

**Report on the Stoneware found on the south side
exterior of St Mary's church, Breamore**

**Photographed and compiled by Julian Porter of
the Southampton Archaeological Society**

August 2022

Report on the Stoneware found on the south side exterior of St Mary's church Breamore.

On the 15th of August 2022, a group from the Southampton Archaeological Society visited St Mary's church, Breamore to investigate and record any graffiti found. As a group, we are mostly interested in medieval graffiti although all graffiti is recorded and more modern graffiti can tell some interesting stories.

While surveying the exterior walls for graffiti, I couldn't help spotting a large stoneware soil waste pipe sticking out of the south side wall.



The stoneware pipe on the south side of St Mary's church Breamore.

On closer inspection of the maker's mark, I found it was manufactured by G Jennings of London and Poole.



G Jennings, London and Poole

So, who was G Jennings?

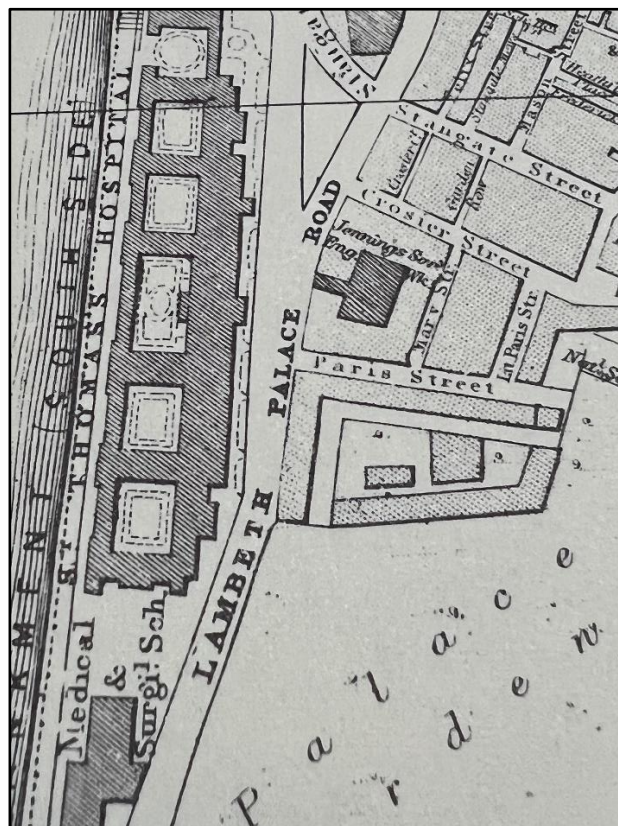
(Joseph) George Jennings was a sanitary engineer and plumber who invented the first public flush toilets. He was born on 10 November 1810 in Eling on the edge of the New Forest and was the eldest of seven children of Jonas Joseph Jennings, a plumber, and his wife Mary Dimmock. He was educated at the local school run by his uncle-in-law Joshua Withers. At 14, after his father's death, he was apprenticed to his grandfather's glass and lead merchandising business, before moving to his uncle John Jennings's plumbing business. In 1831 he became a plumber with Messrs. Lancelot Burton of Newcastle Street, London where his father had been a foreman before him.

He married twice, having four children with his first wife, Mary Ann Gill before she died in 1844 at age of 31. Some five years later, by which time he was 38, he married Sophia Budd, then aged 16. Sophia came from Westminster and George lived in Southwark, although they were married at Twickenham. Sophia bore Jennings a further 11 children.



The only known image of George Jennings

In 1837, Jennings set up his own business in Paris Street, Lambeth (later moving to Great Charlotte Street, Blackfriars) when he received an inheritance from his grandmother, Anne Jennings.



An extract from Bacon's "New Large-Scale Ordnance Atlas of London & Suburbs" published 1888 showing the Paris Street works.

Jennings specialised in designing toilets that were "as perfect a sanitary closet as can be made". However, he also excelled in public sanitation projects such as the design of the underground 'public convenience'. The entrances to these were elaborate metal railings and arches lit by lamps, with interiors built of slate and later, ceramic tiles.

In 1848, Jennings obtained a patent for taps and water closets using india rubber, for which Prince Albert presented him with the Medal of the Society of Arts.



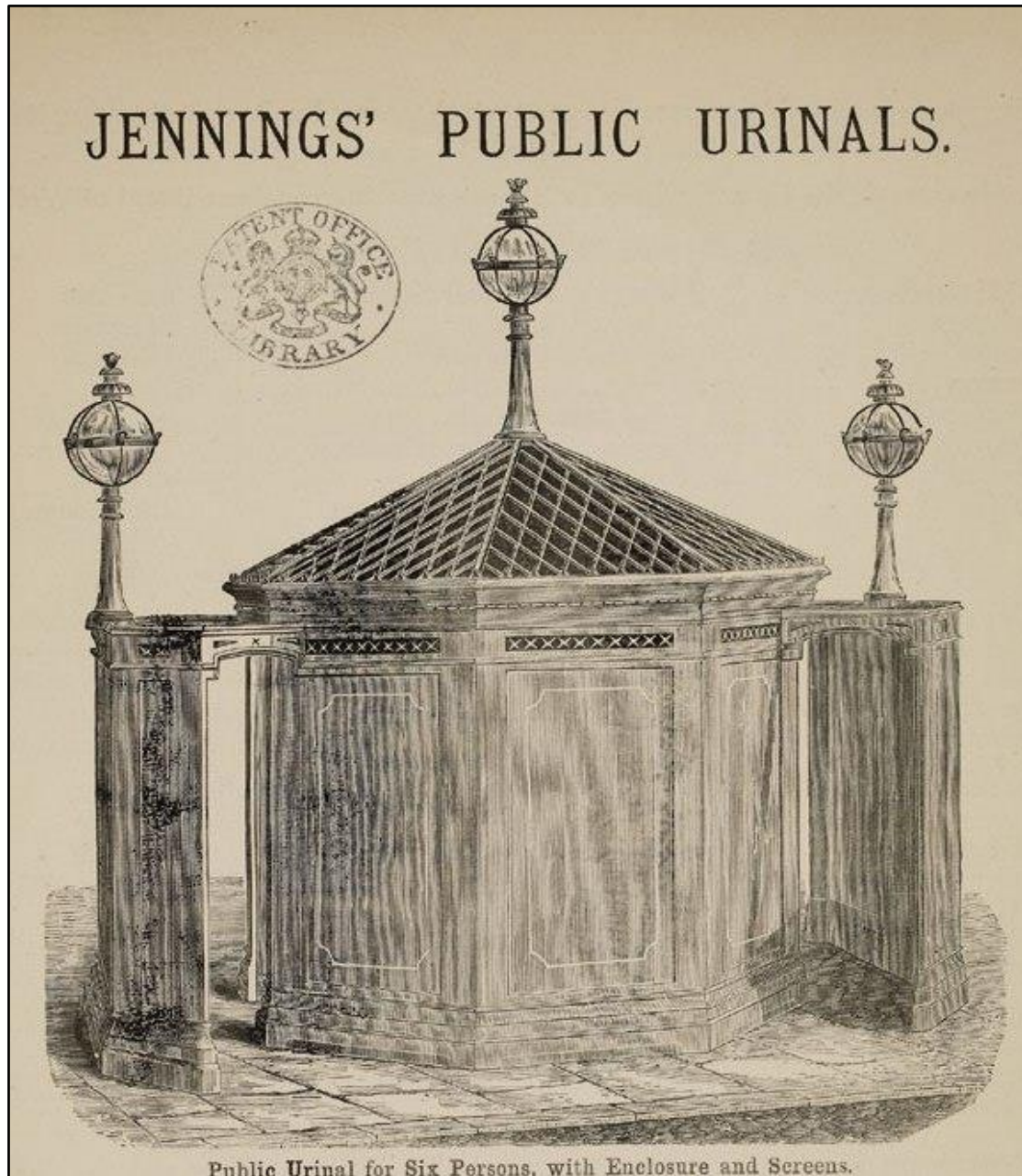
At The Great Exhibition at Hyde Park held from 1 May to 15 October 1851, Jennings installed his Monkey Closets in the Retiring Rooms of The Crystal Palace. These were the first public toilets, and they caused great excitement. During the exhibition, 827,280 visitors paid one penny to use them; for the penny, they got a clean seat, a towel, a comb and a shoe shine. "To spend a penny" became a euphemism for going to the toilet.

When the exhibition finished and moved to Sydenham, the toilets were to be closed down. However, Jennings persuaded the organisers to keep them open, and the toilets went on to earn over £1,000 a year. Jennings said that 'the civilisation of a people can be measured by their domestic and sanitary appliances' whilst the objectors had stated that 'visitors are not coming to the Exhibition merely to wash'!

Thomas Crapper, often mistakenly credited with inventing the flush toilet, was only 14 years old at this point.

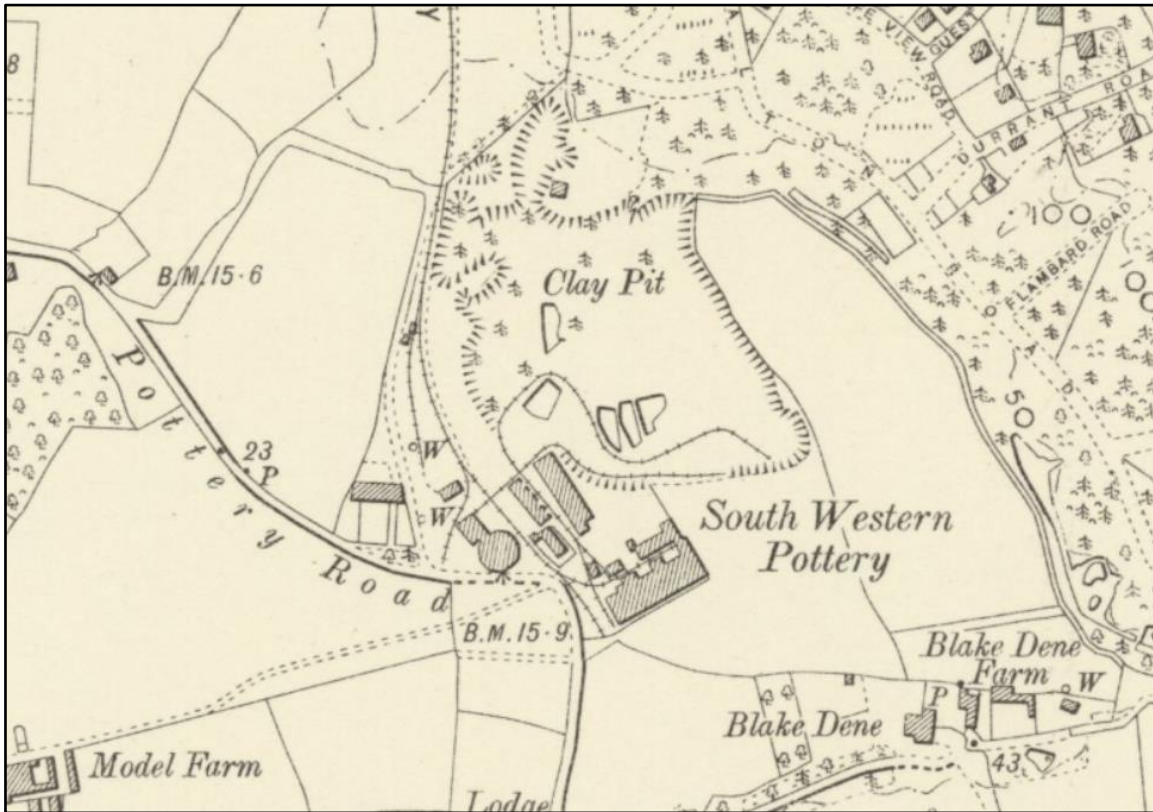
An advertisement for GEORGE JENNINGS, LTD. The top part of the ad contains the company name and address: "63 to 67, LAMBETH PALACE ROAD, LONDON, S.E." and "PARIS: Rue Lafayette, 139." To the right of the address is a royal coat of arms and the text "By Special Appointment SANITARY ENGINEERS To Her Majesty the King." Below the address is a detailed illustration of a clawfoot bathtub with a tall, ornate faucet. To the right of the bathtub is a vertical list of products: "BATHS.", "LAVATORIES.", "WATER", "CLOSETS.", "URINALS.", "SINKS.", "SEWAGE", "DISPOSAL", "APPARATUS." Below this list is the text "Catalogues on Application." At the bottom right, it says "Telegrams: 'Jennings, London.'" and "Telephone: 490 1149." The bathtub illustration is signed "Geo. Jennings 1877" and has a small caption "Fig. 243." below it.

In 1854, Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Sidney Herbert, the Secretary of War, asked Jennings to construct the sanitary arrangements for the British hospitals at Selimye Barracks hospital at Scutari, Sebastopol following a request by Florence Nightingale.



Public Urinal for Six Persons, with Enclosure and Screens.

Also, in 1854 Jennings obtained a patent for a stoneware drain pipe with an improved connection. Unable to find a London maker, Jennings purchased clay beds at Parkstone, Dorset, and built his pottery. In about 1856 he began manufacturing these stoneware drain pipes, which were successful and led him to produce a range of water closets, salt-glaze drainage, sanitary pipes and sanitaryware. The South Western Pottery, as it was known, had its own steam locomotive that ran on a private branch line from Parkstone railway station through to a pier in Poole Harbour. Eventually, the company purchased a further steam locomotive. Jennings now controlled the production of goods made both of metals and earthenware, well ahead of the competition. Jennings then built other works nearby producing bricks and terracotta products, including air bricks, combined smoke and air flues, and facing blocks.



An extract from the OS Six-Inch Map of 1925 showing the Jennings South Western Pottery with its rail link north to Parkstone Station. The area covered by the pottery and clay pit is now a housing estate with only one circular road called South Western Crescent, while Pottery Road still exists.



The George Jennings saddle tank locomotive, one of two that worked the Pottery Tramway at Parkstone.

During the 1860s Jennings was most certainly building up an export business.

Between 1866 and 1888 he supplied the Khedive of Egypt, Tewfik Pasha with a very elaborate mahogany shower cabinet. He also supplied the Empress Eugenie of France with a magnificent copper bath. He was building up a good reputation and in 1870 supplied the water closet with his patented flushing mechanism in Lord Bute's Victorian bathroom in the Bute Tower at Cardiff Castle, designed by architect William Burges.

GEORGE JENNINGS, Ltd.,
63, to 67, LAMBETH PALACE ROAD,

LONDON, S.E.

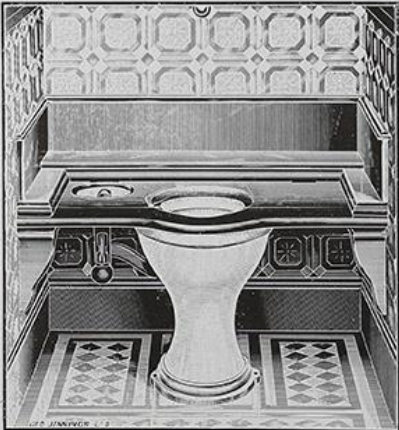
Telegrams: "JENNINGS, LONDON."
"GEOJENNINGS, PARIS."
Telephones: LONDON, 680 HOP.
PARIS, 401-85

WATER CLOSETS.
"Closet of the Century,"
Latrines in Ranges,
Hospital Closets.

BATHS.
For Public or Private Use.
Jennings Patent "DUPLEX" com-
bined Hot, Cold and Tepid
Supply Valves.

URINALS.
For Public Conveniences, Hotel's,
Railways, etc.

CATALOGUES ON APPLICATION.



JENNINGS' Patent "Closet of the Century."
Fig. 1.

PARIS: Rue Lafayette 139.

Th: City Hall, Belfast, and the Technical Schools, Belfast, have been recently fitted with JENNINGS' "Closet of the Century," JENNINGS' Tip-Up Lavatories and Special Urinals.

SANITARY ENGINEERS
BY SPECIAL APPOINTMENT
TO H.S. MAJESTY THE KING.

LAVATORIES.
For Private Houses, Public Build-
ings, Hotels, Railways, Ships,
etc.

SINKS.
For Kitchens, Hospitals, etc.

**SEWAGE DISPOSAL
APPARATUS.**
Revolving Sprinklers,
Travelling Distributors, Syphons,
Automatic Feed Apparatus.

ESTIMATES AND DESIGNS.

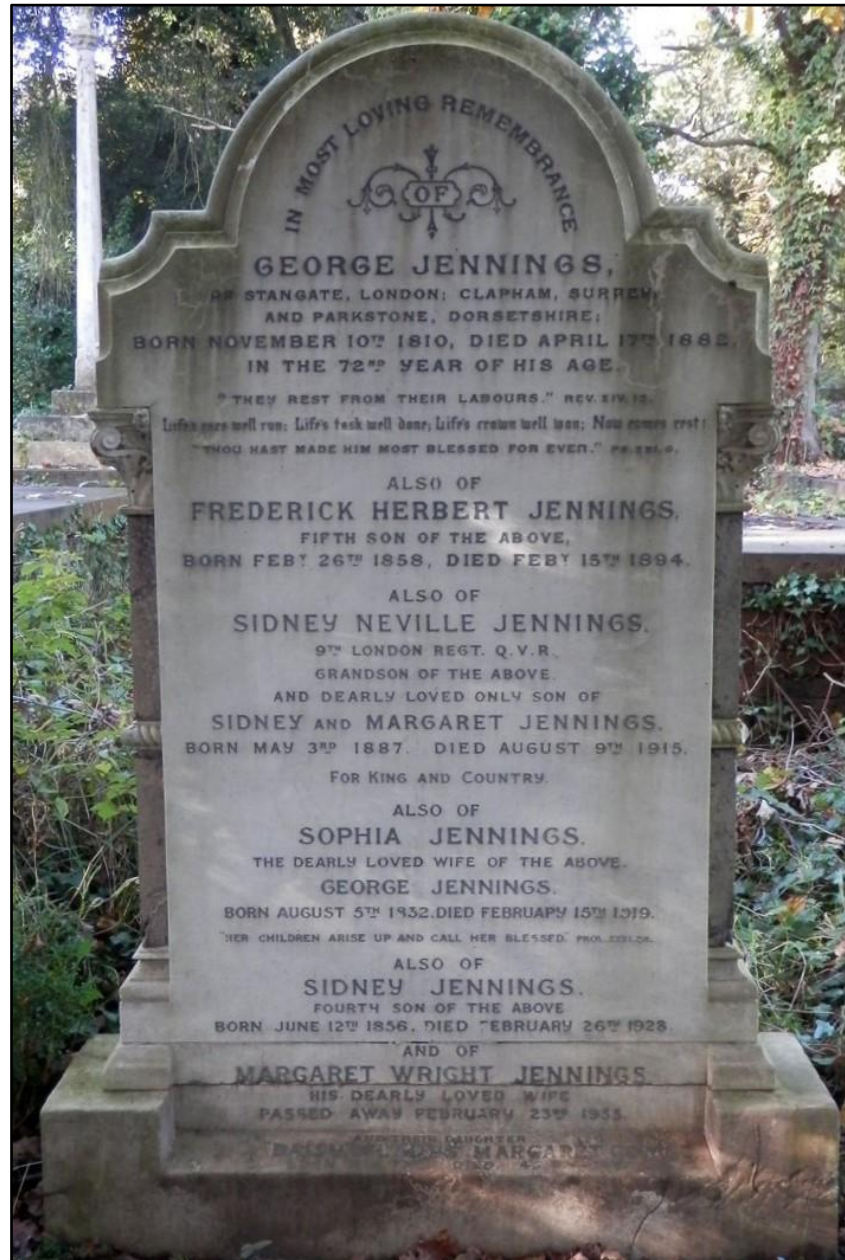
In 1872, George Jennings supervised the public facilities at the thanksgiving service for the Prince of Wales at St Paul's Cathedral to celebrate his recovery from typhoid. He had been a favourite of the late Prince Consort which was recorded by The Sanitary Record: 'The Prince Consort greatly encouraged this indefatigable Engineer. In sanitary science, he was avant coureur in his day and generation and was among the first Engineers to practically carry out the theories of the wise men of the time. 'Sanitas sanitatum' was Mr Jennings's motto before Disraeli adopted it as his political maxim (Sanitas sanitatum, omnia sanitas)... and he implored a shocked city of London to accept his public lavatories free, on the condition that the... attendants whom he furnished were allowed to make a small charge for the use of the closets and towels.'

Jennings died on 17 April 1882, aged 72. The South London Press reported the accident as follows:

'It is with feelings of regret, which will be joined in by all who knew him, that we have this week to record the death of Mr George Jennings of Ferndale, Nightingale Lane, Clapham, universally known as the celebrated engineer of Palace Wharf, Lambeth. Mr Jennings' death occurred under the following painful circumstances: On Thursday evening, according to his usual custom, he, together with his son George, drove home in his gig. The horse, of a very restive character and hard in the mouth, whilst crossing over the Albert Bridge, shied and threw Mr Jennings and his son against a dust cart. Mr Jennings Jnr. escaped with only a shaking, but Mr Jennings' collar bone was fractured.'

He was conveyed home and attended by Dr Edmonds and two other physicians. His recovery from the injuries proceeded favourably up until Sunday, when against his doctors' order, he would get up. On Sunday night a relapse and congestion of the lungs set in, and he expired on Monday evening, about 6 o'clock. He was 72 years of age.'

Jennings was buried on 23 April at West Norwood Cemetery (grave 19,077 square 34) and in his will left a fortune of £76,721 7s 6d, somewhere upwards of £5m today.



Jennings' grave in West Norwood Cemetery.

The family firm continued until 1967 and by 1895 their catalogue listed at least 36 towns where public conveniences had been installed, including Paris, Florence, Berlin, Madrid, and Sydney as well as South America and the Far East.

They provided water closets to at least 30 railway companies in Britain, and other railways in America, Argentina, Mexico and South Africa. Their hard-bound catalogues were thick books that show a huge variety of water closets, urinals, basins, baths, Turkish baths, and saunas, among many others.

At the International Health Exhibition in London in 1884, The Gold Medal was awarded for the Jennings' Pedestal Vase. In a test, its 2-gallon flush washed down ten apples of the average diameter of 1¼ inches, 1 flat sponge about 4½ inches in diameter, plumber's smudge coated over the pan, and 4 pieces of paper adhering closely to the soiled surface.



The Jennings Pedestal Vase which won the Gold Medal at the International Health Exhibition in London in 1884

A JENNINGS BATHROOM is the




Alternative Bath with
Marble Panels to choice

Highest Quality



BY APPOINTMENT

Sanitary Specialists

MANUFACTURERS OF
HIGH-CLASS APPLIANCES

WEST END SHOWROOMS:
**3 PRINCES STREET
HANOVER SQUARE, W.1**
(3 Doors from Regent Street)

GEORGE JENNINGS LTD.

Works and Offices: 63 to 67 Lambeth Palace Road
Westminster Bridge S.E.1

Bath Room with Marble
Walls, fitted throughout by

Jennings also posthumously won the Grand Prix at Paris in 1900, for their siphonic pan which had been a major development in lavatory design.

*... BUT WAIT TILL YOU SEE
OUR BATHROOM!*

You may well be proud of your Bathroom if it is furnished with JENNINGS Sanitary Fittings. A Bathroom like this, or in any other style to match your own individual tastes, is yours for the choosing. Send for our Catalogue and have your Bathroom equipped



by
GEORGE JENNINGS LTD

Showrooms : 3 PRINCES STREET, HANOVER SQUARE, LONDON, W.1

Conclusion:

The stoneware pipe at St Mary's Church Breamore appears to be a soakaway for a lavatory, although what it is doing in the side of the wall of the Nave/Crossing is difficult to understand. The pipe is probably part of the work undertaken in 1874 when the roof was renovated and guttering and drainpipes were added. It is unclear how long this work took or if further work on the drainage was carried out after the roof was renovated as some of the drain pipe hoppers have a date of 1897 on them.



Drain pipe hopper showing the date 1897

A further sighting of George Jennings in Southampton:

If you walk down the Ocean Village/Docks side of Canute Road you will be able to see two manhole covers outside the old LSWR building, now Maritime Chambers. The covers read "George Jennings, London SE, Sanitary Engineer". I wonder how many more pieces of sanitary ware of G Jennings there still are in the area.



Drain cover in Canute Road, Southampton

Next time I spend a penny I'll be thinking of George.

Disclaimer:

This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part hereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project or assessment without the permission of the Hampshire Medieval Graffiti Project or the church.

Acknowledgements:

British Library – National Patent Library
National Library of Scotland for the image from the OS Map published 1925 – Page 7
Grace's Guide – Various adverts
Bacon's "New Large-Scale Ordnance Atlas of London & Suburbs" published 1888 – Page 4 thanks to the Guildhall Library, City of London and published by Harry Margary, Lympne Castle, Kent - 1987

References:

Wikipedia – Various pieces on George Jennings
Grace's Guide
Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
The Practical Engineer – 1892
Whitaker's Red Book of Commerce or Who's Who in Business. Published in 1914
The A-Z of Victorian London – Published 1987