

J'ANSON TIMES

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Frances



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Dear Family Members

In starting the ball rolling for the formation of a "Name Society for the ancient Yorkshire Family of I'Anson. I am fully aware of my limitations, not the least of which is my name is not I'Anson. My sole qualification in this respect is that my Grandmother (Father's mother) who I knew and loved was Jane Isobel I'Anson, originally of Thirsk Yorkshire, and I am actively engaged in tracing my I'Anson Pedigree through her. To this end I am a member of the Family Studies section of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society.

In this first tentative issue of a Family Bulletin I will be the sole contributor, and my mailing list will be Her Majesties Telephone Directories. Its really a feeler to see if I'Anson Family

members are enthusiastic about their heritage and think the idea of a Name Society a good one, plus the publication of a quarterly Bulletin, which is designed to give every family member a chance to hold forth in print about his or her branch of the Family. I can assure them it will be of great interest to the rest of us! In fact this is the only way a publication of this nature can keep going, because I will soon run out of material!

Apart from a circulation of I'Anson Family members, I think it would be a good thing to present a copy to major libraries in Yorkshire and Durham, which are known to be areas of I'Anson settlement; and to such interested bodies as the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Society of Genealogists etc at your editors discretion.

Yours sincerely

Thomas Holstencroft

LASS OF RICHMOND HILL

Surely the most romantic story in the I'Anson Family and the one still in dispute, is that Frances I'Anson born in Layburn and baptised at Wensley in 1766 is the original heroine of the song "Lass of Richmond Hill."

Frances was the daughter of William I'Anson, a solicitor of Bedford Row, London, and Hill House, Richmond, Yorkshire. Her mother's maiden name was Martha Hutchinson and Hill House, Richmond, was originally the property of the Hutchinson family.

Frances met Leonard McNally, a brilliant Irish Barrister in London. McNally was a Man of Letters, wrote for the Stage and was Editor of a periodical called "The Public Ledger."

William I'Anson disapproved of the association between his daughter and McNally, and sent Frances back to Yorkshire to stay at Mill House, Richmond. McNally wrote to her there and enclosed with the letter were the words of the future song.

Frances I'Anson finally eloped with McNally. It is suspected she was "expecting" anyway, and they married at St. George's, Hanover Square, London, in 1787.

They lived in London and had two surviving children. Frances died in 1795 in Dublin, aged only 29. Her daughter returned to Richmond and married a Banker named Simpson.

McNally must have passed the words of the song to James Hook (1746-1827) who was an associate and was the Organist and Musical Director of Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens in London. James Hook wrote the melody of "Sweet Lass" and the song was first sung in public in 1789 by Charles Incledon, a popular tenor vocalist of the day. He was subsequently to sing in the first performance of Haydn's Creation at Covent Garden under Lindley.

The words of the song were later published anonymously in a London newspaper. The British Library (British Museum) has an original copy of the first printed edition of the song, priced 1/-. The music is attributed to Hook but there is no mention of the authorship of the words.

Due to the affairs of the Prince Regent and his mistress, Mrs. Fitzherbert, the popular public fancy in London associated the song with them and Richmond in Surrey as the location. The words, "I'll crowns resign to call thee mine" lent credence to this belief.

Various contributors to the Nineteenth Century publication "Notes and Queries" debated the authorship of the piece, until a letter from William I'Anson, surgeon of Newcastle upon Tyne, who was a direct descendant of Frances I'Anson's family, plus a letter from an 80 year old lady, Anne Bowman, who had personal knowledge of the family, silenced opposition, (Opposing views however, have many heads and the authorship is still periodically brought into dispute up to the present day).

Incidentally, Anne Bowman's father published a book of local history at Richmond, Yorkshire, early in the nineteenth century. Amongst the list of subscribers was Thomas I'Anson and Frances McNally (Junior).

I personally found Anne Bowman, aged about 50, in the 1841 Ripon Census. She lived in Allhallowgate. My family of I'Anson was not far away in Stammergate.

The words of the song were also attributed to McNally by Jonah Barrington in his Memoirs "Personal Sketches." This was certainly not done out of friendship, as McNally and Barrington fought a duel in 1787 in which MacNally suffered a wound in the leg, leaving him with a permanent limp.*

McNally became a political informer, probably after the death of his wife in 1795. He joined a Society called "The United Irishmen" but he was informing the British Government of their activities. One of the arrested members, called Emmett, was defended in Court by MacNally in 1803 but was secretly disclosing his Brief to the Crown Lawyers. As a Protestant Irishman, loyal to the Crown, McNally would have considered he was acting in a patriotic manner.

* In connection with rebellious verses written by McNally when conducting defence of "Napper Tandy."

This aspect of McNally's life did not become known until after his death in 1820. McNally married again after the death of Frances to Louisa, daughter of the Reverend Robert Edgeworth,

My grandmother, Jane I'Anson, knew something of this story and her interest prompted me in later life to find out more. In my innocence I presumed grandmother was a descendent of Frances I'Anson's family and surely it would be easy to trace with a fairly unusual name.

To my dismay, I find them like the tribe of Israel in the North Riding. The Wensley Parish Register in the eighteenth century has a nice little list of the family (including the famous Frances herself in 1766) but then so does West Witton, Fingall, Spennithorn, Hauxwell, Masham, Bedale, Wath and Ripon. After Yorkshire, there is Darlington in Durham, and south into the West Riding towns. I'Anson's went to London, made fortunes, became Baronets, one even became a Grandee of Spain. Another I'Anson won the Derby and had racing stables at Malton. Edward I'Anson was a noted Architect who designed many large buildings in London. Other I'Anson's were Keepers of Corfe Castle in Dorset and a female member married the Keeper of the Crown Jewels in the Tower of London.

I'Anson's were also men of the Cloth. Sir Lancelot I'Anson was sometime Chaplain to Queen Elizabeth I, and Tristram I'Anson was 17th century Vicar of Aysgarth, Yorkshire. Other members were converted to the Quaker faith and suffered persecution for their beliefs.

I'Anson's were also business men, prominent in the pioneer days of railways in Darlington, Charles I'Anson becoming Mayor of that City.

Members of the family went to America and Australia. William I'Anson was Councillor at Law for the State of Long Island in the early 1800 and Miles I'Anson wrote a book, "The Vision of Misery Hill" a legend of the Sierra Nevada. (Knickerbocker Press 1891) Newark, New Jersey, and inscribed to "My fellow miners of California and the Pacific Coast".

Yes, it should have been an easy job to sort the

family out! but what about the answer to my original question, was my Grandmother related to Frances I'Anson? Well, the answer is the same for all present day I'Ansons (except the proved direct descendants who I have located). Her ancestors were "Collateral Cousins". If you look up the word "Collateral" in this context, it means: "From the same stock." All I'Anson's descend from John or Jacques I'Anson who came over from France to fight for Henry Tudor at Bosworth. He settled at Hauxwell as a Yeoman and all I'Anson's descend from his children.

In the second issue, I would like to explain how I researched my own I'Anson family, and how I have traced back to 1750 at Ripon, Yorks.

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B I B L I O G R A P H Y

History of the I'Anson Family

Bryan I'Anson (Private publication)
Copy in British Library.

My Ancestors - Norman Pennay.
Friends Library. Euston Road, London.

Lass of Richmond Hill.

Article in Yorkshire Archaeological Journal 1924
by William M. I'Anson.

Article in Gentlemans' Magazine, March 1904
J. Coventry I'Anson.

Notes and Queries Correspondence. (1850 1875)

The Story of Richmond, Yorkshire. David Brookes, 1946.

Personal Sketches. Jonah Barrington.

Book of National Biography.

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This first copy of the I'Anson Times was written completely by Thomas Wolstencroft. Usually "written" means providing the thoughts and words, but in this case even the beautiful caligraphy of the introduction and the cover design are his.

He had produced all this before he asked me to join him in the venture. I am very glad to do so but could not presume to take any credit for the concept, the work or the brave opening move, and I have asked him to leave the opening article just as it is.

However, I hope many more people join him. At least sixty magazines are going to different families but this is only the start. The cost would be far too great to cover the south of England as well and we hope to eventually cover all interested parties, both to send information in magazine form and to obtain information. It is hoped to produce about four copies of the magazine each year but the issues will require information, effort and some money.

May I suggest the formation of an I'Anson Society. The membership would be open to any interested person on payment of £1. This should help to defray the cost of printing and postage for four copies of the magazine.

Please send any suggestions or information to Mr. Wolstencroft or myself but even if you have nothing to say, please include your name, address and subscription.

Charles I'Anson.
ASHBROOK,
HEATON GROVE,
BRADFORD.

W. YORKS. BD9 4EB.