

HENRY GEORGE MURPHY (known as Harry)

Henry George Murphy was born in Birchington, the son of Henry Murphy and his wife Mary Ann. Henry senior was listed as a coachman, but was also groom to the owners of Rossetti Bungalow in the 1880s at the time that his son was baptised (1st November 1885). His granddaughter, Shelagh Herbert understood that he was living at the bungalow at the time of young Henry's birth, but it appears from the All Saints Church baptism register that he was living at No: 7 Brunswick Place in Park Lane, which is only a short distance from the Bungalow.

They were still living in Brunswick Place when their second child Ellen Annie was baptised on 3rd January 1886. It would appear from the dates that Henry's baptism was a fairly late one. They may have moved into the groom's quarters later, but this we cannot check from our records.

Henry George Murphy grew up to become a very well respected jeweller and silversmith and opened his own studio, which he named The Falcon Studio.

(Notes from Web-site - not correct!)

Henry George Murphy (known as H. G. or Harry) was born in Birchington in Kent in 1884. His father was a groom¹, but by coincidence, the cottage in which he grew up had belonged earlier to Dante Gabriel Rossetti². At the age of ten Murphy met William Morris, who was taken with the boy's artistic talents and encouraged him to pursue them. When he was fourteen Murphy entered the Central school of Arts & Crafts in London. While studying there he was apprenticed to Henry Wilson, an architect and metalworker who was a prominent member of the Arts & crafts movement. Shortly after completing his studies, Murphy returned to the Central School where he remained for twenty-seven years, teaching goldsmithing and enamelling. He became principal of the school in 1936.

In 1910 he travelled to Venice and there met the German jeweller and silversmith Emil Lettre, with whom he studied in Berlin. In 1928 Murphy opened his own workshop, Falcon Studio, in central London, where he produced jewellery as well as fine silver and gold objects commissioned by individuals and institutions. In 1929 he became a Liveryman of the Goldsmith's Company.

Murphy is the subject of a retrospective exhibition on view at Goldsmith's Hall in London from April 4th until April 30th. It is entitled "At the sign of the Falcon - HG Murphy: Art Deco Silversmith & Jeweller. The curator is Paul Dyson, and John Benjamin and Paul Atterbury have written the accompanying book, "Harry Murphy: Art Deco Jeweller and Silversmith" which is distributed in North America by the Antique Collectors' Club. It may be obtained by telephoning 800-252-5231.

¹ He is listed in the baptism register as coachman in 1885 and 1886.

² Rossetti did not own the bungalow; he merely stayed there at the invitation of his friend Hall Caine, who had negotiated with its owner, architect and builder, John Seddon, to rent it for a few months in the winter of 1882, hoping to improve Rossetti's failing health with some bracing sea air. Rossetti hated the place - not surprisingly, as it faced due north and was right on the cliff top..