

Journal of the East Surrey Family History Society

www.eastsurreyfhs.org.uk

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The cover photograph is of St Andrew's church, Gatton

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

From the Chairman

Joanna Grant [9080]

I am writing this in mid October, a day before departing for a holiday in Australia, so I have a number of last-minute things to get done, this being one of them.

Our Canadian Representative of many years, Eileen Robinson, has sadly had to stand down due to ill health which I am sure you all hope will improve, as I do, and that Eileen will be able to continue to enjoy researching her family history. A big thank you for looking after our Canadian members for so long from myself, Ann Turnor, the Membership Secretary, and the rest of the committee.

Ann Turnor had a really good response to her email for new a representative from the Society's Canadian membership. The new representative is Yvonne Smith, whose details will be both on the website and in the Journal. Good Luck, Yvonne, and thank you.

Yet another thank you for all those who have helped at open days at the Croydon and Lambeth Archives and the Hampshire FHS and those who will be helping at the West Surrey FHS Open Day at Woking on Saturday 6th November. Please do contact any committee member if you are interested in helping out at any event the society is attending.

Looking forward to 2011, which will be upon us sooner than we think, there are a number of interesting events for those who are able to get to London.

26th – 28th Feb WDYTYA Live at Olympia

Sat 9th April East Surrey FHS AGM & Open Day at Croydon
This year's theme – The Census (as 2011 is a census year)

Sat. 16th April The London Maze:
a free local London history fair at the Guildhall Art Gallery

Sun. 29th May The Family History Event at the Barbican

I attended a Users Group meeting at the Kingston Local History Room (the local archives for Kingston-on-Thames) in September. One of the main reasons for these meetings is that the History Room will have to move from the Kingston Centre around June 2011 as the building being pulled down and replaced by a school.

Of course the hope was that they would get bigger and better premises but due to the change of government they really had no more news than at the first meeting in February of this year. The outlook in the present climate is not good so if you live in the Kingston area please visit the History Room to support them. The more support and number of visitors they get will hopefully help to secure a new and better home for this local archive.

All the Group Secretaries are in the process of organising another year of interesting speakers for 2011, some of which will be on the Group Meetings pages and the website; so make sure you make a note of the dates and also of the AGM, which always has a number of good speakers to be enjoyed before the actual AGM.

Seems a bit early but I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Healthy and Peaceful New Year.

Projects Report

Rita Russell [7123]

Some progress has been made on both Lingfield Monumental Inscriptions and Carshalton Parish registers, but not as much as we had hoped.

Lots of transcribing has been done in the Croydon Local Studies library on the Croydon registers plus other registers, Poor Law and odd things like militia lists, and employment applications by our dedicated transcribers/checkers elsewhere. Eventually all this will be put on a compilation CD.

We do have permission to transcribe and photograph the memorials in Caterham Cemetery but we will now start in the spring. I do need some volunteers, please, to help with this work.

The Super Name Index has been updated and we have also produced a CD of St Mary Magdalene, Reigate, Monumental Inscriptions. I really hope that we will have Carshalton PRs and Wimbledon MIs available early in the New Year.

Society Logo – the projects team has been charged with investigating the possibility of updating our logo. We are looking for something clean, clear and eye-catching. It needs to be useable with or without the Society's name. One or two ideas have been put forward but if anyone has any artistic skills or a suggestion, then please do send your samples through to me for the committee to look through. We hope to put the best designs in the March journal and they will be put to the AGM in April.

The Society's name has also been under discussion for several years but it proves very difficult. We don't want it to be too long and we need to make sure it covers South London and East Surrey – tricky, but maybe someone out there has a bright idea?

March

- | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------|-----------|
| 3 | Tracing Living Relatives and Missing People | Dr Geoff Swinfield | Sutton |
| 12 | Marshalsea Prison
Richmond | Stephen Humphrey | |
| <i>Geoff is a professional genealogist and family history researcher</i> | | | |
| 15 | Newspapers for Family Historians - How to get the most from them | Celia Heritage | Croydon |
| 23 | A Soldier on Campaign | Ken Divall | Lingfield |

April

- 9 East Surrey Family History Society AGM
at East Croydon United Reform Church

Ensure you check the day of the week carefully as not all Groups meet on the same evening or at the same time (see below for times of meetings).

-
- Croydon: United Reformed Church (small hall), Addiscombe Grove, Croydon
3rd Tuesday (except August and December); 8.00 p.m.
Secretary: Mary Gill
- Lingfield: Lingfield & Dormansland Community Centre, High Street, Lingfield
4th Wednesday (except August and December); 2.30 p.m.
Secretary: Rita Russell (01342 834648)
- Richmond: Vestry House, 21 Paradise Road, Richmond
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 Street, London, SE1
1st Monday of alternate months; 12 noon
Secretary: Sheila Gallagher (020 8337 8580)
- Sutton: St Nicholas's Church Hall, Robin Hood Lane, Sutton
1st Thursday; 8.00 p.m.
Secretary: Chris Pocock

Doors usually open 30 minutes before the start of the meeting. Please check the Society website www.esfhs.org.uk for future meetings and last-minute alterations. Ensure you check the day of the week carefully as not all Groups meet on the same evening or at the same time.

East Surrey Family History Society Annual General Meeting

Counting the people and the Law of Unintended Consequences

Saturday 9th April 2011

United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon, CR0 5LP

SPEAKERS, HELP DESK, DISPLAYS

Timetable of events

10.00 Doors open

10.30 Welcome

10.35 Else Churchill:

Census Records and Census Substitutes before 1841

The first official census was taken in 1801 and some records may be found. However, there are earlier records that resemble censuses that can also be of help to family historians. Else is the Genealogy Officer of the Society of Genealogists

11.30 Break

11.45 Audrey Collins:

1911 Census

Despite having no English ancestry of her own Audrey has been researching English genealogy for more than 20 years. She is currently part of the TNA Expertise Online team and has written books on English genealogy

12.45 Lunch and help desk

- 2.00 David Annal:
Counting the people: census returns online
A census of England and Wales has been taken every ten years since 1801. The schedules for 1841 to 1911 are now available online. This talk will introduce some essential techniques for searching online databases and provide some clues to help you track down your elusive ancestors. David Annal became a professional family historian in 1990 and, from 1998 was employed by TNA, working at the FRC and Kew. He has written a number of books and was a regular magazine columnist.
- 3.00 Break
- 3.30 AGM of East Surrey Family History Society
- 4.00 Doors close

The display this year will be

Census Surprises!

Did the enumerator or the transcriber mangle the entry beyond recognition? Were they somewhere very different from expected? Or were they in a small, local census before the 1800s?

Bring us your stories!

Display size should be no larger than A3 (297mm x 420mm).

Entries may be brought along on the day or delivered to a Committee Member prior to the meeting.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available throughout the day.

He may have preceded Walter to Canada

Floyd Cooper [6926]

Thus spoke my cousin James (Jim) Cooper of Surrey. 'He' was my great-great-grandfather Luke Cooper and 'Walter' was his great-grandson, my father Walter Cooper.

In December 1791 Luke was baptised in the parish of Lovington, Somerset, in the presence of parents Charles and Rebecca Cooper. The 1851 census recorded Luke, age 60, as a Chelsea Pensioner.

The term Chelsea Pensioner is used to designate 'in-pensioners' and 'out-pensioners'. An 'in-pensioner' is one who resides in the Hospital at Chelsea. An 'out-pensioner' is a former soldier of the regular army who receives a pension for long service and/or disability caused through service.

In the April 2006 edition of *Ancestors* magazine an article titled 'To Honour the Brave' appeared, which discussed the Military General Service Medal (MGSM). The medal was introduced in June 1847, thirty years after it was first proposed, and awarded to officers and ordinary soldiers to commemorate the battles of the Napoleonic Wars and associated campaigns, including the British/American battles.

After reading the article and passing it on to Jim, he stated in a subsequent telephone conversation, "He may have preceded Walter to Canada." And thus the search began.

Information obtained by Jim online via The National Archives (TNA) revealed that Luke served in the 88th Regiment Foot and was discharged at age 24. This only served to whet Jim's interest and in early April 2006 he travelled to Kew to find additional information.

He successfully located an enlistment document for Luke showing that in July 1812 he was recruited into the 2nd Battalion 88th Regiment of Infantry, probably used for recruiting purposes and as a training unit for recruits. Thereafter it was referred to as the 88th Regiment of Foot (Connaught Rangers).

This was an Irish regiment established in 1793 in the province of Connaught consisting mostly (approximately 95%) of Irish soldiers referred to as "The Devils Own" a name allegedly given to the 88th by The Duke of Wellington.

Historian Arthur Bryant has said of them "they were a tough crowd from the bogs of western Ireland and had a reputation for filching chickens and goats when on campaign which, if caught, resulted in a flogging and in extreme cases, hanging."

Why he enlists with the 88th remains a mystery. Was it poverty, lack of employment, conscription or desire to serve his country that led to his decision to enlist? The year 1812 was a bad year for farmers and farm labourers and speculation has it that Luke took the King's schilling to get some food in his belly.

In a later visit to Kew Jim was also successful in obtaining Pay and Muster rolls for the 88th from 1812 to 1817. Using Muster Rolls it is possible to establish the enlistment date and dates that a soldier moved within his Regiment around the world. These records also contain the date of discharge and were taken every month or every quarter. Muster rolls reveal that from the time of Luke's enlistment in July 1812 until September 1813 he was stationed back and forth at Exeter Devon, Berry Head Devon, or Ottery St Mary.

For several periods away from barracks during this time troops, including Luke, were billeted with various innkeepers who were paid for necessary expenses incurred.

In January 1813 of the above period Luke signed up for service and in September of that same year he was shipped to Fermoy, Ireland where he remained until May 1814. At Fermoy he was transferred to the 1st Battalion 88th Regiment of Foot (Connaught Rangers).

No muster record for the period May to August 1814 could be located. While Luke had been transferred to the 1st Battalion, a search of the Muster Book during this period states that the 1st Battalion is "stationed at sea on voyage for America" and Luke is not listed. Thus if Luke was with the 2nd Battalion until May the 1st Battalion would be in mid-Atlantic at this time. Luke together with his comrades-in-arms, who were also transferring, would need to travel on another ship. They were therefore probably attached to a different regiment until they were able to meet up with the 1st Battalion in North America. Muster rolls for the period August to December 1814 confirm this while Luke was stationed at William Henry (now Sorel) Quebec, Canada.

"He may have preceded your father to Canada," cousin Jim had speculated. My father, Walter Cooper, immigrated to Canada in April 1913 thus Luke preceded his great grandson Walter to Canada by 99 years.

One of the British/American wars, the Battle of Plattsburg (New York), took place in September 1814 during which Luke was injured, subsequently convalescing in Sorel, Three Rivers and Quebec City, Quebec. While stationed there during the winter of 1814-15, troops of the Connaught Rangers spent their time wining, dining and partying with the local gentry in which Luke may have taken part despite his injury.

By April/May 1815 Luke was in St John's Newfoundland and by June was at sea arriving in Ghent northwest of Brussels just a month after the Battle of Waterloo. From here the 88th Regiment marched to join the army in the outskirts of Paris in September and by February 1816 Luke was in Valenciennes France near the Franco-German border. Luke and the 88th Regiment remained in garrison in Valenciennes as part of the army of occupation until March 1817 and he was, for the most part, hospitalised during this time. In March 1817 discharge documents were signed by his commanding officer.

The cause for discharge is described as 'reduction and defective vision occasioned by ophthalmia in 1816 – nearly blind'. Luke's blindness may have been attributable to what is referred to as 'sympathetic ophthalmia', an inflammatory condition to the second eye after a perforating or penetrating injury to the first eye. This can occur anywhere from several weeks to several years after the original eye injury and in all probability occurred during the Battle of Plattsburg.

From Valenciennes he was invalided to Chatham, Kent, Edinburgh Castle and discharged officially in July 1817. His discharge documents signed at Horse Guards state he enlisted in January 1813 at the age of 20 years for unlimited service and served for a total of 4 years 219 days.

In August 1818 Luke married Mary Guiliford in the parish of Kilmington, Somerset where they raised a family of eight children, three of whom did not survive birth and a fourth died at a young age.

Luke passed away in June 1870 at the age of 82 in Galhampton, North Cadbury, Somerset and was buried in the churchyard of St Michael The Archangel. To the best of knowledge there was no memorial and the exact burial place is unknown.

Postscript

The Military General Service Medal (MGSM) 1793-1814 commemorates the campaigns and battles of the British Army between 1801 and 1814 and could not be awarded without a bar. No bar was awarded for the Battle of Plattsburg and thus Luke did not qualify for the Military General Service Medal.

Nevertheless we have the satisfaction of knowing that our ancestor Luke Cooper served more than four years, sustained a blinding eye injury as a member of the 88th Regiment of Foot (Connaught Rangers) described by Wellington during the Peninsular Wars as that most astonishing infantry.”

Names in Family History

Chris Pocock [8926]

Over the fifteen years I have been researching family history I have come across a wide variety of interesting names. They reflect different sources of names. Some belong to my family, others I have picked up from research I have done for other people or for general interest.

Occupations

Robert Basketmaker Cockrell
Fisher Clarke
James Cryer
Edith Smith

Geography and Nature

Albert Easterfield
Mary Ann Perry
Samuel Reed
Mary Ann Seal
William Edwin Wood

Famous People

Florence Nightingale Beatty
Charles Dickens Dawson
William Ewart Gladstone Cowlshaw

Mixture of first/surnames

John Riddle Duck Gowland
Millichamp Rowley Christmas Humphries
Henry Morris Pryce-Jones
Isobel Edith Hindmarsh Stephens

Names with biblical connections

Mercy Best
Thankful Ticer Pocock
Shadrach Meshack Abednego Findlay
Levi James Batten

People from other countries

Charles Henry John Obermuller (Germany)
Alexander Sefi (Lebanon)

The sources and origins of names can play an important part in family History research. Often you will find websites with particular surnames on. Genes Reunited and The Guild of One Name Studies are useful. Also put the surname in the search engine and see what comes up. Also using members' interests in family history societies can bring results.

I finish with a true story. In September this year I visited the Isle of Wight Records Office to research my own surname of Pocock. I was sitting at a long table. On my right was a man and on my left a man and a lady. Through overhearing their conversations I realised they were both researching the same surname. I made them realise this and so they were able to compare their records.

Rates Books

Brenda Hawkins [785]

Rates books are not the most obvious source for family history. They don't show everyone in a household, their survival is patchy and they are held, generally, in local studies libraries, rather than county record offices. But like Land Tax Assessments before them, they can significantly improve our understanding of our ancestors' lives.

George Lanning had lived at 33 North Street, Marylebone for several years, as can be seen from the rates books at Westminster Archives. But the murder of a female lodger in November 1851 probably created a great deal of adverse publicity, for he was no longer at the address in 1852.

You can find out who owned the property, as well as the occupier's name, what the rent was and all the financial details of the rates collection. The volumes are large, heavy, dusty, and not the archivist's favourite source, so it is always sensible to check well in advance whether they have them for the period you want. The London Borough of Bexley has a good collection for the interwar years, while the London Borough of Croydon's records stop in 1896. This is a shame, as I wanted to compare the rates books with the Valuation Act Field Books.

In Croydon, it looks as though the information for the Valuation Act on owners and occupiers was collected very swiftly, from rates books of 1909 or 1910, to judge by the contemporary street directories, with the more time-consuming details of physical descriptions of the properties completed quite some time later. The Valuation Act records contain various spelling mistakes in the surnames of occupants and similarly the rates books are less reliable than the directories.

One word of caution. Croydon in the 1800s was a boom town. The town hall could hardly keep track of all the new developments. To start with, each new development appears to have been given a new schedule number. So a single road might appear on five or more different pages. Before house numbers started to be important, this could mean a trawl through two fat volumes to be absolutely certain you have explored every possibility. In 1883, when Croydon gained Borough status, the books were reordered by ward and appear in the same order as the electoral rolls. It would be therefore worthwhile, if you were looking at a property in Croydon in 1881, to go first to 1883, note the schedule number and then look for that number in an earlier volume. Be warned, though, that just as houses were renumbered during the period, so the schedule numbers appear to have been revised from time to time.

What can you learn from the rates? Besides seeing exactly how long someone lived at an address and how much they paid for the privilege, you can often get the address of the landlord and track them down in the censuses. Besides the employers, they were probably the most important people in our ancestors' lives. Some of them did very well out of bricks and mortar. Joseph Busbridge was the son of a shoemaker from Riverhead in Kent, but when he died in 1904 he left several thousand pounds, enabling his son to retire from his job as a science teacher. Old Ann Allsop, who owned the terrace of four houses still called Holly Cottages in Pawsons Road, may have been collecting over £30 a year in rents, but she was living very simply with a grocer's family. These are imperfect thumbnail sketches, but they do help colour the lives of our ancestors.

Nominations for Committee Members

Nominations for members of the Executive Committee are invited from any member of the Society. No qualifications are required, just an interest in family history and the Society. The Committee meets six times per year on the third Thursday of alternate months, starting with January. For convenience the meetings are held at the URC, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon, which is a central location with good bus, train and tram links as well as parking.

If you need any more information then please get in contact with me, Sue Adams, at secretary01@eastssurreyfhs.org.uk or speak to any Committee member at meetings.

Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society

Lecture Programme 2010 – 2011

December 14th

Annual General Meeting & Presidential Lecture

Len Reilly — Archive Manager, Lambeth Council

Sources for fraternalism and freemasonry in South London

January 11th

Edmund Bird — Heritage Advisor to the Mayor of London

The Edwardian Architecture of Lambeth

February 8th

Stephen Humphrey — Historian

History Reflected in Churches

March 8th

Various speakers — Symposium

Recent Local Archaeological and Historical Work

April 12th

Hana Lewis — Museum of London Archaeology

Excavations at Holywell Priory

May 10th

Becky Haslam — Archaeologist, Pre-Construct Archaeology

Recent Archaeological Works in Advance of the British Museum World

Heritage & Exhibition Centre

June 14th

Evening Walk – Blackheath – led By Richard Buchanan.

Lectures are on Tuesday evenings at 7.30 p.m. Light refreshments are served at 7.00 p.m. All lectures are held at The Housing Co-op Hall, 106 The Cut (the hall is almost opposite the Old Vic Theatre, a few minutes walking distance from Waterloo Station).

Visitors are welcome but are asked to make a £1.00 donation. Enquiries 020 8764 8314.

Further details of the Society from Richard Buchanan, 79 Ashridge Crescent, Shooters Hill, SE18 3EA.

Website round up

Brian Hudson [7324]

www.raggedschoolmuseum.org.uk – This site promotes a museum that is based in the buildings that once housed the largest ‘ragged’ or free school in London – Barnardo’s Copperfield Road School, which opened in 1877. There are several galleries, a reconstructed Victorian classroom and kitchen complete with many historical artefacts. Entry is free but donations are welcomed.

http://yourarchives.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php?title=Online_Probate_Indexes * – A useful page listing online wills indexes, generally before 1858, from various organisations and institutions with links to their website.

Some of the links need to be updated as there are a few ‘*page cannot be found*’ messages; this usually means that the website has been reorganised and the page is in a new location but it can still be found by searching for the site.

Indexes are generally free to search; where documents are available to view online there may be a charge.

*For a shortcut to this webpage type **goo.gl/RLkL** into your browser address box.

<http://maps.familysearch.org/> - **England Jurisdictions 1851** is the title of the opening screen. On the right hand side is an interactive map; click twice slowly on any county and a menu will appear. Make a selection e.g. **List all parishes in Surrey** and the information appears on the left. Roll the cursor over the parish names and a marker moves over the map showing the locations. Click on a parish name and more choices can be made using one of the tabs on the new menu that appears.

Now look to the left of the screen, above the parish names is a **Layers** tab with more choices to be made on the presentation of the map including Civil Registration District, Diocese, Rural Deanery, Poor Law Union and Hundred. There is also the option to overlay the modern road map or satellite image with the previously selected boundaries and/or names. The easiest way to get to grips with all the features is just to ‘*play around*’. The map can be a bit slow to load and reload but it doesn’t detract from the usefulness of this site.

Letter from the Front

Diane Smith [10000]

Some years ago I was visiting Dad and my brother in New Zealand. I was shown a collection of letters and photographs, but had to leave them with my brother for safekeeping as I was returning to the UK and my case was overweight, as always. After Dad died my brother kindly gave them to me, having picked out the ones he liked first. Luckily for me he had not wanted the various pieces of 'paper history' that were also in with the photos.

I did not look through them properly at the time, but a few years after his death, I was looking through the old photos he had given me earlier and found this letter.

The content is mainly personal but I thought it would still serve as a snapshot in time of a squaddie's life on the North West Frontier. I like to think that it has a cultural and social significance too, and shows the mindset of the 'man in the street' of that time – much more acceptance of hard times and simply 'getting on with it'. It could also make one feel ashamed of our pampered lives nowadays.

The letter was addressed to my father, Stanley Jones, at 19 Pearfield Road, Dulwich S.E.23, and sent from one of his brothers, namely Wilfred Jones. I have reproduced it as it was written, only omitting the Army number. I thought that perhaps it would resonate with us all, bearing in mind the current situation in Afghanistan and our troops serving out there fighting the Taliban. Makes you see that history ever repeats itself, *plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose* . . .

(Army No) Pte W. Jones
C Coy, 1st E. Lancs Regt, Roberts Barracks, Quetta, India
Jan 2 1929

Dear Stan,

It was a bit of a shock to get a letter from you, as maybe it is for you to get one from me, but still very acceptable.

I must thank you for the Xmas box which I received right on the 25th, couldn't have been nicer, & I appreciate your kindness & thoughts for me thanks once again old chap.

Yours was the first letter from home for a few months, & although I have got rather a busy time before me now, answering all these letters I don't mind in the least, although letter writing was never my great achievement.

Your card was very nice, & I am sorry that I could not send any home this year, as business prevented me from doing so, as I was away from Quetta, & the frontier is no place to be in round about Xmas.

Anyhow we had a good time here on the 25th, well as good as could be expected under the circumstances, & one must not grumble, all's fair in love and war.

Well Stan I was surprised to hear that you were a "Brickey"[sic] but believe me there's bags of coppers to be earned at that very noble trade, & well that's all that matters nowadays in these hard times.

I expect to see you a full blown navy by the time I come home; maybe you can knock me up a little shed out at the back to live in, because by now I feel I can get down to it anywhere, after the hardships of manoeuvres out here, they are no joke I can tell you, & and the soldier out East earns his money on these occasions, put me on the clothes line now and I'll go to sleep, yes & want waking up the next morning too.

I read of your exploits on the one seater which you purchased from Harold's old acquaintance "Blower", not mine, as you said, & I can imagine what kind of a machine it was if you bought it from him, anyhow I suppose you have broken friendships with him after that, the nasty fellow!

I hear that mother has been poorly again, I do hope she recovers quickly, I am writing to her by this post, so you should both get a letter which is this, about the 21st of January I should say, that is unless the boat breaks down, like your famous 'bike' did, in that case, you'll never receive this.

Well Stan old boy I am still in very excellent health & spirits, & taking life as it comes, good or bad, so that's that isn't it?

There is really not much news to impart to you so I am afraid we must make the best of a bad thing and call it finished.

So Stan once more thanking you for the Xmas box, I wish you, and all at home a very prosperous new year, although I'm about three weeks late; so please accept all these

from your loving Brother

Bill

ps Cheerio & the best of luck in your new job. WJ

News from Surrey Heritage

Julian Pooley, Team Leader, Heritage Public Services

William Bray of Shere never ceases to amaze me. Born in 1736 he became a leading Surrey solicitor, acting for families and manorial estates across the county throughout a long and successful career. He was also, through the patronage of the Evelyn family of Wotton, a Clerk of the Board of Green Cloth (responsible for the household accounts of the Royal Family) and a keen local and family historian who is remembered today for his zealous completion of Owen Manning's *History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey* (3 vols, 1804-1814). He was also one of the founding members of the Equitable Assurance Company, Treasurer of Henry Smiths' Charity and a prominent Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. In 1818 he and William Upcott were the first to edit and bring to public attention the diary of John Evelyn. The large and important Bray family archive held by Surrey History Centre includes pocket diaries kept by William Bray between 1756 and his death in 1832 and regular readers of *Root and Branch* may remember that in 2008 a newly discovered diary that he had kept in 1754-5 included what is believed to be the first manuscript reference to the game of baseball. In September this year we were successful in buying a letter at auction that includes a detailed description of Bray's home in Shere and the daily routine that he led towards the end of his life. It was written on 29 May 1827 by a young London bookseller called Thomas Thorpe, who traveled by stage coach to Dorking and walked the last few miles to Shere to stay a few days with Bray and his daughters. He describes the house room by room, marveling at how Bray could keep upright on the uneven but highly polished oak floors. Impressed by Bray's great age and retention of his faculties, he describes his mealtimes, diet and modest consumption of alcohol in great detail. He records how between breakfast and dinner (7.30 am and 3 pm) Bray undertook antiquarian research and how two rooms upstairs were full of his books. We already know so much about Bray's reading habits through his diaries, travel journals, letters and even through the records of a bookseller near Rugby school where he seems to have spent all his pocket money, so it is particularly fascinating to have this intimate account of his home and library at the end of his life.

Other recent accessions of note include a copy of Surrey Home Guard 'Z Sector Defence Scheme', 1943 (ref 8718). "Z" Sector in Surrey defined an area from Streatham in the north to Kenley in the south and from Carshalton in the west to Addington in the east, and the Scheme details the assistance the Home Guard was expected to provide in defence against airborne and seaborne raids and

invasion, the disposal of secret documents where necessary, the disposal of unexploded bombs or shells, attendance on crashed aircraft and the capture of enemy personnel. We have also taken in the extensive archive of The Royal Star and Garter Homes, Richmond Hill (ref 8711), established by the Red Cross after World War I for disabled ex-servicemen. The records include minutes, publications, correspondence, plans, 1915-2010, records of the Charity's property in Folkestone, 1725-1954, and papers and effects of former residents, c.1899-2000. Also of note is a very full history of the Surrey police entitled 'The working life of the Surrey Constabulary, 1 Jan 1851-31 Dec 1992' by Robert Bartlett, retired Chief Superintendent Operations Department, Surrey Constabulary, which includes many photographs of the force in action and draws on recollections by many former members of the force (ref Z/565).

A fantastic team of volunteers, coordinated by Sally Jenkinson, is forging ahead with the project to transcribe the Surrey tithe apportionments. To date, three-quarters of the apportionments are in progress with 20 completed. Volunteers are about to start indexing the Application and Report books for Richmond Board of Guardians and the index to pupils at the Princess Mary Village Homes in Chertsey, 1872-1890, is about to go on our website

August also saw the formal completion of our Ockenden project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Through the project, the marvellous archive of the Woking-based refugee charity Ockenden International was fully catalogued, rare archive film was digitised and preserved, the memories of 30 people who worked for or were helped by the charity were recorded and transcribed and Woking Community Play Association staged a retelling of the story of Ockenden, entitled 'The Vision'. To complement the archive collection, and as part of our HLF objectives for the project, we have now produced an online version of the travelling exhibition which can be seen on our Exploring Surrey's Past website at http://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/themes/subjects/refugees/the_ockenden_exhibition

The Ockenden web pages on the site have already been well received, with former refugees who were helped by the charity contacting us for access to their records. The exhibition itself is free to hire, please contact Di Stiff on 01483 518740 for further details.

Our conservators have completed work on the repair and rebinding of a marvellous set of Tudor letters from the recusant peer Anthony Browne, Viscount Montague (d.1592) to Sir William More of Loseley and work has begun on the first male case book of the Manor Hospital in Epsom, which includes haunting photographs of the patients, 1899-1901.

Through the auspices of Surrey Record Society all our watercolours by the topographical artists John (d.1825) and Edward Hassell (d.1852) have now been digitised and can be accessed via the Exploring Surrey's Past website. Many of the watercolours depict the county's churches before Victorian restorers got their teeth into them and others offer tantalising glimpses of towns and villages.

Surrey History Centre has lent its support to an HLF funded project to erect a permanent exhibition that celebrates the history of Tweedsmuir Camp, near Thursley. The camp was built by the Royal Canadian Engineers in 1941 and during the Second World War acted as a base for returning Canada and American troops. Between 1947 and 1960, the camp was used as temporary accommodation for personnel of the Polish Resettlement Corps (PRC). It is the camp's Polish history that is being collated and preserved by project administrators Wies and Zen Rogalski and the exhibition will be launched at Surrey History Centre next year some time prior to a permanent home at the Rural Life Centre, which itself is close to the former site of camp. The project will involve those from the camp and their descendants and a booklet outlining the camp's history and DVD record of the site will be produced. Interviews with Polish people who lived in the camp as family members of PRC personnel will be made and Surrey History Centre will provide a home for any historical material from the project as well as collated documents procured from the National Archives, Canadian Archives, Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum, Secretts Farm and private collections. Anyone who has information about the camp should contact Zen or Wies via their website www.tweedsmuirmilitarycamp.org.uk.

We are already planning Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-sexual (LGBT) History Month 2011, with more stories of Surrey's LGBT past and present. A new online bibliography and guide to tracing LGBT history will also be launched so watch this space. If you would like to volunteer to carry out LGBT research with us we would be delighted to hear from you. Similarly if you have material relating to the county's LGBT past or present, whether personal recollections or records of organisations, we would very much like to receive them. Please contact Di Stiff for further details on 01483 518740.

Finally please come and see us at the Bracknell Family History Fair on Sunday 30 January and of course at 'Who Do You Think You are – Live' on 25, 26 and 28 February 2011.

Both sides of the pond

Searching for my family in World War II

Barbara Kent Lawrence

Why should a person from the US join a historical society in the UK? The answer is, of course, that someone somewhere in England yanked out his or her roots and replanted them in the New World. In my case it was my mother, Barbara Kent Green, who changed her name to Greene when she became an actress, and later evacuated during World War II. I know a little of her history; I've met some of my British relatives, and visited Bath, Frome and Kent to which I knew I was connected. But I had never paused to think more deeply about my mother's life in England until this year.

This year, as I approached what I must admit is old age – the math no longer works to categorize myself as middle-aged when I double 67 – I began to wonder what my mother was like as a child and young adult before she emigrated to the US. She died in 1973 when she was 53; my



grandmother died two years later after returning to Bath, and my Uncle Kent died in the same nursing home in 1977 so there was no one to ask.

By training I'm a sociologist and I've been teaching research and writing for the past ten years. I had some tools and I knew a few facts, but they were fragments I couldn't glue together. Uncle Kent was in the Army and was rescued from Dunkirk. Mummy was a young actress who got a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and was later 'discovered'. She made several movies including *Moonlight Sonata* and *Blind Man's Bluff*, and acted in plays, and Grannie said that Ambassador Joseph Kennedy's son was one of her admirers. I knew Mummy had been near a bomb that severely damaged her hearing and that she came to the US as an escort for children being evacuated from the Blitz. I knew she learned to fly and piloted a small plane around the eastern half of the United States raising money for Bundles for Britain, but that was about it.

I've made progress over the past nine months uncovering more bits of the story, but most of all I've discovered the importance of helping hands. Members of mercantilemarine.org help me identify the ship my mother took to the US: The

Warwick Castle. A meteorologist friend using old data tells me the weather was cold and sunny, and plots a likely route. From books and Wikipedia I learn about U-Boats, 'Wolf Packs', Aldis Lamps and degaussing cables.

Reasoning that if I could find another passenger who was a boy with an unusual name, one that hadn't changed at his marriage, I might be able to locate him, I search the Passenger Lists again. I find Jim (the rest of his name is less common) now 81 who was eleven on the voyage and remembers it clearly. Jim is so generous with his time and memories that he is instantly an old friend. He tells me the Warwick Castle was hastily requisitioned to accommodate the staff of Lord Halifax when he went by battleship to assume his duties as the newly appointed ambassador to the United States. Someone called Jim's parents on Saturday, January 11 and told them that if they could get him a new passport, visa, and updated medical documents, he could leave on the following Tuesday. It's an important clue, and Jim adds that the ship travelled 22 knots not 13 and took a much longer but safer route, hugging the northern coasts.

But why join the East Surrey Family History Society? The reason is that my mother's career in theater in the UK ended some time during the Blackout after Great Britain entered the war in September 3, 1939. She then joined the Voluntary Aid Detachment (V.A.D.) and was sent to serve in hospitals in Croydon and Lambeth, but which ones and in which order? I don't know.

The dates of her service matter because she told reporters interviewing her for newspaper articles about her trip for Bundles for Britain that she was very near a bomb that destroyed the Nurses' Home while she was working in Surgery. That's the 'family' story as well, the one my sister and brother and I remember. I've found a report in the BBC files by a nurse describing the bombing of the Nurses' Home at Lambeth Hospital, but it happened on January 11, 1941, three days before my mother boarded the boat train to Glasgow. Lizzie Mould at the Croydon Local Studies Library searches carefully through records again and again for bombings in Croydon as we try to identify the hospital in Croydon in which my mother worked, but there is nothing that fits what we know.

Finally, I find clues I've missed before – the Croydon hospital was very near an airport and it was bombed frequently. Lizzie keeps searching, but also suggests I join the East Surrey Family History Society, which I do. Other people tell me it wouldn't have made sense to put a military hospital near an airport transformed into an RAF base, but then Peter Heather steps in to tell me that, in fact, part of the Aerodrome Hotel at Croydon Airport was made into a temporary military hospital. That immediately feels right.

This information ties in with stories my mother told about the war. She did so infrequently, but she always mentioned the bravery of the young RAF pilots – and she knew their names. Sometimes she told a story about attending a séance in the United States on Long Island in New York state with new friends at which the Medium got rather cross with a voice “on the line,” telling him to go away because no one knew him. When the Medium said the name, however, my mother recognized it. It was the name of a pilot who had crashed into his friend’s plane while he was being chased by a Fokker during the Battle of Britain. Both British pilots died. “Tell his wife it wasn’t my fault,” the voice pleaded, but my mother didn’t know how to reach her.

It was a dramatic story, but then Mummy was an actress. When I read accounts of the Battle of Britain however, the plea haunts me as well, and I hope to find the pilots’ names. I wonder if my mother’s decision to become a pilot and to ferry bombers from the US to Great Britain began when she was at Croydon Airport. It was a plan my arrival interrupted and she never flew a plane again.

I joined the East Surrey Family History Society because I want to know more, and I need more helping hands to patch together this story. Did my mother work first at Croydon and then at Lambeth Hostels, even though that is the opposite chronology reported in the newspaper articles? Was she at Lambeth when it was bombed? The Border Manifest when she crossed onto US soil from Canada states she was a “friend of Ambassador and Mrs Joseph Kennedy”. Did the Ambassador hastily arrange her evacuation after she was hurt?

If she had been near the exploding bomb only three days before leaving on the boat train, my mother would have been disoriented by the sudden loss of almost all hearing in one ear, and her balance would have been affected as well. I know that because I’ve talked with a doctor who examined her about twelve years later. Perhaps she wasn’t escorting children, but someone was escorting her? The three names above hers, and the two below are all members of or associated with the Hyams family, and their residences are given as Gaumont State Theatre in Kilburn. Phil, Sid, and Mick Hyams built that theater with A.J. Gale, and my mother’s films may have played there. A film she didn’t finish, *The Great Barrier*, was a Gaumont – British production, so perhaps she knew them, perhaps Ambassador Kennedy did as well and perhaps the Hyams family helped her. I would like to find them, to know the story, and to thank them.

There are many other mysteries, and I look forward to working with members of the East Surrey Family History Society in searching for clues and answers. Thank you for hands helping across the pond that separates and joins us.

Tech Topic – File types – part 5

Brian Hudson [7324]

.pdf (the file extension for a Portable Document Format (PDF) file)

This popular file type was created by Adobe Systems over 15 years ago. It is also known as document exchange software, as a PDF allows documents produced on one computer to be viewed and printed exactly the same on any another computer or operating system, e.g. PC or Mac.

Adobe Acrobat is the program normally used to produce a PDF and the Adobe Acrobat Reader is the free software used to display and print the files. Originally a proprietary format, it has become an **open standard** (i.e. the software coding is publicly available for others to use). It is now widely used by other products, such as family history programs, to produce documents and charts. Recent versions of Microsoft Office have the ability to produce PDF files and many other companies sell or give away sophisticated PDF publishing software.

Family History Societies (such as East Surrey) produce their digital publications using PDF not only because it works so effectively on many different computer systems but also because it provides invaluable features such as indexes and fast document search.

Email correction

Yvonne Thornton [8044]

I was so pleased to see my request for help printed in the last Journal. Unfortunately the contact email address quoted is incorrect; it should read yvonne1908@ticali.co.uk not 1905.

I would hate anybody to give up trying to contact me because of an error on the email.

Journal back issues

Back issues may be obtained, subject to availability, from the Treasurer, Gill Hyder. Postal and email address are listed inside the front cover of the journal. Please send £1.00 per copy to cover the cost of postage and packing.

Please note that extra copies of the current year's journals may be obtained, subject to availability, from the Membership Secretary.

Can you help?

Brasher / Brown

Joyce Moss [10039]

I never knew my paternal grandparents but my father's birth certificate shows them to be Charles Henry Brown and Ellen Brasher. According to the 1891 census they were living in Sandison Street, Peckham - Charles aged 40, a Wheelwright's Labourer born in Fulham and Ellen aged 28, born in Brixton.

Their children were George H. age 6, Charles H. age 4, Mary age 3 and James age 1. Alice was born later that year and my father, William, in 1893.

I have a birth certificate for a Charles Henry Brown born in Fulham in September 1850 to James Brown and Mary Turner and one for an Ellen Brasher born in January 1866, in Clapham, to John Brasher and Rebecca Nikols. She was illiterate and later research gives Rebecca's surname as Nichol(l)s. I believe these to be my paternal grandparents and great-grandparents but have not found a marriage for Charles Henry and Ellen.

There is a marriage for an Ellen Brasher in 1881 to Edward Petty in Emmanuel Church, Camberwell, with Ellen giving her age as 18 and the witnesses being Emma and Alfred Reeves who were married a year earlier. Emma was Ellen's sister and they all lived at the same address in Whateiey Road, Camberwell. Ellen was really then, only aged 15 . This seems to verify she was the Ellen Brasher who then appears on the 891 census with Charles Henry Brown . To add to the mystery, Edward Petty - research proves he is the same person who married Ellen Brasher in 1881, then married a Frances Ayres in 1887 in Newington declaring himself a bachelor. So, unless my research so far is very wrong Edward became a bigamist and Ellen then went to live with Charles Henry Brown. I cannot imagine there would have been a divorce.

On the 1901 census Ellen now gives her age as 34 ,living in Oglander Road Camberwell, married but minus Charles Henry and the two older sons. I have been unable to find them anywhere on the census.

As a child I knew my father's siblings: Mary, who married George Hodge in 1910; James, who married Annie Louise Buckingham in 1911 , declaring his father deceased on the marriage certificate; and Alice who never married. Of the two older brothers I have no information, only the birth certificate for Charles Henry Jnr in 1886. My father never spoke of them, or of his parents, and when I started my research my father had been dead for many years. The 1911 census shows him living with sister Mary so I believe both their parents were dead by then. He

joined the army soon after and married Kate Mayo in 1921. We lived in Nunhead, Peckham, moving to Brighton after a few years and losing contact with the Brown family in London.

I have spent a small fortune on wrong certificates and haven't yet been able to verify the deaths of my Brown grandparents. I would so appreciate any help whatsoever in tracing my elusive Brown ancestors. I know James and Annie had sons so perhaps they in turn married and had families who would be interested in contacting their long lost relations. Please, does anyone have any information about these families – I'm desperate.

Ray / Reynolds

*Jane Deed (janedeed@fastmail.fm)
PO Box 74367, Greenlane, Auckland 1546, New Zealand*

Having done extensive family history for many years I am now trying to find any living relatives!

Two brothers married two sisters. One brother, Cecil Hunt Ray, from Horton Kirby in Kent, appears to have had only one child. Irene Ellaline Ray was born December 1894 in Kingston, Surrey. She married Lawrence Gilbert Reynolds in 1920; he was born December 1886 in Oldham, Lancashire.

I am trying to find out if they had any children and would appreciate any help. Cecil Hunt Ray was my grandfather's brother.

Vouchers for sale

The Society keeps vouchers for sale at £5 for
Findmypast (including 1911 census)

If you would like to purchase any, please send a cheque (payable to "East Surrey FHS") and a stamped addressed envelope to Sue Adams, 10 Cobham Close, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 9DS.

