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officially granted on March 5, 2007

A Royal Gift in the Family Tree

The Cockshutt - Asprey Connection

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In April 2016, A distant relative, David Egan, contacted me about my Cockshutt family research and asked what I might know about Elizabeth Egan, the wife of Nicholas Cockshutt (1863-1903) and our Granny Flack's grandfather.

I wrote back explaining that all I knew about Elizabeth Mary Cockshutt, nee Egan (1876-1947) was that she appears on the 1911 Census as wife of Nicholas Cockshutt, Barrister at Law, aged 47, married 8 years with two children born to present marriage, living at 23 West Cliff Road, Preston. I also noted that there is listed a third child in the family – Nicholas McKelvie Cockshutt, son aged 16, suggesting that Nicholas had a previous marriage. There were three servants living in the house.

David Egan later wrote back to me sharing the results of his subsequent research and inquiries made with relatives as follows:

"Elizabeth Egan Cockshutt, called Bessie, lived at The Red House, Sutton Green, Guildford, Surrey with her husband Nicholas who died in 1938 age 75, she had the following printed in The Tablet:

"MR. N. COCKSHUTT: Mr. Nicholas Cockshutt, of The Red House, Sutton Park, Guildford, died at his home on January 9th.

The second son of the late Joshua Cockshutt, cottons-pinner, of Preston, Mr. Cockshutt was born in 1863 and was educated at Ampleforth. His mother was Margaret, daughter of Nicholas Hayes, of Browndedge, Preston, and sister of the late Rev. James Hayes, S.J., Rector of Farm Street, and of the late William Hayes, the founder of the firm of Hayes and Finch.

Mr. Cockshutt practised for some years as a Barrister on the Northern Circuit, but later became a solicitor at Guildford. He was keenly interested in public affairs, and twice, in 1910 and 1923, contested Rochdale as a Conservative. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Patrick Egan, of Tullamore, who survives him together with one son and four daughters. The Requiem and funeral were at St. Edward's, Sutton Park, on the 11th."

Their eldest daughter, Evelyne Cockshutt born 1905, married in 1937, the widower Philip Rolls Asprey M.C., of the famed ASPREY'S jeweller's, 167 Bond Street, London and their youngest sister Aileen, age 34, married Philip Rolls Asprey's cousin Harry Asprey, in 1947. Their sister Judith Maureen 'Billie' Cockshutt married Commander Brian Toller Whinney. Their step brother was Nicholas McKelvie Cockshutt, later an engineer, born in 1894. He became Lieut N.M. Cockshutt of the Royal Army Service Corp, 1914-1921. Unsure of the where-about of the fourth daughter?

Maurice Asprey and his first cousin John Rolls Asprey successfully ran the Asprey business for a number of decades. As a young man Maurice Asprey visited Ireland touring the auction houses. On one occasion, in the mid 1960's, stayed in Tullamore whilst attending a dinner party hosted by Henry (Harry) Egan, nephew of Bessie Egan and his wife Betty Egan. Maurice was in high spirits after successfully buying a long sought after, antique wooden rose bowl with inlaid solid Irish silver.

Maurice's father, Philip Roll's passed away in 1980, aged 86.

That same year, Asprey's was almost acquired by Dunhill, the luxury goods group, after a bitter feud spilt the family. One faction was keen to sell but John and other supporters retained control by buying out the dissenting shareholders. Fifteen years later The Independent newspaper headlined the following:

'End of an Asprey era: Two hundred-year tradition over as 'Queen's gift shop' passes into foreign ownership'.

John Asprey sold the family Asprey Jewellers to the Sultan of Brunei's brother Prince Jefrei in 1995 for £243million.

Philip's widow Evelyne Asprey, passed away in 1985, age 81

The Egan's, Cockshutt's and Asprey's are buried at St. Edward the Confessor's Catholic Church in Sutton Green, Guildford, Surrey.

Elizabeth Egan born in 1876, 2nd daughter of Patrick Egan, a wealthy Irish merchant and brewery owner in Kings County. Elizabeth (Bess) finds her father dead on the floor of his office in 1897. Marries Nicholas Cockshutt in 1903. After Patrick's death the family moved to Dublin – I suspect Nicholas may have had some business to attend to in Dublin where they met? Interestingly a legal row erupted in the Egan family in 1918 for control of the family business – one of the outcomes was the 'Cockshutt Settlement.'

Elizabeth Egan (b.1876) married Nicholas Cockshutt (1863–1938) in 1903. Nicholas practiced law as a Barrister on the Northern Circuit before becoming a solicitor in Guildford. He stood unsuccessfully on two occasions for the Conservative Party in the constituency of Rochdale in the 1910 and 1923 British General Elections. By coincidence, in the same year, his wife's first cousin Patrick (Pat) Egan was elected as a member of the 4th Dail having been successful as a Cumann na nGaedheal TD for Leix-Offaly in the 1923 Irish General Election. He subsequently lost his seat in 1927.

Elizabeth Egan and Nicholas Cockshutt had a son and three daughters one of whom, Elizabeth Evelyn Mary, married Philip Rolls Asprey in 1937. A second daughter, Aileen, married Philip's cousin Harry Asprey in 1947.

Philip and Elizabeth Asprey had two sons, Maurice and John Asprey. Asprey of New Bond St., London continue to hold a Royal Warrant as Jewellers since 1862. However Maurice Asprey at age 41 and his father Philip and Mother Elizabeth agreed in 1979 to sell their remaining interest in the business which is currently owned by a US Private Equity Firm.

Elizabeth Egan's and Nicholas Cockshutt's third daughter Judith Maureen "Billie", married a man by the name of Whinney. Her death notice was published in The Telegraph in 2006:

"WHINNEY Judith Maureen "Billie" (née Cockshutt) aged 96. Much loved mother of Sarah and Martin, grandmother and great grandmother, peacefully on 20th March. Requiem Mass and burial at 2 p.m. on Thursday 30th March at St Edward's, Sutton Park, Sutton Green, Nr. Guildford". Maureen Whinney was a shareholder in the malting company Egan-Tarleton Ltd when it entered voluntary liquidation in the late 1970's."

Naturally, I was delighted to receive this very interesting story and wanted to ensure that the facts were verified as far as possible.

Readers will no doubt appreciate that it takes a while to work out all the family relationships in David Egan's story but an examination of original sources has helped. These are set out below.

The following sources were found to support most elements of the story:

- Birth registration of Elizabeth Mary Egan, daughter of Patrick Egan and Elizabeth Moorehead, born 29 September 1876 at Tullamore, Kings County, Ireland.

Elizabeth Mary Egan	
in the Ireland, Select Births and Baptisms, 1620-1911	
Name:	Elizabeth Mary Egan
Gender:	Female
Birth Date:	29 Sep 1876
Birth Place:	Tullamore, Kings, Ireland
Father:	Patrick Egan
Mother:	Elizabeth Egan Moorehead
FHL Film Number:	255964

- Nicholas Cockshutt's marriage to his first wife, Mary Alice Whittam (1866-1897) who died on 29 October 1897 at Fylde, Lancashire.

CLO-COH] MARRIAGES registered in October, November, and December 1893.

Name	District	Vol.	Page
Cockshutt, Nicholas	Chorley	8 e	821
Cockshutt, Albert	Blackburn	8 e	686
Cockshutt, Elizabeth Ann	Lancashire	8 e	405
Cockshutt, Jonathan	Wolstanton	8 h	149
Cockshutt, Emily Mary	Wolstanton	8 h	149

Nicholas Cockshutt

in the England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915

Name: Nicholas Cockshutt

Registration Year: 1893

Registration Quarter: Oct-Nov-Dec

Registration district: Chorley

Parishes for this Registration District: [View Ecclesiastical Parishes associated with this Registration District](#)

Inferred County: Lancashire

Volume: 8e

Page: 821

Records on Page:

Name
Robert Barker
Elizabeth Bennett
Nicholas Cockshutt
Mary Alice Whittam

- The Burial Registration for Nicholas Cockshutt's first wife, Mary Alice Cockshutt nee Whittam dated December quarter 1893.

COB-COL] DEATHS registered in October, November, and December 1897.

Name	Age	District	Vol.	Page
Cockshutt, Mary Alice	31	Fylde	8 e	470

Name: Mary Alice Cockshutt

Estimated Birth Year: abt 1866

Registration Year: 1897

Registration Quarter: Oct-Nov-Dec

Age at Death: 31

Registration district: Fylde

Parishes for this Registration District: [View Ecclesiastical Parishes associated with this Registration District](#)

Inferred County: Lancashire

Volume: 8e

Page: 470

- The birth registration of Elizabeth Mary Egan, the second wife of Nicholas Cockshutt

Elizabeth Mary Egan
in the Ireland, Select Births and Baptisms, 1620-1911

Name:	Elizabeth Mary Egan
Gender:	Female
Birth Date:	29 Sep 1876
Birth Place:	Tullamore, Kings, Ireland
Father:	Patrick Egan
Mother:	Elizabeth Egan Moorehead
FHL Film Number:	255964

- The 1903 marriage of Nicholas Cockshutt to his second wife, Elizabeth Mary Egan (known as "Bess")

Despite extensive searches in the UK's Government Record Office Marriage Registers for the period 1897 (the year of the death of his first wife Mary Alice Cockshutt nee Whittam) and 1904 (the year of the birth of Elizabeth Evelyn Mary Cockshutt), no record of a marriage for Nicholas Cockshutt and Elizabeth Egan (1876-1985) could be found. Similar searches in Ancestry, FindMyPast and FamilySearch were similarly unsuccessful.

As noted above, the 1911 Census records show that Nicholas Cockshutt, aged 47, married, head of the household, Barrister at Law and born in Preston, Lancashire was resident at 23 West Cliff Preston on Census day with Elizabeth Mary Cockshutt, aged 34, married, wife of 8 years with 2 children living, born Tullamore, Ireland and three children, Nicholas McKelvie Cockshutt, son, 16 years, Elizabeth Evelyn Mary Cockshutt, Daughter, aged 6 years, born Lytham, Lancashire and Judith Maureen Gau Cockshutt, Daughter in Law aged 2.

As the 1911 Census Collector recorded that Nicholas and Elizabeth had been married for 8 years, it might be assumed, first that Nicholas McKelvie Cockshutt was a son of Nicholas Cockshutt's previous marriage and second, that since Elizabeth Mary Cockshutt, Nicholas' wife, was born in Tullamore in Ireland, and David Egan's family story states that the couple met in Dublin, it is possible that Nicholas and Elizabeth married in Ireland, possibly explaining why no marriage record of their marriage can now be found.

- Birth Registration of Elizabeth Evelyn Mary Asprey, nee Cockshutt, the daughter of Nicholas Cockshutt and Elizabeth Mary Cockshutt nee Egan.

199 BIRTHS registered in October, November, and December 1904. [COC-COL

	District	Vol.	Page
Cockshutt, Alice	Burnley	8e.	238
Elizabeth Evelyn M.	Fylde	8e.	561

Elizabeth Evelyn M Cockshutt

in the England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837-1915

Name:	Elizabeth Evelyn M Cockshutt
Registration Year:	1904
Registration Quarter:	Oct-Nov-Dec
Registration district:	Fylde
Parishes for this Registration District:	View Ecclesiastical Parishes associated with this Registration District
Inferred County:	Lancashire
Volume:	8e
Page:	561

- The 1937 Marriage Registration of Elizabeth Evelyn Mary Cockshutt nee Egan (1905-1989) and the second wife of Philip Rolls Asprey (1894-1980)

COC-COE MARRIAGES REGISTERED IN JANUARY, FEBRUARY AND MARCH, 1937.

Names of persons married.	District.	Vol.	Page.
Cockshutt, Edwin	Ferry	Hitchin	3 a 1973
Cockshutt, Elizabeth E.M.	Asprey	Surrey N.W.	2 a 696

Elizabeth E M Cockshutt

in the England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916-2005

Name:	Elizabeth E M Cockshutt
Registration Date:	Jan-Feb-Mar 1937
Registration district:	Surrey North Western
Inferred County:	Surrey
Spouse:	Philip R Asprey
Volume Number:	2a
Page Number:	696

From this information the following family tree can be constructed.

Elizabeth Evelyn Mary (known as "Evelyne") Asprey, nee Cockshutt died in 1985 and was buried at St Edward The Confessor Catholic Church Sutton Green, Guildford, Surrey, England



The following official notice National Probate Calendar for 1985 states that she died on 29 July 1985.

ASPNEY, Elizabeth Evelyn Mary of Sutton Green Hse Sutton
Green Guildford died 29 July 1985 Probate London
13 November £1121236 85511157940

The following is an extract from the from [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asprey), the free online encyclopedia.

"History

Foundation

Asprey was established in England in Mitcham, Surrey, in 1781. Founded as a silk printing business by William Asprey, it soon became a luxury emporium. In 1841, William Asprey's elder son Charles went into partnership with a stationer located on London's Bond Street. In 1847, the family broke with this partner and moved into 167 New Bond Street, the premises Asprey occupies today.

From its central London location, Asprey advertised 'articles of exclusive design and high quality, whether for personal adornment or personal accompaniment and to endow with richness and beauty the table and homes of people of refinement and discernment.' An early speciality was dressing cases. Asprey

crafted traditional cases and designs, mostly in leather, suitable for the new style of travel ushered in by railways. The main competitors at the time were H.J. Cave & Sons. Asprey was recognised for its expertise when it won a gold medal for its dressing cases at the International Exhibition of 1862, but it lost out to its rivals, H.J. Cave & Sons, in 1867.

The company consolidated its position through acquisitions. In 1859, Asprey absorbed Edwards, a maker of dressing cases and holder of a Royal Warrant. The company also purchased the Alfred Club at 22 Albemarle Street, which backed on to the New Bond Street store and meant that Asprey now had entrances on two of London's most fashionable streets.

20th century

As the business grew, the company acquired manufacturing facilities and hired silversmiths, goldsmiths, jewellers and watchmakers including Ernest Betjeman, the father of the distinguished poet John Betjeman, one of the most highly regarded craftsman and designers of his day. In the 1920s, commissions poured in from around the world, from American millionaire J. Pierpont Morgan to potentates such as the Maharaja of Patiala, who commissioned a huge teak travelling trunk for each of his wives, in which each trunk was fitted with solid silver washing and bathing utensils with waterspouts of ornate tiger head and lined with blue velvet. Asprey cigarette cases became collectable amongst young sophisticates who delighted in its other modern products, including travel clocks, safety razors and automatic pencil sharpeners.

Key dates

- 1781 Asprey begins trading as William Asprey in Mitcham, Surrey
- 1847 Asprey flagship store opens on New Bond Street, London
- 1851 Asprey receives an 'Honourable Mention' at the Great Exhibition for their lady's dressing case with 'Annie' cipher.
- 1862 First Royal Warrant granted by Queen Victoria
- 1889 Edward VII grants the second Royal Warrant to Asprey
- 1925 HM Queen Mary commissions a necklace, later given to HRH Princess Margaret on the occasion of her 18th birthday
- 1930 Maharaja of Patiala commissions five trunks, one for each of his five wives
- 1973 Bespoke chess set is commissioned for Ringo Starr's birthday
- 1975 Asprey received the Queen's Award to Industry by Queen Elizabeth
- 1990 Asprey and Garrard merge
- 2002 Asprey and Garrard split."

I found the story fascinating and I hope readers do too.

On reflecting about the lives of Joshua Cockshutt's (1840-1916) family, it is instructive to an understanding of their lives to remember that his family included:

- His granddaughter, Elizabeth Evelyn M Cockshutt who married Captain Philip Rolls Asprey M.C. from the wealthy and well connected Asprey family;
- A younger son, Joseph Cockshutt (1875-1950) also became a solicitor in Preston;
- A brother-in-law, Father James Hayes (1839-1907) who was a Jesuit Priest in Preston;
- His second son, Nicholas Cockshutt (1863-1938) who became a solicitor, a local government Councillor for Lytham, Lancashire and stood as a candidate for Parliament;
- His daughter's brother-in-law, Maurice Asprey (1893-1916) who was killed in the First World War in 1916 aged just 23;
- His oldest son, Edmund Cockshutt (1862-1904), who died in the poor house in Kingston, Jamaica, the father of our grandmother, Alice Flack;
- His grandson, Captain Edmund Meredith Cockshutt (1893-1964) who was severely wounded in the First World War;
- His granddaughter, Alice Mary Flack, nee Cockshutt (1890-1955) who subsequently married Dr Frederick Henry Flack our grandfather.

No doubt a most interesting family connection with the Aspreys. My thanks to David Egan for putting me on the hunt for "a Royal Gift in our Family Tree".