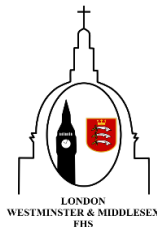


ISSN 1359-8961 (print)
ISSN 2056-3698 (online)

METROPOLITAN

The Journal of the
LONDON WESTMINSTER & MIDDLESEX
Family History Society



Volume 11 No. 3 (186)

June 2025

President : Mr Michael Gandy BA FSG

OFFICERS

Chairman : Mrs Elizabeth Burling,
✉ 38 Capel Road, East Barnet, Herts EN4 8JE
💻 chairman@lwmfhs.org

Treasurer : Ms April Vesey
✉ 290 Woodlands Avenue, Eastcote, Ruislip,
Middlesex HA4 9QZ
💻 treasurer@lwmfhs.org

Secretary : Vacant

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Correspondence Secretary : Mrs Andrea Olley
💻 info@lwmfhs.org

Events Co-ordinator : Mrs Karen de Bruyne
💻 events@lwmfhs.org

Journal Editors : Mrs Elizabeth C Burling, Mrs Barbara E Haswell
and Mr Paul Feetum
✉ 93 Leicester Rd, New Barnet, Herts EN5 5EL
💻 editors@lwmfhs.org

Membership Secretary : Mr Graham Ford
✉ 7 The Drive, off Lyonsdown Avenue, NEW
BARNET, EN5 1DZ
💻 membership@lwmfhs.org

Minutes Secretary and
F.H.F. Liaison : Ms Tahirih Miks
💻 secretary@lwmfhs.org

Projects Co-ordinator : Mrs Elaine Tyler
💻 projects@lwmfhs.org

Surname Interests : Mrs Barbara E Haswell,
✉ 93 Leicester Rd, New Barnet, Herts EN5 5EL
💻 surnames@lwmfhs.org

All general enquiries concerning the Society should be addressed to:
💻 info@lwmfhs.org

Information may also be found on the Society's website: www.lwmfhs.org

METROPOLITAN

Volume 11 No. 3 (186)

June 2025

ISSN 1359-8961 (print)
ISSN 2056-3698 (online)

CONTENTS

118	Editorial
119	Chairman's Comments
120	Letters to the Editors
122	Nothing Unusual Happened
127	Jottings
130	Artificial Intelligence and FamilySearch full text search
136	Out and About
138	Spotlight on Burnt Oak
142	My elusive great grandfather
145	An 'offal' load of tripe
150	Website News
152	A prayer book
160	A family bible rediscovered
163	Our LWMFHS YouTube channel
164	<i>Help!</i>
168	Surname Interests
170	Forthcoming branch meetings
172	Focus on Facebook

Cover picture: See Letters to the Editors on page 120

Copyright: © 2025 LWMFHS and contributors. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication or any other material published by the Society may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any way, form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recorded or otherwise without the prior written permission of the London Westminster & Middlesex Family History Society

EDITORIAL

Hooray for Zoom! We are having an editorial meeting a few days before we send the journal off to the printer and one of us is in Devon, one in France and one in North London. The June journal is ready and we are just doing the final editing – checking punctuation and spelling. Despite our checking, in rushing to get the AGM Minutes into the March journal, Graham Ford, our Membership Secretary, was inadvertently missed off the list of members of the Executive Committee. Many apologies Graham!

As usual, in this edition we have provided a wide range of articles, for example there is information about AI and how it can provide a useful new way of finding unindexed information for your research. We also have two articles about family religious books but whilst one is about the contents, the other is about the physical appearance.

At the same time, we have incorporated a topical theme about the Second World War. V.E. Day was on 8th May and the Society had a stall at a local North London celebration, see page 136. One of our articles is from the diaries of two people who lived through the war years – see page 122. We also have information about war memorials and how to find them in our Website News on page 150. Do let the Editors know if you have any family stories about the end of the War.

We are in the happy position of having had more contributions to the journal than we can fit in to this issue, so if your article has not yet appeared, you can be sure that it is at the top of our list for publication. The Editors are always glad to receive articles, snippets, jottings, ‘Help’ pieces, unknown photographs and more – these make for an interesting journal about our part of North London, so do please keep them coming in to: editors@lwmfhs.org

If you enjoy reading the journal, don’t forget to ensure you continue getting copies by renewing your membership by 30 September. The Annual Subscription Renewal Form can be found in the centre of this journal.

Barbara, Elizabeth and Paul, the Editorial Team

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

You will have seen from the inside front cover that we have a new Minutes Secretary: Tahirih Miks. Tahirih has been our Family History Federation Liaison for a couple of years and I am most grateful that she is taking on this additional task. Thank you to others who also volunteered to do this and I am pleased that you are now helping in other ways.

We do need a new Postal Sales Co-ordinator now though. Celia, who has been doing this, has moved away from our area and so is not able to do it any more. This task involves sending out our booklets to those who order them online, so being within striking distance of Enfield is essential (as our supplies are kept there) and having a Post Office nearby also helps. If you would like to volunteer or need any further information, please contact me at: chairman@lwfmfhs.org

I gave my first ever live talk on 28 March to the Lost Cousins members. The Lost Cousins website, if you are not aware of it, was started as a means of finding living relatives who were researching their ancestors and used the 1881 census returns as a basis. It has now added other censuses, including some abroad. Peter Calver, the founder, invited family history societies to speak to his members about how we could help them in their research and I decided this was too good an opportunity to miss. The talk duly went ahead and I am delighted to welcome to our Society quite a few Lost Cousins members who have now joined us. I am looking forward to hearing about your London, Westminster and Middlesex ancestors. For the rest of you, if you are unaware of Lost Cousins, it is a free site and Peter produces an excellent newsletter. You can find it here: <https://www.lostcousins.com/>

There was a discussion about donations to the Society at the AGM. Should anyone wish to do this, we have now added a 'Donate' button to the GenFair shop.

For next year, in addition to our journal *Metropolitan* and our Virtual Branch/Zoom Meetings, as part of your membership, we hope also to be able to provide a new private Members Forum and the ability to manage your communication/ mailing GDPR preferences online. More details to follow in due course.

Elizabeth Burling

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Wow! You have done such a phenomenal job. Thank you very much for finding out about my ancestor William JOHNSON in the *help!* section of March's *Metropolitan*. And it's all so interesting.

I know a lot about William Balcombe LANGRIDGE's archive in Sussex. He



John JOHNSON's City of London
Alderman's medallion.

was my 4th great grandfather. But I've been interested in John and William JOHNSON because they were relatives by marriage but also very involved in the businesses of William Balcombe LANGRIDGE's son William Vidler LANGRIDGE and grandson William Kirby Johnson LANGRIDGE. William Kirby JOHNSON witnessed John JOHNSON's death and I believe he named his son after John JOHNSON so the families were very close. John JOHNSON's widow Mary Vidler JOHNSON was close to her sister Abigail's family. She bequeathed John

JOHNSON's Alderman medallion and a silver snuff box to a great nephew on the Langridge side. They have recently come into my possession.

I am going to take a look at all of the newspaper articles you've mentioned and I'm sure I'll be able to find out even more now that I can base my search on everything you have done. It was helpful to get your perspective on the Westminster archives and where they are stored and so on. I'm going to dive in now and will get back to you if I have questions. I will keep an article about William in mind as well.

Thank you very much again. I really appreciate your efforts. It will be so much fun to dig into everything you've found and hopefully expand upon it. The inscription in the lid of the snuff box is: PRESENTED TO/ John Johnson, Esq./ by the Members of the/ PLYMOUTH DEVONPORT & STONEHOUSE/ Commercial Rooms/ To certify their sense of his valuable/ exertions which essentially contributed to the/ Establishment of that institution./ June 1834.

The medallion itself came in a presentation box which is inscribed: IN 1765,/ HIS MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY,/ GEO. III./ Gave to the Magistrates in the/ CITY AND LIBERTY OF WESTMINSTER,/ Permission to distinguish themselves by Wearing/ the/ Arms of Westminster,/ With the Emblems of Magistracy, on a/ Gold Shield,/ Fastened to a Ribbon hanging down/ the breast. See cover picture.

Jennifer Monopolis,
Member No. 8534



The snuff box presented to John
JOHNSON.

As a now retired railwayman who has worked for British

Rail, Railtrack/ Network Rail and, more recently, Transport for London (TfL) I was interested in your article on Railway 200 and the various repositories of records.

I noted that you referred to the TfL staff registers being at 55 Broadway. TfL moved out of 55 Broadway in 2020 and the archives are now at their headquarters office at 5 Endeavour Square, Stratford London E20 1JN. That office (where I used to work!) is a stone's throw away from the former Olympic Stadium and about 10 minutes' walk from Stratford station (through the shopping centre is the quickest route).

There is quite a bit of information on their website at the following address:

[About the TfL Corporate Archives](#)

Paul Richardson, Member No. 8240

Note: Thank you very much for this update, Paul.



“NOTHING UNUSUAL HAPPENED”

The contrasting worlds of two diarists at the height of the London Blitz

By Valerie Smith, Non-member

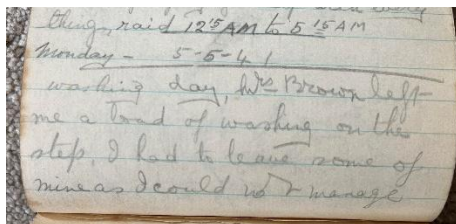
Ten years ago I acquired the unpublished 1854 journal of a Central London gentleman, kept during the Crimean War, cholera pandemic and writings of Charles DICKENS. Transcribing and researching its contents led to a compulsion to collect diaries, letters and other historical documents, unearth their writers' stories and share their contents. Recently my burgeoning ephemera has focussed on World War Two, by way of the significant anniversary commemorations of the Normandy landings last year and Victory in Europe Day on 8 May 2025.

Through posting extracts from my collection online I was delighted to be contacted by the Society to contribute a topical article on diarists within its catchment area. My two writers from 1941 couldn't be much more contrasting in age, background, occupation, writing style and detail, let alone experiences; their only three common features being the war, the weather and where they lived.

Firstly is Marion MARDEN (1894-1987), a harried housewife in her late 40s, at 46 Highfield Road, Winchmore Hill, Southgate, married to Frank, a hardworking paying labourer and Home Guard. Their two boisterous school-age children are 11 year old Raymond and 8 year old Myrta. Marion's 21 year old son Albert from a previous relationship works as a clerk but lives away from home whilst training for the army. His regular but sometimes unplanned visits and stay-overs cause Marion additional work, exhaustion and worry.

Marion's free-form notebook journal records her life between mid-January 1941 and early March 1944. She writes in a colloquial or conversational tone, as if she is chatting to someone constantly while pressing on with her household jobs, pausing only to jot down her actions in her diary. The title of this article is one of Marion's comments. Much of what she notes is 'mass observation' style, often mundane detail, peppered with the family's experiences, ranging from terrifying air raids to (in her words) "the usual goings on", but even trivial facts combine to present a much bigger picture of life experienced by multitudes of similar people living through the privations of wartime Britain.

In stark contrast to Marion is Gwynne Rowland THOMAS (1916-66), in his 20s, living comfortably in Central London at 21 Upper Montagu Street, Marylebone, with his pharmacy business-owning father Gwilym, mother Marion and two younger brothers, Mervyn and Alun. Ambitious Gwynne is training to be a surveyor in a large nearby estate management company, Couchers Surveyors and Estate Agents, at 100 Crawford Street, Marylebone. He attends evening classes at technical college to further his career and, though his property related work across London fully occupies his weekday time and frequent weekends and holidays, his regular income enables him to enjoy many cinema and theatre trips as well as cycling, walking and scouting activities.



An example of Marion's writing.

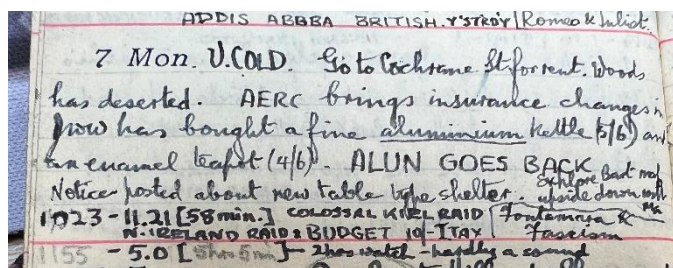
I have his 'Motorist's' diaries for 1939-1943 but comparing the diaries of Marion MARDEN and Gwynne THOMAS over the first six months of 1941 makes for interesting reading, to see how each of the apparently disparate writers recorded their 'goings on' amidst the height of the Blitz.

To backtrack first to 1940, Gwynne describes London during what would later be termed the 'Phoney War', where all preparations for actual conflict had been put in place on the Home Front, including imposing blackouts and the rationing system, training for invasion and aerial raids, installing shelters and educating the public through diverse information systems. But things changed in June following the surrender of France to Germany and the urgent evacuation of Allied troops from Dunkirk. Subsequently, Gwynne notes the escalation in making ready for war on home soil, with street railings being removed and recycled into aircraft and weapons, white lines painted on roads to help travel in darkness, public transport being suitably 'dulled down' and the creation of civil defence workers. His diary entry on 25 June 1940 notes ominously "AIR RAID WARNING – 1st since September!" and from then on things developed rapidly.

Onwards now to both diarists in early 1941. On her first entry of Saturday 18 January, while Marion is working through her numerous jobs at home, Gwynne is arranging for the office safe to be sent to his boss's house in Harrow for protection against air raid damage (he records each raid; there are 500 in London by March 1941.) A month later Marion's family move

their beds downstairs and then remain clothed each night in case of attack, though generally they are unable to sleep through the night raids and the bombs which shake the house; she says the barking of their dog Judy, "is nearly as bad as the guns". She worries about the children during day raids because the school shelters are damp and dark and, whilst knitting him socks, she fears for the safety and well-being of her son Albert away from home. The family is affected by several devastating raids, one on 15 March at nearby Palmers Green causing fatalities on a bus and at a dance hall. In the first half of 1941 Marion records 65 days of local air raids. Her mother's house takes a direct hit from a bomb, which will mean new accommodation whilst repaired.

Gwynne has a lot to record about the effects of the war. During air raids, he seeks refuge in the cellar at home, basement at work or the nearest street or underground station shelter for hours at a time; in April he records the introduction of the new Morrison 'table shelter'. Gwynne's brother Alun enlists for the Officer Training Corps and Gwynne, with colleagues and neighbours, arrange to take turns to be fire watchers to tackle blazes breaking out following raids. As Gwynne cycles extensively around London, he witnesses their aftermath ("fires everywhere"). His diary paints a vivid picture of the extent of damage in the city. His family house in Marylebone



An entry from Gwynne's diary.

their higher prices. Marion has milk and meat delivered, often giving the milk man and "girl" a cuppa on their rounds. She gets disappointed or frustrated when meat runs out and they have to resort to "sausages made of bread" or an "all-vegetable dinner". She shops at Palmers Green with an occasional helping hand from a neighbour, and a costly buying expedition leads her to note "How money flies". As well as hardly any eggs to be had (their chicken seems non-productive), there are no lemons for Pancake Day and no Easter eggs or hot cross buns. The family grows their own veg on the

gets damaged too and there is a lot to be done at home as well as at work.

One by-product of the war was, of course, the scarcity of foodstuffs and

allotment and join in the work involved. Unsurprisingly, Marion comments “I get fed up with the grub problem”. There is never enough to eat, but early nights stave off the hunger pangs.

For the Mardens, new clothes are unheard of (except a suit for young Raymond, bought with a loan). Luckily, Marion is a dab hand at needlework, and frequently makes, mends and alters clothes for others, taking in washing to help the family finances. Of laundry Mondays, boiling clothes in the copper, mangling, airing and ironing, through gritted teeth she remarks “I hate washing but still it has to be done so here goes”.

Not having to assume responsibility for a family, Gwynne appears to have a less stressful life than Marion, though he works hard at home helping out with all manner of jobs. But he is fortunate to have sufficient regular income for clothes and some luxuries and, apart from mentioning a lack of chocolate (substituted by dates), he eats adequately, thanks to his mother’s cooking and the public People’s Restaurants. His clothes buying is only restricted in June, when that too comes under rationing.

Both Marion and Gwynne undergo discomfort and disruption in the bitter winter of 1941 even into May; Gwynne enduring recurrent chilblains and travel chaos and Marion struggling to get essential gardening and other jobs done in the erratic weather.

The chilly days are inevitably a draw to the warmth of the cinema; Gwynne records eight trips to the “pictures” and Marion seven. Apart from the big screen where the news could be had on Pathe reels, films were no doubt entertainment and distraction from the reality of life. Otherwise the wireless set was an essential in every household; everything from the latest war reports to variety shows and quizzes are mentioned. Whilst Gwynne attends church and chapel services, Marion and her family listen to them on the radio (except when her accumulator battery needs charging). Her son Raymond goes to Sunday School and church, with his sister on occasion, while Marion and Frank MARDEN take advantage of some much needed child-free “rest”. She does record going to a service on Palm Sunday but the cold church leaves her feeling low.

When she’s not looking after her own family Marion is seeing her sister Edna and paying visits to her mother and in-laws across London. Besides family card games or walks in the vicinity to view the air raid ruins there is little

opportunity for her to do anything in her spare moments except rest. Even birthdays pass almost unnoticed; Marion only recalls Frank's special day late that evening, and her own birthday brings just a letter from Albert and a birthday card and letter from her sister. There is one bright spot for Marion, though; a real 'me treat' in the form of a visit to the hairdresser for a much longed-for perm on 26 March, about which she writes "I was there 4½ hours", and goes to show it off next door. Her new hair-do doesn't stop her working hard in the garden later.

Gwynne's whirlwind job means he is always busy at work, so occasionally he likes an evening at home reading, going out with his brothers and friends or just browsing the shops; his watch buying deliberations are notable. His full and active social life is especially revealed in his later diaries when the intensity of war experienced in Britain reduces a little. That is another story, however. Marion's diary also continues, throughout 1941 and spasmodically to early 1944, where it mysteriously finishes on the entry "9/3/44 Thursday".

My research so far indicates that Gwynne THOMAS later married (another 'Marion') and sadly died in 1966 aged only 50 without children, whereas Marion MARDEN lived to the grand age of 93. It seems that her younger children Raymond and Myrta continued to live in the family home until their deaths. If anyone can help with more information on either diarist, that would be greatly appreciated.

We may never know how many diaries either Marion MARDEN or Gwynne THOMAS kept and indeed what was their purpose, whether to record events for future reference (Gwynne) and perhaps as a private means of venting their thoughts on the world around them (Marion). Further, we might never find out why their precious documented memories were allowed to escape into the public arena but I am very glad to have discovered them and brought their writers back to life through this snapshot in time.

I am sharing regular extracts from the 1940 diary of Gwynne Thomas and Marion's 1941 journal on my Facebook page 'Addicted to Diaries' and plan to write a book about my wartime diary collection next year.

My thanks to Elizabeth Burling for suggesting the article, Facebook followers for genealogy help and support and Marion MARDEN and Gwynne THOMAS themselves, without whose substantial legacy this would not have been possible.

JOTTINGS

From streets to the stars: 500 years of maps

This new exhibition shows a range of maps from all around the world dating from the 15th century onwards. Included are all sorts of treasures, even for Londoners, with a map of the city from 1855 and an actual copy of The Survey of London. Of course, as family historians we are bound to like maps but there is another reason to visit this one. It is being held at the Maughan Library in Chancery Lane.

The Maughan Library is part of King's College London and not generally available for visiting but when it was built in the 1890s, it was intended to be a museum for the nearby Public Record Office. The Library has the same footprint as the chapel which previously stood in its place and this chapel was originally established by King Henry III in 1232 as one for Jews who had converted to Christianity. When Jews were banished from England following the Edict of Expulsion in 1290, the chapel was taken over by the office of the Master of the Rolls. It became used as a storage place for the rolls of Chancery but was still used for religious purposes too. In this capacity it was mainly used as a private chapel for those employed at Chancery. Burial vaults beneath the chapel, which contain the remains of former Masters of the Rolls and members of their families, were sealed in 1895 and are still there. Around 1860 the stored records were cleared out of the chapel and taken to the nearby purpose-built Public Record Office. The chapel was rebuilt twice but when it was demolished in 1895, its monuments and stained glass were included in the new building, now the Maughan Library.

The exhibition is on until the end of September 2025 and is free to visit. It is usually open from 10am to 5pm but check the website for occasional closures. You can do that using this link: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/events/from-streets-to-the-stars-500-years-of-maps>

The exhibition is on until the end of September 2025 and is free to visit. It is usually open from 10am to 5pm but check the website for occasional closures. You can do that using this link: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/events/from-streets-to-the-stars-500-years-of-maps>



The Maughan Library

Guildhall Library: 600th anniversary

The first library at Guildhall was established around 1425, using money from Richard Whittington's will which, although left to charity and the City, did not explicitly mention establishing Guildhall Library. In the intervening 600 years it has amassed an amazing collection of books about London.

The library's literary treasures include medieval manuscripts, printed documents dating from before 1501 and known as 'incunabula', one of the world's finest copies of Shakespeare's First Folio, 'penny dreadfuls', a collection of sensational 19th century cheap fiction (called 'bloods') and much more. A special events programme this year includes talks on the City and Magna Carta; the Square Mile's hidden and unusually named alleyways; the life and work of celebrated artist, David Hockney; and London historian, John Stow, whose 'Survey of the City' was published in 1598 and chronicles the founding of the original library. The full list can be seen and booked here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/guildhall-library-3623855655>

London in the Second World War exhibition

The London Archives (TLA) are holding a free exhibition exploring the experiences of Londoners during the Second World War and the effect it had on the city they knew.

One archive featured is the London County Council (LCC) air raid fire report books compiled by the London Fire Brigade, which was part of the LCC at this date. The books record where an incident took place, the names and occupations of those affected, and injuries and casualties with a description of the damage caused. Up to August 1940, our LWMFHS area is only covered by Division A (Westminster) and Division B (City of London, Camden and Islington) but after this the Fire Service was nationalised and then covered an area similar to that within the M25 and so will include our Middlesex parishes. The archive dates from May 1940 to the end of March 1945 and is split over 65 chronological volumes, with TLA Ref: LCC/FB/WAR/02, should you wish to see them yourself. 60 of these books have been indexed and this will be available to view in the Information Area. This archive is augmented by the Bomb Damage Maps (which can also be seen on the London Picture Archive, for those unable to go to the exhibition). Another of the exhibits is the diary of Anthony HEAP (1910-1985) who lived in the St Pancras and Holborn areas. He records observations of his time in London during the Second World War including the nightly raids and sleeping in air-raid shelters. Also a keen theatre-goer, he supplies insights into entertainment during this period.

Photographs of the destruction caused by air raids were taken by City Police photographers Cross and Tibbs and these are also on show, as are many other archives.

The exhibition also examines the way that London sought to rebuild after the war, through the creation of the County of London plan, and how this was put into place at Poplar's Lansbury Estate for the opening of the Festival of Britain in 1951.

The exhibition is at TLA, 40 Northampton Road, London EC1R 0HB until 30 October 2025. Although it is free, TLA recommend you book a ticket to help them manage visitor numbers. You can do this via their website: <https://www.thelondonarchives.org/>

London Zoo

While trawling through their storage rooms looking for artefacts to mark their 200th anniversary next year, archivists at the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), the charity which runs London Zoo, has uncovered some items which they need help with. They are hoping that historians will be able to help them identify the content of some 200 reels of old film.

While most of the 200 reels are labelled with a cryptic name or a description, 20 are entirely unmarked, giving no clue as to the history they may hold. Some of the labelled reels hint at footage of Chi-Chi the panda (who lived at the zoo between 1958 and 1972), behavioural research of Congo the Chimpanzee and other scientific studies. It is believed that most of the reels come from the 1950s and 1960s. If you would like to help, please email ZSL here: <https://historyhive.zsl.org/>

The Morning Advertiser, Tuesday 1 August 1865

Female Fashions for August

... Blue is a very fashionable colour, though only suited to delicate complexions and fair hair. We see many blondes dressed in blue literally from head to foot, the very gloves being blue, but this has a rather heavy effect. When the gloves are a pretty grey or stone colour the ensemble is much more elegant.

For ladies with dark hair maize is a very fashionable and becoming colour. Our dark-haired elegantes (among which are included many of the most distinguee) are wearing straw hats of the brigand or Diana shape, edged with black velvet and trimmed with maize and black feathers or flowers. ...

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE and FamilySearch Full Text Search

By Paul Feetum, Member No. 8218

The past 12 months

This past year has been marked by huge progress in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and next year promises even greater acceleration. It is not the purpose of this short article to examine them all but a few general points could usefully be borne in mind:

Expansion of service providers: the clear market leader OpenAI (ChatGPT) was joined by Anthropic (Claude) and Google (Gemini). Later entrants have been Perplexity, Meta (Llama), X (Grok) and DeepSeek. This list is not exhaustive and may well have grown by the time of publication. This proliferation, however, offers choice and exerts market pressure to keep down prices, although all do offer some level of access for free.

Reasoning models and chain of thought: the program is trained to check itself before producing an answer. It remains possible for users to employ a similar approach by building up incremental prompts to arrive at an analysed answer too.

Large Language and Small Language Models: Large Language Models were built using billions of documents and images etc. on which to train. This information is held openly and so there were concerns about confidentiality of any data input. One potential solution arises from developments in Small Language Models. These can be run privately and with a more focused data pool, increasing speed and accuracy/relevance. Expect to see these on home computers and mobile devices over the next year.

Search tools: while conventional wisdom had always been to ask AI to work only with given data, and most definitely not to conduct searches on the web, new tools like ChatGPT Search, Perplexity and Google's Deep Research will not only conduct proper searches but will also provide citations which enable easy verification – always essential with any AI-produced work.

Video: although typically of lesser relevance for genealogists, pictures and video can be generated from tools such as Dall-E and Midjourney. Photos can also be uploaded for analysis by any AI tool and for enhancements by companies such as MyHeritage (colourisation and animation).

Voice input: note that interaction with AI is more and more available through voice prompting rather than typing. You can treat AI as an assistant or colleague at work in everyday language.

Agents: the ability to instruct a virtual assistant to take action on your behalf is going to be an area to watch for next year. The idea of letting a program loose with your credit card to book a holiday or buy groceries may, however, take a little time to gain widespread acceptance. But consider the possibilities of setting AI on a research project where it has agency to initiate its own steps.

RootsTech 2024

I remember so vividly the presentation last year by Michelle Barber in the FamilySearch Tech Forum. In my notes, I marked the particular development she outlined as “the headliner”. This was Full Text Search, a brand new feature for unindexed documents. Think of that. No need to prepare indexes for any document for which a scanned version is included in this system. And they have billions of them.

AI is used to transcribe such documents into text which is at the same time made fully searchable. You can search therefore by any word on the transcription and those words (typically, but not exclusively, name, place, relationship etc.) will be highlighted on the image and also on the transcript. Back in March 2024, they already had 100 million images fully searchable albeit, for an English audience, they were not necessarily immediately relevant as they covered:

- US land and probate
- Mexico notarial
- Plantation records

But this was always intended to develop both in terms of the number and range of images and in the accuracy of the Optical Character Recognition performed by the AI. The goal was eventually to enter all unindexed images (and they have many billions) into Full Text Search mode.

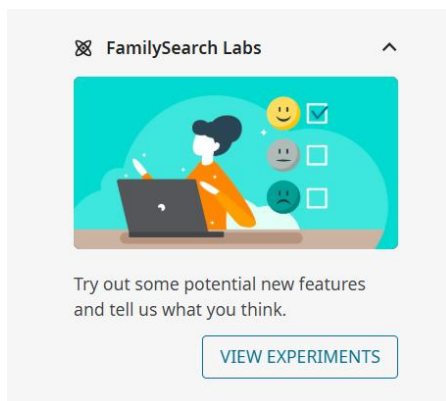
Roll on RootsTech 2025 and Michelle reported that they now have 1.2 billion images (about 10 billion names) within the scope of Full Text Search. These extend to 29 countries and include death, marriage, military, voting, family bible, court case and naturalisation records and, as will be seen below, this includes U.K. records too, as one of the 29 countries.

You need to have an account with FamilySearch but this is entirely free and easily set up. All you need to do is input your full name, user name, date of birth, password, email address and consent to terms of use.

The Full Text Search Tool is then to be found on the Labs page: <https://www.familysearch.org/en/labs/> or on the home page at the bottom right corner:

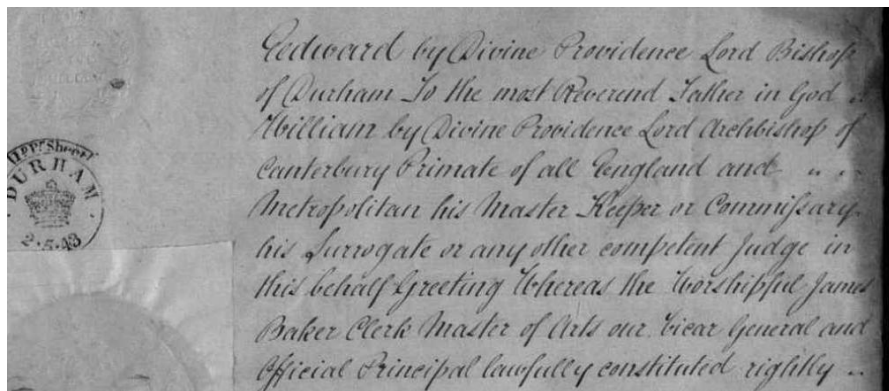
In the text box entitled *Expand your search with Full Text*, click on “Go to experiment” and enter your search terms, noting the useful search tips they provide.

Prepare yourself for a veritable treasure trove of unexpected results! I used my surname FEETUM as the sole Keyword but limited it to 1784 to 1850. It delivered 119 results.



FamilySearch Labs page.

For example, one result cited an application in 1843 to appoint an administrator in respect of the late Mark FEETUM to his son and sole surviving kin. It allows the scanned original document to be viewed and downloaded, thus:



Extract of Grant of Letter of Administration, 1843.

Not only that – the image comes with the option to generate a citation, thus: "Durham, England, United Kingdom records," images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-XCML-8V?view=fullText> : Mar 20, 2025), image 219 of 508. While not exactly in the format I would normally use, nevertheless it contains most of the information required and at absolutely no effort.

Although the handwriting is easy enough to read, it also produces a transcript which can be copied, edited/corrected and filed, as this short extract illustrates:

“Edward by Divine Providence Lord Bishop of Durham to the most Reverend Father in God William by Divine Providence Lord Archbishop of Canterbury Primate of all England and Metropolitan his Master Keeper or Commissary his Surrogate or any other competent Judge in this behalf Greeting We hearas the Worshipful James Naker Clerk Master of Arts our Vicar General and Official & Rincipal lawfullt constituted rightly”

It is not claimed that this transcript is 100% accurate. It misses the capital T (in 1.2 “To”) and transcribes Principal as “& Rincipal” (l. 9). Nor, unhelpfully, does it keep the same line structure as would be the case with a conventional transcription and it randomly breaks words over two lines too. It does, however, correctly transcribe the long first “s” in Commissary (l. 5). This brief extract emphasises the constant need to check carefully any text or work output produced by AI but it was certainly a reasonable first attempt and would save considerable time typing, particularly where long documents are involved.

One further excellent feature is the ability, again in common with AI generally, to summarise. Thus, clicking on the “Summarize the document” button produced the following, including the acknowledgement of AI involvement, required by best practice:

“AI-generated from the transcription below.

The document pertains to the granting of Letters of Administration for the estate of Mark FEETUM, a deceased joiner from Darlington, Durham. It is addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, requesting his assistance in administering the oath for the appointed administrator, Mark FEETUM, who is identified as the deceased’s natural and lawful son and only surviving next of kin. The process indicates legal proceedings involving the involvement of

the Vicar General, James BAKER, underscoring the oversight of ecclesiastical and civil authority in the matter.

Dates

- April 23, 1843

Names and Relationships

- Mark FEETUM (deceased) - Father of Mark FEETUM (son)
- James BAKER - Vicar General
- Mark FEETUM (son) - Administrator and next of kin of Mark FEETUM (deceased)"

The deceased was my 6x great uncle and his son, Mark, died less than 10 years later at 22 King Edward Street, London.

Further results were returned for Poor Law Relief assessments on Christopher Campbell FEETUM (£35 19s 4d. for 1873, Westminster, Church Ward); Jonathon FEETUM (£15 8s. 9d. for 1852 Westminster, St. James rising to £21 in 1861).

I also found a secondary immigration record of Sidney FEETUM of 11 Adelaide Rd., South Hampstead, London, a clerk aged 25 and single. His next of kin is listed as C. FEETUM at that address and I know his father was called Charles Albert. He had set out from Glasgow and arrived on 2 May 1908 aboard the S.S. *Furnessia* in New York, intending to stay in that city. There were 5 passengers on that page of the manifest who were stamped "Non immigrant Alien" from which it would appear, since he was not so designated, that he emigrated to the U.S.A. and so another place for me to start research.

With my knowledge of family history, I would certainly have focused my research attention on documents from County Durham. It would never have occurred to me to look at Toronto in Canada. Full Text Search, however, produced details of land acquisitions and mortgages for \$1,000 at various dates in 1885 and 1886. This related to one of my distant relatives, Colin Campbell FEETUM and his wife Ellen, who obtained mortgages on two plots of land, all carefully delineated in the Toronto Land Records 1800-1958. Who would have thought? Still, it provides yet another line of research when time permits.

I could go on. There was a manuscript family tree produced in connection with Clitheroe Court records; an entry in a heraldry reference book which

seems to relate to this record; voter records in Nevada, California 1879 for Joseph FEETUM; and so on. I am sure we are all well too well aware of the dangers of rabbit holes!

At the same time, the search results included some clear errors. Thus a document indexed under FEETUM instead referred to Freetown, which is in Bristol County, Massachusetts. This same issue arose with several other apparent results, once again demonstrating the need to check the original images.

Please note the warnings provided, namely that this is experimental and there is no guarantee that it will be available or that, like AI generally, it may not produce errors. We need to supply the human dimension and check everything carefully.

Sources:

<https://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 21 March 2025.



When my fellow editor Paul showed me his article on AI and familysearch.org, I immediately had to try it for myself. I often use familysearch.org and I was keen to see if AI could pick up a couple of marriages that I had not been able to locate.

I followed his example – just putting in my research name and a year range. This brought up 169 pages showing 20 records per page from all over the world. I went back to the form and added Hertfordshire as the place. This brought up a more manageable 43 pages although records from other counties were also included. The third record listed was a marriage bond for my ancestor - an image and a transcription. (A couple could decide to marry by licence instead of banns, in which case, a bond or an allegation had to be sworn showing that there was no reason why they could not marry). On the third page of the 43, I found the bond for my other missing marriage.

I did not know the exact dates of the marriages but I had found the names of the couples and the years when they intended to marry. With this information, I was able to look at other parish records and found the dates.

Result!

Barbara E. Haswell

OUT AND ABOUT

Suffolk Family History Society Fair



This event took place on Saturday 26 April at The Hold, the home of Suffolk Archives, in Ipswich. It is Suffolk FHS's 50th anniversary year and it was good to be there helping them to celebrate. Our stand was next to our London neighbours, the East of London Family History Society, whose banner you might recognise on the left in our photo. This made it very easy for us both to refer people to each other's stand (as is often required in London research!). Our helpers for the day, Karen and Elizabeth, were kept busy answering all sorts of questions, including ones about schools in Paddington, where people who died in Enfield might be buried and much more. It was lovely to meet past members, current members, and to welcome a new member to our Society.



Karen and Elizabeth on our stand.

VE Day in the Gardens at Stephen's House and Gardens, Finchley

We helped Stephen's House and Gardens celebrate VE Day on 4 May on a bright but chilly day in the beautiful garden. There were fish and chips (which were never rationed during the War), may pole dancing, 1940s songs, readings of Spike MILLIGAN's war memoirs, and lots of history. There was even a member of the STEPHENS family present.



Elizabeth manning our stand.

Our stand was manned by Elizabeth and Karen again, who concentrated on local London Borough of Barnet resources - our

Finchley Parish Guide proved the most popular. There were plenty of people

to talk to, including some of our own members. Elizabeth was interviewed by a news team from ITV and you might have seen our stand featured on the news that day.

Coming up...

Barnet Medieval Festival, 7 and 8 June

The Society will be having a stall at this year's Barnet Medieval Festival, which is taking place on Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 June from 10.30am-5pm at Lewis of London Ice Cream Farm, Fold Farm, Galley Lane, Barnet, Herts EN5 4RA. The site is within walking distance of bus routes in Barnet, easily accessed by car from the A1 and M25, and outside the ULEZ. It is a fabulous event, commemorating the 1471 Battle of Barnet. There will be battlefield displays, mounted knights in combat, living history encampments, cannon firing, archery, music, dance, arts and crafts, and a great selection of food and drink. Tickets cost £10 for adults, £5 for children aged 12-17 and free for the under-12s and are available on the gate or in advance from www.barnetmedievalfestival.org

If you would like to get in for free, you can do so by volunteering to help out on our stand. We aim to promote our Society and family history in general, sell our publications and have fun too! We are in need of more volunteers to help so if you would like to offer even just a half day's help or more, that would be very welcome. Please let us know asap.

You can find out more about the festival on that website too or on their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/1471barnet>

Can you help at BARNET MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL?

7 and 8 June

Please email Karen at:

events@lwmfhs.org

SPOTLIGHT ON: BURNT OAK

Burnt Oak is a district of North London which was in the Ancient Parish of Hendon in the county of Middlesex but now forms part of the London Borough of Barnet, although some of it is also in the Boroughs of Brent and Harrow.

It is first mentioned in documents in 1754, when the name referred to a field on the east side of Edgware Road. An oak tree in the field had apparently been struck by lightning at some point previously, giving the field its name.



Houses on Burnt Oak Broadway, which is actually part of Edgware Road.

Edgware Road, previously known as Watling Street, was a Roman road which had been an important route for centuries, running from Dover to Wroxeter via London and St Albans. There is some evidence of Roman settlement in the area with 3rd and 4th century coins being found in a garden in Thirlby Road. Edgware Road continued to be important and a turnpike trust in 1711 kept the stretch between Kilburn and Edgware in a reasonable state. Burnt Oak is some 11 miles north of central London and a number of inns, such as the Bald Faced Stag, provided a convenient stopping place for travellers. In the 17th and 18th centuries, May Day was celebrated at the Bald Faced Stag and other local inns by hay carters from both Hertfordshire and Middlesex who displayed their horses in their finest brasses and decorated their carts with ribbons. There were prizes for the best cart and ploughing competitions too.

The land here was used mainly to grow hay as fodder for London horses. There were several farms and a nearby field of 33 acres, known as Sheves Hill Common Field, was split into portions and rented out to 46 tenants. Another field, just to the north of Burnt Oak Field, was called Red Hill and this was chosen as the site of the new Union Workhouse, which was built in 1838 and designed to cater for up to 350 poor people from the recently formed Hendon Poor Law Union. This was an amalgamation of the parishes of Edgware, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Hendon, Kingsbury, Pinner, the Stanmores and Willesden.

One of the buildings here, Redhill House, was used as the Hendon Union Infirmary from 1865. This was replaced by a much larger infirmary slightly further north in 1925. Following the closure of the workhouse in 1930, Middlesex County Council took over the running of this infirmary, which became known as Redhill Hospital. Controversially closed in 1994, local campaigning resulted in the building of a new hospital here. The General Hospital site was demolished and Edgware Community Hospital opened in its place in February 2005. If you are looking for ancestors who were in the hospital, the archive is split between The London Archives and Barnet Local Studies and Archives.

Burnt Oak started to be developed when a Mr ESSEX bought the field and laid out North Road, South Road and East Road just north of the workhouse for housing in 1853. He kept the name 'Burnt Oak' for his estate to avoid the stigma of the name 'Red Hill', which was associated with the workhouse. Local newspapers had been advertising 'A freehold and copyhold estate called Burnt Oak and Fox Meads, situate in the parishes of Kingsbury and Little Stanmore, comprising 115 acres, 1 rod and 12 perches of meadow land, with two barns thereon' for sale for £5,760 in June 1844. A union school for 150 children was built just north of the new housing estate in 1859. This became a men's home known as Redhill Lodge in 1930 and was demolished to make way for the new Edgware Community Hospital.

Burnt Oak does not appear as a place name in the 1861 census but in 1871, running from the Tollgate on the Edgware Road, are over 6 pages of dwellings noted to be mainly 'Cottage, Burnt Oak'. The first one is occupied by a builder, with carpenters, gardeners, a railway signalman, two police constables, a hay binder, a plumber, a National School Mistress and many labourers as neighbours. There are two beer shops run by Maltese-born

Stephen J SAMSA and James WALKER to cater for locals and carpenter's wife Harriet HODGKINSON ran a grocers' shop. There is even a John CARTER senior, retired tripe dresser aged 67, originally from Grantham in Lincolnshire. Burnt Oak Villas, on the other side of the Union Schools seem to have a better class of resident, with a Congregational minister and a glass bottle and stoneware merchant.

The school mistress in the 1871 census did not state her place of employment but a National School was set up by the Church of England at Burnt Oak in 1884 in a corrugated iron building which was also used as a place of worship. This was replaced by Burnt Oak Board School, opening in 1901 and catering for 300 pupils. This was itself replaced by the Meads School in 1930.

Burnt Oak, despite housing the workhouse infirmary and Mr ESSEX's small estate, remained rural until 1924 when a station on the Northern Line was opened here. A train station had been planned for the area in 1913 but this was delayed by the First World War.

In conjunction with this, and also in 1924, the London County Council bought land to build 4,000 homes. This was part of the provision to provide 'homes fit for heroes', as promised by prime minister David Lloyd GEORGE after the First World War. The Watling estate was duly completed by 1930, with houses mainly in short terraces at a density of 12 to the acre. Areas were set aside for allotments, parks, schools (Goldbeaters and Woodcroft opened here at this time) and public gardens. The new residents were small working-class families with children, in the main, typically having an income of £3-£4 per week. They mainly came from overcrowded working class districts of inner London, such as Islington and St Pancras. The large number of them caused some friction with long-term residents, who accused them of larceny and of harbouring Communist sentiments.

Initially there were very few facilities for locals, with no pub or local shops. The isolation of the estate was countered when the residents formed the Watling Association in 1927 and a community centre was opened in 1933 to provide facilities and entertainment. The houses all had gardens and the estate horticultural society proved extremely popular. The first branch of Tesco opened in Burnt Oak in 1929 and shops were built on Watling Avenue in 1930, with a market added in 1936. The Baldfaced Stag, The Royal Oak and the Prince of Wales pubs were all rebuilt in 1930 (although they have

now all closed). By 1931 the population of the Burnt Oak ward, including the Watling Estate, had grown to 21,545 people – a massive increase from the 6 pages of the 1871 census returns. The estate was made a conservation area in 2007.



St Alphage Church, Montrose Avenue.

The church of St Alphage was built in 1927 as the centre of a new parish which covered the Watling estate. It was damaged in the Second World War but has been repaired. The baptism register started in 1927 and it is believed that these are kept at the church.

Sources:

A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 5, Hendon, Kingsbury, Great Stanmore, Little Stanmore, Edmonton Enfield, Monken Hadley, South Mimms, Tottenham. Originally published by Victoria County History, London, 1976, online here: <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/middx/vol5/pp2-5>

Burnt Oak Pocket History, Barnet Local Studies and Archives:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries-old/local-studies-and-archives/pocket-histories/edgware/burnt-oak>

Burnt Oak, Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burnt_Oak

Census returns on Findmypast

Hendon Workhouse: <https://www.workhouses.org.uk/Hendon/>

Parish Guide to Edgware (LWMFHS, 2023)

Parish Guide to Hendon (LWMFHS, 2019)

Watling Estate, Layers of London:

<https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/records/watling-estate-1930>

MY ELUSIVE GREAT GRANDFATHER

By Janet Sutton, Member No. 6805

George (William) PHILLIPS has been a mystery since I first started tracing my family tree back in the 1980s. On several occasions I thought I had traced him but ended up down two wrong, but very interesting, rabbit holes. Neither line was mine but it gave me a fascinating look at the New Zealand Māori wars and Navy records. Then, out of the blue, I was contacted by a distant relation who said it was rumoured that George ‘went to sea’ and that there may be connections with the Isle of Wight. Not a great deal of help but something I kept in mind during my later research.

I know from official records that George (sometimes George William) PHILLIPS married Louisa Elizabeth ASHBY at St Thomas’s, Bethnal Green on 9 December 1883. His residential address was James Terrace, Harwar Street, Hackney Road, Bethnal Green and he was a book binder. She is noted as a cartridge maker. He names his father as George PHILLIPS, a carman.

George and Louisa had their first child Elizabeth Jane who was born four months after the wedding. She was followed by four brothers – Henry George (my grandfather 1886-1961), William Duncombe (1889-1985), Bertie James (1893-1971) and Frank Alec (1899-1916). The family lived for some years in Noble Street, Clerkenwell.

Following the death of Louisa in 1911, George married again to Beatrice Mary COURT. The couple married on 26 March 1917 at St Ann’s, Tottenham. His address was 7 South Grove, Tottenham, occupation being a taxi cab driver. This time he states that his father, George, was a builder. Census entries for 1891 through to 1921 were consistent with the information I had – with George giving his place of birth as Islington, and occupation as a taxi cab driver. George died on 25 January 1944 at 14 Wakefield Road, Tottenham.

So far so good ...

His entry in the 1939 Register gave a date of birth of 10 September 1858. Over the years I followed up many George PHILLIPS (and variations) born several years either way, constructing trial family trees. These were researched and eliminated. Census returns for 1861, 1871 and 1881 were

inconclusive. An entry on the 1861 census has a George aged 2, with parents George and Jane PHELPS (the latter born about 1818) at Bethnal Green, father noted as a porter, and a sister Jane E. PHELPS (aged 13) – I thought at the time it may be a line to follow up.

There was an entry for a George PHILLIPS in 1871 at Mansell Street Boys Refuge, Whitechapel – county of birth is given as Middlesex (the place itself is illegible). According to the Children's Homes website, this was initially known as the East London Shoeblack Society in 1854. In 1859, it was certified to operate as an industrial school. It also housed boys who had been placed under detention by magistrates. In a newspaper report in 1859 it is stated that it housed 75 boys. As for the 1881 census – there is a William PHILLIPS, aged 20, in the Royal Navy, born Clerkenwell. This may be a red herring.



Taken in the late 1920s the back row shows George, his wife Beatrice and daughter May. In front are May's children Ella (1921-2009), Doris (1922-2009) and Eric (1920-2000).

Then a few months ago, an entry came up on Ancestry for Islington Workhouse in 1858. A Jane PHELPS was admitted to the London Road, Islington Workhouse from 43 Parkfield Road on 29 July. She was aged 27 (which would give a year of birth of about 1831) a servant, single and was 'partly disabled' due to pregnancy. A later entry gives details of the birth of her son on 10 September 1858 – a possible eureka moment. This was followed by a baptismal entry:

Baptised	15 October 1858
Born	10 September 1858
Name	George
Mother	Jane PHELPS
Residence	Work House
Occupation	Poor

A search for a birth certificate confirmed these details – no father named. Jane and her son later appear in the workhouse register as being discharged



In front row is George and his daughter Elizabeth, behind are his surviving sons, William, Bertie and Henry (my grandfather). This photo was taken in the 1930s at a family wedding.

on 26 October 1858 and being returned to Southampton. Maybe the Isle of Wight link was partially correct – who knows? I have since found the entry of their transfer and they were sent to Hazeley and Mattingley in Hampshire. PHELPS is a credible variation on the name PHILLIPS. My grandfather's birth was registered as PHILLPS (without the second 'I').

Research has now been focused on Jane PHELPS in Hampshire but it is early days. It has taken so many years to get to this point - where will it

take me next? Meanwhile, time to tackle other brick walls on the family tree, I think!

Sources

Family history websites – Findmypast and Ancestry UK

GRO certificates

www.childrenshomes.org.uk



New Email Address?

Please let us know: membership@lwmfhs.org

YOUR ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL FORM IS OVERLEAF

Please read our Treasurer's note on the back page of this insert before completing the form.

If you already pay your subscription by **Standing Order**, please contact your bank to ensure that you are paying the correct amount and to our new Santander bank account. Paying your subscription in this way is the most cost effective for the Society.

You can pay directly into the Society's Santander Business account: Sort Code: 09-01-29; Account Number: 70580978; the account name is London Westminster & Middlesex Family History Society.

You may also renew by **Parish Chest** via our website here:
<https://lwmfhs.org/join/>

Please ensure that the Membership Secretary has your current address and email address

LONDON WESTMINSTER & MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL – for the year 2025-2026

There are three categories of membership each with a different subscription rate. These rates depend on the mode of delivery of the LWMFHS journal *Metropolitan*.

Subscriptions are renewable by 1 October 2025 and must be paid in pounds sterling.

Our preference is that you pay electronically by one of the means listed below.

Otherwise, please make your cheque payable to LONDON WESTMINSTER & MIDDLESEX FHS and return the completed form to our Membership Secretary with your appropriate payment to:

LWMFHS Membership Secretary
7 The Drive, Off Lyonsdown Avenue
New Barnet, London, EN5 1DZ

Please tick the appropriate box below, indicating your category of payment or cancellation of your membership of the Society.

☐ £12; UK & Overseas. To receive my journal as an electronic download.

☐ £15; UK only. To receive my journal as a paper copy by post

☐ £20; Overseas. To receive my journal as a paper copy by airmail post

☐ Please cancel my membership of the Society (or email: membership@lwmfhs.org)

Please ensure that the Membership Secretary has your current address and email address. If you pay your subscription by standing order, please contact your bank to ensure that you are paying the correct amount.

Signed.....Dated.....

Title.....Name (in capitals)..... Memb. No.....

Address.....

.....Post Code/Zip Code.....

Email.....

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL PAYMENT

A note from the Treasurer

To renew your membership for 2025-2026, you can:

- Set up a standing order payable on 1 October annually*
- Make a payment directly into our bank account*
- Pay through Parish Chest directly from our website:
<https://lwmfhs.org/join/>
- or our page on the Parish Chest website:
<https://www.parishchest.com/london-westminster-middlesex-fhs-4577.php>
- Post a cheque to the Membership Secretary (details above) giving your name and, if possible, membership number

*You will need this information to make the payment

- The Society's Santander bank sort code: 09-01-29
- The Society's Santander bank account number: 70580978; the account name is London Westminster & Middlesex Family History Society
- Note that you must have the name of the society in full for the bank details to match
- Your membership number which is on the email notification of your electronic *Metropolitan*, or the address sheet with your paper copy

Note: **It is important that you include a reference with your payment**, otherwise the Society will not know who the money is from. Please ask your bank to add a reference which includes your name and membership number eg L Jones 1234, Fairweather 2345. These details will be enough for us to identify your payment and renew your membership.

However you pay, make sure you send us the correct amount, depending on whether you have paper or electronic copies of *Metropolitan*.

If you have changed your name, address or email, please tell the Membership Secretary.

April Vesey, Treasurer

AN 'OFFAL' LOAD OF TRIPE!

By Dr Cliff Roffey, Member No. 8854

This story of a ROFFEY/WEBB family conundrum starts with the subject of a Tripe Shop or Offal Dealer in Islington. A Tripe Dresser was the general name given to an Offal Dealer. They traded in all animal parts not normally found in a butcher's shop which included tripe, trotters, heads and all internal edible organs, most of which are probably considered inedible today.

Tripe itself or cow stomach lining for human consumption was prepared by cleaning, trimming, boiling and bleaching it. There were many cuts including 'black', 'thick seam', 'honeycomb' and 'cow heels'. Tripe was a cheap, nutritious and popular food for the British working classes from the Victorian era until the latter half of the 20th century when its popularity had decreased. The photo depicts such a tripe shop, or offal dealer, circa 1920 and was given to me by my late father-in-law, Percy Sidney George WEBB.



It shows two men. The man on the right of the photo was confirmed by him as Sidney Alfred WEBB (1898-1949) his father. The second man on the left was said by him to be to be a 'Bill' ROFFEY. Naturally being a ROFFEY myself, undertaking a One-Name study of the name, I was intrigued to find out how or if he fitted in with my family.

This fascinated me also, as I had married one of Percy's daughters, in 1985. There was no known connection then between our ROFFEY/WEBB families. Our lines were geographically quite far apart, London for the WEBBS and Hampshire for my direct ROFFEY line. It would be quite a coincidence to have such a photo of two people who happened to have some link.

Bearing in mind the reported date of the photograph, the logical thought was to first examine the 1921 Census records. The 1921 Census found Sidney Alfred WEBB aged 23 and 5 months, who was born in Tottenham, living with the PAGE family at 38 Bannockburn Road, Plumstead SE18. He was reported as the brother-in-law to the head of the household Archibald PAGE. Sidney's job was recorded as an Offal Dealer at Bennett, Son and Co Ltd at 41 Chapel Street Islington.

Needless to say, I had therefore searched for years for a 'Bill' (or William) ROFFEY in vain as the other man.

My sister-in-law however announced to me more recently that she had been told by her father that the guy's name was in fact 'Harry' ROFFEY and she had found a Henry Philip ROFFEY (1885-1973), who probably fitted the situation as Henry is often substituted by the name 'Harry'.

I then found that a Henry Philip ROFFEY now probably the 'Harry' reported in the photograph circa 1920 from father-in-law was already in my extensive database. He was in fact the great grandson of my great, great grandfather John ROFFEY (1821-1880). The latter, a butcher, migrated to Portsmouth in Hampshire from Islington. Ultimately, from one of his children's line, George ROFFEY (1844-1886), resulted in myself being raised in Gosport, Hampshire. John ROFFEY owned the Blue Anchor public house in Kingston Crescent in Portsmouth. I needed therefore to get some further confirmation for links to the WEBB family and the occupation of Tripe Dressing.

Three particular census records, two for 1921 and one for 1911 were very helpful. The first record found for 1921, Henry John ROFFEY (Harry's father) was Manager of a Tripe Shop for Bennett, Son and Co at 227 Hoxton Street in Shoreditch. He was living there with his wife Sarah Jane and servant Helen PAGE (no known relation to those of the PAGE names previously mentioned). Furthermore, the 1921 Census also indicated that Henry Philip's

brother John Edward ROFFEY was a Shop Man in a Tripe Shop, employed at the same address as above. He, however, was living at 57 Prince George Road, Stoke Newington in the Ward of Hackney. So, father and son were employed by Bennett's. Bennett's was the organisation mentioned previously that the WEBB family also worked for. My sister-in-law and wife's great grandfather WEBB was the Manager of the Battersea shop.

The second record was for his son Henry Philip ROFFEY who, in 1921, was a meat salesman at Smithfield Market. His employer then was noted as W.M. Simpson (Liverpool) Ltd of 91 Cowcross Street. He was aged about 36 and living with his wife Jane Anne ROFFEY at 41 Lesbia Road, Hackney.

The third record for the 1911 Census just links them (father and son) together. Henry John ROFFEY was then aged 47 living with his wife and other family members at 227 Hoxton Street N, Shoreditch. His occupation was as Tripe Dresser Manager. Henry Philip ROFFEY was then aged 25 and had the occupation Shopman in a Meat Market. Another brother of his, Frederick Charles ROFFEY was also shown in the 1921 census as being employed as a Butcher's assistant at the same address by W.M. Simpson Ltd.

It was noted that in 1921 Henry John ROFFEY was 58 years old and the person in the photograph was definitely not 58 years old. Henry Philip ROFFEY, however, was 36 and that appears just about right.

Henry Philip ROFFEY was born in January 1885 at Twyford Street, Caledonian Road, Islington St Mary and baptised there on 3 May. He married Jane Ann SHALL (1888-1977) at St Luke, Finsbury, Old Street on 24 March 1912.

Throughout his life Henry Philip had many residential addresses. These ranged chronologically mainly from London areas then to Essex and finally Berkshire. In 1891 aged about 6 years he was in Islington and in 1901 aged 16 years in Hackney. In 1911 at about 26 he was living at 227 Hoxton Street, Hoxton, Shoreditch. From 1918 to 1921 at the age of about 34-36 years he was at 41 Lesbia Road, Hackney. In that same year on 13 December 1921 he was initiated into The Masonic Lodge at Mount Edgumbe. Electoral rolls for 1924 -25 indicate he was in Ripple and Westbury in Essex with his wife Jane.

There is an immigration record on 28 April 1930 when he was about 45 at Southampton, Hampshire, suggesting he spent time in South Africa. He appears aged 41 with his wife listed as J. A. ROFFEY aged 42 as having arrived from Natal, Capetown, South Africa on *Kenilworth Castle* to the address in the UK of 35 Dame Street, Islington. Henry's occupation was noted as a salesman.

Furthermore, in 1934 he appears aged 49 to reside at 25 Union Square, Islington South & West and then in 1937-38 at 44a Cloth Fair, City of London with his wife Jane (see note 1).

Although in 1938 the electoral roll entry shows him with his wife Jane there is also another entry at 53 Lillieshall Road, Clapham North where Henry Philip appears to be with a Helen ROFFEY. Helen could be Ellen as the names are often recorded interchangeably, but two addresses in the 1938 in the same year for him seemed a bit strange. It might of course not be him but more likely a double entry (see note 2).

Perhaps the double entry for Henry Philip was related to a business address and a home address. He could have moved from one place after filling out the form and moved in with a new lady friend before her form was filled out or maybe the registers were simply not updated by the then existing administration.

It seems to indicate this was when his marriage to Jane was possibly going 'pear shaped'. A Jane A. ROFFEY appears in the 1939 census on her own, married and living at 4 Tyssen Road, Hackney, London, a Cook, born 7 September 1888.

It seems by the 1951 electoral register he was in fact living at 36 Edna Street, Battersea with an Ellen ROFFEY. Clapham North mentioned above and Battersea are not far away.

Throughout 1954 to 1964 however from the age 69-79 years he seems to have lived mainly in Berkshire with Ellen. In 1954-1956 for example his abode was 1 The Ring, Wokingham. The years 1957-58 saw him at 1 Parish Bungalow, Shaw Road, Farley Hill in Wokingham. In fact in 1960 and 1961 he was living there at Riseley Gorse Farm. By 1962 he was back at 1 Parish Bungalow.

His brother Frederick (previously mentioned) and family also lived in Wokingham according to the 1939 Register. He appears as living in the Reading area in Zinzan Street. This may have been the reason Henry moved to Berkshire to be near his brother suggesting their relationship was close. This brother Frederick was also on the electoral role for Wokingham in 1965 and died there in 1971.

Henry Philip's death is shown as June 1973 aged about 88 in Reading Berks. I have not managed to find any children for him.

He lived there in the Reading area for a long time as mentioned with another woman. The electoral registers give her name as Ellen Georgina Rose ROFFEY. I can't find a marriage for them. So, either they were unmarried or she was a ROFFEY by birth. For the former the only possibility with a similar long name was an Eleanor Georgina Rose BISHOP born 1894 in Islington but I could not find any clarity here. His first wife appears to have died 31 December 1987. It is therefore unlikely that he married the second woman, unless he was a bigamist.

I am from the evidence presented, reasonably sure that Henry Philip ROFFEY is the unknown man in the photograph, though would love to get confirmation and any further details. Can any readers help? Are there for instance, as there seem to be no children for him, any readers from the extended families of the two women he lived with, who could aid with photographs etc?

Notes

(1) Cloth Fair in the City of London is now a short residential street to the East of Smithfield in the Ward of Farringdon Within. It contains in its boundaries the oldest residential dwelling in London (Nos 41 & 42). No 43 was the home of the late Poet Laureate Sir John Betjeman. So, Henry was presumably not far away at No 44a.

(2) Nowadays it's sometimes possible to register at two addresses (though you can only vote once in any election). For example, if you're a student with different home and term-time addresses, you may be able to register at both.

Sources

Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk)/Find My Past(www.findmypast.co.uk)

Personal Family Records of the Roffey and Webb families.

'Roffey Migration to Portsmouth Area' by Cliff Roffey, *The Hampshire Family Historian*, (2006) Vol 33 No1 June, p 13-18.

WEBSITE NEWS – WAR MEMORIALS

We had an email from one of our most long-standing members, Eileen Blythe, who is Member No. 2. She wrote:

‘I was so lucky to have met my Grandfather once before he died. George MATTHEWS was born in Hackney in September 1885 and married in 1907. George was a tram driver for the London County Council (LCC) in the Tramways Department for 36 years. He had two children when WW1 started but he enlisted and in June 1916 he was on the Folkestone Boat Train to France with his regiment, the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry.

In 2016 the Harbour at Folkestone was sold and refurbished and the small café which had been at the end of the rail line was taken down. Eight red books were found which had the names of the soldiers who crossed the Channel to France in WW1. These books are not official papers: the men sign by choice, giving name, date, Regiment and number. Thousands of men did sign. These records are now with Kent County Record office in Maidstone and a CD was made by ‘One Step’, part of the S&N Genealogy group.

I don’t have the details but I can remember that when in Dover Harbour some years ago going on a ferry, I noticed a large brass memorial board with the names of men who had worked on the trains and were killed in WW1. Not sure if it’s still there or if it’s been moved as changes have happened. This was at the terminus of the Boat Train to France. There may have been one at Folkestone Boat Train terminus as well. The Boat trains from Dover and Folkestone were used to send the Army to France. I also remember Liverpool Street Station had a large board with the names of men killed in WW1. I guess that all the London Main Stations had these large plaques.

The LCC produced a CD in 2004, ‘Records of War Service – London County Council Staff 1914-1918’, which was published by S&N Genealogy with details of the War service of their employees, giving name, LCC Department, regiment and number.

The London Transport Magazine of October 1950 reports that George retired after 36 years on the trams as a Vehicle Inspector from Clapton garage.’

There is a very useful website if you are looking for any sort of war memorial, which we first wrote about in 2016. The Imperial War Museum has compiled a register of all war memorials in the UK, which can be found at many more places than just local churches and municipal monuments.

More details of the names on memorials in the Register can often be found by clicking on the listings at: www.iwm.org.uk/memorials

We looked here and discovered that there is, as Eileen remembers, a large memorial to South Eastern and Chatham Railway employees from the First World War and Southern Railway employees from the Second World War. This is located in the former Dover Marine Railway Station, now in Terminal 1 of the Dover Cruise Terminal at the Western Docks. This is not a public area but staff will allow access if asked. It has the names of 556 railway employees from the General Offices, Coaching Department, Engineers Department, Goods Department, Loco Carriage and Wagon Department, Marine Department, Outdoor Locomotive Department and others who died, out of the 5,222 men who served. There does not seem to be one at Folkestone.

The memorial Eileen remembers at Liverpool Street Station is the Great Eastern Railway war memorial, a very large marble plaque which was originally erected in the booking hall of the station in 1922. It was moved to the upper concourse level when the station was redesigned in the 1990s and is now attached to the former Great Eastern Hotel. The inscription reads ‘To the glory of God and in grateful memory of the/ Great Eastern Railway staff who in response to the call of their/ King and Country, sacrificed their lives during the Great War’. On it are carved the names of 1,108 of those employees who died. Under the main plaque are two smaller memorials which were originally located elsewhere, and a passenger lift which has marble covered doors to match the memorial.



The memorial at Kings Cross

A memorial at Kings Cross Station dedicated to the Great Northern Railway employees who died in the First World War and those of the London and North Eastern Railway who fell in the Second World War used to look much like the one at Liverpool Street but was redesigned in 2013. The 11 panels containing 938 names have been set within individual steel frames placed to echo the composition of the soldiers in John Singer SARGENT's 1919 painting ‘Gassed’. The IWM website shows the journey of the memorial from large plaque on platform 1, via the First Class Lounge and storage to its current location and includes many photographs.

A PRAYER BOOK

by Robert Wilkinson, Member No. 8019

Previously, I wrote of Beatrice Lilian ANDREWS (1900-1983) and her father Alfred (1851-1927), a younger brother of my maternal ancestor James ANDREW(s) (1849-1886). I'm not quite done with her yet though, because her maternal WHITE ancestry became of interest, thanks to a prayer book and some funeral cards.

I should mention that whilst 'Aunty Beattie' bore this title amongst my older relatives, my late maternal grandmother, (born Beattie WHITE in Lancashire) is remembered by my younger relatives with the same title. However, the older Beattie's maternal WHITES were from Hampshire, based on census information, whilst my own ancestral WHITES have so far been traced back from Lancashire to Cheshire. Isn't family history just full of such confusions?

As mentioned in the earlier article, Beattie's widowed father, Alfred, had married Mary Ann WHITE (1863-1919) in 1898. Beattie pointed out the names of the two witnesses on the marriage certificate: Peter HINSON, grandfather to her PETHERICK relatives and Alice Lydia JEFFERIES. I had understood both witnesses to be related maternally to Beattie but at the time did not know in what way either fitted in.

On one of my visits to Beattie in the late 1970s, she presented me with a prayer book containing details of people from her maternal family. Her words to me at the time were along the lines of, "Do you want to make some money?", the reasoning being that since the name WORDSWORTH appeared a number of times amongst the entries therein, there would be some connection with the famed romantic 19th century poet and I should be able to make a tidy sum from selling the book!

Here are two of the pages with a transcription of each.

First Page

Mrs Susan WORDSWORTH Born December 2 1802

Mr John George WORDSWORTH Born Jan'y 19[?] 1804

Died August 20 1834 [though see entries below – actually 1832?]

Susannah Maria WORDSWORTH Born May 9 1829

Mary Ann LANCASTER Born January 24 1837

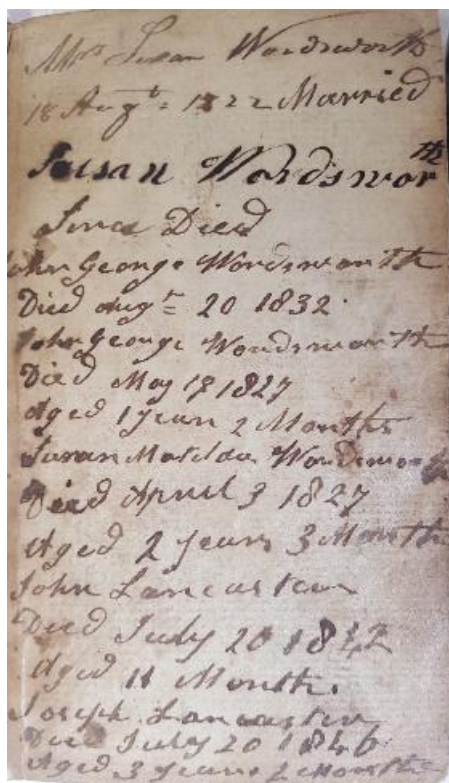
Eliza LANCASTER Born June 21 1839

Emma LANCASTER Born August 6 1847[?]

Joseph LANCASTER Born December 12 1812 or 13[??]

Written vertically across the above names was 'Mrs Susan DOWDING'.

There are some very faint pencil markings also running vertically, which have not so been deciphered.



Next Page – 2 entries in pencil

Mrs Susan WORDSWORTH 18 Aug 1832 Married

[Underneath this – again:] Susan WORDSWORTH

Since Died

John George WORDSWORTH Died Aug't 20 1832

John George WORDSWORTH Died May 19? 1827 Aged 1 year 2 months

Susan Matilda WORDSWORTH Died April 3 1827 Aged 2 years 3 months

John LANCASTER Died July 20 1842 aged 11 month

Joseph LANCASTER Died July 20 1846 Aged 3 years 2 months

Following (third) Page - 2 entries only, in pencil

Mrs Susan LANCASTER Died June 16 1854

Eliza LANCASTER Died Dec 4 or 6 1855

As a spoiler, I should mention that many years later, I've still got the prayer book and, to date, haven't come across any connection with the famous William, nor have I got any further back than 1802, for the earliest entry, but the information has proved interesting nonetheless and did indeed lead me initially to research the names in the book at the time when I obtained it. In that pre-internet age I collected various bits and pieces of information in a flurry of amateur enthusiasm. One such example was an extract from a telephone directory of the time, with the names of nineteen 'subscribers' in London bearing the surname WORDSWORTH.

I don't know if I'll ever get around to researching those names to see if any might ultimately connect with the family in the prayer book but I have wondered, whilst browsing through parish records, whether WORDSWORTH might originally have been WARDSWORTH. A John George WARDSWORTH was baptised at St Martin in the Fields some weeks after the 1804 date above but the birthdate information in that record does not match the date given in the prayer book, so no conclusions have been possible so far. Even so, in an era when the poet had risen to fame, one can imagine the possibility of a family with a similar name tweaking it a little to join the celebrity bandwagon. But I digress, and idly speculate. After all, there was still a story to be derived from the prayer book in any case.

Needless to say, Beattie had filled me in on her maternal family at an early stage and it was relatively easy to use her information along with that in the prayer book, to build up the following scenario, supplemented by more recent research:

John George WORDSWORTH born on 19 January 1804 had married Susan DOWDING (born 2 December 1802) on 18 August 1822 at St Mary, Newington, Surrey and, according to the prayer book, there were three children. The first known child, Susan Matilda WORDSWORTH (whose birth wasn't noted in the prayer book) was baptised at St Martin in the Fields, London on 28 January 1825, the family abode then being at 6 St Martin's

Lane. John George's occupation was given as 'bookkeeper' (i.e. clerk). A son, also John George WORDSWORTH (unrecorded too) was baptised (same address) on 26 March 1826. Both children died in infancy as indicated above. Susannah Maria WORDSWORTH was baptised on 2 December 1827. The family now lived at 13 New Street, Covent Garden. On 20 August 1832, John George WORDSWORTH died, his burial on 26 August being recorded in the registers of St Martin in the Fields. There was some confusion in the prayer book pages with a death entry appearing on two pages and given as 1834 in one and 1832 in the other. Perhaps entries were only made, some years after the earlier births – possibly after Susan had been widowed?

Susan WORDSWORTH remarried on 22 May 1836 at St George's Church, Hanover Square, Westminster to Joseph LANCASTER, a chair caner/mender. According to the 1851 census he had been born locally, so on



12 December around 1811-1813. Several children followed, as recorded in the prayer book and the first of these was Mary Ann LANCASTER, who was baptised on 12 February 1837, when the family were then living at 19 Rose Street (seen in the 1841 and 1851 census).

Rose Street (as it would have been in 1851) superimposed on a more modern map. A small 'alley' section still exists.

Eliza LANCASTER, born in 1839 would have been the next child and whilst a

baptism has not so far been located, a record from Castle Street (St Martin's) Workhouse (and matching the address in Rose Street) shows that she was admitted to that institution on 5 November 1855 on the recommendation of one Doctor Leonard, who also certified her death there from Phthisis (Tuberculosis) on 6 December. The death certificate purchased under the GRO's 'digital PDF' scheme, further revealed that she had been suffering with the disease for 5 months.

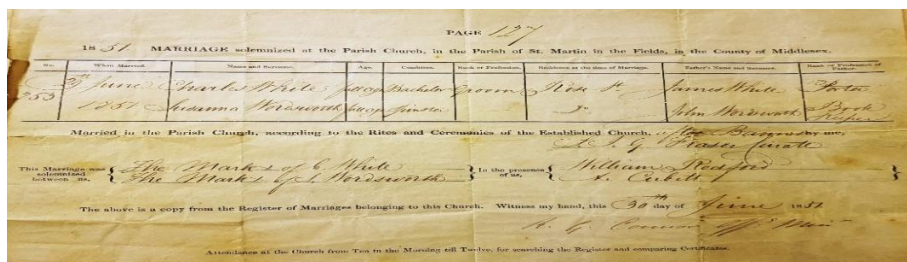
Baptisms have not so far been found for siblings John and Joseph LANCASTER, but the prayer book indicates the tragically short length of their lives; Joseph's burial being recorded in the registers of St Martin in the Fields on 26 July 1846. One further child, Emma LANCASTER, was baptised at St Martin in the Fields on 22 March 1848. Other than that, her fate is as yet unknown, save that in the 1851 census, aged three, she was a 'student at St Martin's National School.'

38	19 River St	Joseph Lancaster	Head	Mar	39	Franc. Worker	Head & St Paul's School	Barstow
		Susanah	Wife	Mar	39	do	do	do
		Mary Ann	Daughter		41	do	do	do
		Oliver	do		42	do	do	do
		Emma	do		5	Scholar, P. Marston National School	do	do

Extract from the 1851 census returns. The family were also at Rose Street in the 1841 census too.

GRO PDFs confirmed that Susan WORDSWORTH (née DOWDING) died on 16 June 1854, following a fall at home in Rose Street - her passing being registered three days later, whilst a man named Joseph LANCASTER, died on 17 January 1860 on admission to the 'Vinegar Yard' workhouse (St Giles). Whether this was the relict of Susan is not certain, but it appears that the workhouse was located near to the junction of the modern Endell Street and Short's Gardens (not far from Rose Street).

On 29 June 1851, Susanna Maria WORDSWORTH, now aged 23, married Charles William WHITE (born Frimley, Hampshire ca 1830). The original marriage certificate from 1851 is still in my possession at the time of writing. Their daughter Mary Ann WHITE would later marry Beattie's father Alfred, in 1898. Some weeks before her marriage, Susanna Maria may have been employed as a servant at 33 Essex Street, St Clement Danes (1851 census).



The original marriage certificate of Charles William WHITE and Susanna Maria WORDSWORTH.

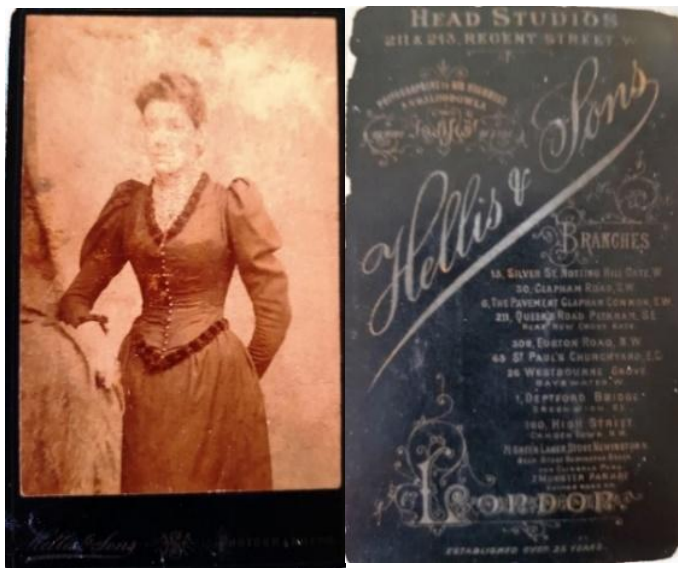
Apart from her mother, Beattie specifically named three of her maternal uncles and aunts, although subsequent research has suggested seven. Of the three 'not mentioned', it appears that Charles T? WHITE (1854-1856) did not survive infancy, whilst an elder sister, Susanna Maria WHITE, appears to have been born on 20 March 1852 and subsequently baptised at St Martin in the Fields on 11 July of that year, with a given family address of 'George Yard, Drury Lane' and with Charles's profession as 'Ostler', which accords well with 'Groom' from the 1851 marriage certificate. An 1861 census entry for 8 Huntsworth Terrace, Marylebone, includes two more children: Charles (born about 1856/7) and Arthur (born towards the end of 1860). In 1871, the family, now at 2 Lisson Cottages, Marylebone, had been joined by Mary Ann (born 1863), Henry (born 1865) and Alice (born 1868). Beattie had vaguely remembered an 'Arthur' but whatever the case, a useful family tree on Ancestry leads back to an Arthur James WHITE with plausible family details, though further research would no doubt clarify this one way or the other. In 1861, Charles William WHITE had been listed as a carman; in 1871, he was a 'watchman'.



Charles William
WHITE (1830-187-?)

On 15 April 1876, the eldest daughter, Susannah Maria WHITE (1852-1886?) married James Alfred JEFFERIES at St Matthews, Bethnal Green. A child, Alice Lydia JEFFERIES matching the name of the marriage witness was born at Hoxton in 1880. Arthur James WHITE (if this is the correct Arthur) married Johanna ELLIS at St Mark, Shoreditch on 3 August 1884 and the occupation of his father given as Charles William was 'timekeeper'. It may be possible that Charles William WHITE had died by then, for only one of the family has so far been located in the 1881 census and that person was Alice the youngest daughter then aged 13, who was at 44 Bridge Place, Paddington; the home of a 'General Carrier', Charles BURLEY (born Hersham, Surrey ca 1832) and his wife Mary Ann (born ca 1833). A cousin named Isobel BURLEY (born ca 1861) was also there. Notwithstanding the fact that Charles and Isobel were the witnesses at the marriage of James JEFFERIES and Susannah Maria WHITE, the family were of interest in any case since Beattie had mentioned the BURLEYS of 25 St Mary's Terrace Paddington.

And sure enough, in the 1891 census, there were the BURLEYS, now in St Mary's Terrace, together with Charles's sister Elizabeth BURLEY and Mary Ann WHITE, Beattie's mother, listed as a servant. With a little more delving



Beattie's mother Mary Ann WHITE (1863-1919) in the 1890s.

it became evident that Charles's wife Mary Ann was the sister of Charles William WHITE and therefore the aunt of Beattie's mother. Charles BURLEY and Mary Ann had married at St Martin in the Fields on 5 October 1851.

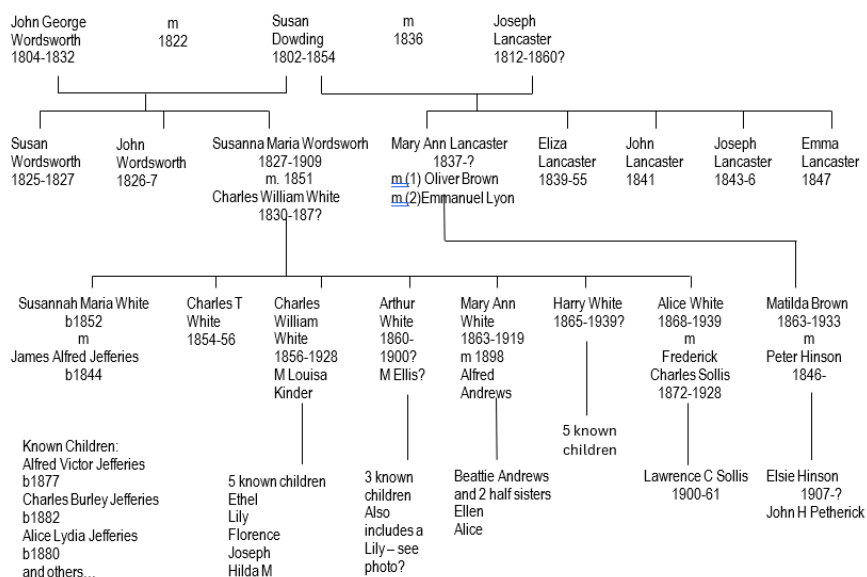
Even though the whereabouts of the WHITE

family in 1881 remain a mystery at the time of writing, Susannah Maria, now widowed, resurfaced at 6 Senior Street, Paddington in the 1891 census, along with daughter Alice, now aged 23 and grandson, Charles Burley JEFFERIES, aged 9 - brother of Alice Lydia.

Curiously, this address was just two doors away from where my ancestor James ANDREWS had briefly lived earlier, between 1872-3 – indeed the above locations in Marylebone and Paddington were all fairly close to the locations of the extended ANDREWS family and relatives linked by marriage.

On 5 October 1897, Alice WHITE and Frederick Charles SOLLIS were married at St Mary Magdalen, Paddington. The witnesses were Alice Lydia JEFFERIES and Alfred Victor JEFFERIES (another of her brothers). From this record, it appears that Charles William WHITE, now shown as deceased, had finally ended up as a 'Stonemason'. Plenty more research here then, to understand his various roles...

It seems that Alice Lydia JEFFERIES later emigrated to Canada in 1903, since a lady of that name married one Alex COBURN from Scotland on 14 October 1905 at York, Ontario. A 1911 census record (Quebec Province) shows them alongside a 'frère' (it's all in French!) named Charles who seems to have joined them in that year. This came to light when I noticed the name Charles Burley JEFFERIES in a Canadian record which, though mislaid for now, did set me off on this trail and saved me from incorrectly 'marrying off' Alice Lydia when attempting to pull this article together. The younger Charles himself briefly appears in Great Western Railway employee records for 1899 as a 'vanguard' based at Smithfield, but perhaps someone out there knows a lot more about this family than I do already?



Sources:

Notes from Beattie's memory and items passed on to me

Family Prayer Book of Susan / Susannah Wordsworth (nee Dowding)

Census records 1841-1921

Civil Registration and Parish Records

Original Marriage Certificate for Alfred's second marriage 1898

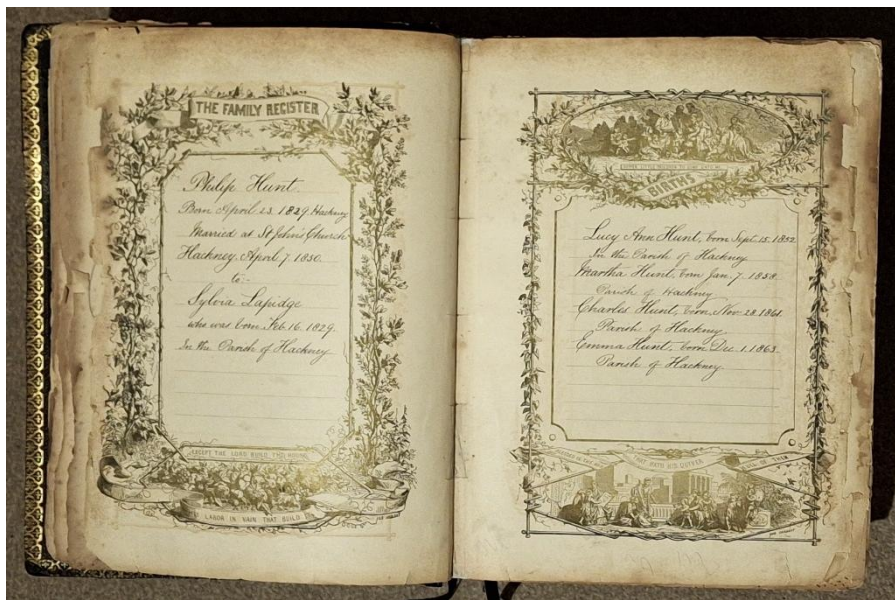
Family Photographs



A FAMILY BIBLE – REDISCOVERED

By Colin Barratt, Member No. 4427

I wonder how many of you have a Family Bible? These were popular in the 19th century and were often huge publications, lavishly illustrated with engravings of biblical stories. They also had a number of pages specifically for recording family births, marriages and deaths. My mother's family (HUNT) knew that a family Bible existed but over the years it became mislaid. All of my parents' generation had gone and my cousins were decreasing. Then, during the Covid lockdown, one of my cousins decided to clear out his cupboards and found a large box at the back of one. To his surprise he had found the missing family Bible. He didn't realise that he had it! There were many family details recorded in it, starting with the birth of our great great grandfather Philip HUNT in 1829 and ending with the death of my grandparents' eldest child at just 13 years old in 1914. It's a pity that family events weren't recorded after this. I have hundreds of family details now, stored online in Family Tree Maker, so I may insert a sheet into the Bible with some of these.



The Bible register

The Bible didn't have a date of publication in it, but the publishers were Cassell, Petter and Galpin of London and New York. This company operated through the second half of the 19th century, under various names, but my research showed that they were only known by this name between 1858 and 1871. So the Bible must date from this period. I don't know who bought the book, but I assume it was my great great grandfather, Philip HUNT (1829-1883). This huge book must have been an expensive purchase. It weighs 6.5kg, is 12cm thick and has 1700 pages! He was an ordinary worker in fairly lowly jobs in Hackney, so I don't know how he could afford to buy it, or why. It's not a book that can be handled easily, but the large illustrations would help teach children Bible stories.

Unfortunately, the Bible was in a poor state of repair, with many loose pages and detached backboard. The spine was also broken and detached. At some stage in its history it wasn't treated with much respect, as some of the blank pages have children's sketches and scribbles, but that's all part of its story.

My cousin's father, (my mother's brother), was a HUNT, and my cousin wanted to pass the Bible down that side of the family to the next generation of HUNTs. However, it needed a lot of work before this was possible. He did consider applying to BBCs Repair Shop to get it restored, but without a good back story we knew it was unlikely to be accepted.



The Bible before restoration.

We discussed how we should get it repaired. We did email Chris Shaw, the Repair Shop's book binder, at his business address, but without reply. So we looked for book binders in the north London area. Our nearest one was in south Tottenham. I was impressed by their website and I discussed our requirements with them. We took the book there last year for repair. The lady book binder had many years' experience repairing books like ours and

thought it should be possible to restore it. Some weeks later we received an estimate for the job and we decided to go ahead.

It needed a considerable amount of work, re-stitching the loose pages, re-



The Bible after restoration.

building the spine and re-casing the book to keep it together and usable and as much of the original material as possible was kept. Many pages had small brown spots on them. This wasn't mould, but was an effect called 'foxing', which is an age related paper deterioration, caused by oxidation of metal impurities in the paper. The advice was to live with it, as removing these marks would be very expensive, requiring complete disassembly of the book and using special chemicals. Given this, the result

of the repair was excellent and will allow the family Bible to be kept in our family, be looked after for years to come and hopefully be passed down the generations.



NEXT COPY DATE

Please remember that the copy date for the next issue of *Metropolitan* is
1 August 2025

Articles, letters, requests and comment should be sent to the Editors.

The Editors reserve the right to edit contributions.

Contributors should indicate if copy is being distributed to other family history society journals or family history magazines.

Material in *Metropolitan* may not be reproduced in any form without first obtaining written permission from the Editors.

OUR LWMFHS YOUTUBE CHANNEL



In March we launched our new YouTube channel. On it we will put any videos we make and there are already six up there. These are free to view.

A couple of them are ways for us to introduce ourselves to people who may not have heard of us before. One is only 2 minutes long whilst the other goes into more depth, including why our name is so long (for newer members who might not know our Society's own family history).



LWMFHS Where Were They Buried - Edmonton
250 views • 1 month ago



LWMFHS Talk: About Us
111 views • 1 month ago



LWMFHS Where Were They Buried - Harefield
19 views • 3 months ago



LWMFHS Where Were They Buried - St James Piccadilly
47 views • 3 months ago



London Westminster & Middlesex Family History Society - An...
181 views • 7 months ago



Where Were They Buried - an introduction
79 views • 1 year ago

The other four are part of an ongoing series to help people find where their ancestors might be buried which can be very difficult, especially in London. One is an introduction video created for the All About That Place event last year, which shows the type of records available. We will be creating videos for each of our ancient parishes and have so far uploaded ones for Edmonton, Harefield and St James Piccadilly.

You can find our channel by going through the 'Recordings' part in the Members' Area of our website, for those with an ejournal you can just click on this link, <https://www.youtube.com/@LWMFHS/videos>, or you can type 'LWMFHS YouTube' into a search engine.

Do please subscribe to our channel (this is free) and give each of our videos the thumb up!



Please set out your *Help!* request as clearly and succinctly as possible. All surnames should be in CAPITALS. Members may have one free entry per journal. Don't forget to include your

Help!

contact details and your membership number. Please send any replies to the Editors, who will pass them on to the appropriate member.

ELIZABETH LIVERMORE/WILSON

In the 1861 census returns, Joseph LIVERMORE, widower and bricklayer, is living with 4 of his children. Of these, the youngest, Elizabeth, aged 5 and born in St Pancras, cannot have been the child of his wife Emma THUMWOOD, who died in 1853.

In 1871 Elizabeth is living with Ann SLADE (née LIVERMORE) and family as Ann's sister and in 1873 Ann SLADE and Charles WEST are witnesses to Elizabeth's marriage to Henry John BERRY. On the entry at St Mary's church, Plaistow, Joseph ELLIOT, bricklayer, is listed as the (deceased) father of Elizabeth ELLIOT, the bride.

Elizabeth married Charles Henry WILSON in 1896 in St Pancras but can be followed through the subsequent censuses. Several of Elizabeth's children (Walter, Elizabeth Sarah, John Henry and Nellie Harriet) have their mother's maiden surname as LIVERMORE in the GRO birth index. The other children have it as ELLIOT. This would suggest she had both surnames as previous names. The children are all from one family, however, as they appear together as a unit in censuses.

DNA matches have shown a connection matches to descendants of the LIVERMORE and BERRY families from someone who is descended from William Henry WILSON (1896-1936), son of Elizabeth and Charles Henry WILSON (1853-1903). Many of the WILSONs lived in the St Pancras area. I am guessing that the ELLIOT name may possibly come from the maternal partner of Elizabeth's parentage, assuming that Joseph was her father.

My question is, how/where can I identify/document this relationship, if at all possible?

John Kelly, Member No. 8578

Looking for a birth for Elizabeth ELLIOT in the GRO birth indexes between 1852-1857 brings up 7 who were registered in St Pancras.

The first one which caught our eye was Elizabeth Maria ELLIOT, who was born in 1852, although the mother's maiden name was SLINN. In 1851 her parents, Charles and Maria ELLIOT, were living at number 8 Little Charles Place so very near to your LIVERMORES at number 1. Charles died in 1853 and we considered the option that this was an informal adoption between friends. However, Elizabeth Maria appears to have died aged 1, appearing in the GRO indexes as Maria Elizabeth ELLIOTT in 1853.

Another Elizabeth ELLIOT appears in the June quarter of 1853, with the mother's maiden name of WILLSON so must surely be worth a look, even though the date is a couple of years earlier than expected. The birth certificate is available as a digital download for only £3.00. She does not appear to have any siblings close in age in the GRO indexes. We could not find a baptism for her on Ancestry UK (who have a database of Church of England baptisms covering this period from records held at The London Archives) or, indeed, any other records.

By the way, do not dismiss burials for your Kentish Town family if records say that they were buried in St Martin-in-the-Fields. Camden Town Cemetery on Pratt Street, now called St Martin's Gardens, was acquired in 1803 as an additional parochial burial ground but local people in St Pancras parish were also buried there.

MIDDLESEX or LONDON?

One thing I have found puzzling when writing up my 'Middlesex/London' family research - the confusion between recording places as Middlesex or London.

For example, I have family records relating to Tottenham covering the period 1850 to 1990. Tottenham is still called Tottenham Middlesex although surely part of London. I'm not sure when the cut-off date would be for recording my family history data as Tottenham MDX and then Tottenham LND. The same for various other places such as Barnet, Crouch End, Edmonton, Hornsey and Islington.

Is there a LWMFHS recommended date for recording places as Middlesex and then London?

Richard Whitchurch-Bennett, Member No. 8619

Your point about recording places is one which crops up a lot, as I'm sure you can imagine. Even today, people living in Barnet write 'Hertfordshire' after this when it stopped being in Hertfordshire in 1965.

The best way to handle this is probably to record addresses exactly as they were written in the individual records, which will hopefully reflect not only what actually happened but the difficulties people faced when describing their location! Also, recording the address as it was written contemporaneously will facilitate identifying relevant archives in which to search.

You might be interested to read the 'What is the Correct Address?' on the Help pages from the journal of December 2023, when Anne raised a similar point. You can see this in the Members' Area of our website.

GILLETT

I am searching for information on my Great Grandfather Henry GILLETT and his parents Henry and Elizabeth GILLETT.

I have managed to find a birth certificate for 6 July 1849 which says he was born at 67 Star Street, Paddington. His father is given as Henry GILLETT (servant) and his mother as Elizabeth GILLETT née CHADDER 1824-1909. She was born in Holbeton in Devon and her occupation is given as Dressmaker. I cannot find a baptismal certificate for Henry GILLETT 1849-1934 or a marriage certificate for Henry and Elizabeth. Presumably they met through work.

Henry GILLETT 1849-1934 appears on the 1851 and 1861 Census with his mother but no father is mentioned, presumably he was at work?

I have found information in the 1851 census for a Henry S-AIGLETT (Butler) at 17 Hyde Park Gardens (St James Marylebone). The computer thinks that this should be GILLETT. His age is given as 32 and his place of birth as Ealing, Middlesex. I cannot find any more information in Ancestry or Findmypast and wondered where else I could look for further information. I have contacted several churches in the area and understand some records were lost in the Blitz.

Patricia Harding Member No. 8548

Note: We have been unable to find anything at all about Henry GILLETT senior regarding his marriage to Elizabeth CHADDER or any appearance in the census returns. Henry S-AIGLETT does not seem to appear

anywhere else either although whether they are the same person or not cannot be said for sure.

Also, there do not appear to be any other AIGLETTs in the 1851 census, even though Henry stated in the returns that he was married.

It is unusual to find no trace whatsoever of a person. The fact that his wife appears as a dressmaker or needlewoman in every census from 1851-1901 would seem to indicate that she had to work for a living and likely that Henry senior was not around to support her and her son.

We also cannot find a baptismal certificate for Henry junior. Henry married in 1876 - do you have his marriage certificate? This might confirm his father's name and possibly whether he was still alive at that time.



CAN YOU HELP?

could you be our new

POSTAL SALES CO-ORDINATOR

Celia has moved away and can no longer help with this.

This job involves:

1. Monitoring online orders of our booklets, which come in from GenFair
2. Processing these orders and posting them
3. Keeping a record so that our stock levels can be monitored

Stocks are held in our storage unit at Enfield so you will need to be within striking distance of there. Being near to a Post Office might help.

If you would like to volunteer or need any further information, please contact the Executive Committee at: info@lwmfhs.org
or Elizabeth at: chairman@lwmfhs.org

SURNAME INTERESTS

The research interests listed here were submitted by members between mid-February and mid-May 2025

Each quarter's members' interests are put onto the website just before the journal is published. If you would like to contact a member whose interests are listed, please go <https://lwmfhs.org/surname-interests/> In the search box, type the name you are interested in and a list of entries will appear if a match is found. Click Contact and this brings up an email for you to fill in.

Interests shown are from members: 8542; 8555; 8573; 8570; 8592; 8596; 8616

Name	Period	County	Parish / Area	Mem.No.
ATTWOOD	1890-1920	MDX	Paddington	8555
BARKE	1850-1950	MDX	Edmonton	8573
BARKE	1800-2000	MDX	Islington	8573
BAYSTON	1860-1880	MDX	Paddington	8555
BULL	1900-2000	MDX	Hillingdon	8573
CAMP	1810-1900	MDX	Ponders End	8555
CAMP	1840-1890	MDX	Edmonton	8555
CAMP	1840-1920	MDX	Tottenham	8555
CHILVERS	1870-1970	MDX	Hendon	8555
CLUNIE	1768	SRY	Bermondsey	8596
CORDES	1770-1855	Any	Any	8592
FLINDALL	Any	Any	Any	8570
FORD	1860-1890	MDX	Islington	8555
FOWLER	1900-1950	MDX	Edmonton	8573
FRANCIS	1850-1901	MDX	Islington	8596
FRINDLE	Any	Any	Any	8570
GALE	1700-1900	MDX	Hillingdon	8570
HARTWELL-JONES	1930-1960	MDX	Westminster	8542
HILL	1900-2000	MDX	Enfield	8616
HILL	1881-1921	MDX	Tottenham	8616
HOARE	1850-1900	MDX	Westminster	8570
HOWELL	1850-1925	MDX	Islington	8573
JACKSON	1870-1900	MDX	Fulham	8570
JONES	1930-1945	MDX	Westminster	8542
JONES	1850-1950	MDX	Islington	8573
KNIGHT	1860-1900	MDX	Chelsea	8570

LAWRANCE	1900-2000	MDX	Edmonton	8573
LEE	1780-1810	LND	St Martin le Grand	8596
LEE	1815-1821	LND	Holborn, St Andrew	8596
LEE	1820-1860	SRY	Lambeth	8596
LEE	1841-1851	MDX	St Marylebone	8616
LEVITT	1800-1900	SFK	Any	8555
MARTIN	1850-1925	MDX	Islington	8573
MARTIN	1860-1900	MDX	Hendon	8570
MEADS	Any	Any	Any	8570
PRIEST	1850-1900	MDX	Kensington	8570
ROBARTS	1820-1970	MDX	Islington	8555
RUSHBROOK	1600-1950	ESS	Any	8555
SOWERBY	1800	LND	St Mary Aldermary	8596
SOWERBY	1800-1813	LND	St Vedast Foster Lane	8596
STONESTREET	Any	Any	Any	8570
TILLIN	Any	Any	Any	8570
WILLETTS	1864-1865	MDX	Clerkenwell	8616
WINSLADE	1860-1900	MDX	Notting Hill	8570
WISE	1875-1960	MDX	Islington	8555
WISE	1700-1920	WIL	Any	8555
WOOD	1914-1945	MDX	Tottenham	8616
WYLLIE	1770-1800	LND	St Olave Old Jewry	8596

SPECIAL INTERESTS

8542	London Welsh Dairy shops in Pimlico area. Jones and Hartwell-Jones
-------------	---

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the new members, number 8551 - 8690 who have joined the Society over the past few months and wish them well with their research.

OBITUARY

It is with sadness that we report the death of the following member of the Society. We send condolences to his family and friends.

Mr Anthony Rayfield (membership number 6924)



FORTHCOMING BRANCH MEETINGS

Virtual Branch – Talks are on the second Thursday of the month. ‘Doors’ open at 7.45 for an 8pm start. Meetings are listed in *Metropolitan*, on our website and Facebook page. The details of each Zoom meeting will be emailed to you a few days prior to the event. The talk will be recorded (with the speaker’s permission) and will be available for 3 days in the Members’ Area of the website so that members who live abroad or those who can’t make the live event can watch it at a hopefully more convenient time.

Branch Contact: Clare Pollitt, Email: virtualbranch@lwmfhs.org

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 12 June | <i>Getting the best out of newspapers</i> by John Hanson
This lecture will investigate what is out there in this much underused resource and explore ideas on how to find those elusive ancestors. |
| 10 July | <i>Victorian Hiring Fairs</i> by Clare O’Grady
The Hiring, Mop or Statute Fair was an important event in the rural community as it was a way to seek and to provide employment, especially in the 19th century. This talk will show outline how, when and where the fairs worked; the evidence they leave behind; the campaign against the fairs; why they declined as employment tools; some of the other attractions provided and registration societies. |
| 14 August | <i>Beating the Bounds</i> by Tudor Allen
Beating the bounds, the ancient custom of walking the boundary of a parish or borough, is still observed today in some places in the country. Tudor Allen, Senior Archivist at Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre, leads a virtual walk around the boundary of Camden, exploring the history to be found en route. |
| 11 September | <i>Suffragettes and Suffragists</i> by Debbie Bradley
Debbie looks at how these movements started and introduces some of the people first involved in the first groups. She shows how to research your suffragette ancestors and provides information about the prominent ladies of Norfolk who campaigned to obtain the Vote for Women. |

Rayners Lane Branch – Talks are on the first Monday of the month unless that is a Bank Holiday, in which case the meeting will be on the second Monday. Doors open at 1pm for a 1.30pm start at Roxeth Community Church, Coles Crescent, South Harrow, Middlesex HA2 0TN. Free parking. Branch Contact: Tony Allen, Email: raynerslanebranch@lwmfhs.org

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 2 June | <i>Victorian Life – Upstairs and Downstairs</i> by Judy Hill.
In the 19th century there was a vast increase in the number of domestic servants this talk will look in detail at the operation of a Victorian household. |
| 8 July | } |
| 4 August | } Please check the website for updates. |
| 1 September | } |

LWMFHS members are also welcome to attend the following meetings:

Midland Ancestors London and Home Counties Group – Talks are held on the second Saturday of each quarter from 10.15am to noon at the LDS Hyde Park Chapel, 64-68 Princes Gate, Exhibition Road, South Kensington SW7 2PA. For more information you can visit the group's webpage: <https://midland-ancestors.uk/about/local-groups/london-group/>

East Surrey FHS Southwark Group – Talks are held on a Monday, usually at John Harvard Library, 211 Borough High Street, Southwark SE1 1JA. Doors open at 11.30am and the talk starts at 12 noon. East Surrey FHS ask for a donation from visitors towards a cuppa. You can find their webpage here: <https://www.eastsurreyfhs.org.uk/index.php/event>

ADVERTISING RATES

Advertising rates per issue of *Metropolitan* are as follows:

Full Page £40, Half Page £23, Quarter Page £14, Eighth Page, £8.50

All copy, correspondence and remittances should be sent to the Editors.

See inside front cover for address.

FOCUS ON FACEBOOK

By Elizabeth Burling, Member No. 4992

Jade found a census return from 1851 which mentioned that a man she was researching was the landlord of the Bull Inn, Tanners End, Edmonton and she asked on our Facebook Help and Discussion Group whether the building was still there.

Local resident Jackie confirmed that it was, albeit with a new name, and took a photo of it for Jade. Jackie mentioned that the pub is on Silver Street but that part of Silver Street is known as Tanners End (Tanners End church and Drill Hall are just opposite) but she doubts that anyone newish to the area would know that.

Tanners End would have been a good place to run a pub at this time, as large building projects were underway for two Poor Law Unions and it seems likely that the workmen would need refreshment! This was the site for the new Edmonton Union Workhouse, which was built in 1839-1841. Edmonton Poor Law Union had been formed in 1837 and included the parishes of Edmonton, Enfield, Hampstead, Hornsey and Tottenham from Middlesex, Cheshunt from Hertfordshire and Waltham Abbey from Essex. A larger Union workhouse was required and one was built at Tanners End, opening in 1842 to house the able-bodied poor, with children going to Enfield and the aged and infirm to Hampstead (at least initially – a new hospital block added to the Edmonton Workhouse in 1910 went on to become North Middlesex Hospital).

Also in the mid-19th century, the Strand Poor Law Union acquired Millfield House to use as an orphanage in 1849, even though it was some 8.5 miles from where most of the children will have been born. Twenty years later, Strand Union built themselves a new workhouse just north of the Edmonton one, as their Cleveland Street one was no longer fit for purpose. Two infirmary blocks were added to Millfield House in 1878 and 1889 so there were probably many thirsty workmen looking for refreshment throughout all of this time. The Strand Union Edmonton workhouse continued to be used by poor people from central London until the First World War.



AIMS OF THE SOCIETY

- 1 To encourage the study of family history, genealogy and heraldry, primarily in the City of London, City of Westminster and the London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Camden, part of Ealing, Enfield, Haringey, Harrow, part of Hillingdon, and Islington.
- 2 To help to co-ordinate efforts to make local records more accessible.
- 3 To carry out such activities as are relevant to a family history society

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual subscription covers all family members living at one address, with one journal and one vote per subscription.

There are three subscription rates: £12, £15 and £20 depending on where you live and how your journal *Metropolitan* is delivered.

Our year runs from 1 October until 30 September the following year.

Members joining during the Society's year will receive back copies of journals.

£12 UK & Overseas: to receive *Metropolitan* electronically by download

£15 UK: to receive *Metropolitan* by post

£20 Overseas: to receive *Metropolitan* by airmail post

CHEQUE PAYMENT BY UK OR OVERSEAS MEMBERS

UK cheques are payable to LONDON WESTMINSTER & MIDDLESEX FHS.

Overseas members' payments must be made in pounds sterling by cheque, drawn upon a London Bank, made payable to: LONDON WESTMINSTER & MIDDLESEX FHS.

All cheques should be sent to the Membership Secretary, address on the inside front cover. Please give your name and, if possible, membership number (which is on the email notifying you of your electronic version of *Metropolitan*, or on the address sheet sent with your paper copy).

CANADA: Canadian Postal Money Orders cannot be accepted.

AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND: Most banks will provide sterling cheques.

OTHER WAYS TO PAY

- Set up a standing order payable on 1 October annually (bank details below);
- Make a payment directly into our bank account (details below);
- Pay through Parish Chest directly from our website lwmfhs.org.uk or our stall on the Parish Chest

BANKERS: Santander Business Banking, Bridle Road, Liverpool, Merseyside L30 4GB

Sort Code: 09-01-29; Account Number: 70580978

Business account name: London Westminster & Middlesex Family History Society

Please include your name and membership number as payment reference.

MEMBERS' DATA

A labels-list of members is held on computer for the purposes of administration and distribution only.

Data from the members' list will NOT be given out to commercial enterprises.

Anyone objecting to his or her name being on this list should write to the Membership Secretary.

METROPOLITAN Copy Dates: **1 Feb, 1 May, 1 Aug, 1 Nov.**