

What's in a Name?

The London Gazette is one of the official journals of record of the British government, and the most important among such official journals in the United Kingdom, in which certain statutory notices are required to be published. The notice below, abstracted from page 2550 of THE LONDON GAZETTE of 6 JUNE, 1947, makes quite remarkable reading:

NOTICE is hereby given that by a deed poll dated the 7th day of May 1947 and duly enrolled in the Supreme Court of Judicature on the 2nd day of June 1947 WINSTON MAWDSLEY GRAHAM of "Treberan" Perranporth in the county of Cornwall Author a natural born British subject renounced and abandoned the surname of Grime and in lieu of that surname assumed as from the date of that deed the surname of Mawdsley Graham.—Dated the 2nd day of June 1947.

NALDER and SON, of 7, Pydar Street, Truro,
Solicitors for the said Winston Mawdsley
(231) Graham, formerly known as Winston Grime.

Having read it and dismissed my initial thought that it must be a bizarre hoax of some kind, I went back to *Memoirs*, only to find not a line, not a word, to refute it. For though WG gives quite detailed information concerning his mother's family, the Mawdsleys, that regarding his father's is frustratingly deficient; the word "Graham", what's more, is never once mentioned. Hardly surprising, since the family name was Grime.

WG was a keen tennis player in his youth: if you check the British Newspaper Archive you'll find on page three of the *Western Morning News* of 23 August 1928 a column headed "LAWN TENNIS" that records him playing under his birth name of Winston Grime. His brother, a resident of Cornwall named in *Memoirs* only as Cecil, is also referenced (as "Cecil Grime, Esq.") on page seven of *The Cornishman* of 18 January 1945 as a contributor to the Camborne-Redruth Hospital Appeal.

The man who married Jean Williamson on 18 September 1939 signed the register "Winston Grime"¹ (Cecil was both best man² and a witness; the second witness was WG's "dearest friend"³ Fred Harris). Though no Winston Graham is listed in the 1943 Plymouth Area phone book, Perranporth 2209 was the number of Winston Grime.

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.										
<i>Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given</i>										
<i>The contents of the Schedule will be treated as <u>confidential</u>. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed</i>										
NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family.	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX.		PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE.						
		For Infants under one year state the age in months as "under one month," "one month," etc.	Ages of Males.	Ages of Females.	Write "Single," "Married," "Widower," or "Widow," opposite the names of all persons aged 15 years and upwards.	State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of—			Total Children Born Alive.	Children still Living.
of every Person, whether Member of Family, Visitor, Boarder, or Servant, who (1) passed the night of Sunday, April 2nd, 1911, in this dwelling and was alive at midnight, or (2) arrived in this dwelling on the morning of Monday, April 3rd, not having been enumerated elsewhere. No one else must be included. (For order of entering names see Examples on back of Schedule.)	State whether "Head," or "Wife," "Son," "Daughter," or other Relative, "Visitor," "Boarder," or "Servant."					Completed years the present Marriage has lasted. If less than one year write "under one."				
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	
1 Albert Henry Grime	Head	43		Married	15	2	2	0		
2 Annie Grime	Wife	42		Married						
3 Cecil Grime	Son	12								
4 Winston Grime	Son	2								
5 Ellen Grime	Sister-in-law		19	Single						
6 Ellen Moore	Dom. Servant		23	Single						

This is the left-hand half of the relevant page of the 1911 census of England and Wales. The heading has been cut and pasted across so as to be fully visible. Thanks to BF.

Above, further confirmation from the census of 2 April 1911, when young Winston would have been 2 years and 9 months old. The form records him as 2 and his parents Albert Henry (stated to be a "commercial traveller" in the

"grocery" business)⁴ and Annie⁵ – 13 years married – as 43 and 42 respectively. Other members of the household are Winston's brother Cecil (12), Anne's sister Ellen Mawdsley (39 – occupation: "private means") and 23 year old domestic servant Ellen Moore.

All this presumably explains why WG was unusually reticent about his date of birth – because, until the 2nd day of June 1947, by which time *Ross Poldark* and *Demelza* were already published, "Winston Graham" was but the pseudonym (whose idea?)⁶ of Winston Grime. Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised that someone who spent so much time productively re-imagining the past should start with his own. But why be so coy about it? No word in *Memoirs*? After all, what's in a name?

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NOTES AND SOURCES

¹ The Perranzabuloe Parish Register of Marriages that records the wedding (Volume 1900-1940, page 123) is held by the Cornwall Record Office in Truro.

² *The West Briton and Cornwall Advertiser*, 21 September 1939.

³ *Memoirs*, Book One, Chapter Five

⁴ On his marriage certificate – see Note ¹ above – WG records his late father's occupation as "wholesale chemist"

⁵ The spelling of WG's mother's name is not clear. He dedicates his first novel to "Ann" but in *Memoirs* writes "Anne". On the census form above, his father records "Annie". Presumably Anne is correct.

⁶ Before he became a published novelist in October 1934, WG wrote a play – *Seven Suspected* – which was produced locally and then regionally. The title page of its manuscript names its author as Winston Graham. This (because pre-publisher; pre-agent) suggests that the decision, when writing, to jettison "Grime" in favour of "Graham" was WG's alone.