

## Person Sheet

**Name:** James BOWLEY

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Birth: 25 Dec 1801 Portsea, Hampshire  
Christen: 25 Feb 1802 St Johns Chapel, St Marys, Portsea  
Death: 1 Jun 1886 The Cottage, Lee Road, Lee, London  
Burial: Family Vault, St Margarets Church, Lee  
Occupation: Gentleman/Shipbuilder/Ship Joiner/Church Warden  
Father: Richard BOWLEY (1758-1819)  
Mother: Sarah ROLFE (1757-)

### Spouses:

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**1:** Sarah WRENN  
Birth: 26 Sep 1805 Liverpool  
Death: 17 Oct 1879 Lee  
Burial: Family Vault, St Margarets Church, Lee  
Baptism: 16 Oct 1805 St Nicholas, Liverpool  
Father: David WRENN  
Mother: Sarah SPEEDING (1788-)  
Marriage: 14 Nov 1828 St Dionis Backchurch, London  
Children: Frederick James (1830-1882)  
Thomas (1833-)  
Charles William (1834-1929)  
Edwin (1834-1914)  
Percy Wallis (1837-1839)  
Sidney (1840-1912)  
William Rolfe (1844-1871)  
Percy (1846-1910)

### Notes for James BOWLEY

James was the youngest son of Richard and Sarah. He was born on the 25th December 1801<sup>1</sup> and baptised on the 25th February 1802 at St Marys, Portsea.<sup>1</sup>

He married Sarah Wrenn on the 14th November 1828 at St Dionis Backchurch, London,<sup>2</sup> and they had seven sons.

The 1841 Census shows the family living at 13 Emmett Street, Limehouse.<sup>3</sup> Frederic was aged 11, Thomas 8 and Sydney 8 months. Charles William and Edwin do not appear. James is shown as a Clerk. There were also two female servants - Penelope Marshall aged 35 and Eliza Gibbens aged 16. (Census ref. HO107/702 Book 10 Folio 22-25).

In 1851 they were living at 19 Penny Fields, Poplar.<sup>4</sup> (HO107/1556 Page 19). Charles was by then a Shipbuilder and Ship Joiner as well as a Church Warden. Frederick, Charles, Edwin and Percy are all on the Census - Frederick a Ship Joiner, Charles a Ship Builder and Edwin a Clerk. There were also two servants - Jane Williams aged 30 and Rebecca Emmett aged 27. Another son, William Rolfe, seems to have been staying with a relative (Simon Knight) in the Dock Superintendants house. It is thought Simon was William's step-uncle. The Census shows William Rolfe as having "Instruction at Home". William unfortunately drowned at Brighton in 1871 and no more can be found on Thomas so maybe he died young,

James was obviously a very prominent businessman. He appears in The Kellys Directory between 1847 and 1858 as James Bowley & Co., Ship Joiners and Contractors of Emmett Street. The Company is not

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there in 1868 but The Bowley Windlass Co. of 13 Emmett Street is shown. There must be some connection but the Managing Director is D J Cocks. By 1891 13 Emmett Street was uninhabited.

In the early 1860's a road from Emmett Street to Bridge Road which had been laid out in 1807 but not established as a through road, was designated " Bowley Street after James Bowley a ship joiner in Emmett Street from the 1830s to the 1860s".

A document found on the internet (Access to Archives) indicates that James had some connection to St Matthew's School, Great Peter Street. The document is dated February 1858 and says "Rev. Richard Malone and Robert Baxter to Charles and James Bowley".

By 1868 James was south of the river as he appears in the West Kent Poll Book living at The Cottage, Lee Road, Lee. He was still there when the 1881 Census was taken - he was 79 years old and a Ship Owner. Living with him were Elizabeth Wainford a housemaid, Ellen Trail a cook/housekeeper and Henry Selway a Coachman. Sarah had died two years before in 1879.<sup>5</sup>

James died of Bronchitis on the 1st June 1886 at The Cottage. His death was in The Times and a cutting which Jane Yates<sup>6</sup> found in her Great Grandmother Bristow's scrapbook reads as follows - "On the 1st June at his residence The Cottage, Lee Road, Lee, James Bowley Esq. in his 85th year - deeply regretted. Friends please accept this (the only) intimation". His Death Certificate shows him as a Gentleman. James and Sarah are buried in the family vault at St Margarets Church, Lee<sup>3</sup> along with their eldest son Frederick and also William Rolfe.<sup>7</sup> According to James' Will Frederick is buried in Abney Park Cemetary so presumably his body was later moved to Lee.

James' Will reads as follows:-

This is the last Will and Testament of me James Bowley of "The Cottage", Lee Road, Lee in the County of Kent Esquire. I desire to be buried in my vault in Saint Margarets Churchyard Lee. I appoint my sons CHARLES WILLIAM BOWLEY and EDWIN BOWLEY and my friend SIDNEY YOUNG of Hyndford House, Brompton Road in the County of Middlesex Esquire Executors and trustees of this my will and I give to each of my said two sons the sum of twenty five pounds free of legacy duty for the trouble they may have in the execution of the trust thereof. I give to the said SYDNEY YOUNG the sum of One hundred and five pounds free of legacy duty as a mark of my attachment to him as a sincere friend. I give to each of my Grandchildren who shall be living at the time of my decease the sum of fifteen pounds. I direct my executors to invest in their names as soon as may be after my decease the sum of fifty pounds three pounds per cent Consolidated Bank Annuities free of legacy duty upon trust to apply the dividends arising therefrom from time to time in perpetuity in keeping in good and proper order and condition my granite tomb in the said Churchyard of the Parish of Saint Margaret Lee also the grave and gravestones of my dear son Frederick James in Abney Park Cemetery. I direct that all my household furniture plate linen china glass jewellery ornaments books pictures prints wines liquors and other household effects which may be in or upon or about my dwelling house and premises at the time of my decease shall be valued and shall be divided by my executors into as many lots as I shall have children living at the time of my decease of as nearly equal value as may be and I give one of such lot to each of my children then living to be chosen by them in rotation according to seniority. I give devise and bequeath unto my said trustees all my freehold estate and the residue of my personal estate of what nature or kind or ever upon trust that my trustees do and shall with all convenient speed sell and dispose of my freehold estate and such part or parts of my residuary personal estate including my horse and carriages as they shall think fit either by public auction or private contract and either together or in parcels with power to make any special conditions as to title or evidence of title or otherwise and with power to buy in the same premises at any public sale or to rescind either on terms or gratuitously any contract for the sale thereof and to resell the same or any part thereof without being answerable for any lots which may be occasioned thereby and do and shall stand possessed of the monies arising from such sale and also of my residuary

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personal estate and effects In trust in the first place thereout to pay my just debts and funeral and testamentary expenses and legacies and then to invest in their names the sum of One thousand pounds New Three pounds per cent Bank Annuities free of legacy duty and I direct that they stand possessed of the same upon trust to pay the dividends from time to time arising therefrom unto my sisters in law SYBELLA KNIGHT MARIANNE KNIGHT and JANE KNIGHT daughters of the late SIMON KNIGHT and to the survivors and survivor of them during their joint lives equally and during the life of the survivor of them for their and her own use and after the decease of the survivor of them such stock shall fall into my residuary estate and go therewith and subject thereto as to my said residuary estate in trust for all my children who shall be living at my decease or shall have died in my lifetime leaving issue living at my decease in equal shares as tenants in common and not as joint tenants such issue to take between them the share or shares their parent or parents would have taken if living. I will that the copyhold estate in which I am beneficially interested shall be sold and disposed of by the trustee or trustees thereof and that the clear purchase money for the same after deducting all expenses attending the same shall be paid into the hands of my executors and be applied by them as part of my residuary estate. For the purpose of such sale I declare that the trustee or trustees of the said copyhold estate shall have and may exercise all such powers and authorities as are given by the statute 23rd and 24th Victoria Chapter 145 to trustees having a power of sale I authorise my trustees to delay selling all or any of my shares in ships or any other parts of my personal estate so long as they shall think fit and I declare that they shall not be answerable for any loss that may occur in conveyance of any such delay. And I empower my said trustees to grant any lease or leases of any of my real or leasehold estate for any term or terms of years not exceeding twenty one years to take effect in possession and not in reversion at the best rent or rents that can be reasonably obtained for the same respectively. I declare that the trustees or trustee for the time being of this my Will shall be the person or persons to appoint new trustees hereof and I declare that the powers and discretions hereinbefore vested in the trustees herein before named shall be exercisable by the trustees or trustee for the time being of my Will. I give devise and bequeath to my said sons CHARLES WILLIAM BOWLEY and EDWIN BOWLEY and the said SIDNEY YOUNG all estates vested in my as trustee or mortgage subject to the trusts and equities affecting the same respectively and I hereby revoke all former Wills. In witness whereof I have to this and the preceding sheet hereof set my hand this twenty fourth day of October one thousand eight hundred and eighty two.

JAMES BOWLEY - The Testator, James Bowley, signed this in our presence and we in his. Thos.Stone, Solicitor, 5 Finsbury Circus. Henry Selway Coachman to Mr Bowley.

I declare this to be a CODICIL to my will dated 24th October 1882. Circumstances have occurred which make it expedient that the portion of my estate which I have in my said Will bequeathed to my son PERCY BOWLEY should not go direct to him but remain in the hands of my executors and trustees CHARLES WILLIAM BOWLEY, EDWIN BOWLEY and SIDNEY YOUNG to be retained by them for his benefit and that of his wife and family. I therefore devise unto my said trustees the amount which may appear due to my said son PERCY BOWLEY on the closing of my estate in accordance with the terms of my Will and to be advanced to him from time to time together with any and all interest that may accrue on the same as circumstances may require in accordance with their judgement and discretion. I also declare that should my son PERCY BOWLEY raise any objection to this my direction or make any arrangement by anticipation which may affect the same in such case I will that his said share of my estate be forfeited and then divided in equal shares between his other brothers CHARLES WILLIAM BOWLEY, EDWIN BOWLEY and SIDNEY BOWLEY. In witness hereof I have put my name this eleventh day of May One thousand eight hundred and eighty three - JAMES BOWLEY. The testator JAMES BOWLEY signed this in our presence and we in his - MARTHA WARD housekeeper to Mr Bowley and HENRY SELWAY Coachman to Mr Bowley.

On the 15th day of July 1886 Probate of this Will and Codicil was granted to CHARLES WILLIAM BOWLEY, EDWIN BOWLEY and SIDNEY YOUNG the executors.

### Research

Birth - Parish records

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Christening - Parish records and IGI  
Marriage - IGI  
Death - GRO ref. Lewisham 1d 583 June 1886

### Notes for Sarah (Spouse 1)

Sarah was born in 1806 (outside Middlesex County according to the 1841 Census, but in Limehouse on the 1851 Census).

She is buried in the family vault in St Margarets Church, Lee,<sup>3</sup> along with husband James, and sons Frederick James and William Rolfe.<sup>7</sup>

It is possible that Sarah's mother (also a Sarah), remarried a Simon Knight on the 14th July 1815 at St Dunstons, Stepney<sup>2</sup> and they had the following children - Robert (1818), Sibella (1820), Marianne (1824), Jane (1826) and James (1826). These would be half brothers and sisters to Sarah, and in James Bowley's Will he mentions his sisters in law Sybella, Marianne and Jane Knight, daughters of the late Simon Knight. This seems to be the only way for them to be related.

### Research

Birth - Census  
Marriage - IGI  
Death - GRO ref. Lewisham 1d 699 December 1879

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1. Parish Register
2. IGI
3. Photo in file
4. Census
5. GRO Record
6. Jane Yates (Great Grand-daughter of William)
7. Tombstone Inscription