

Journal of the
**East Surrey
Family History Society**

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The deadline for the March Journal is 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 1st February
All contributions should be sent to the Editor, whose contact details appear opposite

Group meetings

December

- | | | | |
|---|--|------------|--------|
| 6 | Women at war
<i>Ken served in the army, and has worked at the Society of Genealogists, the Imperial War Museum and the National Army Museum.</i>
<i>There will be a Christmas Social after the talk. Contributions from members of food and drink are invited.</i> | Ken Divall | Sutton |
|---|--|------------|--------|

January

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|-----------|
| 3 | A brief history of the photograph
<i>Paul is a professional Genealogist and President of the East Surrey FHS</i> | Paul Blake | Sutton |
| 12 | Huguenot Ancestry | Dr Kathy Chater | Richmond |
| 15 | Lighterage on the Thames - based on the lives of a Surrey family | Alun & Barbara Thomas | Croydon |
| 23 | Frosts, freezes and fairs – a thousand years of winters on the frozen Thames and other rivers | Ian Currie | Lingfield |

February

- | | | | |
|----|---|---------------|-----------|
| 7 | Understanding the Family Search website
<i>John is a lecturer specialising in IT and Family History</i> | John Hanson | Sutton |
| 11 | Music & Musicians in Southwark and Lambeth – from Vauxhall to Crystal Palace
<i>Len is Archives & Library Manager at Lambeth Archives and was formerly on the staff at Southwark Local History library</i> | Len Reilly | Southwark |
| 19 | Shirley & Addington - Part local and part Family History | Ray Wheeler | Croydon |
| 27 | Suffragettes and the Oxted bomb | Janet Bateson | Lingfield |

March

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----------------|-----------|
| 7 | Pleasures and pastimes in Victorian Britain
<i>Ian is a Family Historian who specialises in Social History</i> | Ian Waller | Sutton |
| 9 | Child employment in 19thC Kingston | Dr Helen Goepel | Richmond |
| 19 | Family History from Education Records | Colin R Chapman | Croydon |
| 27 | tba | | Lingfield |

April

- 4 Local Railways. How, why and their effects Ron Cox Sutton
Ron is a family and local historian who specialises in Surrey
- 8 [to be announced] Southwark

May

- 21 News from FamilySearch and the London Family History Centre Sharon Hintze Croydon
This will particularly focus on parish records

June

- 18 My ancestor's occupation Open Evening Croydon

July

- 4 Probate Records Gillian Rickard Sutton
Gillian is an author and has been a professional researcher for 30 years, specialising in Kent records. She has written a regular column for the Kent FHS Journal since 1993
- 16 In and out of London Ian Waller Croydon
Many researchers find it difficult and somewhat daunting when their ancestors move into or around London. Research in the capital has its own challenges which can easily be overcome. This talk suggests how to do it.

August

- 1 Scandals in Family History Chris Pocock Sutton

Croydon: United Reformed Church (small hall), Addiscombe Grove, Croydon, CR0 5LP
3rd Tuesday (not August and December); 8.00 p.m.
Secretary: Mary Gill (020 8405 0598)

Lingfield: Lingfield & Dormansland Community Centre, High Street, Lingfield, RH7 6AB
4th Wednesday (not August and December); 2.30 p.m.
Secretary: Rita Russell (01342 834648)

Richmond: Vestry House, 21 Paradise Road, Richmond, TW9 1SA
2nd Saturday of alternate months; 2.30 p.m.
Secretary: David Carter (020 8642 6437)

Southwark: Southwark Local History Library, behind John Harvard Library, 211 Borough High St, SE1 1JA
Fourth Monday of alternate months (not December); 12 noon.
Secretary: Sheila Gallagher (020 8337 8580)

Sutton: St Nicholas's Church Hall, Robin Hood Lane, Sutton, SM1 2RG
1st Thursday; 8.00 p.m.
Secretary: Chris Pocock (020 8642 6789)

Doors usually open 30 minutes before the start of the meeting. Please check the Society website for updates.

A curious address

Irene Franklin [4227] lilianirenefranklin@yahoo.co.uk

I have been-researching my 3xgt-grandfather, James **Savage**, born Ireland 1801. He married Susan Eleanor **Browne** in 1821 at Christchurch Newgate St City of London.

He may have had more children but so far I have only found two: they were James (b1828 MDX) and Jane Pamela (b1829 MDX). Jane was my gt-gt-grandmother.

On the 1841 census they were living at Marylebone with (I assume two relatives) William Savage, age 30 born 1811 Ireland, and Margaret Savage, age 25 born 1816 MDX.

James Savage is also on the 1841 census but living with second wife Mary Ann Savage at Amen Corner, Within the Gates, St Martin Ludgate, London. The other occupants are the well known author of that time Richard Harris Barham and his wife Caroline. Possibly James and Mary Ann were the house keepers? James' first wife died in 1839.

However, it was the curious address that spurred me on to seek further information. I tapped the address into my computer and to my great surprise and delight not only does it still exist but the house is now occupied by the Dean of St Paul's. Amen Corner is so called because on the feast day of Corpus Christi the monks would say prayers in a procession to St Paul's Cathedral, and they would reach the final Amen as they turned the corner into Ava Maria Lane.

The story does not end there, as the area is haunted; and the report tells also of horrendous stories in the nearby Newgate Prison.

Jane Pamela Savage married William **Frost** at Bethnal Green in 1848, and they lived at Kennington.

Archives – use them . . .

. . . and you may get more than you bargained for!

Monica Polley [9928]

At a talk on Poor Relief, given at Lingfield in September 2011, the speaker assured us that Settlement records could be a mine of information – so it was with high hopes that I went to the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA), and I was not disappointed.

I had been researching my **Durand** ancestors on and off for many years. My 2x g grandfather, John Durand was born in Westminster in 1829 and married Elizabeth **Henderson** in 1850 in Bethnal Green. They had 11 children in various locations in Middlesex, Surrey and Kent, the last baby dying in Camberwell Workhouse in 1871. After this date the family members became difficult to follow, as the surname was mis-spelt, but I was fairly certain that I had found Elizabeth and some daughters in service and the boys in work and married. Elizabeth died in 1894, living with Thomas, my great grandfather.

John Durand seemed to have dropped off this planet as I could find no records for him, dead or alive, except for him being recorded in 1893 as ‘deceased’ on a son’s marriage certificate.

Then I found the youngest 4 children were all baptised together in 1874 at Holy Trinity, Tooting, with their abode given as the Westminster Union Industrial School, Battersea. Something catastrophic must have happened to the family.

In October 2011 Sheila Gallagher organised a group visit to the LMA with a talk on school records, after which I was able to locate the Admission/Discharge records at the LMA for the 4 children in the School. This led me onto the Westminster Board of Guardians Settlement and Relief register 1871-73. The 1872 examination of Elizabeth’s circumstances was so detailed; it confirmed most of my searches and added much more information, but stuck into her record was a newspaper cutting and a memorandum dated

March 1882 from Bow Street Police Station which revealed the truth!

John left Elizabeth and 7 children in 1871, and in 1880 bigamously married in West Bromwich, Staffordshire, giving his name as John Davis Durand. Shortly after, he returned to London to seek his first wife (Elizabeth was in service in Bow) but wife 2 advertised for him in the London papers (named Durand) and he was arrested, charged and tried at the Old Bailey in 1882, as Davis Durand (or Davis Dueant in some on-line Central Criminal Court records). The prosecution offered no evidence and he was acquitted, returning to live in West Bromwich with wife 2. By 1891 they were only using the Davis surname, but fortunately an address search found them as they hadn't moved, and he remained with wife 2 until he died in 1916.

So, although it has taken me over a year to fit the pieces together, the mystery is solved, thanks to meticulous Victorian record keeping. But thanks must also go to the ESFHS for providing interesting speakers and to Sheila Gallagher for pointing me in the right direction.

A Parish Clerk

Rod Freeman [9424]

Does any member recognise the man in this photograph opposite? Unlikely, I must admit; he died in 1866 and any other likenesses are extremely rare.

But, if your ancestors lived in the Parish of St. Mary, Lambeth, during the first half dozen decades of the 19th century, he would have played an important part in their lives. He was a Parish Clerk at St Mary's and his name was James Longman **Gawler**.

As a member of the Society's transcribing team, under the guidance of Rita Russell, I had been assisting in putting birth,

marriage and death details from Surrey's pre-1837 Parish Registers into modern, spreadsheet form, for publication. There is no real training for this kind of work, beyond an interest in old handwriting, and the willingness to 'have a go'. (I'm a musician by trade). Initially, the work could be difficult, depending on the quality of the photocopied Registers: quill pens and ink were in use at that time, hence an ink-blot could obscure a vital detail. More especially the handwriting of the Curates in charge of proceedings was often poor, to say the least.



(photo courtesy of Mary Rix)

After a year of two, the team were asked by Rita to take on a huge project from the large and overcrowded Parish of St. Mary, Lambeth. An hour a day spent transcribing or checking can be interesting, so I volunteered to take on some batches of the Marriage Register. In 1812 the Curates were again up to their scratchy, mis-spelled recording of names, but occasionally someone who also signed as a 'witness' appeared to have filled in the names and Parishes of the bride and groom in a very clear, legible, copperplate hand. 'J. L. Gawler' or 'Jas. L. Gawler' had, by 1818, become 'Jas. Longman Gawler'. A quick sidetrack to the Censuses revealed that our man was 'Parish Clerk' along with his colleague, Jno. Seager. From there on, and for hundreds of entries to come, I always warmed when I saw James' script in the Register. Handwriting of this clarity is a godsend to the bleary-eyed transcriber and makes the task in hand much quicker and more accurate.

I couldn't resist finding out more about this man and the results were rewarding.

James Longman Gawler was baptised on 4 November 1790 in Tooting, one of the children of William and Mary (**Cook**). His father, William, also a Parish Clerk at St. Mary's, Lambeth, was born in Lambeth and the family came originally from Dorchester. William was a noted composer for harpsichord and piano and also wrote songs and hymns. When he died, in 1809, his son, James, took over as one of the Parish Clerks at Lambeth. James married Ann Keen in 1814 and 2 children were born, both of whom perished. James and Ann shared an interest in Botany and he is noted as discovering a previously-unknown fungus.

Ann Gawler died in 1844. In the summer of 1849 James married Kensington-born Caroline Catherine Lydia **Miller**. He was 61 and his wife, 25. They went on to produce Kate, 1851, Caroline, 1852, John, 1855, Letitia, 1857 and Jessie, 1860.

James Gawler died at 3, Spencer Villas, Wandsworth, in 1866 aged about 78.

In order to make this article complete, I tried to find an image of James, but neither Lambeth Palace Library, nor the Guildhall Library, nor London Metropolitan Archives could help. I had arrived at a brick wall, until, a year or two later, out of the blue, I received from Rita Russell a copy of a page from Somerset & Dorset FHS, featuring a short article about William Gawler, James' father. From there it was a short hop to find distant members of the family (including James' great-grand-daughter in Australia) and eventually some images came to hand, some from paintings of a much younger James, but the best being the rare photo in this article.

Finally, I owe a great deal of thanks to the people who gave generously of their time and energy: Brian Webber, John Carmichael, Mary and Trevor Rix, and a special hug to Rita and her good memory!

A date for your diary

Saturday 20th April 2013

**Local and Family History Fair
followed by ESFHS AGM
East Croydon United Reformed Church,
Addiscombe Grove, Croydon, CR0 5LP**

For 2013 we are hosting the above in conjunction with the Croydon Local Studies Forum. As usual there will be a number of talks and our Bookstall and Help Desks will be there, plus much more of interest to the local and family historian. Further details will be on our website as soon as confirmed and in the March Journal.

Projects Report

Rita Russell

We are still sorting and scanning data for our Indexes. I think we should have finished by the end of the year. It is taking slightly longer than anticipated as my own family have needed some attention.

There is a regular team of typists now at our research days, indexing the scanned documents and I shall be putting the finished data into one large index as soon as possible with others being added as we go. My thanks to Sue, Gill and Judith for all their time; also, my thanks to the various members throughout the country who continue to transcribe. However, my appeal in the September Journal raised just one extra helper, I really thought we could do better than this.

Family word-search

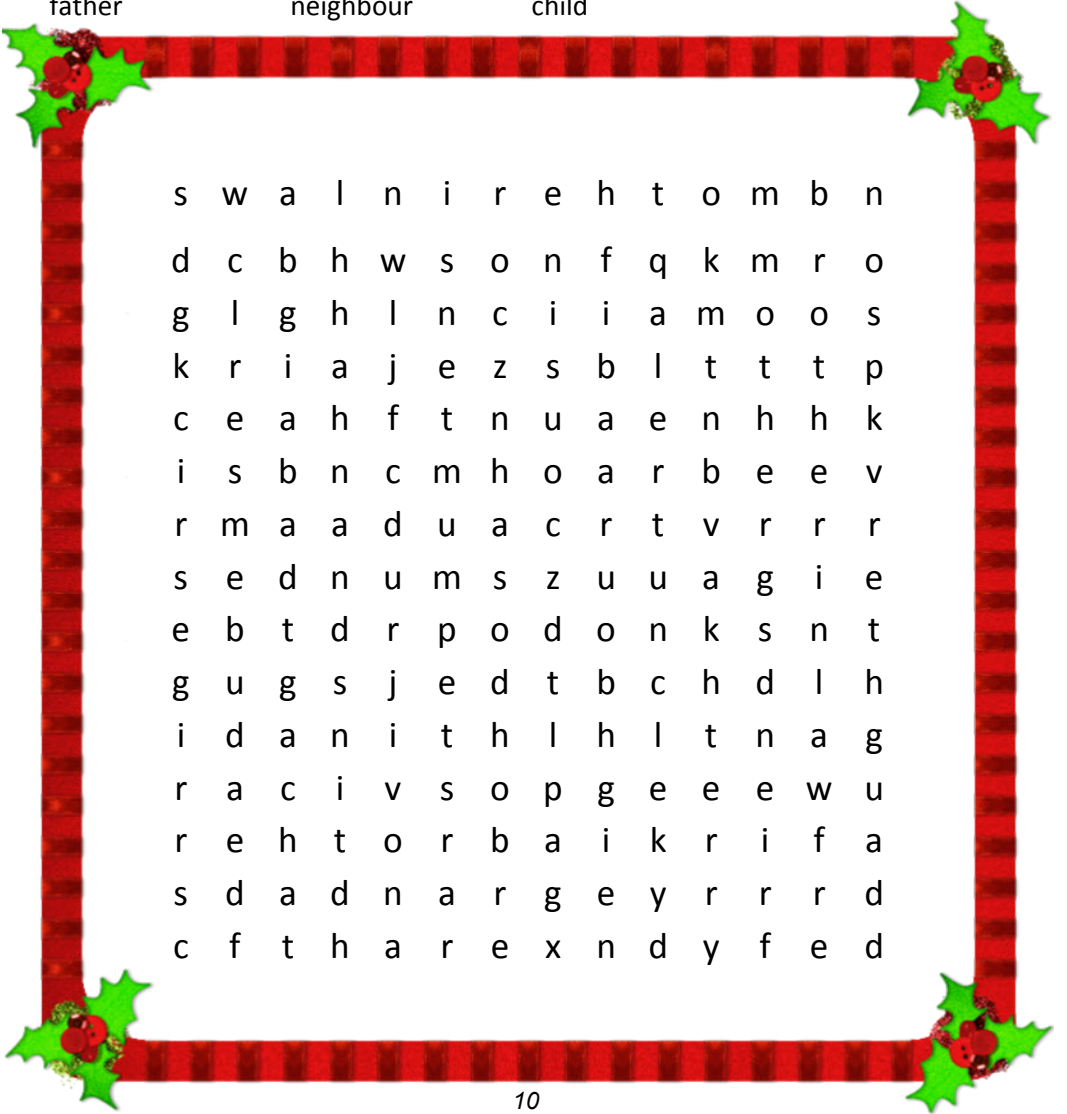
The words below all appear in the grid. See if you can find them (answer on page 48).

motherinlaw
son
mother
daughter
father

uncle
friends
grandmother
cousin
neighbour

aunt
grandad
brother
stepmum
child

vicar
sister
brotherinlaw
ex



s w a l n i r e h t o m b n
d c b h w s o n f q k m r o
g l g h l n c i i a m o o s
k r i a j e z s b l t t t p
c e a h f t n u a e n h h k
i s b n c m h o a r b e e v
r m a a d u a c r t v r r r
s e d n u m s z u u a g i e
e b t d r p o d o n k s n t
g u g s j e d t b c h d l h
i d a n i t h l h l t n a g
r a c i v s o p g e e e w u
r e h t o r b a i k r i f a
s d a d n a r g e y r r r d
c f t h a r e x n d y f e d

News from Surrey Heritage

Julian Pooley, Surrey History Centre

I am delighted to report that it is now easier than ever to search our catalogues online through the 'Search for Archives and Books' page on our website. A huge amount of work behind the scenes by Robert Simonson, our archivist who coordinates our IT resources, has enabled us to update the Collections Catalogue (also accessible at www.surreyarchives.org.uk) with a vast quantity of new material.

It now includes:

- all of the catalogues that were previously only available on the National Archives A2A (Access to Archives) website
- all of the Quarter Session papers up to the end of 1828 (including the cataloguing done from 1806-1828 by our splendid volunteers Kathryn & Philip Bennett, whose work amounts to 15,000 records)
- 99 of the detailed catalogues of the East Surrey Regiment photograph albums (originally part of the Buried Battles and Veteran Voices project) which have been reformatted in ongoing work by volunteer Jeannette McRae to create individual records for each original photograph, which will allow images to be linked to catalogue records in a future digitisation project
- the Dennis vehicles drawings database (11782 records) and photographs database (17932 records)
- the up to date versions of the Francis Frith, Sale particulars, Illustrations, Library maps and Robert Barclay collection databases (56,500 records in all). Images have also been linked to a selection of catalogue records for the Robert Barclay collection, which includes many watercolours of Surrey buildings by John and Edward Hassell. 12,500 records of the Photographic Survey and Record of Surrey

and the Historic Buildings and Antiquities of Surrey photographs also now have linked images. The majority of these have been scanned over the last few years by volunteer Graham Stevens. The catalogue of the historic buildings photographs has taken four years to complete and allows access to a massive 20,500 records through the Collections Catalogue. We are very grateful to our volunteers, Naomi Weatherhead and Brian Arthur for their careful and detailed work on this project

- the collection glass plates photographs taken by George and Herbert Bunce of Caterham and Purley also now has linked images (1792 records), which were again scanned by Graham in 2007, with funding for their cleaning and packaging provided by the Bourne Society.

Our conservators, Jeff Dowse and Catherine Carey, have been equally busy repairing and restoring some of the more fragile documents in our care so that they can at last be consulted in our searchroom. They include the court roll of Walton on the Hill for the years 1480 to 1508 (2163/5/1), a valuation and extent of the manors and lands of Francis Carew, 1612 (2163/7/5) and a fascinating book recording the names of domestic servants employed at Loseley Park near Guildford for the seventy-five years between 1685-1760 (LM/1087/2/18). This will be of particular interest to family historians as we receive many enquiries each year about ancestors who were in service in Surrey houses. Catherine is currently working on a volume of accounts and expenses relating to prisoners in the Tower of London between 1615 and 1616 (LM/1087/1/5).

New accessions continue to arrive each week. Recent additions include a very detailed survey of Surrey bridges, chiefly in

Tandridge and Reigate Hundreds (9028/-). The original survey was by William Barnes, based on presentments made at the Surrey Quarter Sessions in Croydon in 1533. There are entries for sixty-five bridges, describing their location, condition and responsibility for repair. The hand would suggest this is a late 17th century copy of the original, though by the time the copy was made one would have hoped the bridges had been repaired.

We have also received documents of the Horsham Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) that include 'certificates of clearness' for couples to marry, 1676-1704 (9030/-). When Quakers intended to marry they had to report their intention to their monthly meeting who would investigate and if satisfied that there was no reason why the marriage should not take place would issue a 'certificate of clearness'. These documents also show the Quaker practice of numbering the days and months rather than using the traditional names based on pagan deities.

Two large albums of illustrations of Surrey churches and chapels have also been deposited with us (9043/-). They were originally deposited with Guildford Museum by the Guildford Diocesan Advisory Committee in 1957. They include alphabetically arranged drawings and watercolours, some very accomplished and some very naive, of Surrey churches, mostly in their pre-Victorian restoration state. There are also paintings of alternative designs for rebuilding churches especially in the south London area. Many appear to have been made in the 1830s, though most are anonymous and undated. In general they are more detailed than the Hassells of the period.

Most of the archives we acquire are deposited with us by private individuals, businesses or organizations, but occasionally we need to find funds in order to purchase important items in the

salerooms. Surrey History Trust supports our work by raising funds to help us secure the purchase and conservation of collections. You can help us by becoming a member of the Trust. Please visit <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreyhistorycentre> and follow the links to Surrey History Trust for more details. This year we will once again be selling Christmas cards on behalf of the Trust in our foyer and via the Surrey Heritage online shop - where you will also find a wide range of books and CDs relating to Surrey's past. There is a direct link to the Surrey Heritage Shop from the front page of our website.

Finally, a huge thank you to everyone in Warlingham who made our Heritage Showcase event on Sunday 21 October such a huge success. This was a new venture for us - a chance to highlight the resources, skills and expertise of our teams at Surrey History Centre in partnership with local experts from the East Surrey Family History Society, the Bourne Society, Woldingham History Society, Caterham and District Local History Centre, the East Surrey Museum, Surrey Gardens Trust, Surrey Museums Consultative Committee, Surrey Archaeological Society, All Saints Parish church, along with Surrey History Trust and Surrey Historic Buildings Trust. Nearly three hundred people crowded Warlingham Church Hall for a splendid afternoon of displays, ask the expert sessions and talks. Feedback has been very positive and we look forward to holding similar events around the county in future.

Please note that we will be closed for our annual stock check for two full weeks between Monday 3 December and Monday 17 December.

Our Christmas and New Year Opening times are as follows:
Tuesday 18 to Saturday 22 December open as usual.
Monday 24 to Wednesday 26 December CLOSED

Thursday 27 December 9.30 – 5.00

Friday 28 December 9.30 – 5.00 as usual

Saturday 29 December to Tuesday 1 January CLOSED

Wednesday 2 January Open as usual, 10.15-5.00.

For further details see our events page at

<http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/heritageevents>

or join our mailing list at

www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreyheritagemailinglist

WDYTYA Live! 2013

22 -24 February

Free admission to ESFHS volunteers

We are looking for volunteers to help man our bookstall at Olympia this February. No previous experience is necessary as we ensure there is always a mixture of old & new hands helping out. Individual stints typically last about two hours, and we expect you to do no more than two in a day so there is plenty of time to visit other stalls, attend lectures, chat to old friends and make new ones.

If you are interested, please contact us at events@esfhs.org.uk (or snail-mail me, Brenda Hawkins, at 100 Beechwood Road, South Croydon CR2 0AB). Please let us know which days you are available and whether you prefer early or late sessions. Final timetables are drawn up in early February.

This is a great opportunity to visit the flagship family history event of the year (and sell a few books!)

Ten boys!

Anne Ramon

What is the probability of having ten sons in a row?

I've been researching a friend's family recently and was able to confirm her claim that her grandfather was one of ten brothers, all single births, with no sisters. I'm wondering how extraordinary such a family might be.

They were the **Newlands** of Blakeney, a fishing village on the Norfolk coast. The father, James Newland (1859-1924) was himself one of a family of nine; seven boys and two girls. Mother was Mary Ann, née **Holmes**, who was born in 1865 and who had four brothers and a sister.

In the 1911 census Mary Ann Newland stated that she has had 10 children, of whom two had already died. I checked the previous census returns and the parish records and found the ten to be:

Walter, born 1892; Edward, born 1893; Robert Holmes, born 1894; James, born 1895; Jack, born 1898; George, born 1899, died 1910; Richard, born 1900, died 1901; Richard Waterson, born 1902; William, born 1901; Warnes, born 1904.

Is the probability $50\% \times 50\% \times 50\%$ etc. for the ten boys, so 1 in 1054? Is it half that because they are all boys, rather than girls? Do you also have to factor in the probability of a woman carrying ten pregnancies? (I think this was more likely to happen in Victorian times though the dangers to the mother's health would have been greater.)

I 'googled' for information on probabilities and discovered a variety of more or less suitable websites on medical probabilities, the most helpful being bookofodds.com, a US web site. This suggests that (i) the odds of having a boy are (today) 1 in 1.95, for a girl slightly less at 1 in 2.05; and (ii) having already had several children of one sex does not affect the gender of the next child.

To calculate the odds a woman's first n children will be one gender, use these formulae: $1/0.5119$ to the power n for boys, or $1/0.4885$ to the power n for girls, where n is the number of consecutive single boys or girls.

Using this, the odds that a woman's first two children will be boys are 1 in 3.82, and the odds they will be girls are 1 in 4.19. As streaks lengthen, the odds diverge by gender, so the odds that a woman's first:

3 children will be boys (girls) = 1 in 7.45 (8.58)

4 children will be boys (girls) = 1 in 14.56 (17.56)

5 children will be boys (girls) = 1 in 28.45 (35.95)

6 children will be boys (girls) = 1 in 55.57 (73.6)

For 10 boys, with the aid of the scientific calculator on my computer, I came up with a value of 1 in 809. I think this means that in 809 families of ten children, only one family will be all boys. So, indeed, my friend's ancestors are a very remarkable family!

The same website gives this nugget:

"Mrs Feodor VASSILYEV (of late 18th-century Russia) gave birth to more children than any woman in recorded history - 69 of them. In 27 total confinements she had 16 sets of twins, 7 sets of triplets, and 4 sets of quadruplets. Even by today's standards of fertility, Mrs Vassilyev is a marvel of fruitfulness and multiplication. The odds today of having a set of twins are about 3.15%, or roughly 1 in 32; of triplets: 0.17%, or 1 in 575; of quadruplets: 0.01%, or 1 in 8,739. So the odds of having a family exactly like Mrs Vassilyev's are truly galactic—1 in 2.05×10^{49} , or 1 in 20,500,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000.

So about the same chance as me winning the Lottery! I'd welcome comments on my statistics and I'd be interested to hear about other unusual families.

ESFHS website shopping links

Stuck for ideas for Christmas or Birthday presents?

Have you noticed the links to the East Surrey Bookstall and to Cassini and Amazon on the East Surrey Family History Society web site?

Click on 'Bookstall' in the left hand menu to see the maps, CDs, Books and Fiche available from the Society. A range of this material is taken to Shows; click on 'Events' to see if there will be a Show near you.

Click on the icons at the bottom of the left hand menu and you'll be taken to the shopping pages on the regular Cassini and Amazon web sites. If you then make a purchase the Society will receive a small commission, at no additional cost to yourself. Cassini pays a 10% commission; Amazon is a bit more complicated but basically it is 6% for gift certificates, 10% for MP3 downloads and 4% for other products.

So if you are shopping for a Kindle or a book from Amazon, or think a Cassini map would make a welcome Christmas gift, please think of using the links on our Society Home Page.

The links are not just for Christmas! You can also make them 'Favourites' for next time.

Genealogical Record Research Services covering Surrey, Sussex and London

Do you live too far away to justify the expense of locating your genealogical records in S. E. England repositories?

Let me do the legwork extracting the records for you.

Prices from £6 per hour + expenses (see website for details)

Andy Spooner, Old Scaynes Hill House, Clearwater Lane,
Scaynes Hill, West Sussex, RH17 7NF, England

Web: <http://www.grrs.co.uk> Tel: +44 (0) 1444 831602 Email: grrs@btinternet.com

ESFHS Books tall by post

BOOKS & MAPS BY POST

Use these links to benefit the Society when making a purchase

Tech Topic – the cloud

Brian Hudson

The “cloud” is a collective term used to describe computer resources that are available over the internet. In effect it is a virtual computer that is an extension to your personal one; it is meant to simplify and extend the way you use it. One aspect that family historians should find particularly useful is the security of cloud storage, more on this in the next issue of the Journal. Note that this “cloud” should not to be confused with ‘The Cloud’, which is the brand name for a particular WiFi internet service.

Three Butlers and a Wedding

Judith Mitchell [10087] judith.mitchell@lineone.net

Although I have lived on Epsom Downs in Surrey all my life, most of my ancestors have no connection with the county. One exception, however, is my great-great grandfather John **Clark**, born in Easthampstead, Berkshire, who married Rebecca **Lenton** at the Surrey Tabernacle in Borough Road on 31 July 1843.

The censuses reveal how John moved around England for his work as a servant. In 1851 he is a 28-year-old 'unmarried' groom in Long Horsley, Northumberland, working for the Bigge family but on 7 April 1861 he is an 'unmarried' butler (aged 37), visiting The King's Head, Roehampton, while his wife and two of his surviving children are living at 78 Tachbrook Street, Westminster. Two other butlers are visiting the King's Head on census night: Thomas Truss, aged 32, born Wotton under Wood, Buckinghamshire, and Thomas J Welsh, aged 36, born London, Middlesex; George Tegg, a 23-year-old clerk, working for the London Omnibus Company, born Midgham, Berkshire, is the only other visitor.

I was intrigued when I first saw the census entry and wondered if there was any specific reason why three butlers should be staying at the King's Head at the same time. They could, of course, simply be travelling through Roehampton en route to different destinations. Or were they old friends who had met while working elsewhere and had agreed to meet at the inn? Or were they staying there in preparation for a job interview?

The last is a possible explanation, since in the census of 1871 John is shown working as butler for T M Guest at his home in Fifehead Magdalen, Dorset (at last being correctly described as 'married!'). John served the Guests for most of the rest of his life and died at their home, Inn Wood House, Henstridge, Somerset, on

4 April 1896. One source in July 1890 states that he 'had been 30 years with Merthyr [Guest]'¹.

The Guests also had a connection with Roehampton. Thomas Merthyr Guest was a son of Lady Charlotte Elizabeth ('one of the most outstanding and successful women of the nineteenth century'²) and Josiah John Guest, the industrialist and owner of Dowlais Ironworks in South Wales. After Josiah's death Lady Charlotte married Charles Schreiber, travelled extensively and her collection of china can today be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum. She kept a diary from 1822 until 1881.

In 1857 Lady Charlotte started to look for a house near London. 'Roehampton was the locality she favoured, and before many days were passed Exeter House was decided on. It stood in sixteen acres of ground with fine trees. The house belonged to a Mr. Drummond and Lady Charlotte arranged to rent it for three years.'³ On 4 April 1857 Lady Charlotte and her family moved into Exeter House. Nearly two years later, on 18 January 1859, Merthyr's coming of age was celebrated by the whole family at Roehampton.

I haven't yet researched when Merthyr Guest set up his own household and discovered the exact date when John Clark started working for him. Unfortunately, for about three years from April 1860 Lady Charlotte only made short notes and did not keep a complete journal. Merthyr was, however, lodging at 116 Jermyn Street, Westminster on the night of the 1861 census and was not at Exeter House with his mother and sisters.

On 9 April 1861, two days after the census, the wedding of Katharine Gwladys Guest, one of Lady Charlotte's daughters, took place at the church of St George, Hanover Square. She married Frederick Cecil Alderson, and details are recorded in the diary of her sister Mary Enid Evelyn Guest, who later married the

archaeologist, Austen Henry Layard. Enid described how ‘there were two weddings before – & one after Kate’s. In fact before we could get back into the vestry we were asked to stand back in order to let the other “party” go past. The two brides jostled each other and nearly stuck in the doorway.’⁴ The wedding breakfast, ‘an elegant dejeuner’, according to the newspaper report in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* of Tuesday 16 April 1861⁵, took place at Exeter House.

So could there perhaps have been a connection between the wedding and the three butlers’ stay at the inn? Further research is needed.

¹Lady Layard’s Journal, 22 July 1890 (www.browningguide.org/browningscircle.php). Originals at the British Library, *Journals of Mary Enid Layard* Add. 46153–46170: 46163. Vol XI (ff. ii + 278). 17 June 1888–6 Nov. 1891

²Revel Guest and Angela V John, *Lady Charlotte, A Biography of the Nineteenth Century*, Wiedenfeld & Nicholson Ltd, 1989, inside cover flap

³The Earl of Bessborough (ed), *Lady Charlotte Schreiber, Extracts from her Journal 1853–1891*, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, 1952, p66

⁴Lady Layard’s Journal, 9 April 1861

⁵www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk

Christmas presents in mind?

Special offer of the following books:

2nd book on New Town Upper Norwood SE19

'Treetops & Terraces And the walls came a'tumbling down
Years 1900 - 1960

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Price: £6 each plus post & packing £1.30

Special offer: 2 books £10 plus post & packing £2.30

Apply to Beryl D Cheeseman, 33 Beacon Hill, Dormansland,
Surrey, RH7 6RQ (tel. 01342 832585).

Guildhall Library Events

Wednesday 28th November - A brief introduction to St Paul's Cathedral. Time: 14:00 - 15:00. A talk which touches on the history of St. Paul's cathedral from Saxon and Norman times to Wren's Cathedral. An introduction to some of the people commemorated there Nelson, Wellington and with a bias toward artists specifically Turner, Cruikshank, Leighton, Millais, and Holman Hunt.

Thursday 6th December - With Love at Christmas. Time: 18:00 - 20:00. Cost: £3 on the door - Please book in advance by phone or email. Join Carole Matthews as she launches her new book.

Can the imperfect family really have the perfect Christmas? With the big day fast approaching, Juliet hopes that she can stop everything spiralling out of control, because the only thing she wants is her family all around her and her home to be filled with love at Christmas.

Wednesday 12th December - Rediscovering the Cheapside Hoard. Time: 14:00 - 15:00. Hazel Forsyth of the Museum of London tells the story of the astonishing treasure of 400 jewels and gemstones discovered under the cellar floor of a 17th century house in Cheapside in 1912. Known as the Cheapside Hoard, it is the largest cache of Elizabethan and Jacobean jewellery in the world.

Afternoon talks at Guildhall Library are free, with no need to book.

Following each evening event there will be a wine reception and an opportunity to purchase a copy of the book signed by the author.

Book by phone: 0207 332 1868/1870 or email guildhall.library@cityoflondon.gov.uk.

Useful Tips

The Groups of the Society have had an interesting programme of talks and it is hoped to include useful family history tips from these talks in the forthcoming journals.

Croydon had a talk on researching a street where your ancestor lived as a way of adding background to the people who were living there. Using a street in Croydon as an example, Brenda Hawkins explored the documents, which can be used to find the history of a street and probably could be found in your Local Studies Library or Archive Centre. Start with the Census Returns, local street directories, rate books, war damage maps and records if these exist. Also if the family were very longstanding residents of the street the Probate Indexes online may show how the family prospered over the various decades.

At Lingfield Ken Divall talked about the “History of the Fire Brigade” from watermen, after the 1666 Great Fire, and the Insurance Fire Brigades to where you may find the records of individuals who were members of a Volunteer Fire Brigade, Works or Industrial Fire Brigades e.g. Port Sunlight, Military Fire Service, Retained Fireman, Auxiliary Fire Service, the National Fire Service and the Municipal Fire Brigades across the country. If your ancestor was in the Royal Navy he may have been recruited to the London Fire Brigade, as he would have the skills they were looking for. The following sources may help you find ancestors’ records and give you insight into their lives within the various fire services. The records may not be complete and some may be difficult to locate. The Auxiliary Fire Service records for London were supposed to be sent to the London Fire Brigade headquarters but this did not happen in all cases.

Sources of information:

Fire Brigade Museums such as Manchester, Sheffield, Edinburgh Glasgow

London Fire Brigade Museum at <http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/ourMuseum.asp>

The LFB museum holds information on their,ex-employees and some staff from organisations that preceded the LFB, some of this date back to the 1860s.

Surrey Fire Brigade Preservation Trust at <http://firebrigadesofsurreypreservationtrust.webs.com/>

Imperial War Museum has a selection of records including the Silvertown Explosions in 1917

Record Offices may hold some local fire service records but you may find the records are closed for 70 or 100 years.

National Archives does not hold personal records but reports and commission documents about the services

London Metropolitan Archive holds records of some the London Insurance Fire Brigades

Southwark had a talk by Jane Lewis *'High and Low Estate' - Costume & textiles in 18th century Surrey Society* which gave an informative review of costumes and textiles in eighteenth century Surrey, illustrated with photographs of costumes preserved by the Chertsey Museum.

Sources

Chertsey Museum:

<http://www.chertseymuseum.org.uk/>

Details of the dress collection at <http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/study/history-art-design/dress-collective/listing-of-dress-collections/chertsey-museum-dress-collection>.



Jane Lewis with Paula Burger

Website round up

Brian Hudson

www.geffrye-museum.org.uk - The Geffrye is one of London's lesser known museums. It shows the changing style of the English domestic interior in a series of period rooms from 1600 to the present day and provides an opportunity to imagine how some of your ancestors and their contemporaries might have lived. While an actual visit is recommended it is possible to use the website to explore room layouts, collections and gardens using the 360° view or the virtual tour.

An almshouse has been fully restored to its original condition, offering a look into the lives of London's poor and elderly. Tours run by volunteers take place at specific times each month. I can personally recommend the delicious cream tea available in the modern restaurant overlooking the period gardens.

www.immigrantships.net - The Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild have been working since 1998 transcribing ship passenger lists and making them available on the internet. There are already over 12,000 passenger manifests in 13 volumes and the work continues. The site can be searched by name and there is a very wide range of other resources and lists.

www.missing-ancestors.com - This website contains free information on industrial & reformatory schools, alien naturalisation, emigration, children & adults to Canada, Australia, extradition of prisoners, boarded out children, tobacco bandits, juries of Middlesex, pensions records for the UK & overseas and the Post Office service 1870 -1874; there is much more, do have a look.

www.gravestonephotos.com - This international project to photograph gravestones has been in existence since 1998 and has gradually expanded to cover 23 countries. At the time of writing

there are images from 1,857 cemeteries with 262,579 graves and 552,500 names.

There is a good search facility and when a large number of entries are found there are options to change the order of the data display. By far the largest numbers are in England with 213603 graves with several cemeteries in the East Surrey area. If a gravestone photo of interest is found then a free high quality image can be downloaded on request.

Bermondsey Parish Apprentices

correction & apology

Sheila Gallagher

In the article about Bermondsey parish records in the last Journal (September), I stated that no poor law documents survive before 1834 and included Parish Apprenticeship Indentures in the 'missing' list.

Whilst this is strictly true, I had forgotten that LMA hold an Apprenticeship Register, 1754-1780, reference LMA P71/MMG/001, regrettably 'unfit for production'. However, it has been microfilmed in part by the LDS Library & a copy is available at LMA, reference LMA X015/003.

The film includes a single page of entries from 1754 + an index, probably complete. The single page includes columns including: Name / age when received / born in the Workhouse? / date placed / Master's name and residence / trade / fee / apprenticeship term.

The Index includes: date of apprenticeship/ name / master's name, residence & occupation.

I hope this helps members with Bermondsey ancestors and I apologise for omitting it before.

The Osmonds come to London

Juliet Bailey [9985]

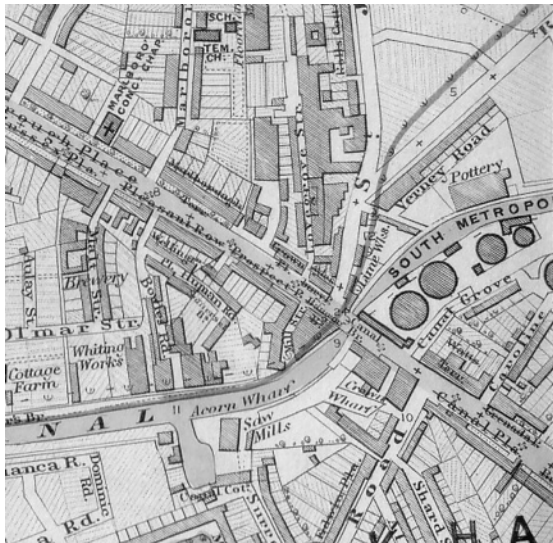
This article tells the story of my great-great-grandfather, Silas **Osmond**, his move to London and what happens to his children. There are many gaps, so if any members have information to fill these, or if you think I might have information that can help you, please get in touch.

Silas Osmond was born in Folke, Dorset in 1840¹, the oldest child of James and Harriet (née **Toogood**) Osmond. In 1861 Silas was living in nearby Sherborne working as an agricultural labourer like many of his ancestors. By 1866 he had moved to London where he married Charlotte **Lang** (born 1838, Langport, Somerset) on 7th October in Marylebone; he gave his occupation as miller.

Silas and Charlotte had eight children: Amelia Charlotte (1867 - ?) who married Thomas **Whittle** on August 4th 1890 (8 children); Benjamin John (1869-1955) who married Louisa **Hider** on October 12th 1890 (7 children); Silas Frederick (1870 - ?) who married Emma **Dight** on February 25th 1897 (4 children); James Giles (1872 - 1873); Mary Harriet (1874 - ?); Ada Florence (1876 - 1959) who married John **Hitchings** on September 11th 1904 (9 children); Albert Edward Paul (1878 - 1936) who married Mary **Clark** in 1901 (5 children); Herbert Lang (1880 - ?) who married Edith **Mennell** in 1904 (1 child).

Silas and Charlotte moved around a lot in the early years of their marriage - their first 5 children were born in different places around Rotherhithe. In late 1874 they settled at 6 Mill Street², off Old Kent Road by the bridge over the Grand Surrey Canal, remaining there until the late 1880s. The canal was constructed around 1807 and linked the Surrey Commercial Docks with Old Kent Road, Camberwell and Peckham.

Silas was the miller at the Steam Flour Mill. It not clear when the mill was founded but presumably it was soon after the canal was constructed, giving a route to bring grain plus coal and water for the boilers. The mill had a chequered history before Silas arrived including a major explosion in 1845 which caused widespread damage.



The Standard carried more details⁴

Terrific boiler explosion and destruction of steam mills

Yesterday morning ... an explosion took place near the bridge, Old Kent Road, at the steam flour mill of Mr. Walters ... The boiler, which weighs about three tons and a half was distinctly seen by a man in the Kent-road blown to the height of 200 feet and fell about 100 yards from the premises in a stone yard where, from the force of the fall, it was embedded about two feet. The mill and part of Mr Walters house became a heap of ruins.

After this the mill appears to have been a distillery for a while as shown by the granting of a patent in 1852⁵ to the then owner Charles Flude and his colleague James Waterman for improvements in the generation of steam. In 1857 Robert Fullforth was manufacturing baking powder there, suggesting it was a mill again.

Milling was declining in London at this time due to the availability of cheap flour from Eastern Europe and the

development of new mills nearer the wheat fields, which were moving further away as London expanded. This clearly had an effect on Silas's business as reported on 21st January 1879 in the London Gazette⁵.

In the Matter of Proceedings for Liquidation by Arrangement or Composition with Creditors, instituted by Silas Frederick Osmond, of Mill-street Steam Mills, Old Kent-road, in the county of Surrey, Miller. NOTICE is hereby given, that a First General Meeting of the creditors of the above-named person has been summoned to be held at the Law Institution, Chancery Lane. London, on the 5th day of February, 1879, at one o'clock in the afternoon precisely.

Silas appears twice more in the London Gazette. The first entry, on 21st March 1879, was similar to the above but with a different date. The second entry, from October 5th 1880 cover the dissolution of a partnership.

NOTICE is hereby given, that the Partnership lately subsisting between us the undersigned, Silas Frederick Osmond and Henry Hawkins, as Millers, at the Surrey Canal Flour Mills, Mill-street, Old Kent-road, in the county of Surrey, and as Bakers, at 582, Old Kent road, in the county of Surrey, under the firm of Osmond and Hawkins, was this day dissolved by mutual consent. All debts due and owing to or by the late firm will be received and paid by the said Henry Hawkins. The business of the Surrey Canal Flour Mills aforesaid will in future be carried on by the said Silas Frederick Osmond; and the business of Baker, at 582, Old Kent-road aforesaid, by the said Henry Hawkins.

I assume that when Silas filed for bankruptcy in 1879, Henry Hawkins, who may have been one of his creditors, came forward and paid his bills in return for becoming a partner. Clearly this partnership did not work and they soon agreed to go their separate ways, with Henry Hawkins paying the firms debts.

Charles Booth⁶ the noted social reformer surveyed Mill Street on 3rd July 1899 and his notebooks describe the area as “poor with average earnings of 18s-21s a week for a moderate family” – better off than some but clearly working class. It was presumably much the same a decade earlier when Silas lived there.

Family life was difficult for Silas and Charlotte. They were not well off and in 1873 their son James died, followed in 1874 by Silas’s father James, who had been living with them. Daughter Mary probably also died around this time. On 19th March 1882, Charlotte died of smallpox, leaving Silas with 6 children, the youngest just 18 months old. Amelia, the oldest, was 15 when her mother died and presumably started looking after the younger children and her father.

As far as I can tell, Silas and his family continued to live at the mill until about 1890. Amelia and her brother Benjamin married within two months of each other in 1890. This seems to have been the final straw for the family which fell apart with disastrous consequences for the two youngest children.

To be continued

Sources

¹Census and BMD data obtained from www.ancestry.co.uk. BMD data checked by obtaining certificates.

²Part of Stanford’s 1868 map of London showing Mill Street, Old Kent Road and Grand Surrey Canal, obtained from local university library and scanned by author.

³From Google books <http://books.google.com/>

⁴From British newspapers online at <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

⁵From The London Gazette <http://www.london-gazette.co.uk/>. The official Government publication where granted patents were listed and all bankruptcies were reported so that any creditors could come forward.

⁶Booth’s original papers are at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Some of the material can be accessed at <http://booth.lse.ac.uk>.

English probate records (part 1)

Maggie Loughran: Maggie maggie@maggieloughran.co.uk

Wills and probate records are probably one of the most important collections of documents available to family historians, not least because of the detail they frequently contain about family, relationships, property and place of burial. A typical will can contain a dozen or more names and are one of only a handful of documents of a personal nature, apart from diaries, which may give some insight into the innermost feelings of an ancestor.

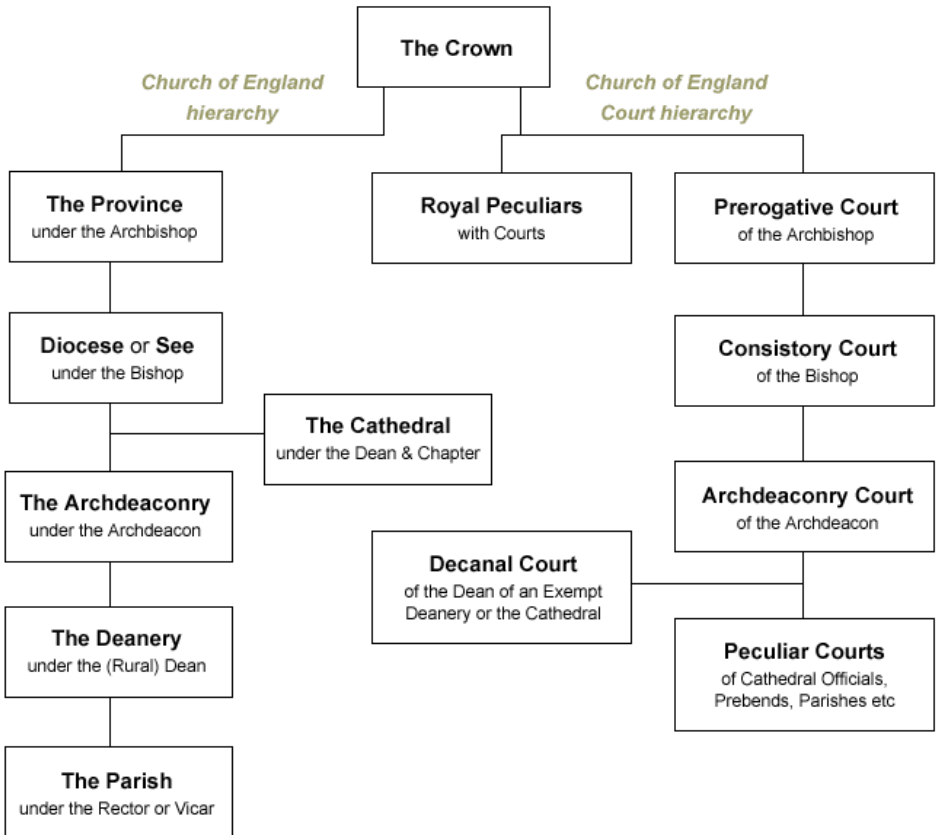
In his will, Charles Smith wrote:

... Item I give devise and bequeath unto my respectful friend Elizabeth Morgan all my household furniture, stock in trade, ready cash, book debts, notes of hand and all other my estate, and effects of what nature or kind the same may be, to and for her own sole use and benefit Item I give and bequeath unto Frances Smith my wife the sum of one shilling of lawful money of Great Britain ...

From the 13th century, wills were recorded in the ecclesiastical (church) records until civil probate was introduced in 1858. Probate (the ratification of a will) was controlled by the Church, as were most other matters to do with death, with over 300 Church courts functioning at one time or another.

The relevant probate jurisdiction or court where a will was proved depended upon the location of the deceased's property, regardless of where he or she lived, died or was buried. And where property was held in different areas, probate may have been granted at a higher level court such as that of the local bishop (if it all fell within a single diocese) or one of the two Prerogative Courts, Canterbury (PCC) and York (PCY) (see the probate court hierarchy chart opposite).

In principle this means the wealthier an ancestor, the harder it may be to identify the correct probate jurisdiction. But even the less wealthy might own property in different areas, particularly if



part of it is inherited via a parent from another part of the country.

Additionally, some parishes were ‘peculiars’, that is they did not belong to the diocese in which they would be expected to fall geographically, and have independent jurisdictions. These include the “royal peculiars”, churches which fell directly under the jurisdiction of the Crown.

During the Commonwealth period, (1653 to 1660) most Ecclesiastical Courts were closed by Parliament. The Court of Probate (or Court of Civil Commission) was established: a single court covering the whole of England and Wales. This was in fact

the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, under a new name and was run on the same lines but without the authority of the Church. Wills proved during this time can be found amongst those of the PCC.

Many, if not most, wills are dated shortly before the death of the testator. Before open access to modern medicine, you knew if you caught something nasty you were probably on your way out, the expense of the will possibly put people off from making their only will until the last moment; additionally the thought that it might have been 'tempting fate' maybe a contributory factor. Probate was usually completed within a few weeks of the testator's death.

Probate records include wills, testaments, administrations and inventories. There is a difference between 'wills' and 'testaments'. Wills relate to 'real estate'; testaments refer to personal goods, clothing, jewellery, household goods, tools of trade, farm animals, stocks and shares, debts, and also cash. These were generally united in one document, 'My Last Will and Testament', in England and Wales; this was not the case in Scotland or the Channel Islands.

Inventories are probably the least used and most interesting of all probate records, listing all the property of the deceased, with the exception of his land and buildings. From 1530 to 1782 it was obligatory for every executor or administrator of a will to provide the registry of the appropriate probate court with an inventory of the deceased's goods, together with their value.

The inventories usually listed the deceased's personal property: chattels such as furniture, clothing, pictures, books and kitchen equipment; together with any cash, shares, debts owing or owed, crops, livestock, implements used by the deceased in his trade or occupation, stock-in-trade, and even numbers of slaves. Real

estate, except leases, are not normally included unless relevant to the settling of any debts. A Probate account was also prepared by the executor/administrator and supplemented the information found in inventories (where they survive). It should account for all the goods and debts received and all the debts and legacies paid and expenses incurred during the winding up of the deceased's estate, recording a final balance.

At the most basic level, a will provides evidence of the death of an ancestor; the date on which the will is proved gives an approximate date of death. Where you have been unable to trace a death or burial record, the will may be the only evidence of death; or, in the case of a common name, it may confirm which of several burial entries in a parish register refers to a particular ancestor.

If a person died without leaving a will (intestate), someone (usually a relative) could apply to the probate court for a grant of administration, which would allow them to deal with the estate.

There are no rules as to who might and might not have made a will. Class, fortune (or lack of it) could make no difference and the wills of the well-to-do lie next to those of the ne'er-do-well. However there were some who could not leave wills, including children, lunatics and criminals; and married women before the Married Woman's Property Act of 1882. Prior to this date a woman's goods and property were forfeit to her husband upon marriage.

Where they exist, the wills of widows and spinsters can be a genealogist's dream, frequently naming and identifying a great many of the woman's, and possibly her late husband's, family.

Daughters would often be given their share of an inheritance on their marriage, in the form of a dowry. The eldest son may have already taken over the family business or farm before his father died. Therefore certain children may well not be mentioned in a

will - or there may be a considerable discrepancy in the amounts bequeathed - this is therefore not any indication of them having been 'cut out' of any inheritance, just that they had their bit already.

In the main, these probate records - are to be found in the county record offices which double up as the diocesan record office - although there are some exceptions to this, such as the Borthwick Institute in York and the Lichfield Diocesan Record Office in Staffordshire.

Unlike census records, which describe only an ancestor's household, a will often provides evidence of the wider family, including nephews, nieces and grandchildren, and can be used to confirm family relationships deduced from records of birth or baptism. For example, bequests to a married daughter or her children should make it possible to identify the record of daughter's marriage and the baptisms of the ancestor's grandchildren.

Outside the gentry, who have sometimes left complete pedigrees, wills are almost the only independent source of confirmation for family relationships suggested by baptismal and marriage records. And if you are researching the period before parish registers, a will may be the only evidence for a lineage.

From 12 January 1858, all ecclesiastical courts were abolished, and District Probate Registries were set up throughout England and Wales. Since then, the District registries have sent copies of all Grants of Probate, and all wills associated with them to what is now the Principal Registry of the Family Division in London, where annual centralized indexes have been prepared.

It is important to remember the value of wills goes beyond the actual pedigree they help you create - they also provide information on the occupation and social status of an ancestor,

indicate the closeness or otherwise of the relationship to a spouse and children, and may allow you to identify in the present day a house or land owned by the family.

The Internet both simplifies and complicates the locating of wills. So in the second part of this article (see next issue of the ESFHS journal) Maggie will set out how to locate and access wills and associated documents.

Finding out more

Wills & Probate Records: A guide for family historians by Karen Grannum & Nigel Taylor (The National Archives 2009)

Wills, Probate & Death Duty Records by Jane Cox (FFHS 1998)

England Jurisdictions, 1851: An Internet based Geographic Information System (GIS) showing parish maps, probate jurisdictions etc of the 40 counties in England:

<<http://maps.familysearch.org>>

The *National Wills Index (NWI)*: Online index to pre 1858 wills (ongoing project) <www.origins.net>

Glossary of probate terms:

<www.origins.net/help/probateglossary.aspx>

Family History themes

The editor is always looking for articles to fill the journal. To encourage you to put your thoughts into words, the committee felt that each journal should have a theme. Those for 2013 are:

March: Births and Baptisms

Was it challenging to find a particular birth or baptism? Were the details held somewhere unusual? Were they born far from the parents' home parish? Help others break down their brickwalls by telling us how you managed to find that vital birth or baptism.

June: In Tandridge Hundred

Some of these parishes (Blechingley, Caterham, Chelsham, Crowhurst, Farley, Godstone, Horne, Limpsfield, Lingfield, Oxted, Tandridge, Tatsfield, Titsey, Warlingham, and Woldingham) have always been tiny, others have seen their importance wax or wane over the centuries. If your ancestor lived there, tell us what was special about their home parish.

September: Pubs and Publicans

Did your ancestor run a pub, or work in one? Was it a famous coaching inn, or just a beer house? Does it still exist and is it anything like it was when they were there?

December: My Ancestors' Christmas

Where were your ancestors on Christmas Day? How did they celebrate? Perhaps Christmas was no different from any other day or perhaps it was very special in some way. Give us your seasonal stories!

Please send any contributions to the Editor, whose contact details are inside the front cover. The deadline for the next issue is shown at the foot of page 1.

Shirley: Broom and Waste

Sylvia Dibbs

The village of Shirley, east of Croydon, though very small throughout its history, has made its own contribution to the wider world.

Shirley farmer and land agent Hewitt Davis managed farms in Selsdon, the Oaks Farm in Shirley, formerly the home farm of Shirley House, where Trinity School now stands, and Spring Park Farm, then described as being in Addington. All that remains of the last is the public park known as Miller's Pond. He developed methods of farming which improved the productivity of both the chalk land and the heath land in the area, in particular making Spring Park Farm, formerly known as Cold Harbour, into a model farm visited by other farmers interested in achieving similar success. He described this farm as principally gravel, in parts very boggy and springy, wet in winter and burnt up in summer, reclaimed from heath only thirty years, a cold, desolate district, aptly changing the name from Cold (also Cole) Harbour to Spring Park. People living in the houses there now will recognise the same problems in the gardens, but he built drainage and improved roads, making the whole district both more desirable and more accessible. In 1843 he wrote a 16 page pamphlet entitled 'Injury and Waste of Corn from the present practice of too thickly sowing', printed by F.Waller of Fleet Street. He observed crops on his farms and measured the yields, compared them with national statistics, proving that sowing less seed, more spaced out than was usual at the time, produced a heavier crop per acre than sowing more seed crowded together. His pamphlet shows that he was much concerned by the increase in population in England, Scotland and Wales from 16,366,011 at the end of 1831 to 18,666,761 at the end of 1841 and he was sure that his work on

improving crop production would greatly help in feeding more people and reduce the need for imported grain. His ideas on the advantages of thinly sowing of seed were triggered in part by a mistake made by one of his drill-men in 1840. Davis described how he gave the man seven bushels of seed to plant in an eight acre field. The man set the seed drill wrongly and found that after he had planted half the field, he had not planted half the seed. So he altered the drill and planted all the rest in the second half of the field. Davis was not told of the mistake & was dismayed in the winter when he saw part of the field growing thinly. He nearly ploughed this up but the other was half growing much more thickly, so he left the field as it was. At harvest he noted that the thin sown half proved much better with a much greater yield. He then got the confession of the poor man who made the mistake in sowing and realised that he had made an important discovery, though something that foresters and gardeners already knew and practised. Davis noted that the farmer apparently 'guided by his eye, is pleased in the early stages of his crop to see his ground well covered with plants of young corn, without stopping to reason upon the room wanted, and the power of the soil to bring them to maturity.'

As Davis observed, the land in Shirley naturally best supported heath: broom, heather, birch and gorse. Sweet chestnut trees had been added to the local flora as it coppices well, forming a renewable crop of thin, straight branches of hardwearing wood suitable for fencing poles and handles for brooms, farming and garden implements. William Hone's 'Table Book of daily recreation and information concerning Remarkable men, manners, times, seasons, merry makings Antiquities and Novelties', written in 1827 and published by W. Tegg of London, describes a trip through Shirley. William travelled around the country with his artist friend

'W...' and together they collected bits and pieces into this book for dipping into in odd moments, a book to leave lying around on tables. Here is part of his evocative description of the broom-makers of Shirley Common, Surrey.

'On a fine summer's day I alighted with my friend W_____from the roof of a stage-coach at Croydon, for a by-way walk, in a part unknown to both. We struck to the eastward through Addiscombe, scarcely a village, and only remarkable for having the East India Company having seated it with a military establishmentwe turned to the left, and at a stone's throw crossed into a lane [now Upper Shirley Road], having a few labourers' cottages a little way along on the right, and soon came to the Broom-maker's, represented in the engraving [a sketch of the broom-makers at work heads his article]. We had a constant view all the way up the lane, from beyond the man climbing the ladder, of the flickering linen at the point of the rod waving on the broom-stack. The flag was erected by the labourers on the carrying of the last shoulder-load of the rustic pile.....It [a teamed wagon-frame] belonged to the master of the place- a tall, square-shouldered, middle-aged, active man, who looked as one having authority, who laboured, and was a master of labourers.....His name is on his carts "John Bennett, Shirley Common". He calls himself a "Broom-maker and Wood-dealer,"He and his men cut the materials for broom-making from the neighbouring common, and the wood he deals in from adjacent woods and copses. He sells the greater part of his brooms to shopkeepers and other consumers in Streatham and Camberwell. Much of his poling is sent further off. A good deal, he told me, had gone to the Duke of Devonshire for fencing.....we entered the broom-manufactory- a small, warm, comfortable barn, with a grateful odour in it from the heath and birch-wood. Four or five persons were busy at work. Foremost

within the door was the unmistakable old “original”. Like his fellow-workmen he wore a leathern apron, and a heavy leathern sleeve on the left arm; and with that hand and arm he firmly held and compressed the heath into round bundles, of proper consistency and size, and strongly bound them with the other..... He had been the best broom-maker in the manufactory, and had earned excellent wages. When I saw him he was infirm, and did not get more than fourteen or sixteen shillings a week. Mr Bennett’s men are paid piece-work, and can easily earn a guinea a week.....we walked with him through his little garden of fruit trees and vegetables to another shed, where they fashioned broom-handles, and some common husbandry implements of wood.....

From the Broom-maker’s at Shirley Common, we had a pleasant walk into Addington, where there is a modern-built palace of the archbishop of Canterbury, with extensive old gardens and large hot-houses, and several good houses. We had passed Mr. Maberley’s seat and grounds on our way [Shirley Park, which later became a hotel with a golf course. The house has been replaced by Trinity School, but the golf course remains as Shirley Golf Club.]’

The John Bennett of this account was born in Nutwood, Sussex. He came to Shirley as a boy around the end of the eighteenth century. Here he founded a dynasty of Bennetts, which flourished in the area for several generations, modifying the type of work as times changed. In the 1851 census at the age of 78 years, he was still describing himself as a broom maker and living with his wife Maria aged 59 years in Starve Acre, on Shirley Church Road at the eastern corner of the Recreation Ground. In the 1881 census his grandson William, wood broker’s labourer, aged 35years, with his wife Ann and children Amy and Albert aged 14 and 1 year respectively was living in 4, Sandpits Lane. By 1911 Albert was a

wood dealer in his own right and also a broom maker living in 5, Sandpits Road. He later developed a horticultural and building supplies business & then ran the earliest coach hire service, Shirley Coaches, using the site of the old sand and gravel quarry at the end of the road as their base. They ran the first bus to New Addington. The business was sold in 1986 and the Birkdale gated housing estate was built there. So the family lived and worked in the locality for 200 years, probably the oldest family in Shirley.

Further reading

Images of England published by Tempus Publishing Limited 2003
Shirley and Addington: Wheeler, Raymond: ISBN 0-7524-2683-4

Obituary

Sadly, I have to report the death on 21st October of Colin Brackpool, another of our long standing members. I have known Colin since his wife Marion and I set up the Lingfield group about 14 years ago. I found him a quiet, kind and gentle man who was a great foil for Marion, who is a chatty, enthusiastic family historian.

Colin was a member of the Society's committee in the past. He supported all the activities of the Society and was always there to help us at Lingfield in whatever capacity he could. He was unable to come to our meetings in recent months and we have missed his company. Our thoughts are with Marion and his family at this time.

Rita Russell

Can you help?

Akehurst

Fred Akehurst: 18 Goodman Way, Tile Hill, Coventry, CV4 9UF: freda1940@talktalk.net

Was my father born a true cockney?

He was born on 25th January 1903 at 147 Hanover Buildings, Horseleydown Lane, Bermondsey; although he always said he was born in Tooley Street the two are very close to each other. Can the bells of St Mary-le-Bow be heard from here?

Can anyone tell me anything about Hanover Buildings? I presume there was more than one block. I have a copy of *Bermondsey and Rotherhithe remembered* (Stephen Humphrey) and on page 90 there is a picture of Devon Mansion (formerly Hanover Buildings) in 1976. This block is opposite Sweeny Crescent, which runs between Jamaica Road and Druid Street, so on which was Devon Mansions situated?

Page 91 shows an ordnance survey map of 1894-96 with Hanover Building blocks in Fair Street and on the end of Barnham Street and Parish Street.

Fair Street and Barnham Street still existed in 2004 (according to the A-Z).

Can anyone help?

Flint

Bruce Ellice-Flint [6076]; baeflint@gmail.com

I have run up against a brick wall in sorting my Flint family, who lived in Charlwood.

With a reasonable degree of certainty I believe that I am descended from Benjamin Flint and Sarah Ellis who married in Charlwood in 1745. The number of Benjamin Flints in and around Charlwood is one reason that the trail is muddled. Another is that

Can you help?

some of them were Anabaptists, with the implication that the children were not baptised in infancy.

Early in my genealogical journey I was told that there is a book that might help in sorting the Charlwood Flint's into some sort of order. The book is titled *The Flints of Charlwood* and it was written by B F Flint (Benjamin?) and published in 1854 in a limited edition of 100 copies. I have lost contact with the person who told me of the existence of this book. At the time they did not tell me how they came to know about it.

It would be wonderful if someone could assist in whatever way.

Flower

Norm Flower [8032] flower@telus.net

I have been looking for years for Rose Flower born June 20, 1847 to Paul and Mary Ann Flower nee Fisher. She is the 3rd child of the 4 children born to Paul and Mary Ann, their oldest Elizabeth Dinah Flower born Dec 09, 1842, Mary Ann born Dec 02, 1845 and John William Flower born June 19, 1849, he is my Great Grandfather. The last document I have is the death certificate of Paul Flower August 02, 1869 and Rose is the informant on the certificate which states "X Mark of Rose Flowers present at death 1 Clarence Terrace Rotherhithe" . The certificate has an "s" on the Surname "Flowers" but that was not uncommon as my family has gone through the years with registrars adding an "s" when there wasn't supposed to be one.

Rose's sister Mary Ann married a Lighterman in Dec of 1865. Rose's other sister Elizabeth Dinah married a Mark Hawkins (no marriage certificate found) she had one child Eliza Mary Ann Hawkins born in 1866 in England then next appears with a second child Rose Hawkins born in Austria about 1870 as Mark Hawkins was a marine engineer also on a document he is a Naval fitter.

Can you help?

They next appear in Malta as the oldest daughter Eliza Hawkins is married in Malta to a Thomas Fen Godfrey in the marriage register of St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral in Valletta Malta records 1891. Rose Hawkins also marries in Malta to a Ernest Brain in Sept quarter 1900. I've tried to find if it was possible that Rose Flower was with her sister at maybe the baptism or marriage of Mark and Mary Ann's children but have run against that brick wall.

I have not found a trace of Rose Flower in the BMDs for a marriage or a death in England.

Any help in finding Rose would be greatly appreciated.

Hodgkin / Roll / Williams

Mike Wilton mike@thewiltons.net

My late mother Winifred Wilton, who was born in 1895 in Wandsworth and lived in Charlton, apparently spoke to my brother of a Great Aunt Sophie who lived in France. My brother has asked me if I can identify who she was and how she was related to our family. The problem is that we do not know which side of the family she was related to. My mother's maiden name was Roll on her father's side and Hodgkin on her mother's side, and we have a number of Clippertons , Smiths and Williams in our ancestors.

Going on the basis of 30 years per generation I imagine this would place Gt Aunt Sophie's birth around 1830. I have been working back through the various branches but so far have been unable to identify who she was. The only connection I have come across by chance is that according to the 1871 census a Sophie A Williams was born in France about 1811, her spouse was a Charles G Williams, and they lived in Sumner Road, Croydon. Her husband Charles Gummow Williams was born about 1803 in Padstow, Cornwall.

Can you help?

I wondered if it is possible that any of your members might recognise the family and perhaps know who her parents were and in particular the maiden name of her mother, as I have been unable to trace details of their marriage which might possibly throw up a family connection. I realise that this is an extremely remote possibility but it seems to be the only one so far that might provide a clue to solving our long standing family problem.

Neville

*Michael Coles [7816]
1 Church Green, Bishops Caundle, Sherborne, Dorset, DT9 5NN*

I am seeking descendants of Henry Augustus Neville, born 1877 and living at 26 West Square, Southwark, in 1911.

Also his brother William Cornelius Neville, born 1872 and living at 1 Allardyce Street, Ferndale Road, Brixton in 1911.

Robinson

Ann Reid annreid@live.com.au

I am looking for the birthplace of John Robinson (b c1790) who died on 17 JUN 1880 aged 89 at Park Place, Norwood Road, Wandsworth. He married Ann Georgina Bell on 23 JUN 1826 at St Mary, Lambeth. One son, John, was born.

The second marriage, to Augusta Carter, was on 01 JUL 1830 in Kennington; John and Augusta produced nine children.

John was a teacher at Rodney House, Rodney Buildings, St Mary's, Newington. I should like to go back further and find his parents and I should be grateful if anyone can help.

Answer to “Family Word-search” (see page 10)

s	w	a	l	n	i	r	e	h	t	o	m	b	n
d	c	b	h	w	s	o	n	f	q	k	m	r	o
g	l	g	h	l	n	c	i	i	a	m	o	o	s
k	r	i	a	j	e	z	s	b	l	t	t	t	p
c	e	a	h	f	t	n	u	a	e	n	h	h	k
i	s	b	n	c	m	h	o	a	r	b	e	e	v
r	m	a	a	d	u	a	c	r	t	v	r	r	r
s	e	d	n	u	m	s	z	u	u	a	g	i	e
e	b	t	d	r	p	o	d	o	n	k	s	n	t
g	u	g	s	j	e	d	t	b	c	h	d	l	h
i	d	a	n	i	t	h	l	h	l	t	n	a	g
r	a	c	i	v	s	o	p	g	e	e	e	w	u
r	e	h	t	o	r	b	a	i	k	r	i	f	a
s	d	a	d	n	a	r	g	e	y	r	r	r	d
c	f	t	h	a	r	e	x	n	d	y	f	e	d

Open Day at the SoG

Members might be interested in the following free event to be held at the Society of Genealogists next year:

23 March Open Day - 11:00-16:00, free library tours, lectures and family history advice. Free to all, but must be pre-booked through the events department: 020 7553 3290.