

# The Pickingill Research

New materials:

The Photograph of George Pickingill - Debunking the claim that it was a photo of Alf Cavill the station porter.



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The Photograph of George Pickingill - Debunking the claim that the photo was that of Alf Cavill the station porter.

Researched and compiled  
by William Wallworth

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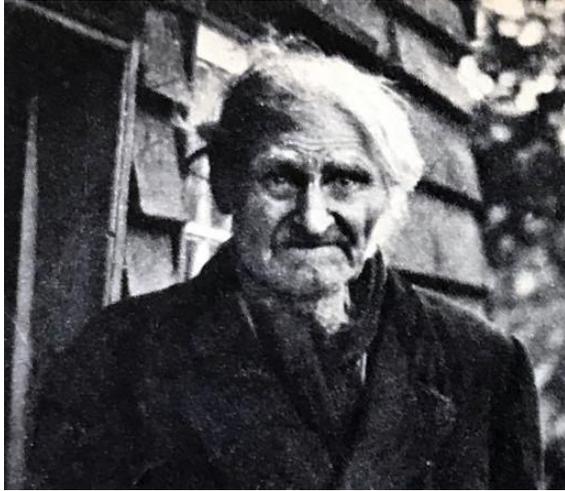
These two pictures are what I have in the current Pickingill History. I tried the best to edit it from the poor image picture found on the internet.





Then I recently found another picture (of the same) of George Pickering on the internet. From an image that was sharper but more darker (as you can see details of the fence, etc. became darker). I edited it more to make the overall picture better.





The details of the eyes are better than the one I have.

Hopefully someday someone will make a larger scan of the original photograph that was in Mike Howard's possession.

## ~ Analysis

The photograph that was in Mike Howard's possession looks more of a photograph made in the early 1900's.

The photo was most likely taken when the newspaper reporter visited him 1908. Word spread of George Pickingill's supposed longevity. They though he was over a century old.

George Pickingill's actual age in 1908 was around 92.

Mike Howard got the photograph from Lillian May (Higby) Garner "Granny Garner" of Canewdon, Essex.

Mrs. Garner probably got the photograph from Charles Frederick Pickingill (eldest son of George), also living in Canewdon. She either got the photo from him directly or after his death in 1928 when perhaps his belongings were sold off in a sale.

John Pope claims the photo was made in the early 1960's.

Okay... let's look at the facts....

First, the photograph is not typical of photographs taken in the 1960's.

Alf Cavill would have been at the age of 46 in 1960 and age of 50 in 1964 which would be the end of the "early 1960's".

Does the photograph look like a man age 46 to 50 or of a man around the age of 92 ?

To me it looks like a 92 years old.

Also would an old man using a walking stick be working as a station porter?

Also, John Pope mentioned that Alf Cavill laughed when he showed him the Pickingill picture that probably was in a book or magazine. If I saw a picture of myself in a book or magazine without my permission, I would have a very different reaction.

Alf Cavill was most likely laughing at the fact that this young guy thinks that he was the person in the picture.

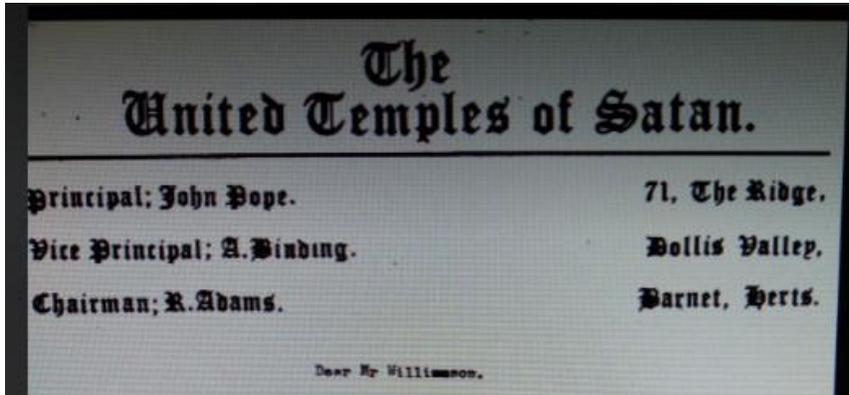
John Pope is a common name. But this person obviously read books about witches and magicians. Which kind of narrows down the field.

A friend of mine recently sent me an image of a letter that was in Cecil Williamson's document collection. It was not dated but probably from the 1970's. The letterhead surprised me.

The United Temples of Satan.

71, The Ridge / Dollis Valley, / Barnet, Herts.  
Principle: John Pope.

Image of part of the letter:



The address is located in Barnet, Hertfordshire which is about 5 miles from the train station in Elstree, Hertfordshire where Alf Cavill was a station porter.

Could he be the same John Pope who met Alf Cavill?

~ **11 January 2023**

A copy of the letter in the 1984 Insight magazine was found.  
Which is mentioned below.

About Alf Cavill

## Alfred Charles Cavill (1914-1984)

"Alf Cavill"

Station Porter

1. **ALFRED CHARLES CAVILL** was born 12 February 1914 in Islington, London and was baptized on 30 April 1914 in St. Michael church in Islington.

Father: Alfred Cavill

Mother: Nellie Fowler

The birth date came from 1939 Register and his death record below. The residence at the time of the baptism was at 42 Copenhagen Street in Islington which may also have been where he was born.

### ~ 1914

From the England & Wales Civil Registration Birth index:

*Name / Mother's maiden name / Date / Registration district / County / Vol. / Page*  
Alfred C Cavill / Fowler / Jan-Feb-Mar 1914 / Islington / London / 1b / 485

From the baptism records of St. Michael church in Islington:

Baptisms 1914 - Page 46, No. 414

*When Baptized. / Child's Name. / Parents' Names. / Surname. / Abode. / Profession. / By whom the Ceremony was performed.*

30<sup>th</sup> April / Alfred Charles / Alfred & Nellie / Cavill / 42 Copenhagen St / Carman / John Henry Boudier Vicar.

### ~ also in 1914

Alfred Cavill's mother, Nellie Cavill, died at the age of 27 in the 1st quarter (Jan-Feb-Mar) of 1914 in the Hackney registration district of London. She was buried in Islington, London.

From the England & Wales, Death Index:

*Name / Age / Date / Registration district / County / Vol. / Page*

Nellie Cavill / 27 / Jan-Feb-Mar 1914 / Hackney / London / 1b / 550

From the UK, Burial and Cremation Index:

*Name / Register Type / Date / Burial Place*

Nellie Cavill / Burial / Mar 1914 / Islington, London, England

### ~ 1916

Alfred Cavill's father, Alfred Cavill, was killed in action on 15 July 1916 in France or Flanders in World War I.

From the UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919:

*Name / Birth Place / Death Date / Death Place / Enlistment Place / Rank / Regiment / Battalion / Regimental Number / Type of Casualty / Theatre of War*

Alfred Cavill / Islington, Middlesex / 15 Jul 1916 / France and Flanders / Dalston, Middlesex / Sergeant / Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex) Regiment / 1st Battalion / L/7967 / Killed in action / Western European Theatre

### ~ 1939

In 1939, Alfred C. Cavill was living with her Aunt, Florence C. Fowler, at 45 Blackstock Road in Stoke Newington, London.

Alfred was listed as a Railway Porter.

From the 1939 census of Stoke Newington:

*Names. / Sex. / Birth date / Marital status / Occupation*

45, Blackstock Rd.

181 / 1 & 2

Fowler, Florence E / F / 22 Oct 84 / S / Perfume finisher & packer

Cavill, Alfred C / M / 12 Feb 14 / S / Railway porter

### ~ 1984

Alfred C. Cavill died at the age of 70 in the 1st quarter (Jan-Feb-Mar) of 1984 in the Elstree and Potters Bar registration district of Hertfordshire.

From the England & Wales, Death Index:

*Name / Age / Birth Date / Death Registration Date / Registration District / County / Vol. / Page*

Alfred C Cavill / 70 / 12 Feb 1914 / Mar 1984 / Elstree and Potters Bar / Middlesex / 10 / 306

### ~ **Also in 1984**

A few months after the death of Alfred C. Cavill, a letter was published in the *Insight* magazine. The writer of the letter, John Pope, claimed that the photograph of George Pickingill of Canewdon, Essex was actually that of Alf Cavill the station porter in Elstree, Hertfordshire.

From the book, *Pop! Goes the Witch*, 2004, edited by Fiona Horne:

Issue number 31 of *Insight* magazine, dated July 1984, contains a very interesting letter from John Pope: "The photograph purporting to be Old George Pickingill is in fact a photo of Alf Cavill, a station porter at Ellstree, taken in the early 1960s. Alf is now dead, but he was no witch, and laughed over the photograph when he saw it."

However, a very respected Craft authority has told me that he believes the photo, which is in his possession, to be of Pickingill, and I have no reason to disbelieve him.

For several years, I have been trying to locate a copy of the *Insight* magazine in the hope that the magazine had more information about the letter than mentioned in the book.

### ~ **11 January 2023**

A fellow researcher and friend, Melissa Seims, obtained from Julia Phillips a copy of the page that contained John Pope's letter in the *Insight* magazine.

From the magazine, *Insight*, Issue No. 31, July 1984:

Dear Sir,

I see more claims Re. Pickingill controversy in '*Insight*' again. Jean Bann, an Alexandrian Witch from Southend puts the other side of the coin. She says there were no witches in Canewdon and the whole story was invented by Eric Maple in his '*Dark world of the Witches*'. The photograph purporting to be Old George Pickingill is in fact, a photo of Alf Cavill, a station porter of Ellstree, taken in the early 1960's. Alf is now dead, but he was no witch and laughed over the photograph when he saw it.

Yours Faithfully, John Pope, 71, The Ridge, Dollis Valley Barnett [sic], Herts.

(Well, here's a story with a difference ..... any comments welcomed. Ed.)

Image of the letter in the magazine:

Dear Sir,  
I see more claims Re. Pickingill controversy in 'In-  
-sight' again. Jean Bann, an Alexandrian Witch from South-  
-end puts the other side of the coin. She says there were  
no witches in Canewdon and the whole story was invented by  
Eric Maple in his 'Dark world of the Witches'. The photo-  
-graph purporting to be Old Geroge Pickingill is in fact,  
a photo of Alf Cavill, a station porter at Ellstree, taken  
in the early 1960's. Alf is now dead, but he was no witch  
and laughed over the photograph when he saw it.  
Yours Faithfully, John Pope, 71, The Ridge, Dollis Valley  
Barnett, Herts. (Well, here's a story with a difference...  
..any comments welcomed. Ed.)

So the addresses matched. It was the John Pope of The United Temples of Satan of  
Barnet, Hertfordshire who wrote the letter to the Insight magazine in 1984.

Perhaps he did thought that Alf Cavill looked like George Pickingill.

Sources:

1. 1914 birth of Alfred C. Cavill in the index. England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837-1915, online at Ancestry.com. Name: Alfred C Cavill; Mother's Maiden Name: Fowler; Registration Year: 1914; Registration Quarter: Jan-Feb-Mar; Registration district: Islington; Inferred County: London; Vol.: 1b; Page: 485. Searched March 1, 2020 Sunday 12:35 AM.
2. 1914 baptism of Alfred Charles Cavill. London, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1917, online at Ancestry.com. Islington, St Michael, Islington, 1912-1918, image no. 24. Searched on March 1, 2020 Sunday 12:42 AM.
3. 1914 death of Nellie Cavill in the index. England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, online at Ancestry.com. Name: Nellie Cavill; Estimated birth year: abt 1887; Registration Year: 1914; Registration Quarter: Jan-Feb-Mar; Age at Death: 27; Registration district: Hackney; Inferred County: London; Volume: 1b; Page: 550. Searched on March 9, 2020 Monday 5:36 PM.
4. 1914 Burial of Nellie Cavill in the index. UK, Burial and Cremation Index, 1576-2014, online at Ancestry.com. Name: Nellie Cavill; Register Type: Burial; Death Date: abt 1914; Burial or Cremation Date: Mar 1914; Burial or Cremation Place: Islington, London, England. Searched on March 9, 2020 Monday 5:30 PM.
5. 1916 Alfred Cavill killed in action in World War I. UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919, online at Ancestry.com. Regiment: Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex) Regiment; Battalion: 1st Battalion; Regimental Number: L/7967. Searched on June 28, 2021 Monday 12:56 AM.
6. 1939 England and Wales Register, online at Ancestry.com. London, Stoke Newington Met B, AWAK, image no. 12. E. D. Letter Code AWAK, Met Borough Stoke Newington MET-B, Reg. Dist. And Sub-dist.

- 11-1. Alfred C. Cavill in the household of Florence E. Fowler. Searched on February 29, 2020 Saturday 12:06 AM.
7. 1970's image of letter from John Pope to Cecil Williamson. From a friend in Australia via internet. Received March 1, 2020 Sunday 5:48 PM.
8. 1984 death of Alfred C. Cavill in the index. England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, online at Ancestry.com. Name: Alfred C Cavill; Death Age: 70; Birth Date: 12 Feb 1914; Registration Date: Mar 1984; Registration district: Elstree and Potters Bar; Inferred County: Middlesex; Vol.: 10; Page: 306. Searched on March 1, 2020 Sunday 12:27 AM.
9. 1984 letter of John Pope in the Insight magazine. Issue number 31 of *Insight* magazine, dated July 1984. From Julia Phillips' collection of records. Received from Melissa Seims on January 11, 2023 Wednesday.
10. 2004 about the claim that the photograph of George Pickingill of Canewdon, Essex actually being a photograph of Alf Cavill of Elstree, Hertfordshire. Pop! Goes the Witch: The Disinformation Guide to 21st Century Witchcraft, edited by Fiona Horne, Red Wheel Weiser, Jul 1, 2004, online at Google Books. Page no.? --- (This digital file in Google Books doesn't have the page numbers). Searched February 29, 2020 Saturday 10:00 PM - Leap Day Evening.