

# The Mason Family

The Masons of Romsey and Southampton, Hampshire, England  
The Witches Ernest and Susie Mason and their Ancestors



William Wallworth

The Exile's Publications ~ July 30, 2025 ~ W-035 Edition A

# The Mason Family

The Masons of Romsey and Southampton, Hampshire, England

The Witches Ernest and Susie Mason and their Ancestors

In this Edition A:

A report on newspaper articles that mentioned Ernest and Susie Mason.

In a later update, will be added the genealogical information on them.

Also in the past, I done a research on Job Mason of Romsey, Hampshire which appeared in one issue of Mike Howard's The Cauldron. I have been updating it and will add it to this when ready.

It was interesting to do the newspaper extracting on Ernie and Susie Mason. You will find how deep Ernie was into astronomy, he and his associates were not "amateur astronomers" they were even better.

Also when reading the letters written to the newspapers in 1983, it shows how many remember them. Ernie Mason left a lasting impression on many people of all ages.

Researched and compiled by  
William Wallworth

W-035 Edition A was done on July 30, 2025 Wednesday 11:50 PM.

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## Ernest W. Mason



Ernest W. Mason in his later years

### ~ **18 September 1897**

Ernest W. Mason and Susie M. Mason at Hartley College in Southampton, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, The Hampshire Advertiser, Saturday, September 18, 1897:

HARTLEY COLLEGE, SOUTHAMPTON.

Results of the examinations in Science, Art, Technological, and Commercial Subjects.

Session 1896-7 :---

The letters A and E indicate Advanced and Elementary Stages respectively.

(long article and only the relevant are transcribed here)

“ART EXAMINATIONS.”

“Freehand Drawing. --- ... E, 2nd class --- ... Ernest W Mason ... Susie M Mason ...”

“Model Drawing. --- ... E, 2nd class --- ... Susie M Mason... E W Mason ...”

“Drawing in Light and Shade. --- ... E, 2nd class --- ... Susie M Mason ...”

## **~ 20 August 1898**

E. W. Mason, S. M. Mason and R. Mason were at Hartley College in Southampton, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Saturday, August 20, 1898:

### **HARTLEY COLLEGE, SOUTHAMPTON.**

Results of the Examinations.

Appended we give the results of the examinations in science, art, technological, and commercial subjects, held in March, April, May, and June last. A denotes advanced stage, E, elementary stage.

(long article and only the relevant are transcribed here)

“ART EXAMINATIONS.”

“Freehand Drawing (Elementary Stage) : --- ... E. W. Mason, 1st class ... S. M. Mason, 2nd class ... R. Mason, 2nd class ...”

“Model Drawing (Elementary Stage) --- ... and E. W. Mason --- 1st class ... S. M. Mason ... R. Mason ... 2nd class.”

“Drawing in Light and Shade (Elementary Stage) --- ... E. W. Mason, R. Mason, S. M. Mason ... 1st class”

“Modeling in Clay (Elementary Stage) --- ... E. W. Mason, S. M. Mason ...1st class... R. Mason ... 2nd class”

## **~ 16 September 1899**

Ernest Mason, Susie M. Mason and Rosetta Mason were at Hartley College in Southampton, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Saturday, September 16, 1899:

### **THE HARTLEY COLLEGE.**

Results of Examinations.

Appended we give the results of the examinations on Science, Art, Technological, and Commercial subjects held in March, April, and May last :-

(long article and only the relevant are transcribed here)

“ART EXAMINATIONS.”

“MODELING. ---Elementary, 1st Class --- ... Rose Mason...”

“FREEHAND DRAWING. --- Advanced Stage ... 2nd Class --- Ernest Mason...Elementary Stage, 1st Class ... Rosetta Mason... Susie M. Mason... Rosetta Mason...”

“MODEL DRAWING. --- Advanced Stage, 1st Class ---... E. Mason... Elementary Stage, 1st Class --- Susie Mason... 2nd Class --- ...Rosetta Mason...”

“DRAWING IN LIGHT AND SHADE. --- Advanced Stage --- Susie M. Mason... and Ernest Mason; 2nd Class --- ... Rosetta Mason ...”

### **~ 22 September 1900**

E. W. Mason, Rose Mason and Susie M. Mason were at Hartley College in Southampton, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Saturday, September 22, 1900:

HARTLEY COLLEGE, SOUTHAMPTON.

Results of the Science, Art, Technological, and Commercial Examinations held in March, April, May, and June last:---

(long article not transcribed here)

“ART SUBJECTS.”

“FREEHAND DRAWING. --- First Class---

E. W. Mason, ...”

“MODEL DRAWING. ... Second Class --- ... Rose Mason, Susie M. Mason, ...”

“DEAWING IN LIGHT AND SHADE. ... Second Class --- ... Rose Mason...”

“PERSPECTIVE. ... First Class --- ... and E. W. Mason.”

### **~ 22 September 1913**

E. Mason of 28, Dorset-street, in Southampton mentioned in an advertisement.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Monday, September 22, 1913:

**TOO LATE FOR CLASSIFICATION.**

FOLDING BAGATELLE BOARD, 9 x 3ft., 1 1/2-inch Ivory Balls; needs partly re-covering; 22s. 6d. --- E. Mason, 28, Dorset-street, Southampton.

### **~ 23 September 1913**

E. Mason of 28, Dorset-street, in Southampton mentioned in an advertisement.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Tuesday, September 23, 1913:

ARTICLES FOR SALE.

FOLDING BAGATELLE BOARD, 9 x 3ft., 1 1/2-inch Ivory Balls; needs partly re-covering; 22s. 6d. --- E. Mason, 28, Dorset-street, Southampton.

### **~ 29 November 1913**

Mr. E. W. Mason of Southampton gave a lecture at the Theosophical Society at 12 Victoria Road North in Southsea, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Portsmouth Evening News, Saturday 29 November 1913:

**THEOSOPHICAL.**

Theosophical Society, 12 Victoria Road North. --- Sundays, 3.15 p.m. To-morrow Mr. E. W. Mason (Southampton), "Sound Vibrations" (Illustrated by Magic Lantern).

### **~ 17 January 1914**

A Mr. Mason attended an event at the Theosophical Society where a lecture about "Cosmos out of Chaos."

From the newspaper, Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Saturday, January 17, 1914:

#### **Cosmos Out of Chaos.**

A Consideration of Theosophy as a Conception of Life.

There was quite a large gathering in the Art Gallery, Above Bar, on Wednesday afternoon, in response to invitations to an "at home" issued by Miss E. M. Green, President of the local branch of the Theosophical Society, and Miss A. M. Wentworth Sheilds. Among those present were Mrs. A. W. Swalm, Mrs. C. J. Sharp, Mrs. May, Mr. Bekton, Mrs. Keele, Capt. Newnham, Mr. Matthewson, Mons. Bidault, Mrs. Bennett, Mr. and Mrs. Conway, Mrs. Shaw, Miss E. P. Tucker, Mrs. Farquharson, Mrs. Wall, Mrs. Norman Aldridge, Mrs. Hollick, Mrs. Mosely, Miss Burniston, Miss Hendon Warde, Mrs. Thomas, Miss Reeves, Miss Simpson, Miss Boswell, the Misses Wiseman, Mr. Mason, Mr. Witt, and Mr. Targett. Miss Green presided.

Miss Codd, who has recently returned from India, "which Theosophists considered their headquarters," it was remarked, gave an address. She said that theosophy a way of looking at life which made cosmos out of chaos. ...

(long article not transcribed here)

### **~ 7 October 1916**

Mr. E. W. Mason of Southampton gave a lecture at the Theosophical Society at 12 Victoria Road North in Southsea, Hampshire.

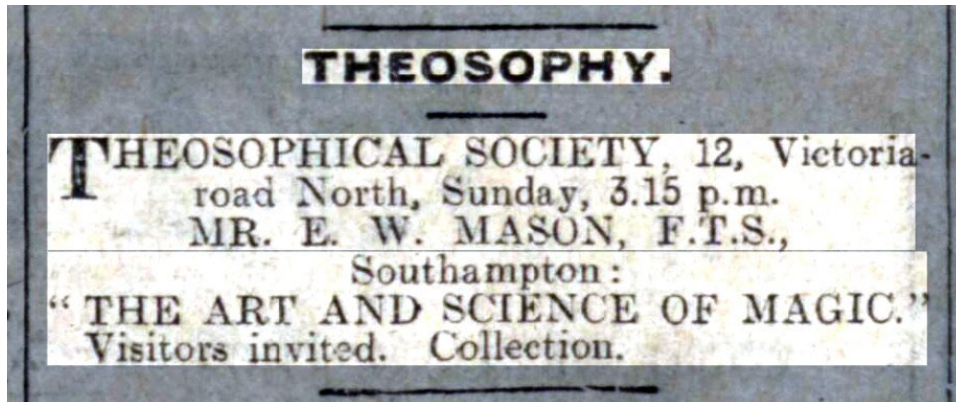
From the newspaper, Portsmouth Evening News, Saturday 7 October 1916:

#### **THEOSOPHY.**

'THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, 12, Victoria road North, Sunday, 3.15 p.m. MR. E. W. MASON, F.T.S., Southampton:

"THE ART AND SCIENCE MAGIC." Visitors invited. Collection.

Image of the article:



### **~ 5 December 1916**

E. W. Mason of 28, Dorset-street, in Southampton mentioned in an advertisement.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Tuesday, December 5, 1916:

WANTED Folding Turkish or Vapour Bath Cabinet. --- E. W. Mason, 28, Dorset-street, Southampton.

### **~ 5 September 1921**

E. W. Mason of 28, Dorset-street, in Southampton mentioned in an advertisement.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Monday, September 5, 1921:

TYPEWRITER (Standard Empire), visible; perfect condition; £6. --- E. W. Mason, 28, Dorset-street, Southampton.

### **~ 6 September 1921**

E. W. Mason of 28, Dorset-street, in Southampton mentioned in an advertisement.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Tuesday, September 6, 1921:

TYPEWRITER (Standard Empire), visible; perfect condition; £6. --- E. W. Mason, 28, Dorset-street, Southampton.

### **~ 26 November 1921**

The property at 28, Dorset-street, Southampton was listed to be sold by Auction.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Saturday, November 26, 1921:

**PUBLIC AUCTIONS.**



Short notice of sale.

WITH VACANT POSSESSION.

Monday, November 28th, 1921, on the premises, at 3 p.m.

Ryder, Bowyer And Lane

will Submit To Public Auction (unless previously disposed of by private treaty) the Long-Leasehold Shop and Dwelling-House. 28, Dorset-Street, Southampton, containing shop, 2 reception-rooms, bathroom, 2 bedrooms, and office; large shed in rear.

Vendor's Solicitors --- Messrs, Page and Gulliford, 29, Portland-street, Southampton.

Keys and order to view of the Auctioneers, Junction Auction Mart, 155, Above Bar, Southampton. Telephone 966 (Private Branch Exchange). Telegrams: "Rostrum," Southampton.

Image of the advertisement:

Short notice of sale.  
**WITH VACANT POSSESSION.**  
Monday, November 28th, 1921,  
on the premises, at 3 p.m.  
**RYDER, BOWYER AND LANE**  
will SUBMIT to PUBLIC AUCTION (un-  
less previously disposed of by private  
treaty) the LONG-LEASEHOLD SHOP  
and DWELLING-HOUSE.  
28, DORSET-STREET, SOUTHAMPTON,  
containing shop, 2 reception-rooms, bath-  
room, 2 bedrooms, and office; large shed  
in rear.  
Vendor's Solicitors—Messrs. Page and  
Gulliford, 29, Portland-street, South-  
ampton.  
Keys and order to view of the Auc-  
tioneers, Junction Auction Mart, 155, Above  
Bar, Southampton.  
Telephone 966 (Private Branch Exchange).  
Telegrams: "Rostrum." Southampton.



## **~ 7 June 1924**

Mr. E. W. Mason manipulated the lantern and prepared the slides at a Southampton Astronomical Society meeting.

From the newspaper, Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Saturday, June 7, 1924:

### **Astronomical Society.**

The monthly meeting of the Southampton Astronomical Society was held in the Y.M.C.A. Rooms on Tuesday, evening, when Mr. J. T. Burge presided. The chairman introduced the subject of "Is Mars Inhabited?" The light and heat Mars received from the sun, he said, was probably about half what we get. We knew it possessed air and water from the snow caps at its poles, although its air was much more attenuated than ours, owing to the fact that the force of gravity was less on Mars than on the earth. Mr. E. Roberts thought the conditions on Mars were such as to warrant the existence of life on the planet. By means of coloured slides taken from photographs, he traced the progress of vegetation in the Southern hemisphere of Mars from the pole to the equator, and as their spring advanced to summer and the summer to autumn. He considered Mars was a planet from which most of the surface water had been lost, and that its surface was, therefore, largely composed of desert, but that the inhabitants had utilised the water which they still possessed to irrigate the parched land, and so provide vegetation for their sustenance.

This they obtained from the melting of the snows around the poles, and conveyed hundreds of miles by means of canals. He produced various slides and data to substantiate this. Mr. J. Blackhall, taking the negative side, considered the canals which Mr. Roberts had laid such stress upon were merely optical illusions, and quoted many authorities in support of his contention. A discussion followed, in which Messrs. A. C. Curtis, F. J. Acfield, E. W. Mason, and other members took part. Mr. E. W. Mason manipulated the lantern and prepared the slides.

## **~ 28 August 1924**

Mr. Ernest Mason constructed a telescope.

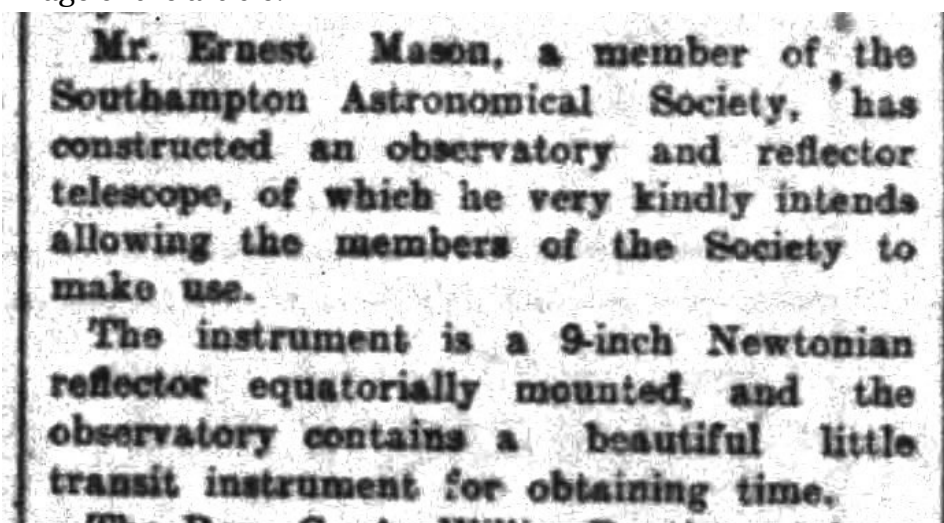
From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Thursday, August 28, 1924:

### **Topics of the Hour.**

Mr. Ernest Mason, a member of the Southampton Astronomical Society, has constructed an observatory and reflector telescope, of which he very kindly intends allowing the members of the Society to make use.

The instrument is a 9-inch Newtonian reflector equatorially mounted, and the observatory contains a beautiful little transit instrument for obtaining time.

Image of the article:



**~ 15 October 1924**

Mr. Ernest W. Mason built an observatory and telescope on the Mason's property at Beechwood, 1, Osborne-road in Southampton, Hampshire. He let the members of the Southampton Astronomical Society have use of the telescope.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Wednesday, October 15, 1924:

### **STUDY OF STARS.**

#### **OBSERVATORY OPENED AT SOUTHAMPTON.**

Last evening an astronomical observatory was opened at the Beechwood, St. Denys, Southampton, in the presence of a number of members of the Southampton Astronomical Society, including several ladies. Both the observatory and the appliance contained in it are the work and property of Mr. Ernest W. Mason, whose really remarkable achievement was the subject of delighted comment on the part of the visitors.

#### **TELESCOPIC INSTRUMENT.**

It is what is known as a Romsey observatory, and the telescopic instrument is an equatorially-mounted 9-inch Newtonian reflector. A transit room communicates with the observatory, and contains a transit instrument, fitted up to hold a sidereal clock, the transit instrument itself having been very kindly presented by Professor Watkin, of University College, Southampton.

Although the observatory and its appliances are the property of Mr. Mason, he has generously placed them, under certain conditions, at the disposal of the Astronomical Society, to whom access to such an instrument will prove of the greatest possible value.

The company having assembled in the observatory, Mr. Edgar Roberts, the secretary of the Astronomical Society, said he felt that their meeting there that evening would prove an epoch-making occasion in the Society's history. He called upon Mr. E. A. Mitchell ("Townsmen," of the "Echo") to perform the opening ceremony.

#### **SOCIETY CONGRATULATED.**

Mr. Mitchell, after congratulating the Society upon the rapid progress which it had made since its inauguration, paid a very cordial tribute to Mr. Mason for the extraordinary skill, ingenuity, and patience he must have displayed in constructing the observatory. It was most generous and helpful of him to allow the Society to benefit by his work, and there was no doubt that the Society felt itself under a deep debt of gratitude to him.

Touching on the subject of Astronomy itself, he said he thought the study was valuable, not merely because it trained students in habits of accurate observation, record, and of thinking generally, but because it was a science which, perhaps more than any other, led the mind towards an appreciation of the vastness of the universe, and of those ultimate problems which were the subject-matter of the deepest philosophy. Astronomy also, by showing man the comparative insignificance of one part of his being, tended to soften his egotism and endow him with a more humble outlook, while at the same time reminding him of his link with the Whole.

#### **MEMBERS WELCOMED.**

Mr. Mason welcomed the members of the Society, and clearly described the instrument and its manner of working, after which Mr. Mitchell formally declared the observatory open.

The roof-shutter was then rolled back by Mr. F. J. Ackfield, editor of the Society's "Bulletin," the telescope properly adjusted, and members of Society were given an opportunity of studying telescopically the surface of the moon.

#### **~ 21 October 1925**

Mason of 1, Osborne-road in Southampton was mentioned in an advertisement.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Wednesday, October 21, 1925:

#### **ENGINES, MACHINERY, TOOLS, ETC.**

6 1/2 in. SPENCER LATHE, self-acting, screw-cutting, 4ft. 9in. bed for power; £10. ---  
Mason, 1, Osborne-road, Southampton.

#### **~ 29 October 1925**

Mason of 1, Osborne-road in Southampton was mentioned in an advertisement.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Thursday, October 29, 1925:

## **ENGINES, MACHINERY, TOOLS, ETC.**

LATHE, massive, 6 1/2 in., screw-cutting; 4ft. 9in. bed; any reasonable offer accepted. ---  
Mason, 1, Osborne-road, Southampton.

## **~ 5 December 1925**

Mr. Mason mentioned doing further works on the telescope at the Beechwood Observatory. This is the observatory that Ernie Mason built on his property at Beechwood, 1, Osborne-road in Southampton, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Saturday, December 5, 1925:

## **ASTRONOMICAL FINDS.**

Observational Group of Southampton Society.

The members of Southampton Astronomical Society, at their last meeting, listened with evident interest to Mr. E. R. C. Edyvean, the Observational Secretary, when he gave a report of work being done by that section.

Mr. Edyvean stated that the attendance at the observational groups held every Monday and Thursday for members and visitors at Beechwood Observatory was very satisfactory. Improvements had been made in the instruments. The mirror of the large gin reflector had been refigured by Mr. Mason and was now capable doing very fine work. The transit instrument and sidereal clock had received further adjustments. In addition to the large one, three telescopes of different sizes were kept at the observatory.

## **ENTHUSIASTIC MEMBERS.**

Regarding actual observations, the speaker mentioned two enthusiastic members who had risen in the early hours to watch for one of the now comets recently discovered. They were rewarded in their search, but disappointed at the faintness of the object. Recently Mr. Acfield observed an object in the Southern Equatorial Zone of the Planet Jupiter, which, he said, resembled a gigantic football. Sceptical members had looked for the object and although at first their scepticism was confirmed, at a subsequent observation the object was seen by the Rev. Newman and Mr. Edyvean, rotational oscillations confirming this.

Within the last fortnight, a most interesting group of sun spots have been seen and its appearance was described as "astounding" by the Observational Secretary. The group was visible to the naked eye, the sun within the region of the group appearing shaded. Observing with an instrument, the speaker said, he was able to count 44 nuclei, and 50 nuclei seen by one observer was, according to text books, believed to be a record.

The President (Professor Watkin), in thanking Mr. Edyvean for his report, reminded members that developments would take place in the early part of next year which would place the Southampton Society in a very fortunate position in comparison with other local societies as regards instrumental equipment.

### **~ 1 March 1926**

The address of 1, Osborne-road, Southampton was mentioned in an advertisement.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Monday, March 1, 1926:

#### **ARTICLES FOR SALE.**

LAWN MOWERS, 10 in, Reliance, 10s. 6d.; 8 in. Ransome's Patent, with grass box, 20s.  
--- 1, Osborne-road, Southampton.

### **~ 13 October 1926**

The Beechwood Observatory at 1, Osborne-road was mentioned.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Wednesday, October 13, 1926:

#### **IS THERE LIFE UPON MARS?**

Planet Favourable for Observation.

Invitation To Interested Public.

(Long article, only the relevant part transcribed here)

“At the Beechwood Observatory, 1, Osborne-road, the Polar caps and other features on the planet have been observed recently by members of the Astronomical Society, and any of the public who are interested are invited to attend on Mondays and Thursdays, during which evenings the Observational Secretary will be in attendance.”

### **~ 16 October 1926**

The University College in Southampton, Hampshire opened an observatory with a telescope built by Mr. E. W. Mason.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Saturday, October 16, 1926:

#### **AN OBSERVATORY.**

University College Acquisition.

CEREMONY BY SIR FRANK DYSON.

Immediately following his lecture at the University College, Southampton, last evening, Sir Frank Dyson, F. R. S., L. L. D., the Astronomer Royal, performed an interesting little ceremony --- that of formally opening the new observatory erected at the College, to provide facilities for the study of astronomy by College students, members of the Southampton Astronomical Society, and general public.

Owing to the inclemency of the weather the first part of the function took place in the lecture hall.

Mr. K. H. Vickers (Principal of University College), who presided, explained that the College authorities did not pretend that the observatory which had been established was a great one, but they did claim that it was evidence of their interest in the science of

astronomy. He also mentioned that Mr. R. Casson was acting as temporary head of the Department of Mathematics, in the lamented absence of Professor E. L. Watkins, whom, he was sorry to say, had been ordered six months' complete rest in a foreign climate, and whom he saw off on a Union-Castle liner that afternoon. They sincerely hoped that he would come back to them fully restored to health. (Applause.)

### **SMALL BEGINNINGS.**

Mr. Casson, who was invited by the Principal to ask Sir Frank Dyson to kindly perform the opening ceremony, remarked that after hearing the Astronomer Royal's description of what he might call one of the magnificent cathedrals of science at Greenwich, it seemed almost impudent of them to ask him to inaugurate their little mission conventicle of science in the grounds of the University College. (Laughter.) He was emboldened on that occasion, however, because one saw that all those kind of things had small beginnings. After all, a temple of science was not built entirely by hands. It was very largely a matter of the spirit in which people went into it.

### **PUBLIC WOULD BE WELCOME.**

One of the objects of the observatory was to try and induce the residents of Southampton to come up there and gain a first-hand acquaintance with the glories of the heavens. They would be fixing up regular dates for the public, who would be very welcome. He hoped, too, they might be able to arrange for visits from the older boys and girls attending the local schools. Mr. Casson then introduced to Sir Frank Dyson Mr. E. W. Mason, whom he described as the moving spirit of the local Astronomical Society, a keen amateur observer, a practical astronomer, and one who had rendered invaluable help in connection with the building of the observatory.

Sir Frank cordially shook hands with Mr. Mason, and was then handed the [keys] of the observatory, which he was invited to declare open. He congratulated his hearers on the rapprochement between the local Astronomical Society and the University College, which he thought was an excellent thing. He had had the pleasure and honour of teaching University students astronomy for five years in Edinburgh, and he came to the conclusion, from what he saw of the students, that in Scotland, at any rate, people were very ignorant indeed on the subject of astronomy. He also came to the conclusion that people who were going to teach, and who were interested in geography especially ought to have more acquaintance than they had with astronomy.

### **WORK OF AMATEURS.**

It had been a very interesting thing to notice how, in the last 30 years, the amateur astronomers had come to the front; they had done a lot of good observational work, particularly of variable stars, of the planets, and in the discovery of new stars, but he thought they had done more in getting people to take a general interest in astronomy. He might be a bit prejudiced, but it seemed to him that an old science like astronomy, which had so much influenced the thought of the world, was one on which no educated person ought to be entirely ignorant. (Applause.) He was very glad to see, therefore,

that the University College of Southampton had got a telescope, and he hoped that a good many of the students would make use of it, and get to know some of the outside, elementary things of astronomy, because they were really extremely interesting. He did think that the study of astronomy had been somewhat neglected, and that their grandparents, who used to learn the uses of globes, knew some things which people to-day were in danger of not learning. He wished the College observatory a very useful and successful future, and hoped that those who used it would derive great pleasure from it.

#### **LIBATION TO THE GODS.**

Accompanied by the Principal and other officials of the College, together with the officers and members of the Southampton Astronomical Society, Sir Frank Dyson proceeded to the observatory, which is situated on the opposite side of the University-road and unlocked the door. Inside the building he was handed a cup of water, brought specially for the purpose from the famous Castalian Spring the sacred spring of Apollo at Delphi, Greece, with which he was invited to christen the observatory. He readily responded to the invitation, and remarked that he hoped all the gods would combine together to give the observatory every prosperity. "I pour out this libation," he added, "to the gods of astronomy."

#### **TRIBUTE TO MAKER.**

Three cheers were afterwards given for Mr. Mason, the maker of the telescope. The construction of the instrument was explained by Mr. Frank J. Acfield, the observational secretary of the local Astronomical Society, the president of which is Mr. J. Blackhall, and the general hon. secretary, Mr. E. Roberts.

The observatory, which is of the Romsey type, has a revolving dome roof, 1[8?]ft. in diameter. The telescope is a 12-inch Newtonian equatorial reflector, constructed on a heavy concrete base. Smaller apparatus has also been installed, and a fixed telescope for observing the actual time of the transit of the stars is in course of construction.

The large telescope was made by Mr. Mason at his workshops at Beachwood, 1, Osborne-road, where he himself has an observatory, which is the present headquarters of the Astronomical Society, and the construction of the stand and mounting was carried out by the students at University College. The silvering of the powerful mirror --- a most delicate operation --- was the work of Professor H. Stansfield and his assistants.

#### **~ 24 June 1927**

The Beechwood Observatory, at No. 1, Osborne-road, Southampton, would allow visitors to view the solar eclipse.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Friday, June 24, 1927:

#### **TO SEE THE ECLIPSE.**

Chance for Southampton People.



The members of the Southampton Natural History Society greatly enjoyed a lecture, principally on the forthcoming eclipse of the sun, given at the Friends' Meeting House last evening, by Mr. Frank J. Acfield, observation officer of the Southampton Astronomical Society.

The lecturer, who was introduced by Mr. E. Hayward, made his preliminary remarks brief, as he had a number of fascinating lantern slides to show, some specially made in order to illustrate the subject.

#### **“SIGHT OF A LIFETIME.”**

“The eclipse,” said Mr. Acfield, “will be the sight of a lifetime. The last similar eclipse was in 1724, and as the next will not occur until 1999 many of us will have to take the opportunity afforded next week of seeing probably the most beautiful of Nature's pictures, or miss the chance for ever.”

He explained that those who remained in Southampton would see the moon “bite” a small piece on the right-hand side of the sun, and gradually pass along until half the sun would disappear. Then the moon would move in such a direction as to leave only a small portion of the sun showing along the lower edge, in shape somewhat like a crescent.

#### **LOCAL OBSERVATORY OPEN.**

A party of Southamptonians were going to Richmond in Yorkshire, said Mr. Acfield, to see the eclipse, and there they would see the moon come more centrally on to the sun.

He mentioned that the Beechwood Observatory, at No. 1, Osborne-road, Southampton, would be open to anyone who desired to witness the eclipse on the morning of Wednesday next. The observatory would be open at 5.15 a.m., and the eclipse would begin at [5.26?]. The maximum phase would be reached at 6.20 a.m., and the eclipse would end 7.17 a.m.

After series of questions had been answered Mr. Acfield was very cordially thanked for his lucid, and informative lecture.

#### **~ 25 June 1927**

Larger than expected crowds prompted the Beechwood Observatory to change the location for people to meet to view the solar eclipse.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Saturday, June 25, 1927:

#### **How to See the Eclipse.**

Owing to the great number of applications the Southampton Astronomical Society have decided that it will be impracticable to accommodate the public at Beechwood Observatory on Wednesday morning, as suggested, for the purpose of viewing the eclipse.

The Society, however, offer to explain to the public, through the guidance of Mr. Edyvean, the whole of the phenomena during the process of the eclipse from a vantage point on Southampton Common.

Mr. Edyvean will be at the Cowherds at 5.30. The public are recommended to bring field glasses, and tinted glass for the protection of the eyes may be useful.

### **~ 11 September 1929**

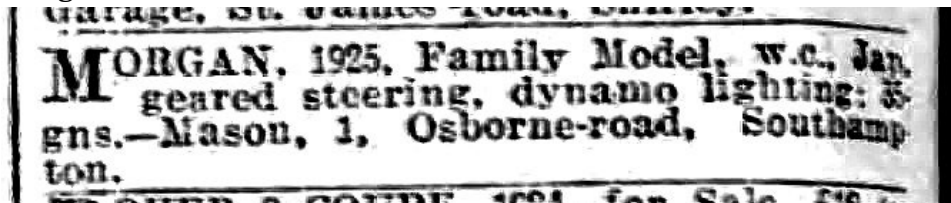
Mason at 1, Osborne-road, Southampton was mentioned in an advertisement selling an automobile.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Wednesday, September 11, 1929:

#### **MOTOR CARS FOR SALE OR HIRE.**

MORGAN, 1925, Family Model, w.c., Jan. geared steering, dynamo lighting; 35-gns. ---  
Mason, 1, Osborne-road, Southampton.

Image of advertisement:



### **~ 2 November 1929**

The Mason's address, 1, Osborne-road, Southampton was mentioned in an advertisement.

From the newspaper, Hampshire Advertiser, Saturday 2 November 1929:

WANTED, good General Maid, age about 30; all duties; comfortable home. --- 1, Osborne-road, Southampton.

### **~ 1 April 1933**

Mr. Ernest W. Mason gave a lecture at the Theosophical Society.

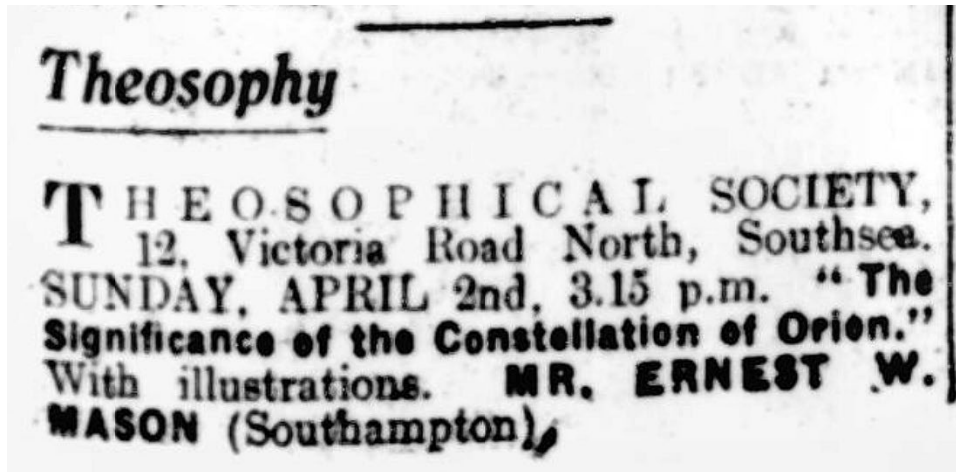
From the newspaper, Portsmouth Evening News, Saturday 1 April 1933:

#### **Theosophy**

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, 12, Victoria Road North, Southsea.

Sunday, April 2nd, 3.15 p.m. "The Significance of the Constellation of Orion." With illustrations, Mr. ERNEST W. MASON (Southampton).

Image of the article:



~ **17 August 1934**

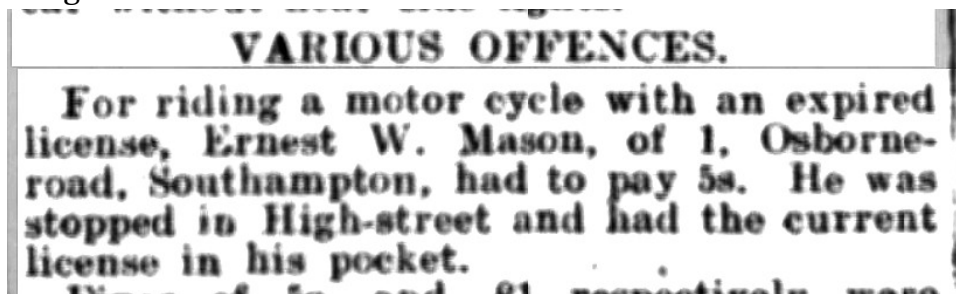
Ernest W. Mason was fined for driving a motorcycle with an expired license.

From the newspaper, Bournemouth Times and Directory, Friday 17 August 1934:

**VARIOUS OFFENCES.**

For riding a motor cycle with an expired license, Ernest W. Mason, of 1, Osborne-road, Southampton, had to pay 5s. He was stopped in High-street and had the current license in his pocket.

Image of the article:



~ **26 February 1937**

Mr. E. W. Mason gave a lecture about Variable Stars at the Natural Science Society in Bournemouth, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Bournemouth Times and Directory, Friday 26 February 1937:

### **Next Week's Diary**

(among other events not transcribed here)

### **Natural Science Society:**

At 39, Christchurch-road, Bournemouth.

(among other listings, not transcribed)

Saturday, March 6, --- Astronomical: "Variable Stars," by Mr. E. W. Mason, 3 p.m.

### **~ 5 March 1937**

Mr. E. W. Mason gave a lecture about Variable Stars at the Natural Science Society in Bournemouth, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Bournemouth Times and Directory, Friday 5 March 1937:

### **Next Week's Diary**

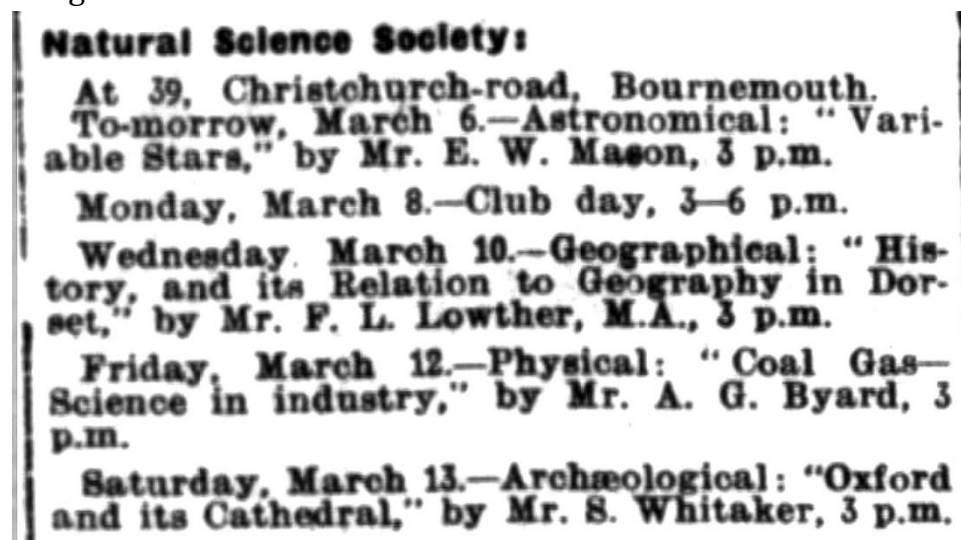
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At 39, Christchurch-road, Bournemouth, To-morrow, March 6, --- Astronomical: "Variable Stars," by Mr. E. W. Mason, 3 p.m.

(other listings follows, not transcribed here)

Image of the article:



### **~ 12 March 1937**

An article about Mr. E. W. Mason's lecture on Variable Stars.

From the newspaper, Bournemouth Times and Directory, Friday 12 March 1937:

Astronomical Section,

### **Variable Stars**

MR. E. W. MASON lectured on Saturday to the Astronomical Section of the Bournemouth Natural Science Society taking "Variable Stars" as his subject. Mr. W. Goodacre, F.R.A.S. was in the chair.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Mason said that it was only with the invention of telescopes that the scientific study of variable stars had become possible, as many of these stars were at too great a distance from the earth for observation with the naked eye. Comparatively little is therefore known as yet of these mysterious and beautiful heavenly bodies, and a wide field is open for future investigation.

There are a very great number of variable stars; as many as seventeen hundred may occur in one star cloud. They have been divided into several classes according to the length of time which elapses between their periods of maximum and minimum brightness, and the rapidity with which maximum and minimum is reached.

Observations of these fluctuations have been greatly facilitated by the invention of the photometer which compares the light of a variable star with that of a fixed star, and registers electrically a record of the variations. Mr. Mason described several of these photometers with the help of diagrams shown on the screen, and he also explained how charts of the stars are prepared so that the variable star under observation may readily be distinguished from the innumerable other stars which surround it.

One important class of variable stars is that composed of what are called Binaries. In this class, the variable star has a companion star of greater or lesser magnitude which revolves around it. At certain positions in its revolution, the companion star eclipses the other, and this eclipse produces a diminution of the light visible from the earth. The lecturer showed a graph of the variation of light of Algol in Perseus, one of the stars of this group, from which it was evident that after a fairly constant magnitude, there was an abrupt drop, almost into darkness, followed by as rapid an ascent to the first light level. It is this sudden variation from a constant brightness which characterises a Binary.

Images of the article:

*Astronomical Section.*

## Variable Stars

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## ~ 4 June 1938

Ernie Mason's father, George Miles Mason, died.

From the newspaper, Hampshire Advertiser, Saturday 4 June 1938:

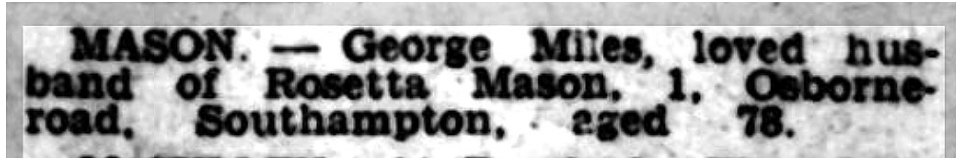
On page 1:

### DEATHS



MASON. --- George Miles, loved husband of Rosetta Mason. 1, Osborne-road, Southampton, aged 78.

Image of the article:



On page 14:

### **SHOCK OF AN ACCIDENT**

Mr. George Miles Mason, aged 78, of Osborne-road, Southampton, fell while attempting to board a tramcar at the junction of Lawn-road and Portswood-road and died the same night.

At an inquest, conducted by Mr. Arthur Emanuel (Borough Coroner), Dr. E. A. Argent-Saunders, of Lawn-road, said that he attended deceased after his fall and he (deceased) complained of great pain in the back. Deceased had been suffering from hardening of the arteries and chronic dyspepsia and that condition, combined with the shock he suffered, caused death.

After his fall deceased had said: "It is my own fault; I ought to have known better."

A verdict of "Death from misadventure" was recorded.

Image of the article:



~ 5 August 1938

The Summer Festival of the Rosicrucian players commenced in the Garden Theatre in Christchurch, Hampshire.

In the play, "Pythagoras," Ernest Mason played Cylon, the Tyrant of Crotona.

E. Woodford Grimes played Theano, wife of Pythagoras.

In the play, "King Henry VII," E. Woodford Grimes played Lambert Simnel.

From the newspaper, Bournemouth Times and Directory, Friday 5 August 1938:

### **Rosicrucian Players Summer Festival This Week**

Summer Festival of the Rosicrucian players commenced on Monday at their recently opened Garden Theatre at Christchurch. The plays presented this week have been enjoyable to watch. One wished there were larger audiences.

No appeal is made at the Garden Theatre to the fans of Robert Taylor and Carole Lombard, but there must be many people who would find a visit well worth while. The Theatre is situated only a few minutes walk from the bus station at Purewell Cross and is equipped with modern Amenities.

**"PYTHAGORAS"**

THE Festival opened on Monday with a performance of "Pythagoras" by Alex. Matthews. The play deals with the life of the Greek philosopher who lived in the 6th century B.C.

It should not be thought, however, that its interest is merely antiquarian, for the history of 6th century Greeks contains much that is applicable to our own time. For instance, it was an age of tyrants, or dictators, whose policy of large public works and aggrandisement has obvious parallels to-day. The life of Pythagoras was one of resistance to these subversive doctrines, and the belief which he expressed might well be put into practice in the 20th century, for his philosophy was a simple one, namely that men should be just, pious and honourable.

We can then eradicate from our minds the notion that Rosicrucian productions are not relevant to the present time. As their programme says, they present

"Plays, Satires, Masques and Mime, Plays dealing with present time, And fitting to this age and season Which give you cause to pause and reason."

The name part was played with consummate skill by Alex. Matthews. Here we have a mature actor, who knows the value of clear enunciation and significant gesture. His presentation of the philosopher in his youth was not quite so happy as his interpretation of advancing age, though he was always convincing.

As the King of Egypt, G. F. J. Galloway revealed considerable abilities, though he hardly had the dignity necessary for the part; the Queen (Irene Lyon Clark) on the other hand was truly regal.

An outstanding performance was given by J. Donaldson Palmer as Lysimachus, a "debunker" who became converted to the doctrines of Pythagoras. His words were always remarkably clear and he has a good stage-presence.

Ernest Mason played Cylon, the Tyrant of Crotona. In appearance he was indeed machiavellian, but his voice was not entirely suited to the part. He could not make it sneer effectively enough.

E. Woodford Grimes played Theano, wife of Pythagoras, with tenderness and charm, and Ailsie D. Hall was impressive as Cleobulina. The acting generally reflected great credit on the producer.

The staging can hardly be too highly praised, and there was a proper measure of restraint. The scenery, designed and executed by Irene Lyon Clark, was first rate; one backcloth of a garden deserves special mention. Lighting, too, was in very capable hands, and the electricians were responsible for an excellent rendering of a burning house. Technically the Rosicrucians have little to learn, though with more experience they will move properties more silently.

#### **"KING HENRY VII."**

ON Tuesday the Players presented King Henry VII, part one. Conscious as many other have been that Shakespeare left off his chronicle plays at an unfortunate stage, Alex.

Matthews has attempted to continue the series after Richard III. He has based the action of his play upon Holinshed's Chronicle, thus following Shakespeare's main source. And he has had the courage to write blank verse, and rime is used to good effect in some scenes.

The play opens with the Battle of Bosworth Field, and in the first part traces the history of King Henry's reign down to the overthrow of the Earl of Lincoln and Lambert Simuel of Stoke. Henry has reached the peak of his power. There is plenty of action; indeed, the battle-scenes are presented with a gusto that is rare on any stage. All of us have visions of absurd combats with wooden swords, which serve for battles in so many productions. But anyone who visits this theatre need have no such qualms, for many of the Rosicrucians are adept fencers.

The part of King Henry is played with dignity and restraint by A. C. Whitehorn. He may not appear a very dominating figure, but we must remember that the historical character was very different from the dashing Henry V; and the actor's opportunities are therefore more limited.

W. Sawkins made an all too brief appearance as Richard III, for his deep resonant voice is exactly suited to the traditional interpretation of that king. J. Donaldson Palmer gave to the Earl of Northumberland and the Earl of Buckingham the same vigour which he had imparted to Lysimachus the previous evening. E. Woodford Grimes made Lambert Simnel a really sympathetic figure; she has a remarkable ability for playing men's parts without appearing incongruous.

No play of this nature would be complete without representatives of the common people. Scabbard, Mistress Scabbard, Pikle and Piker are the counterparts of many of the devotees of the Boar's Head Tavern and of Mistress Quickly and Fluellen. And Scabbard seems to have some kinship with Sir John Falstaff. The humour within its limits is sufficiently effective, forming an adequate relief to the more serious scenes. Rhona Perreau (Piker) and W. L. Newby-Stubbs (Scabbard) merit special mention.

Again it is a pleasure to compliment those responsible for the scenery and lighting (though there appeared to be a little uncertainty at times as to which lights should be on, but no doubt this will be remedied at subsequent performances).

Images of the article:

# Rosicrucian Players

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## ~ 12 August 1938

Continuing their Summer Festival at the Christchurch Garden Theatre, the Rosicrucian Players presented several plays.

In the play, "The Merchant of Venice," E. Woodford Grimes played Portia, and her daughter, R. Woodford Grimes, played Launcelot Gobbo.

In the play, "The Master Beyond," the Master was played by M. Besant Scott.

In the play, "Twilight on the Threshold," E. W. Mason did the special effects of the play. From the newspaper, Bournemouth Times and Directory, Friday 12 August 1938: News of the Priory Town.

### **"Merchant of Venice"**

#### **Rosicrucian Festival Continues**

Continuing their Summer Festival at the Christchurch Garden Theatre, the Rosicrucian Players presented "The Merchant of Venice" on Friday and again on Wednesday.

The success of this play has come to depend upon Shylock. Though in Elizabethan times the Jew was almost certainly intended to be a figure of ridicule --- in the manner of Marlowe's Jew of Malta --- to-day he is the "fat" part.

Through succeeding generations of actors he has been developed into a sympathetic character and almost into a hero. Therefore it is quite a common fault for Shylock to be too dominating; on the other hand, John Gielgud has been criticised for going towards the other extreme and presenting a subdued Shylock.

Alex Matthews invites a similar criticism. One felt his Jew was too mild to cut a pound of a living man's flesh. It was possible, perhaps, to accept his interpretation in the first three acts, but in the Court scene it had to be rejected. Although it is always a pleasure to watch an actor of Alex Matthews' ability, we may suggest that in this instance his skill was slightly mis-applied.

E. Woodford Grimes' Portia was wholly satisfying. She conveyed admirably the sophistication of this character, and attained considerable dignity in the Court scene.

Another notable success was the Launcelot Gobbo of R. Woodford Grimes, who gave to the part just the right sauciness and impudence. A. C. Whitehorn and R. Lyon Clark gave good performances as Antonio and Bassanio, and we must not forget the Nerissa and Jessica of Ailsie Hall and Francesca Keen.

The production was of the high standard we expect of this company.

H.M.

### **THREE SHORT PLAYS**

On Tuesday were presented three one-act mystical plays, written by Alex Matthews and designed as expressions of Rosicrucian philosophy. By their nature these plays must have a rather limited appeal, but to anyone prepared to make a little mental effort they are by no means devoid of interest. As drama they suffer from lack of action; for the most part they consist of dialogue. Some compensation for the want of plot is made by the excellent lighting effects which are a feature of this company's productions.

"The Master Beyond" deals with the experiences of a human soul awakening after death. The philosophy relating to the nature of God and life is expounded by the Master

(M. Besant Scott) seems not unconnected in some ways with the Platonism of the *Phaedo*, and there also appear links with the Pythagorean doctrine of the transmigration of souls. The part of the *Awakened Soul* was played with a deep insight by Francesca Keen.

In “*Twilight on the Threshold*” only one character, the disciple, appears on the stage. The phantoms speak and howl off stage, being represented on a blackcloth by grotesque figures projected from a lantern. The effect was certainly uncanny, and E. W. Mason deserves great credit for his ingenuity.

Evelyn Wyatt was very convincing as the disciple who after death is assaulted by the representations of his own mortal passions and desires. Until these are subdued, the soul cannot pass on over the “threshold” into eternal happiness. For the electricians this play is indeed a triumph.

The last and longest of these one-act plays, “*Out of the Depths*” is concerned with Druids.

Though there is rather more plot, it was less easy to detect the underlying idea. The situation was clear: the Brehons, an old tribe, are attacked by powerful enemies, and cannot find a leader able to repulse the invaders. They consult the Chief Druid (played with suitable dignity by Alex Matthews), and after prayers to the gods a magic boat sails to their shores containing a mystic cross, which presumably signifies that the gods will see to it that the Brehons prosper in the future.

Probably seeing the play a second time would result in a deeper understanding.

Good performances were contributed by Ailsio D. Hall as the Prophet and by J. D. Palmer as a Druid.

Last night the Rosicrucian Players gave the first performance this summer of “*The Window in Hudson's Pagoda*,” a thriller of an unusual type, which has been written by Alex Matthews.

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Images of the article:

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### ~ 13 August 1938

The Rosicrucian Players at the Garden Theatre in Christchurch, Hampshire had several plays.

In the play, "Twilight on the Threshold," ... it gave Mr. E. W. Mason scope for lighting experiment and lantern effects.

In the play, "Out of the Depths," the prologue spoken by E. Woodford-Grimes.

From the newspapers, New Milton Advertiser, Saturday 13 August 1938:

## **Garden Theatre**

### **SUMMER FESTIVAL BY ROSICRUCIAN PLAYERS**

ESCAPE from convention is usually interesting, and to be encouraged in these days of mass thought and centralised ideas, therefore, the Garden Theatre, presided over by Alex Mathews, should be of interest to those who love the theatre and all that it stands for, from an intellectual point of view.

The Rosicrucian Players have arranged a summer festival through August, and the plays selected are drawn from historical, classical, and mystical sources, so you may choose or reject as it pleases you. The theatre itself is delightful, good-sized auditorium with comfortable seating, acoustics are good and stage well equipped, and the lighting is excellent. It is situated at Christchurch on the main road, turning up Meadow End, near Purewell.

It was in keeping with tradition that the Rosicrucian Players should open the season with a play based on the life of Pythagoras, the great Greek philosopher, who has come down to us through the ages almost as a legendary character. His wisdom, beauty and great personality live forever as an inspiration to all who would learn of the Mysteries.

Alex Mathews, who was responsible for the text, played the role of Pythagoras. The Egyptian and Greek costumes were most beautiful, and Mrs. R. Lyon-Clark is, indeed, an artist to design them, correctly in every detail. I have never seen better “dressing” in an amateur play as designed and made by themselves they were, in fact, an artistic achievement.

Much of the play was in the style of a ritual, as Greek drama should be, grouping was good and always picturesque. But the weak spot was the actors' voices, with the exception of one or two --- beauty of tone, modulation and correct inflection are essential in all plays, but particularly in this type of play, which depends so much on the spoken word in its appeal to an audience

Alex Mathews has a pleasant low-toned voice, but in characterisation he lacked the inward fire and gift of rhetoric that is attributed to Pythagoras; there could have been more contrast between the youth in his first initiation, and the great teacher of esoteric science, instructing his disciples. The production would have been improved by a more varied choice of music --- Greek dances could have been introduced, for music, dance and drama, should merge in a play of this period.

On the next evening, a group of three mystical one-act plays was presented, also written by Alex Matthews. They were beautifully staged with specially effective lighting effects, and in “The Master Beyond” there was better use of the voice, though the dialogue could have been effectively shortened; Francesca Keen as the Awakened Soul, spoke musically and with a child-like simplicity and, indeed, looked rather like a Botticelli angel newly materialised on an unknown plane --- and dominated this little play with much charm.

I think it was a pity to follow this with “Twilight on the Threshold,” as both plays dealt, as it were, with a similar theme, though from a different approach. However, it gave Mr. E. W. Mason scope for lighting experiment and lantern effects.

In the third play, “Out of the Depths,” the eye was feasted by lovely colours, and beautiful costumes, decor and scenery right up to standard. W. Newby-Stubbs is the scenic artist, but timing was often at fault, and the prompter, too, much in evidence. The prologue spoken by E. Woodford-Grimes was spoilt in this way. Alex Mathews here enacted the Chief Bard, and was excellently suited to this role, his voice, calm and low, suited the part to perfection, gestures and make-up always pictorial.

Other plays in the festival are historical scenes written round Henry VII, in blank verse by Alex Mathews, who, I understand, is a Shakespearian scholar, and there is “Window of Hudson's Pagoda,” billed as a thriller. This I hope to see next week.

The Rosicrucian Players are to be congratulated on their efforts, and we hope to see more original contributions from the players themselves. It is always of greater interest for a dramatic society to draw upon itself than to merely try to imitate a production dubbed a success, which has been produced and acted by well-known actors.

In the Garden Theatre at Somerford are all the accessories for first-class work, and their arrival here amongst us is a welcome innovation. We shall watch their productions with interest and encouragement, for in all their work there is beauty of idea and expression and “a thing of beauty is a joy forever.”

E. M. HERMES.

## ~ 27 July 1939

In this article, the following people are mentioned that were mentioned in Philip Heselton's books:

E. Woodford Grimes, Ernest Mason, M. Besant-Scott, and Susie Mason.

At the Christchurch Theatre.

In the play, “Pythagoras,” E. Woodford Grimes played Theano, Ernest Mason played Cylon, M. Besant-Scott played Cleobulina and Susie Mason played the 1st Elder.

From the newspaper, Daily Echo, Thursday, July 27, 1939:

### **THE CHRISTCHURCH THEATRE.**

Mr. Alex. Matthews to Present “Pythagoras.”

In his series of summer season plays at the Christchurch Theatre, Somerford-road, Mr. Alex Mathews is to present his second play, “Pythagoras,” next Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 27 to 29, at 8 p.m.

If ever any play could be appropriate to the times, this is. We are not introduced to the intricacies of mathematics or the 47th proposition, but to a beautifully written play

which shows the struggles of the great Greek philosopher to bring peace to the world and introduce philosophy which is adaptable to all times.

Alex. Mathews plays the name part with his usual ability, and his gradual transformation from a young man of twenty to one of ninety is a magnificent exposition of play-acting. Newby-Stubbs makes a good Pharaoh of Egypt; Robert Sawkins is Kut Hum, the High Priest, who meets his downfall in a very dramatic manner, with David Brown and John Palmer as other priestly conspirators.

From the second act to the end of the play we are transported to Crotona and Pythagoras is introduced to us in a gorgeous temple scene with cast of thirty. Here the philosopher meets his future wife. Theane, played by E. Woodford Grimes, who displays skill in the rendering of the part. Martin Andrew as Lysimachus and Kenneth Stubbs as Philotas (the love-lorn youth) make an excellent pair in introducing a humorous strain. Lysis (Rhona Perreau), Archippus (Peggy Baker) and Cylon (Ernest Mason) add their quota to the play and put much life into their work.

Damo, daughter of Pythagoras, is played by Francesca Keen, and Cleobulina, enigmatist of Rhodes, by M. Besant-Scott.

Peggy Baker, as Queen Neobule, gives most excellent advice to her son, Enkhenre (Elizabeth Barnes) and such advice could be taken to heart by any youth to day.

Other players are Cyril Barnes, Chief Magistrate; N. Beardwood, 2nd Elder; Susie Mason as 1st Elder; Rhona Perreau as Locrian and M. Paull as the Messenger. All the players work well and prove the excellence of Mr. Alex. Mathew's training.

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## **~ 23 March 1949**

Mr. G. H. Petch gave a lecture on the “Suns of the Universe” at the Beechwood Observatory.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Wednesday, March 23, 1949:

### **Duels on the sun?**

WE take a lot of things for granted, such as the sun rising and setting each day. But the immensity of happenings in an unfathomable space, once one thinks about them, is indeed breath-taking.

The president of Southampton Astronomical Society (Mr. G. H. Petch) in a recent talk on “Suns of the Universe” dwelt on this feature. For instance, discussing the importance of the sun to us, he spoke of solar prominences, which formed the subject of a short film “Explosions on the Sun.”

This showed these prominences erupting and disrupting on the sun's periphery. The breath-taking splendour of these solar flares, shooting thousands of miles into space, astonished a large audience.

Mr. Petch illustrated the splendour of the distant suns and galaxies with magnificent slides, and transported the audience to the farthest known depths of space. He dealt with the various types of galactic systems to be found and in our own system stressed the importance of one star --- the sun --- to us.

Members of the public afterwards inspected the moon through the Society's 18-inch telescope at the Beechwood Observatory.

## **~ 14 June 1951**

Mason had a property to sell, a Cinema Theatre in the south of England.

From the newspaper, The Stage, Thursday 14 June 1951:

### **Property for Sale and to Let**

#### **THEATRE FOR SALE**

CINEMA-Theatre, South of England.

Freehold for sale, heavy population area; no agents. --- Mason, 1, Osborne-road, Southampton.

Image of the article:



~ **30 November 1951**

The Pythagorean School of Crotona held lectures at Beechwood Hall at 1, Osbourne-road, Southampton.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Friday, November 30, 1951:

**THE PYTHAGOREAN SCHOOL OF CROTONA**

cordially invites all Students, especially those interested in Astronomy, to come to BEECHWOOD HALL.

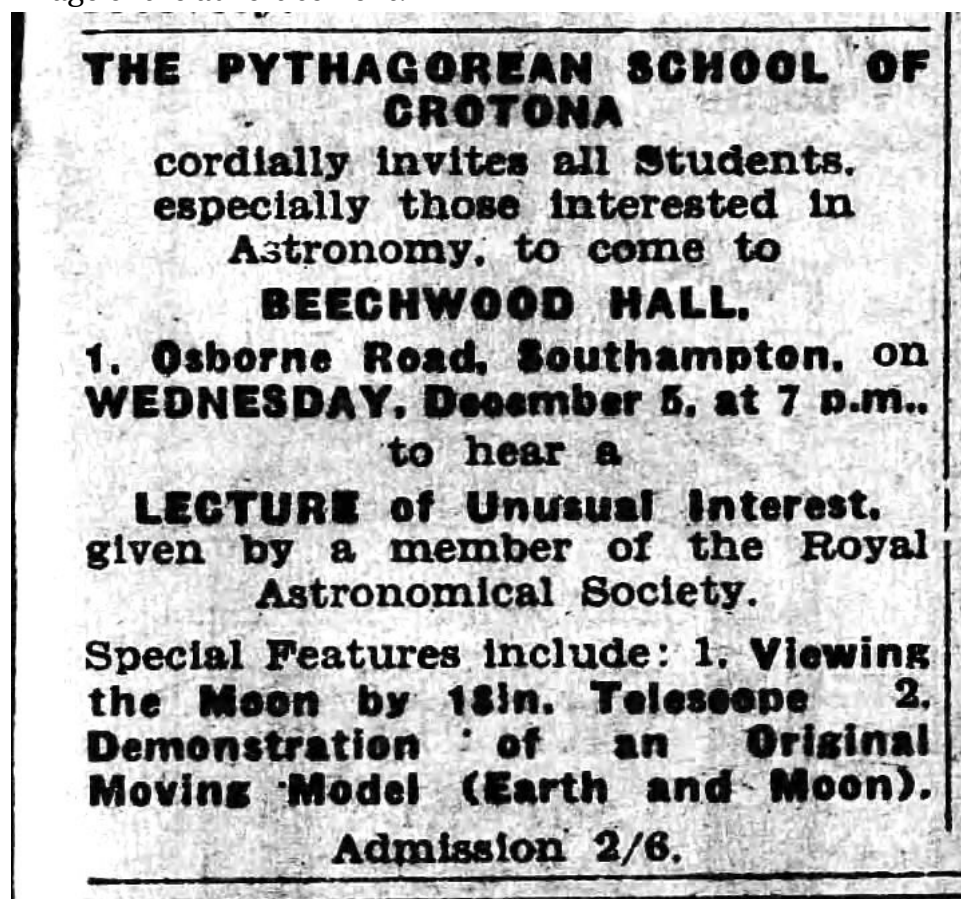
1, Osborne Road, Southampton, on Wednesday, December 5, at 7 p.m., to hear a Lecture of Unusual Interest, given by a member of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Special Features include: 1, Viewing the Moon by 18in. Telescope 2, Demonstration of an Original Moving Model (Earth and Moon).

Admission 2/6.



Image of the advertisement:



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### ~ 6 December 1951

A newspaper article mentions about Mr. Ernest Mason's observatory and telescope.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Thursday, December 6, 1951:

#### **HE MAKES THE EARTH STAND STILL**

MEET Mr. Ernest Mason, of Portswood, Southampton a man who gives some meaning to the phrase "I'll move heaven and earth ..." We saw him do just that last night!

Mr. Mason, a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, has devised an ingenious machine which unravels the mysteries of space for the layman far more realistically than words could do.

Mr. Mason, who demonstrated his machine at a lecture to a meeting of the newly-revived Southampton Astronomical Branch of the Pythagorean School of Crotona, is both a member of that society and hon. vice-president of the Southampton Astronomical Society.

The space machine? A balanced, finely made affair of cogs and wires, which sends a model moon revolving on a true course round a model earth at the turn of a handle.

Says Mr. Mason: "I thought it a good way of illustrating the movements of the moon in relation to earth.

"The machine took me two months to build, and I spent more time thinking. it out than making it."

### **Perhaps, perhaps ...**

THE audience was prepared for Mr. Mason's lecture by Mr. Victor Brodrick-Bullock, principal of the Crotona School, who invited them to imagine they had just landed on Mother Earth in a flying saucer and were trying to get their bearings in unfamiliar surroundings.

A down-to-earth statement by Mr. Brodrick-Bullock spilled them out of their saucer. He said: "If we put Astronomy in the dock and said to her 'Is there any other planet where there is life such as we know it?' her answer would not satisfy the court. She would say 'Perhaps,' but never 'Yes' or 'No.' "

After the lecture, held in the hall adjoining Mr. Mason's home in Osborne-road, Portswood, everyone went out to view the moon through the 18in. telescope in Mr. Mason's garden observatory.

Footnote: One astronomer told us we might reach the moon but would certainly not get back!

### **~ 17 June 1952**

The address of 1, Osborne-road, Southampton was mentioned in an advertisement.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Tuesday, June 17, 1952:

#### **ARTICLES FOR SALE**

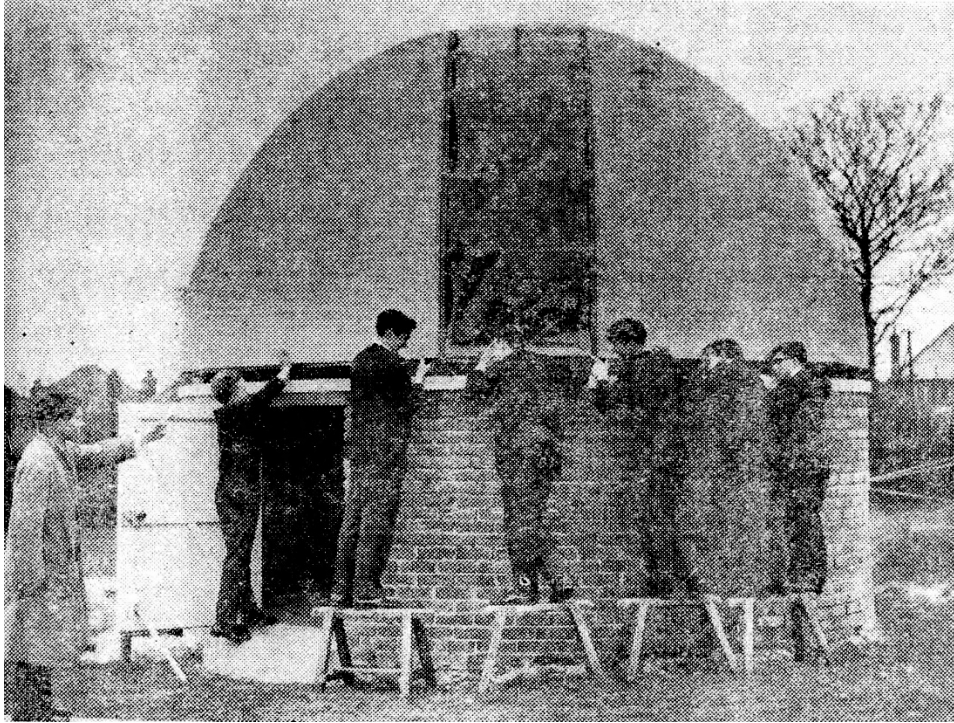
BESSON silver-plated Cornet, £5 or nearest; B flat Trumpet, 50s. --- 1, Osborne-road, So'ton.

P17

### **~ 23 February 1962**

Mr. Mason grounded the 16-inch mirror for the telescope being built for Itchen Grammar School.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Friday, February 23, 1962:



Boys of Itchen Grammar School adjust the dome of their do-it-yourself observatory.  
--- "Echo" photo.

### **Schoolboys' eyes are on the heavens**

WITH all the eyes on the sky days, the sixth formers of Itchen Grammar School, Southampton, are engaged on a highly topical venture --- building a 16in. reflector telescope and an observatory in which to house it.

After 12 months work, interrupted by examinations and the weather, the observatory walls and revolving roof are now ready.

After being delayed through high winds, the roof has now been lifted on by many willing helpers.

Though much of the detailed work remains to be completed inside the building, attention will now largely concentrate upon the telescope and its mounting.

The tube has already been constructed by the boys: the 16in. mirror has been ground by Mr. Mason, a local craftsman of national distinction, and the mounting will soon be started.

A date for completion of the project is still too difficult to predict, particularly as the original builders will be leaving school in the summer.

Leadership in the enterprise has already passed to the second

generation of school captains --- E. Brown, who in October, follows his predecessor, B. G. Smale, to the Imperial College of Science, London University.

With steady work it may be finished by 1963.

### ~ 12 September 1962

Mason at 1, Osborne-road, Southampton was mentioned in an advertisement.

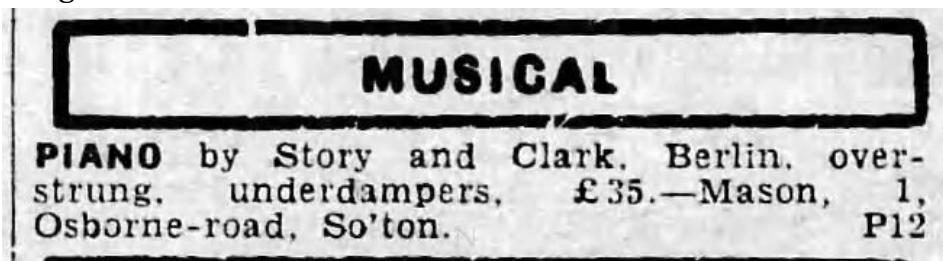
From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Wednesday, September 12, 1962:

#### **MUSICAL**

PIANO by Story and Clark, Berlin, over-strung, underdampers, £ 35. --- Mason, 1, Osborne-road, So'ton.

P12

Image of the advertisement:



### ~ 26 February 1965

Ernest Mason grounded the 18-inch mirror that is part of Mr. Ron Jenkinson's telescope.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Friday, February 26, 1965:

WHEN HE RETURNS HE PLANS ...

A view of the stars from the Island

Most men dream of pottering around in a greenhouse or going for long walks over the hills as a way of passing their retirement. But one Southampton man has greater ambitions than that. MR. RON JENKINSON, who lives in Shirley, plans to take himself to the Isle of Wight and there build an observatory.

Mr. Jenkinson, who is a senior grade draughtsman at the Ordnance Survey in Southampton's London-road, talked to me of his plans for building the 24ft. wide observatory to house the 10ft. long telescope he has already begun to construct. ...

(long article, only the relevant part transcribed here)

“For those readers with stars in in their eyes, Mr. Jenkinson's telescope is an 18-inch Newtonian Reflector equatorially mounted, and constructed of steel and aluminium. The mirror which Mr. Jenkinson has had specially made, is the work of another well-known local astronomer, Ernest Mason.”

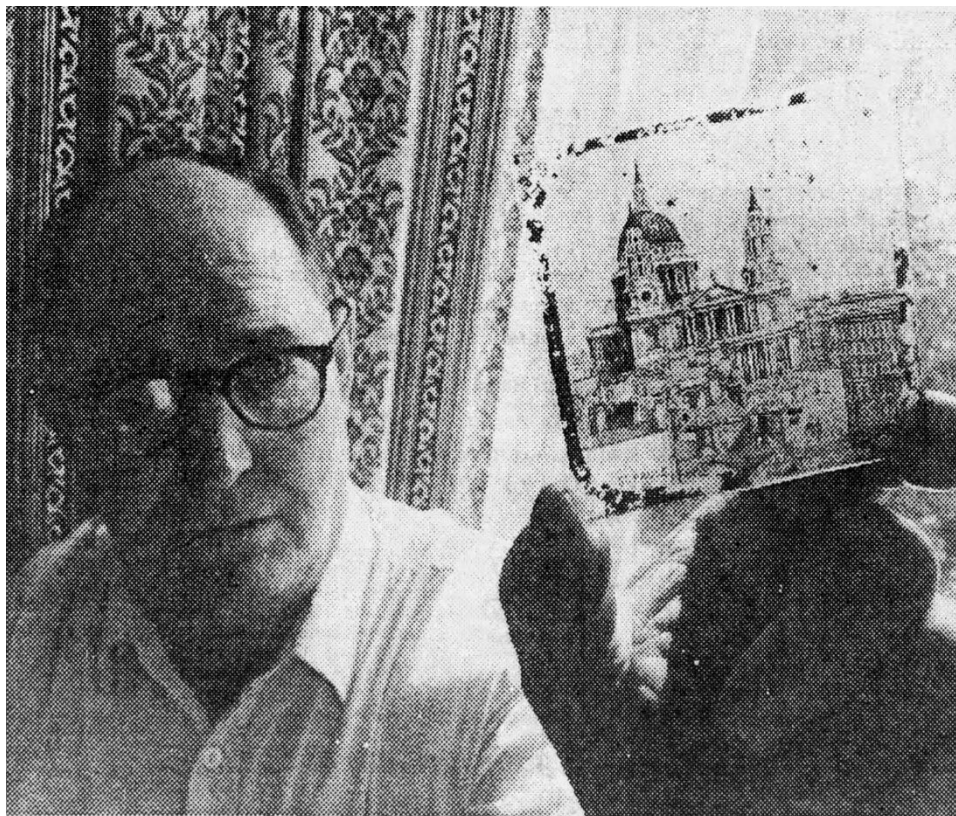
### **~ 20 August 1983**

A lot of antique glass slides were found buried in a garden at Belmont Road in Portswood, Hampshire.

This article made several people remember the Mason brothers and they wrote to the newspaper. Those letters were printed (see following dates of 1983 below)

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Saturday, August 20, 1983:

### **Buried treasure poses a puzzle**



**BURIED TREASURE:** Tom Rogers with one of the glass slides he and Jessie Williams have unearthed.

**BURIED TREASURE:** Tom Rogers with one of the glass slides he and Jessie Williams have unearthed.

GOOD NEIGHBOURS Tom Rogers and Jessie Williams unearthed more than weeds and rubbish when they dug over a sick friend's garden.

The two pals have discovered what could be an antique collector's treasure trove --- but remain baffled by their find.

For they have turned up hundreds of antique glass slides --- many in colour --- and more are being unearthed daily.

The slides appear to date from the late 1920s and early 1930s and comprise two 2 1/2in by 2 1/2in sheets of glass containing a wide range of pictures.

Two to three dozen are still intact and some feature local scenes.

Two show Beaulieu Abbey, others depict General Gordon, some are semi-religious and one shows a baker's shop advertisement offering bread at twopence three farthings.

Tom (67), who helped dig up the slides in a garden at Belmont Road, Portswood, said: "They could be worth something to a collector, but we're not interested in money.

"If they prove to be of real interest, perhaps a museum would like them.

"In one corner of the garden there had been a shed which collapsed and we think these slides were in there. We also found an enamel photographic developing tray."

Tom, of Osborne Road, Portswood, is now busy cleaning u up the slides.

He said: "If there is anyone interested in having a look, we'll gladly show them.

### **~ 30 August 1983**

An interesting article where this man mentioned of what the Mason brothers were doing at their place.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Tuesday, August 30, 1983:

#### **Likely origin**

WITH regard to the discovery of photographic slides at Portswood, reported on August 20, I think the most likely place of origin would be the workshops and laboratory of the two brothers who lived in the big house at the end of Osborne Road.

They spent most of their time in optical and chemical experiments. They built an observatory, fitted with a large telescope and experimented with many different lenses which they mostly ground and fitted themselves.

I only met them twice, but remember with some envy the range and scope of the equipment.

At this time, before the war, there was an enormous effort being made to improve photographic materials and it was widely believed that if you could invent a good colour method great wealth would be the reward.

So in all sorts of unlikely places private research went on to try and crack the problem and this is what one of the brothers claimed to have done.

His fear was that a big company would cheat him of his legal rights and when I displayed a small knowledge of film emulsions, I was never asked back again, so my knowledge of their work stopped dead.

Was a good colour system, in fact, invented by this man long before the war or was it just another duplication of effort as so often happens? --- Leo Morley, Priory Road, St. Denys, Southampton.

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## **~ 6 September 1983**

A person remembered about Mr. Mason and wrote to the newspaper.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Tuesday, September 6, 1983:

### **A squint at Jupiter**

MR. LEO MORLEY'S reference (Letters, August 30), to "workshops and laboratory of the two brothers who lived in the big house at the end of Osborne Road" stirred my memory. Searching through old log-books I found the following entry, written by Senior Scout Allan Holt:

"Sunday 28th April, 1957. At 7.30pm a small party consisting of the Mate, Handel Taylor, Allan Holt and Garth Jones, were invited to see over an observatory in Lawn Road which belongs to Mr. Mason.

When we arrived, we were shown over the observatory telescope, which has an 18-inch mirror and has a barrel 12ft long. It carries a small 6-inch telescope underneath to sight the main telescope. The observatory itself is composed of a sliding dome (manipulated by a complicated system of bicycle-chains) about 12ft high, and about 20ft in diameter.

The party leader had added:- "Poor Mr. Mason had started off by intending a very brief tour of inspection, but as he was rather pleased by the interest shown, he finished up by showing us all over the house, which was crammed full of the most amazing scientific paraphernalia.

"In the end, Jupiter came out, and Mr. Mason decided we might as well have a squint at it through the telescope. A very clear view was finally obtained, showing not only the four moons of Jupiter, but the red lines across the planet itself." --- JOHN GRIFFIN, Venture Scout Leader, 25th Southampton (Northam).



Images of the article:

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### **~ 7 September 1983**

A person as a boy remembers the astronomer brothers but don't remember their names. From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Wednesday, September 7, 1983:

#### **Dome shaped**

WITH reference to the letter "Likely Origin" (August 30) regarding the two brothers in Osborne Road, the astronomers. I remember as a boy I lived in Dukes Road, and my mother was asked by the "brothers" if they could "borrow" my brother and me for the day to take photograph.

We walked to the Common and had photographs taken looking for birds nests, then went to Lodge Road and were photographed walking into St. Barnabas' Church. Another was taken on a horse and cart.

I cannot remember their names, but we could see their dome-shaped building from our bedroom window. --- J. R. WARREN, Kendal Avenue, Millbrook, Southampton.

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**~ 15 September 1983**

A person remembered about Ern Mason and wrote to the newspaper.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Thursday, September 15, 1983:

**Jupiter offer**

I READ with interest the article by John Griffens about the telescope at Osborne Road. If he would like to contact me (Soton 455335) perhaps we can arrange for his Scouts to come and have a similar “view of Jupiter” through the “successor” to the E. Mason telescope, which was housed for some years at the Hamble observatory of the Folland Astronomical Society.

The old telescope he mentioned was kindly donated to the Society by the late Ern Mason, and was reverently housed and used by the members. It was eventually sold to a school and was replaced by the present telescope, a fine 12in Newtonian reflector made by Mr. Brian Knight, who was a devoted friend of Mr. Mason. --- ART DIXEY (Founder Member, Folland Astronomical Society), Beech Close, Hamble.

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~ 16 September 1983

An article that mentioned Ernest and Alfred Mason of No. 1 Osborne Road.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Friday, September 16, 1983:

## **The Mason brothers**

WITH reference to, the letter "Dome Shaped" (September 7) the name of brothers referred to was Mason, Ernest and Alfred, of No. 1 Osborne Road.

The dome housed an 18-inch reflecting telescope made by Ernest Mason whose business was producing lantern slides to order.

If coloured slides were required in those days they were coloured by hand.

Alfred Mason was a dispensing chemist by profession.

There is much that could be told about Ernest Mason, an amazing and brilliant person. I was involved with him for many years as secretary and once or twice president of Southampton Astronomical Society, of which Mr. Mason was a founder member. - G. H. PETCH, Ripstone Gardens, Highfield, Southampton.

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**~ 3 October 1983**

Another person remembering Mr. Ernest Mason.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Monday, October 3, 1983:

**Recalling the Mason brothers**

I HAVE been sent some “Echo” cuttings of letters about the Mason brothers who lived in Osborne Road. I vividly recall attending many meetings of the Southampton Astronomical Society at Mr. Ernest Mason's home during the immediate post-war period.

I was in my teens then and to me the house represented every schoolboy's dreams of paradise.

Mr. Mason, unaided, had built and mounted an 18-inch telescope in his garden workshop, he had a mirror grinding machine, an unground 18-inch mirror blank and three working lathes, not to mention others that did not work.

Mr. Mason told me that early in the war the Government had approached him to see if he could provide the key to the release of “sonic energy” which was thought to be a route to better explosives.

This was completely in keeping with my picture of Mr. Mason as the scientist-cum-inventor of the boys magazines. I was an avid admirer and willing apprentice. In the kitchen he taught me how to mend lantern slides with flour and water paste.

The lantern slide collection which Mr. Mason made available to the SAS excelled that of the British Astronomical Association.

All the slides were in black and white, but some were brilliantly hand-tinted. A few, wood-mounted slides, were even capable of mechanical animation.

I catalogued hundreds of these slides on behalf of the SAS which was enjoying a post-war revival in the capable hands of such people as Mr. J. Blackhall (a naturalist from Dibden Purlieu), Brigadier Hughes and Dr. Oliver (both from Winchester). Later: Mr. Petch took over to be followed by Mr. A. C. Curtis.

These days came to an end when some, or all, of Mr. Mason's property passed to the Rosicrucians. I was too young to follow the ins and outs of ' this, just sad that an exciting period of my life had ended. --- DR. I. F. FERGUSON, Ingle Head, Fulwood, Preston.



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my picture of Mr. Mason as the scientist-cum-inventor of the boys magazines. I was an avid admirer and willing apprentice. In the kitchen he taught me how to mend lantern slides with flour and water paste.

The lantern slide collection which Mr. Mason made available to the SAS excelled that of the British Astronomical Association.

All the slides were in black and white, but some were brilliantly hand-tinted. A few, wood-mounted slides, were even capable of mechanical animation.

I catalogued hundreds of these slides on behalf of the SAS which was enjoying a post-war revival in the capable hands of such people as Mr. J. Blackhall (a naturalist from Dibden Purlieu), Brigadier Hughes and Dr. Oliver (both from Winchester). Later Mr. Petch took over to be followed by Mr. A. C. Curtis.

These days came to an end when some, or all, of Mr. Mason's property passed to the Rosicrucians. I was too young to follow the ins and outs of this, just sad that an exciting period of my life had ended. — **DR. I. F. FERGUSON, Ingle Head, Fulwood, Preston.**

~ 15 November 1990

A refurbished telescope observatory was dedicated to Ernie Mason. Mr. Mason made the 1960's telescope 16-inch mirror.

From the newspaper, Southern Daily Echo, Thursday, November 15, 1990:

### **Observatory opening is now earlier**

THE official opening of Itchen College's refurbished observatory has been moved forward seven days so that it will be part of the annual college open evening celebrations on Friday.

The 1960s observatory, saved from dereliction by Solent Amateur Astronomers over the past 32 months, will be declared open by Southampton's Mayor Mary Key immediately after the celebrations in the college hall.

Twelve members of the society will be attending the open event. Originally the opening was set for November 23 --- to coincide with National Astronomy Week.

The group still plans to hold an inaugural public lecture at the observatory --- in the grounds of the college in Deacon Road, Bitterne.

It will be delivered by member Dave Allen, a retired IBM computer analyst who has lectured all over the world. He is calling it "Itchen College Observatory and the observable universe."

The skywatch group, who will be managing the observatory, are dedicating it to the memory of Southampton-resident Ernie Mason. He was one of the country's leading makers of telescope mirrors.

"He was a perfectionist in his field," said membership secretary Rob Smith. "If someone wanted a mirror making he would it for nothing if they were hard-up."

Mr Mason made Itchen College observatory's 16-inch mirror but by the time Solent Astronomers took on the task of reviving it had disappeared.

"We were planning to get a new one made until the missing one came to light next to the fridge in the college office," said Mr Smith. "One of the secretaries found what she thought was a strange piece of glass and asked what it was."

The renovation team has been headed by their 78-year-old president, Bill Dawson --- former friend of Mr Mason.

"We are certainly looking forward to getting the observatory open and using it," said Mr Smith.

#### Sources:

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4. 1899 Ernest Mason, Susie M. Mason and Rosetta Mason were at Hartley College. Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Sat, Sep 16, 1899, page 2. Online at Newspapers.com. Searched on July 17, 2025 Thursday 11:15 PM.
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15. 1924 Mr. E. W. Mason manipulated the lantern and prepared the slides at a Southampton Astronomical Society meeting. Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Sat, Jun 07, 1924, page 20. Online at Newspapers.com. Searched on July 18, 2025 Friday 11:03 PM.
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# Susie M. Mason

## ~ 14 September 1895

Rosetta Mason and Susie M. Mason at the Hartley Institute in Southampton, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Saturday, September 14, 1895:

HARTLEY INSTITUTION, SOUTHAMPTON.

The following are the list of examinations in Science and Art passed by the students at the examinations held in April, May, and June last :---

(long article and only the relevant are transcribed here)

“ART EXAMINATIONS --- ELEMENTARY STAGE...”

“MODEL DRAWING --- 1st Class --- ...Rosetta Mason ... 2nd Class --- ... Susie M. Mason ...”

## ~ 18 September 1897

Ernest W. Mason and Susie M. Mason at Hartley College in Southampton, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, The Hampshire Advertiser, Saturday, September 18, 1897:

HARTLEY COLLEGE, SOUTHAMPTON.

Results of the examinations in Science, Art, Technological, and Commercial Subjects.

Session 1896-7 :---

The letters A and E indicate Advanced and Elementary Stages respectively.

(long article and only the relevant are transcribed here)

“ART EXAMINATIONS.”

“Freehand Drawing. --- ... E, 2nd class --- ...Ernest W Mason ... Susie M Mason ...”

“Model Drawing. --- ... E, 2nd class --- ... Susie M Mason... E W Mason ...”

“Drawing in Light and Shade. --- ... E, 2nd class --- ... Susie M Mason ...”

## ~ 20 August 1898

E. W. Mason, S. M. Mason and R. Mason were at Hartley College in Southampton, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Saturday, August 20, 1898:

HARTLEY COLLEGE, SOUTHAMPTON.



Results of the Examinations.

Appended we give the results of the examinations in science, art, technological, and commercial subjects, held in March, April, May, and June last. A denotes advanced stage, E, elementary stage.

(long article and only the relevant are transcribed here)

“ART EXAMINATIONS.”

“Freehand Drawing (Elementary Stage) : --- ... E. W. Mason, 1st class ... S. M. Mason, 2nd class ... R. Mason, 2nd class ...”

“Model Drawing (Elementary Stage) --- ... and E. W. Mason --- 1st class ... S. M. Mason ... R. Mason ... 2nd class.”

“Drawing in Light and Shade (Elementary Stage) --- ... E. W. Mason, R. Mason, S. M. Mason ... 1st class”

“Modeling in Clay (Elementary Stage) --- ... E. W. Mason, S. M. Mason ...1st class... R. Mason ... 2nd class”

## **~ 16 September 1899**

Ernest Mason, Susie M. Mason and Rosetta Mason were at Hartley College in Southampton, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Saturday, September 16, 1899:

THE HARTLEY COLLEGE.

Results of Examinations.

Appended we give the results of the examinations on Science, Art, Technological, and Commercial subjects held in March, April, and May last :-

(long article and only the relevant are transcribed here)

“ART EXAMINATIONS.”

“MODELING. ---Elementary, 1st Class --- ... Rose Mason...”

“FREEHAND DRAWING. --- Advanced Stage ... 2nd Class --- Ernest Mason...Elementary Stage, 1st Class ... Rosetta Mason... Susie M. Mason... Rosetta Mason...”

“MODEL DRAWING. --- Advanced Stage, 1st Class ---... E. Mason... Elementary Stage, 1st Class --- Susie Mason... 2nd Class --- ...Rosetta Mason...”

“DRAWING IN LIGHT AND SHADE. --- Advanced Stage --- Susie M. Mason... and Ernest Mason; 2nd Class --- ... Rosetta Mason ...”

## ~ 22 September 1900

E. W. Mason, Rose Mason and Susie M. Mason were at Hartley College in Southampton, Hampshire.

From the newspaper, Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Saturday, September 22, 1900:

HARTLEY COLLEGE, SOUTHAMPTON.

Results of the Science, Art, Technological, and Commercial Examinations held in March, April, May, and June last:---

(long article not transcribed here)

“ART SUBJECTS.”

“FREEHAND DRAWING. --- First Class---

E. W. Mason, ...”

“MODEL DRAWING. ... Second Class --- ... Rose Mason, Susie M. Mason, ...”

“DEAWING IN LIGHT AND SHADE. ... Second Class --- ... Rose Mason...”

“PERSPECTIVE. ... First Class --- ... and E. W. Mason.”

## ~ 4 July 1925

Miss Susie Mason gave a lecture at the Theosophical Society in Southsea, Hampshire on “Discipleship.”

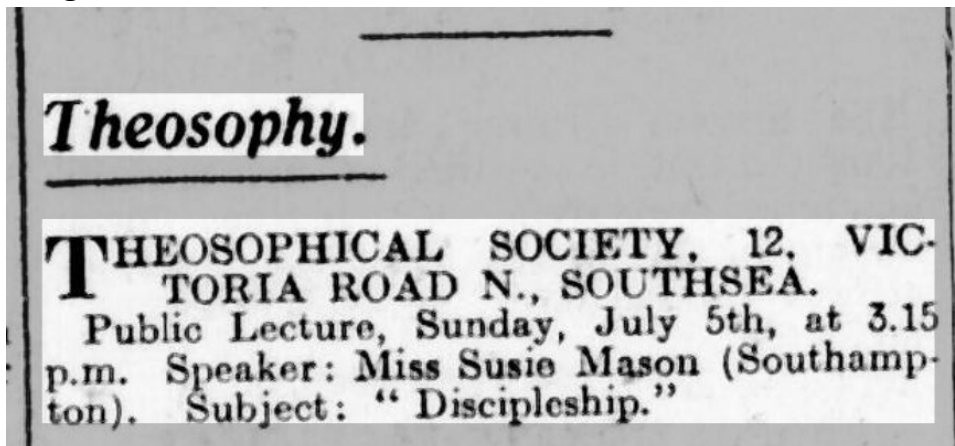
From the newspaper, Portsmouth Evening News, Saturday 4 July 1925:

### **Theosophy.**

Theosophical Society, 12, Victoria Road N., Southsea.

Public Lecture, Sunday, July 5th, at 3.15 p.m. Speaker: Miss Susie Mason (Southampton). Subject: “Discipleship.”

Image of the article:



## ~ 16 March 1929

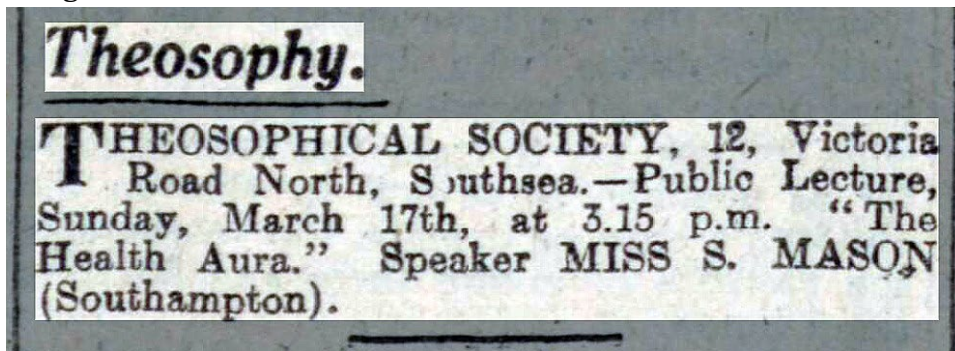
Miss S. Mason gave a lecture at the Theosophical Society in Southsea, Hampshire on “The Health Aura.”

From the newspaper, Portsmouth Evening News, Saturday 16 March 1929:

### **Theosophy.**

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, 12, Victoria Road North, Southsea. --- Public Lecture, Sunday, March 17th, at 3.15 p.m. “The Health Aura.” Speaker MISS S. MASON (Southampton).

Image of the advertisement:



## ~ 18 March 1929

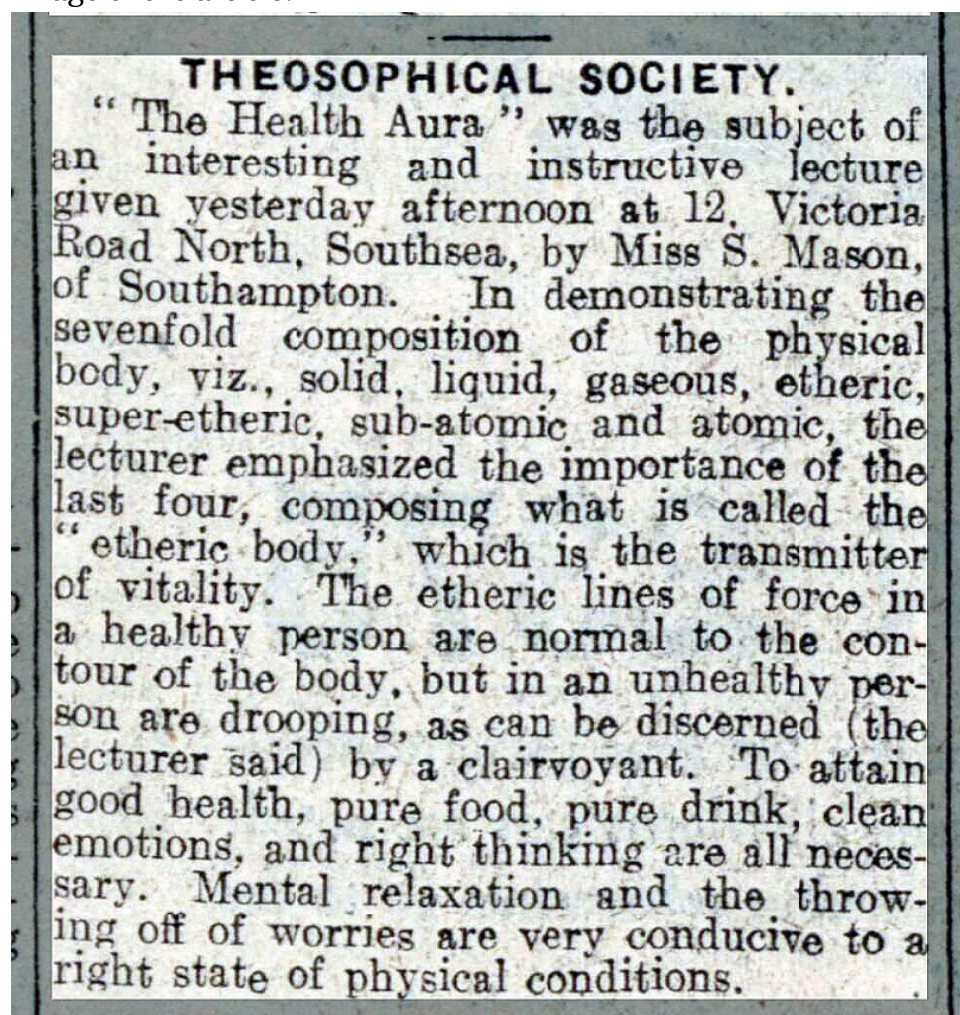
An article about Miss S. Mason’s lecture on “The Health Aura.”

From the newspaper, Portsmouth Evening News, Monday, 18 March 1929:

### **THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.**

“The Health Aura” was the subject of an interesting and instructive lecture given yesterday afternoon at 12, Victoria Road North, Southsea, by Miss S. Mason, of Southampton. In demonstrating the sevenfold composition of the physical body, viz., solid, liquid, gaseous, etheric, super-etheric, sub-atomic and atomic, the lecturer emphasized the importance of the last four, composing what is called the “etheric body,” which is the transmitter of vitality. The etheric lines of force in a healthy person are normal to the contour of the body, but in an unhealthy person are drooping, as can be discerned (the lecturer said) by a clairvoyant. To attain good health, pure food, pure drink, clean emotions, and right thinking are all necessary. Mental relaxation and the throwing off of worries are very conducive to a right state of physical conditions.

Image of the article:



~ 17 March 1930

Miss S. Mason gave a lecture at the Theosophical Society in Southsea, Hampshire on “Occultism in Daily Life.”

From the newspaper, Portsmouth Evening News, Monday, 17 March 1930:

#### **THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY**

“Occultism in Daily Life” was the subject taken by Miss S. Meson for her lecture on Sunday at 12, Victoria Road North, Southsea. She stated that the term “occultism” is greatly misunderstood. It does not mean magic, but simply that which is beyond our present understanding. The motor-car of to-day would have been “occult” to the early Victorian. In describing the necessary training of the physical, emotional, and mental bodies of the average man, so that the ego can obtain the necessary control of his instruments in the three worlds, Miss Mason emphasized the fact that the development

will have to take place, and that the future incarnations will develop physical bodies capable of more automatic action (or control of the sympathetic system) than at present, and will prove false the old saying re the impossibility [sic] of "doing two things at once."

Image of the article:



~ 12 May 1939

There were also three short plays and among the cast were M. Besant Scott and Susie Mason.

From the newspaper, Bournemouth Times and Directory, Friday 12 May 1939:

**News of the Priory Town**



## Alex Matthews Was Likeable Irishman

### New Theatre Season Opens

An entertaining comedy, "His Last Legs," opened the spring season at the Christchurch Theatre on Monday.

It is an improbable story dependent on a string of coincidences, but as this is the common denominator of most comedies, nobody need mind.

The plot pivots round the efforts of a down-and-out Irishman to repair his fortunes, a feat which he accomplishes with the necessary dexterity and roguery. He finds it politic to pose as a man of medicine --- a dangerous proceeding, one would have thought, but as it turns out, a felicitous one because his patient is only masquerading for his own ends and because his "illness" brings the supposed doctor into the arms of a former sweetheart, now a wealthy widow.

As it also unites an estranged couple and enables the quondam patient to marry the girl of his choice instead of collecting a degree at Cambridge, the Irishman's pose can be voted a general panacea.

As to the "period" of this piece, I confess my ideas are hazy. I was particularly baffled by the gentlemen's trousers; they seemed more like advanced designs in beach pyjamas than anything else, but it may be that my notions are tainted, so we will not press the point. The dialogue made it clear that stage coaches were still in vogue, so let us be content to label it the pre-railway era.

### Men In The Cast

Alex Matthews made a likeable O'Callaghan, far too wily to indulge in bomb outrages or similar modern manifestations of the temper of the savage old Irish. Indeed, his general adroitness and especially his accomplished duping of his patient's father suggested the Latin rather than the Celtic genre of dirty-work.

Squire Rivers, the dupe (Leo Newby Stubbs) was as good-intentioned and as gullible as most of his kind; neither did he lack the appropriate red face, beaming smile and well-fed appearance. Ken Newby Stubbs made Charlie Rivers emit some memorable groans, and though young in years had a proper sense of the value of study on the banks of Cam. Thebes, as Dryden calls that seat of learning, "did not his green unknowing youth engage."

Having said something of the male characters, a moment with the ladies. The noble qualities of demureness and modesty, as portrayed by Rhona Perreau, made Julia a charming heroine, and the homely grace of Dora Sawkins gave a pretty simplicity to the wealthy but not over-merry widow.

The audience was small, and as small audiences are always afraid to laugh, tho quips and sallies produced titters instead of mirth. But had there been a lot of people, I think they would have laughed. Anyway, it is an experiment Christchurch might try.

Three short mystical plays were also included in the programme. Those taking part in them were H. Wright, Alex Matthews, Phil Masterman, David Brown, Francesca Keen, Ken Newby Stubbs, M. Besant Scott, Susie Mason, J. Lang, P. Brown, P. Baker, Rhona Perreau.

B. M.

## **~ 27 July 1939**

In this article, the following people are mentioned that were mentioned in Philip Heselton's books:

E. Woodford Grimes, Ernest Mason, M. Besant-Scott, and Susie Mason.

At the Christchurch Theatre.

In the play, "Pythagoras," E. Woodford Grimes played Theano, Ernest Mason played Cylon, M. Besant-Scott played Cleobulina and Susie Mason played the 1st Elder.

From the newspaper, Daily Echo, Thursday, July 27, 1939:

### **THE CHRISTCHURCH THEATRE.**

Mr. Alex. Matthews to Present "Pythagoras."

In his series of summer season plays at the Christchurch Theatre, Somerford-road, Mr. Alex Mathews is to present his second play, "Pythagoras," next Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 27 to 29, at 8 p.m.

If ever any play could be appropriate to the times, this is. We are not introduced to the intricacies of mathematics or the 47th proposition, but to a beautifully written play which shows the struggles of the great Greek philosopher to bring peace to the world and introduce philosophy which is adaptable to all times.

Alex. Mathews plays the name part with his usual ability, and his gradual transformation from a young man of twenty to one of ninety is a magnificent exposition of play-acting. Newby-Stubbs makes a good Pharaoh of Egypt; Robert Sawkins is Kut Hum, the High Priest, who meets his downfall in a very dramatic manner, with David Brown and John Palmer as other priestly conspirators.

From the second act to the end of the play we are transported to Crotona and Pythagoras is introduced to us in a gorgeous temple scene with cast of thirty. Here the philosopher meets his future wife. Theane, played by E. Woodford Grimes, who displays skill in the rendering of the part. Martin Andrew as Lysimachus and Kenneth Stubbs as Philotas (the love-lorn youth) make an excellent pair in introducing a humorous strain. Lysis (Rhona Perreau), Archippus (Peggy Baker) and Cylon (Ernest Mason) add their quota to the play and put much life into their work.

Damo, daughter of Pythagoras, is played by Francesca Keen, and Cleobulina, enigmatist of Rhodes, by M. Besant-Scott.

Peggy Baker, as Queen Neobule, gives most excellent advice to her son, Enkhenre (Elizabeth Barnes) and such advice could be taken to heart by any youth to day.

Other players are Cyril Barnes, Chief Magistrate; N. Beardwood, 2nd Elder; Susie Mason as 1st Elder; Rhona Perreau as Locrian and M. Paull as the Messenger. All the players work well and prove the excellence of Mr. Alex. Mathew's training.

Image of the article:

**THE CHRISTCHURCH  
THEATRE.**

---

**Mr. Alex. Matthews to  
Present "Pythagoras."**

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In his series of summer season plays at the Christchurch Theatre, Somerford-road, Mr. Alex Mathews is to present his second play, "Pythagoras," next Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 27 to 29, at 8 p.m.

If ever any play could be appropriate to the times, this is. We are not introduced to the intricacies of mathematics or the 47th proposition, but to a beautifully written play which shows the struggles of the great Greek philosopher to bring peace to the world and introduce a philosophy which is adaptable to all times.

Alex. Mathew plays the name part with his usual ability, and his gradual transformation from a young man of



with his usual ability, and his gradual transformation from a young man of twenty to one of ninety is a magnificent exposition of play-acting. Newby-Stubbs makes a good Pharaoh of Egypt; Robert Sawkins is Kut Hum, the High Priest, who meets his downfall in a very dramatic manner, with David Brown and John Palmer as other priestly conspirators.

From the second act to the end of the play we are transported to Crotona and Pythagoras is introduced to us in a gorgeous temple scene with a cast of thirty. Here the philosopher meets his future wife. Theane, played by E. Woodford Grimes, who displays skill

in the rendering of the part. Martin Andrew as Lysimachus and Kenneth Stubbs as Philotas (the love-lorn youth) make an excellent pair in introducing a humorous strain. Lysis (Rhona Perreau), Archippus (Peggy Baker) and Cylon (Ernest Mason) add their quota to the play and put much life into their work.

Damo, daughter of Pythagoras, is played by Francesca Keen, and Cleobulina, enigmatist of Rhodes, by M. Besant-Scott.

Peggy Baker, as Queen Neobule, gives most excellent advice to her son, Enkhenre (Elizabeth Barnes) and such advice could be taken to heart by any youth to-day.

Other players are Cyril Barnes, Chief Magistrate; N. Beardwood, 2nd Elder; Susie Mason as 1st Elder; Rhona Perreau as Locrian and M. Paull as the Messenger. All the players work well and prove the excellence of Mr. Alex. Mathew's training.

Source:

1. 1895 Rosetta Mason and Susie M. Mason at the Hartley Institute. Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Sat, Sep 14, 1895, page 2. Online at Newspapers.com. Searched on July 18, 2025 Friday 10:24 PM.
2. 1897 Ernest W. Mason and Susie M. Mason at Hartley College in Southampton, Hampshire. The Hampshire Advertiser, Sat, Sep 18, 1897, page 5. Online at Newspapers.com. Searched on July 18, 2025 Friday 12:14 AM.
3. 1898 E. W. Mason, S. M. Mason and R. Mason were at Hartley College. Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Sat, Aug 20, 1898, page 7. Online at Newspapers.com. Searched on July 18, 2025 Friday 9:33 AM.
4. 1899 Ernest Mason, Susie M. Mason and Rosetta Mason were at Hartley College. Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Sat, Sep 16, 1899, page 2. Online at Newspapers.com. Searched on July 17, 2025 Thursday 11:15 PM.
5. 1900 E. W. Mason, Rose Mason and Susie M. Mason were at Hartley College. Southampton Times and Hampshire Express, Sat, Sep 22, 1900, page 2. Online at Newspapers.com. Searched on July 16, 2025 Wednesday 10:30 PM.
6. 1925 Miss Susie Mason gave a lecture at the Theosophical Society in Southsea, Hampshire. Portsmouth Evening News, Saturday, 04 July 1925, page 8. British Newspaper Archive, online at [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk). Searched on June 20, 2025 Friday 11:05 PM.
7. 1929 Miss S. Mason gave a lecture at the Theosophical Society in Southsea, Hampshire. Portsmouth Evening News, Saturday, 16 March 1929, page 6. British Newspaper Archive, online at [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk). Searched on June 22, 2025 Sunday 12:34 AM.
8. 1929 Article about Miss S. Mason's lecture on "The Health Aura." Portsmouth Evening News, Monday 18 March 1929, page 2. British Newspaper Archive, online at [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk). Searched on June 4, 2025 Wednesday 12:42 AM.
9. 1930 Miss S. Mason gave a lecture at the Theosophical Society in Southsea, Hampshire. Portsmouth Evening News, Monday 17 March 1930, page 2. British Newspaper Archive, online at [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk). Searched on June 3, 2025 Tuesday 1:51 AM.
10. 1939 Susie Mason was in or more short plays. Bournemouth Times and Directory, Friday 12 May 1939, page 11. British Newspaper Archive, online at [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk). Searched on July 23, 2025 Wednesday 12:46 AM.
11. 1939 In the play, "Pythagoras," Susie Mason played the 1st Elder. Daily Echo, Bournemouth, Dorset, England, Thu, Jul 27, 1939, page 9. Online at Newspapers.com. Searched on June 9, 2025 Monday 10:20 PM.