

The following are transcriptions from very poor copies of 1905 articles from some, unidentified Sunderland Newspapers – probably Sunderland Echo and Sunderland Daily Post. A few words could not be deciphered and these have been transcribed with question marks – peoples names are probably the most likely to have been transcribed incorrectly as there was no easy way to check in most cases.

Antony Barton, 16th August 2014

Francis Edward CAWS born 21 August 1846 Seaview, married Catherine Francis RIDDETT 4 February 1868 St Helens Church, died 9 April 1905 Sunderland

DEATH of Mr Frank Caws

Sketch of His Career

The announcement of the death of Mr Frank Caws will be received with deep regret throughout Sunderland and the district, especially in view of the painful suddenness with which the sad event occurred.

Mr Caws went to London on Friday week in order to see the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and protest against the removal of sand from beach near Roker. When travelling he got a chill and on Wednesday this developed into pneumonia. Dr Percy Blumer and Dr Robinson were called in, but Mr Caws gradually sank and died at his residence, No 1, Bellevue Crescent, at half-past eight o'clock on Saturday night.

Mr Caws was 58 years of age, and was born at Sea View, Isle of Wight, he being the son of Mr Silas Caws, a well-known figure in the Island. He served his articles at Ryde, and then went for a course of instruction at Kensington School of Art, where he gained several important prizes and early showed himself a man of great artistic attainments. He then received an appointment at Darlington, where he did some work for the North-Eastern Railway Company, including the designing of a part of the Durham Railway Station. For a time after he was at Wolverhampton and came to Sunderland when 21 years of age as manager for Messrs Potts and Sons, architects. After holding that position for a short while he opened an office, and from that day to the time of his death continued in business on his own account. During his professional career he has designed some of the best buildings in the town, including the Cobden Exchange, both the one that recently burnt down and the one which is now being erected. Messrs Grimshaw's premises at the corner of Fawcett Street and High Street which was one of the first terra-cotta buildings in the country; the Pottery Buildings, High Street East; Messrs Pearman and Corder's establishment, Union Street; Messrs Corder's and Meng's building, opposite the Town Hall, in which his own office was situated. He also laid out several of the principal residential estates in Sunderland, including the Thornhill and Tunstall Road estates, and was also connected with Hexham. He designed, too, Dukes House, Hexham, the residence of the late Mr E Backhouse, and others of a like type.

Caused some stir

As a civil engineer he occupied a very high place in his profession, and as a consequence was elected a fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and was twice president of the Northern Association of Architects. He frequently acted as an arbiter and assessor in important cases. Some years ago, it will be recalled, he caused some sensation in a Parliamentary committee room when he produced plans which showed that the design for the new bridge over the Wear were so defective in regard to levels that if the bridge was built from them one end would be several feet in the air, and a few months ago he rather startled people in this part of the country by asserting, in conjunction with Mr T.W. Backhouse, that Sunderland in some parts had subsided several feet.

The Wonderful Pier

Mr Caws was the designer of a pier at his native place which was regarded as a model of its kind in regard to standing stress and strain. This pier, which may be regarded as Mr Caws's chief work, is a beautifully artistic looking erection, on the suspension principle. The design was the result of the application of principles adopted after years of special study of suspension bridges, and although nothing of a merely ornamental character was introduced, yet the beauty of the natural curves of the main cables was so emphasised by the proportion and arrangement of the other features as to produce an excellent general effect. It consists of five suspension spans – three of 200 feet each and two of about 140 feet, the total length of the pier, including the fan-shaped head being 1,120 feet. In appearance it strongly reminds one of the Forth Bridge, except that it is, of course, quite 'cobwebby' looking in comparison. Its marvellous strength has, however, been proved in several tremendous gales which have been fatal to other more substantial-looking structures, but out of which it came unscathed, thus demonstrating the correctness of the theories of its designer.

He also designed a suspension bridge across the Wear at Stanhope, and was the architect for the sheds at the yards of Messrs Swan and Hunter, at Wallsend. Probably his most important invention was a patent tank for ascertaining from a small scale model of a ship what her displacement and speed through the water would be at a given horse-power, and in connection with this he did a considerable amount of testing for shipbuilders both at home and abroad.

He trained many young men, and amongst those who were his pupils are Mr Stanley Thompson, Mr Herbert Raine, and Mr Septimus Scott, the latter being recently appointed one of the joint architects for the new Town Hall at Durban, South Africa.

The utmost of the highest

Mr Caws was one of the founders of the Y.M.C.A. in Sunderland, and was among its earliest secretaries. Some years ago he began a work among the poorer class of youths in the town and four or five years ago, as the result of certain appeals made by him, the Waife Rescue Agency and Street Vendor's Club was formed, an institution in which he took a deep interest. He was one of the organisers of the first Moody and Sankey mission in the town and Professor Henry Drummond was his guest when he delivered a memorable course of lectures in Sunderland. In religion Mr Caws was formally a member of the Society of Friends, but for some years had not associated himself with that body. Latterly he had taken a Young People's Bible Class at the Union Congregational Church and he

was one of the architects and principal organisers of the Social Centre instituted by the late Rev G.H.R. Garcia.

A Liberal in politics he was one of Mr G. B. Hunter's principle supporters at the last election, but he took no active part in public affairs otherwise. He was ever a great advocate of peace in international matters. A man of wide sympathies, he was ever ready to assist in objects for the amelioration of the conditions of the less fortunate classes of the community.

In many respects Mr Caws was a remarkable man. He possessed exceptional originality in design, and great artistic ability, was a mathematician of considerable power, and had intellectual gifts and tastes decidedly above the common. Added to this he had a wonderful charm of manner which made him a favourite with all who knew him, and no townsman could be held in higher esteem.

He married Miss Catherine Frances Riddett, of Ryde, and she survives him, together with a grown-up family of four daughters and one son.

FRANK CAWS

An Appreciation

By one who knew him intimately

('Daily Post' Special)

It is no exaggeration to say that in the removal by death of Frank Caws Sunderland has lost one of her most remarkable and interesting citizens. For 36 years, or thereabouts, he had been amongst us, and, although never occupying a prominently public position, seeing he never sought it, his influence was both seen and felt on many occasions; an influence always exercised in favour of what he believed to be the best interests of the community wherein his lot was cast.

There must be hundreds of men outside Sunderland, scattered all over the world, who will heave a sigh of deep regret when they learn that Frank Caws is no more. His was essentially a noble nature – unselfish, chivalrous, and almost quixotic in its apprehension of the rights and feelings of others.

In any controversy, whether of a local, national, or international kind, one could always reckon upon Frank Caws having a strong word for the weaker side. He was a keen and enthusiastic defender of the rights and views of the minority, unless such were palpably absurd. He had a powerful intellect,

PROFOUND and FAR- SWEEPING

And in dealing with any subject one might be sure that whatever could be said would be said on behalf of those who held opinions opposed to the popular view. He had so keen an appreciation of all-round truth that in any discussion involving the contested rights of another, he could be depended upon to say the fitting word either in extenuation or explanation of the opinions or claims of those he thought to be at a disadvantage, in this he excelled; and the reason, to such of his friends who knew him best, was always obvious, viz., that, although he had a powerful and searching mind, he had a great and loving heart, which usually led the way, and to which his reasoning faculties were subordinated.

He could write strongly, he could speak strongly when occasion demanded, but "his bark was worse than his bite." Often when called upon to give public expression to his views upon persons or things – and that perhaps, fervently – it was observable with what tender consideration he would privately speak of those from whom he differed, and emphasise the finer traits in their characters. His, indeed, was a charity that "seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."

In the seventies the name of Frank Caws was a household word among the young men of Sunderland. As one of the founders, and for several years honorary secretary of the Y.M.C.A., he exercised a wholesome influence in moulding the lives of many; and with confidence it may be affirmed that not a few to-day would readily and warmly acknowledge that to him they owe much of what is solid and abiding in their characters.

With respect to the exercise of his profession as an architect, our town possesses many illustrations of his skills and several of his old pupils hold leading positions in our midst, whilst some in this and other lands testify by their success to his careful training. But to be quite candid and it is only expressing the opinion of those most competent to judge. Frank Caws, with

HIS SPLENDID ABILITIES

Was fitted for a larger sphere, a metropolitan centre, where his versatile genius would have had more scope and his artistic powers an ampler opportunity.

Perhaps there is no profession in the entire world which makes greater demands upon human energy and talent than that of an architect; and perhaps there is none in which successes are so comparatively few and so very uncertain. Ability of the highest order, masterfulness in detail, and unlimited patience are only some of the prerequisites, and too often they count for nothing in these days of competitive commissions. Little do those occupying public positions know, when leisurely sauntering round and critically examining with an amateurish eye the elaborated designs of competing architects, the weary days and midnight hours there represented. Many a noble heart has worn itself out in a vain endeavour to win recognition of undoubted and conscience ability.

That Frank Caws had won the respect and esteem of his brethren was evidenced by his call some years ago to the presidency of the Northern Architectural Association. He was a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects – a further token of his high standing in the profession. He was a frequent contributor to contemporary literature bearing upon the scientific features of architecture and civil engineering, in which latter he was also an expert of acknowledged standing and influence. On difficult points and in critical emergencies, his opinion was frequently sought by those in high places away from his adopted town. In dynamics and kindred subjects he was thoroughly at home; and it required to be a difficult problem indeed that baffled or foiled his ingenuity.

In later years much of his attention was ??d upon matters connected with ship construction and marine engineering; and although he has not lived to receive full rewards of his untiring labours, nor to carry some of his most valuable investigations to a fructifying point, there are those on the banks of the Wear and Tyne who can testify to the value of his discoveries and scientific skill. On the latter river, the vast sheds, under one of which the leviathan Cunarder is now being built, are striking monuments to his constructive ability.

But whilst science claimed much of his time, his larger life was devoted to even nobler things. His sympathies were with the neglected and depressed, and no genuine appeal to his kindly nature was ever made in vain. As a co-worker with the late Mr Garcia at the Social-Centre, he, like his friend, will be held in loving remembrance. But his heart and soul were with the little waifs and strays of our town, who will miss in him a warm and dear protector. He welcomed any suggestion that might work for their benefit; nothing was a trouble that might minister to their well-being. He took a leading and active part in the foundation of the Waifs and Strays Agency; and as one of the secretaries he has done yeoman service to make it successful.

If at times he appeared to have a special way of his own in dealing with administrative details, which some of his colleagues might think not quite en regle, they know well that it was simply the exuberance of his deep sympathy running ahead of his usual precaution. He had a strong

AVERSION TO RED TAPE:

He was peculiarly sensitive regarding rules and regulations – if too hard and fast; he chafed against official checks and bars – not per se, but with a fear that they might hinder rather than help forward the movement at heart. But his intimates knew well that these interesting little foibles were only on the surface and that none appreciated more than he did their co-operation towards the common end.

In matters religious he was broadminded – almost to a fault, if that be possible. Identified at different periods of his life with several denominations, he was pre-eminently undenominational. He could never allow that any church held a monopoly of the truth. On the contrary, he saw some good in nearly all the differentiating varieties of Christian doctrine and practice. He preferred to believe that each denomination had its own *raison d'être* – some special and important feature to magnify and assert for the general good. Had he been asked to name a denomination by preference one could imagine him replying “The Garden of the Lord hath many flowers, my choice might not be yours, nor yours mine; but all are beautiful.” Or perhaps he might have quoted his beloved Tennyson

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Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

But whilst no one church could altogether hold him, all might claim him, for the impulses of his radiating mind moved in a circle of luminous sympathy. This Christ-like charity was beautifully exemplified on Tuesday last at Bishopwearmouth Cemetery, when two of his intimate friends, clergymen of the Church of England, laid him to rest in unconsecrated ground, with the comfortable words of the Anglican Burial Service – a fitting augury of that surely-morning (??) day when “there shall be one fold and one Shepherd”

His memory long will live alone
In all our hearts, as mournful light
That broods above the fallen sun.
And dwells in heaven half the night.

The death of Mr Frank Caws will be sincerely regretted by all who knew him personally and by a much larger number who only knew of him. He was a most estimable gentleman and his professional ability was of a high and varied order. I was familiar with him, and he always impressed me as a man who had what the world esteems the defects of genius. His vary verentility (??), his very kindness, and, above all, his constant cagern (??) as to promote goodly causes in which he felt he could render useful service, made in his case all the difference between a rich man and a man who was not rich. I recall a delightful evening spent in listening to him discoursing on "A Poem I Love" to a debating society in this district. The man was transfigured as he read to a rapt audience Tennyson's story of the quest of the Holy Grail, stopping now and again to elucidate this or that passage in simple but lofty and informing words. He did much good in his lifetime, and his career entitles his memory to reverent remembrance.

Death of Mr Frank Caws Sunderland

It is with regret that we announce the death of Mr Frank Caws, the well-known architect of Sunderland, which occurred at his residence in Belle Vue Crescent, Sunderland, on Saturday evening, after a short but severe attack of pneumonia lasting less than a week. Mr Caws had gone to London on business, and was in indifferent health before he left the North on Friday week, but on his return on Monday last he felt very far from well in the course of his journey home. He was attended by Dr Percy Blumer, and subsequently Dr Robinson was called in, but it was seen from the first that the case was a very grave one, and it terminated suddenly by his death as above stated.

Mr Caws was well known in the North of England in the architectural profession, and was also deeply in philanthropic undertakings. About 30 years ago he was honorary secretary of the Sunderland Young Men's Christian Association, and when the first portion of the premises were erected in John Street, Mr Caws was the architect whose plans were selected and under his direction the work was carried out. The town of Sunderland contains numerous examples of his architectural work, including the ware houses and premises of Messrs Pearman and Conder. Messrs Blackate's in High Street, the Cobden Exchange now in course of erection after the recent fire, Messrs Conder's in Fawcett Street, and Mr Meng's adjoining. He was also, at the age of 21, the architect for the erection of Duke's House, near Hexham, the residence of the late Mr Edward Backhouse, a design of occuplonous merit, particularly as the work of as young a man. He was also the inventor of an apparatus for the measurement of a ship's resistance, a number of vital importance to shipbuilders, and in this connection he had received models from numerous local and other shipbuilders, and also from the Admiralties of several Continental Powers. He was a man of considerable versatility of ?? and was at all times ready to place his knowledge and advice at the service of all who sought it. He took a great interest, with others, including Mr Charles Thompson, in instituting the Home for Waifs and Strays in Sunderland, and to boys and young men he was a true and devoted friend. For the period of two years recently, he occupied the position of president of the Northern Architectural Association, and was highly esteemed by all the members of it. He was a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects which he qualified for by examination, and was a frequent contributor to the Institute's Journal of Transactions, on scientific and architectural subjects. Mr Caws was also the architect of the Wallsend Cafe, built by Mr G.B. Hunter, some years ago. He leaves a wife, a son and four daughters. His son has been associated with him in the business. Mr Caws came to Sunderland between 30 and 40 years ago from the Isle of Wight. He was about 59 years of age.

April 11 1905

FUNERAL OF MR FRANK CAWS

Many Tokens of Sorrow

The burial of Mr Frank Caws, architect, who died on Saturday, took place in Bishopwearmouth Cemetery this afternoon. The funeral was largely attended, the deceased gentleman having been highly respected by an extensive circle of friends and acquaintances.

The body was enclosed in an unpolished oak coffin with brass mountings and a breast-plate inscribed, "Frank Caws; died April 8th 1905, aged 59 years." When the funeral procession left the deceased gentleman's residence, 1, Belle Vue Crescent, all blinds of the houses in the neighbourhood were drawn. Members of the Union Congregational Church Young Men's Bible Class, of which Mr Caws was chairman, acted as under-bearers, and walked alongside the hearse to the cemetery where the burial service was conducted by the Revs. G.A. West and W.E. Cockshott.

The principle mourners were:-

Chaise: Revs. G.A. West and W.E. Cockshott, and Dr Percy Blumer.

1st Carriage: Mr Douglas Caws (son), Mr Douglas Caws (brother), Misses Mabel and Katie Caws (daughters).

2nd Carriage : Mr E. Caws (brother), Mr Arthur Caws (brother), Mr Percy Greenham (brother-in-law), Mr Howard Caws (nephew).

3rd Carriage: Mr William Priestly, Mr Wm Doubleday, Mr G.W. Harrington, Mr G. Burnham, and Mr G.W. Harrington jnr.

The following gentlemen attended to represent the Waifs and Strays' Rescue Agency and Street Venders' Club, Lambton Street: Councillor Summerbell, Mr C.E. Thompson, Mr A. Brewer, Mr E.H. Kirby, Mr F.F. Perrise, Mr J.H. Charlton, Mr T.J. Allison, Mr Oscar Gad, Mr P. Lodwidge, Capt Hall, and Mr George Former. There were also eight cabs containing altogether 72 boys connected with the club. Other boys followed on foot.

The Northern Architectural Association, of which Mr F. Caws was a past president, was represented by Messrs J.T. Cackett (president, Newcastle), G.T. Brown (vice-president), A.H. Plummer (hon-secretary, Newcastle), J.W. Taylor (ex-president, Newcastle), P. Burns Dick (Newcastle), Jas. Spain, W. Milburn, T.R. Milburn, G.E. Errington, James Bruce, H. Charleswood, W.H. Dunn (Gateshead), H. Grieves (South Shields), and J.W. Douglas (Alnwick).

Among the other gentlemen present were Alderman Ranken, Mr Fred W. Ranken (president), Mr J.B. Scott, Mr Peter Rule, Mr J. Huntley, and Mr W.H. Hope (secretary), representing the Sunderland Master Builders' Association : Mr A.H. Haver (Newcastle), Mr W. Peterson (Newcastle), Mr J.K. Sedgwick, Mr J. Lister (representing the workman's governors of the Stanhope Conservative Sanatorium), Mr James Henderson, Mr H. Hedley, Mr F.E. Coates, Mr J.H. Nicholls, Mr J.D. Todd, Mr J.H. Bennett, Mr W. Gibson, Mr Irwin Sharp, Mr Gillin Brown, Mr W. Anderson, Mr G.E. Hunter, Mr T. Bainbridge, Mr L. Bainbridge, Mr F. Davidson, Mr T.H. Watson and Mr A. Fletcher (of Messrs Swan

and Hunter, Wallsend), Mr H. Grieves (South Shields), Mr J. Pyburn, Mr J. Peat, Alderman Willott (South Shields), Mr H. Johnson (Y.M.C.A.), Dr Robinson (Stanhope Sanatorium), the Rev R.P. Guy (Derby), Mr A.S. Arnison, Mr J. Rule, Mr John Wright, Mr Theo. Guy, Mr W.A. Priestly, Mr C. Thompson, Mr J.B. Wilkinson, Mr W. Common, Mr T.T. Nesbit, Mr Meng, Messrs R.J. Leithead, J. Stanmark, J. Brown, G. Reed, T. Forster, J. Atkinson, F. Sedgwick, H. Lucas, W.L. Wilkinson, D. Mc Nair, and J. Duncanson (members of the Young Men's Bible Class of which the deceased was chairman).

Intimations of regret that they were unable to attend were received from Mr G.H. Hunter (Wallsend), who was represented by his son, Mr G.E. Hunter: Dr Haswell: Mr J.C. Moor, district secretary of the Y.M.C.A.; and Mr Walter Guy (Belfast), a former pupil of Mr Caws.

Wreaths were sent by the following:- Union Congregational Church Young Man's Bible Class, Mr and Mrs J.H. Charlton, Miss May Moller (London), Mr & Mrs G.W. Errington and family, Mr & Mrs J. Hannington Bennett, Mr & Mrs John Rule, Mr and Mrs J. Ewa Miller, Mr & Mrs P.M. Greenham, Mr Raymond Greenham, Miss Muriel Greenham, Messrs Percy and Willie Wilkinson, Union Congregational Church Sunday School teachers and scholars, Ald. Ranken, Mr F.W. Ranken, brothers and nephews of the deceased, Mrs Frank Caws and family, the Committee of the Waifs' and Strays' Rescue Agency and Street Vendors Club, boys of the Waifs' and Strays' Rescue Agency and Street Vendors Club, Mr & Mrs Kelso Storey, Mr and Miss Meng, Mr Robert Richardson, Mr and Mrs Alex Cameron, Mr Charles Gowland, Mr and Mrs W. Priestly, Memorial Hall, Seaham Harbour; and a crown of laurels from an anonymous sender. The wreath from the boys of the Waifs and Strays Club was composed of primroses, and in that from the Committee of the institution were interwoven the words " Waifs and Strays."
