

The Leadbeaters: Brief Biographical Information

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A young Charles W. Leadbeater and his mother, Emma

According to archival documents in the United Kingdom, obtained through the National Archives, *Family Tree* and *Find My Past*, Charles Leadbeater was born on 24 June 1825 in Manchester, Lancashire, to John Leadbeater, a builder, and Mary Leadbeater. He was baptized on 18 September 1825 at the Church of St. Mary in Manchester. The family lived in Chorlton Row, Manchester. The 1851 Census reports his profession as a Clerk to Railway Contractor. The 1861 Census saw the Leadbeater family living in Kensington, London, again with his profession reported as Railway Contractor Clerk. He died at Rutland Cottage, in 1862 in Hampstead, London.

Emma Morgan was born in Liverpool, Lancashire in 1821, to Webster and Mary Morgan, he being a merchant, and resided at Jubilee Street, West Derby. Charles Leadbeater and Emma Morgan were married on 19 May 1853 at St. Jude Church, West Derby, Lancashire. He at that time resided at Stockport, Cheshire, and Emma at Edge Hill, West Derby. His profession was declared in the marriage register once again as a Book-keeper.

Emma and Charles Leadbeater had a son, Charles Webster Leadbeater, born on 16 February 1854 at Stockport, Cheshire, and baptized on 19 March 1854. The record of his baptism (reproduced below) includes an interesting information: the parents declared two different addresses – Charles Leadbeater’s address is recorded as Thomson Street and Emma Leadbeater’s address as Greek Street. Current Google maps for Stockport show that both streets are close to each other but but along parallel lines.

The England and Wales Census for 1861 saw the Leadbeater family living at 28 Seymour Place, Kensington, London, and Charles Leadbeater’s profession is stated to be a Railway Contractor Clerk. The England and Wales Census of 1881 reports

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BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of <u>St Thomas, Stockport</u> in the County of <u>Cheshire</u> in the Year 1854						
When Baptized.	Child's Christian Name.	Parents Name.		Abode.	Quality, Trade, or Profession.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
		Christian.	Surname.			
1854. March 5 No. 425.	Mary	Robert	Kirkman	Exton St. Hester Nere	Householder	John Willington
March 5 No. 426.	Elizabeth Ann	Samuel	Kirk	Ridgway Lane	Householder	John Willington
March 12 No. 427.	Anna	William	Taylor	Hester Nere	Carter	John Rife
March 12 No. 428.	Charles	Thomas	Green	High Bankside	Carter	John Rife
March 19 No. 429.	Charles Webster	Charles	Leadbeater	Thomson St. Greek St.	Book-binder	Joseph Taylor
March 19 No. 430.	William	George	Burrows	Churchgate	Joiner	Joseph Taylor
March 24 No. 431.	John Henry	John	Burrows	Mutton St.	Householder	Joseph Taylor
March 28 No. 432.	Joseph	Thomas	Butfield	Wellington Road.	Sailor	Joseph Taylor
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BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of <u>St Thomas, Stockport</u> in the County of <u>Cheshire</u> in the Year 1854						
When Baptized.	Child's Christian Name.	Parents Name.		Abode.	Quality, Trade, or Profession.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
		Christian.	Surname.			
1854. March 28. No. 433.	Thomas	George	Littler	Subinfield Lane.	Mechanic	Joseph Taylor
April 2 No. 434.	Sarah	George	Walker	Booth Street. Edgeley	Hatter.	Joseph Taylor
April 9 No. 435.	William	Annis	Oldfield	Lambank		Joseph Taylor
April 14 No. 436.	Amelia	John	Hart.	Commercial St. Salford.	Commercial Traveller	Joseph Taylor
April 16 No. 437.	Thomas	Joseph	Leedham	Woolley Street.	Weaver	Joseph Taylor
April 16 No. 438.	Mary	John	Barry	Lower Broughton	Manager of a Mill	Joseph Taylor
April 16 No. 439.	John Henry	John	Hatchor	Lord Street.	Post-Office Inspector	Joseph Taylor
April 16 No. 440.	William	John	Turner	Dockside	Weaver	Joseph Taylor

The record of CWL's Christening.

Emma as a widow living Headley Rd, Bramshot, Hampshire, living with her son, Charles Webster Leadbeater, and a servant, Catherine Ellen Wigg.

Below is the information regarding Charles Leadbeater’s Will.

“Wills. 1862.

29 July

Leadbeater Charles

The Will

Effects under £ 1,500

of Charles Leadbeater late of Rutland Cottage Hampstead in the County of Middlesex deceased who died 17 June 1862 at Rutland Cottage aforesaid was proved at the Principal Registry by the oaths of Emma Leadbeater of Rutland Cottage aforesaid Widow the relict and James Tomlinson Morgan of 47 Parliament-street Westminster in the said County Gentleman two of the Executors.”

(<https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/Calendar?surname=leadbeater&yearOfDeath=1862&page=9#calendar>)



Military passport, UK, 1857
(The National Archives)

The following quote mentions the changes in passport regulations in England from 1858 onwards:

In April 1858, the Foreign Office published regulations regarding all the changes to passport procedures in *The Times*. The regulations finally abandoned the old pretense of respectability as the criterion of eligibility for a passport and opened obtaining a passport to “any British subject who shall produce ... a certificate of his identity, signed by a mayor, magistrate, justice of the peace, minister of religion, physician, surgeon, solicitor, or notary resident in the United Kingdom.” [“Passport Foreign Office Notice”, *The Times*, 28 April 1858, 5] The British passport was thus transformed into a national document of individual identity for all Britons.

Anderson, Martin. “Tourism and the Development of the Modern British Passport, 1814—1858.” *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 49, no. 2, 2010, pp. 258–282. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/23265202.

Below is the facsimile of the Index to Register of Passport Applications 1851-1903, for England, Great Britain (source: *Find My Past*), containing Charles Leadbeater’s passport application.

It was obtained through a search by using his name, year of birth (1825) and year of death (1862). It is dated May 3, 1858. Such an application is entirely consistent with the departure of the “Tamar”, the vessel which left Southampton on 10 May 1858 and which would eventually reach Bahia, the northeast of Brazil, on 30 May 1858. The facsimile of the “Tamar” ship manifest for that date is presented further down.

Name of the Bearer of the Passport		Number of the Passport.	Date of the Passport.	OBSERVATIONS.
Leadbeater	Charles	4186	May 3 1858	
Leadbetter	Blanche	5864	" 26 "	
Leadbetter	Robert	5870	" " "	
Leadbetter	John	2005	July 5 "	
Leader	Henry	4090	Apr. 30 "	
Leadley	Sarah J.	6812	July 29 "	
Leaf	William A.	10041	Aug. 14 "	
Leahy	James	1871	Nov. 11 "	
Leak	Thomas	1265	Sep. 1 "	
Leake	George	11142	May 1 "	
Leaker	William W.	9271	Aug. 10 "	
Leakey	Peter R.	12735	Sep. 2 "	
Lean	Capt. Saml	392	June 17 "	
Leane	George	5841	May 22 "	
Leapingwell	George	7144	July 31 "	
Lear	James G.	1582	June 25 "	
Lear	Thomas	6173	July 27 "	
Lear	John	1933	Aug. 2 "	
Lear	William	9467	" 11 "	
Lear	Joseph B.	13701	Sep. 9 "	
Lear	Emma	14732	" 20 "	
Lear	John	19386	Dec. 14 "	
Learmouth	Alice	18185	Oct. 30 "	
Learoyd	Alfred J.	4070	July 12 "	
Learoyd	Charles W.	9913	Aug. 15 "	
Leary	John T.	10225	" 16 "	
Leason	Anne	58785	Feb. 17 "	
Leath	Anne	3738	July 8 "	
Leather	Annie W.	6642	" 29 "	
Leathes	Stanley	2370	June 30 "	
Leary	Patrick	18018	Oct. 27 "	
LeBlanc	René J. Z.	56548	Feb. 12 "	
Leblanc	Margaret	2998	Apr. 20 "	
Leblanc	René J. Z.	2343	July 7 "	
Leblanc	Arthur	7329	" 31 "	

Official List of Passport Applications including the name
of Charles Leadbeater (UK National Archives)

C. Jinarajadasa, in a “memo for Biography of CWL”, which is housed in the Archives of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, stated that CWL “went with father, mother and brother to Brazil [in] 1858. Father [was] chairman of Company owning concession of the Bahia and San Francisco Railway”. Mr Jinarajadasa also says that the family “minus Gerald” returned to England in 1861. In view of currently available evidence it was not correct for him to say that Charles Leadbeater was the “chairman of the Company owning concession of the Bahia and San Francisco Railway” as well as that CWL had a brother called Gerald, as there is no evidence of his existence. But there is evidence that the family went to Bahia in Brazil and that Charles Leadbeater worked for a Railway contractor, although the year of the family’s return to England was 1859 and not 1861.

Among the passengers who arrived in Salvador, Bahia, on 30 May 1858, together with Charles Leadbeater and his wife and son, were Richard Tiplady and James Overend. Both of them were associated with the construction of the Bahia and San Francisco Railway. The website *Grace’s Guide to British Industrial History* has the following to say about Richard Tiplady:

Richard Tiplady, born in Blackburn, Lancashire, on the 7th February, 1843, was a son of the late Mr. Charles Tiplady, bookseller and printer, and Alderman of that town. After being educated at Balderstone Grammar School, the subject of this notice was articled to Mr. Hugh Wilson, then Borough Surveyor, whom he accompanied to Brazil in 1858, Mr. Wilson having obtained occupation in superintending road-making works in the State of Bahia. After Mr. Tiplady’s term of service as apprentice to Mr. Wilson was completed he remained as the latter’s assistant until the completion of the works. He was then engaged on the construction of the Bahia and San Francisco, and from 1864 to 1870, he acted as a District Engineer on that line.

https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Richard_Tiplady

In his Doctorate thesis, “‘Se Eles São Livres ou Escravos’: Escravidão e Trabalho Livre Nos Canteiros da Estrada de Ferro de São Francisco: Bahia, 1858-1863’ (‘If They Are Free or Slaves: Slavery and Free Work at the Work Sites of San Francisco Railway: Bahia, 1858-1863’), presented to the Programme of Post-Graduation in History at the Institute of Philosophy and Human Sciences, Federal University of Campinas, Brazil, 2013, Robério Santos Souza, on page 26, writes thus about James Overend:

No curto espaço de tempo em que teve negócios na praça comercial da Bahia, o empreiteiro Watson contou sempre com os serviços de outros ingleses, muitos deles engenheiros designados ainda em Londres para tratar de seus vários contratos. O seu representante junto à Cia. de Diques era o inglês James Overend, conforme procuração assinada em Londres no ano de 1857. Naquela ocasião, Watson dizia constituir Overend como seu bastante procurador, uma vez que o mesmo seguiria para a “Bahia do Império do Brasil em referência a um certo contrato por uma escritura datada no dia 20 de abril de 1856 [...] na dita cidade de Londres pela construção de um dique no paquete inglês Tamar, que partiu do porto de

Southampton, o engenheiro civil Overend desembarcou na Bahia, em 31 de julho de 1857, a serviço da estrada de ferro. O fato de, em 30 de maio de 1858, ter desembarcado com a família sinaliza que pretendia fixar residência e, provavelmente, trabalhar como engenheiro nas obras da empreiteira de Watson ou assumir contratos de empreitadas de obras públicas provinciais.

(English translation): In the short space of time he had business in Bahia's commercial community, the contractor [John] Watson always counted with the services of other Englishmen, many of them engineers who had been appointed in London to look after his contracts. His representative at the Dams Company [in Brazil] was the Englishman James Overend, according to the power of attorney signed in London in 1857. On that occasion Watson declared to constitute Overend as his power of attorney, once he would travel to "Bahia of the Empire of Brazil regarding a certain contract according to a legal instrument dated 20 April 1856 [...] in the said city of London for the construction of a dam." Travelling in the English vessel Tamar, which left the port of Southampton, the civil engineer Overend arrived in Bahia on 31 July 1857, at the service of the railway. The fact that he arrived again with his family on 30 May 1858 was a sign that he wanted to establish residence and, probably, to work as an engineer on the work sites of Watson's contractor firm or undertake contracts in provincial public works projects.

(http://repositorio.unicamp.br/bitstream/REPOSIP/280990/1/Souza_RoberioSantos_D.pdf)


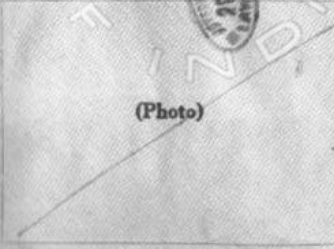
The engineer John Watson was the contractor for the Bahia and San Francisco Railway. The following is the information about him to be found in *Grace's Guide to British Industrial History*:

John Watson (1816-1890) Civil engineer. Born in Blackburn. 1848 Associate of Inst. Civil Engineers. 1851 Living at Stonewell, Lancaster. 1851 December 11th Married at Darlington to Elizabeth Overend
1857 Member of Inst. Civil Engineers, working in Lancaster
1864 of Albion Lodge, Stamford Hill; offices at 47 Parliament St, London SW
1885 of 70 Bishopsgate, London EC
1890 August 8th. Died age 74. 'On the 8th Inst., at Colindale, Beckenham, John Watson, M.I.C.E., in his 75th year'.

([https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/John_Watson_\(1816-1890\)](https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/John_Watson_(1816-1890)))

It is to be noted that John Watson's offices' address in 1864 coincides with the address mentioned in Charles Leadbeater's Will in 1862: 47 Parliament St, London SW.

CWL's date of birth, according to his birth certificate, was 16 February 1854. The information about him in the Censuses of 1861, 1871 and 1881 presents an age consistent with the birth in 1854. The Census of 1891 presents an age related to a birth in 1847 and that is the date which appears in his passport.

2		3	
DESCRIPTION SIGNALEMENT		PHOTOGRAPH OF BEARER	
Profession Profession	Bishop		
Place and date of birth Lieu et date de naissance	England 17.2.1847		
Domicile Domicile	S. India		
Height Taille	5 ft. 11 in.		
Colour of eyes Couleur des yeux	Blue		
Colour of hair Couleur des cheveux	White		
Visible distinguishing marks Signes particuliers	—		
CHILDREN ENFANTS			
Name Nom	Date of birth Date de naissance		
Sex Sexe			

WIFE FEMME

(Photo)

SIGNATURE OF WIFE ET DE SA FEMME

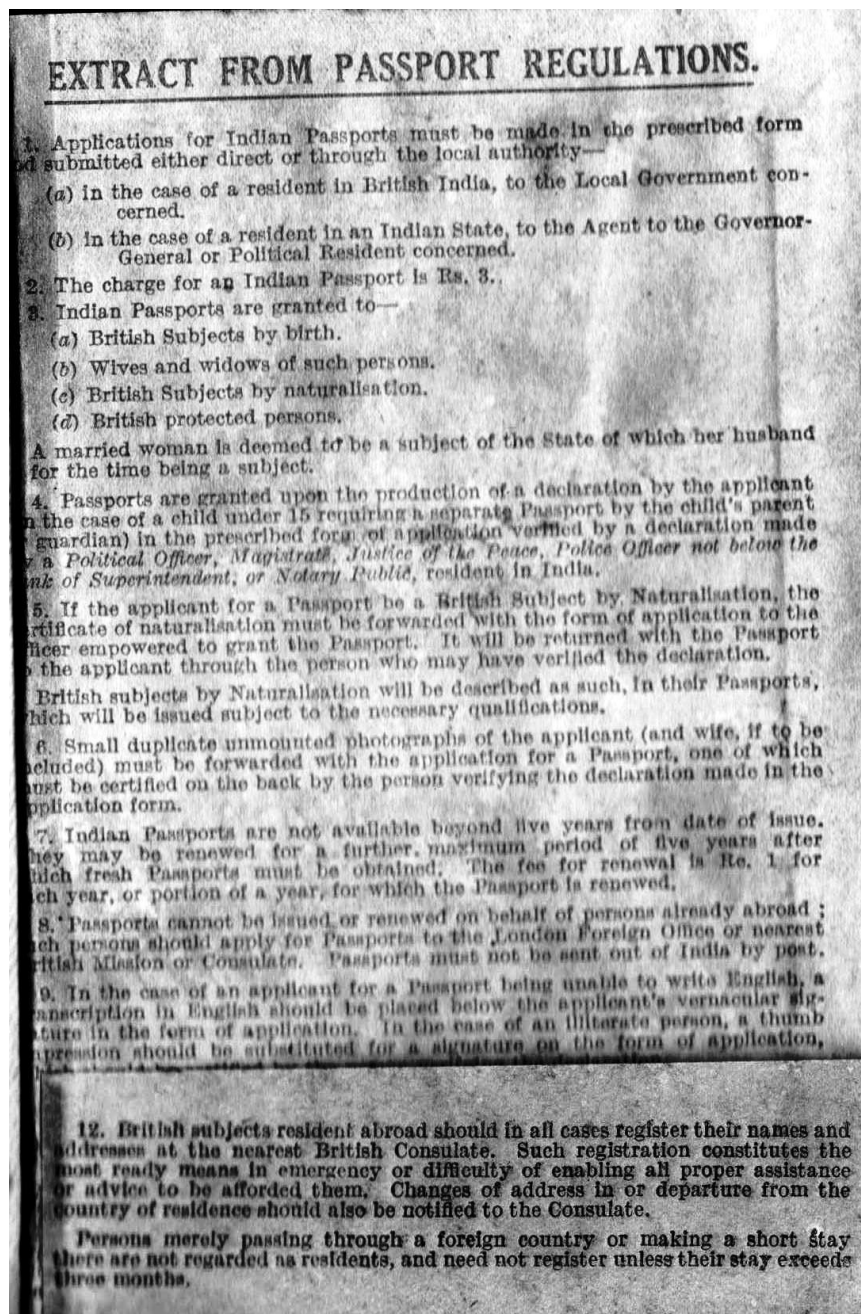
GN Leadbeater

CWL's passport identification page (www.cwlworld.info/archives.html)

PASSPORT		PASSPORT. PASSEPORT.	
<p>These are to request and require in the Name of the Viceroy and Governor-General of India all those whom it may concern to allow the bearer to pass freely without let or hindrance, and to afford him every assistance and protection of which he may stand in need.</p> <p>Given at Fort St. George the 29th day of January 1934</p> <p>By order of the Viceroy and Governor-General of India. <i>Chinnappa Rao</i> Secretary to the Govt. of S. 108, Law Department.</p>		<p>This passport contains 32 pages. Ce passeport contient 32 pages.</p> <p>EMPIRE OF INDIA. EMPIRE DES INDES BRITANNIQUES.</p> <p>No. of Passport } 11159 No. du Passeport }</p> <p>Name of Bearer } BISHOP CHARLES Nom du Titulaire } WEBSTER LEADBEATER</p> <p>Accompanied by his wife (Maiden name) } Accompagné de sa Femme (Née) }</p> <p>and by / ch. ren et de / enfants }</p> <p>National Status } British subject by birth Nationalité. }</p>	

CWL's passport, information page

Below are the Passport Regulations (year 1934), issued by the British government in India, the year CWL obtained his last passport before dying in Perth, Western Australia, on 1 March 1934:



More research is needed to ascertain what was behind the change in birth year: was it a lie, as the 'received tradition' about him maintains, or was it a moment of personal discovery?