

## GREEK ORTHODOX BURIALS AT HOLY CROSS, SARRATT

In a commanding position beside the path leading to the rear of the church and backed by the tower is a triangular burial plot fenced with iron railings. In it stands an ornate monument surrounded by gravel. I often wondered about it but did not research the family until a visitor left a query in the church visitors' book some years back. The first and main inscription reads 'In loving memory of Deme beloved son of Anastasius and Henrietta Eugenidi died 15 July 1892 aged three months'. The second reads 'also Henrietta Eugenidi died 22 November 1908 aged 49'. Around the extreme base, and missed by most people, are three more names; 'Alexander Argenti born 15 October 1870 died 17 October 1934', 'Anastasius D Eugenidi born August 15 1862 died December 9 1941' and 'Marigo Eugenidi second wife of Anastasius Eugenidi born 6 December 1865 died 26 January 1963'.

Who were these people and how long were they in Sarratt? Well my first port of call was the 1891 census and at a house called The Warren in Bushey Heath found two young couples; Ambrose and Henrietta Argenti and Ambrose's brother in law Anastasius Eugenidi and wife Henrietta. Also present were Ambrose's brother Alexander and his mother in law Marietta Sechiari. All had been born in London with the exception of Anastasius, described as 'under secretary of bank', who had been born in Constantinople.

The Argentis had their first child, Marigo, at Bushey in September 1891 after which both families moved to Goldingtons in Sarratt which they most probably leased. There the Eugenidis had a son, Demetrius, in April 1892 and the Argentis another daughter, Virginia, in June 1893. As we have seen Demetrius died aged three months, his death certificate shows of Gastro Enteritis, certified by Dr. Mark Sharman of Rectory Road, Rickmansworth. His burial on 20<sup>th</sup> July is recorded in the Holy Cross burial register, the ceremony carried out by Dr. Agathgeles Moskovablis, archimandrite. There is also a note 'baptised 19 April at Goldingtons by Dr. A M'. I see on-line that an archimandrite is a priest of the Greek Orthodox church who has been elevated in rank to just beneath that of bishop.

Despite this setback the two banking families became active in the village. Mr. Argenti had a fine show of fruit and veg at the 1895 Horticulture Show and at Sarratt's celebrations for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 Mr. Eugenidi presented medals to everyone. At the same event three cups described as 'being engraved and very handsome' were given by Mr. Argenti for the one mile handicap race and other prizes were given out by Mrs. Eugenidi. Both couples were guests at the marriage of Rev. Ryley's daughter Maud in the same year, the Argentis giving the couple a silver salver and the Eugenidis a silver grape and fruit dish. Both men were also on the Electoral Register for 1897-9 on account of their joint occupation of Goldingtons. In

the first half of 1896 the Argentis had a son, Nicholas, born in Paddington. This could well have been at a London home belonging to them.

Both families then left Sarratt, and by the 1901 census the Argenti family are at Picts Hill House, now a grade 2 listed property, in the village of Turvey in Bedfordshire where they probably lived in some style for the rest of their lives and the elder daughter Marigo kept a very chatty diary for many years which is now at the Bedfordshire Record Office. The Eugenidis had moved to 20 Porchester Terrace just off the Bayswater Road in Paddington where they had been joined by Anastasius's brother Alexander who was studying English. He too had been born in Constantinople and was still a Greek subject unlike his brother who was now a British subject. The Eugenidis had no more children and in November 1908 Henrietta died aged only 43 and was buried here in Sarratt a few days later, the ceremony again conducted by Dr Moskovablis. Two years later Anastasius re-married, this time to Marigo Sechiari who was a sister of Henrietta Argenti, wife of Ambrose. In fact it looks as though Marigo had been a witness at Anastasius's first marriage! Anastasius possibly kept a slight link with Sarratt as we see him donating £5 towards the church bells repair fund in 1913. In 1934 Alexander Argenti was buried in Sarratt by an official describing himself as a Great Archmandrite! Alexander seems to have been brother to Ambrose and died in Fulham just a stone's throw from the Olympia exhibition centre.

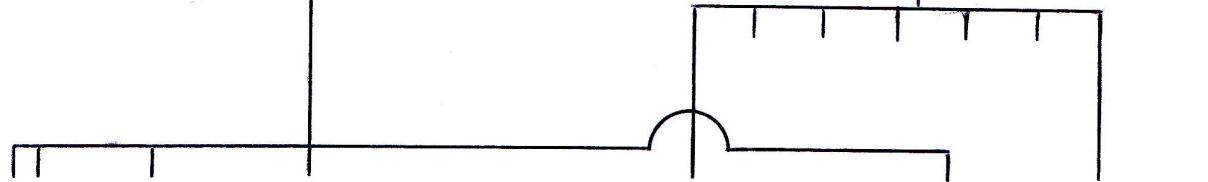
In 1939 the government, with war looming, carried out a survey of the population before issuing identity cards to everyone. In this, now known as the 1939 Register, we see that the Eugenidis have joined the Argentis at Turvey. Anastasius died there in December 1941 aged 79 and was buried here at Sarratt by James Nirvos, archimandrite of the Greek cathedral in London. Anastasius's second wife, Marigo, lived on to the ripe old age of 97 dying in January 1963 at 24 Parkside, London and buried here by the then Sarratt Rector – Jack Tomlinson.

So ended their relationship with Sarratt, a fleeting one really but the village obviously meant much to them. We don't know why they choose to come here, perhaps to pursue a country idyll and what better place could they opt for in such lovely surroundings and with good rail connections recently opened to London. In my research I've used material from Herts. Archives and Local Studies at Hertford, and several on-line sources such as The Sarratt Scrapbook, census records, and records of births, marriages and deaths. It's not been easy; the combination of unusual surnames, a limited number of forenames and 19<sup>th</sup> century handwriting have made it interesting to say the least, and I'm still working on it. I have added a small family tree at the end, hopefully to make matters clearer. The people buried here in Sarratt have been highlighted.

Philip Buller

Nicholas Andre = Marigo  
Argenti Argenti  
b 1834 b 1840  
Marseilles London  
m 1862  
d 1883  
Wandsworth

Parsquera = Marietta  
Sechiari Argenti  
b 1837 b 1843  
Constantinople Finsbury  
m 1863  
d 1900 d 1924  
Hendon Paddington



Alexander = Henrietta  
b 1870 b 1865  
Kensington Kensington  
m 1891  
d 1934 d 1908  
Fulham Paddington

Anastasius = Marigo  
Demosthenes  
Eugenidi  
b 1863 b 1865  
Constantinople Kensington  
m 1910  
d 1941 d 1963  
Turvey Westminster

Ambrose = Henrietta  
b 1866 b 1867  
Kensington Kensington  
m 1890  
d 1952 d 1942  
Turvey Turvey

**Demetrius**  
b 1892  
Sarratt  
d 1892  
Sarratt

Marigo Virginia Nicholas  
b 1891 b 1893 b 1896  
Bushey Sarratt Paddington  
d 1975 d 1981 d 1961  
Turvey Turvey Westminster