**Mary Ann SEAL: Cook Domestic, 1898.**

I have read with great interest Gill Disley’s article and photos relating to her family in Great Holland at the turn of the century.

My great grandmother, Mary Ann [Marian] Seal was a cook in Great Holland until 1898, and I would like to try to find out more about her life there, and if possible contribute to your website. I am assuming Mary Ann would have been employed by either The Hall or The Rectory as a live-in cook some time after 1891 -- when she was a kitchen maid in Hampshire.

During the winter of 1897, Mary Ann had an affair [not a local man] which resulted in the birth of my grandmother, Eva, in August 1898. Mary Ann had no family -- no brothers, sisters or parents -- and I can only surmise that a kind and generous soul in Great Holland help her materially and practically over her confinement. She gave birth at the Annie McCall Maternity Hospital, Clapham, founded in 1889 by Dr Annie McCall and Miss Marion Ritchie. The hospital was staffed by women doctors, and was also a midwifery school. They gave priority to single women having their first child and very poor married women; and the hospital was financed by subscriptions from sympathetic well-to-do individuals. Given the academic standing and interest in women’s affairs of the women Gill mentions: Amy and Beatrice, and Amy’s suffragette work, I wonder whether they may have been my great grandmother’s source of help?

If you have papers which mention servants, wages books, etc, or know of any connection with the Annie McCall Hospital, or Mary Ann Seal, I would be grateful if you could contact me with details.

Patricia Neville

ols\_patricianeville@hotmail.com