

Among papers given to me by Nicholas Man is the following recollection of James Matthews by one of his Man nieces. Unfortunately the writer is not identified, but I believe it is Katherine Rosa Crosthwaite.

Grandpa Matthews when I first remember when I was 5 was a very old gentleman with a small beard in an overcoat with a wide beaver collar. I don't remember ever speaking to him. He lived in a beautiful house in town 21 Manchester Square and a lovely country house at Halleford on the Thames called Lawn Cottage. We all spent Xmas at Manchester Square. There was a fascinating footman called Samuel with a spotty face who used to carry me on his shoulders. There was also a cook called Mrs. Gill. She made very tall ice cream puddings and on Xmas night there was always a large dinner party for the grown ups and we children used to hang over the banisters and watch with watering mouths the delicious course carried in across the hall --- On Xmas afternoon the family assembled, hordes of them, in the large double drawing room and the presents were given away in a different manner each year. On one occasion the curtain separating the two rooms were drawn aside and hanging from the ceiling was an enormous stocking bulging with presents and labeled 'Uncle Webber's gouty leg'. Uncle Webber and Auntie and A. Torie all lived at Manchester Square. My only other recollection was my young sister Dolly aged about three years dressed in blue and spangles suddenly appearing from behind and enormous laundry basket to give away presents.

I expect this is perfectly untrue but I remembered it was whispered among us children that grandpa once sold knives on London Bridge. History does not relate how he eventually became a partner with Mr. Grindlay and _____ Grindlays bank and they were the most important people and sat in a glass 'case' when you went to 54 Parliament Street. Grandpa was succeeded by his son uncle Jim and on his death Eric and Trevor Matthews my cousin.

Grandpa died at Brighton where we were staying in rooms there, and Mother came and told us and we felt full of awe, A. May (Mary Caroline Man) terrified me in the middle of the night by suddenly shrieking out 'here he is' and said that he was standing at the foot of our bed!! We didn't go the funeral, but the scarlet collars and cuffs on our best grey dresses were replaced by black ones.

Extracts from Reverend Morrice Man's Diaries:

She [Katherine Jane (Morrice's mother)] was the youngest daughter of James Matthews 1839-1897 senior partner of Grindlay & Co the bankers in Parliament Street. They were a typical well to do Victorian family. His house, 21 Manchester Square just opposite Lord Hertford's, now the Wallace Collection was a social centre of some interest and mark. He was immensely hospitable and liked good music, the theatre and clever people. Around him he gathered interesting people - Shirley Brooks (Editor of Punch) was a regular visitor and often wrote verses for the great Christmas dinner gatherings. Marie Tempest, C. Hoey and Ellen Terry being very young all acted in private theatres there. Mark Lemon, Sir Augustus Harris and many others belonged to a circle of people who gathered around my grandfather at Manchester Square. To us children it was a name to conjure with. He loved children and every Xmas filled his house with nephews and nieces and grandchildren. How my dear Aunt Torie (Victoria) who was his housekeeper when Grandma Matthews died ever got us all in and our elders I cannot understand. It was a big

corner house (and is) and every nook and cranny was filled with relatives and children. We always had a children's play each year, for which we were coached long before (I remember Beauty & The Beast especially). And there was a visit to the Drury Lane Pantomime. My grandfather had worked his way up from junior clerk to Senior Partner in Grindlay's and after his marriage lived in Wimpole Street. He brought up his family there until he went to No 21.

My father began life as a Clerk in Grindlay's (I cannot imagine him a Clerk and Charles Lamb's words to his Grandfather apply tenfold to him, 'What didst thou in an office? thy gibes thy jokes'). He soon fell in love with the partner's youngest daughter, Catherine Jane. Visits were exchanged between the ladies of Halstead and Wimpole Street. My father was sent in to India where he joined the Uncoremartex Service and then (eventually) the Bar.

The holidays were fun though especially the Christmas holidays in Manchester Square. Grandpa flanked by his daughters Aunt Tory & Victoria and her eldest sister Mrs. Webber D Harris and her husband General Webber Harris retired from the Indian Army - a veteran of the siege of Delhi.

James Matthews died at Hove in rooms when Hubert, Harry & I were staying there with him and A[unt]T[orie]. For a long while he used to walk when in London from his rooms to Grindlay's until he was 80. AT used to get Mrs. Man's servant to follow him surreptitiously, the old man was independent indeed and would have been furious had he known he was followed. At Hove his walks became shorter and shorter, Harry Hubert and I used to go with him onto the front, one of us on each side of him. One morning I noticed his weight on my shoulder; it was the beginning of the stroke. His breathing as he lay dying was loud and we listened to it; painful to hear but I have since learned from doctors that when that happens it means that the patient is unconscious and has no pain.