Sunderland in Durham for the Jul-Sep quarter of 1837. His birthday was 9th July and he was born at home at East Cross Street, Bishopwearmouth. His mother made her mark when registering the birth. Her name was recorded as Margaret Ortiger formerly Whitfield, and her husband as Peter Ortiger, a mariner. Joseph was home with his mother as a young boy of 4, at East Street, Bishopwearmouth for the 1841 census. They were again together ten years later, on the night of 30th March 1851, when Joseph was listed as a 13 year old scholar. I have found no further English census records for Joseph Ortiger.¹

We know that he left England as a young man, and often recounted his voyage to India via the Cape of Good Hope. He evidently inherited his father's love of the sea as he was never so happy as when he was on a journey – he had the 'wander lust'. According to the Ortiger and the Robinson-Hayes family trees, Joseph married Elizabeth Doherty on 21st January 1864, in the Cathedral Church of Our Lady of the Rosary, Portuguese Church Street, Calcutta. This goes some way to explaining his absence from the census records, but does not assist in finding out when precisely Joseph had arrived in India. Elizabeth Doherty, probably from Cork, had been born to George and Mary Doherty on 21st May 1846. The Ortiger family tree gives her year of birth as 1848. It is possible that her parents or at least her father had died by September 1853 as this was the year that Elizabeth Doherty was admitted as a pupil at the Military Orphanage at Entally, Calcutta. Her school fees were paid by the military until June 1862. In this account I have referred to her as Eliza, as that is the name she used when registering the births of her children.²

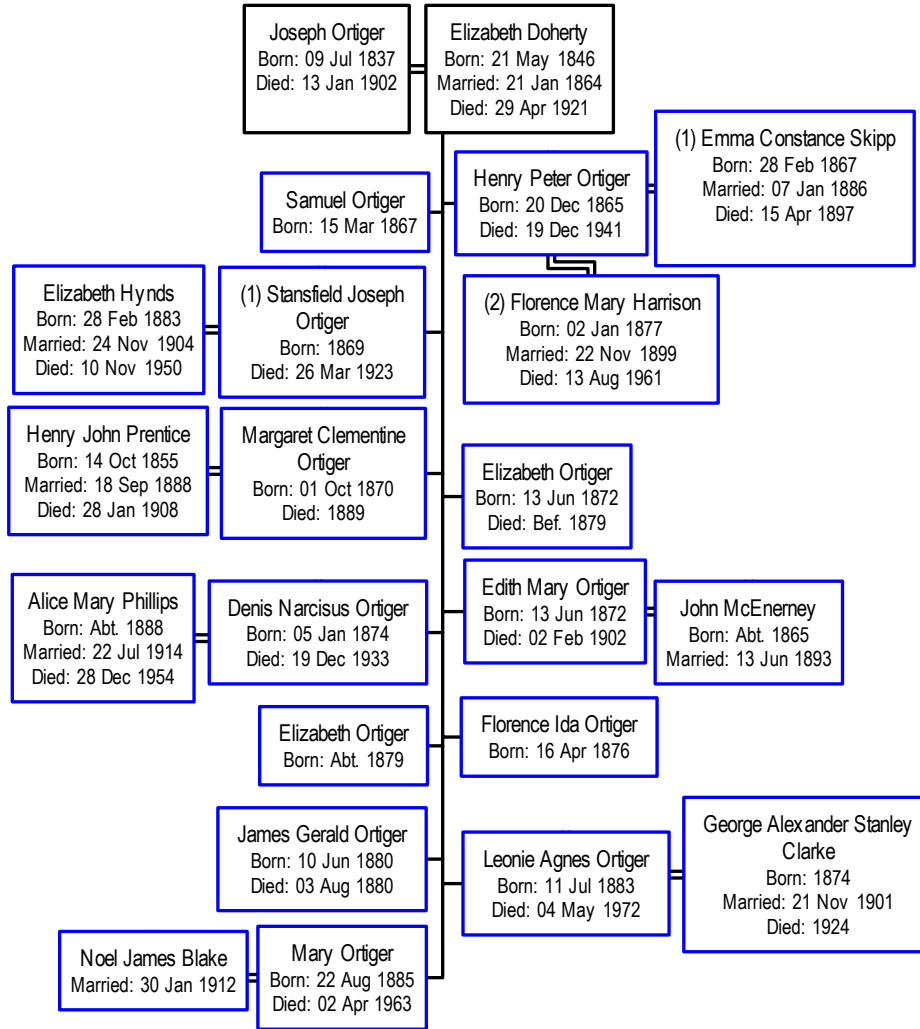
I have no evidence to confirm or otherwise the birth place of the first child born to Joseph and Eliza, but as I have found no registration in the England and Wales BMD records, it is more than likely that that Henri Pierre Ortiger was born in India, and probably Calcutta. When Eliza Ortiger registered the birth of her second child for the 1867 Jan-Mar quarter at Auckland, Durham, she and Joseph were back in England. Samuel was born on 15th March at home at Queen Street, Shildon, Durham. His father was employed as a labourer at an iron foundry. Sometime after 1867 Joseph Ortiger returned to India and found work there on the railways, as the family tree describes him as a railway engineer, but from the births of their younger children, we know that both Joseph and Eliza returned to England on at least one occasion, and perhaps twice. It was Joseph who registered the births of his daughters Florence Ida Ortiger, born in 1876, and of Mary Ortiger, born in 1885 respectively in Yorkshire and Durham. Joseph was recorded as an engine driver for both of these registrations.³

Joseph and Elizabeth were parents to twelve children born over a twenty year period from 1865 to 1885. For some of these children I have been able to obtain a birth certificate. I have also relied on the Ortiger and Robinson-Hayes family trees in listing the children. In order these were :⁴

Henry Peter (Henri Pierre) Ortiger	20 th December, 1865
Samuel Ortiger	15 th March 1867, Shildon, Durham
Stansfield Joseph Ortiger	1868
Margaret Clementine Ortiger	1 st October 1870, Calcutta
Edith Ortiger and Elizabeth Ortiger	13 th June 1872
Denis Narcissus Ortiger	5 th January 1874
Florence Ida Ortiger	16 th April 1876, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough, Yorkshire
Elizabeth Ortiger	Abt 1879
James Gerald Ortiger	10 th June 1880, Madras
Leonie Agnes Ortiger	11 th July 1883
Mary Ortiger	22 nd August 1885, Bishop Wearmouth, Durham

We know from some identified records, and as recalled by granddaughter Edith Mary Ortiger, that five of the children born to Joseph and Eliza died in infancy or at a young age. These were Samuel, Elizabeth (2 daughters of this name and one, born in 1872, a twin of Edith Mary), Florence Ida and James Gerald.

Joseph Ortiger died at the age of 64 on 13th January 1902, but I have found no record to verify where he died, but presume it was somewhere in India. His widow died nearly twenty years later. According to a Family Search record she died and was buried on 29th April 1921 at Mussoorie.⁵



What follows is an account of those children of Joseph and Eliza Ortger who survived their childhood years, and their own families. Again, much of the information relies on the Ortger and Robinson-Hayes family trees, supplemented by my own research, and by information provided by various family members. Particular thanks are due to my uncle Noel Ortger Booth whose knowledge and assistance has been invaluable and to his nephew Richard Ortger (Father Stephen).

As with any family history, every piece of the jigsaw slotted into place results in yet more puzzling pieces to be followed up.



Notes

- ¹ FreeBMD Birth Index 1837-1915; certified copy of Birth Certificate BXCD939187; HO107/310/1/p33; HO107/2396/p10.
- ² Recollection of Joseph Ortiger from his granddaughter Edith Mary Ortiger (Sister Mary of the Assumption); information on Elizabeth Doherty provided by Stuart Lancaster; I wonder if the Military orphanage was in fact the Entally orphanage founded in 1845 by the Loretta Sisters, and which is today the Loreto Convent where Mother Teresa commenced her novitiate in 1928.
- ³ Ortiger Family Tree.
- ⁴ Certified copies of Birth Certificates BXCE017017, BXCE001851, BXCE001814; FIBIS The Times of India, 14 June 1880; note the Ortiger family tree gives Stansfield Ortiger's year of birth as 1869.
- ⁵ Family Search India Deaths and Burials 1719-1948; note the Family Search record has her birth year as 1848, as does the Robinson-Hayes tree, which puts her death at 18th April 1921.