



East Surrey Family History Society

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Journal of the East Surrey Family History Society



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Next *Journal* deadline

23 July 2005

Editor: Tony Goring
address inside front cover

*For details of cover photograph
please see Letters p.10*

ESFHS Web site:
<http://www.eastsurreyfhs.org.uk>

Programme

JUNE

- Thurs 2 **Sutton** MY ANCESTORS WERE THAMES WATERMEN
AND ROYAL WATERMEN
Talk by Pat Hilbert
- Thurs 9 **Croydon** READING HANDWRITING
Members' Evening
- Wed 22 **Lingfield** APPRENTICESHIPS
Talk by Richard Harvey
- Mon 27 **Southwark** USING METROPOLITAN POOR LAW UNION
RECORDS AFTER 1834 FOR RESEARCH
Talk by Amy Proctor of LMA

JULY

- Thurs 7 **Sutton** METROPOLITAN POLICE RECORDS AND THE
FAMILY HISTORIAN
Talk by Maggie Bird
- Sat 9 **Richmond** MEMBERS' AFTERNOON
Our own members' research and stories
- Thurs 14 **Croydon** THE RAILWAYS - WHY & HOW THEY WERE
BUILT, AND THEIR EFFECTS ON TOWN & VILLAGE
Talk by Ron Cox
- Wed 27 **Lingfield** LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED
Talk by Meryl Catty & Audrey Gillett

AUGUST

- Thurs 4 **Sutton** THE LONDON OF CHARLES DICKENS
Talk by John Neal
- Southwark** TBA

SEPTEMBER

- Thurs 1 **Sutton** SOUTHWARK IN ARCHIVES
Talk by Stephen Humphrey
- Thurs 8 **Croydon** PARISH RECORDS
Talk by Brenda Hawkins
- Sat 10 **Richmond** I NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT - A SECOND LOOK AT
PROBLEMS
Talk by Lady Mary Teviot
- Wed 28 **Lingfield** MY ANCESTORS CAME TO LONDON: HOW I
TRACKED DOWN LIVING RELATIVES
Talk by Richard Ratcliff

The meetings listed opposite are held at the following places and times:

- Croydon** United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove,
Croydon, at 8.00pm (doors open at 7.30pm)
Group Secretary: Wendy Shuttleworth
(tel: 020-8406 3814)
- Lingfield** Lingfield & Dormansland Community Centre,
High St, Lingfield, at 2.30pm (doors open at 2.00pm)
Group Secretary: Rita Russell (tel: 01342 834648)
- Richmond** Vestry House, 21 Paradise Road, Richmond-upon-
Thames, at 2.30pm (doors open at 2.00pm)
(But see below and overleaf for AGM)
Group Secretary: Veronica Crellin (tel: 020-8876 9893)
- Southwark** Southwark Local Studies Library, John Harvard
Library, 211 Borough High Street, SE1
Lunchtime meetings, noon to 2.00pm
Group Secretary: Sheila Gallagher (tel: 020-8337 8580)
- Sutton** St. Nicholas's Church Hall, Robin Hood Lane, Sutton,
at 8.00pm (doors open at 7.30pm)
Group Secretary: Vacant
-

Vacancy for Independent Examiner

At the Annual General Meeting **Brenda Hawkins** was elected to the Executive Committee. This creates a vacancy for an Independent Examiner to carry out an annual examination of the Society's accounts. If there is a UK-based Member, with accounting knowledge and some auditing experience, who would be willing to fill this position would he or she kindly get in touch with the Chairman.

Secretary's Report to AGM for the year ending 31st December 2004

I am now well into my second year as Secretary, and I hope that I haven't made too many mistakes. I have visited all of the Groups for their meetings on at least two occasions each, except for Southwark. My apologies to them; I'll try and get there this year.

The Executive Committee has met six times this year. These meetings always turn out to be longer than expected, but it gives us a chance to meet up and discuss any matters that need to be sorted out.

We held a very successful Beginners' Day in April, and hosted a FFHS Regional Seminar in November. We also had representatives at many Open Days throughout the year, including SOG in May, and BBC Family History Day in December.

The website continues to attract a growing number of visitors. Regular improvements and updates were made to the website, including a complete reorganisation of the publications section. To improve the process of producing our CD publications, a CD duplicator and printer were purchased. The equipment soon proved its worth with the production of a large number of CDs for delegates at the Beginners' Day.

Our thanks go to Ted Scott for his work on the complex task of preparing the large amount of Census data for the FFHS Pay-Per-View website which, as the accounts show, are contributing a welcome and steady return to the Society.

Four issues of the Journal were published in 2004. There is very little feedback from members as to whether or not they find the content and style to their liking, and a survey questionnaire on this topic issued to members three years ago yielded only a 10% response, from which no firm conclusions could be drawn. In light of this continuing situation, an editorial board consisting of the editor and three volunteers was formed at the end of the year to try to get a range of opinion on what should be included in the Journal, which for some members is virtually the sole contact they have with the Society. The Journal is of course, to a large extent, dependent on contributions from members. Attracting suitable material remains the most difficult task facing the editor, so members are encouraged to do the best they can to provide a flow of interesting and informative contributions.

The Research Centre has been operating for just over a year now. The number of visitors has been low, but we have been able to answer many queries so much easier with the majority of our material in one place. It is not in an ideal situation, as we are constantly reminded, but no worse than visiting the Surrey History Centre. It is, however, at a rent that we can afford and in a comfortable building. Hopefully, more members and visitors will come to see us this year.

Although our overall Society membership has fallen slightly this year, all of the Group meetings for all five locations have been well attended. This is, no doubt, due to the diverse range of interests and topics covered. We have been lucky to have

had some excellent speakers this year, whose knowledge and advice have been of great help to those of us who attend the meetings. We have also been getting a few non-members attending the meetings, who we hope will come again and join the Society.

The Society is very fortunate in having a group of people who spend a lot of their time making sure that everything runs smoothly for all of our members.

Brian Hudson has kept the website running perfectly, and Tony Goring has done similar excellent work as editor of the Journal. Brenda Hawkins has been examiner of our accounts for several years, and is also our FFHS representative. Sue Adams and Gill Hyder continue to run our bookstall very successfully. Then there are the chairmen and secretaries who make sure that the local Group meetings are always run like clockwork; also the helpers who make the teas and coffees and sell the books at these meetings. We also have a group of volunteers who transcribe and check data to increase our publications.

Tony Goring and Beryl Cheeseman have to retire from the Committee this year, as they have done their full five years. Jacqui Gomm is retiring due to work commitments.

My sincere thanks go to all of these people, and to anyone else that I may have inadvertently missed.

Don Knight

Secretary

Please see p 18 for information about the Annual Report & Accounts for 2004

A USEFUL SERVICE

of particular help to out-of-town searchers is offered by
Mrs Elizabeth Oliver, 57 Sheen Park, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1UN
Send names for baptisms and marriages together with date of event and church from IGI entries for full extracts from the Parish Registers.

The service covers the City of London (Guildhall), Westminster (City of Westminster Archives) and the Dioceses of London and Southwark (London Metropolitan Archives).

[Non-conformists (National Archives) not covered]

FEE: £3.50 per entry, plus SAE for reply or 3 IRCs if overseas

How things have changed!

Marion Brackpool

I was thinking the other day that I have been a member of our society now for over 25 years and have been researching various family histories for over 27 years. Then I got to thinking just how things have changed since my husband Colin and I first started research in 1977. For those who are fairly new to this subject let me just reiterate some of the differences between then and now.

In 1977 we didn't have any computers at home; they were unheard of. The 1881, 1891 and 1901 censuses had not been released, and there were no indexes to the ones that *were* available to view.

There was no IGI, the CFI (Computer File Index), its predecessor, started in 1979, there were no family history magazines, very few indexes in general, and most of the parish registers and records were still in their church of origin. The Public Record Office was in three different buildings, Chancery records were at Chancery Lane, the Census at Portugal Street, and Government records were kept at a much smaller building at Kew. I should add here that if you wanted to look at the Census then, you had to fill in an order form, hand this in, and then wait a minimum of 20 minutes for your reel of micro film. You couldn't leave your seat for that long or it was taken and given to someone else! The queue to get in the building sometimes went a long way down the road. You couldn't hang around the counter either; it was a nightmare, and when the Census became available from cabinets in the depths of Chancery Lane it was wonderful!

We still managed to trace our ancestors. We travelled round the country, making appointments with various Vicars so that we had access to their parish records which were sometimes the worse for wear from mice, damp and termites. We would traipse through churchyards looking for that elusive grave stone, and of course it was all great fun. Of course we had the Society of Genealogists which was then in Harrington Gardens, Kensington, an Edwardian town house near Gloucester Road tube station. I was a frequent visitor.

I heard about our society in 1979 and joined straight away. Jack Saunders put together our first Directory of Members' Interests. He did this on a typewriter whilst having all our interests on slips of paper which he indexed by hand and then typed out. I think I still have a copy of that first foolscap DMI.

I remember *Family Tree Magazine* coming out bi-monthly in 1984, the same year that we held our first Symposium at Sutton Library. By then the IGI had issued its second batch of micro-fiche, and we thought we were in heaven!

In the 1980s all the member societies of the Federation started to index the 1851 Census, a feat we never thought possible. Many volunteers of our society sat and typed out page after page of different areas of East Surrey. Since then of course family history resources and help have gone from strength to strength and even I am

'hooked' on the various sites on the Internet, but I still get out there and try to do one day a week 'live' in a repository somewhere. I love surfing the net, finding different sites and names etc, and giving these site details to others who might find them useful. I keep a list of these invaluable sites next to the computer.

At a recent social gathering a lady came up to me and said she was 'stuck with her family tree'. I rattled off everyday sources such as wills, poor law, monumental inscriptions, newspapers etc. The lady looked at me as though I was foreign and said she had never heard of any of these sources, having done all her research on the computer! In my mind there is nothing like getting out there and chatting to other family historians about your research, even if you bore each other stiff! There is also nothing like joining a family history society and having the companionship of others who know exactly how you feel when you get 'stuck' or 'lost', or, for that matter, the elation of finding something you have been seeking for years.

My, how times have changed. Are they for the better or not? I wonder!

Computer news

Brian Hudson

Family History programs

IN THE PREVIOUS ISSUE of the *Journal* (March 2005 pp 15–17) Geoff Burgess wrote in his article *Beginners Guide to Family History* that his choice of family history program was the one available from Family Search at www.familysearch.org. It reminded me that a question frequently asked by new, and not so new, computer owners, is 'What program should I buy?' There is no definitive answer to this. The best selling program is *Family Tree Maker* but the pros and cons of competing family history programs are always a good topic for discussion.

So how do you choose a program? Here are some options:-

Ask someone you know what they use and if possible have a demonstration. Knowing an existing user of a particular program is probably the reason for many sales. Check the cover disks of genealogy magazines. Some of them include trial programs which have limitations on their use, but are sufficient to get the feel of using them longer term.

Look through the advertisements of software suppliers - although they can be confusing with so many products but little in the way of explanations or descriptions.

Visit Family History Fairs to see demonstrations and ask questions of the suppliers. If you are lucky there can be special show promotions.

Search the Internet. You don't have to pay for a program; there are free ones such as the one from Family Search, already mentioned above, which can be downloaded.

My current program is *Roots Magic*. This choice was made after trying out various demonstration programs, reading magazine reviews, and seeing presentations at the SoG Family History Fair. The main reason for looking for a new program was that my *Family Origins* program was several years old. It still performed its job well, but the time had come for an update after I bought a new computer and wanted a more modern program.

The original *Family Origins* program was discontinued after the company that produced it was bought out by Genealogy.com. However I found the program author had moved on and was producing a brand new program called *Roots Magic*. It had had many good reviews in the US, and then a UK edition was produced. At a demonstration during the SoG Fair in London it was immediately pleasing to see that the layout and operation of the program had similarities to my *Family Origins*, but its features had been greatly improved. To this day *Roots Magic* remains a delight to use and a program I would recommend.

.....but you may disagree or have your own recommendation; if you would like to write to the editor with your views we may be able to help others make an informed decision when they come to make their choice.

Roots Magic UK Edition v2, published by S&N Genealogy www.genealogysupplies.com at £21.95 for the Basic Edition, £34.95 Standard Edition, and £49.95 for the Platinum Edition. All prices plus P&P.

1861 Census online

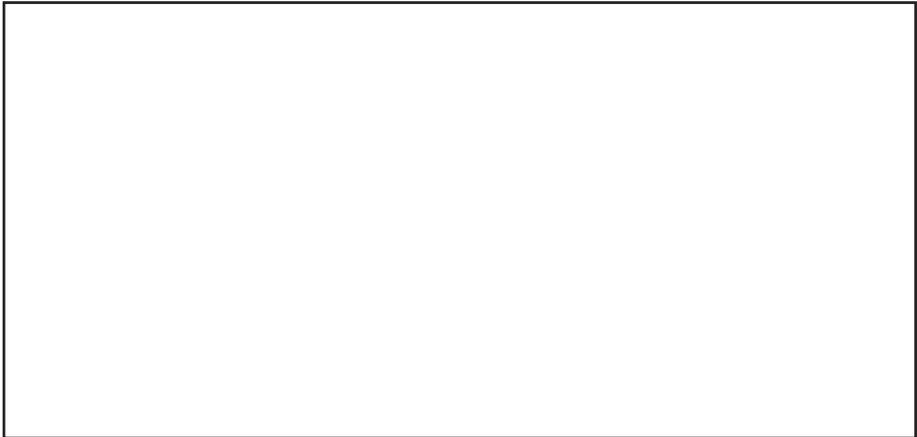
HAVING MADE their name in providing access to the PRO indexes, 1837online at www.1837online.co.uk are now offering Pay-Per-View access to the 1861 Census. The initial offering is for counties in the south east of England including Surrey. The site is well organised, searches are easy to make, and it is possible to narrow them down where enough information is already known about other family members. Unfortunately some transcription errors were found, but good quality images of the actual census page can be printed or downloaded, so you can make your own decisions. That is if you can find the image; if the place name has been mistranscribed then you have a problem. If an initial exact spelling does not find the required census entry then choose the option that searches for variants of the name. Unfortunately some entries could still not be found; hopefully these problems will be resolved in much the same way that the original 1837online index searches for Births Deaths and Marriages have been improved since its first introduction.

A2A New address

BY THE TIME you read this the website address for Access to Archives will have changed to www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a - another example of making life more complicated?

Directories

WHEN SEEKING information on the location of ancestors between censuses then street and trade directories can be a useful source. The problem is not only which one to look in, because there are many to choose from, but where can you find these directories apart from places like the Society of Genealogists, which has a very large collection, the East Surrey FHS research collection, or buying a facsimile. One option worth trying is the result of a project by the University of Leicester who are aiming to make a selection of searchable Street and Trade directories available on the internet at www.historicaldirectories.org. There is good national coverage and for a wide range of dates, from the 1750s up to 1919. To search, enter a name or address; it's as easy as that. I had some slightly strange results, but mostly the keyword was correctly found and highlighted in yellow on the directory page.



Browsing again

IN THE LAST ISSUE I mentioned the Mozilla Firefox browser which is eating away at the market share of Internet Explorer. The more adventurous among you might like to look at a new British contender for the market. Known as Deepnet Explorer it has been produced by a small company based in London and initial reviews indicate that this could be even better than Firefox. To see more about Deepnet go to www.deepnetexplorer.com

PS - for Firefox users. At the time of writing this article version 1.0.3 was available for download from www.mozilla.org/products/firefox. The program has been updated due to the discovery of some vulnerabilities.

Letters

The photo [*front cover*] is of my great grandmother, Emma **Vousden** (formerly Mrs **Cheeseman**, maiden name **Cook**), wife of Charles Frank Vousden. She is pictured with older daughter May and younger daughter Muriel (my grandmother). The photo was taken when they were living in Horsmonden, Kent.

Having just embarked on tracing our family history, we are still very 'green'. I have probably done what most people do as they start the long and fascinating journey through the generations - hit the library, get out all the interesting books, go to bed early, and read, read, read! I have found a wealth of information there, and also the trip to WH Smiths every month to see what new family history magazines are in and what free discs they have.

We were naive to believe that the journey through the generations would not take as long as we were led to believe. It has in fact got to the 'hit the brick wall' point in some family names we are searching, whilst others have grown to the extent that we now have a large collection of A4 folders on the surnames.

My husband's uncle started their family tree, and had traced part of the family back to 1627 - for the family name **Jewson**. Having joined Genes Reunited, we have now found many people researching the same name. In fact, I am already quite exhausted and only wish TV had been invented much earlier, as families were normally of eight to twelve children. I have indexed 510 names of Jewson.

Having been a secretary has a great advantage as I am methodical. Each person I find is logged on index cards and cross referenced. We are also adding discs. I have already found a cousin I never knew I had. My husband has also found some first cousins and we will be having a reunion in May.

We are visiting all appropriate Record Office in Kent, Sussex and Lambeth, not forgetting churches and graveyards. My mother cringes when we ask if she would like a day out - she automatically says 'not another cemetery'! We find it useful to take a digital camera and photograph gravestones with the family name, the church they are in, and the village.

As I only joined the ESFHS in February, I have yet to get to know anyone. Even though I am in a wheelchair, please don't let it put you off talking to me. My first visit to the Resource Centre in Lingfield was wonderful. Rita and Don made us so welcome, and Don sifted through his disc to help me on the 1891 census for the surname of **Conquest**. Needless to say, we found many names to investigate; thanks Don. And I must say thank you to Brenda, who has been a great help in pointing me to the right record office. As a beginner, I can't thank them enough. **Karen Thatcher** (Member 9122), 119 Harewood Gardens, Sanderstead, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 9BW.

I was pleased to read Brian Roote's article on the Caterham Asylum in the March *Journal*. My gt uncle Charles **Horne** died in the Cane Hill Asylum, Coulsdon in 1918. Until I checked the 1891 census, I didn't know I had a gt uncle Charles. I thought my grandfather had three brothers, not four. I contacted an aunt who told me that Charles had fallen from a carnival float, hit his head, and spent the rest of his life in an asylum. A fire had broken out on the float and he was trying to put it out. She did not know when or where but we guessed it would have been in the Streatham/Norwood area, where the Hornes lived.

When I obtained his death certificate I read that he had died at Cane Hill in February 1918, aged 32 - of primary dementia 14 years. That put the accident around 1904 or earlier, if he spent some time in hospital or at home first. He was training as a paperhanger in 1901.

I've been unable to find out anything about a carnival or the accident. If anyone has heard or read about a fire on a carnival float I'd be very pleased to hear from them.

June Carmichael (Member No. 1017), 38 Foxearth Road, Selsdon, Surrey CR2 EE

Question and Answer

John **Newman** and Louisa **Hammond** were married in 1824 at St John's, Horsleydown. Has anyone any information on this church, where it is or was? I have heard St John's could be in Southwark but cannot be sure. Any information would be appreciated.

Sylvia Newman (Member No. 7837), 25 Leaside, Portishead, Somerset BS20 6JL
e-mail: sjn52uk@yahoo.com

Stephen Humphrey, Southwark Local Studies Library, replies:

St John's Parish was split off from St Olave's Parish in the early 18th century as a result of the *Fifty New Churches Act*. The church was opened in 1733 and from that time onwards it was a separate ecclesiastical and civil parish. It was formally known as St John's, Southwark, but because the greater part of its area had been occupied by the former common called Horselydown, it was more usually known as St Johns, Horselydown.

St Olave's, the original mother-church, was closed in 1918 and was demolished in 1926–28, after which St John's served both parishes. Then, in the Second World War, St John's was bombed and its site was used to build an office for the London City Mission.

The parish church subsequently was St Mary Magdalen's, Bermondsey.

News from Sutton Local Studies Centre

The Local Studies Centre has been quite busy since our reopening. Readers are still getting used to our new opening hours and I expect numbers to steadily increase over time. Family historians still make up 50% of our readers. I'd like to say a big thank you to ESFHS for supporting the *A2A Flesh & Blood* bid. The project is coming to an end, and by the time you read this most of the catalogues should be up on the website: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a

Summer events

Sutton Libraries & Heritage Service are organising a number of events relating to the 60th Anniversary of the end of the war. Keep an eye on our web pages for further details www.sutton.gov.uk

Carew Manor: tours of the Great Hall, cellars and dovecote summer and autumn: 3 July and 25 September. Tours at 2pm and 3.30pm. Tickets £3.50 – advance booking on 020 8770 4781. Sutton's only Grade I listed building, with its late medieval hammer-beamed hall roof; cellars with medieval, Tudor and 18th century features. Plus a visit to the nearby 18th century dovecote.

And finally a plug for my colleagues in the London Borough of Hackney. They have successfully launched electronic catalogues of both their Archive and Local Studies Library collections. This means it is possible to search both at the same time. Go to: www.hackney.gov.uk/index/hackney/archives.htm and follow the link to the Webcat electronic catalogue.

✉ **Kath Shawcross**, Borough Archivist & Local Studies Manager
London Borough of Sutton

Sutton Local Studies Centre
2nd Floor, Sutton Central Library

New opening hours:

Tue – Fri: 9-8pm

Saturday: 9-5pm

Sunday: 2-5pm

IF THERE IS A MEMBER living within reasonable travelling distance of West Wimbledon and would be prepared to assist in the entry of data on computer in connection with one of the Society's projects, would he or she kindly get in touch with the Secretary.

Sutton 'Magical Mystery Evening' ~ 7 April 05

AN IMPROMPTU BUT ENJOYABLE EVENING WAS HAD BY ALL AT SUTTON WHEN THE SPEAKER for the evening failed to appear and member Bert Barnhurst stepped manfully into the breach. Bert led the members in a 'useful information' evening, encouraging everyone to speak for a few minutes about something that they had found helpful in their research, or a useful website they had tried. He also kindly volunteered me as minute-taker to relay the useful information offered to the editor so that the rest of the members might benefit. Who was it who said 'A friend in need is a blessed nuisance'?

Here is a resume of the information discussed:

SOG offer of 72 hours free on Origins website www.originsnetwork.com

Needs SoG membership. It wasn't very good a few months ago, but now they have the 1841 census for Devon, whilst the 1891 census is better; also have 1871 census. Some people have had problems, either because their security level was too high or because the server was down, but SoG do try to be helpful with problems. One member suggested problem might be Microsoft web settings. He said security should only be 'medium'.

Local press are a good source

A member contacted a lady who had written in the local press in Yorkshire and because of that, she was able to go back two more generations, so keeping an eye on the local press is recommended.

Website for Durham

If your research place is a long way to visit, check the web. The chairman reported that Durham are putting parish registers on their website. There is a charge to view full details, but not as expensive as a trip to Durham in person.

Online Parish Clerks websites

These are various and can be found via a search engine such as Google. People are putting together websites for various parishes/towns and gradually putting all available parish information on them – *eg* parish registers, lists, census etc. There is a list available of places which have a 'parish clerk' and those which are vacant and if you are lucky enough to choose one which is being entered, it may supply you with useful information.

Free BMD Rootsweb

They have recently up-graded their server and the site is now much faster. Bert explained for those who didn't know, that once you are on the site it is possible to view the statistics of what years have already been entered, in order to see what

chance you have of finding the birth, marriage or death you are seeking.

Cotton or flax mills and Surrey apprentices

Sheila Gallagher is investigating this subject at the moment and made a plea to members holidaying or visiting in this country. If you happen to go to areas where there are old cotton or flax mills, would you please take some pictures for her (saying where they are, of course). Sheila has been working on north east Surrey parishes which sent parish children during the 1820s to be apprenticed to these mills in Nottingham and elsewhere. The youngest she has found was only 6yrs 4months! She found them in settlement examinations and told us that a book entitled *Dark Satanic Mills* is the story of these children.

Relatives on Large Estates

One member solved a problem by ordering film from the Latter Day Saints and got maps etc. from the time that the estates where forebears lived were auctioned off. It gives full details of property, terms and costs of the lease. She said she could then track down a local paper and discover the results of the auction. Another member added that the LDS produce a CD Rom of their whole Catalog which costs £5.95, although of course this can be viewed free at their research centres.

Times Digital Index

This has more than *Palmers* and examples of finds given were mentions of clubs, ships returning from the Crimea, court cases etc. This can be seen at Kew, FRC, Bromley Library, but is not thought to be at Sutton yet.

Don't neglect cemetery records

Some local cemeteries are very helpful. Richmond has all their records indexed and the Richmond cemeteries went online in September. Merton said they would charge £8. However, Epsom, who are being put on computer, will give a great deal of help for personal visitors. Bert added that the Local History Centre at Bourne Hall, Ewell, has an indexed file of all the Epsom cemetery records, compiled by one of the volunteers. Another member said if you phone Brookwood, they would charge £30 to search for you, but you can see their records at the Surrey History Centre at Woking. At some cemeteries, they give you the original registers to search.

The Gentleman Magazine

This does not only contain references to 'toffs' – a member whose ancestors were gypsies found references to them in this magazine. It can be consulted in the Guildhall. Some are indexed but not all.

Internet message boards

Don't ignore message boards – one member put a message on and heard from a lady in New Zealand who turned out to be related and who supplied much information.

www.oldmap.co.uk

This is a useful site providing 19th and 20th century maps. If you want a good print you have to pay, but there is some interesting information and also a link to a site offering modern aerial pictures.

Church of Latter Day Saints

You can do a free search at the Mormon Library which saves you paying a subscription at SoG. However, if you are a member of SoG, you can look at the Ancestry website free at their library. This can also be accessed at Kew.

Local newspaper appeals

A member who works on a local paper suggested if you have an ancestor who perhaps had a business locally, write to the paper asking for anyone's memories of that business or street. It is uncertain how long the paper might take to publish the letter, but even if it works slowly, results can still be accomplished.

War memorials

If you find a likely name on a war memorial, it can be followed up in the Commonwealth War Graves CD and then at Kew. One member reported finding 12 siblings as a result.

Serendipity

This of course cannot be found – it has to fall into your lap. However, one member had researched burial records and as a result the cemetery contacted him with a request from another researcher regarding a part of the family on which he had no information. On the day he was leaving for a trip to Australia, he received a letter regarding a possible Australian cousin. Whilst in Australia, he looked up the cousin, they met and he gained information and photos. Interesting to find a photo of your gt gt grandmother in Australia when it was taken in Croydon!

BMD Online hint

If you can't get on to Free BMD through their address, trying going through Google. Sometimes that works.

Couch-surfers beware!

A member met someone with her surname through the Internet and discovered that she had been pursuing her family tree for about 12 months solely from home on the computer. There were several types of records she knew nothing about; she didn't know how to find and check the originals, and was taking her online information on trust. It appears there is a new generation of researchers who are missing the fun of associating with other genealogists and consulting real records – and are likely to come unstuck if they take their information on trust. Bert added that a distant relative, an American member of the LDS, actually worked on compiling the IGI,

and he knew from her that people were allowed to just add information from their own research; it was taken as read and not checked before being included.
Moral: you must go back and check [as we all know].

Coroners' inquests

Although Coroners' inquests are destroyed, if you have an idea of the date there were often reports of Coroners' inquests in the local paper at the time, so the information might well be found after all in the newspapers.

Wills question

How soon can you consult a current will? General view was that it could be consulted as soon as probate is granted.

www.idealhomes

This is a website giving information about Southwark development in the last 200 – 300 years.

It can now be seen that ESFHS Sutton members are a font of knowledge! The chairman thanked Bert for stepping in at such short notice and suggested everyone had found the evening useful and amusing.

☞ *Gill Alford*

Searches in the Society's Research Collection

Beryl Cheeseman handles all initial enquiries for searches in the above collection. Enquiries (with SAE please) should be addressed to her at:

33 Beacon Hill, Dormansland,
Surrey RH7 6RQ

Journal back issues

Back issues of the *Journal* are now available for the cost of postage only (50p per copy and subject to availability) from **Gill Hyder** at:

41 Bardsley Close, Park Hill, Croydon, Surrey CR0 5PT

Canadian success

Marc Capron

I recently read with interest the article *Phone Book Surprise* by Keith Dunton in the March 2005 *Journal*. The article reminded me of a similar experience I encountered some years ago. My mother (Louisa **McKone** born 28 Oct 1919 at 102 Gt Suffolk Street, Southwark - the building still exists as Victoria Buildings behind the fire station) told me of my gt uncle Frederick John **Littlemore** (born 26 Jul 1886 at 45 Punderson Gardens, Bethnal Green, died 14 Jul 1965 Vancouver) who had emigrated to Canada sometime around WWI. He was one of my grandmother's two brothers with whom she had grown up in Bethnal Green. My grandmother was born Alice Littlemore 12 Feb 1888 at 7 King Street, Mile End Old Town, and died 26 May 1979 in South Clapham Hospital. She supposedly married my grandfather (Edward William McKone born 22 Aug 1885 at 49 Westmoreland Road, Walworth, died 22 Mar 1975 Orpington) c1910 but having looked through the GRO and numerous parish registers I can find no evidence of this. Also, their first born was named Alice McKone Littlemore (born 1910 Bethnal Green, died Greenwich 1915) and was the only child of 11 siblings not to have been born in Southwark.



Frederick Littlemore c1904 when serving with RASC

My mother remembers Uncle Fred visiting my grandmother's house in Bramah Road, Brixton in the late 1950s. This was a 'pre-fab' bungalow erected as temporary housing after WWII to house my grandparents after their house in Rockingham Street, Southwark had been earmarked for demolition. The temporary accommodation, made of prefabricated asbestos concrete sheets, lasted until c1975 when my grandfather was moved into sheltered accommodation. The bungalow probably brought on the demise of my grandparents as the dwelling was very cold in the winter, being heated only by a single Parkray type fire in the living room. Another point of interest was a gas-fired refrigerator in the kitchen,

which I had never seen before or since. Since the time of their first meeting Bramah Road had only been only their third marital home. My grandmother's family could be traced back to the East End of London in the mid-18th century and my grandfather's to Westminster via Lambeth to the same period.

When first considering tracing great Uncle Fred to Canada I looked at the Canadian Archive website and various other sources, but decided to put this particular project on hold. For some reason about a year later I decided to look at the Canadian equivalent of the BT website and entered the Littlemore name: 28 entries appeared on the screen. The Littlemore groupings tended to be in one of three areas: British Columbia, Winnipeg and Southern Ontario. I picked one family from each area and sent a letter with a quick resumé of my interest in gt uncle Fred. I received a letter, with photographs, from the grandson (Tom Littlemore born 25 Feb 1956 Ottawa) of my gt uncle. He was living in Ottawa and his father (Robert Stanely Littlemore born 3 Feb 1929 Saskatchewan) had been trying for several years to contact his British kinfolk. This was in 2001. To add a final twist to the story, in October 2001 we had already planned to holiday in Canada and NE America. Towards the end of our holiday we were invited to Ottawa to stay overnight with my 2nd cousin. He had rallied all the Littlemores in Ottawa and we went out for a meal. My 2nd cousin could be my twin brother as we are so much alike. Since 2001 we have been in regular contact, and his niece is now working in Clapham. All I need to do now is trace gt uncle George Littlemore (born 1883 Bethnal Green, on 25 Dec 1907 in Bethnal Green married Emily Caroline **Tout** born St Saviours 1879) who also emigrated to Canada at about the same time as Frederick. Since my visit to Ottwa the Littlemores have had a family 'get together' with other same-named groups from Ontario, and this now complements the bi-annual UK meeting of the Littlemores in Cheshire.

✉ Marc Capron (Member No. 7362)

e-mail: mcapron@totalise.co.uk

Annual Report and Accounts for 2004

The Annual Report and Accounts for 2004 were approved at the AGM on 23 April but it has not been possible in the period between the AGM and the despatch of this Journal issue to present the accounts in an easily readable form in the Journal. They will therefore be printed in the September issue. If any member who was not present at the AGM wishes to have a copy of the Report and Accounts before the September issue is despatched at the end of August would he or she kindly request one from the Treasurer.

Help wanted

I am researching my maternal gt gt grandfather's family and ancestors, but I believe I have exhausted the information available on the internet. Joseph Richard **Holland** was born 3 Dec 1807 to John and Ann Holland. He was baptised 19 Jun 1808 at St Mary, Lambeth. Joseph married Sarah Prudence **Twopenny**, date unknown. Sarah was born c1815 and died 25 Jan 1858 in Lambeth. Joseph and Sarah Holland had at least 3 children: John Henry c1835, Matilda Lucy and her twin (my gt grandmother) Priscilla Prudence Anna b.25 Nov 1838. I seek information on other children of Joseph and Sarah, their wedding date, and the parents of Joseph and Sarah.

Tim McGinnis (Member No. 9147), PO Box 1180, Kincardine, Ontario, Canada N2Z 2Z4

tmcginnis@bmts.com

I am looking for any information on John **Newman**, son of William Newman and Elizabeth née **Lindsell** of Hunsdon, Herts and Louisa **Hammond**, daughter of John Hammond and Ann née **Field** of Eastwick, Herts who were married 22 Mar 1824 at St John's, Horsleydown. John may have been a farmer at some time and also a publican in Epping. I am wondering why they were married in Southwark when they came from Hertfordshire.

Sylvia Newman (Member No. 7837), 25 Leaside, Portishead, Somerset, BS20 6JL
sjn52uk@yahoo.com

Seeking information about the family of my father George Alexander **Dewdney** born 11 Oct 1911 Ashington, Northumberland to Thomas Richardson Dewdney and Mary Mathewson **Best**. As a child I lost all contact with my father but recent research has revealed a last known address at 3 Orford Court, Belmont Road, Wallington where his brother William (Bill) and sister Ada Dewdney resided 1938–1939. George Dewdney was a soldier in the 2nd Battalion, Middlesex Regiment (C Company Mons Squad Regiment) 1938-1939. I would be delighted to hear from any descendants/researchers of this line of the Dewdney family.

Mrs M Dewdney, 24 Anewirn Place, Brynmawt, Gwent NP23 RT

I am looking for descendants of my gt uncle Charles Edwin **Bull**, son of Charles and Elizabeth née **Tanner**, and also of Mary Ann **Grange**, daughter of Sidney Grange. Charles Edwin and Mary Ann married at St James, Bermondsey on 28 Apr 1907, when his address was given as 3 Anchor Street and hers as 1 Anchor Street.

Barbara Carthew (Member No. 3998), 19 Albert Road, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3QB

I am trying to trace the whereabouts after 1931 of Edward Frank **Stevens**, born Paddington Dec 1904 to Charles and Annie Jane née **Creed**. His siblings were Annie Ruth, Charles Henry, Arthur George, Robert Sydney, and Gladys May (my mother). His address in 1930/31 was Mozart House, Tankerton Road, Whitstable, and he worked as a tailor's presser with his father (a master tailor) at East Kent Valet Service in Tankerton. The family split up after Annie Jane died in 1930. Any information would be much appreciated.

Mrs Christine Roberts (Member No. 7357), 15 Margaret Gardens, Buckland, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 4DG

William **Snelling** worked in the calico mill at Merton Abbey Mills from c1785 to 1825. His family lived in a cottage in Phipps Bridge Road, Mitcham, owned by Smith & Mansfield and let to Newton, Leach, Greaves & Hodgson. Can anyone supply any information about the family and their occupations?

C Snelling (Member No. 7859), 2D Fifth Cross Road, Twickenham, Middx TW2 5LQ

My gt grandfather Edwin **Lewis** was born London in 1816. He was in the 3rd Dragoon Guards 1839 to 1851. Whilst in the army he married Mary Ann **Peet**; they had at least 10 children. In 1851 he joined Surrey Police and served in various districts where some of the children were born: James at Chertsey 1851, Catherine Emily at Lingfield 1853, John and Fanny Louisa at Chipstead 1857 and 1858, Ann at Shere 1860, George Henry at Godstone 1855. On his retirement in 1871 the family moved to Reigate. They ran a tobacco and confectionery shop at 18 High Street, Redhill. Mary Ann died in 1880 and Edwin married Ellen **Andrews** in 1881. They had a daughter Clara in 1883. He carried on running the shop until 1905 when he died aged 89. I would be very interested in any links to the Lewis family and any information about the Redhill shop.

Leo Cox (Member No. 9028), Broadmere, Burrows Lane, Middle Stoke, Rochester, Kent ME3 9RN
leo37@btopenworld.com

As I live in Scotland I am hoping that a member could check some records for me at the Surrey History Centre in Woking relating to the rolls of the 56th Surrey (Epsom and Banstead) Battalion Home Guard. I am looking for my father, Frederick C. **Eadie**. I understand that there are a total of eight items in 477/15 relating to the various Companies in the Battalion and are indexed. Also I would very much appreciate if a member could do a search in the Royal Mail Archives for a past Post Office employee in the Pensions and Gratuities Records. The person am I looking for is Richard Eyre, a great uncle of my wife, who died at the age of 55 years between April & June 1946.

I will be more than happy to pay for any photocopying and in exchange I can offer reciprocal research in the Glasgow area, Dumbartonshire, Renfrewshire or North

Ayrshire.

**Andrew Eadie (Member No. 6901), 23 Acer Crescent, Paisley, Renfrewshire
PA2 9LR**

andrew.eadie1@ntlworld.com

In the 1851 census there was recorded living in a caravan at Hills Yard Wandsworth a licensed hawker Thomas **Smith**, his wife Amy, daughters Rebecca, Mary, and Charity, and sons Thomas and James. Does anyone have any information about this family please?

On 23 Jul 1899 Charles Augustus **Franklin** married Amy Kathleen Smith at St Saviour, Walworth. The two fathers William Henry Franklin and James Henry Smith are both recorded as living in Villa Street, Walworth. Does anyone have any information about any of these people please?

**Mrs J Johnson-Rissi (Member No. 5147), 11 Neason Court, Neason Way,
Folkestone, Kent CT19 6DZ**

jwraight@aol.com

Does anyone recognise any of the people in this wedding photograph taken in Camberwell in 1901 please. The surnames of those present include **Maurice, Turner, Dreyfus, and Cole.**

**Christine Bassett (Member No. 9201), 7 Gainsborough Close, West Mersea,
Colchester, Essex CO5 8PR**

bass@part19.freeserve.co.uk



The Victorian Dustman

Geoff Burgess

If you enjoyed the piece in the last *Journal* about the Victorian Photographer, then I hope that you will enjoy this one as well. Those familiar with Henry Mayhew will have realised that his articles *London Labour and the London Poor* are the main source. He wrote them as a series of articles for the *Morning Chronicle* in 1849–50 and they were later published in 4 volumes. His work reinforces the fact that Charles Dickens did not exaggerate when he wrote novels about the same people.

Many of us have ancestors who were amongst the London poor, but most Victorian histories concentrate on the middle and upper classes. Few of us remember Victorian times and must rely upon the work of others. These pieces in our *Journal* have been sourced from many books and from the internet.

If only 254 dustmen in the whole of London are recorded in the 1841 census, then it must be mistaken. It would not be possible for so few to cope with the huge volumes of dust and refuse at that time. A nearer estimate would be 2000, so you may have a dustman as an ancestor, but not know it.

In the middle of the century some 3.5 million tons of coal were being shipped into London, mainly from Newcastle. Also, coal was brought in by rail from elsewhere. By far the largest waste problem was the removal of all the ash and clinker resulting from the burning of this fuel. The parish vestries were responsible for this removal. There were 176 parishes in London and all except one contracted with a dust contractor for its removal. The exception was Bermondsey, which did it themselves. Dust yards were often in the suburbs because space was needed, and because complaints of nuisance were fewer. They were usually near rivers or canals for easy shipment by barge to the brickworks etc. South of the Thames there were dust heaps at Bermondsey and Rotherhithe.

Dust contractors became wealthy, as recorded in *Our Mutual Friend* by Charles Dickens. The dust contractor tendered for the job and charged a fee. He in turn employed a yard foreman; gangers and collectors; loaders; carriers; and one or more foremen/women of the heap. The foreman/woman of the heap then, in turn, employed sifters; fillers-in and carriers-off. The gangers and collectors are what we would know as 'dustmen'. They would go off in pairs with a horse-drawn, heavy-built high box cart, covered in filth. Their tools would be 2 shovels, 2 baskets and a short ladder. They would go round the streets shouting 'Dust oy-eh!'. A householder would call them. One would fill the baskets whilst the other tipped them, as they were filled, into the cart using the ladder. When the cart was full it would return to the dust yard and shoot it onto the main dust heap. The gangers and fillers expected beer or money-in-lieu from each household, and if none was forthcoming, then the next visit (about 6 weeks later) resulted in a mess being left until the tip was given (I remember this happening right up until about the 1970s). These tips

were docked from the piece-work wages, by the contractor, though. The loaders of the carts for shipment to the brickworks were the same as the gangers and collectors - they rotated the jobs. The loaders took the sifted ash to the barges. The carriers of cinders were boys employed by the contractor to take cinders and old bricks (which were the property of the contractor) to their respective heaps within the yard. The hill foreman/woman was also known as the hill-man/woman. They agreed to sift all the dust throughout the year. He/she was allowed to keep any bones, rags, pieces of old metal, old tin, old boots and shoes, and half of all money and jewellery. The sifters could not work in wet weather so their income was precarious. They were usually the wives or widows of dustmen - and worked for a pittance. The fillers-in were a man or boy who shovelled the dust into the sieves of 3 women. These were often casual workers, drawn if necessary from the pool of desperate men who waited each day at the dock gates for any casual work available. There was no special hiring place, and vacancies were often filled by word of mouth. Once employed, people stayed because the income could be good especially where the whole of the family was so employed. The carriers-off were children, as soon as they were able to walk. They picked out bones and rags from their mother's heap and put them into a basket, and took them to the other appropriate heaps.

The product of the sifting was:

Soil, or fine dust. This was used on agricultural land to improve its texture, and in the making of bricks by being mixed with the clay.

Cinder, or brieze, which was used in the manufacture of bricks. It was packed round the edge of the mould and would burn to fine dust in the firing of the bricks.

Rags, bones and metals were sold to the marine store dealers for recycling.

Old tin, iron and metal vessels were used for the clamps of trunks etc.

Old bricks were used by builders as hardcore for buildings and roads.

Old boots and shoes were partly used by shoe makers, but mainly used by the manufacturers of Prussian Blue.

Money and jewellery was either kept, or sold to pawnbrokers or dealers (referred to by Mayhew as the 'Jews').

In the centre of the yard would be the highest heap, which was the raw material as collected. Around that heap there were numerous smaller ones, being the unsifted material for each man or woman sifter. These would be sifted using iron sieves, and the cinders or brieze would be carted away to another large heap. Amongst the men and women, cocks and hens would scavenge, as would pigs. The work was hard and dirty. By modern standards it would be regarded as hazardous. Yet the workers there seemed to be remarkably healthy and sturdy, and many lived till old age - one, Tyrell, lived to be 97; Wood lived till 100; and yet another survived for 115 years! They claimed that none died during the plague when they carted the bodies to the mass graves, nor did any die during the cholera epidemics. This might be because they all drank great quantities of beer, and hardly any water.

Whole families grew up in the dust yard, and knew no other life. They were born into it, using it as a playground until put to work. They stayed there till they died, probably venturing barely a mile from their home in their whole life. The children never went to school. All they ever knew they learned at the dust heap. They knew nothing of politics. They were not religious so stayed away from church. A few married, but most did not (which makes it very difficult when tracing their family history). A few could read and even fewer could write. They had a violent antipathy to the police, magistrates or anyone in the administration of justice. They lived in poor housing very near to the dust heap and generally only had the one set of clothes for work. Over 50% of their income was spent on drink, and they were very keen on singsongs and the local theatre. They went out as a family – but the men were notorious for the way that they treated their wives: starving them and beating them.

Often three or four dustmen with their real or common-law wives would live in the same house. This would be almost unfurnished. There were no benefit societies for dustmen so if they became ill they would have to get Letters of Admission for a hospital. If they became incapacitated they would go into the workhouse, which they generally welcomed. They referred to the workhouse as ‘The House’, ‘the Great House’ or ‘The Old House’. Whilst working, the men would wear knee breaches with ankle boots or gaiters. They would also wear a short, dirty smockfrock or a coarse grey jacket. On their head they would wear a fantail hat. The women sifters would work up to their middle in dust and would wear a coarse dirty cotton gown tucked up behind. Their arms would be bare from the elbow up. Over their gown would be a leather apron from neck to the bottom of their petticoat, and over that would be another padded leather apron fastened round the waist with string. The apron would cushion the blow when they shook the sieve backwards and forwards. On their head would be a battered and crushed black bonnet.

The contract with the vestry was for the removal of dust and rubbish. Nightsoil was removed by private arrangement with the various landlords, as was the emptying of cesspools. These jobs were shared between them all so that all could take advantage of the extra money.

We think that we are very good at recycling our rubbish, but we could learn from our Victorian forefathers. They, however, worked very hard for small rewards and the economics would not work for us today.

Next month there will be a piece about Lodging Houses.

Bucks FHS will be holding its Open Day on Saturday, 23 July 2005, 10 am to 4 pm, at Aylesbury High School, Walton Road, Aylesbury (south east of town between A413 and A41). Many attractions for Bucks researchers including full Bucks FHS library and databases, Bucks FHS Computer Group demonstrations, guest societies, commercial suppliers, and family history advice. Guest speakers include Michael Gandy and Ian Waller. Light refreshments.

For more information visit www.bucksfhs.org.uk/openday

Thomas Alfred Goodyear

My grandfather, Thomas Alfred **Goodyear**, was born 29 Nov 1871 at 11 Potters Court, Wandsworth. On 5 Jun 1892, when he married Emily **Wilkinson**, he was living at 10 Burtrop Road and was an engineer. When he died on 17 Oct 1931 he was living at 31 Bective Road, Putney and was a carpenter by trade. During his adult life he became active in the London Regiment, Royal Fusiliers, and rose to the rank of Regimental Sergeant Major. My father, and other family members of similar age, always claimed that he was several times offered a commission but would not have been able to afford the Mess fees. Also, the fact that his wife was both illiterate and an alcoholic would have made such a position untenable.

The 'G' records at Kew are amongst the most damaged, so I have been unable to trace his military record, but I do have originals of two testimonial letters written by officers of that regiment and from these I presume to conclude that he was an able RSM and held in high regard. I also have his inscribed swagger stick.

Amongst possessions that I inherited is a seven page handwritten letter from the WWI trenches. This would seem to have been received by my grandfather shortly after he had retired from the regiment, and had taken up the position of Regimental Sergeant Major with the Frinton Volunteers. The transcript below keeps to the original spelling, punctuation, upper /lower case letters etc. but a sample of the handwriting is shown. Infuriatingly the last page/pages are missing so I do not know who the author was. Perhaps descendants of those named in the letter might be able to throw further light on this? Or on my grandfather's military career? I understand from Kew that letters from the trenches written by other ranks normally mention battles and places, but not so frequently names of combatants.

Barbara Surridge (née Goodyear) (Member No. 8465), Mount Cottage, Calford Green, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 7UN
e-mail: mj_surridge@yahoo.com

4-5-15

Dear Old Pal,

Your letter to hand, glad to hear you like Epsom & trust they will not put it on the boys too much. Well Tom, by now I expect you have heard something of the battalion being properly in action. I know you will be pleased to have a few details & to know how the boys behaved. the attack was to be made on the Aubers Ridge & the 8th Division were told off to x attack with the 7th division in reserve. The Eighth div: I may mention were the boys who went through at Neue Chapelle & having been recently reinforced by our both & several big drafts, were ready for the job & pretty strong. we marched off to our assembly trenches 11 pm 8-5-15& laid waiting for the attack to commence. before going too far I should mention the front line consisted of RI Rifles, Lincolns, Berkshires, with Kensingtons on the left. Second line our Batt: Devons, Wilts & 7 Middlesex. the bombardment started 4.55 exactly & previous orders warned us to allow 50 minutes, when the elevation would

W. 5. 15

Dear old pal

Your letter to hand. Glad to hear you like Popson & trust there still not put it on the top too much. Well Tom by and I expect you have heard some thing of the but some time ago in action I thought you will be pleased to hear in a few details of the great battle the boys of the attack was to be made on Aubur Ridge of the 6th Division were told off to attack with the 4th Division in reserve. The 8th div I may mention who the boys who went through the at King's Chapter & having been recently reinforced by our batt & several big drafts were ready

be raised so the infantry could charge. but the best laid plans of mice and men etc. the German's replied with a bombardment nearly as hot as our own. Still directly the first phase (50mins) was up we made our advance. Across open country shells bursting to the square yard & rifle fire that was terrifying. C Company advanced by platoons. Mr Dickie leading with No 9 - No 10 - 12 with No 11 Capt Marchmont & myself bringing up the rear. Somehow an order was passed along & I did not hear it. No 11 was ordered to hold back as they could not get the troops clear in front. I kept along and caught No 12 up, first of all finding poor old Bob Phillips laying wounded & in agony I removed his equipment & jacket & put a pad on his wound first of all getting him down into a hollow where I thought he would lie safe until the S Bearers came along. he begged me not to leave him, but our orders are so strict as to stopping with a wounded man & the fire was hell. All along that that field our chaps fell & I can only look on it as a marvel that one man could have lived in such a fire. We reached the front line of trenches & from that time (about 6 AM) laid there until past 10 PM I tell you Tom old pal I've spent some happy day but of all this just about capped it. & then the Germans started their counter attack. they found the range with their 9.2 (coal boxes) to a nicety & all our poor little devils went through it for the day. The explosion of these shells is to me indescribable [sic], but if they burst 50 yards from you, you get cast iron all over you. it got terrible towards evening & in fact I was on the point of thinking it was all UP. with us. they dropped one in my trench completely burying about 8 Sergt Oulds happened to struggle out, wounded in the head. the others. Fred Nicholls. Batty. Goodliffe. Jenkins. Cook A & Shorlands were beneath about 2 tons of earth. We dug like niggers & were rewarded by finding poor Batty his head half blown off & later Charlie Parrott came across a leg, it was impossible to get them out. only one could dig at a time & it was suicide to get on top, so let us hope they died instantaneously. I think it must have been so. this had a far from cheering effect on me. Young Major was shot through the head and died instantaneous. Joe Gray was blown up. Well Tom there were several others & I daresay you will soon see the casualty list. It pains me to have to record such a loss, all good lads & their names may be handed down as thorough heroes, not a man shirked his job & were ready to obey any order. My chief regret is that the battalion lost 204 on that day & did not have the opportunity of getting in touch with the enemy. On the other hand the other regiments did nobly & when the order came for the 8th Division to fall back (not retire) & the 7th took our place, it was indeed a phantom division. The Irish Rifles numbered 1 officer & 120 R & F! The other regiments were almost as bad. Here we are like a ship out of water. Kensingtons 150 & only about 50 men with rifles. If thought there was another job coming off like that for a little while I sincerely think I would sooner be dead. To see poor devils lying wounded for 17 hours [.]

Aspirations

Yvonne Smith

For years I was fascinated by the family story that my grandmother's **Soan(e)s** family had originated in France and that we were related to Sir John Soane the architect (1753-1837), despite the fact that he was born in Reading and the Soans family was rooted in Kent.

Prior to 1996 most of my life had been spent abroad in Germany, the USA and Canada, then my husband retired from the Royal Air Force and we lived in England for a while and I started to dabble in the family history. Sensibly I had written down all my father told me before he died. Although living in Surrey a full time job and family commitments kept me distant from the archives and family history centres, so it was not until we moved to Canada that I had time for some research. Once settled I had the fortune to become friendly with a delightful Canadian lady who had researched most of her English roots with the help of filmed census and church records in our local LDS family history centre, supplemented with several lengthy visits to her relatives in the UK. Until then I had no idea of the wealth of information that was available for a small outlay. The librarian helped me order my first film of the St Mary's, Dover church records, where we knew my great grandmother Ellen Elizabeth **Petts** was born around 1861. Once the film arrived, there were Petts' records galore - I was hooked!

Filmed copies of the census returns showed when my great grandfather, John James Soanes [*photo opposite*], born in Bexley, and the Petts family had each moved into Surrey; at last it was clear how my great grandparents had met. They married in St James, Bermondsey in January 1880, and the first of ten known children was born the following December. There may have been two other births which are difficult to prove as at that time still-births were not recorded, but I did find one complete surprise, a daughter born in 1890 that none of my relatives knew about; sadly Eleanor died five years later, in the same quarter as her younger brother of a few months of age. The eldest child, Alice, went to live with her maternal aunt in South Shields, who only had one child of her own. Alice was raised in a far more comfortable home than that of her siblings, and was always the 'posh' member of the family; she was nursing in France during WWI and married late, at 42 years of age.

My great grandfather was a fruit porter, probably working in Borough Market. In the earlier years of marriage, the family moved approximately every two years judging by the different addresses on the first five birth certificates, before settling at 82 Ash Street, Newington around 1890. Ellen Elizabeth died in May 1908, four years after the birth of her youngest child; the cause of death on her certificate: 'Diabetes and Exhaustion'. Two years later John James and his eldest son, Henry (Harry), along with Harry's cousin, Robert Soans, emigrated to Montreal, leaving the rest of the family behind. In 1911 Harry returned to collect two of his sisters, Ethel (23) and the youngest, Elsie (7); he was back again the following year to



marry his sweetheart Rebecca **Burges** in Southwark before taking her, and her brother Harry back to live in Montreal. Harry Burges married Ethel in 1921.

I often wondered why John James and Harry decided to emigrate to Canada, mistakenly thinking they were the entrepreneurs, until, looking at the members' interests on the Kent FHS website, I found another researcher tracing the Soans from Bromley, where John James' father, John Henry, was born. A few e-mails later and my third cousin-once-removed, Val, had filled in a few gaps. It was her uncle, William, who was the first to leave; he emigrated to New York in 1906 where he was joined briefly by Robert in 1910; Robert returned to Montreal and was listed with Harry as electricians in the 1913-1914 Montreal's *Lovell Street Directory*, but was back in Yonkers by 1918 where he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. A researcher from the Quebec FHS in Montreal sent all he could find concerning the Soanes between 1910 and 1925, including the location of John James' grave, who died in August 1915. It is interesting how the surname Soans changed to Soanes in my line, but not in Val's.

I used *1837online.com* to obtain the GRO references for ordering birth, marriage and death certificates. Prior to the recent explosion of interest in the past the certificates took about 14 days to reach me, now they take at least a week longer. I am still amazed at the wealth of information I have uncovered with the aid of the internet, especially from the digitised records now available on line, but none of it has revealed any link between my Soanes and Sir John - was it all wishful thinking? I would like to acknowledge all the research done by my super-sleuth first cousin-once-removed, Olive, who conveniently lives near Kew and does all the interesting research such as the Army and Merchant Seaman careers of some of our ancestors - it really helps to have two brains instead of one!

As I go back further into the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries I may find a link with France, but that will have to wait because, thanks to an entry on *Genes Reunited*, I have found a distant cousin of my husband, the complete Smith history back to 1752....and a possible link to the actor, James Mason; but that's another story, set in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

***Family Records Centre
1 Myddelton Street
London EC1R 1UW***

Opening hours:

Monday, Wednesday & Friday	9.00 am – 5.00 pm
Tuesday	10.00 am – 7.00 pm
Thursday	9.00 am – 7.00 pm
Saturday	9.30 am – 5.00 pm

The Tragedy of Richard Batter

Helen Wilson

Richard **Batter**, my 3 x gt grandfather, was born in 1799 in Malden where his family had lived since at least the 1730s. Richard was the seventh child of William Batter (b. 1759) and Ann **Rowley**. In about 1825, he married Harriet **Hill** of Wonersh. They went on to have seven children in Malden, including a daughter Sarah (b. 1832), my gt gt grandmother. During this time Richard is described as a labourer, probably an agricultural labourer.

In the late 1830s Richard, Harriet and their family moved to Wimbledon, and lived in a row of cottages next to the Common, known as Crooked Billet. Intrigued by the name I investigated further and discovered that the origin lies in the fact that one of the cottages was an alehouse. The term Crooked Billet originates in times before alehouse names existed. Their names came from their signs, which were hung outside for the many prospective customers who were illiterate. An alehouse keeper may have hung a misshapen log (sometimes known as a billet) outside their house to mark it out from other dwellings, and it would have become known as The Sign of the Crooked Billet. Later on, a sign showing a crooked billet would have been hung outside instead, and so the inn sign was born. The Crooked Billet in Wimbledon may date back as early as 1509. Between 1839 and 1848 Richard and Harriet had four more children, giving a total of eleven. At the baptisms of these four children Richard is described either as a labourer or a carter, but by the 1851 census his occupation is given as a farmer's labourer.

Census 1851 HO107/1603 Folio 49a

Parish of Wimbledon

Crooked Billet

Richard Batters, Head, M, 49, Farmer's Labourer, Surrey Malden

Harriett Batters, Wife, M, 46, Labourer's Wife, Surrey Wonersh

Richard Henry Batters, Son, 14, Labourer's Son, Surrey Malden

Sarah Batters, Daughter, U, 18, Labourer's Daughter, Surrey Malden

Miriam Batters, Dau, 9, Labourer's Daughter, Surrey Wimbledon

George Batters, Son, 5, Labourer's Son, Surrey Wimbledon

Robert Batters, Son, 3, Labourer's Son, Surrey Wimbledon

While searching the parish registers of St Mary's, Wimbledon for the baptisms of Richard and Harriet's children, I discovered that Richard had died at the relatively young age of 55 and been buried 26 Jun 1854. I found Richard's death registration in the GRO index and ordered the certificate. When it arrived I was shocked and intrigued to find that under cause of death it stated: 'Gun Shot wounds, 15 minutes, Manslaughter against Edward **Weston** the Younger'. Richard had died 22 Jun and the death was registered 29 Jun by William **Carter**, Coroner for Surrey. Eager to know more about what had happened, I contacted Surrey History Centre for infor-

mation. Unfortunately the Coroner's Reports for that period are not available. However, a search of local newspapers revealed a graphic description of the incident:

Sussex Agricultural Express, Surrey Standard, Weald of Kent Mail, and County Advertiser Saturday 1 July 1854

'WIMBLEDON – SHOCKING OCCURRENCE

The inhabitants were thrown into a great state of excitement on the afternoon of Thursday week. The labourers in the employ of Mr Watney, farmer, were mowing green wheat in a field near the Ridgeway, among whom was the deceased Richard Batter. A youth named Edward Weston was with the horses for the purpose of conveying the fodder home when cut by the mowers. During the time they were thus engaged Edwards, the foreman, came to them, having a musket loaded, which he carried for the purpose of destroying the small birds from off the crops. Hereupon a conversation ensued as to which of them was the best marksman. Batter, who was a jocular man, playfully asked Weston to shoot at him he being about 30 yards distance, and presented himself as a target for that purpose. The musket was lying on the ground at Weston's feet, where Edwards had deposited it, and as he thought, unloaded, which he seized up, and as Edwards did not inform him to the contrary he pointed it towards Batter. Before he had taken an aim from the shoulder, however, whilst resting upon his thigh, it exploded by some means, and the whole of the contents of the charge lodged in Batter's breast, who immediately endeavoured to embrace Weston, of whom he was particularly fond, and made towards him for that purpose, but would have sunk had not Weston rushed forward and caught him in his arms. The poor fellow survived the disaster about 10 minutes, and then expired, but he was unable to articulate a single word. Weston, when he saw what was done, became quite frantic, and his mental sufferings were of the most poignant description. Sergeant Golding took him into custody, and conveyed him to Wandsworth before Mr Paynter, but he was liberated on bail.'

When I read this report, I was extremely moved. The incident was certainly a tragedy, not only for Richard himself, but also for his family and, indeed, Edward Weston. Curiously, the name Edward Weston had rung a bell when I'd first read it on Richard's death certificate. It transpired that he was on my family tree. Sarah Batter, Richard's daughter, married Frederick **Booth**. Frederick had a much older brother called Joseph. Joseph had a daughter Emma, who married Edward Weston in 1857, only a few years after the tragic incident! This was reassuring. A search of the Quarter Session records did not reveal what punishment, if any, Edward Weston received, but the fact that he married within the extended family of the man he killed (daughter's husband's niece), and quite soon afterwards, implies that the incident was not held against him.

I wanted to know more about Edward Weston and found him in the 1851 census as a 15 year old agricultural labourer living with his family in Croft Build-

ings, Ridgeway (*ie* a stone's throw from where he was working that fateful day). His father was also Edward Weston and an agricultural labourer; hence his being referred to as Edward Weston the Younger.

Census 1851 HO107/1603 Folio 73b

Parish of Wimbledon

Croft Buildings, Ridgeway

Edward Weston, Head, M, 40, Agricultural Labourer, Kent Deptford

Hannah Weston, Wife, M, 45, Northhamptonshire Northampton

Edward Weston, Son, U, 15, Agricultural Labourer, Surrey Wandsworth

Maria Weston, Dau, 13, Surrey Wandsworth

Eliza Weston, Dau, 11, Surrey Wandsworth

Henry Weston, Son, 9, Surrey Wimbledon

I also found Edward and wife Emma (**Booth**) in the 1871 census with a family of their own. It is probably no coincident that Edward and Emma called their son Richard.

Census 1871 RG 10/856 Folio 74a and 75b

Parish of Wimbledon

South Place

Edward Weston, Head, M, 38, Carter, Surrey Wandsworth

Emma Weston, Wife, M, 48, Laundress, Surrey Wimbledon

Richard Weston, Son, 13, Scholar, Surrey Wimbledon

Maria Weston, Dau, 9, Scholar, Surrey Wimbledon

Emma Weston, Dau, 6, Scholar, Surrey Wimbledon

Frederick Booth, G Son, 3, Surrey Wimbledon

Another person of interest in the newspaper report is the farmer Mr **Watney**. This was undoubtedly Thomas Watney (b. 1785 in Wimbledon). He was the grandson of Daniel Watney, who moved to Wimbledon in 1730 and married a local woman. They established a large and prosperous family in the area, some of whom became prominent tradesmen, active in the Church and community. And in case you think the name Watney rings a bell, one of Daniel's great grandsons founded the brewery bearing that name. By 1851, only two male members of the Watney family remained in Wimbledon: Thomas the farmer, and another great grandson of Daniel's called John, a baker who employed Richard Batter's son Charles as an errand boy. It was therefore Richard Batter's son's employer's father's cousin on whose land Richard met his death! Wimbledon would have been a very small world in those days.

The newspaper report of 1st July continued:

'On Saturday afternoon last an inquest was held on the body of the deceased at the Rose and Crown, before W. Carter, Esq., Coroner for East Surrey, when it was found

that Edwards, the foreman, although he had been summoned under the Coroner's warrant to attend, was gone to Bookham, therefore it was adjourned until Thursday last after the Coroner had severely animadverted [*sic*] upon Edwards's conduct. Here were our tradesmen summoned at an hour the most inconvenient in the whole week, and just for nothing at all, because a man chose to absent himself to attend a club feast on the following Monday. Mr Wallis, baker, who had been summoned to appear as a juryman did not answer his name at the opening of the court, and was fined £2 in consequence. The result of the inquest on Thursday we shall give next week. He was a father greatly beloved by his children for his kindness towards them, and they deeply feel their bereavement.'

I was quite surprised to read that the inquest on Richard Batter was held in the *Rose & Crown*. Apparently, this was quite normal in those days. In fact, not only inquests, but also meetings of the Church vestry and the Wimbledon Friendly Society were held there. The *Rose & Crown* is Wimbledon's oldest inn still standing in its original form. It was originally called *The Sign of the Rose* when it was built in about 1650 when Oliver Cromwell was Lord Protector. The 'Crown' was later added to the name, when the monarchy was restored and Charles II came to the throne. Unfortunately, the result of the inquest was not reported the next week, and with no Coroner's Report it seemed no further information was available. But it was gratifying to find out that Richard was a 'jocular' man and 'a father greatly beloved by his children'. The newspaper account of the incident was no doubt more graphic and sensational than the contents of a Coroner's Report, but it gave an insight into what kind of person Richard was.

The above information represents my research on and around the incident up to April 2000. I was disappointed that I hadn't managed to discover how the law had dealt with Edward Weston, but I laid the subject to rest, so to speak. Then, in January 2005, my husband discovered *The Times Digital Archive 1785-1985* and was almost overwhelmed with success in searching for entries about his ancestors. He suggested that I should try it, but I was sceptical that my lowly ancestors would make *The Times*, unlike my husband's more affluent forebears. I was wrong to assume that I would find nothing; my one and only 'hit' concerned Richard Batter's death:

'THE TIMES, THURSDAY, JULY 6, 1854.
CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT, July 5.
NEW COURT.
(Before the RECORDER)

Edward Weston, 18, labourer, was indicted for the manslaughter of Richard Batter. Mr. Ryland prosecuted.
It appears that the parties lived at Wimbledon, and that there had been some harvest merrymaking upon the farm of a gentleman in whose employment prisoner and

deceased were fellow-labourers. They had been upon the best of terms, and were so at the time of the fatal occurrence, which arose in this way:- They had been joking, and deceased turned his back upon prisoner, who caught up an old gun which was kept for scaring sparrows, and, holding it with one hand, pointed it at deceased, when it exploded, and lodged the charge in his body, causing almost immediate death.

The RECORDER, upon hearing a portion of the evidence, said the matter was purely an accidental one, and directed the Acquittal of the prisoner.'

I had finally found the missing piece of the jigsaw. The report confirmed my earlier supposition that Edward Weston was not punished for the tragic incident. He continued to live in Wimbledon with wife Emma and their three children, until Emma died in 1898. By 1901 he had moved in with his son Richard and family in Newton Road, Wimbledon. He does not seem to have settled in one occupation during this time, being a stoker in 1881, a labourer again in 1891 and a road sweeper in 1901. This perhaps reflects the unsettling trauma he endured in his early life. I have no doubt he suffered mentally for the rest of his life for causing the death of his friend and we can only hope that Emma and his children were a comfort to him. Edward died in 1914 at the age of 79.

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*photo*London

Five of the largest collections of London's photographs ~ held by

English Heritage's National Monuments Record
Guildhall Library
London Metropolitan Archives
Museum of London
Westminster City Archives

have united to produce the *photo*London website at www.photolondon.org.uk

A Grave in the Woods

Mary Gill

This little story has nothing to do with my personal family history research, but it does illustrate how much you can find out, just browsing the internet for a couple of hours. My husband and I often walk in the woods between Farleigh and Warlingham. On one occasion, in the area close to the old Warlingham Park Hospital grounds, we came across a grave.



The headstone is quite legible and reads :

*In Memory
Sophia Guthrie
Sills
Who died
7th July 1924
Aged 74 years
"Regretted"*

I was intrigued, and decided to see what I could find out about this mysterious lady. So, on a whim, I spent a few hours that

evening trying to find out. Luckily, there are not many people called Sophia Guthrie Sills. Had she been Mary Ann Smith I suspect I would have made far less progress.

Using *ancestry.co.uk* (which I currently subscribe to), *1837online*, *Free BMD*, the *Ellis Island* and *Family Search* sites, I discovered the following: Sophia Guthrie **Andrews**, born St George's in the East, London c1850; her mother was called Hannah and was a lodging-house keeper, born c1810 in Shadwell, Middlesex. Unfortunately I was unable to find her father's name using these records. Sophia, who is described (in 1871) as a forewoman in a shirt warehouse, had at least two older sisters: Elizabeth, a board school visitor, who married someone called **Pook**, but was already widowed by 1871, and Mary a dressmaker, who married a tailor called Cyrus E **Lister**.

In 1874 Sophia married Christopher Siddon Sills, a master mariner, and had at least 4 children: three daughters – Agnes (a school teacher), Beatrice and Hannah, as well as one son, also named Christopher Siddon Sills. Christopher followed in his father's footsteps and became a merchant seaman. According to the Ellis Island site he was 2nd mate on the *Cliona*, which sailed out of Antwerp and arrived in New

York on 10 May 1923. From these records I learn that Sophia's son was between 5'8" and 5'10", had brown hair, blue eyes and a fresh complexion.

In 1881 Sophia (described as the wife of a master mariner) is living in Cyprus Road, Bootle, where her three younger children were born. By 1891, back home in the East End, she is described as a widow living on her own means in Tomlins Grove, Bromley St Leonards, Poplar, together with two of her daughters, Agnes and Hannah, her widowed mother Hannah Andrews and aunt Annie **Potter** (also widowed). By 1901, however, she is living alone, and her three daughters have moved in with their aunt, Elizabeth Pook. All of them are in Bromley St Leonards, Poplar.

In 1924, Sophia died in the Registration District of Godstone and is buried in the woods of Warlingham Great Park. Hopefully, there is someone out there who knows the full history of Sophia Guthrie Sills née Andrews and can tell me why she is laid to rest so far from her roots and with such a formal epitaph.

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Bookstall

The Bookstall will be attending:

- 3 July 2005** Rotherhithe Festival, Pumphouse Educational Museum, Lavender Road, Rotherhithe SE16 5DZ - no further details known at present
- 25 Sept 2005** Hampshire Genealogical Society Open Day 10am - 4pm Barton Hall, Horndean Community School, Barton Cross, Horndean, Hampshire
www.hgs-online.org.uk
- 9 Oct 2005** Hastings & Rother Family History Fair 10am - 4.30pm Horntye Park Sports Complex, Bohemia Road Hastings (note different venue from previous years)
www.hrfhs.org.uk

My grandfather – Richard Norris Lane

Irene Keefe

My interest in family history started with a desire to find out who the father of my grandfather was as this has always been a mystery within the family. It is known that his mother was Mary Ann **Nightingale** and that he was brought up at some time by his grandparents. His date of birth was 18 Dec 1849 and he was an only child. I went to the Family Records Centre but could not find his birth registered. I did however find his marriage to Sarah **Sanders** in 1875 registered and when I got a copy of the marriage certificate it gave his father as William **Lane** – deceased – occupation coachman.

The 1881 census gave his birthplace as Merton, so I went to the Surrey History Centre and looked at microfilms of the parish records for Merton and found the baptism in May 1850 of a Richard Norris son of Thomas and Mary Ann **Woolard**. I then went back to the FRC and quite easily found the birth of Richard Norris Woolard registered and also the marriage of Mary Ann Nightingale to Thomas Woolard. The marriage was on 26 July 1849 at St George the Martyr, Southwark. Thomas Woolard is a gentleman's servant and his father, Thomas, is a corn chandler. Richard Norris Woolard is registered as being born at Littlers Factory, Merton, on 18 Dec 1849.

I then found Mary Nightingale on the 1851 Merton census. She was entered with her maiden name and she was living at Abbey House as a servant to the **Littler** family who owned the Littler factory at Merton Abbey for printing silks. Richard, aged one, was living with Thomas and Sophia Nightingale and described as their grandson. They are on the 1851 census at Merton Pickle which was very near the Merton Abbey factory. This factory was on the river Wandle, and the Merton Pickle was a ditch that was dug to take some of the Wandle through the Abbey grounds and back to the Wandle. It was originally called a 'pike hole' because it was used by the Abbey to catch pike.

Later, in the 1861 Mitcham census, there is a Richard Lane, aged 11, living with Mary Ann Lane who is described as a beer house keeper. There is no other adult registered on the census at that address, so if she has a new husband, William Lane, he wasn't at home that night. Interestingly a letter written by my grandfather in 1862 to an aunt and uncle has been kept in the family and it gives a lot of chatty news about Mitcham, including the building of a new gasometer near where he lived in Western Road, and the moving of the town pump to a different spot.

From the 1871 Merton census I found that Mary Lane was back living with her father and she is described as a widow; so if she got remarried - to William Lane - he must have died before 1871. I looked through all the marriage registers from 1871 backwards to 1850 for a marriage of Mary Woolard or Mary Nightingale but found nothing, so maybe she didn't marry William Lane. I did look through the registers of deaths for the death of Thomas Woolard but that wasn't very conclusive. Interestingly most of the Woolards or Woollards come from Suffolk.

Richard's mother, Mary Ann Lane, died in Guy's Hospital on 4 July 1877 aged 60 after having her leg amputated. Other causes of death mentioned are 'calcerous arteries' and 'inflammation of the liver'. So maybe being a beer house keeper wasn't too good for her health.

Richard Norris Lane

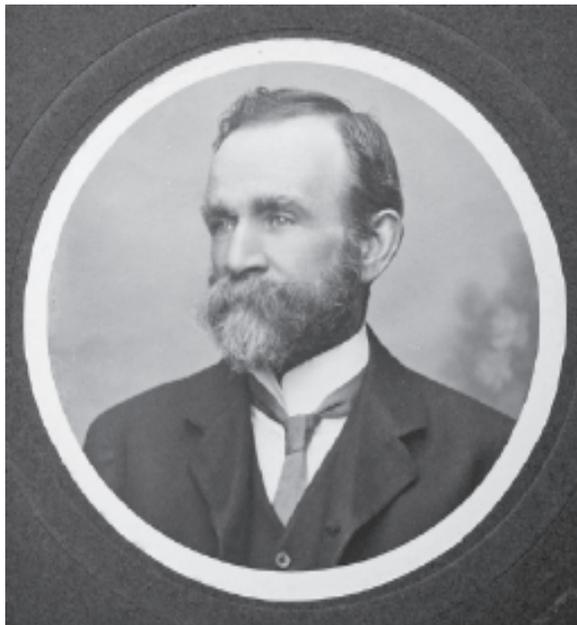
My grandfather became a carpenter and joiner like his Nightingale uncles, and eventually had a shop in Tooting High Street which was described as an oil shop on the 1891 census. Later he moved with his family to

Himley Road, Tooting, where he brought up my father together with his brother and three sisters. I was intrigued by Richard's middle name of Norris and when I found the marriage in 1808 of his grandparents on *Family Search* I found that his grandmother's name was Sophia **Norris**.

But I have still found nothing about the mysterious William Lane who gave his name to Richard Norris and his descendants (but not his genes), nor have I found out anymore about Thomas Woolard from whom we are descended. I'm still searching!

✉ Irene Keefe

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1901 on-line census vouchers and familyhistoryonline vouchers

These remain available from either the Treasurer or the Chairman

The Hunt for Harry Fairman

Ernie Bailey

Harry Charles **Fairman** was my former wife's grandfather. My interest in him was first awakened by an odd rumour that at his funeral in 1918 some people arrived who said that they were descended from his first wife. It seemed that nobody knew that he had been married before. I thought this a most unlikely tale, although after what I later found and then heard – that he was the 'black sheep' of the family – I would have believed almost anything of him.

Harry Charles Fairman married Emma **Booker** in Holy Trinity Church, Wallington on 2 Dec 1884. The certificate states that he was 37, lived in Wallington, a house painter and a widower. His father was John Fairman, a bleacher, who, in the 1881 census, lived in Croydon, age 84, born in Manchester. When he died in 1881 Phoebe Laurena **Bastin** (née Fairman), daughter, was present at death. Problems began when I was unable to find Harry Fairman's earlier marriage or any record of his birth or baptism in Carshalton, or indeed anywhere else for that matter. With the help of members of this society I found the family of Phoebe Laurena Fairman in the 1861 census, but no mention of Harry Charles. In the 1851 census the family is recorded as **Freeman**, but comparing the two entries side by side, they are the same family. But still no sign of Harry. There was much head-scratching until my former wife suddenly recalled that a cousin had once remarked to her 'your grandfather was Charles Edward Fairman'. At a stroke this transformed the whole scene. I knew that Charles Edward Fairman was baptised on 23 Aug 1835 in St John the Baptist, Carshalton, at the same time as his sister Phoebe Laurena Fairman. There were four brothers and six sisters in the family. Most of them were later married, but I was startled to see that nobody at each ceremony – bride, groom or witnesses – was able to sign his/her own name. A sad sign of the times.

But this involved story took place over several years, and I eventually decided to get professional help to accelerate progress. My researcher soon found Charles Edward Fairman's marriage to Jemima Eleanor **Mills** on 20 Apr 1863 in the Parish Church in Farnborough, Kent. They had three daughters, namely Ada Jemima (1871) Maud Mary (1875) and Josephine (1877). At this point the saga took a dramatic turn. I wondered where the family were in 1881 and all too soon I found the three daughters in St Barnabas School, Beckenham – an orphanage! There was no sign of Charles Edward Fairman in the census. But, sadly, Jemima Eleanor Fairman was also found, in Kent County Asylum, Barming Heath, Maidstone where she was classed as a lunatic. The asylum records say that she was admitted on 14 May 1879 and that she talked incoherently and sang constantly. She was unable to recognise her friends and twice tried to commit suicide. A real life Victorian melodrama. The end came when Jemima died on 30 July 1888 from tuberculosis, still in the asylum.

But Charles (aka Harry] had married in 1884 saying he was a widower. Was he a 'black sheep'? There are those who, charitably enough, point out that with his

wife in the asylum he was left with three daughters, all under ten years of age and his living to earn. Surely he had little alternative but to put them into an orphanage. Divorce was then far too expensive for a working man. On the other hand, on entering into another marriage he took twelve years off his age, changed his name, and relocated back into Surrey. A guilty mind? I understand that his second 'wife' Emma Booker had left him before he died. Why? Because she found out about his first wife? On yet another hand, the *Police Guardian*, a journal dated 29 Feb 1884, carries an item about two notorious poachers, Charles Fairman and Eli **Gambrell**, who allegedly murderously assaulted and robbed Police Sergeant **Bishop** of the Surrey County Constabulary about seven miles from Croydon. There is not a scrap of evidence to connect the two Charles Fairmans – and yet?

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Book reviews

Brenda Hawkins

PLEASE NOTE THAT COVER PRICES ONLY ARE QUOTED. If ordering books by post, please check the costs of postage with the publishers.

Dating Nineteenth Century Photographs

by Robert Pols

Published by the Federation of Family History Societies (Publications) Ltd
Units 15 – 16 Chesham Industrial Centre, Oram Street, Bury, Lancs BL9 6EN
ISBN 1 86006 188 5 pp 112 £5.95

Photographs have an instant appeal. There is nothing more frustrating than inheriting a wonderful collection of family photos when you have little apparent clue as to who the sitters were. This new volume, based on Robert Pols' earlier *Dating old photographs* helps remedy that situation. The type of photograph, the mount, the back of the mount, the shape, the size can all help narrow down the options, before you start to look at props, backgrounds and clothes.

This is a fascinating book with a number of illustrations. I could wish they were new illustrations: the images are striking and many of them I remember from the earlier book. It would have been nice, too, if the occasional cabinet print had been reproduced full size, to remind us of how different they look to the carte de visite photograph.

The section on copying photographs completely chickens out of any discussion on scanning, which is a great pity. This is a subject on which I know next to nothing and some hint as to whether acceptable copies may be produced by any scanner or if you need to use those above some minimum specification would have been helpful. Still, there is plenty of useful advice and a good basic bibliography.

Irish Family History on the Web

A directory

by Stuart A Raymond

Published by the Federation of Family History Societies (Publications) Ltd Units 15
– 16 Chesham Industrial Centre, Oram Street, Bury, Lancs BL9 6EN

ISBN 1 86006 188 5 pp112 £5.95

British History and Heritage on the web

A directory

by Stuart A Raymond

Published by the Federation of Family History Societies (Publications) Ltd Units 15
– 16 Chesham Industrial Centre, Oram Street, Bury, Lancs BL9 6EN

ISBN 1 86006 184 2 PP160 £6.50

These books have to be popular, or why do new titles keep appearing? They are also very difficult to review. Like dictionaries, you cannot read them from start to finish. As I am not a librarian, I find the books difficult to navigate. Opened at random, there are no chapter or section headings at the top of the page. These difficulties are mitigated by the number of different indexes at the back.

All I can do is look to see if websites I have found useful appear in the book. This means that I cannot comment at all on the Irish book, as I have no research interests there. Chapters include Family History Societies, message boards, surnames, births marriages and deaths, and miscellaneous topics. Some of the URLs are impossibly long and, as it acknowledges in the introduction, already out of date, but they are a guide to what should exist.

So I tried *British History*. This is organised roughly by general topics, historical periods, and localities. County heritage sites are not listed. I tried various websites suggested and was completely baffled by the amount of choice. The lovely *Norfolk Online Access to Heritage* must be accessible through some of the links suggested, but I failed miserably to find it.

There are going to be masses and masses of useful sites listed, but not very much on naval history, so <http://www.pbenyon.plus.com/Naval.html> is not there. On the other hand 'What contribution was made by the Alehouse to the life of early modern towns' is not a question I've ever asked myself, but I'd be fascinated to know the answer!

Basic Facts about.... Methodist Records for Family Historians

by Richard Ratcliffe

Published by the Federation of Family History Societies (Publications) Ltd Units 15

– 16 Chesham Industrial Centre, Oram Street, Bury, Lancs BL9 6EN

ISBN 1 86006 185 0 pp16 £2

There may only be 16 pages to this booklet, but Richard makes excellent use of them and every word tells. He manages to cram in a biography of John Wesley, a history of the movement, details of the sorts of records that survive, where they may be found, a bibliography, an address list, and a calendar of important events. This is essential reading for anyone with Methodist ancestors, since there are far more records than you may be aware of, but information may not always appear in the place you had anticipated.

Basic Facts about.... The Wesleyan Methodist Records Historic Roll

by Richard Ratcliffe

Published by the Federation of Family History Societies (Publications) Ltd Units 15

– 16 Chesham Industrial Centre, Oram Street, Bury, Lancs BL9 6EN

ISBN 1 86006 187 7 pp16 £2

The centenary of the death of John Wesley was celebrated by the launching of the 'Twentieth Century Fund'. All Methodists were asked to donate a guinea and no more, but you could, if you chose, make additional donations 'In Memoriam' or in respect of those who had moved away. Thus, as the cover illustration shows, you can come across family groups with addresses and dates of death. The information was collected principally between 1st January 1899 and 30th June 1904 on pages distributed to all Wesleyan chapels. These were then bound into 50 volumes which comprise the Historic Roll. These have been microfiched and are available for public inspection.

This is an amazing and little publicised source for those who had Methodist ancestors at the turn of the last century. Richard provides a history of the fund, explanation of how the roll may be consulted and examples of the sort of information that may be discovered. He is to be congratulated for bringing it to the attention of family historians.

The life of a Victorian soldier

Helen Allinson

My great grandfather James William **Barker** was born in 1855 at 2 James Street, Larkhall Lane, Clapham. His mother Frances Priscilla was over 40 and there were several older children. His father John was a journeyman tailor. So far we have been able to find the family on only one census return, that for 1901.

James William was always known as William or Bill. He did not have a happy childhood as his father was a harsh man who used to whip him. Both parents were members of the newly-founded strict Irvingite sect with churches in Lambeth. He went to school in Clapham where he became a monitor. His father was determined that when he left school Bill should follow in his footsteps and be a tailor too, though he showed no wish to do so and wanted to be an artist. So William was made to help his father and taught to measure, cut and stitch, all by hand of course, and when he left school he had to sit cross-legged in the shop window sewing, which he hated. This was the custom then, as it advertised their trade. For a while he did help a local builder with painting and decorating, but his father's determination remained that he should be indentured as a tailor.

William had grown into a tall dark-haired youth full of spirit, and when a group of boys and men pulled down railings which police had erected round Tooting Graveney Common in June 1868 he was in the thick of the action. The attempt to enclose the common failed. After a particularly severe row with his father William ran away from home to join the army in August 1871. He was only sixteen but when he signed on with the Royal Fusiliers at Westminster he gave his age as eighteen and name as William, as the pay rolls show. He was sent to Portland where the Second Battalion had their headquarters. We don't know whether the rift with his father was ever healed, or when he told his parents where he was.

William enjoyed life in the army. How different it must have been to the claustrophobic atmosphere of his home in Clapham, though the discipline would still have been fierce. In January 1872 the battalion was moved to Fermoy in Ireland. The elections in Galway and Kerry were causing great excitement, for a Home Rule candidate stood at each. It took all the strength of a considerable military and police force to keep the peace. In 1873 orders for posting to India were received; they were to embark for this far off part of the British Empire. They sailed on the troopship *Serapis* from Queenstown on 30 September and arrived in Bombay 32 days later. Then came the hot journey by rail to Poonah about seventy miles away. Here the Regimental History shows that the battalion occupied the Ghopuri lines. It was then that William was appointed drummer and he was with the band in October when the battalion furnished a guard of honour to receive H.R.H the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII), on his first visit to India.

The men suffered severely from sickness during 1875. Consequently they were moved to the mountain town of Belgaum during the next relief season. How

refreshing it must have been to reach the cooler air and pleasant surroundings of Belgaum. The British had built a spacious administrative district with broad lanes and bungalow gardens as big as parks; a green reminder of the English countryside for the soldiers.



It was whilst at Belgaum that William had his photograph taken, in uniform of course. It may well have been on his 21st birthday. He has a small moustache and looks dashing. The photograph of the band that we also miraculously possess was taken that year too, and William lies at the front of the group next to the big drum. He and the other three men carefully posed at the front, each have a bugle beside them. Behind the band of forty men and six boys is a brick arcade and then doors with fanlights, which is probably Belgaum barracks. William enjoyed his years in India and in later years told his children of his pleasure in the music of the band, of having his own servant, of having time to paint. This was the life!

But in October 1877 his time in India came to an end, as the muster roll tersely records: 'Drummer Barker William 8 Nov 1877 to England.' In 1878 he was transferred to the army reserve list, his seven years being up. His son, my grandfather Jack, remembered being told that with his discharge money William set up as a greengrocer

in Orpington, and married Rose **Martin** who was the sister of Bill Martin who had married William's elder sister Emma. We have searched so thoroughly for this marriage that it seems that William and Rose did not marry but lived together, as was the case with Bill Martin and Emma Barker. The business failed, due it is said to William's recall to the regiment. At any rate this particular dream of a little business was dashed, and William began to think of emigrating to a better life in America once he was free from the army. Life in the Fusiliers had given him a taste for seeing the world, but unfortunately it was in those army years that he acquired the taste for too much drink, and periods of drunkenness were to be a feature of his life.

We believe that shortly after 1883 he sailed with Rose and also surprisingly, his mother, for a new life in America.



The time in America is so far completely undocumented, the only evidence being what Grandad told us. This was that he went out intending to sell cutlery, and that Rose died there in childbirth. He did not find it easy to make a living and sold his paintings to pay for their keep. His mother also died in America. It must have been a traumatic time for William. He came back to England sadly disillusioned and settled in Beresford Street, Walworth. Possibly he had relatives nearby.

It was here, when in his early thirties, that he met Louisa **Weekly** and they married in 1890 at St John's, Walworth. Louisa was only twenty and lived in the same road. She must soon have been worn down and felt as old as William for she bore eleven children between 1892 and 1910, only six surviving infancy. These were Louisa, John (Grandad), Emily, Albert (known as Bob), Grace and Lilian.

During the first years of marriage William was painting and decorating for various builders. His employment during the worst years of his drinking must have been spasmodic, and the 1901 census shows how low he had brought his young family, for here he is described as a scavenger which meant a dustman. He was then 46 and should have been at the height of his earning powers, instead of which they were in two rented rooms. However he did obtain a good job in the early years of the century as a police inspector at Waterloo Station, but was dismissed for drinking and lost his pension. What a blow to the family that must have been. Luckily the children were nearly all earning by then. Louisa was luckily a good manager and brought the children up with enough to eat despite his drink problem.

In spite of his intemperance William was a caring father, and when sober was lively and intelligent. Sometimes he helped sew the children's clothes, never having forgotten his early tailoring skills. He encouraged the children to paint, and he painted signboards for the Martins' chimney sweeping business in Southend. Bill Martin was a chimney sweep and had been a boy chimney climber. When drunk he could climb a lamp post backwards due to his days in the chimneys.

We have a photograph of William in later life, during the 1920s, still with soldierly bearing, wearing glasses and grey haired. My mother remembers him as an old man living with his wife and two youngest daughters, Grace and Lily. She went to visit him about once a month as a little girl with her father. They boarded a tram to Kennington and walked past the railings of the common to 61 Delverton Road, a tall late Georgian house with bow windows on to the area, fanlight and basement. Their sitting room in the basement had bow windows with inside shutters and a window seat. They rented the whole house but let the upper part. They had moved there in



1914, and were to stay 30 years. It belonged to Mr **Fitzgerald** of Hayes Wharf, whilst the land was part of the Duchy of Cornwall.

Old William was very lively, and rather frightened Mum who hated kissing him as he had a sharp, bristly moustache. He often sang one of his army ditties to her:

Every night I smoke my hookah

Eat my dulwah every day

Night time comes make plenty Pujah

Sing Britannia rules the waves!

He lived to the age of 85, dying in 1940 when a bomb damaged the house. This hastened his death; he died in Brook Hospital, Kennington and was buried in Streatham cemetery during the Blitz.

Sources

J W Barker's army records were found at the National Archives: Pay List WO12 / 2566 & Muster Roll WO16 1399. We knew his regiment and battalion as they were written on the back of the photographs, together with place and date, by JW himself.

The Regimental Museum of the 7th Royal Regiment of Fusiliers which is at the Tower of London kindly sent me the pages of the regimental history referring to the years when JW was in the army, so we knew the exact movements of his battalion in India and Ireland.

The local library was able to confirm the story Grandad had told us of the riot at the common from *History of Tooting Graveney* published in 1897.

The Irvingite baptisms of JW's siblings were found at the National Archives: RG4 / 201.

Above all, many years ago we had asked Grandad and his sisters about their family, and had written down all they told us.

Endpiece

Tony Goring

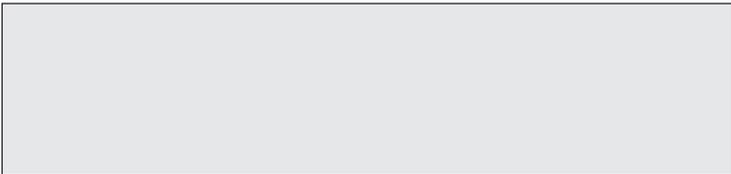
My gt gt uncle Joseph (born 1854) married in Bermondsey in 1875. His wife Mary Jane died aged 36 in 1889, leaving him with three young children. In the 1891 census he is listed as a widower but he has a domestic servant Ada aged 29, unusual perhaps for a labourer. In the 1901 census Ada is listed as his wife and she has given him four children to add to his first three. However he married Ada in Camberwell in 1890 when he stated he was a batchelor. He referred to her as his unmarried servant in the 1891 census doubtless because she was his deceased wife's sister, and he thus had fallen foul not only of canon law (see the *Table of Kindred and Affinity, Wherein Whosoever Are Related Are Forbidden by the Church of England to Marry Together* in the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*), but, from 1835, of civil law as well as a result of that year's *Deceased Wife's Sister Act*.*

This Act created much controversy and aroused fierce emotions in the Victorian era. A sister-in-law was thought to comprise part of one's own family, and to marry her following the death of one's wife was considered as marriage to one's own sister, and tantamount to incest. But by the middle of the century strenuous efforts were being made to repeal it, especially as many respectable citizens had married their sisters-in-law before the Act became law, in the belief that it was best for the children - which of course in most cases it was.

Attempts to repeal the Act, however, met with vehement opposition, especially from the House of Lords. From the 1860s bills were introduced each year in Parliament to permit marriage with a deceased wife's sister, but it was 1907 before this was legalised by the *Deceased Wife's Sister's Marriage Act*. The fairer sex had to wait even longer - until 1921 and the *Deceased Brother's Widow's Marriage Act* before they could marry their late husband's brother.

So I'm left wondering . . . does this mean my gt gt uncle's four youngest children were illegitimate?

* *I am grateful to members at the Richmond AGM who pointed this out to me*



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