

University Library, Special Collections & Archives  
Highlight for January 2011

**Not the England cricket team: photographs by Fred Shaw (1867-1950)**

In a new cataloguing project for the new year, a listing is being prepared of the collection of photographs made by Fred Shaw, bequeathed by him to the Gypsy Lore Society at the University of Liverpool. Most of the original glass plate negatives have Fred Shaw's own dated captions, but there are some unidentified photographs of a cricket team for which more information is sought. Any information will be gratefully received by Special Collections & Archives: [k.hooper@liv.ac.uk](mailto:k.hooper@liv.ac.uk)



SMGC Shaw photo PB.4

Frederick James Shaw (1867-1950) was born in London, and lived in Friern Barnet, Hertfordshire. A keen Territorial soldier, he served as an ARP Warden during the Second World War. He was an active member of the local branch of the British Legion, whose members attended his memorial service at Friern Barnet parish church, January 13<sup>th</sup> 1950, in full regalia. There were no flowers at the funeral, by his own request, but his coffin was covered with red poppies.

Fred Shaw was also a fluent speaker of several Romani dialects from childhood, and he joined the Gypsy Lore Society in 1908, soon after its revival by Robert Andrew Scott Macfie in Liverpool; he was Honorary Treasurer of the Society 1922-1930. A printer by trade, Fred Shaw was also an expert photographer, and he bequeathed his collections of photographs (1890s-1940s) and books to the Gypsy Lore Society at the University of Liverpool.



SMGC Shaw photo PB.5

Several members of the cricket team reappear in another photograph of a larger group of men in front of the cricket pavilion (Shaw photo PB.5).

There is also a photograph of several of the men from the larger group portrait, without the cricketers, in a smaller group in which Fred Shaw himself appears. He is standing, in his trademark flat cap, second from the right in the back row (Shaw photo PB.1).

Fred Shaw's obituary notices in the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* were written by two of his friends and colleagues in the Society, Eric Otto Winstedt and Andrew Macfarlane.

They recall Fred Shaw's visits to Brough Hill Fair, before the First World War, and his later caravan tours in Wales with the President of the GLS, William Ferguson. There are records of these and other excursions in the photographic collection, including many photographs chosen for reproduction in the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*.

Shaw is also remembered for his hospitality at home in Friern Barnet, and his "pleasant and unassuming manner". He remained deeply interested in the GLS and the Romany families they encountered into his eighties, although he was discerning rather than romantic in his approach. As Macfarlane puts it,



SMGC Shaw photo PB.1

"Fred Shaw never had much use for the type of enthusiasm that made a writer claim some remote Gypsy ancestor as responsible for his interest, and, by inference, subtle insight into Gypsy life: 'hereditary, like a wooden leg' was his sarcastic comment on any book in which such a claim was made."

## References:

University of Liverpool, Special Collections & Archives website: <http://sca.lib.liv.ac.uk/collections/index.html>

Gypsy Lore Society archive: [http://sca.lib.liv.ac.uk/collections/coll\\_descs/gypsy/index.html](http://sca.lib.liv.ac.uk/collections/coll_descs/gypsy/index.html)

Obituaries: *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* (3<sup>rd</sup> series, vol.29 1950)