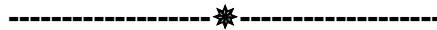


The Copeland family and their Jerrold connections

- 1 Robert Copeland (1765-1842)
- 2 William Robert Copeland and Elizabeth Sarah Jerrold
- 3 Children and grandchildren of William Robert Copeland and Elizabeth Sarah Jerrold
- 4 The Fitzwilliams and the theatre
- 5 Copelands of Bampton, Oxfordshire
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Who were the Copelands? Although they were closely linked to the Jerrolds for three generations there is little said about them in any of the four biographies of Douglas Jerrold.

Robert Copeland (1765-1842) worked closely with Douglas Jerrold's father, Samuel. **Walter Copeland Jerrold**¹ relates in his biography of Douglas that at the end of the eighteenth century Douglas Jerrold's father Samuel was an actor with the Dover Company of Players:

'The actor who had the Dover circuit at that time was Robert Copeland – of the Copelands of Belnagon, co. Neath [sic] – whose son [ie, William Robert Copeland], born in 1799, was also to become an actor in due course and to marry a daughter [ie, Elizabeth Sarah Jerrold, elder brother of Douglas] of Samuel Jerrold'.

In a second marriage between the two families, Douglas Jerrold's son Thomas Serle Jerrold married his cousin, **Jane Matilda Copeland**, daughter of **William Robert Copeland** and Elizabeth Sarah Jerrold.

Five generations of the family are shown on the next page. Those underlined in this tree denote my own line.

1 Robert Copeland (1765-1842)

Robert Copeland was the manager of theatres in Dover, Deal and Sandwich, adding the Theatre Royal, Margate to the circuit in 1802. According to an early website of this theatre he managed it from 1799-1803 and from 1811 to 1816. The Margate theatre is still active and claims to be the second oldest in England.

Robert was the son of **William Copeland** and Mary Fell and was born at Bampton, Oxfordshire (see Section 5 below). According to the local parish registers he had at

¹ Walter Copeland Jerrold, 1914. Douglas Jerrold, Dramatist and Wit. Hodder and Stoughton. 2 vols. (Vol. 1, p 9). http://www.archive.org/stream/douglasjerrolddr01jerr/douglasjerrolddr01jerr_djvu.txt

least six siblings. **Robert** married Ann Longfellow on 12 July 1791 in St Mary's, Dover and their children **William Robert Copeland** and his four siblings were all christened there between 1792 and 1801. **Robert** died in 1842².

William Copeland of Bampton and four generations of his descendants

William Copeland of Bampton b. 1729, d. 20 Jun 1824, Bampton, Oxon
 +**Mary Fell** b. 1734, Bampton, Oxon, m. 24 Nov 1754, Bampton, Oxon, d. 26 Feb 1807, Bampton, Oxon, par. Robert Fell and Rachel Beechey
 |-----**Benjamin Copplin** c. 28 Mar 1756, Buckland, Berkshire
 |-----**Elizabeth Copeland** b. Cir 1757
 |-----**Benjamin W Copeland** c. 26 Dec 1759, Bampton, Oxon, d. Dec 1800, Chinnor, Oxon
 | +Sarah Crook c. 1 Sep 1754, Cuxham, Oxfordshire, m. Bef 1787, d. 1797-1800
 | |-----**Six children**
 | |-----**John Coplin** c. 30 Sep 1761, Bampton, Oxon
 | |-----**Robert Copeland** b. 1765, Bampton, Oxon, d. 17 Apr 1842, Kensington RD
 | | +**Ann Charlotte Longbottom** c. 11 Sep 1763, St Botolph Without Aldgate, London, London, England, m. 12 Jul 1791, Dover,
 | | |-----**Mary Ann Copeland** c. 13 Jul 1792, Dover, d. 1873
 | | |-----**Thomas Copeland** c. 6 Jul 1794, Dover
 | | |-----**Charlotte Copeland** c. 10 Apr 1796, Dover
 | | |-----**William Robert Copeland** b. 1799, Dover, d. 29 May 1867
 | | | +**Elizabeth Sarah Jerrold** b. 1797, Brackley, Northants, m. 18 Jan 1835, Manchester Cathedral, d. 24 Jan 1863, Liverpool, parents Samuel Jerrold and Mary Ann Reid
 | | | |-----**Mary Ann Copeland** c. 9 Oct 1829, Douglas, IoM
 | | | |-----**Frances Catherine Copeland** b. 1831, Lancaster, d. 13.2.1909, Hampton, Middx.
 | | | |-----**Maria Elizabeth (Henrietta?) Copeland** b. 1832, Ulverston, Lancashire, d. 28 Mar 1919, Toxteth Park
 | | | | +**Frederick William Molineux** b. 18 Apr 1844, Birkenhead, m. 1869 Q1, Liverpool
 | | | |-----**Douglas Copeland** c. 26 Feb 1834, Kendal, Westmorland,
 | | | |-----**Jane Matilda Copeland** b. 1835, Lancaster, d. Jan 1909, Kingston
 | | | | +(**Charles**) **Thomas Serle Jerrold** b. 4 Jul 1833, Little Chelsea, m. 20 Jul 1858, Walton on the Hill, | Everton, d. Jan 1907, Surbiton, parents Douglas William Jerrold and Mary Ann Swann
 | | | | |-----**Rev. Percy Copeland Jerrold** b. 24 Jan 1859, St Peters Kent (Isle of Thanet), d. 10 Feb 1933, Saskatchewan
 | | | | |-----**Mildred Elizabeth Copeland Jerrold** b. 15 Jun 1860, Bovey Tracey, Devon d. 31 Jan 1959, Creston, BC, Canada
 | | | | |-----**Harrold Copeland Jerrold** b. 1861 Q3, Kingston, d. 1864 Q1, Lambeth
 | | | | |-----**Lucy Francis Copeland Jerrold** b. 1864, d. 1878 Q2, Fulham
 | | | | |-----**Walter Copeland Jerrold** FZS b. 3 May 1865, Liverpool, d. 27.10.1929
 | | | | |-----**Mary Copeland (May) Jerrold** b. 21 Oct 1866, Liverpool, d. 1.10.1936, Creston BC
 | | | | |-----**Cyril Copeland Jerrold** b. 1869 Q1, Bracknell, d. 1935 Q2, Battersea
 | | | | |-----**Dorothy Copeland Jerrold** b. 13 Jul 1871, Hartley Wintney, Hampshire, d. 1967
 | | | | |-----**George Edwin Copeland Jerrold** b. 1874 Q2, Brentford, d. 1874 Q2
 | | | | |-----**William Robert Copeland (Bob) Jerrold** b. 1877 Q2, Fulham, Shepherds Bush d. 24 Mar 1949, Vancouver
 | | | | |-----**Infant Jerrold** b. Bef 1878, England
 | | | |-----**Kathleen Stafford Copeland** b. 1839, Sheffield, d. 1910 Q1, London
 | |-----**Frances Elizabeth (Fanny) Copeland** b. 26.7.1801, Dover, d. 11.9.1854
 | | +**Edward Fitzwilliam** b. 8 Aug 1788, Holborn, m. 2 Dec 1822, d. 30.3.1852
 | | |-----**Ellen Fitzwilliam** b. 1823, d. 1860
 | | |-----**Edward Francis Fitzwilliam** b. 1.8.1824, Deal, d. 20.1.1857, Brompton
 | | | +**Ellen Morvan Chaplin** b. 1822, Bath, m. 1853 Q4, d. 19 Oct 1880, NZ
 | | |-----**Kathleen Mary Fitzwilliam** b. 13 Nov 1826, London, d. 6 Jan 1894
 | | | +**Charles Edward Withall** b. 1821, Lambeth, m. 1854, d. 23 Mar 1886
 | | |-----**Nellie Fitzwilliam** b. 1828 ?
 |-----**Ann Copeland** c. 4 Dec 1767, Bampton, Oxon
 |-----**Mary Ann Copeland** c. 3 Aug 1777, Bampton, Oxon, d. 5 Apr 1816, Henley
 | +**John Strange** c. 17 Apr 1778, m. 12 Oct 1801, d. 9.2. 1845, Henley

² Death notice in Hampshire Advertiser, 23 April 1842

2 William Robert Copeland and Elizabeth Sarah Jerrold

William Robert was **Robert's** fourth child. He married Douglas Jerrold's sister Elizabeth Sarah. Elizabeth Sarah Jerrold was first married to Robert Lambe in 1815. They probably had at least one child together:

John Charles Lamb,
c: St Martins in the Fields, s of Robert Lamb and Elizabeth Sarah, c 16 Aug 1818
bur: John Charles Lambe, bur St Pauls Covent Garden, 21 May 1820, aged 2 years

From 1829 Elizabeth gave birth to at least four children by **William Robert Copeland** before marrying him in Manchester Cathedral in January 1835, by when she was pregnant with **Jane Matilda jr.** Perhaps her first husband Robert Lambe was still living until January 1835, but then died, leaving her free to marry again. No record of Robert Lambe's death has been found. **William** and Elizabeth had six children:

- Mary Anne, born 1829, was unmarried in 1861 but may have married a few years later.
- Frances Catherine, born 1831 died 1909, was a teacher and did not marry.
- Maria Elizabeth, born 1832 married Frederick Molyneux, who was an iron foundry manager in Birkenhead. She had at least two children and died in 1919.
- Douglas was born in 1834 but there are no further records.
- Jane Matilda, born 1835 – see below.
- Kathleen Stafford, born 1839 was a piano teacher and died unmarried in 1910.

[William Robert Copeland](#) is described as a comedian in the 1841 census, when he was living at St Leonard's, Hythe, with **Elizabeth** and four of their children. By 1851 he was manager of the Royal Amphitheatre, a large theatre in Liverpool. According to Wikipedia he 'became the lessee and manager of the Theatre Royal, Liverpool and proprietor of the Royal Amphitheatre, Liverpool (1843). He also managed the Strand Theatre, London, which he called "Punch's Playhouse", from May 1851 to May 1852', and his other interests are well described in his obituary (Appendix 1).

William Robert was clearly successful and his estate was valued at 'less than £20,000', a considerable sum³. His daughters **Maria Elizabeth** and **Kathleen Stafford Copeland**, who at the time of his death were living in Hampton, Middlesex, were executors. **William** and Elizabeth Sarah are buried at [Toxteth Park Cemetery](#)⁴, Smithdown Lane, Liverpool, one of the first of the imposing Victorian municipal cemeteries but sadly their headstone has collapsed, like many others there. Their unmarried daughters **Kathleen** (a professor of music) and **Frances Catherine** (a teacher of elocution) lived quite peripatetic lives and ultimately retired together on the Edgware Road.

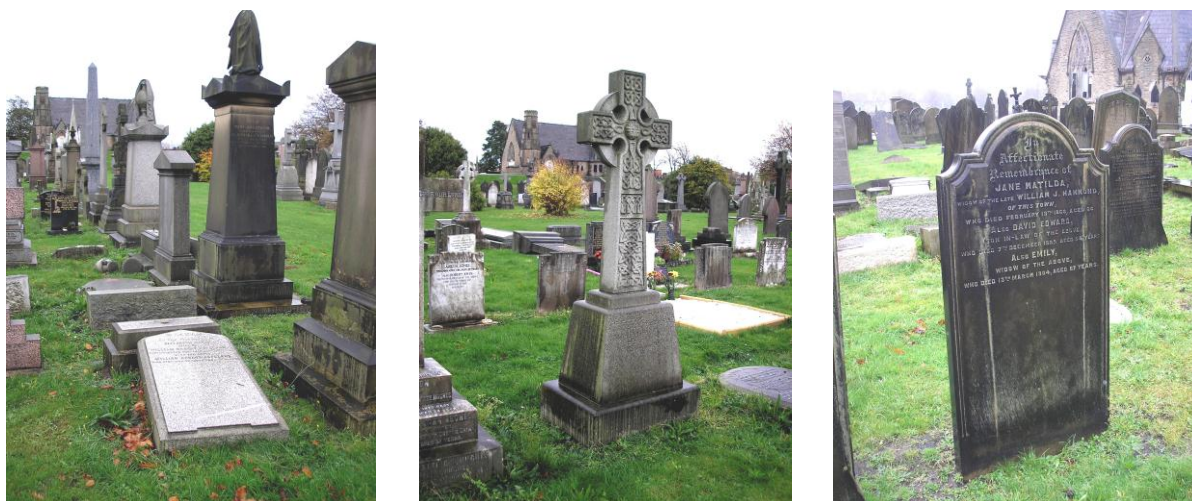
There are several other family graves at Toxteth Park Cemetery:

- Jane Matilda Hammond, née Jerrold, sister of Douglas and Elizabeth Sarah.
- Henry Holbrey Hammond, son of Jane Matilda Jerrold and William John Hammond.

³ Index of Wills is on www.ancestry.com.

⁴ Also see <http://www.toxtethparkcemetery.co.uk/>

- John and Letitia Molyneux (and others of this family), parents of Frederick Molyneux who married **Maria Elizabeth Copeland**, third child of **William** and Elizabeth Sarah Copeland.



Graves in Toxteth Park Cemetery, Liverpool. L to R:
 William Robert and Elizabeth Sarah Copeland (eldest sister of Douglas Jerrold)
 Henry Holbrey Hammond (1833-1908), (son of William John and Jane Matilda Hammond)
 Jane Matilda Hammond (elder sister of Douglas Jerrold)

3 Children and grandchildren of William Robert Copeland and Elizabeth Sarah Jerrold

3.1 Jane Matilda Copeland

Jane Matilda Copeland (1835-1909, christened 26 August 1835 at St Mary's, Lancaster) was their first child to be born in wedlock. She married her first cousin, Douglas Jerrold's younger son Thomas Serle Jerrold (1833-1907), so descendants of this marriage have a double dose of Jerrold and Copeland genes. (Thomas was actually christened Charles Serle Jerrold on 11 Aug 1833 at St George's Bloomsbury⁵, but seems always to have been known as Tom, obviously after his godfather, the dramatist Thomas Serle).

Thomas was named after Thomas J Serle, actor and manager, and close friend of his father. Douglas seems to have had difficulty getting him to focus on a career but eventually settled him as an apprentice in horticulture with the great landscape gardener Joseph Paxton, Head Gardener at Chatsworth House. Paxton would later be knighted for his design of the Crystal Palace (so named, incidentally, by Douglas Jerrold).

Tom and **Jane** wrote several books on gardening and particularly promoted vegetable growing⁶. In 1887 they followed their eldest son **Percy** to the Northwest Territories of Canada, managed a flower shop and, presumably, continued to write.

⁵ Original parish register entry available in the London parish register collection on www.ancestry.com.

⁶ (with Jane Jerrold). Household Horticulture (A Gossip About Flowers). Chatto and Windus. London. 1885. The Garden That Paid The Rent. Chatto and Windus, 1882. Our Kitchen Garden. date? Reprinted as 'Our War-time Kitchen Garden', Chatto and Windus, 1917.

They returned to live in Surrey sometime after 1901, died in 1907 and 1909 and are buried in the Jerrold tomb at West Norwood.



Jane Matilda Copeland (1835-1909)

Tom and **Jane** Jerrold had 10 or possibly 11 children, of whom seven survived infancy. Some of them were:

Percy Copeland Jerrold

Percy was born on the Isle of Thanet and, according to **Henry Jerrold Young**, travelled to Kiev as a boy or young man. He married Clara Lewis in Lambeth in 1887 and the couple immediately travelled to the North West Territories, where two children were born in 1888/9, in Qu'apelle, East Assiniboia, NWT, now Saskatchewan. Qu'apelle lies on the Trans-Canada highway, about 70 km east of Regina. **Percy** was an Anglican minister. The first child to survive, **Douglas Stafford Lewis Jerrold**, 1891-1977, lived and died in Alberta.

Percy and Clara had at least four other children who married:

- **Mary Matilda** married John David Theissen in 1925. They had three children and at least six grandchildren, one of whom, **Shawn McKee**, is a trades unionist and previous parliamentary candidate.
- **Emily Margaret** married her brother in law, William George Theissen.
- **Muriel Francis** married George Warren Wilcox in 1927. They had four children and at least 11 grandchildren.
- **Kathleen Lewis** married Thomas Lilburne Moore and had three children.

Mildred Elizabeth Copeland Jerrold

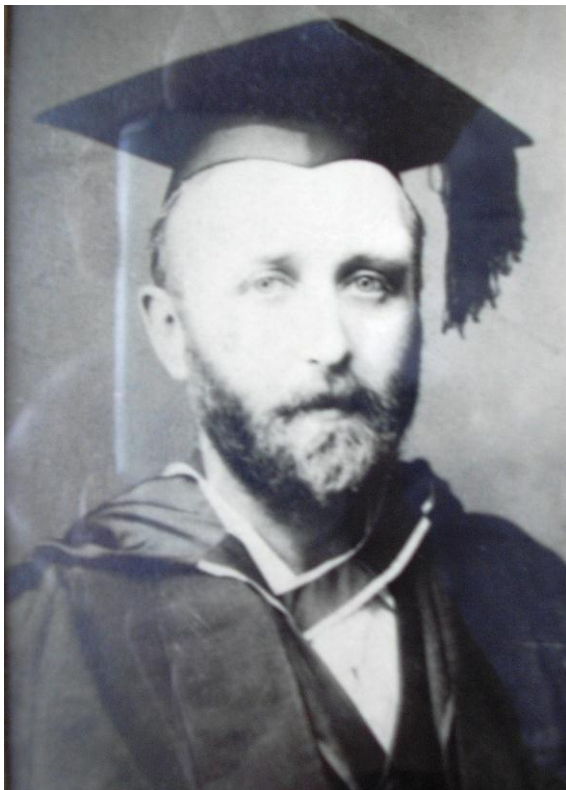
Mildred married James Henry Young, a government scientist and Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, in 1879. In 1881 they were living with their first born, **Roland**, in Hammersmith. Four more children had arrived by 1891, when they were living in Wandsworth. James Henry died suddenly in 1900, collapsing of heart failure

on a commuter train from Tooting to Waterloo. By 1901 **Mildred** and all her children had moved to Goodmayes, Ilford.

After seeing her eldest three children settled, she emigrated to Canada in 1907, taking her youngest, **Margaret** (16) with her. **Mildred's** brother **Rev Percy Copeland Jerrold** and younger sister **May** had already emigrated to western Canada and her parents, Tom and **Jane**, had also lived there for several years, before returning to England in about 1902.

Mildred had one grey eye and one blue, and was a formidable personality. At the time, emigration to British Columbia was promoted in England and parcels of land were made available to settlers to develop for fruit farming. From the east coast she travelled by train to Medicine Hat, Alberta, to stay with her brother, the **Percy** and then to Pincher Creek, Alberta to visit her sister **May** (see below). From there she travelled 120 m west to Creston, close to the US border, where **May's** daughter **Olive Clifford** had already settled. Here **Mildred** stayed, firstly working as a cook in a local mine, then buying some property, draining some swamp-land and planting an apple farm. She also ran a millinery shop. She lived in Creston for the rest of her life although she returned to England several times during her lifetime, staying with the Youngs at Havering-atte-Bower, Essex. She died in 1959 and is buried in the Pioneer Cemetery, Creston.

Her youngest daughter **Margaret** married within a few months of her arrival in Creston, in January 1908. She and her husband Andrew Miller both died of complications following the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918/19, leaving six children under 9! **Mildred** took responsibility for them initially and some were adopted by close relatives in British Columbia or England.



James Henry Young BSc FRAS, 1892



Mildred Elizabeth Copeland Jerrold, c. 1881?

Walter Copeland Jerrold

[Walter](#) was sub-editor of the Observer, 1892-1905; assistant-editor of the Londoner, 1900; on the literary staff of the Daily Telegraph, 1904-1914 and the Amalgamated Press, 1917-1920; and on the London Staff of the Glasgow Evening News, 1920-1926. He was a prolific author of popular biographies, children's book and travel books, including two in the 'Highways and Byways' series⁷. His wife Clara Bridgman wrote several books about Queen Victoria as well as travel books with her husband. They had five daughters, all named after Greek goddesses, and all of whom were cultivated individuals. Before WW1, the family lived in an imposing 18th century house, [Jessamine House](#), in Hampton, Middlesex, now demolished. Before the war some of the daughters lived and had a studio in St Johns Wood.

- [lanthe](#) was an author of mystery novels, listed [here](#). She married George Menges, whose brother Herbert was a distinguished conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra. They lived at [Cwmmau Farmhouse](#) in the Wye Valley, now National Trust.
- [Daphne](#) was an expert flower painter. She married Reggie Leefe, a designer at the Theatre Royal, Stratford and they had four boys in the 1930s. Her pictures still come up for auction occasionally.
- [Phyllis](#), Daphne's twin, was also an expert flower painter, book illustrator and embroiderer. She and *Daphne* lived outside Stratford-on Avon, as described by their neighbour of the 1950s on *Yvonne Jerrold's website*.
- **Hebe** lived in a little house at Little Tew, Oxford. She was a professional indexer, in the pre-digital age when this was a skilled and laborious process. I remember her as a very cultured and kind old lady. A short poem of Hebe's was reproduced in 1999 in an anthology of war poetry⁸.

Mary Copeland (May) Jerrold

For some reason **May** does not appear to have been baptized until after her marriage. Originally married to Egerton Clifford in 1884, she moved, probably after his death, to Canada in 1890. She settled in Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan (70 km E of Regina) and married Helmer Nathorst in 1892. They moved to Trail, B. C., then to Nelson, B. C. and finally to Pincher Creek, Alberta (115 m S of Calgary, in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, and 120 m E of Creston BC). Their daughter **Helen** married Owen Davidge and there are many cousins of that name in western Canada.

⁷ Other books, according to *Who Was Who*: Michael Faraday, Man of Science, 1891; W. E. Gladstone, England's Great Commoner, 1893, and other "popular" biographies; Oliver Wendell Holmes, 1893; Nonsense, Nonsense! 1901; Monograph on George Meredith, 1902; The Autolycus of the Book stalls, 1902; Charles Lamb, 1905; Thomas Hood: His Life and Times, 1907; Highways and Byways in Kent, 1907; Highways and Byways in Middlesex, 1909; Douglas Jerrold and Punch, 1910; The Danube, 1911; A Book of Famous Wits, 1912; Douglas Jerrold, Dramatist and Wit, 1918; Henry VIII and His Wives, 1925; (with M. H. Spielmann) Life of Hugh Thomson, 1929 (with Clare Jerrold); Five Queer Women, 1929; etc.; (as Walter Copeland) books for children; edited---The Bon Mot Series, five vols, 1893-1897; Voltaire's Candide, 1897; Thackeray, Lamb, Sterne, De Quincey, Emerson, Dickens, etc., in the Temple classics, Everyman's Library, and World's classics; Douglas Jerrold's Essays, 1903; Nursery Rhymes, Tales, and Fables, 1903-1912; Temple edition of Dickens's works; Thackeray's prose works; Hood's Poetical Works, 1906; The Book of Living Poets, 1907; The Nelson Touch, 1918; Epigrams, 1926; Blunders, 1928; etc.

⁸ A. Powell (ed.), 1999, *Shadows of War, British Women's Poetry of the Second World War*. Sutton Publishing, Guildford.



*A 1909 Christmas postcard from the Walter Copeland Jerrolds
Clockwise from top left: Phyllis, Daphne, Ianthe, Hebe, Clare, Walter, Althea*



*Ianthe Jerrold, by Bassano, 1936
© National Portrait Gallery, London*



A finely detailed painting by Daphne Jerrold

Cyril Copeland Jerrold

Cyril never married. In a Canadian census his occupation is given as teacher of the blind.

Dorothy Copeland Jerrold

Dorothy, who was christened as an adult at the same time as **May**, married Harry Barber and lived in Charmouth, Dorset. Passenger lists show that she visited Canada in the 1890s. She too was an artist and I purchased one of her landscape paintings at auction in 2009, entitled 'At Montreuil, France'. I also have a gilt Douglas Jerrold Memorial Cross on a heavy chain, which she gave to **Dulcie Young** and which **Dulcie** presented to me on my 21st birthday.



Douglas Jerrold memorial cross, inherited by Dorothy



Dorothy Copeland Jerrold by Rowland Henry Hill

William Robert Copeland Jerrold

William (1877-1949) is the only Jerrold in the BC records. He was with Percy's family in Medicine Hat in 1911 and 1916, but otherwise we have no record of his life or descendants, if any.

4 The Fitzwilliams and the theatre

As **Robert Copeland's** Wikipedia entry states, his daughter [Fanny Elizabeth Fitzwilliam](#) (*née Copeland*) became a famous actress, and her career is summarized in Wikipedia. Further information is [here](#). She played at many of the London theatres, in Dublin and in the US, and in 1832/3 managed the Sadlers Wells Theatre. In 1851 she acted in Douglas Jerrold's melodrama 'Black-eyed Susan' at the Haymarket. Her picture can be seen on the [Garrick Club](#) website.

In 1822 **Fanny** married the actor [Edward Fitzwilliam](#) whose pictures are also in the [Garrick Club](#) and the [National Portrait Gallery](#). His career is also summarized in Oxberry's Dramatic Biography⁹. Edward died in 1852 and **Fanny** in 1854. Their son [Edward Francis](#) was a prominent song writer. Her obituary (Appendix 2) relates

⁹ C. E. Oxberry, 1825. Dramatic Biography and Histrionic Anecdotes. George Virtue, London. (Vol 2).

that she was due to marry the prominent actor and theatrical manager [John Baldwin Buckstone](#)¹⁰ the next month.

The Wikipedia entries of **Robert Copeland** and of Buckstone both wrongly state that Buckstone then married **Fanny's** sister **Isabella Copeland**, an understandable misconception also found in Michael Slater's biography of **Douglas Jerrold**¹¹. The Dictionary of National Biography correctly says she was Fanny's cousin. **Isabella Copeland** married Buckstone in 1857 as his second wife and the marriage certificate shows that she was the daughter of **Joseph Copeland**, a gardener of Fingest, Buckinghamshire. This **Joseph** was the son of **Benjamin W Copeland** of Chinnor (Section 4 below). **Isabella** was actually therefore **Fanny's** first cousin once removed, rather than her sister although it is possible, of course, that she might have been a sister if adopted by **Fanny's** mother, Ann. There is one photograph of her in the primary collection of the [National Portrait Gallery](#). **Isabella** was only 18 when she married Buckstone, who was almost 55 and they went on to have 12 children! At least two of these, [John Copeland Buckstone](#) and [Lucy Isabella Buckstone](#) were also prominent actors in the late 19th century.

John Baldwin Buckstone wrote more than 150 plays and managed the [Haymarket Theatre](#) from 1853 to 1877. There is a portrait of him in the [Garrick Club](#) and several in the [National Portrait Gallery](#), including one by Daniel Maclise, who also painted the well-known portrait of Dickens as a young man. Buckstone's ghost famously still haunts the Haymarket Theatre and an appearance on stage that startled the actor Sir Patrick Stewart was reported in the [national press](#) as recently as 2009!

Several artistic personalities, famous in their time, are descended from Edward and Fanny Fitzwilliam. They include:

- [Edward Francis Fitzwilliam](#) (son, died young, composer and musician)
- [Kathleen Fitzwilliam](#) (daughter, actress and singer)
- [Sir Walter de Frece](#) (grandson, theatrical agent, entrepreneur and later MP for Ashton-under-Lyme and Blackpool). He married [Vesta Tilley](#), music hall star in WWI
- **Lawrence (Lauri) de Frece**, great-grandson, who married the actress [Fay Compton](#) CBE, sister of [Compton MacKenzie](#), author of 'Whiskey Galore'.



Lauri de Frece (1881-1921), a famous actor and comedian, and one of an extensive theatrical family. Great-grandson of Robert Copeland.

¹⁰ See also: <http://www.theatrehistory.com/british/buckstone001.html>

¹¹ M. Slater, 2002. Douglas Jerrold. Duckworth. (Appendix. p 284).

5 Copelands of Bampton

William Copeland and Mary Fell were married at Bampton on 24 Nov 1754. In addition to **Robert**, other children born to **William** and Mary **Copeland** recorded in the local parish registers¹² were:

- **Benjamin Copplin** c. 28 March 1756, Buckland, Berkshire (presumably died in infancy).
- **Benjamin W Copeland**, c. 26 Dec 1759, Bampton – later of Chinnor, see below.
- **John Coplin**, c. 30 Sept 1761, Bampton.
- **Ann Copeland**, c. 4 Dec 1767, Bampton.
- **Mary Ann Copeland**, c. 3 Aug 1777, Bampton - married John Strange in 1901. See below for details of the Strange family.



*St Mary's, Bampton, 12th century
(used in 2012 for the church scenes of 'Downton Abbey')*

As **William and Mary** named their first child, and probably their first two children, 'Benjamin', this is quite likely to be the name of William's father, according to the contemporary convention, and there is indeed a **Benjamin Copeland** in the Bampton burial register, dated 30 May 1756, aged 82 [ie, born 1674]. There are three entries in the baptism register that presumably relate to this Benjamin, but no entry for a William:

- 19 Apr 1723, Mary Copling d of Benj
- 23 Dec 1724 Sara Coplin d of Benj
- 20 Dec 1727 Ann Copling d of Benj

William was a witness at the marriage of Elizabeth Coplin to John Neal, Bampton, 8 July 1777. Elizabeth could possibly have been his daughter born 1757/8, when there is a gap in the sequence. **William** was also witness at four other marriages at Bampton between 1773 and 1819 and he was buried there in June 1824, aged 95 (ie, born 1729).

¹² Transcriptions of parish registers at the Society of Genealogists, London.

So far I have found no record of the birth of **William**. His wife Mary is probably the Mary Fell christened in Bampton, 25 Sept 1734, daughter of Robert Fell and Rachel Beechey.

An inscription on the grave of Mary Fell is recorded in Giles's *History of Bampton*¹³, Appendix XXII:

COPELAND, Mary wife of William Copeland. died Feb. 26, 1807, aged 73.

Unfortunately, most of the inscriptions on the Bampton tombstones have now eroded away. Giles has not recorded any inscription for William himself, who was buried in Bampton in 1824.

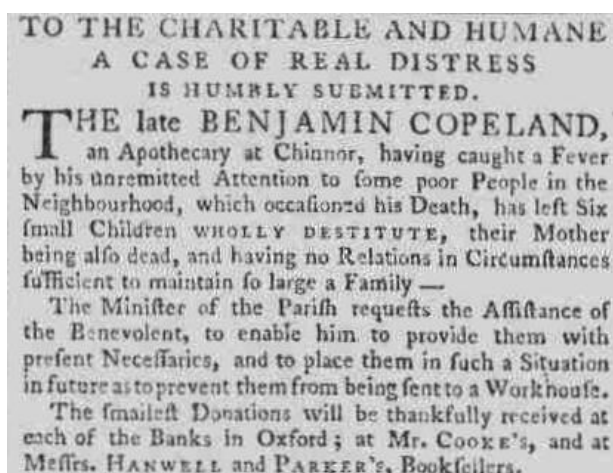
How can we be sure that the **Robert Copeland** of Dover is the Robert Copeland christened in Bampton in 1765? There are three separate pieces of persuasive evidence.

- **Walter Jerrold** biography, page 10: '...Robert Copeland's wife is said to have been a member of a Yorkshire family named Longbottom, with traditional descent from the family of Bishop Fell'. The connections seem actually to be slightly different; Robert's wife was indeed a Longbottom but the Fell connection is through Robert's mother rather than his wife. ([Bishop John Fell](#) (1625-1686) Dean of Christchurch and Bishop of Oxford and the son of [Samuel Fell](#), also Dean of Christchurch and vice-chancellor, was a leading figure in seventeenth century Oxford. Samuel Fell and his family lived at Longworth, which is where Bishop John Fell was born, about 4 km from Bampton. See Section 7, below, about the Fell family).
- **Caroline Copeland** (see below) appears in two census returns living with two of **Robert's** descendants. Both entries record that **Caroline** was a cousin and was born in Chinnor:
 - 1851: **Kathleen Fitzwilliam**, 24, born St Martin in the Fields. *Kathleen* was the daughter of *Fanny*, **Robert Copeland's** daughter.
 - 1861: **Mary Ann Copeland**, 67, born Dover, was **Robert's** eldest daughter, christened in Dover in 1792 (ages were commonly underestimated in the census returns).

6 Benjamin W Copeland, apothecary of Chinnor, Oxfordshire

Caroline Copeland was the daughter of the **Benjamin W Copeland** (b 1759, see above). **Benjamin** and his wife Sarah Crook's first child **William** was born at Bampton but the other five, including **Caroline**, in Chinnor, which is 27 miles to the east, on the Buckinghamshire border. Sarah died when or after the last child **Ann** was born in 1797 and **Benjamin** married secondly in 1800 Sophia Ramsbottom. Disastrously, **Benjamin** died later the same year leaving his new bride with six stepchildren aged between 3 and 13, and one newborn child of her own! In the Oxfordshire Records Office there is a bond of administration (in which **Benjamin** is described as an apothecary), by which Sophia relinquishes her rights to administer Benjamin's estate in favour of his creditors. A pathetic appeal on behalf of his children was published in the Oxford Journal, which says that Benjamin died ministering to the poor -

¹³ J A Giles, 1847. History of the Parish and Town of Bampton. J H Parker, Oxford. Available on www.googlebooks.co.uk.



Benjamin Copeland of Chinnor's children by his first wife Sarah Crook were:

- **William Crook**, b 1787
- **Robert** (1788-1851) – nine children
- **Joseph** (1790-1877) – ten children, the last married John Baldwin Buckstone
- **Caroline** (1791-1867) – did not marry
- **John**, b 1794
- **Ann Crook** (1797-1846) – did not marry

I have indexed 67 grandchildren and great-grandchildren of **Benjamin W Copeland** and Sarah Crook, all of whom descend from just two of their sons, **Robert** and **Joseph**.

7 The Fell connection

As described above, **William Copeland** married Mary Fell in Bampton on 24 Nov 1754. It is easy to follow Mary's paternal ancestry through the Bampton registers:

- 4- Rev. Leonard Fell, b.1660, d.18 Nov 1731 Bampton
- 3-Leonard Fell, b.1687 Bampton, d.29 Aug 1740 Bampton (bros John & Robert)
- 4- mother unknown
- 2-Robert Fell, b.1714 Bampton, d.14 Oct 1738 Bampton (brothers John & Leonard)
- 4- father unknown
- 3-Mary, d.30 Jun 1732 Bampton
- 4- mother unknown
- 1-Mary Fell, b.1734 Bampton, d.26 Feb 1807 Bampton (brother John)
- 4- father unknown
- 3- Samuel Beechey ,d.?
- 4- mother unknown
- 3- father unknown
- 2-Rachel Beechey, c.6 Jun 1712 Bampton, d.?
- 3- mother unknown

According to the Clergy of the [Church of England database](#), Rev Leonard Fell (b 1660) attended Queen's College Oxford; was ordained deacon by Bishop John Fell on 15 March 1685; made priest in 1689 by Bishop Gilbert Ironside of Bristol; and was vicar of Asthall (8km NNW of Bampton) from 1690 to 1731¹⁴. He died 29 Nov 1731. The list of Oxford University Alumni¹⁵ records that he graduated from Queens

¹⁴ Asthall is famous as the childhood home of the Mitford sisters: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asthall_Manor

¹⁵ www.ancestry.com

Coll as BA in 1684, that he was born 1660/61 the son of John Fell of Bolton, Cumberland, and that he was a priest. (Bolton is 13 km ESE of Penrith). His father, this John Fell, would have been born about 1630 and so clearly he could not have been a son of Dr Samuel Fell (1583-1648) who already had a son John, so the link to Bishop Fell's family proposed by Walter Jerrold seems shaky. It just seems coincidental that there were two separate families of clergymen named Fell living in and around Oxford at the same time.

Another Leonard Fell, an infant, is commemorated on a painted memorial on the northern pillar of the chancel arch at St Mary's, Bampton, and that is also included in Giles' list of monumental inscriptions:

Hic reliquiae ponuntur Leonard Fell, infantis, qui obiit 30 nonarum Feb., MDCCVI [i.e., died in infancy, 1706]
--

The father's name is not given and the IGI records no other relevant baptisms. However, as the above Rev Leonard Fell was vicar of nearby Asthall in 1806 it is likely to be his infant son.

8 The Strange family

William and Mary Copeland's last child **Mary Ann** married John Strange in 1801. He was a builder and yeoman farmer of Henley on Thames, whose father had built the Henley Workhouse. Ironically their son **William Copeland Strange** was to die there as an inmate! A line of descent can be traced in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, through a variety of trades and professions to **Michael Strange**, born 1947, who was an engineer in the RAF and later a project manager for British Aerospace. Michael's pedigree and family notes can be found [here](#).

9 The Copelands in Ireland

Walter Jerrold wrote in his biography of Douglas:

'The actor who had the Dover circuit at that time was **Robert Copeland** – of the Copelands of Belnagon, co. Neath...'

He meant, of course, County Meath, the county northwest of Dublin, famous for the great Neolithic structures at Newgrange and the Hill of Tara, for the medieval Book of Kells, and for the Battle of the Boyne (1690), the fallout of which still resounds daily throughout Northern Ireland.

Genealogically this is an exciting link as the Copeland family had some interesting connections in Irish society of the time. It is frustrating that **Walter** was not more specific about the evidence for the link as it is difficult to trace the family. Sadly many of the Irish records were lost in the Civil War of 1922.

9.1 Armorial records

To start the search it was not difficult to find the family coat of arms of Copeland of Belnagon in Burke's General Armory¹⁶:

Copeland (confirmed 1744 to Benjamin Copeland of Belnagan, Co Meath). *Or, on a cross sable between four trefoils slipped vert five mullets argent. Crest - Out of a ducal coronet a swan's head proper.*

Mr Thomas Woodcock, Norroy and Ulster King of Arms (now Garter King of Arms) at the College of Arms in London, kindly checked his records of these Copeland arms, which are copies of the originals in Dublin. He confirmed the existence of arms of this heraldic description and also advised that:

- the arms are annotated with this inscription:
'Benjamin Copeland esquire son of William Copeland descended of an ancient family of that name in Great Britain now of Belnagar alias Bensfort in co Meath, esq. Arms and crest confirmed and entered 8 Dec 1744'.
- the fuller description of the crest is: *On a wreath of the colours Out of a Ducal Coronet a Swan's head and Neck proper.*
- there is a second coat of arms in which the Copeland arms are impaled with those of Charles Grattan¹⁷.
- Further details of the family are found in an Abstract¹⁸ of the will of William Copeland dated 9 April 1732 (proved 1734) in the records of the Prerogative Court of Ireland:
 - William is described as of Lower Balnagan, co Meath, gent.
 - Only one son is mentioned in the will: Benjamin of Balnagan, also called Bensfort, arms confirmed 8 Dec 1744.
 - A short pedigree shows that Benjamin had two sisters, 1. Elizabeth, wife of John Jones of Belturbet, junior, the mother of Amelia Jones, and 2. Mary, wife of Charles Grattan of Bensfort.
 - A later hand has added a note to the record that the wife of William Copeland was Catherine, elder daughter of Ben. Chapman, by Elizabeth, daughter of John Rotch of Wexford by Catherine, 8th daughter of George Andrew, Bishop of Leighlin. (George Andrew was appointed [Bishop of Ferns and Leighlin](#) in 1635 and forced to flee the country at the time of the 1641 rebellion. He died in October 1648 and was buried at St Clement Danes, London).
- the same arms were originally granted in either 1528 or 1529 to Robert Copeland of London, merchant tailor. There are two separate records, one of which has no crest but the other has a quite different crest from that of Benjamin: *On a Wreath A Horse's Head couped at the neck Argent bridled Or between two Branches Vert.* Unfortunately, however, there is no accompanying pedigree

¹⁶ Sir Bernard Burke, 1884, General Armory of England, Scotland and Ireland, p. 227. www.ancestry.com.

¹⁷ The Grattan arms in the General Armory are described: 'Grattan (Enniskillen, co. Fermanagh, confirmed by Hawkins, Ulster to Rev Charles Grattan, master of Portora School, 4th son of Patrick Grattan, senior fellow of Trin. Coll. Dublin). Quarterly, 1st and 4th per saltire ermine and sable a lion rampant or, for Grattan; 2nd and 3rd, argent two bars, sable, for Brereton. Crest – on a tun or, a dove, wings elevated, holding in the dexter claw, a sceptre all proper.

¹⁸ In 1810 Sir William Betham, Ulster King of Arms, superintended the compilation of an alphabetical index of testators. He also wrote out brief genealogical abstracts of almost all those wills that pre-dated 1800, and later constructed sketch pedigrees from his notes. When the Prerogative Wills were destroyed by fire at the Public Record Office in 1922, this work became a very important tool for genealogical research.

attached to the 1744 arms, so the link between Robert Copeland of 1528/9 and Benjamin of Belnagon/Bensfort cannot be confirmed.

The Genealogical Office at the National Library of Ireland in Dublin holds the original design of Benjamin's Copeland's arms and, beside it, that of Charles Grattan of Enniskillen, quartering Brereton and impaling Copeland. Both arms were registered on the same day, 8 Dec 1744. The arms are contained in a thick book of about A2 size, with the arms painted on vellum pages, four to a page.



Left: arms of Benjamin Copeland of Belnagon, confirmed 8 Dec 1744

Right: arms of Charles Grattan of Enniskillen (Grattan quartered with Brereton and impaled with Copeland, confirmed 8 Dec 1744

© The Genealogical Office, Dublin.

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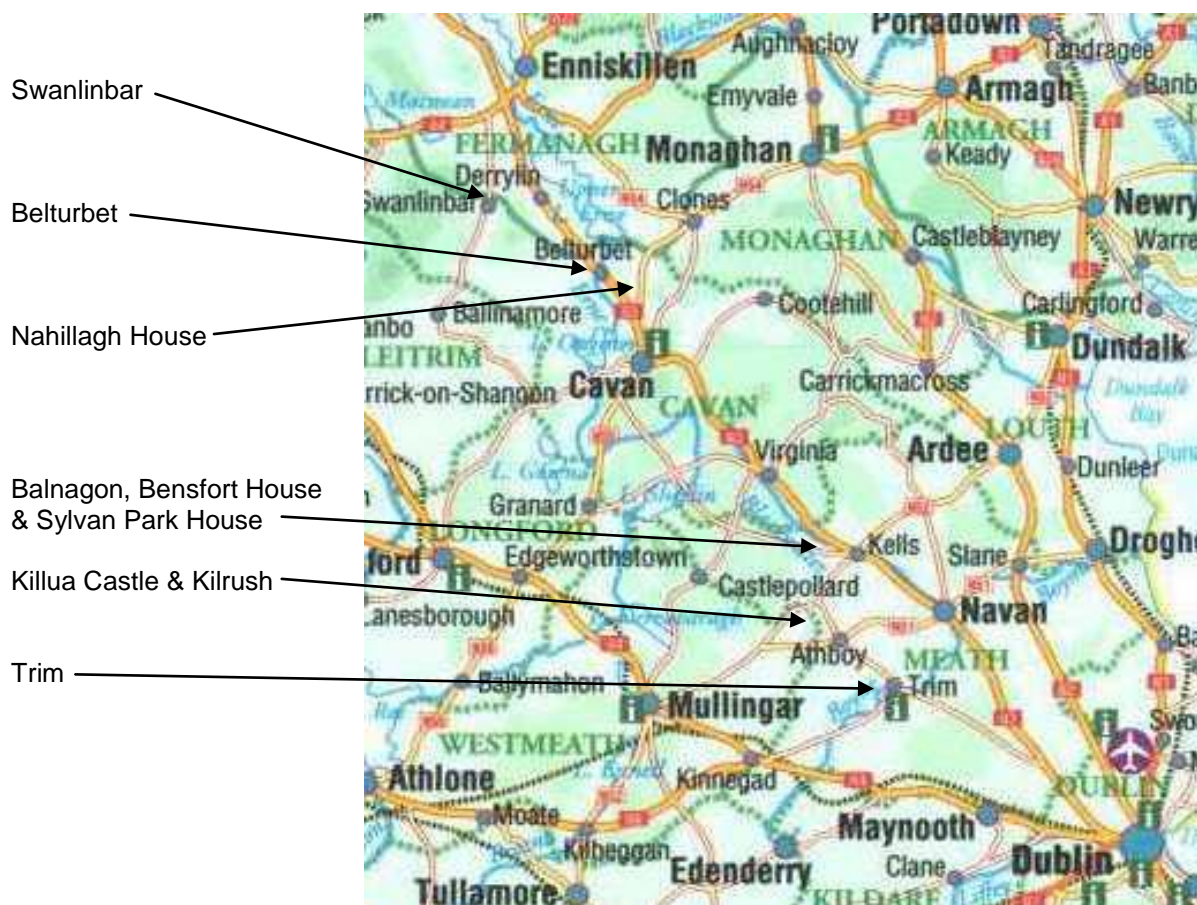
9.2 Wills and other records

Regarding William Copeland (d 1734):

- The IGI has a death entry for William Copeland:
 - Death: 1734, Lower Belnagee, Kilkier, Meath, Ireland
 - Burial: Drumlane, Cavan, Ireland. [5km SSW of Belturbet, Co. Cavan]
- The Public Records Office in Belfast holds a copy of Betham's Abstracts of Wills. William's will, dated 1732, proved 1734, in Vol 16, p 202, shows bequests to:
 - His son Benjamin Copeland of Bensfort
 - His daughter Elizabeth, wife of wife of John Jones of Belturbet, Junior
 - Her daughter Amelia
 - His daughters Mary, wife of Grattan of B? and also to their sons William and Charles.
 - William Chapman of Killua, Co Westmeath, [brother in law to William]
 - John Jones, senior brother in law of WC [presumably father of John Jones Junior [above]]

The abstract of William's will saying that his wife was Catherine Chapman, elder daughter of Ben. Chapman by Elizabeth Rotch is of wider interest. Catherine's half-brother William Chapman of Killua was also a beneficiary. He was the grandfather of the 1st Baronet Chapman of Killua and was the 3x great-grandfather of T E Lawrence of Arabia, who was an illegitimate son of the 7th Baronet, Sir Thomas Chapman. William and Catherine's father Benjamin Chapman of Killua, b 1621, was originally granted the Killua estate in Co Westmeath by Oliver Cromwell. His father, William, was a cousin of Sir Walter Raleigh. In a published pedigree¹⁹ of the Chapman family that connects all these people, William Copeland is described as 'of Kilrush', a townland in the civil parish of Killua, County Westmeath, adjacent to the civil parish of Kilskeer, Co. Meath, in which lie the townlands of Balnagon.

Balnagon Upper and Lower are two 'townlands', of 659 and 723 acres respectively, in the barony of Upper Kells and the civil parish of Kilskeer in Co. Meath. Balnagon is variously written Balnagar, Balnagee and Ballynagon; and Kilskeer is often spelt Kilskeer or Kilskyre. Balnagon is 7 km west of Kells. According to the Copeland arms, Balnagon is also known as Bensfort or Bensforth; it is in places also spelt Ben's Fort.



Copeland locations in the northeastern counties of Ireland

¹⁹ http://homepage3.nifty.com/yagitani/en/tpc_en11.htm



Bensfort House, Co Meath (about 2005; photo: Meath County Council)

Bensfort House still stands and is on the Co Meath list of protected buildings in the County Development Plan 2007-13, reference MH016-113²⁰. It is described as:

Bensfort House, Balnagon Lower, Ballinlough
Country House
A mid-18th century gable-ended House of 3 bays and 2 storeys with a single storey modern extension to the side. Some windows have been replaced with pvc.
Includes stables and gate-lodge.

The Registry of Deeds in Dublin contains records of land transactions and leases for the period 1708-1785. There are several leases granted by Benjamin between 1731 and 1758. There is one lease from William to his son Benjamin, dated 1731, of 81 acres of large bog'. There are several other deeds between other family members but in all this period there is only one non-family Copeland deed registered (a carpenter in Carrickfergus), which suggests the prominence of this branch relative to other Irish Copelands at that time.

Benjamin, who never married, served as High Sheriff of Co Meath in 1751. He died intestate in 1759 and administration was granted to his sister Elizabeth Jones on 27 Feb 1860²¹. A Benjamin Copeland was also High Sheriff of Co Cavan in 1736²² and could be the same one.

There are no records of any Copeland owning land in Co Meath, Westmeath or Cavan in the Griffiths Valuations²³ of 1850-60, although there are a few Copeland tenancies.

²⁰

<http://www.meath.ie/LocalAuthorities/Publications/PlanningandDevelopmentPublications/CountyMeathPlanningPublications/CountyMeathDevelopmentPlan2007-2013-Adopted/File,6838.en.pdf>

²¹ Betham's Abstracts of Prerogative Administrations Intestate, at the National Archives, Dublin.

²² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Sheriff_of_Cavan

²³ <http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/index.xml?action=nameSearch>

Further mention of William's descendants is found in a privately printed family history of two other landed families, French and Nixon, by Rev. Henry Biddall Swanzy²⁴. Benjamin's sisters Elizabeth and Mary were linked by marriage to these families in Co. Cavan and Co. Meath. Several High Sheriffs of Counties Cavan, Meath and Fermanagh and numerous clergy are found among his sisters' descendants. Swanzy's history mentions a social connection with the circle of Dean Jonathan Swift:

'The Rev Thos. Sheridan, writing from Co. Cavan to Dean Swift, 20 July 1736, says : — " The ladies are full of your coming, viz. my wife, two Ladies Lanesborough . . . Mrs. Nesbitt, her five daughters . . . Mrs. Jones, *Beauty Copeland* ...all your Cavan mistresses." *Beauty Copeland* was no doubt the future Mrs. Charles Grattan'.

An abstract also exists of the Will of a William Copeland of Monaghan²⁵: 'William Copeland of Monaghan, Co Cavan, gent; wife Katherin; son William; grandson Edward, son of William. Will dated 18 Feb 1711, proved 24 April 1714.' The son William of this will could have been William of Belnagon but in that case we would have expected Benjamin to have been mentioned as a legatee also.

A William Copeland was Rector of Trim, Co Meath in 1542²⁶.

So, were the Balnagon Copelands related to the William Copeland of Trim, 1542? Or did they come with Cromwell and receive lands in Meath/Westmeath after the Cromwellian settlement, as many English did, including their Chapman cousins? Or were they part of the 'Irish Plantation' colonisation? Meath and Westmeath were outside the Plantation area but the Copelands clearly also had close links to Cavan, one of the Plantation counties. They were probably Anglican rather than Presbyterian so their origin is more likely to be English rather than Scottish, who made up the majority of the Ulster Plantation colonists.

My interpretation is that the Balnagon Copelands, who claimed in the caption of their coat of arms to be from an 'ancient family in Great Britain' were probably an Anglo-Irish²⁷ family that arrived at Kilrush, Westmeath in the late 17th century or early 18th centuries, and ultimately settled nearby at Bensfort. They mixed socially with local families such as the Chapmans and Grattans (below). The protestant Anglo-Irish families of the 18th century benefitted greatly from the laws discriminating against Catholics and dominated the administration of Ireland in the eighteenth century until the upheavals of the Rebellion of 1798 and the closure of the Dublin Parliament in 1801, after which many English families returned home. Remaining landed families (such as those at Sylvan Park, below) were financially devastated by the loss of tenant income during the famines of the mid-19th century.

²⁴ http://www.archive.org/stream/familiesoffrench00swan/familiesoffrench00swan_djvu.txt

The Rev. Henry Biddall Swanzy, M.A. The families of French of Belturbet and Nixon of Fermanagh, and their descendants. Printed for private circulation, 1908.

²⁵ Abstracts of Irish diocesan wills, W. Copeland, of Monaghan, Co. Cavan, 1714. The Irish genealogist: official organ of the Irish Genealogical Research Society, Vol. I, No. 6, October, 1939

²⁶ John Healey; History of the Diocese of Meath, Volume 2, 1908

<http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/john-healy/history-of-the-diocese-of-meath-volume-2-ala/page-23-history-of-the-diocese-of-meath-volume-2-ala.shtml>

²⁷ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglo-Irish>

But how, if at all, do the Bampton and Belnagon Copelands connect? The similar repetition of names – Benjamin and William – in the Bampton and Belnagon families, together with the claim of *Walter Jerrold*, gives credence to the connection. Perhaps Benjamin Copeland of Bampton (c1674-1756) was a brother of William Copeland of Kilrush and Belnagon (c1671-1734)? Unfortunately there is not enough evidence to be certain – it all lies in the ashes of the Four Courts fire of 1922.

9.3 The Jones family

John Jones Jr of Belturbet, husband of Elizabeth Copeland was High Sheriff of Co Cavan in 1730²⁸. Their eldest son David Jones was also High Sheriff, in 1763. David and his wife Sidney are buried in a tomb on the south side of the present Belturbet church, with their son John Copeland Jones. Also buried here is David Fielding Jones, son of John Copeland Jones and his family; he was an officer in the 1st Royal Dragoons and was also proposed for High Sheriff, in 1860, but was not chosen²⁹. The family lived at Nahillagh³⁰, south of Belturbet, and by the 1870s owned 2,235 acres³¹.



Jones family grave, Belturbet, Co. Cavan (2012)

9.4 The Grattans

Charles Grattan, husband of Benjamin Copeland's sister Mary ('Beauty') was the Rev Charles Grattan FTCD, Master of the Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, 1714-46, later to be famous for alumni such as Oscar Wilde and Samuel Beckett. He was one of 'the seven Grattans'³², close friends of Dean Jonathan Swift's, and a great-uncle of the Right Hon. [Henry Grattan](#), MP, the prominent parliamentarian, whose statue stands in St Stephen's Hall at the Houses of Parliament.

Their father was Rev Patrick Grattan DD, Senior Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and Grizel Brereton, who married in 1669. There is a pedigree of this prominent

²⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Sheriff_of_Cavan

²⁹ http://eppi.dippam.ac.uk/documents/14172/eppi_pages/367183

³⁰ <http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/cgi-bin/viewsite.cgi?siteid=3740> . House not on 1836-46 6" map.

³¹ <http://boards.ancestry.co.uk/thread.aspx?mv=flat&m=6861&p=localities.britisles.ireland.general>

³² http://www.archive.org/stream/familiesoffrench00swan/familiesoffrench00swan_djvu.txt

The Rev. Henry Biddall Swanzy, M.A. The families of French of Belturbet and Nixon of Fermanagh, and their descendants. Printed for private circulation, 1908.

Anglo-Irish family running to 10 pages in Burke's 'Irish Family Records'³³ which extends to descendants born in the 1950s.

Charles and Mary's son William Grattan was appointed High Sheriff of Co Meath in 1779 while living at Sylvan Park House, also in Belnagon (according to the Freeman's Journal of February 1779).

William Grattan's will of 1790 is also recorded in the Index of Prerogative Wills. His son, Rev William Copeland Grattan and his wife Anna inherited Sylvan Park House in Balnagon Upper. They had another property, Swanlinbar House, at [Swanlinbar](#), Co Cavan, where the Rev William died.

Of William and Anna's children, city directories show that Copeland (a doctor) and Humphrey (a solicitor) were living at Lower Fitzwilliam St, Dublin, in 1850³⁴, although Copeland's death was recorded in the same year (Anglo-Celt newspaper):

On the 27th instant, at Lower Fitzwilliam-street, Dublin, staff-surgeon Copeland GRATTAN, late of her Majesty's 65th Regiment of Foot, and 2nd son of the late Wm. GRATTAN, Esq., of Sylvan Park, county Meath.

His brother Humphrey emigrated to Australia after the famine and the same newspaper published news of his marriage in 1854 in the goldfields of Victoria:

On the 6th September at Gnarkeet, Wardy Yallock, by the Rev. John GOW, Humphry GRATTAN, Esq., late of Sylvan Park, county Meath, Ireland, to Sophia, fifth daughter of the late Francis BEGGS, Esq., of Grange, county Dublin.

Humphrey became a successful businessman and farmer in Australia³⁵ and Grattans are now spread throughout Victoria. The [Grattan Institute](#) in Melbourne is Australia's national public policy think-tank.

9.5 Sylvan Park House

There is sadly no picture of the now demolished house in the Irish Architectural Archive in Dublin but it is described in documents there:

- 'A three storey early nineteenth century house now demolished. In 1814 the seat of Walter Keating [who was still living there in 1848 when his wife gave birth, although it appears to have remained the property of the Grattans]. Very attractive stables survive'.³⁶
- Ref MH016-119 R Sylvan Park Stables, Balnagon Lower, Ballinlough. Stableyard. House demolished but Stableyard remains.³⁷
- A 3 storey pedimented house with a roof on a bracket cornice. Bought post World War 2 by Sir William Austin. Subsequently sold and now demolished.³⁸

The house was presumably built by Charles Grattan in the 1740s or perhaps by Benjamin Copeland as a wedding present for his sister. Their son William Grattan

³³ Burkes Irish Family Records, Burke's Landed Gentry of Ireland, Fifth Edition, 2008 Reprint of 1976 Edition.

³⁴ Dublin Directory 1850 <http://www.dublin1850.com/dublin1850/xdubdir33.html#Grattan>

³⁵ http://www.kenbone.net/genealogy1/n_7.html

³⁶ 'Vanishing Country Houses of Ireland' Irish Architectural Archives & the Irish Georgian Society, Dublin, 1988.

³⁷

<http://www.meath.ie/LocalAuthorities/Publications/PlanningandDevelopmentPublications/CountyMeathPlanningPublications/CountyMeathDevelopmentPlan2007-2013-Adopted/File,6838,en.pdf>

³⁸ 'A guide to Irish county Houses', Mark Bence-Jones.

was living there in 1779 and presumably died there about 1784. His son, Rev William Copeland Grattan and his wife Anna continued to live at Sylvan Park for a time, but the family had another property, Swanlinbar House, Co Cavan, where William died in 1844. In 1814 he appears to have been leasing the house to a Mr Walter Keating, who also gave it as his address at the time of his marriage in 1843.

Following the Irish famine of 1845-52 hundreds of unviable estates were put into the hands of the Encumbered Estates Commission to be sold. This seems to have been the case of Sylvan Park, which was sold in 1853, at the direction of the Rev William's trustee, Edward Hudson who married William's daughter Emily the same year.

In the 1870s it was occupied by Dr Standish Grady Rowley, DL MRIA, with 1,165 acres. He died in 1882.

At the 1911 census it was occupied by Mrs Kathleen Rowley (presumably the daughter-in-law of Standish), her two unmarried daughters, and three servants. The Rowleys and one of the servants were the only four non-Catholics out of 116 souls in the townland of Belnagon Upper. (At Bensfort House, their neighbours Henry Booker and two daughters were the only 3 non-Catholics out of 37 in Belnagon Lower who were not Catholics). The Rowleys sold the house in 1924 and had a three day sale to dispose of the contents, which included three pianos³⁹.

Sylvan Park was bought after WWII by Sir William Ronald Fraser Austin, 4th Bt (1900-89) and demolished in about 1952. According to the 1911 census there were 21 rooms and 16 windows on the front so presumably it must have been a substantial three storey, five bay house. It is typical of the architectural disaster of Ireland that there are no records of what must have been a fine house.

Only the stables remain and these are imposing. These buildings are now the office of Sylvan Tractor Spares Ltd – *sic transit gloria mundi*.



The huge stables at Sylvan Park House (2009), now occupied by a tractor company

³⁹ Architectural Archives, Dublin, reference RP.D.43.1 and RP.D.51.10



*Sylvan Park House – entrance to the stableyard, taken in the 1950s.
(Photo: Irish Architectural Archive, Dublin)*

Mike Young
February 2013

Corrections and additions: please email mikeyoung1756@yahoo.com.

Appendix 1

William Robert Copeland – obituary, *The Era*, 2 June 1867

The Late William Copeland, Esq.

With no common grief we have to announce the death of Mr. Copeland, late Lessee and Manager of the Theatre Royal and Royal Amphitheatre, Liverpool, at five o'clock last Wednesday morning, aged sixty-eight.

He had not been very well for the last three or four months, and a few weeks ago he removed to the hotel at New Brighton, Cheshire, hoping for benefit from a change of air; for though approaching rapidly the allotted age of man, his excellent constitution, and unusual exemption through life from illness, induced his family and friends to regard his illness as merely temporary. Their disappointment of course fills them with sorrow, to which time only may bring relief.

Mr. Copeland was, we believe, a native of Deal, where he was apprenticed to a chemist. A peculiar circumstance introduced him to the stage. His father was owner of house property and a Theatre. The Lessee failing in his engagement, the elder Mr. Copeland, for the benefit of the company, kept the house open. Strange to say, the season was prosperous, and no wonder, for among the actors was Mr. Edmund Kean. The elder Copeland's youngest daughter embraced the profession of the stage—that lady was the celebrated Mrs. Fitzwilliam. As might be expected, Mr. William Copeland abandoned the pestle and mortar, and put on the buskin. He shortly afterwards married one of the two sisters of the late Douglas Jerrold, and Mr. William J. Hammond the other; both these gentlemen and their wives enjoyed enviable popularity on the Western and Northern Circuits.

About twenty-five years ago Mr. Copeland succeeded Mr. Hammond at the Liver Theatre, and in 1813 became Lessee and Manager of the Theatre Royal, and Proprietor of the Royal Amphitheatre, Liverpool. Last September he let both to Mr. Byron on a lease.

In 1851, besides being Lessee of the Liverpool Theatres, he became Manager of the Strand Theatre, London, and re-christened that establishment "Punch's Playhouse."

Not having been originally brought up to the Profession, there was nothing of the actor off the stage about Mr. Copeland. By education and early habits he was a gentleman. With everything appertaining to the Drama he was perfectly familiar. He thought through the text of Shakespeare, quoted with the utmost facility from the ancient and modern dramatists, and, being an excellent French scholar he was perhaps better acquainted with the French plays than any theatrical Manager in England. To silly prejudices of any kind he was a perfect stranger. With great candour he spoke of the merits of his contemporaries; and, from a long and intimate acquaintance with him, we can say that his judgment and taste were always in perfect keeping with his candour. He lived to see a sad decadence generally in the Profession, and was, therefore, always anxious to encourage rising talent whenever it presented itself, but it grieved him to find his anticipations so seldom realised. With all the great actors of the time he was necessarily familiar, and he boasted a few months ago that he had presented each and all of them frequently to the Liverpool public. A disparaging expression respecting any one of them never escaped him. One after another they dropped off, and although a few of the greatest still remain, the general result is sadly at variance with the demands of the present stage. The "stars" are too few, and, alas! the means of enabling these few to render their light effective are not easily found. "Who can leave the precincts of the cheerful day, nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?" Industrious catering lacking material, the public are prone to find fault, and that was considered a defect in Mr. Copeland's management, which proceeded from the utter impossibility of providing better entertainment. From his successor much was expected; and no doubt if zeal, ability, and the desire to please can succeed, the public will have no occasion to find fault with Mr. Byron.

Apart from the Theatre, Mr. Copeland's life was entirely domestic. He loved his family, and his family adored him. He had one son, who died young, and four daughters survive him. His oldest friend, and with whom until within a short time of his decease he was in frequent correspondence, was Mr. Buckstone, of the Haymarket Theatre.

Appendix 2

Fanny Fitzwilliam, née Copeland – obituary, *The Era*, 17 Sept 1854

DEATH OF MRS. FITZWILLIAM.

There is something peculiarly significant, at the present time, in those short-lived representations on the stage, by which human life is epitomised. The actor illustrates, with reminding personation, how

“All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players :”

and, surely enough, the events of actual life closely harmonise with the mimic exhibition. The bell which lifts the stage curtain, or is the signal for its fall, is but as the peal which hails the young heir's birth, or the knell which announces the greybeard's departure. And the swift succession of critical adventures which crowd the theatrical scene, until the dark green drapery hides everything from view, is a faithful portraiture of those few spasmodic efforts which a man is allowed to make in this life, before the pall, soon and often suddenly, obliterates his existence.

The strongest and best of us require occasional diversion from the cares and labours of our short earthly pilgrimage; and no one so ably or legitimately administers the necessary amusement as the player. He nightly sets before us those illusive pictures which erase sorrow from the heart and fatigue from the mind; and, by his ever varying art, he cures more pain and imparts more pleasure, than any other contributor to the stock of public happiness. Whilst, at the same time, with never flagging spirits and ever ready exertions, he himself seems to be exempted from the common lot of misfortune. Who ever sees a player depressed, or out of health? Though all the world be dispersing for refreshment, after a long session at business, the player still buoyantly holds on, and freshly as ever, and night after night, he reproduces the accustomed part, as if on him neither time, nor toil, nor common cares, could make any impression whatsoever.

Reader, it is not quite so. At every theatre the “poor player” is both before and behind the scenes; and if in front of the stage he faithfully exhibits the pluck, and ardour, and professional skill which the public expect from him, he is, when out of sight, like other men, liable to depression and sensitive to pain.

Now, it appears to us that nothing is more touching than the sudden arrest, whether by sickness or death, of one who is thus professionally bound to appear, at a stated hour, before the public in mimic costume. Individual disappointment does not hang on the event of a non-appearance; the whole company of the theatre receive a shock, in the necessary change of piece when a principal performance is suspended; and a thousand spectators and more are affected by the necessarily altered arrangements. And what, may we suppose, is the nervous condition of the patient, whose illness has overthrown an advertised scheme? We dare not draw aside the curtain to look at the agonised and impatient form; we dare not listen to the pleading words, asking if there be no remedy—no means to enable the sufferer to fulfil an engagement; we would respect the endurance which is there undergone, as being a tragedy more painful than even SHAKESPEARE ever depicted.

The reader must not expect that we can do more than touch lightly on Mrs. FITZWILLIAM's demise. Twenty-four hours of unexpected illness sufficed to accomplish that admirable actress's complete removal from this life's mimic stage. On Sunday, in health, and on the Monday morning attacked by the prevailing epidemic, she yielded to its fatal clutch, just at the time when the stage curtain rose, which should have disclosed her own excellent performance. What a practical comment on the instability of this life! She, who for so many years had charmingly illustrated so many characters to our admiring eyes, is at length overcome, when pledged to step afresh upon the stage for the renewed personation. She suffered, not in unknown pain, but as kings suffer, with bulletin announcements of their critical condition, and she died, a victim to the irresistible torrent of death, which has been sweeping, with sudden fury, many parts of Europe, and, during the last week or two, has been so virulent in its attack on our own metropolitan streets. Our tear, tender and heartsprung, falls at the grave of FANNY ELIZABETH FITZWILLIAM. In her particular department of acting, she admirably filled an important place. Her fellow actors will sorely miss an old and favourite companion, and the public will be more struck by her awfully-sudden removal from the fact, that her lively and healthful figure gave such promise of a still long career of successful labour.

Memoir of Mrs. Fitzwilliam.

This lady, born in 1802, was the daughter of Mr. Robert Copeland, then manager of the Dover, Deal, Sandwich, and Margate theatres. In the dwelling-house of the Dover Theatre was Fanny Copeland born. When but two years old, she

appeared upon the stage as one of the children in *The Stranger*. She shortly afterwards represented the child in *Pizarro*, when Master Betty, known then as the “Young Roscius,” performed the noble Peruvian. At the age of five, she played and sung all the music of *Tom Thumb*. At ten years old, she was placed under the tuition of Michael Wieppert, father of the late John Wieppert, who instructed her on the harp, while Mr. Sutton, of Dover, conducted her studies on the pianoforte. At twelve years of age, she presided at the concerts then given at Howe's Assembly Rooms, Margate. Some three years afterwards the lady advertised to play Norah, in *The Poor Soldier*, at the Dover Theatre, being taken ill, and the performances being under the patronage of the Earl of Guildford, the manager was in a dilemma, when little Fanny Copeland was applied to, and from a little study on the spur of the moment, added to recollections from the frequent witnessing of the part, she achieved such a triumph as formed in her mind a determination to cling to the stage as a profession. When fourteen years old, she came to London, and was engaged at the Haymarket, then under the management of Colman, Morris, and Winston, and made her first appearance before a metropolitan audience as Lucy, in *The Review*. The late Charles Mathews was exceedingly irritable at all times, as many actors are, or profess to be, and on one occasion upon Fanny's being encored in the song of “Heigho,” in the part of Cicely, in *The Beehive*, he slapped her face when she was coming off the stage, conceiving that her success would deprive him of an encore for his own song in the next scene. He immediately, however, begged her pardon, stigmatised himself as a brute, never forgot his silly ebullition of temper, and endeavoured in all their subsequent professional intercourse to atone for it by kindness and attention. Miss Copeland next appeared at the Surrey Theatre, under Mr. Thomas Dibdin, in *The Heart of Midlothian*. It may here be well to correct an erroneous impression which exists, that Miss Copeland was the original Madge Wildfire in that drama. Mrs. Egerton first performed the part. From the Surrey Miss Fanny migrated to Drury-lane, where she was engaged by Mr. Elliston, and made her first curtsy in the farce of *Maid and Wife*, in which Elliston and Harley also played. In 1822 she married Mr. Fitzwilliam. After appearing at many of the metropolitan theatres, she was engaged by Messrs. Terry and Yates at the Adelphi, and was the original Kate Plowden, in *The Pilot*, and Louisa Lovetrick, in *The Dead Shot*; also, of Pella, in *The Wreck Ashore*, Rose, in *Henriette*, Elisé, in *Victorine*, &c., &c. On Mr. Benjamin Webster becoming lessee of the Haymarket, she entered into an engagement with him, and then left for America, to which portion of the globe, she, during her life, paid two most successful visits. On her last return she appeared at the Adelphi, in Mr. Buckstone's drama of *Green Bushes*, playing Nelly O'Neil; and also appeared as Starlight Boss, in *Flowers of the Forest*. Back again to the Haymarket was her next change, personating Nan, in *Good for Nothing*, and Margery, in *The Rough Diamond*, both of which were inimitable pieces of acting. She also played Dorine, in Molière's *Tartuffe*. The late Mr. Elliston pronounced her the best Lady Teazle he had ever seen. In this character Mrs. Fitzwilliam removed the erroneous impression that Lady Teazle was a high-bred London lady, whereas she is a simple country girl until her marriage with Sir Peter, and in her assumption of the fine lady, her original rusticity should now and then appear through her constrained behaviour. This feature Mrs. Fitzwilliam rendered pleasingly apparent. Now comes the melancholy detail of her death.

The particulars of her decease are as follows. About three weeks previously she had not been well, and though her indisposition proceeded from diarrhoea, there was nothing to cause any apprehensions, especially as she was under medical care, and was enabled to pursue her professional duties up to the Saturday night preceding her death. On Sunday she was better than usual, but feeling indisposed towards the evening, retired early to rest; some friends who had been visiting her went into her room to wish her good night, and found her cheerful as usual. On the Monday morning, at six o'clock, the household was called up, alarming symptoms of cholera having shown themselves. Medical aid was immediately called in, but in vain, for, to the intense grief of her friends, she expired on the same evening at six o'clock; and was buried on Thursday, at Kensal Green, in the same grave with her father, Mr. Robert Copeland, and a young daughter, who died five years ago. No one but those who knew her in private society, at home, and amongst her family and her friends, can conceive how fondly she was beloved, and how devoted she was to all connected with her. Her natural cheerfulness of disposition, her hospitality, and her many accomplishments, combined with goodness of heart, endeared her to every one. The stage has suffered an irreparable loss. She was the last connecting link between the modern actresses and those of the Jordan school. For vivacity and pathos in her peculiar walk she had no equal. Her country girls, her Irish peasants were perfect. Her imitative powers were very great. She was an accomplished musician, a mistress of the harp and the pianoforte, and sang with extraordinary sweetness. Madge Wildfire, Nelly O'Neil, Margery, Nan, and a long list of exquisite creations, are gone perhaps for ever.

Bills were immediately posted up on Monday evening at the theatre substituting the piece of *The Barrack Room*, and during the week *She Stoops to Conquer* has been produced, with *Shocking Events*, &c. Mrs. Fitzwilliam was to have been married to Mr. Buckstone next month.