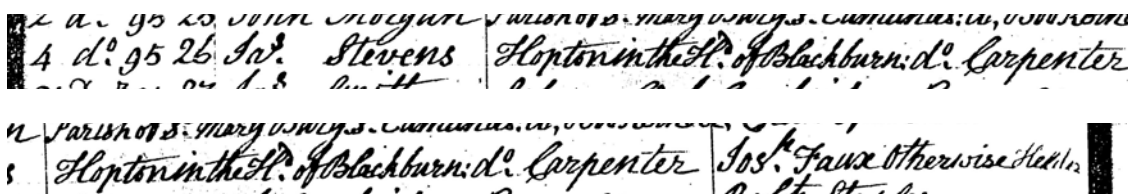


## Joseph Faux

Joseph Faux started as the most elusive of characters but now more is known about him than for most ancestors. Quite early, it was known that his son, Benjamin Joseph, was born in Limehouse, London, in about 1813/14 and that the mother was called Mary, but no records could be located of a Joseph Faux and Mary in London. Boyd's Marriage Index revealed the marriage of a Joseph Faux to Mary Manistre in Rickinghall Superior, north Suffolk, on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1801 and we now know, through DNA evidence, that this couple was indeed the parents of Benjamin Joseph.

Joseph Faux was born in about 1780 although the baptism record, if it exists, has not been discovered. It is also now known that Joseph's father was called Thomas and his mother was called Mary. Thomas died and Mary remarried to a Helder. We know this through apprenticeship records.

When an apprenticeship commenced a fee was paid. This fee was taxed and the tax, or "stamp", paid to the government. The payment of this tax was recorded and these Inland Revenue Apprenticeship Stamp records are now held at Kew Public Record Office. Joseph's record reads:



The first image shows the left hand part of the record and the second image the right hand part. This record is in fact dated 4<sup>th</sup> March 1795 and states:

*James Stevens Hopton in the Hd of Blackburn: County of Suffolk, Carpenter, Joseph Faux otherwise Helder.*

James Stevens was also providing an apprenticeship for Joseph's brother, Gregory Faux, at Hopton in the hundred of Blackbourn (misspelt in the document). At this stage he was training to become a carpenter, later he is a stonemason. It is not known whether he took up a new apprenticeship or whether he simply took up an alternative trade later in life.

Joseph's brother Benjamin (both were to marry Manistree girls) was born about the same time as Joseph and also took up an apprenticeship within a few months of Joseph. It is not known who was the eldest brother and there is a possibility they were twins.

Joseph married in 1801. The marriage entry viewed at the Bury St Edmund's Record Office

states:

*"Joseph Faux of the Parish of Rickingham Superior singleman and Mary Manistre of this Parish singlewoman were married in this church by Banns this fifteenth day of June in the year one thousand eight hundred and one by me Wm Baynes, Rector."*

Shortly after the birth of their first child, Mary, in 1802, Joseph was enlisted into the military as the following record reveals:

RICKINGHALL SUPERIOR PARISH RECORDS

Catalogue Ref. FB121

Creator: Church of England, Rickingham Superior Parish, Suffolk

FILE - Complaint by Mary Faux wife of Joseph Faux serving as a private at Ashfield that she is not able to support herself and family - ref. FB121/G7/5 - date: 9 May 1804

SUFFOLK to wit, The examination of Mary Faux now residing in the Parish of Rickingham Superior in the said County, taken on Oath before me, one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, in and for the said County, this ninth day of May 1804.

Who saith that she is the wife of Joseph Faux a private man, now serving in the Ashfield Volunteer Corps of Infantry assembled at Bury St Edmunds for the purpose of Exercise.

and that she is not able to support herself and one child by her said husband, born in Wedlock, who is under the age of 10 years.

There are two further documents (FILE - Order for maintenance of Mary Faux - ref. FB121/G7/6 - date: 9 May 1804 and FILE - Examination of Mary Faux - ref. FB121/G7/7 - date: 9 May 1804). The former states that Mary will receive 3 shillings weekly but adds little else.

Joseph Faux is recorded in the Ashfield Volunteer Corp Pay Lists (discovered un-indexed at Kew Public Record Office) for the first quarter of 1804, but not April/May 1804 (at which point this Corp disbanded after the muster at Bury on May 14th 1804). Curiously "Burrell Faux" appears for April/May 1804 only and one can only assume this was simply a transcription error, with John Burrell Faux as mayor of Thetford at about this time. Internet sources state (edited):

It was almost at the end of the 18th century that the volunteer movement really came into its own. The alarm caused by the French Revolution brought about a new phase in the organisation of our home defence when in 1794 the raising of bodies of volunteers independent of, and in addition to, the Militia was authorised by Act of Parliament. A wave of patriotic endeavour swept the Country and volunteers came pouring in.

In June, 1808, an Act was passed (48 Geo. III c. 3) "for enabling His Majesty to establish a permanent Local Militia Force under certain restrictions, for the Defence of the Realm"; by which a force six times the size of the regular Militia was obtained

by ballot, consisting of men between the ages of 18 and 30, who were enrolled for four years, no substitutes being allowed.

One of the chief reasons for the establishment of the Local Militia was, as was well-known at the time, the feeling on the part of the authorities that no reliance could be placed on the Volunteer Force that was then in existence, and had been since the threatened invasion of 1803. Volunteering at that time, although in many cases very hearty and patriotic, was at best never anything else than playing at soldiering. The members of the various corps were only civilians in uniform.

At the same time, the Government did not avow openly that they intended the Local Militia to supersede the Volunteers, for so long as the number of Volunteers and Yeomanry in a County amounted to the quota fixed for the Local Militia, no ballot would be put into force; but as soon as any deficiency existed, the difference would be at once made up by establishing Local Militia. But they gave permission to existing Volunteer Corps to transfer their services in a body to the Local Militia, and they relied on the supposition that it would be largely taken advantage of, which turned out to be correct. The expense of their maintenance was beginning to fall heavily on the Volunteers themselves, and the Government intimated that the assistance that they had hitherto granted would be almost entirely withdrawn; in consequence, the Volunteers of almost every County transferred their services to the Local Militia, and regiments were formed strictly under the articles of war.

The services of the force were at first confined to the Counties in which they were raised, but by an Act of 1813 they were liable to serve out of their counties until 1815. In 1816 the ballot was suspended and the Local Militia allowed to die out.

Joseph moved to the Bungay area of east Suffolk some time in 1804 or 1805. He joined the third company of the Bungay Volunteer Infantry under the captaincy of Captain Manns. The first reference to Joseph Faux is in the 25/12/1805-24/12/1806 Pay lists and he serves continuously until the end of 1811. The pay lists show that Joseph undertook 20 days exercise in 1806, 24 days in 1807, 26 days in 1808 plus 10 days at Lowestoft, 26 days in 1809, 17 days in 1810 and 18 days in 1811. There is no record of Joseph in the other years and records exist 1803-1813. Joseph is not listed as "discharged" at the end of 1811 and he served the full quota of days in 1811. His company consisted of a captain, lieutenant, ensign, 3 sergeants, 3 corporals, 2 drummers and about 55 privates. Joseph was a private throughout. They were paid 1 shilling/day. There is, however, a gap from May 1804 to end 1805. No other records have been found for Joseph to cover this time period.

For a long time, it was believed that Joseph had only one child after Mary - Benjamin Joseph in early 1814, but in 2006 Peter Hewitt discovered a third child, Anna Maria, born in Bungay in May 1808. No other children have been located. The lack of children remains curious. Did Joseph really only have 3 children or is there more lurking out there somewhere?

Presumably, Joseph and his family then headed for London sometime in 1812 or 1813. The Bible slip suggests that the family settled in Drury Lane. However, Benjamin Joseph, probably born in the first quarter of 1814, gives his place of birth as Limehouse. Eighteenth century Drury Lane was one of the worst slum areas in London but the area was later cleared to make way for the developments of Kingsway and Aldwych. It is possible there

was work for a stonemason in London's building works but it would seem that if the family did live in Drury Lane it was for only a short period.

Life was probably very tough in Limehouse during the nineteenth century. There was a cholera outbreak in 1832, a year before Joseph's death and accounts provide a vivid picture of living conditions.

“Surviving accounts of the living conditions paint a picture of overflowing cesspits, pigs in the backyard, and inadequate drainage and water supply. The low houses are all huddled together in close and dark lanes and alleys, presenting at first sight an appearance of non-habitation, so dilapidated are the doors and windows:- in every room of the houses, whole families, parents, children and aged grandfathers swarm together.

Drainage in East London was very poor, as indeed it was over the whole of London. Many of the sewers were open ditches, and those which did run underground had not always been properly surveyed, so that the course became blocked up. The worst drain was the 'Black Ditch', an open sewer running from the parish of Christ Church Spitalfields and emptying into Limehouse Dock. The Tower Hamlets Commissioners of Sewers had made an attempt to drain it by diverting the flow, but this had made the stream stagnant and more offensive. The Act for the Prevention of the Cholera Morbus came into force in February 1832 and allowed boards to perform some compulsory cleansing of houses for the first time, but was passed too late to have much effect on the epidemic already in progress.”

Joseph dies in 1833. His wife Mary's death entry states that she died from climacteric disease (loss of life force) on 23rd October 1846 in Ratcliff Workhouse in Stepney. The certificate indicates that she was the widow of Joseph Faux, deceased, a mason, and she was 65 years old (she was actually age 67 at her death).