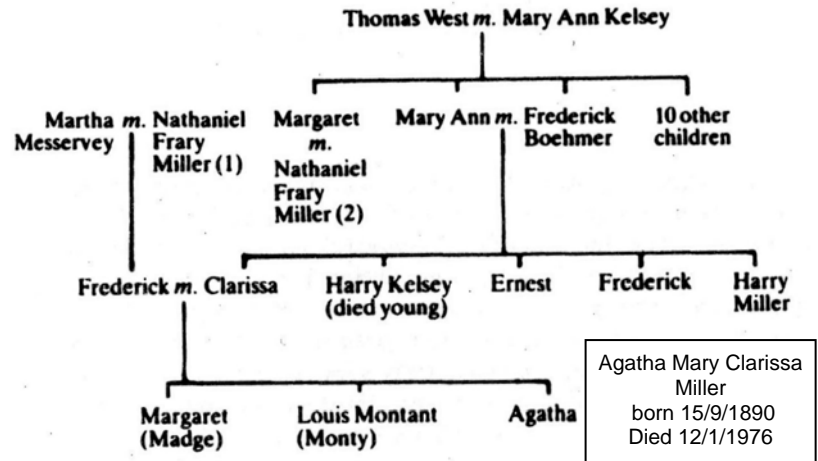


# Agatha Christie's family at Fraryhurst, Prinsted

**Margaret** and Mary Ann and their 10 siblings were orphans and brought up on a farm in Sussex by childless relations. In 1851 Mary Ann met Cpt. Frederick Boehmer of the Argyll Highlanders, he was 36 and she 16. They had five children in quick succession (one died as a baby) their only daughter, Clarissa (Clara) was born in Belfast in 1854.

In April 1863 Cpt. Boehmer, then stationed in Jersey, was thrown from his horse and killed aged 48, leaving Mary Ann now 27 with four children to support. Two weeks before the accident, her elder sister Margaret had married Nathaniel Frary Miller at Westbourne. He had one son Frederick Alvah by his first wife Martha Messervey, and after her death he was brought up by his grandparents in America. After his father remarried and settled in England, Frederick came to visit. Hearing of Cpt Boehmer's death Margaret wrote immediately to her younger sister, offering to take one of the four children and bring it up as her own, and Mary Ann, now in financial difficulties, decided Clara should go and live with her Aunt and Uncle. It was here that Frederick Miller met Clara. They had three children, Margaret (Madge) Louis Montant (Monty) and Agatha born 1890. Margaret Miller nee West, born 1830 in Chichester, was Agatha's Great Aunt and Step Grandmother.



The 1861 census shows Mary Ann West (57) and Frances (56) as living in Prinsted. Margaret West (31) niece and Richard West (21) nephew, are listed as visitors.

Richard Kelsey's occupation - farmer of 161 Acres employing 8 men and 3 boys.

**Richard Kelsey** born 1802 died 1879 is Agatha Christie's Great Great Uncle. He was the first People's warden of St. John's Church, Southbourne.



**Nathaniel Frary Miller** born 21/10/1821 – died 9/5/1869. He married Martha Messervey about 1845 and had one son Frederick Alvah Miller born 1846 – died 1901. Martha died and Nathaniel married his second wife, Margaret West in 1863 in Westbourne Church. He died at Prinsted in the presence of Mary Ann Boehmer and was buried in Green-wood Cemetery, Brooklyn NY on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1869 section H lot 18760. Margaret dedicated a stained glass window to his memory in St. John's Church, Main Road, Southbourne, West Sussex, which was completed in 1876.



**Agatha** was baptised in All Saints Church. Torquay and regularly attended Sunday services. Her father, Frederick Miller made a substantial financial donation to the church and ensured that Agatha was entered in the records as a founder member.

Born in Torquay in 1890, she spent much of her life in the area. Greenway, her family home is now owned by the National Trust, who undertook a £5.4m refurbishment in 2008.

Today Agatha Christie is internationally famous as the most prolific mystery writer of all time with 79 crime novels and many plays to her name.