

Charles LeBoutillier Rowe

By his daughter Eva Mary Rowe Salway



*Charles LeBoutillier Rowe
& Ellen Green Thomas*

Charles LeBoutillier Rowe, was born 18 July 1865 in Jersey, Channel Island. Probably in the town of Grouville, his father was Thomas Rowe, son of Benjamin and Mary Doncaster Rowe of Tavistock, Devonshire, England. His mother was Mary Mallet, daughter of Charles Mallet, son of Charles Mallet and Marie Hooper Mallet of Grouville, Jersey, Channel Island. The Mallet family is one of the first families of the Island.

Father was one of 13 children, 9 died in infancy and one Alfred died at the age of 17 of yellow fever caught in the Australian bush.

Father had to earn part of his living at a very early age, as the family were very poor. At the age of 6 he went to work for a shoemaker, running errands and doing other chores, for which he was paid six pence a week, and allowed to wear shoes that were brought into the store for repairs.

He had an older sister Maria Louisa who married William Barker.

At 10 years old Father went to sea as a cabin boy, on a tramp sailing vessel, his life at sea was very hard, the sailors were very cruel to him, once his nose was broken when the cook threw a basin at him, he always carried a scar on the bridge of his nose. He was shipwrecked 5 times and had many adventures in foreign lands. When he was about 14 years old he sailed with Captain Mead who was kind to him. One day in a terrific storm, the ship struck a reef on the Devonshire coast, the sailors took to the life boats, but the Captain and Charles were left on the wreck and the ship was breaking up. The Captain told Charles to watch when a large wave came in, and to jump into it as it rolled back to the shore, and it would carry him a long way in. Charles jumped safely, but the captain, in his anxiety for the boy, jumped too late and was dashed against the hull of the wreck. The captain was washed ashore with a broken leg. Charles was taken from the water unconscious but otherwise unhurt. When he came to his senses, he was sitting in a large chair by a big fire with a large cat on his knee, and dressed in a woman's nightgown. When he was well enough the woman of the house asked him "where are you from?" "Guernsey" he said. "What is your name" she said, "Charles Rowe" he answered, she said, "what is your father's name?" "Thomas Rowe" the boy answered. "Then I'm your aunt," said she. "Thomas Rowe is my brother." This story intrigued the villagers, who collected money among them to buy clothes and shoes and a new suit because he had to go to the coroners court to identify the dead sailors, who were laid in a row on the floor. The Captain was in the hospital and Charles was the only one who could help.

Another adventure my brother and I would like to hear Father tell. The ship he was sailing in had long been becalmed, no wind came to fill the sail and the ship just drifted. They were running short of food and their water had all gone. Father had a cup of tea one morning, he drank half the tea and shaved himself with the other half. As the ship drifted they spied out a distant shore with a strong spy glass. They noticed a small inlet, and the captain thought they would find fresh water, so the sailors manned a boat and rowed off for the inlet. Charles, was with them, they rowed up the stream through a matted jungle, the trees in many places arched the stream, it was very beautiful. Finally they reached the source and found plenty of fresh water. They filled their tubs and buckets, and wandered around a bit, gazing at the beauty and wonders around them. They also picked a lot of fruit to take back to the ship. There were coconuts but they grew too high, then as it was growing late they returned to the boat only to find it high and dry. They had come up a tidal stream that dried as the tide went low, here was a predicament, they saw all around them animals foot prints where the beasts came at night to drink. The sailors gathered up great piles of wood while it was yet light, to make a ring of fire around them to keep away the animals. They emptied their tubs and buckets to use as drums, and they shouted and bawled and banged their drums to frighten the animals. They could see pairs of bright eyes glaring at them all around. Monkeys in coconut trees near pelted them with coconuts. All night the men kept up this din, and burned their fires, by morning the animals went away. The water came back and floated their boat, they filled the utensils with water again. Half way down the stream they met the captain and other sailors coming to look for them, for he had been very anxious about them all night.

Once while sailing in a dense fog, the captain could not tell where they were, and the ship drifted. When the fog arose, they found they were coming out of a narrow passage, very rocky, between the islands of Herm and Jethow, off the coast of Guernsey, Channel Island. No ship would dare make the passage and they had come through it in the fog.

When father was courting mother, he had to walk far out into the country to take her home. The village boys did not like the town boys courting their village girls so Charles always carried with him a loaded stick, as he might be waylaid. One night he saw what he thought was a head peeping over a fence at him. Thinking it was an enemy, he said, "what do you want?" No answer came, so Charles walked over clutching his stick, still the figures did not move, so Charles gave it a tremendous whack with his stick, and he found he had attacked a stone ball, that ornamented the gate post of a gentleman's estate. They married, but I must leave the account of their marriage to mother's story.

When they married father left the sea, and joined with an old boy friend of his, Adolph Rogers in a watchmaking business. Father would go from house to house gathering watches for repair and take them to Rogers. After awhile he left Rogers and with his wife and 2 children to Jersey. Adolph Rogers prospered in his business and wrote to Jersey for father to come back to Guernsey and manage his jewelry store. Father did so and managed the business for 20 years. It had become the largest business of its kind in the British Isles.

It had not been my fathers's plan to go to Jersey when he did, they had intended to emigrate to Australia, taking advantage of an easy emigration, but after they had packed all their goods, and were all ready to go, the emigrations stopped, so we just crossed over to Jersey.

Father opened a watchmakers shop in High St. Guernsey after he left Rogers and did very well for a while, but just after I was married during the Boar war, his business failed, as did many other businesses at that time.

Father had been spiritually minded, he had been interested in the Baptists, mother who had been Church of England also joined the Baptist church, father was head deacon of that church for many years.

We never stayed long in one house, moving for various reasons. Once we left a lovely house situated in the middle of a very steep road, we moved to a house easier to get to because old Grandfather Rowe could not climb the hill and he would try to visit us at least once a week. We moved to a house near the shore in Paris street. Grandmother Rowe died in that house. Later we moved to number 3 Emma Place Victoria Road. St. Peter's Port in Guernsey, there mother ran a private hotel. One day our lodgers had a dinner party, and as was their custom, the meal was eaten with all the blinds rolled up, and the table with it's good food and glittering silver and glass could be seen by passers by outside. Our house was full at that time and as my bedroom was let to a servant of one of our lodgers, I slept on a cot in the kitchen. Father went outside to smoke while mother and the hired girl cleared away the dishes before going to bed. Father came in and said, "don't go to bed yet, there is still a man in the dining room." Mother said she was sure all the men had left the house, so father went outside to look again and he saw that it was a burglar. Father walked into the room and took the man by the collar and sat him in a chair and called mother. She came quickly and picking up a big walking stick from the hall, stood over the man while father went for the police. When the man moved she waved the stick over him saying, "you move you beggar." The man did not move as he had been drinking and the warm room had made him tipsy. As he had only stolen food he was given a light sentence, 10 days in jail.

Father was fond of reading, his favorite books were detective stories. Father and mother would occasionally travel to London, England, once they went to Paris. We often crossed from one island to another.

My brother became a cabinet maker and moved to England.

After I married and my parents moved to England, father became an atheist; men would come into his jewelry store in Birmingham and talk to father about atheism and father believed him. Mother became unsure of what to believe, but my brother also became an atheist, but I am grateful to my parents that they brought me up to a religion.

Father was generous and kind, patient and loving. I never remember him uttering a cross word. He died of paralysis 30 Oct 1930, he was ill a year and died a short time before their 50th anniversary.



Uncle Charlie

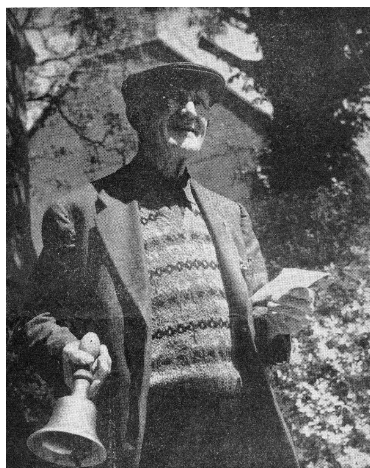
Grandma Rowe's brother & Sister Emily (chair left side)

Back row second from left: Charles Le Boutillier Rowe

Front row second from left: Ellen Thomas Rowe



Charles LeBoutillier Rowe, Ellen Thomas Rowe, Baby Aileen Rowe, Mildred Rowe (on left), Charles Rowe (son), Neville Rowe (on right) about 1915



Charles Rowe, Town Crier of St. Anne's Alderney's from the Guernsey Evening Press Saturday June 12, 1954



Celon Light Infantry Slave Island, Colombo, Celon Charles LeBoutillier Rowe, Mildred Rowe, Eva Salway Tagg, 1919