

## FreeCEN Newsletter – January 2022

Hello All

Welcome to the newsletter for the month. Many of our co-ordinators have been taking breaks over the last few weeks, so only just the 14 completed pieces to report this time, about 50,600 entries between them. Details at the end of this newsletter.

Special thanks to Mike Simpson and his team as the months updates includes the completion of the Dorset census for 1871, all pieces for this year now fully transcribed, and uploaded

The next newsletter is due to be emailed out by February 3rd. Anything you have for this newsletter needs to be sent to me by February 1st.

We need your contributions for these newsletters; otherwise there will not be much to put in them. Anything related to the census welcome. Is there anything you want to see in these newsletters, let me know as it may be possible to make that happen. Address for contributions, suggestions and so on is [cmahoney@orcon.net.nz](mailto:cmahoney@orcon.net.nz)

### Whittle Springs

(From Merle Drury)

I am currently transcribing RG12\_3365 - Burnley Lancashire and came across Mr James Billington, Cotton Spinner, born in 1856 in Whittle Springs, Lancashire (Folio 46/26 Schedule 166 No 15 Cable Street.)

166	15	2	James Billington	Head	Mr	1856	Cotton Spinner	1	Whittle Springs
			Frances	Wife	M	1856	Chapman	2	Roade

No trace of Whittle Springs in either Free CEN or Genuki gazetteers sent me to Uncle Google where I found the attached link to the history of Whittle Springs - a Spa founded in 1836 and a Brewery, long since gone.....

## ***The Rise and Fall of Whittle Springs Brewery***

A brief history of the rise and fall of the Spa and Brewery at Whittle Springs.  
by J. Jackson.

At that time (1836) a certain John Heyes was boring for coal on the land he owned alongside the Leeds and Liverpool Canal on Lower Lane Whittle (Lower Lane has since been named Dark Lane). He was an astute and wealthy business man the son of a calico manufacturer. His residence, Gorse Hall, on the old Chorley to Blackburn road, was a typical 18th Century gentleman's residence, stone built with three floors. Sadly, apart from an old archway within a broken wall, nothing is left for the house was demolished in 1970. There is however a wonderful contemporary description: "Gorse Hall is pleasantly situated, commanding one of the most extensive, beautiful and picturesque views in the county. To any Gentleman fond of field-sports it is most central, encompassing hunting, coursing and fishing in its immediate neighbourhood."

Before long the boring in Lower Lane had reached the depth of 90 yds. A silver Denarius of Roman origin had been discovered, with Hygeia on the obverse of the coin - a singular find in the circumstances, denoting not only a Roman past but portending somehow, in the figure of Hygeia goddess of health, the Spa that was to come. At this point in time, water started to gather in the workings and, following an accident of some sort, the project was abandoned.

In 1841, an effort was made to clear the blockage in the borings, but this resulted in an even greater flow of water. When it was realised that the workmen had accidentally tapped a spring, the borings were once again abandoned - and there the story might have ended.

Legend has it however, that some years later, in December 1845, John Heyes was out for a days walking in the Whittle area with William Brigham of Foxley House Lymm. The two friends stopped and drank from the spring water still bubbling from the old coal workings. Brigham, who happened to be an F.R.C.S, noticed the strange medical taste of the water and offered to have it analysed. It must be borne in mind that at this time, spas and healing springs were all the rage. It would have been a dull man indeed who did not realise the potential of a medicinal spring and, as has already been noted John Heyes was nobody's fool.

A Mr. Davies, a lecturer in Chemistry at Manchester University, duly analysed the water sample sent to him by Mr. Brigham. He confirmed its alkaline content, much to the delight of the two men involved, for the springs containing carbonated alkali are rare and are almost entirely free of earthy substances.

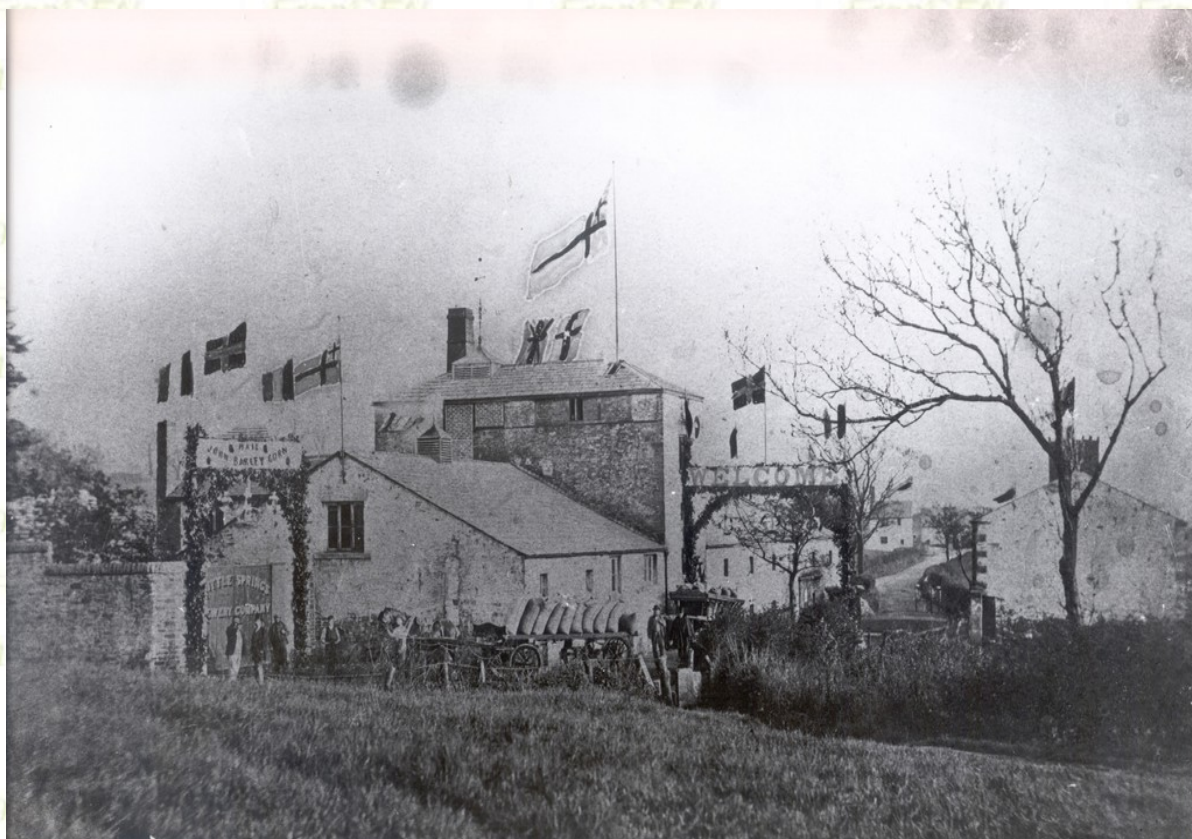
John Heyes lost no time in enclosing the source of the spring water with a circular stone building topped by a dome shaped roof- a structure much resembling that surrounding the Teewit well in Harrogate. Inside three steps, wide enough to sit on ran all round the inside of the building and led down into the water.. The latter bubbled from a 9" pipe in the centre of the floor at 50 gallons a minute before being drained, initially into a horse trough on Lower Lane and from there into the canal.

Judicious publicity and word of mouth brought several thousand visitors, to taste the spring water, in the first two weeks of the spring being open to the public. To the poorest the water was free, the rest paid a penny. By the September of 1846, only nine months after the springs discovery, news of its beneficial nature had reached as far as Liverpool. A gentleman writing in the Liverpool Journal extolled the spring saying he preferred it to either Cheltenham or Harrogate, he likened the water to that found at Baden-Baden and recommended it those, "afflicted by bilious complaints, rheumatism, ulcers of the lower extremities, scrofula or to those who have acquired a relaxed system by residence in the Indies." Apparently the water, whether taken internally or applied externally, was equally beneficial.

A further spring was found "some 100yds away" a chalybeate spring this time. Unfortunately there is now no means of telling the exact location of this spring and in case, it was the alkaline spring that received all the attention.

For more information on Whittle Springs, and the source of this information, refer to [http://www.boydharris.co.uk/whittle\\_le\\_woods/wlw011.htm](http://www.boydharris.co.uk/whittle_le_woods/wlw011.htm)





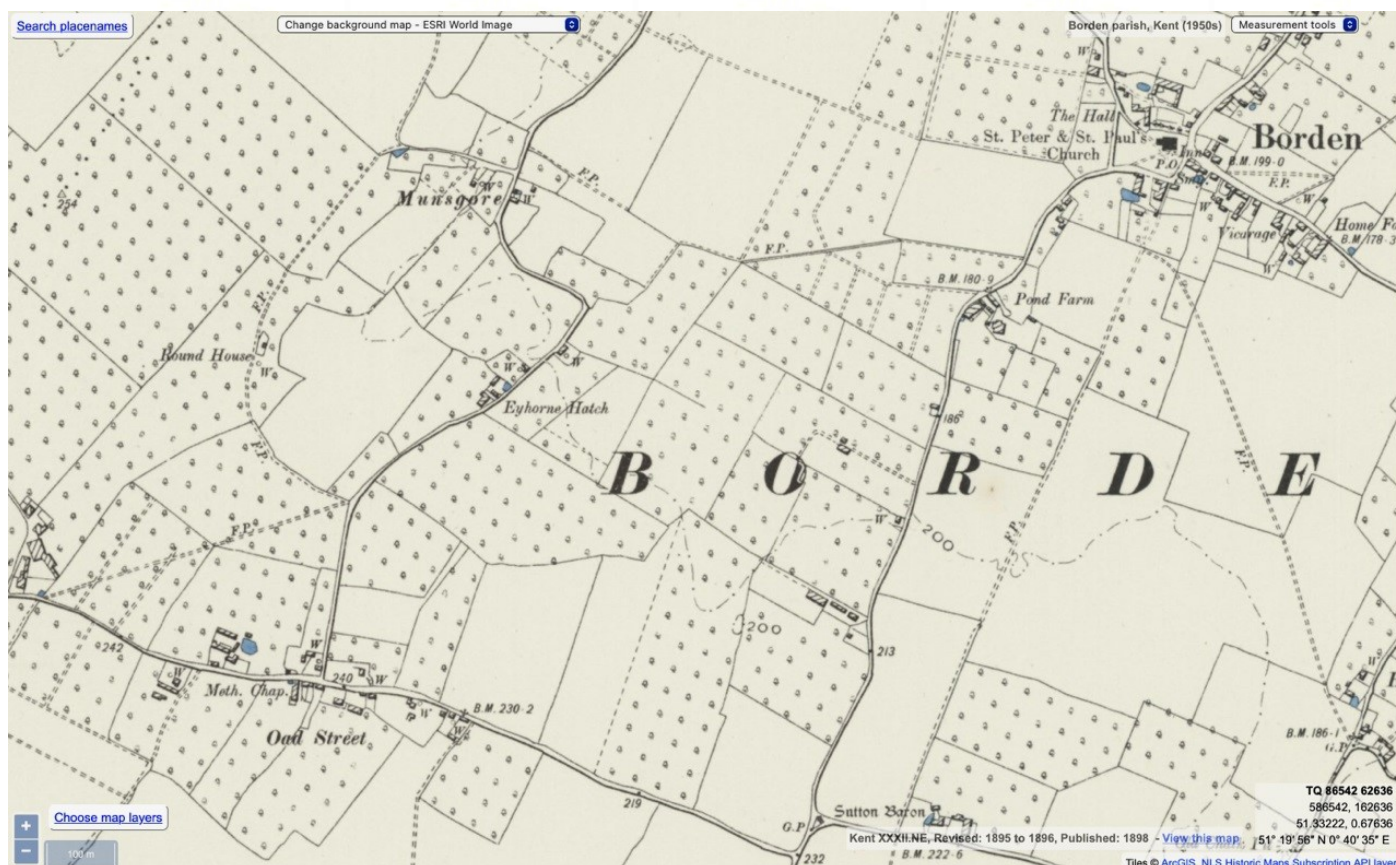
(Whittle Springs Brewery – photos from <https://redrosecollections.lancashire.gov.uk> 1st photo taken around 1872)

## Authoress Primogene Duvard

(From Darrell Drury)

I am just transcribing the 1871 census for Borden and came across a forgotten Kentish Authoress - Primogene Durvard. What first alerted me to her was her address (Eden Hut??) and her unusual name (sch no 27 on census page attached).

27	Eden Hut, Oak St. Road	1	Primogene Duvard	Head	Woman	21	Authoress	Widow	Leeds
----	------------------------	---	------------------	------	-------	----	-----------	-------	-------



Following article from a local newspaper comes from:

<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/sittingbourne/news/sorry-tale-of-the-author-of-mary-tudor-238152/>

Jane Austen, the Brontes, George Elliot, Mary Shelley, Elizabeth Browning and ... er ...

One quickly runs out of names when trying to think of famous female authors and poets before the 1900s, let alone Kent ones.

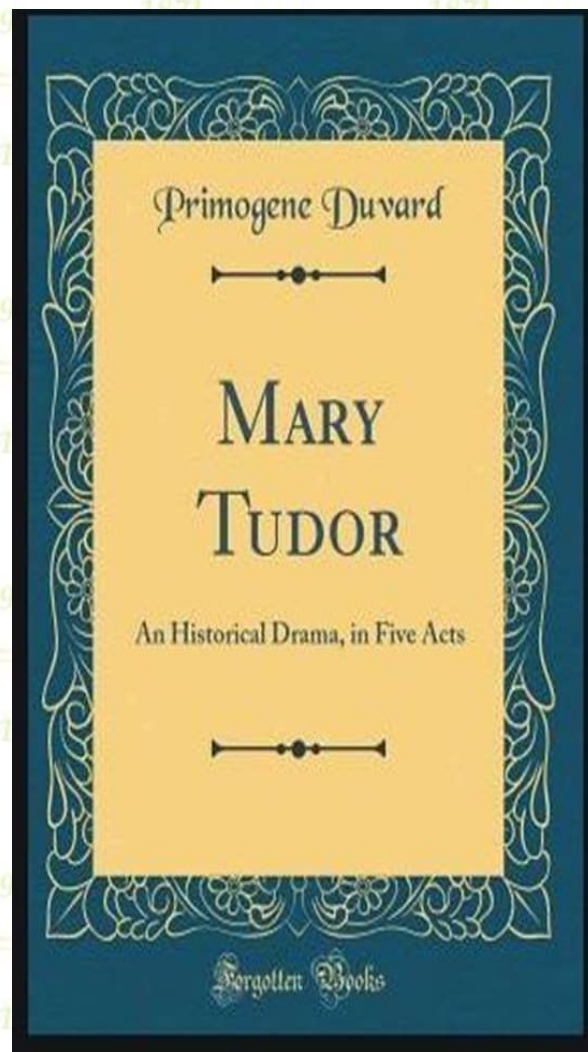
And that makes it all the more sad that a Kentish author and poetess is so grossly overlooked.



Primogene Duvard may possibly have been born in Allerton, Yorkshire, in 1823, but her mother, Frances, came from an old Borden family named Wise, and Primogene was certainly living in the village in the 1870s when her most famous works were published by the [Sittingbourne](#) company H.T.Tidy. She ended her days at Pond Farm in Borden in 1877, aged only 54.

She wrote two highly successful historical plays: *Flora MacDonald*, a drama in three acts, and *Mary Tudor*, a drama in five.

In addition there were several volumes of poetry, including *The Angel Of Death*. Many of her works are still in print today.



Despite this, she spent much of her life in poverty. In December 1947, she and her mother published an appeal in the *London Daily News* asking for assistance.

It read: "Mrs Duvard and her daughter, Primogene Duvard, authoress of several publications, having become through a variety of circumstances over

which they have no control, reduced to a state of utmost distress, solicit the aid of their friends to relieve their present difficulties, and enable them to recommence business for themselves in future.

"Mrs Duvard has during a period of 10 weeks suffered severely from sciatica and acute rheumatism, which threatens to disable her through the winter, and as she is somewhat advanced in life and afflicted with other serious complaints, and Miss Duvard's health will not admit her of obtaining a livelihood entirely by her own exertions due to the illness of her mother."

### **Pieces Uploaded Since Last Newsletter**

County	Year	Piece	Place		Entries
Dorset	1861	RG9_1335	Wimborne	Alderholt, Blagdon, Boveridge, Boveridge Heath, Brockhampton, Chettle, Cranborne, Edmondsham, Farnham, Gussage All Saints, Gussage All Saints, Holwell, Mannington, Monkton, Oakley, Tollard Farnham	3,978
Dorset	1891	RG12_1641	Wareham	Branksea Island, Langton Matravers, Studland, Swanage, Worth Matravers	4,197
Essex	1891	RG12_1409	Colchester	Lexden, Mile End St Michael	4,453
Essex	1891	RG12_1422	Braintree	Bocking, Bocking Church Stre, Bradwell, Panfield, Pattiswick, Stisted	5,168
Gloucester	1871	RG10_2648	Quenington	Quenington	441
Northamptonshire	1871	RG10_1473	Towcester	Easton Neston, Greens Norton, Tiffield, Towcester	4059
Northamptonshire	1871	RG10_1504	Kettering	Broughton, Cransley, Glendon, Harrington, Loddington, Orton, Rushton, Thorpe Malsor	2,313
Northamptonshire	1881	RG11_1595	Peterborough	Peterborough, Minster Precinct	4,166

Suffolk	1861	RG09_1151	Stradbroke	Denham, Fressingfield, Hoxne, Syleham, Wingfield	3,802
Yorkshire - West Riding	1861	RG9_3528	Goole	Snaith	4,749
Yorkshire - West Riding	1871	RG10_4427	Halifax	Northowram	2,775
Yorkshire - West Riding	1871	RG10_4515	Hunslet	Hunslet	4,383
Yorkshire - West Riding	1871	RG10_4519	Holbeck	Churwell, Beeston	3,318
Yorkshire - West Riding	1871	RG10_4526	Bramley	Bramley	2,854

#### Important Notes:

- If the piece number has a letter after it, then this suggests that the upload only contains particular districts within the piece, not all of the districts that make up the piece
- If a place name is followed by a county code, then this indicates that this place is actually in that county, not the county the piece is listed under

#### FreeCEN1

The last reported update to our old website at <https://freecen1.freecen.org.uk/> took place on July 6th. Further updates to this website have, as of now been discontinued, and as of now, any new uploads of completed pieces will take place on FreeCEN2 only.

It is expected that, at some point the old website will be taken off-line.