

*Charles Terry of Henley upon Thames in the County of Wexford Gentleman*

*Mary Harriet Sparks*

*A. B. Moorhouse*

*John Terry*

*John Cooper*

*John Terry*

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# TOWSEY TALES

**NAME: Charles Terry Sparks**

**BIRTH DETAILS: 2 April 1822 St.Sepulchre, London**

**DEATH DETAILS: 16 Sep.1891**

**CHART REF: Towsey Charts C8 & C1**

**MARRIAGE DETAILS: 1st M:15 May 1857 St.George, Camberwell**

**SPOUSE: Emma Newman**

**MARRIAGE DETAILS: 2nd M:15 Mar.1887, Brixton**

**SPOUSE: Juliet Ianthe Thomas**

Charles Terry Sparks was the second of the four children of John William Thomas Sparks and Mary Cooper. We do not know where he was educated. There is no record of him following his elder brother's footsteps into the Merchant Taylor's School.

In 1841, nineteen year-old Charles Terry Sparks was living with his uncle, David Cooper, at Shoe Lane. There is certainly some irony in Charles Terry Sparks living and working at the location from which his namesake had departed under such inglorious circumstances less than two years earlier.

You can read about 'The Unstoppable Charles Terry' on this website.

Charles' occupation is shown as 'Clerk' and we can presume that he was working in and learning about his uncle's stationary business, as his later occupation was as a wholesale stationer.

Probably in 1857, Charles went into partnership with his brother, John Sparks, as East India Merchants and agents.

It is worth noting, that this was the time of the Indian Mutiny, when the British government took over control of India from the East India Company, so the new partnership between John and Charles might be somehow related to that new order. It was also the year in which Charles married.

Up to 1857, David Cooper, Charles and John's uncle, and his rapidly expanding family, had occupied numbers five to seven in Shoe Lane. In 1857 John and Charles Terry Sparks took over number seven for their business, working together there until 1863, at which time their partnership was dissolved, with Charles staying on at Shoe Lane, as an East India Agent, until about 1869.

A lack of evidence of business failure, might indicate that Charles' regular career changes were the result of boredom with the same old routine after a few years.

In the 1851 census, Charles, shown as being a wholesale stationer, is staying as a visitor, with John Newman at his house in Albany Road, Camberwell.

John Newman was also a wholesale stationer, with his business at 48 Watling Street in the city.

Not at home for the 1851 census, was John Newman's daughter, Emma, then 13 or 14, whom Charles then married, in 1857, when she was 20 years old.

Although Charles claimed to be merely a visitor at Albany Road in 1851, the following court case, from 1854, shows that he was still there three years later:

Morning Post – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 1854

*EXTORTION BY CABMAN – Edward Day, a cab driver, badge 2,450, appeared to answer to a charge of demanding and taking more than his legal fare.*

*Mr.Charles Terry Sparks said that on Friday last, he was caught out in the heavy rain, and, seeing the defendant put down a fare next door to where he was, he got into his cab and desired him to drive to his residence in the Albany Road, Camberwell. The defendant did so, and, on getting out of the cab, gave him 1s., which he considered exceedingly*

liberal, as the distance he had been taken did not exceed a mile. The defendant however, demanded 1s. 6d., and said he should not take less, as he had driven beyond his radius.

The defendant admitted that he had made a "slight mistake," the part of the town being new to him, and, in fact, being out of his latitude.

Mr. Norton observed that this was coming it rather strong as his real fare did not appear to be more than 6d. He then convicted him in a penalty of 14s. and costs.

At some point, C.T. Sparks went into partnership with his father-in-law, as wholesale stationers, though the business at Watling Street was only ever in the name of John Newman.

It is not known if there was a link between Charles Terry Sparks' two business partnerships: as an East India Agent and as a wholesale stationer.

The stationery partnership was dissolved in 1867, with John Newman carrying on the business alone, as he had done before taking on his son-in-law. Also in 1867, or soon thereafter, Charles ceased working as an East India Agent and vacated number 7 Shoe Lane.

For the following two years, Charles and family lived at Sandwich, in Kent. There are no records to indicate what the family did in Sandwich, other than producing two more children, but it is safe to assume that any business venture was not successful enough to keep them there. They moved back to London, residing at 3 Norfolk Terrace, Lambeth, by April 1871, with their seven children, aged between thirteen and one, along with a 74 year-old nurse who had already been with them for at least ten years, and a 13 year-old domestic servant whom they had brought up from Sandwich.

The 1871 census shows Charles' occupation as 'Clerk', which is both unenlightening as to his actual occupation and implies a role more menial than we might expect of him. It would also be less remunerative than would be required to support a large family and two servants.

Charles' wife, Emma died in 1876



Soon after the invention of condensed milk, the Anglo-Swiss Milk Company, based in Switzerland, was formed in 1866. The company exported condensed milk to England until 1875, when they set up a condensing plant in Aylesbury. It might have been at that time that Charles Terry Sparks became their manager.

By 1881, C.T. Sparks and family were living at 39 Canterbury Road, Brixton, where he stayed for the rest of his life. Also in 1881, Charles' eldest son, 22 year-old Charles Newman Sparks, was working for the Anglo-Swiss Milk Company, as a clerk.

I wonder if C.T. Sparks had any creative input into the rather humorous and surprisingly modern advertisement of the country store keeper trying to convince the young lady to buy condensed milk instead of cold cream?

**ANGLO-SWISS CONDENSED MILK** { "Prepared in Switzerland."  
"Prepared in England."  
"Prepared in America."  
**ANGLO-SWISS MILK FOOD** FOR INFANTS AND INVALIDS.  
**ANGLO-SWISS** { COCOA AND MILK.  
CHOCOLATE AND MILK.  
COFFEE AND MILK.  
**30 MILLION TINS OF THESE GOODS SOLD IN 1882.**  
Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Co., Cham, Switzerland.  
NEW YORK OFFICE, 86 HUDSON STREET, P. O. BOX, 3773.

Charles T. Sparks stopped working for Anglo-Swiss before 1891, most likely because at nearly seventy years of age, he wanted a quieter life.

In 1905, Anglo-Swiss merged with another, smaller Swiss milk company, who had built a strong public image by inventing an infant milk substitute for mothers unable to breast feed. Because of this popularity, the new company took on the name of that smaller partner: Nestle.

In 1891, Charles is shown as being a manufacturer of walking sticks and umbrella shafts. Whether or not this last change of occupation had anything to do with his second marriage, in April 1887, two weeks before his sixty fifth birthday, to forty one year-old Juliet lanthe Thomas, I do not know.

Charles Terry Sparks died in Brixton in September, 1891.

Unlike so many members of the Sparks, Cooper and Towsey families, all three of Mary Harriet Towsey's brothers managed to produce enough surviving offsprings to ensure the continuation of their branches of the Sparks family.