

Braunds in Nineteenth Century Kent

Branches 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 15

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I have been looking at all Braunds in Kent during the nineteenth century, using on-line census and birth, marriage and death data. I used the two main sources (Ancestry www.ancestry.co.uk and Find My Past www.findmypast.com) and combined the census information, noting that there are – in some years – discrepancies between the two. The search engines for the censuses are clearly unreliable though, especially I think for 1891 and 1901 – as I found additional families by following up individual births (using Ancestry). The usual caveats apply to this account as clearly I have not worked from original documents.

Early Years

In 1841, there is one Braund family, living in the High Street at Dartford, a market town near the River Darent. Head of the family is William Braund (branch 8), watch/clockmaker, his wife Elizabeth, and their four children. His brother, George Braund is also present, giving a total of seven Braunds in Kent. William was born in Lawhitton, Cornwall in 1799. William and his brother, who was also born in Lawhitton, were in Dartford as early as 1838. In 1851, the total is four Braunds and it is William's family again. We learn that he is a master watchmaker, now a widower, living at 41 High Street, Dartford, with three of his children:- James Sim Braund, Elizabeth Sim

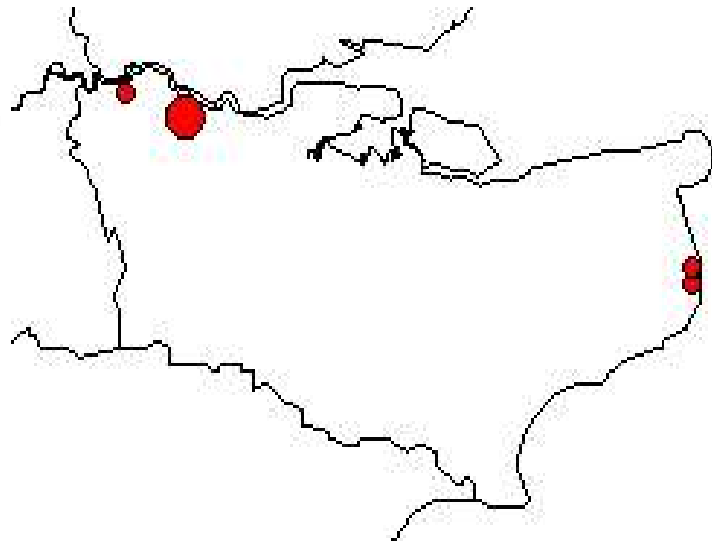


**William Sim Braund,
son of William and
Elizabeth of Dartford**

Braund and Jean Sim Braund. The 1851 census records them all as born in Lawhitton like their father but I think this smacks of a busy recorder as later or separate records show them born in Dartford. As the eldest, William Braund, is nineteen in 1851, this would put the family in Dartford as early as 1832. What happened to the children? The eldest, William, is no longer in Kent in 1851 but can be found as a pupil to a land agent in Leominster. Later we find him in 1891 in Fulham, London, unmarried and described as a retired sheep breeder. By

1901 he is living near Bodmin in Cornwall. As for the other children, we find marriages for Elizabeth Sun Braund (sic) in Dartford, Q3 1860; for James Sim Braund in Woolwich Q2 1869 and for Jean Sim Braund in Lewisham Q3 1867. The 1901 census has a James Sim Braund, born in Dartford, and wife Bessie, living in Veryan, St Austell, Cornwall, living on his own means.

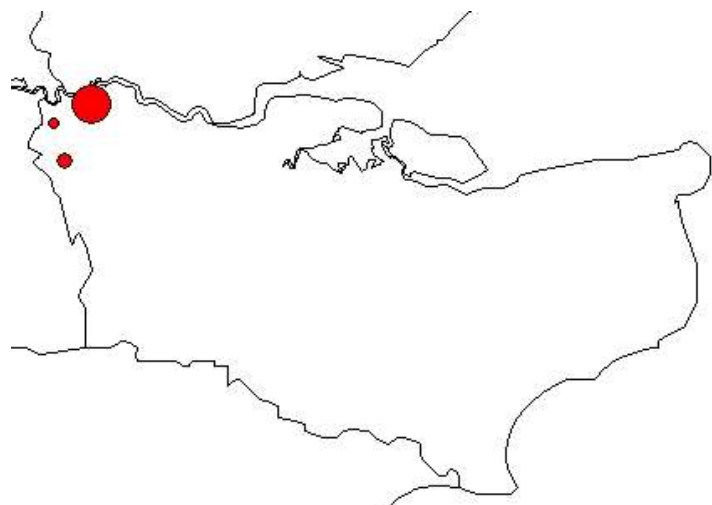
By 1861, the total is back to seven Braunds in Kent as a whole. We can still identify William, now at 42 High Street, Dartford, with his second wife, Alison, and his daughter Jean. (Elizabeth Braund, his first wife, died in Q4 1841). His brother George is at 50, High Street, Plumstead, a growing village closer to London, we find James H



Distribution of Braunds in Kent in 1861

Braund, aged 42, an accountant, who was born in Exeter. He is described as married but his wife is not at home. In addition, John Braund (branch 1), born in Ireland, is a visitor in Deal, aged 25, an inland revenue officer and William Braund (branch 15), aged 29, born in Tiverton, Devon, and an army sergeant, is in his barracks at Walmer.

Moving onto 1871, there are still just seven Braunds in the county as a whole. We lose sight of William the clockmaker but gain sight of Marwood Kelly Braund (branch 1) and his family, living at Plumstead, with his wife Elizabeth and their five children. Marwood was born in Exeter and is aged 41. We see



Distribution of Braunds in Kent in 1881

them again in 1881, with six children, living at 5 Upper Park Villas, Plumstead. Also in Plumstead at The Grange are James Braund, the accountant and his wife Maria, both aged 63, with two children (and two “stepchildren”). James and Marwood are half-brothers – two sons of the appropriate ages are found in Exeter in the 1841 census with their father George Braund, a linen draper. We also, I think, rediscover William Braund, now described as a retired watchmaker and living in Bromley with a third wife, Jane. Finally, James Braund, aged 23, is living in Lewisham and is a banker’s clerk. He is a son of James and Maria as he is described as a stepbrother to the head of the house who has the same surname (Ori) as one of the stepchildren in James’ household. Thus in 1881 there were fifteen Braunds in Kent.

An Interesting Discovery

Numbers remain steady in 1891 at fifteen according to the broad census search but new and different families appear. In particular, I have learnt something new about my own family. I already knew that my grandfather, John Braund (branch 1), came to Swanley, Kent as a market gardener and was lodging there in 1891. I was speculating why John made the journey from Holsworthy to Kent and surmised that it was to find work, with the expansion of horticulture in Swanley and the surrounding area at that time. This may well be true but what I also find in the census for this year is that members of his family were already in the area.

At Bexley, we find John’s brother, Henry Braund, aged 27, a tailor, with his wife Rosa and daughter Eleanor. Furthermore, their older half-brother William Braund (from the marriage of their father Marwood Braund to his first wife, Ann Jewell), aged 40, is also in Bexley, with his wife Eliza and five children. All three brothers were born in Holsworthy, Devon. Perhaps the



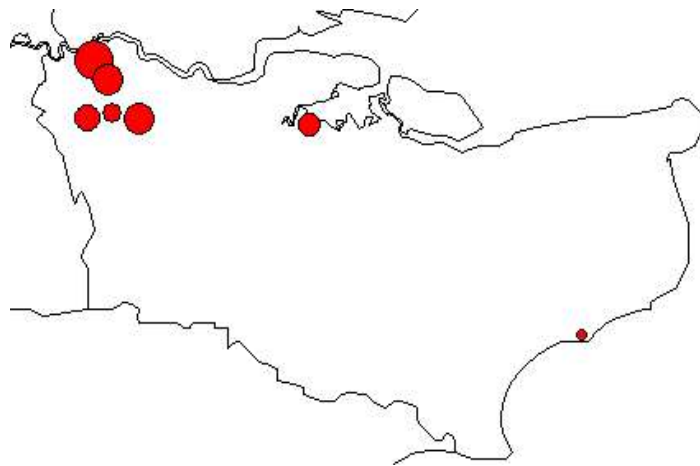
Henry and Rosa Braund and family

presence of family members already in Kent gave John the added impetus to move. In other parts of Kent, we find Edwin Braund (branch 6) (who does not know his birthplace) and his wife, at Walmer (near Deal on the coast); he is aged 33 and a school principal. Bartholomew Braund (branch 7), born in Milton Damerel, Devon, aged 21, is a soldier at Gillingham and Thomas Braund (branch 1), a photographer, aged 24, born in Camborne, Cornwall is a boarder in Folkestone.

However, the census search does not reveal the whole story. I checked Braund births in Kent for the period 1839—1901, finding thirty three in the records, plus there are clearly three more for William the clockmaker prior to 1839. I was able to allocate most of these to a family already identified from the census and/or to a death record. However, I was left with some “orphans” which I then searched for in “all records” and as a result found additional families in the census. For some reason these did not appear from my Braund/Kent global search. So, in 1891 we find William Braund (branch 15) and his wife Sophia, living at 58 Eglinton Road, Plumstead. William is a carpenter, aged 55 and they have seven children. Four of these were born in Kent but the oldest three were born in America, West Indies, Gibraltar respectively. We also find Eliza Braund, wife of Marwood Kelly Braund, who died in 1890, at 58 Heavitree Rd, Plumstead, with five children 18-25 in age. And next door at number 56 is her eldest son, Marwood Leonard Boyd Braund, a solicitor like his father, wife Lizzie, and 7 month son Marwood Kelly Braund (who sadly dies in 1894). So the Kent total for 1891 is thirty three.

The Turn of the Century

By 1901, the number of Braunds has expanded to twenty seven, based on census data. Three of the families mentioned for 1891 account for nineteen of these, with John Braund in Swanley married to Florence Lilly Blessed and now with five children – they would go on to have fourteen in all; Henry and Rosa



Distribution of Braunds in Kent in 1901

Braund have three children and are now in Bickley (near Bromley) and William and Eliza Braund have four sons. They are living at 58 High Street Bexley. I surmise that it is their daughter, Lilian Braund, who is visiting at 60 High St Bexley, an assistant school mistress, aged 19. Elsewhere, Marwood L Braund, solicitor, aged 41, is now in Footscray, with his wife Lizzie and 8 year old son Henry Benedict Braund. In Gillingham we find Josiah Braund (branch 2), a chargeman, aged 28 (born in Buckinghamshire)¹ with his wife Charlotte and his brother Harry Braund aged 24. Emma J Braund (branch 4), aged 25, born in Bideford, Devon, is a servant in Sevenoaks and William Braund (branch 2), aged 26, born in Appledore, Devon is a boarder in Gillingham.

But again, following up other available records reveals more. William H Braund and Sophia remain at the same address in Plumstead with four of their children still at home (and revealing that the eldest, Albert was born Quebec). Their eldest son, William H Braund, is married to Lily and at 162 Herbert Road Plumstead. And Eliza Braund remains in Plumstead with three of her children. So the overall total for 1901 is thirty nine Braunds in Kent as a whole.

As the 20th century unfolded, the sons and daughters of my grandfather, John Braund settled in Swanley and the surrounding area.

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¹ This is a typical example of census errors. Josiah was, in fact, born in Bucks—as in Bucks Mills and this has incorrectly been assumed by the enumerator to be Buckinghamshire.