

Identification of Caroline Ellen Brown [Ellen] (circa 1828-1871)

Caroline Ellen Brown [known as Ellen Wright, and henceforth in this summary as CEB] was the mother of my ancestor Stanley [John] Wright born 1861 in Plumstead Kent. No marriage evidence for Ellen has been found but DNA and the FAN¹ club principle enable her to be conclusively identified as Caroline Ellen Augusta Brown baptised 1827 in Sawbridgeworth Hertfordshire henceforth in this summary as CEAB.

1. CEAB's mother Mary Ann was living with her son Charles Arthur Brown at 2 Upper Ann Street in the 1861 England and Wales census (7 April 1861). CEB gave birth to her son Stanley [John] Wright in Upper Ann Street on 27 May 1861.
2. Henry Dillistone Brown (the illegitimate son of CEAB daughter of Samuel Brown and Mary Ann Baker, born 15 May 1852) volunteered for the Navy on 9 May 1868 in Woolwich (where CEB's husband and family were living and working in 1861). His enlistment papers were signed by CEB (as his parent Ellen Wright).
3. There are no known documentary records for CEAB after May 1852 (when she gave birth in Sawbridgeworth Hertfordshire), nor for CEB before July 1859 (when she gave birth in Hitchin Hertfordshire), so no overlapping documentation.
4. CEB has two known descendants H and J, who both have robust documentation trails confirming they are great-grandchildren of CEB and her partner John Charles Wright. They share 223cM of DNA, which is comfortably within the range of 2nd cousins.
5. H and J share a 24cM match with DNA match D who has a robust documentation trail showing they are a descendant of CEAB via her illegitimate son Henry Dillistone Brown. If CEAB and CEB are the same person, then H and J should be half-second-cousins with D; this is within the range of possibilities but low probability according to <https://dnainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4>.

Combining the (marginal) DNA evidence with the documentary evidence (1 and 2) and absence of overlapping documentation (3) leads me to assert that CEAB and CEB are the same individual.

¹ Friends Neighbours and Associates – see <https://www.evidenceexplained.com/content/quicklesson-11-identity-problems-fan-principle>

Documentary evidence about Caroline Ellen Brown ('wife' of John Charles Wright)

Birth

The only evidence to the date of Ellen's birth is the age given on her death certificate (42 in 1871) which suggests a birth year of 1828/1829.

There is no evidence as to her place of birth as she has no confirmed census record.

Census records

1841: There are too many results for Ellen Brown or Ellen Wright to identify a likely candidate or candidates.

1851: There are too many results for Ellen Brown or Ellen Wright to identify a likely candidate or candidates. John Charles is a 23-year old Painter and Glazier lodging in Marylebone. The census records that he is married (but I have not yet identified a candidate marriage, so have no corroborating evidence.)

1861: The family (John Charles, Ellen and Mary Agnes) are scattered.

John Charles is a married 'painter on the tramp' in Kidderminster (recorded as his birthplace in every census from 1851 to 1901).

Ellen would have been heavily pregnant, so was unlikely to be working as a servant, but should appear as a married woman with her husband not present and is probably not too far from Plumstead where she gave birth a month later.

There is a Caroline Wright a married seamstress aged 32 boarding in Bermondsey without any of her other family present; however, she is likely to be the married daughter of the head of household David Davis and his wife Caroline.

There is a Caroline Wright aged 35, the 'Wife of a Journeyman tailor' who is a patient at Guys hospital. This *may* be the entry for Ellen but would need inspection of the Guys Hospital records to confirm (London Metropolitan Archives).

Agness Wright, a one year old nurse child born St Pancras Middlesex is living in the household of Henry Papworth (a House Painter) and *may* be the child of John Charles and Ellen.

1871: Ellen died just before the 1871 census, but her widower and children are recorded at Crossbrook Street in Waltham Cross.

Marriage

Ellen's husband was identified as John Charles Wright on the birth certificates of two of her children, and on the documentation associated with her death and burial. However, I have not been able to find a marriage between Caroline Brown or Ellen Brown and John [Charles] Wright between 1844 (when Ellen would have been circa 16) and 1871 when she died, so cannot determine the names or occupations of either party's father. Searches have been carried out via FreeBMD, Ancestry and Findmypast, using both John and Charles Wright and Caroline and Ellen Brown as search terms.

Children

Caroline Ellen Brown and John Charles Wright were having children between July 1859 and approx. 1864-66 as follows. There may have been unidentified children born outside these dates.

Mary Agnes (or Agnes Mary) [Agnes] Wright	3 July 1859	High Street, Hitchin, Hertfordshire	Birth certificate gives mother as Ellen Wright formerly Brown	Birth certificate gives father as John Charles Wright, Journeyman Grainer
Stanley Reynolds [Stanley or John] Wright	27 May 1861	Upper Ann Street, Plumstead, Kent	Birth certificate gives mother as Caroline Ellen Wright formerly Brown	Birth certificate gives father as John Charles Wright, Painter and Decorator Royal Arsenal
George Wright	Circa 1864-1866	Kent Middlesex or London	No birth certificate found.	In 1871 and 1881 George is identified as the son of the widowed John Charles Wright.

Death

Ellen Wright died in Cheshunt, Hertfordshire on 10 February 1871 aged 42 (date of birth 1828/29). Cause of death (from the death certificate) was "Effusion on the brain and paralysis". She was buried in Cheshunt cemetery; no grave marker has been located.

FAN club analysis

Given the brief and incomplete window that exists into Caroline Ellen Brown's life, FAN club analysis is difficult.

There is no census record that can be definitively identified as hers.

Her putative husband is known but is not recorded with her on any documents except the birth certificates of two of her children (on which no other individuals are identified) and her death and burial records (ditto no other individuals identified.)

In the 1861 census (1 month before her child Stanley [John] Wright was born, there were a number of Brown households in Upper Ann Street in Plumstead; there is a single Wright household that cannot be linked to match the documentary evidence. One of the Brown households is discussed later under Caroline Ellen Augusta Brown.

There are no Brown or Wright neighbours identified in Crossbrook Street Waltham Cross in 1871.

There are no Brown or Wright neighbours in 1861 census in High Street Hitchin (2 years after she bore a child there).

Further analysis may reveal more information but isn't necessary to reach the conclusion.

DNA evidence

Second cousins H and J are known to share a common great grandfather Stanley (aka John) Wright, son of Ellen Brown and John Charles Wright, so they are great-great grandchildren of Caroline Ellen Brown. The amount of DNA they share (223cM) is comfortably within the range of 2nd cousins according to <https://dnainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4>.

H and J both match D at circa 24cM which dnainter suggests represents the following possibilities:

Relationship probabilities (based on stats from The DNA Geek)	
56.80%	6C 6C1R 5C 6C2R 4C1R 5C1R 7C Half 3C2R 4C2R 5C2R 7C1R 3C3R 4C3R 5C3R 8C or more distant
16.40%	Half 3C 3C1R Half 2C2R 2C3R
16.40%	4C Half 3C1R 3C2R
8.40%	3C Half 2C1R 2C2R Half 1C3R
2.00%	Half 1C2R † Half 2C 2C1R 1C3R
~ 0%	** Half GG-Aunt / Uncle Half GG-Niece / Nephew
** this set of relationships is just within the threshold for 24cM, but has a zero probability in thednageek's table of probabilities	
† this relationship has a positive probability for 24cM in thednageek's table of probabilities, but falls outside the bounds of the recorded cM range (99th percentile)	

Inspection of the family tree of D reveals that he is descended from Henry Dilliston Brown, born 15 May 1852 in Sawbridgeworth Hertfordshire, the illegitimate child of Caroline Ellen Augusta Brown. D is the great-great-grandchild of Caroline Ellen Augusta Brown.

IF Caroline Ellen Brown and Caroline Ellen Augusta Brown are the same person, D would be a half-second cousin to H and J which has a 2% probability, according to the results above (the range of shared cM for a half second cousin would be 9 – 397 cM).

So, the DNA does not strongly support the hypothesis that Caroline Ellen Brown and Caroline Ellen August Brown are the same person, but it does warrant further investigation.²

² The DNA matches are all on Ancestry, which does not provide a chromosome browser.

Documentary Evidence for Caroline Ellen Augusta Brown

Birth/Baptism

Caroline Ellen Augusta Brown was baptised 20 May 1827 in Sawbridgeworth.

Her parents were Samuel Brown (a gamekeeper) and Mary Ann. Samuel and Mary Ann baptised a total of 10 children in Sawbridgeworth between 23 Apr 1811 and 17 March 1831. There are no records of children being baptised to the couple after 1831 or before 1811 in Sawbridgeworth.

The pattern of baptisms suggests that Caroline Ellen was born between May 1824 (when her elder brother James Alfred was baptised) and May 1827.

Census records

1841: Caroline Brown is recorded in Harlow Ward Sawbridgeworth (possibly Rederick Lane) in the household of Samuel Brown aged 50 Gamekeeper. Also present: Samuel's wife Mary Ann and other children James Alfred, Charles, Eliza and Henry aged 5. James Alfred, Charles and Eliza are recorded as children baptised by Samuel and Mary Ann. Henry (born circa 1835/6) is a mystery – he does not appear in the GRO indices or the Sawbridgeworth baptism records but may be a child or grandchild of Samuel and Mary Ann.

1851: Ellen Brown (24, single, born Sawbridgeworth) is recorded with her widowed mother Mary Ann Brown (61, a dressmaker, born Epping, Essex) at London Road Sawbridgeworth. Also present are a number of lodgers, including John "Dillington", a 17 year old labourer born in Sturmer Essex.

1861, 1871 et seq: I cannot identify a census entry that is incontrovertibly Caroline Ellen Augusta Brown (unmarried).

Marriage

I have not been able to find a marriage of Caroline Brown or Ellen Brown between 1851 (when Ellen would have been circa 16) and 1881 (when she would have been circa 41) that can be correlated with her known details. (I have not ordered any certificates so this is not definitive).

Children

Caroline Ellen August Brown had an illegitimate son Henry Dillistone Brown on 15 May 1852 in Sawbridgeworth. He is very likely the son of John "Dillington" who was a lodger with her mother in 1851; subsequent census entries suggest that his name was actually John Dillistone.

I have not been able to locate any other illegitimate children of Caroline Ellen Augusta Brown, but there is insufficient information available to confirm the hypothesis that Henry Dillistone Brown was her only child.

FAN club analysis

Parents

Samuel Brown, husband to Mary Ann and father to Ellen died in August 1844, according to his death certificate and burial record. He appears in the 1841 census, the baptism records for his children and the marriage record between Samuel Brown (a minor of Sawbridgeworth) and Mary Anne Baker (a minor of Harlow, just over the county border from Sawbridgeworth) in Sawbridgeworth Hertfordshire on 19 November 1808. The marriage was by licence (which I have not seen) with

consent of parents. The witnesses were Ann Brown, S Baker, William Parris and J? Burke. No further investigation of Samuel has been done to date.

Mary Ann Baker married in 1808 (as noted above) and appears in the baptism records for her children and the census record of 1841 with her husband Samuel Brown in Sawbridgeworth.

In 1851, she is a widow aged 61 (dressmaker) in Sawbridgeworth; her daughter Ellen Brown is living with her. The census records that she was born in Epping, Essex (part of the Harlow Union).

In 1861, Mary Ann Brown (widow, aged 73, born Epping, formerly a laundress) is living at 2 Upper Ann Street Plumstead, in the household of her son Charles A. Brown (born circa 1828/1829 in Sawbridgeworth). Charles Arthur son of Samuel Brown and Mary Ann was born 6 May 1828 in Sawbridgeworth (Hertfordshire baptism records on Findmypast).

Note: Upper Ann Street Plumstead is the address at which Caroline Ellen Brown gave birth to Stanley Wright in May 1861.

I have not yet located Mary Ann Brown between 1861 and 1871, so she may have died in that period.

Siblings

As noted above, **Ellen's mother Mary Ann** is resident with her younger brother Charles Arthur in the 1861 census at **2 Upper Ann Street Plumstead**. No work has been done to trace other siblings.

Child

I have not found Ellen's known child Henry Dillistone Brown (born 1852) in the 1861 census. However, Navy records show that he volunteered for the Navy in Woolwich in 1868 as an apprentice and entered service in 1870. (The census shows he was at sea in Naples in 1871). His 1868 enlistment papers were signed by his parent **Ellen Wright**.