

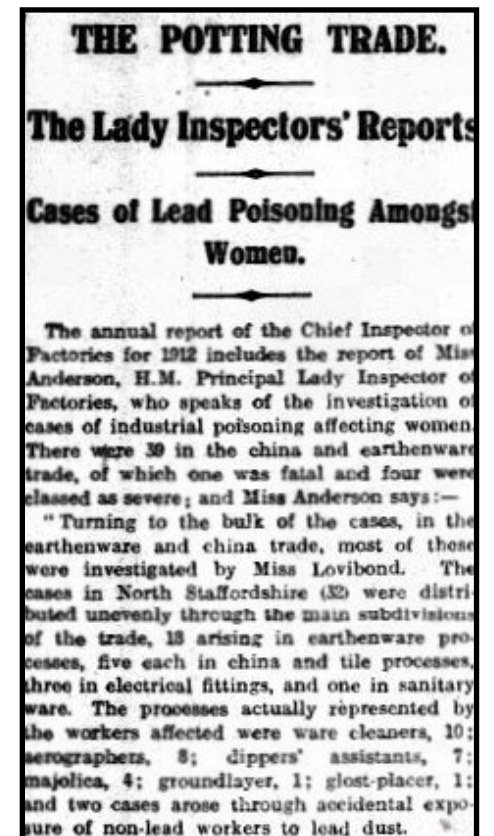
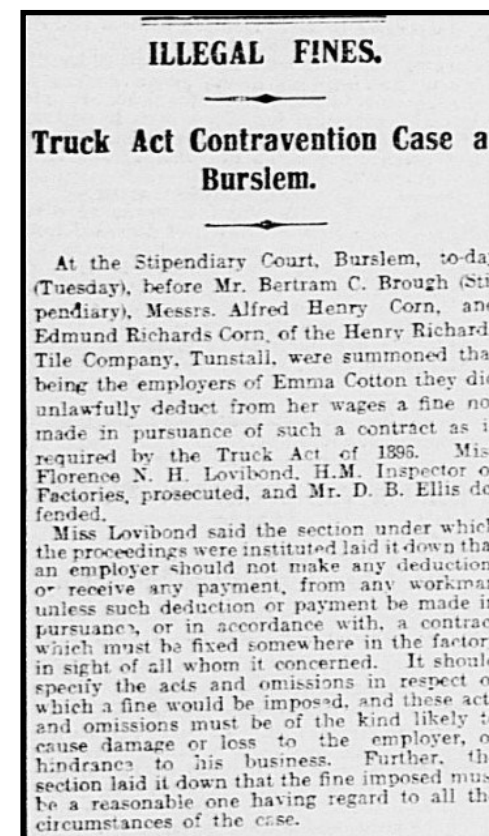
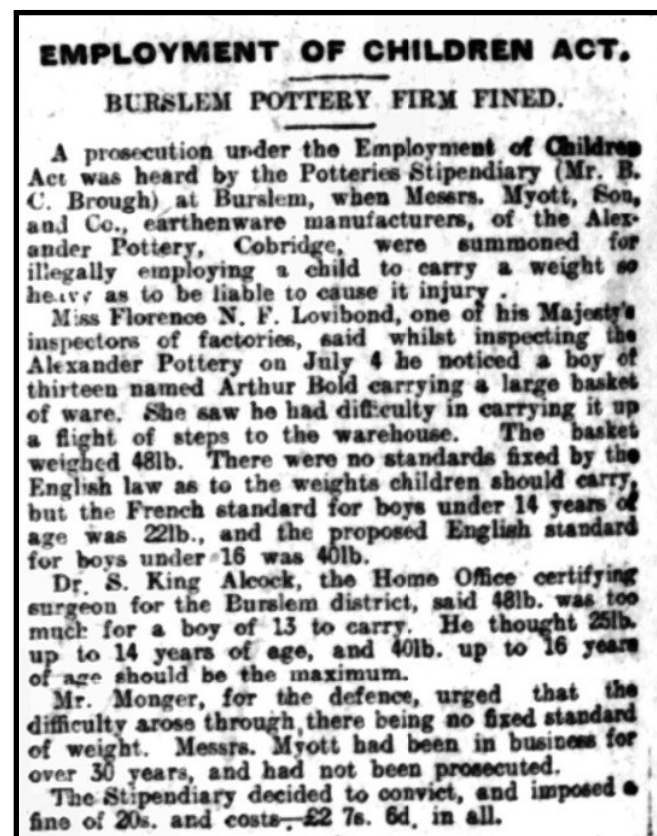
Florence Moorcroft née Lovibond

Factory Inspector

During 1912, while developing a friendship with William Moorcroft, Florence continued to work hard at improving the lives of Stoke on Trent's pottery workers.

She made speeches, lodged complaints and instigated prosecutions in situations where workers, particularly children, were required to carry very heavy weights of clay or pottery as well as the damage caused by including lead in the paint used by the ceramic painters.

Florence supported the fight for women's suffrage and the emancipation of women, which challenged the traditional stereotypes of the early 20th century. These views were, clearly, shaped by debate and discussion with her mother and she would often travel down to Blackheath to visit Frederica and Beatrice. After 1913 William would often accompany her on these visits. It was there, while walking on the heath one day, that Florence agreed to marry him.



The ceremony took place at The Church of the Ascension in Blackheath in April 1913 conducted by Canon Escreet. He stepped in after Florence requested a change to the marriage vows meaning she would not promise to "obey" her husband. A change that William was happy with while the Blackheath vicar was not!

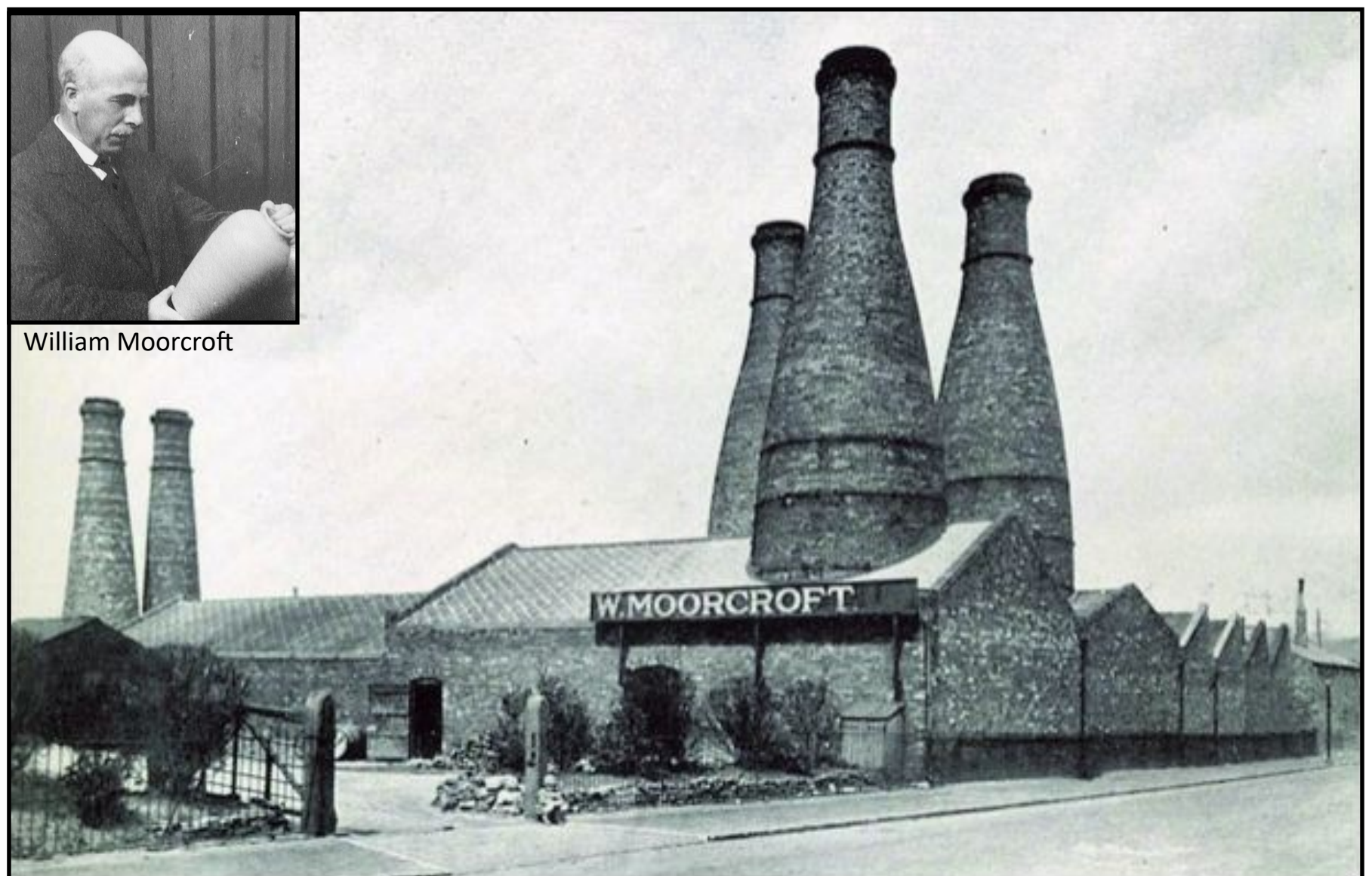
The couple honeymooned in Ilfracombe and, on their way home afterwards, they called into Liberty's in London, to discuss with Alwyn Lasenby his ongoing support of the new Moorcroft factory. This was being built on land that William had bought at Cobridge, after leaving his previous job at Macintyre's.

Florence's six years as a factory inspector meant she was well qualified to assist in the design of a new safe and well-ventilated single storey factory with good lighting and washing facilities and she had already been contributing to the plans.

Moorcroft's was the first modern factory to be built in Stoke on Trent, constructed in only ten weeks with the first firing taking place in September 1913.



William Moorcroft



Bea, Florence and Walter 1917

In the summer of 1926 Florence fell ill with influenza which led to pneumonia. Her sister Dr Beatrice Lovibond rushed all the way from London in a taxi and tried her best to save her, but sadly Florence died at the age of 47 years.

William told his factory staff her last words were: *"I have finished my course and made a good fight."*

Her headstone stands tall in Trentham graveyard and, although Florence's life was cut tragically short, her impact on those she loved and those for whom she worked and campaigned remain her legacy.

When adults, her son Walter followed his father and became a master potter and her daughter Beatrice, followed her mother and became a factory inspector.

With grateful thanks to Sara Morrissey (Florence's granddaughter) for help with family history and photos
Also to The Sentinel newspaper for permission to use articles

William and Florence set up home on Albert Road, Trentham and Florence went on to have two children, Beatrice in 1914 and Walter in 1917.

Once married, Florence was unable to work as a factory inspector but she continued her interest in the Moorcroft works. Walter recalled:-

"Almost as soon as I could walk, my mother took me to The Works, as it was known.....I have scant memories of these visits except my extreme dislike of being kissed by the ladies in the decorating room!"

No doubt the children also accompanied Florence when she proudly went to vote for the first time in the General Election on 14th December 1918.

Florence was a devoted mother, the children enjoyed walks down to Trentham Gardens, games at home and also trips down to London to visit Florence's mother and sister while keeping in touch with William by letter and telephone.

