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# Dr “Harry” F.H. Flack

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General Practitioner and Ship’s Surgeon

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By Dr “Ted” E.D.H. Flack

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Frederick Henry Douglas Flack, known as "Harry" Flack, was born in Burnley, Lancashire on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1878, the second son of William Henry Douglas Flack, Banker's Clerk and his wife Eliza Alice Flack, nee Parker<sup>1</sup>.

"Harry" was baptised Frederick Henry Douglas at Holy Trinity Church of England, Habergham Eaves, Lancashire on 25 February 1878, across the road from the house in Accrington Road from which the family had recently moved. The Baptism Register shows that the family were now living at 6 Rose Hill Terrace Habergham Eaves. The Christening was perhaps one of the few happy family occasions in a year in which the family were to lose both Harry's grandmother, Lucy Flack (died 25 June 1878) and his 3 year old little brother, George Hartley Douglas Flack (died 18 September 1878).

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BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of Holy Trinity Habergham Eaves  
in the County of Lancashire in the Year 1878

When Baptized	Child's Christian Name	Parent's Name		Abode	Quality, Trade, or Profession	By whom the Ceremony was performed
		Christian	Surname			
Sept: 7 <sup>th</sup> 1875 No. 411.	William Robert William Louisa	Robert William	Whittaker	Accrington Road	Letter Carrier	Robt. Gile.
March 21 <sup>st</sup> 1866	Henry Betsey Dinah	Robert Dinah	Whittaker	Accrington Road	Quaker	Robt. Gile.
Jan: 31 <sup>st</sup> 1875 No. 413.	Mary Jane	Charles Mary Jane	Timms	Bornigh Street	Miner	Robt. Gile.
July 24 <sup>th</sup> 1877 No. 414.	Arthur Jane	Henry Jane	Balby	Barnack Road	Quaker - burner	Robt. Gile.
Jan: 28 <sup>th</sup> 1875 No. 415.	Jane	Henry Jane	Balby	Barnack Road	Quaker - burner	Robt. Gile.
Sept: 15 <sup>th</sup> 1877 No. 416.	William Elizabeth	Sti Elizabeth	Lutcliffe	Jennison Lane	Wagon Driver	W. Spradell
July 16 <sup>th</sup> 1877 No. 417.	Elizabeth Ann	George Ann	Lake	Bygon Street	Coalier	W. Spradell
Jan: 24 <sup>th</sup> 1878 No. 418.	Frederick Henry	William Mary Douglas Eliza Alice	Flack	6 Rose Hill Terrace	Banker's Clerk	John M. Davidson Min.

<sup>1</sup> see "A Burnley Worthy" by Dr E.D.H. Flack. 2016.

The 1871 Census shows Harry's father's family resident at 3 Rose Terrace, Accrington Road Habergham Eaves. William Henry Douglas Flack and his young family had moved to the Rose Hill address following his father's progression in the Manchester and County Bank, where he was to be appointed Chief Cashier in 1879. Another factor in the move may have been Grandfather William Flack's retirement from the Army in 1877.

Although the family had moved some distance from the church, he was christened at Holy Trinity Church of England, Habergham Eaves where his family continued to attend regularly and with which they had had a long association.

The 1881 and 1891 Census show the family living at 86 Fair View Road, Habergham Eaves, Lancashire.

In 1889, Frederick Flack, described in the Burnley Express newspaper as a scholar of Fulfilledge School, was awarded the "Liveset Scholarship", entitling him to a free education at the Burnley Grammar School for three years.

During Harry's late teen age and early twenties, he was a keen soccer player, having played in grades just below professional level for Burnley Football Club



Harry Flack is seated in the front row on the left

On 11 August 1900, the Burnley Express newspaper reported that Frederick Henry Flack, M.D., Ch.B. had graduated from Victoria University (Owens College Manchester) and on 26 December 1900, reported that Dr Flack had been appointed Junior House Resident - House Surgeon to the Blackburn and East Lancashire Infirmary.

The Census taken on the 31 March 1901, for Blackburn and East Lancashire Infirmary (Reference RG 13/3916) lists "Frederick H Flack, Surgeon, Single, 28 years, Medical Practitioner Surgeon, born Lancashire, Burnley."

In October 1903, Dr Flack left the port of Liverpool as Ship's Surgeon aboard the Blue Funnel cargo ship the SS Dardanus. The ship travelled to Japan and returned to Portland in February 1904. During the trip, Dr Flack wrote a journal in which describes what he saw on his four month long journey and records something of his experiences as a ship's doctor among the crew. A transcript of his handwritten journal has survived and is reproduced at the end of this history as a separate report.

The Medical Register for 1907 lists “Flack, Frederick Henry, M.B. Bac. Surg, 1900 Vict. Univ.” practicing at 56 Railway Street Nelson.

1911 Census lists Frederick Henry Flack, living at 56 Railway Street Nelson as follows:

NAME AND DESIGNATION	RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD OF FAMILY	AGE	SEX	EDUCATION	PROFESSION, OCCUPATION, TRADE, BUSINESS, OR Vocation	DATE OF BIRTH	PLACE OF BIRTH	DATE OF ENTRY INTO GREAT BRITAIN	REMARKS
Frederick Henry Flack	Head	33	M	High	Physician - Surgeon		Lancaster, Lancashire		
Emily Flack	Wife	37	F	High	Assistant Surgeon		Lancaster, Lancashire		
Agnes Flack	Daughter	11	F	High	General Practitioner		Lancaster, Lancashire		

On 22 January 1914, 36 year old, Dr Frederick Henry Douglas Flack married Alice Mary Cockshutt aged 24, at St Mary’s Church Nelson. The marriage was performed by Reverend William George John Flack who had travelled to Nelson from St Chad’s, Wolverhampton to perform the ceremony.

(The marriage was registered at Burnley in the March Quarter 1914, Vol. 8e, Page 315)

A Marriage Notice appeared in the Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser on Friday 23 January 1914 as follows:

**Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser**  
**- Friday 23 January 1914**

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**MARRIAGE.**

**FLACK—COCKSHUTT**—On the 21st January, at St. Mary’s Church, Nelson, by the Rev. W. G. Flack vicar of St. Chad’s, Wolverhampton (uncle of the bridegroom), assisted by the Rev. J. W. Marsh, M.A., vicar of the parish, Frederick Henry Flack M.B., Ch.B., elder son of William Douglas Flack Esq., J.P., of Brookside, Burnley, to Alice, elder daughter of the late Edmund Cockshutt, Esq., of Preston, and of Mrs. Smith Roberts of Woodlands, Nelson.



Alice Mary Flack, nee Cockshutt, was born on 13 June 1890 in Bamber Bridge (near Preston) to Edmund Cockshutt and Emily Cockshutt nee Meredith.

Edmund Cockshutt and Emily Meredith were married in 1888 in Fylde, Lancashire. Edmund Cockshutt and his family, Emily, wife aged 27, and baby Alice, aged 1, are recorded in the 1891 Census as residing at Cumberland House, 100 Browndge Lane, Walton le Dale, Lancashire, together with a domestic servant and a domestic nurse. Edmund is recorded as Head of the household aged 29 born in Preston.

Edmund Cockshutt, Alice's father, is probably the Edmund Cockshutt whose birth was registered in Preston born in the December Quarter of 1861 although this does not match with the age stated in the 1891 Census.

Emily Cockshutt nee Meredith, Alice Cockshutt's mother, was born 27 July 1863 in Manchester, Lancashire. She was the daughter of Charles Meredith, born 2 May 1807 and Alice Anne Meredith nee Harrison, born 1 November 1832.

Following the death of Alice's father, Edmund Cockshutt, on 14 June 1904, Alice's mother, Emily married Smith Roberts in the March quarter of 1905.

Alice attended St Monica's Convent School in Skipton, North Yorkshire as a boarder during her teenage years.



Smith Roberts, Dr Harry Flack's father in law

Edmund Cockshutt, Alice's brother (born 7 December 1893 at Preston, Lancs.) attended Ampleforth Collage, Yorkshire as did his older step-brother Nicholas Cockshutt.

The 1911 Census shows Alice Cockshutt living with her mother, younger sister Margaret May Cockshutt (born June quarter 1891 at Preston), her younger brother Edmund Cockshutt (born 7 December 1893 at Preston) and her step brother, Charles William Roberts (born 23 December 1905) at Woodlands, Nelson, as follows:



## Military Service

On 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany and the records indicate that Dr FHD Flack joined the Royal Army Medical Corps shortly afterwards.

The family oral history suggests that he served in Northern Italy and Salonika but since most of the official service records were destroyed in the Blitz during the Second World War, I have not been able to confirm this from official records.

One of the few sets of records to survive are the Medal Card Index on which the records of medals issued to those who served in WW1 were recorded. Captain Frederick Henry Flack, RAMC is recorded as having been issued the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Allied Victory Medal, which suggests that he did not serve in a theatre of war such as Salonika, although such service is possible as many records are missing.



In October 1915 a combined Franco-British force of some two large brigades was landed at Salonika (today called Thessalonika) at the request of the Greek Prime Minister. The objective was to help the Serbs in their fight against Bulgarian aggression.

The original two Brigades eventually were reinforced by larger units until 22nd, 26th, 27th and 28th Divisions were there. The Salonika Force dug-in until the summer of 1916, by which time the international force had been reinforced and joined by Serbian, Russian and Italian units. The Bulgarian attempt at invasion of Greece in July was repulsed near Lake Doiran.

At the beginning of Oct 1916, the British in co-operation with her allies on other parts of the front, began operations on the River Struma towards Serres. The campaign was successful with the capture of the Rupell Pass and advances to within a few miles of Serres.

By the beginning of 1918 the Allied troops in Salonika were prepared for a major offensive intended to end the war in the Balkans.

The 1918 Supplement to the London Gazette, 9 August 1918 lists Lieutenant Frederick H. Flack M.B. (Royal Army Medical Corps) to be temporary Captain with effect 2 July 1918.

The records show that the British Army's 62nd General Hospital was posted at Bordighera in northern Italy from January 1918 to January 1919. Given the birth of their son, Henry Edmund Douglas Flack in September 1917, and the promotion to Captain in 1918, it seems unlikely that Captain FHD Flack had been deployed in Salonika before December 1916 although it would have been possible during the latter part of the war in 1918. A posting for Captain Flack to Bordighera, where casualties from the Salonika campaign were treated, would fit what is known from the records and the oral history.

The First World War ended on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918.



The 1919 London Gazette, under the heading “R.A.M.C. – The undermentioned temp. Capts. relinquish their comms” , lists - 21 February 1919, Frederick H Flack, MB.” indicating that he did not serve on in the Territorial Army after the war.

On 10<sup>th</sup> September 1917, Harry and Alice Flack celebrated the birth of their first child, whom they Christened Henry Edmund Douglas Flack at St Mary’s Church of England, in Nelson, Lancashire.

After his war service, Dr Harry Flack returned to private medical practice in partnership with Dr Howarth.

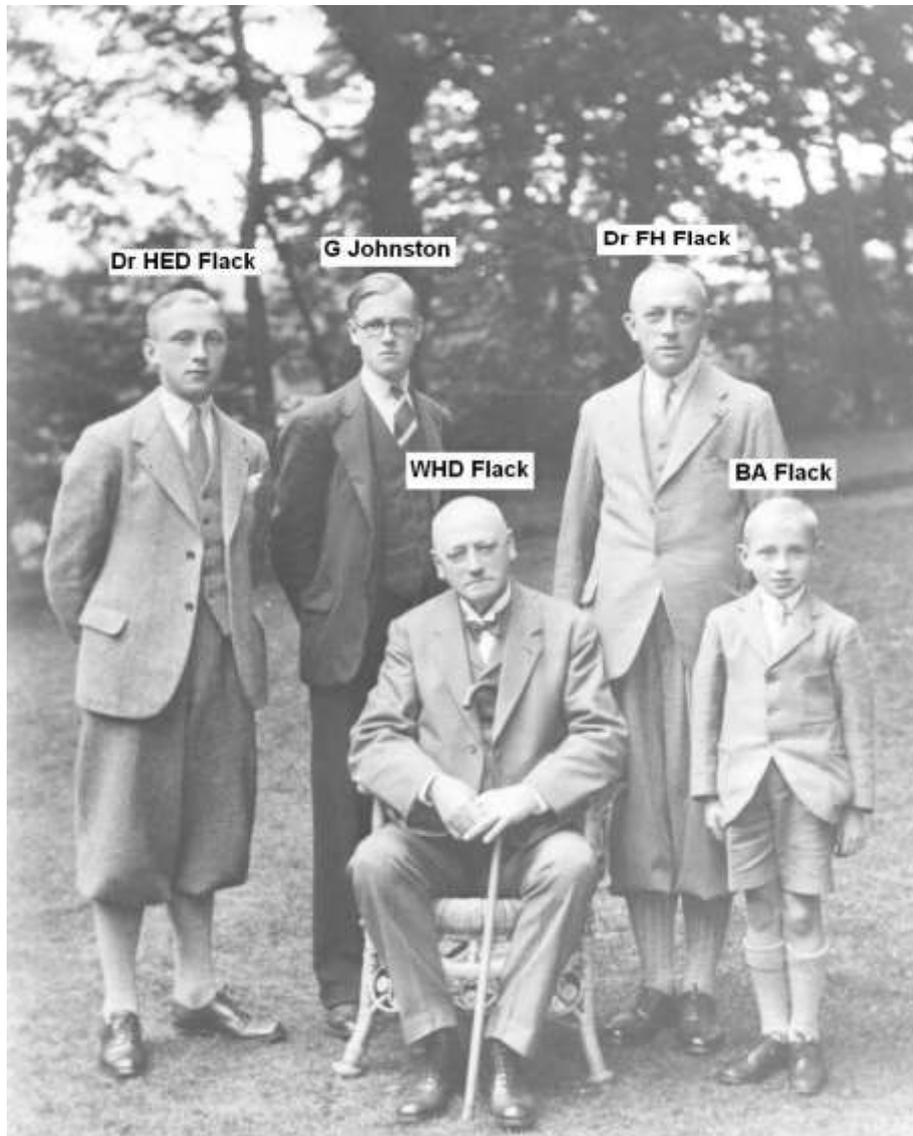
On 3 February 1924, Harry and Alice’s second son, Bertram Anthony Flack was born in Burnley. No doubt their new born son was named “Bertram” after his father’s recently deceased brother, Dr Bertram Flack, who had tragically died in the Flu Epidemic in 1919, aged just 37.

During the 1920’s and 1930’s, Harry’s wider family had begun the practice of taking their summer holidays in the Isle of Man. It’s not entirely clear why they chose the Isle of Man, however it is reasonable to presume that they may have been introduced to the Isle by Harry’s aunt, Francis Elizabeth Moore, nee Flack and her husband John Moore, whose family came from the Isle of Man.



By 1932, Harry's father, William Henry Douglas Flack, aged 82 was in frail health.

A family get-together at "Brookside" near Burnley in 1934 provided a great opportunity for family photographs.



On 10 March 1936, Harry's father William HD Flack passed away at his home at Woodside. He had been the dominant patriarch of the family and his death and the coming war changed the familiar patterns of life for his children.

Much of Harry's father's considerable estate had already been distributed but Probate was granted on 9 April 1936 as follows:

**FLACK** William Henry Douglas of Brookside **Burnley** died 10 March 1936 Probate **London** 9 April to Lucy Flack and Mabel Flack spinsters. Effects £8036 12s. 3d.

A significant portfolio of shares, including shares in the Manchester and County Bank (in which Harry's father had risen to senior levels), were placed in trust with the family's firm of solicitors in Burnley. Harry was appointed one of the Trustees and generous provision were made for Harry's sisters, Mabel and Lucy Flack.

It was in this period shortly after the death of Harry's father, that Harry, Alice and the two children, Henry Edmund Douglas Flack and Bertram Anthony Flack, moved their home from Burnley to Southport in Lancashire. In the 1939 UK Household Survey, conducted as part of the war preparations, Frederick Henry and Alice Flack were listed as living at 40 Blundell Drive Southport. The family oral history suggests that Dr Harry retired from medical practice when he moved to Southport.

During the war, Dr Harry Flack volunteered as an Air Raid Warden and his role is remembered by telling his grandchildren how the German bombers sometimes released their bombs along the coast near Southport because they navigated to their targets in Liverpool using the coast line and the moon's reflection on the sea.

In their later years, Dr Flack and Mrs Flack led a quiet and relatively simple life, enjoying occasional golf and gardening. Harry Flack was a member of the Royal Birkdale Golf Club, not far from their home.

On 8 July 1955, Alice Flack nee Cockshutt died, aged 65, at Southport.

On 22 December 1961, Dr Frederick Henry Douglas Flack, known as "Harry", died at Hesketh Nursing Home. Probate was granted as follows:

**FLACK Frederick Henry of 40 Blundell Drive Southport Lancashire died 22 December 1961 at Hesketh Nursing Home 14 Park Avenue Southport Probate London 19 March to Bertram Anthony Flack officer of H.M. Foreign Service and Harry Nicholas Roberts solicitor. Effects £49517.**

So ended the lives of my grandparents. I had got to know them reasonably well as a young school boy as a result of staying with them at 40 Blundell Drive during short holidays from Terra Nova, my boarding school, when for some reason, my parents were not able to travel up from Aldershot. I also sometimes stayed with my Granny Flack's brother, great uncle Edmund Cockshutt, and great aunty Freda at their home in Macclesfield.

I remember my Granny Flack as a kind and gentle person with a rather retiring manner, but someone who despite being seemingly always busy, always had time to engage with her grandchildren. She particularly liked to play cards with me on the kitchen table. Other things I remember her for was her habit of collecting packaging. She would keep and store brown paper bags, rubber bands, silver paper and the tin-foil tops of milk bottles, etc. - with the explanation "waste not want not"!

I remember "Bompa Flack" as a rather gruff man who seemed to hold that old-fashioned attitude to children "to be seen but not heard". He liked to watch a lot of football on television and did not like being disturbed. My parents said that with them he displayed a good sense of humour and that he was much admired in Burnley and Nelson as a caring local doctor.