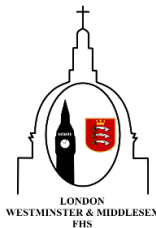


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METROPOLITAN

The Journal of the
LONDON WESTMINSTER & MIDDLESEX
Family History Society



Volume 9 No. 3 (178)

June 2023

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Cover picture: The painted cast-iron insignia of the London Chatham and Dover Railway on Blackfriars Bridge. See page 134.

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EDITORIAL

As usual we have a range of interesting articles and items. Following on from our last issue, it was really exciting to have confirmation of where the gravestones at Monken Hadley came from, and from our own archive too! You can find out more on page 106. Also, the article in the March edition of *Metropolitan* on 'Wembley and its railways' elicited an interesting response about Irish navvies from Robert Barker, which you can read on page 118.

Our Beginners' Corner this time talks about how to draw trees and has a useful table of commonly-used abbreviations. You can see a family tree in action in Michael Gandy's article about his MARDELL and OAKLEY families on page 126 – this one was made using Microsoft Word. Any beginners reading this, do please let us know of any other topics you would like to know more about.

Thank you for the *Help!* pieces which came in as a response to our plea in the March journal. These queries often involve problems which most of us can relate to in our research and the answers can therefore help all of us. In this issue we look at how to find potential birth records of an ancestor who does not seem to want to be found, how to find where someone might be buried and where mentions of a particular family could be found. Our *Help!* Section is on page 137.

The Society's year ends on 30 September 2023 and, although it seems early, we have included the Subscription Renewal Form with this issue of the journal. It is particularly helpful for Sylvia, our Membership Secretary, if you can renew promptly. Membership is still only £12 with an ejournal and we believe this is very good value. You might want to consider renewing by standing order, which is the most cost-effective way for the Society and saves you having to think about it every year. More information on this and the other various ways which you can pay can be found in the white form in the centre of this journal.

Thank you very much for your continuing support of our Society.
Barbara, Elizabeth and Paul, the Editorial Team



CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

At the AGM in March, I was delighted to be accepted as the new Chairman of our Society and am really looking forward to this appointment. I joined LWMFHS about 22 years ago following a house move to North London and started editing the Barnet Branch *Newsletter* in 2002 (only stopping in 2019 when the branch was temporarily closed because of Covid). I remember being rather apprehensive when responding to Rosemary Roome's request for help but thought I would give it a try! Four years later, Barbara, Rosemary and I became the new Editorial Team of *Metropolitan*, taking over from Lilian Gibbens. More recently, I have also been producing the *Parish Guide* series and helping with our Virtual Branch.

I joined because LWMFHS is the Society local to where I live but I do have some London ancestors. My BICKERS family came to Shoreditch from Suffolk in the 1840s and married into a local WREN family, my BAKER 2x great grandmother came from Dorset and married my WILLEY 2x great grandfather at about the same time – his father had lost his money in a bank crash in Exeter and the whole family moved to London. I had heard about these people from my grandparents and was following them back in their counties of origin yet I have also found out a lot more about their lives in London. And perhaps better than this, I have made some great friends in our Society.

I am very pleased to announce that following the AGM we now have a Secretary Team. This is made of three people, Paul Feetum, Andrea Olley and Tahirih Miks.

Paul, our new Minutes Secretary, says: 'The FEETUM name came from Darlington area to London in the 19th Century and crops up in West Ham, Holborn, St Pancras as well as variously in Surrey. My HAMMON name was in Holloway and other branches ended up in East London. I started working on my family tree in the 1980s and have been picking it up and putting it down since then. I am doing it quite intensely nowadays though and joined LWMFHS in 2020.' Paul has also joined the Editorial Team.

Andrea, our Correspondence Secretary, says, 'I joined the society in 2012, I think. I have been researching my family history for about 24 years now and I love the hobby. My mother's side of the family are the Londoners and they

stretch back for several generations in London, north and south. I was born in the North Middlesex Hospital and lived and started school in Tottenham. We moved to Essex when I was 7. I worked in London for a short time when I left school. Two of my three children have worked in London, so I think London is in our genes!'

Tahiri, our Family History Federation Contact says: 'I joined the LWMFHS in November 2022. My research is focused on Middlesex from 1862 through 1912. The surnames I am interested in are ELVERY and MCDONNELL.'

I would like to record the Society's thanks to Tony Allen for his time as Chairman and also to Celia Ottley for her help with forwarding the Secretary's emails in recent months.

You might have been hoping to see us at Haringey History Fair, which had been planned for 13 May. Unfortunately the event has had to be postponed. Several of the ceilings at Bruce Castle were damaged by incoming water last year and the specialist contractors who will be restoring them require warmer temperatures for the historically appropriate material which they need to use. We are hoping that this popular event will be rescheduled for later in the year.

However, the Society will be out and about in the coming months, attending Barnet Medieval Festival on 10 and 11 June for the first time (see page 141 for details). We will also be attending the Family History Show at Kempton Park on 2 September and hoping to be at the Oxfordshire Family History Show in early October.

And whilst we have a great band of helpers for shows, we do really need more - many hands make light work. These events are good fun and you certainly do not have to be an expert in our area to help. You will get free entry to the event with opportunities to have a look around at all of the family history society and other stalls. Also, we always have very good biscuits! Do please consider coming and helping for an hour. Contact Karen at eventsteam@lwmfhs.org.uk to let us know which event you would like to attend and I will look forward to seeing you there.

Elizabeth Burling

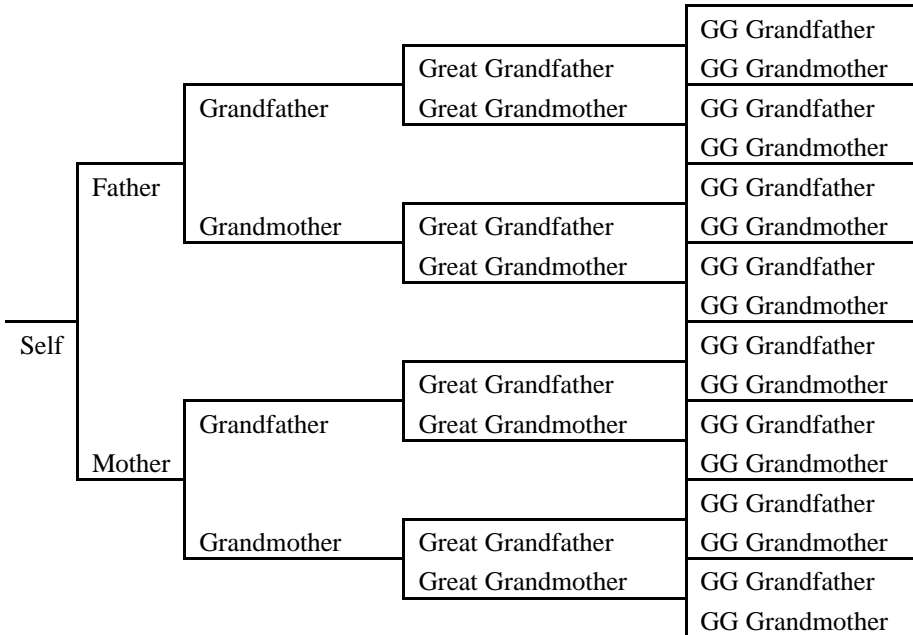


BEGINNERS' CORNER

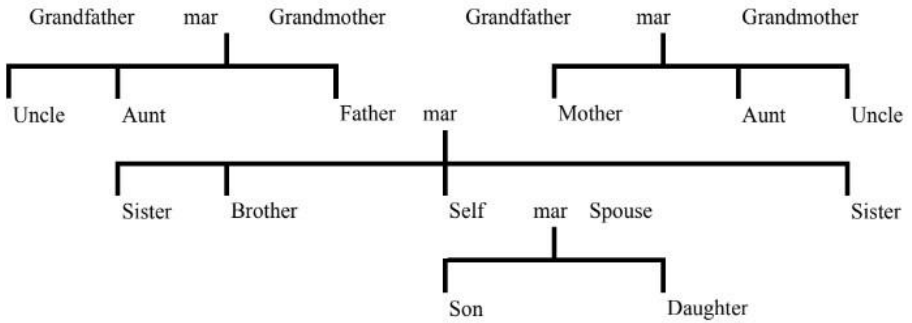
The next stage, after collecting details of several family members, is to draw up a family tree. Here are a few abbreviations that are useful to know:

Abbreviation	Meaning	Abbreviation	Meaning
b	born	m, mar, =	married
bach	bachelor	née	maiden name
bap, bp	baptised	otp	of this parish
bef	before	spin	spinster
bu, bur	buried	unk	unknown
c	circa, about	unm	unmarried
chr	christened	wdr	widower
d	died	wid	widow

There are two main forms of trees – one (the birth brief) that only shows direct ancestors. This is often drawn from left to right across a page.



The other is a drop-down chart which can show more information and include siblings, aunts and uncles.



This tree is squeezed into a small space. On a larger sheet of paper details of birth, marriage and death can be shown:

John Smith bach	mar 3 March 1845	Jane Jones spin
b 1815	Tring, Herts	b 1820
bp 1 March 1815		bp 2 April 1820
d 1870		d 1860
bu unk		bu 3 May 1860

The above tree shows the grandparents of both the father and mother, which is fine to begin with but the addition of eight great grandparents would make this tree a bit big and unwieldy. It is better to draw separate charts for the paternal and maternal branches.

Trees can be drawn by hand or by using a computer. There are many templates of trees that can be found on the internet, ready to be downloaded, printed and filled in. They can also be purchased from genealogy websites.

Notes:

Keep each generation on the same level.

Husbands, fathers and grandfathers are usually drawn on the left with their wives on the right.

Siblings are shown across the chart in date order.

Put multiple marriages in order and number them.

Note: The editors use Microsoft Excel to draw their family trees - with cells ready to be filled with names and details, and rows to keep generations level. The 'Font' section has a variety of ways to use the border tool. Borders to the cells can be drawn with a thick line to produce the lines needed in a chart. Cells can be widened to fit in dates. The charts in this article were drawn using a spreadsheet.

Don't forget you can contact us for help if you need to by emailing us at: editors@lwmfhs.org.uk



LONDON WESTMINSTER AND MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

The following are the draft Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Society held on 9 March 2023 via Zoom.

The Society's President, Michael Gandy, BA, FSG attended to chair the meeting. He welcomed 60 members and hoped everyone had received the relevant paperwork. He stated that it seemed to have been a satisfactory year but the officers' reports would confirm that.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Received from Dawn Adams, Wendy Lancaster, Jan Sellars and Barbara White.

2. MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD 10 FEBRUARY 2022:

The minutes were approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING:

None.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

The Chairman had previously published his report in *Metropolitan* and confirmed that he was resigning this year and was pleased to be able to pass the job onto Elizabeth later in the meeting. Michael Gandy wanted thanks to

be recorded for everything Tony had done since becoming Chairman and wished him luck. Tony said he will still write the occasional article for the journal.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2021/22: This had been published in *Metropolitan*. April confirmed a surplus of £2,378, some of which was being invested back into the Society to update equipment etc to give members better service. This included a projector for Barnet Branch, a tablet and scanner. She stated that the cost of postage was now included with the Parish Guide print costs. This was to reduce the admin costs, which is where postage was shown before. It was more appropriate as it shows net income from Memorial Inscription Booklets and Parish Guides. Next year will be easier for comparison. As recorded last year, April had put forward a proposal to change the wording in our constitution to allow online banking as we were not happy with HSBC and their charges. A new account with Santander was now working very well. Three signatories (maximum allowed) can all look at the account at any time, so there are checks and balances. The HSBC account was closed at the end of November. One or two members' enquiries about the new setup for paying membership were being dealt with. April stated that it would be helpful if members could set up standing orders with the new account, the details of which are in each copy of *Metropolitan*. Michael Gandy asked April if she could foresee any issues in the coming year that would be difficult or unusual. April replied there shouldn't be anything other than a small amount of expenditure.

6. MEMBERSHIP:

Michael Gandy asked about this, although not an agenda item. Sylvia stated we have 490, of which 30 are overseas. She said this was about 35 members down for this time of year but expected numbers to go up. Michael Gandy said a previous update stated 430 members so we had done well. He reckoned about 20% per year would not renew as they had moved on in terms of research. A lot of people join to trace London ancestors then join another society for further research. It was agreed that was the case.

7. ADOPTION OF THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS:

Members were invited to vote on the Adoption of the Accounts as a true record of our finances. Fifty-two voted for and none against and so they were accepted.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Tony Allen, the outgoing Chairman said the only candidate he had been notified of was Elizabeth Burling. She had been proposed by Hilary Blanford and seconded by Barbara Haswell and with no objections, was elected. The Secretary post is still vacant. Elizabeth asked for volunteers for any part of the role and said it could be split between people. Clare said someone could take it on for a short while as a trial. Treasurer – no nominations and April was happy to continue. Elizabeth said she was glad April was carrying on and expressed thanks.

9. OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The following were willing to continue as members of the Executive Committee:

Sylvia Thompson, Membership Secretary, Postal Sales and Virtual Branch Team member.

Barbara Haswell, Members' Interests and joint *Metropolitan* Editor.

Elaine Tyler, Projects Co-ordinator, Postal Sales and Virtual Branch Team member.

Clare Pollitt, Barnet Branch Co-ordinator and Virtual Branch Team member.

Tricia Sutton, Rayners Lane Branch Co-ordinator.

Karen De Bruyne, Events Team Co-ordinator and Twitter administrator.

Elizabeth Burling, joint *Metropolitan* Editor, Publications Editor, Postal Sales and Virtual Branch Team member and now Chairman.

Hilary Blanford expressed concern about the workload on the new Chairman and asked for volunteers, even for a Minutes' Secretary. Tahirih Miks, a USA member offered help, which would be discussed further.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Simon Garbet commented: "May I propose a vote of thanks to all of the committee for another excellent year. Rayners Lane and Barnet have kept physical meetings for those able to join and the Virtual Branch has done a superb job in providing contact with those of us unable to attend physically and overseas. The on-going efforts in publishing works and promoting the Society at various events have been excellent." Other members added their agreement and thanks.

11. CLOSE MEETING:

Michael Gandy closed the meeting at 7.25pm.

FROM OUR ARCHIVE

By Elizabeth Burling, Member No 4992.

This article comes from the journal of one of our founder societies, *The North Middlesex*, Volume 3, Number 3, Summer 1981. It is about the formation of our Barnet Branch, whose 42nd birthday is on 19 May.

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BARNET BRANCH.

Barnet Branch held their inaugural meeting on Tuesday 19th May 1981 at Church House, Wood Street, Barnet.

Brian Piercy was elected Chairman; Peter Willcocks, Secretary; Robin Marson, Treasurer; Doreen Willcocks, Librarian; Jasmin Marson and Vivien Langston committee members.

It was agreed to call the branch 'Barnet' as this covers both the London Borough of Barnet and Barnet Deanery.

Meetings are to be held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, except August.

39 people attended the meeting, of whom 10 were already members of the North Middlesex F.H.S. and 16 people joined that night.

We plan to have a speaker or discussion each month and also to transcribe the records of the churches in the area.

On Saturday 19th September we plan to transcribe the tombstone inscriptions in Monken Hadley Churchyard. This is a job which the Rector is keen to have done and will have the grass mown in readiness. Doug Monk, a member who lives in Hornchurch, hopes to join us on that day as he knows that his ancestors are buried there. We hope to interest the local paper, the "Barnet Press", in our activities that day as both the project itself and Mr. Monk's personal interest should be newsworthy. Do come along and bring a picnic. The more people there are, the lighter the job.

1 from 2.30 p.m.,

The Editors recently received an email from Bruce Mackay, a trustee of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Archives, regarding some of our early journals. These had belonged to their original archivist, the late Bridget Grafton-Green, who was also one of the original members (Member No. 31) of one of our founder Societies, the North Middlesex FHS.

I went along and picked these up on a bitterly cold day in March. The journals were from the very first one through to the end of Volume 8 and cover the setting up of the Society and the Barnet, City and Enfield branches. There is a lot of enthusiasm for recording and indexing useful-looking sources. Of course, this was before the days of digitisation and very few people had a computer at home. Individual events were written onto slips of paper which

could then be sorted by hand (alphabetically or by date order) and subsequently typed up.

As you can see in the image above, members were being encouraged to head for the churchyard of St Mary, Monken Hadley, to start recording the monumental inscriptions there.

A follow-up report was published in *The North Middlesex* Volume 4, No. 2, Winter 1981-2, which was the result of a talk given to the Barnet Branch in November 1981 by Peter Willcocks. He mentioned that all of the burial register entries from 1775-1952 were copied onto slips and these proved a great help in identifying graves, especially where there was only a footstone with just initials and years on it.

Peter wrote: ‘We divided the churchyard into eight sections and started with the front section. One flat stone was half covered by earth and grass and Joan and Geoffrey Nicholson did sterling work in undercutting the turf and rolling it back. The Rector was very impressed and asked that it should be cut away to reveal the complete stone again. There could have been a very nasty accident when Robin Marson took his spade and nearly struck the cable for the floodlighting. After careful brushing and washing they were able to complete recording the of the inscription. Brian Piercy arrived in his boiler suit so we sent him off into the bushes. After a lot of work with secateurs and saws, he demolished an elderberry bush some fourteen feet high, together with assorted brambles, and exposed two more tombs. Down the side we checked with ‘Cansick’ and found that the site of one he had recorded was now a mower shed. The floor was of stone flags with inscriptions on the underside! Beside the shed was an oil tank, part of the bund* wall also bore inscriptions!’

All of this I found very interesting but his next sentence took my breath away. ‘Also, we had previously been told that the crazy paving was made of gravestones which had been imported from Islington cemetery.’ Islington! In my article ‘Buried at St Mary Islington, gravestone at St Mary Monken Hadley?’ from *Metropolitan* Volume 9, No. 2, March 2023, I had been trying to find just this sort of information! As our regular contributor Dennis Galvin would say – Serendipity!

* a concrete or earth wall surrounding a storage tank containing oil, designed to hold the contents of the tank in the event of a rupture or leak.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL...

John Hedland of St Olave Hart Street

By Sheila Clarke, Member No. 7900



Panorama of London from Southwark, 1600 by John Norden,
World Digital Library

‘He was a well good wright, a carpenter,’ wrote Chaucer in *The Canterbury Tales*. No doubt the poor of London’s Hart Street felt the same about carpenter John HEDLAND when they heard their neighbour had left a bequest of twenty shillings ‘to be distributed amongst them where most needs shall appear.’ John’s will is dated October 1609: by the end of the month he had been laid to rest in Olave’s church ‘close to the pew where he satt’. My interest in John was sparked by an intriguing discovery. While sorting through my late father’s papers I came across a large scroll printed in white on a black background. Examination revealed it to be a copy of John’s will (at this point I must confess to having no proof of a family connection except a shared surname and the odd reference by my father to one of our ancestors having worked on the tower of London) and naturally I was eager to read it, but for this I would need help. It proved quite a challenge, but eventually I was presented with an almost complete transcription. I had previously come across references to a John HEADLAND, carpenter to both Queen Elizabeth 1 and her successor King James: could this be my opportunity to establish a family connection?

In May 1603 King James 1 had entered London to prepare for his coronation and was greeted by a party of notable citizens who rode out to meet him.

Among them was John Hedland, ‘warden’ - an alternative name for a master carpenter. The riders, wearing velvet coats and chains of gold, escorted the King ‘through the meadows to avoid the extremities of dust’ and were rewarded with ‘drinks and pippins,’ no doubt welcome in the conditions. By all accounts James received a warm welcome, with thousands pouring into London in the hope of seeing him but the coronation turned out to be a somewhat muted affair due to an outbreak of plague and the planned festivities were postponed until the following year, giving planners time to ensure James would see Londoners really knew how to put on a show.

On 15 March 1604 the King progressed through the capital amid great celebration. It was a spectacle without precedent: seven elaborate arches had been erected throughout the City and James paused beneath each one to witness an allegorical performance penned by the finest writers and performed on platforms above. (As a member of the theatre group the King’s Men, SHAKESPEARE received a grant of four and a half yards of red cloth for the occasion.) Enormous crowds thronged the streets and the city’s conduits flowed with claret. One wonders what James made of it after the austerity of the Scottish court, but he seems to have enjoyed the crowd’s enthusiasm, writing that ‘People of all sorts rode and ran, nay, flew to meet me, their tongues uttering nothing but sounds of joy.’

I have been unable to find any mention of John HEDLAND taking part in this celebration, though as the King’s carpenter he may well have been involved in building the arches or other structures. Carpentry was considered an elite profession, and a master carpenter was at the very top of his game. Carpenters were very important to the Royal household and as well as furniture making, they would have been expected to work on structural projects, roofing and wood panelling. Master carpenters were effectively building contractors, sometimes even designing buildings as well as supplying materials and labour. Some became considerably wealthy and were able to own the homes they built which they then let out as tenements.

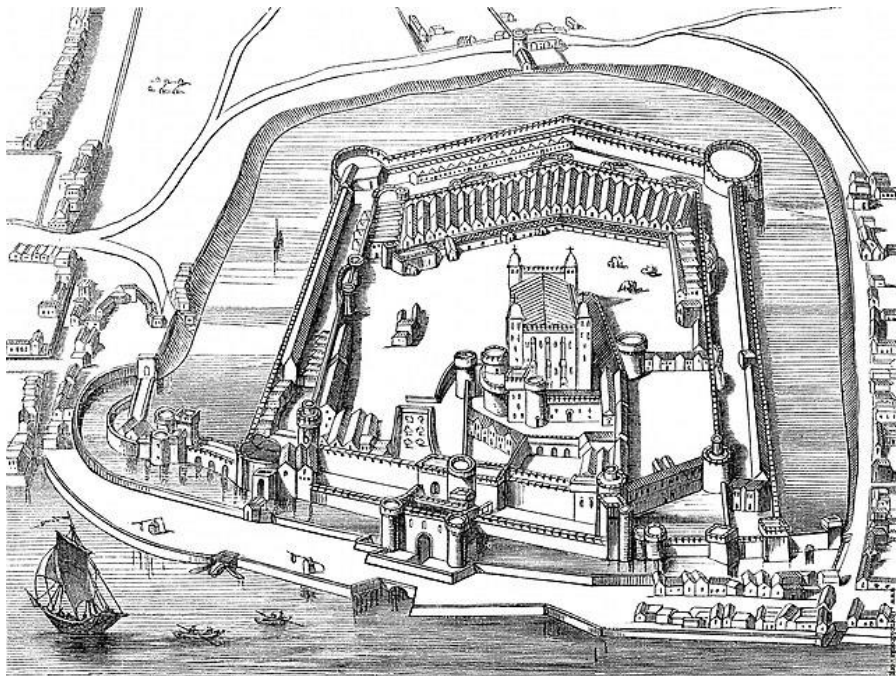
John’s home was in Tower Ward, part of the borough of Southwark on the City’s South Bank. With its many alehouses, bear-baiting gardens and spas it had long been known as an area for entertainment and pleasure, but with a reputation for attracting the more unsavoury visitor, as detailed in a report of 1582 when ‘certain lewd persons did very disorderly disguise themselves and went up and down the street almost stark naked, with their swords drawn

making great noises, shoutings and cryings.’ By 1596 the City Fathers had had enough and issued an order for ‘all manner of rogues, beggars, idle and vagrant persons’ to be apprehended. Over the years numerous attempts had been made to close down the many brothels, but unsurprisingly all failed. Southwark was also famous for its theatres: the Globe opened in 1596, but before that came the imaginatively named Theatre (1576), the Curtain (1577), and the Rose (1587). These were enormously popular, but they too attracted opprobrium, accused of encouraging ‘light and lewd disposed persons’ ‘who under colour of hearing plays, devised divers evil and ungodly conspiracies.’ The area was not short of accommodation for those found guilty, with no fewer than five prisons close by:- the Clink (the name of which passed into general usage); the Compter; the King’s Bench; the White Lion, and the Marshalsea where Dickens’ father served time for debt and which would later serve as a setting for scenes in several of the novelist’s books.

Due to its proximity to the docks Southwark was also home to a large number of immigrants, and John would have been used to seeing a diversity of people speaking many different languages. The area around Hart Street in particular had a number of households with black servants, while others worked as silk weavers, carpenters, or needle makers. Great Britain operated a ‘free soil’ policy: anyone setting foot here could consider themselves free. Those wishing to integrate appear to have been welcomed with enthusiasm, as in the case of Moroccan born Mary FILLIS who became a ‘lyvly member’ of St Botolph’s Aldgate after converting to Christianity, and ‘Mr Aderman BAYNING’s’ servant Julyane ‘who was Christened at nearby St Mary Bothaw’. In 1593 merchant and MP John BARKER had a number of Africans in his house in nearby Mark Lane and his neighbour BAYNING at least five. The following century would see things change for the worse, but in John’s time most immigrants could look forward to a positive experience.

It seems John spent at least some of his working life at the Tower: the Royal Armouries were housed there and John appears on their payroll for 1607/8, and is able to pass on to his eldest son the post of ‘Master Carpenter to his Majestie in the Ordnance.’ James was the last monarch to stay in the Tower, his first home on arriving in the City and is said to have particularly enjoyed watching the displays of animal baiting. Like our present King, James was passionate about architecture and although he oversaw the building of a new banqueting house at Whitehall Palace, most of his projects were outside the

Capital. Citing health reasons, he announced his intention of living away from court, instead commissioning modest town houses to be built in Royston, Newmarket and Thetford. Not for him the magnificent palaces of Queen Elizabeth 1: James preferred country houses which he could use for both state occasions and sport. One can only wonder how Londoners felt about a monarch who preferred to base himself away from his capital.



The Tower of London based on an old print 'The National and Domestic History of England', Creative Commons - share alike

The Church of St Olave is one of the few surviving medieval buildings in London and one of the smallest churches in the City. It is also one of very few to escape the Great Fire of London. Dedicated to the patron saint of Norway who fought alongside King Ethelred against the Danes, it stands on a corner of Hart Street. The archway's three stone skulls caused DICKENS to name it 'St Ghastly Grim', while to John BETJEMAN it was 'a country churchyard in the world of Seething Lane.' We know that John HEDLAND and his family worshipped there and even where he sat for the obligatory services - in the north quire, site of his final resting place. Fellow worshippers

included Sir Francis WALSINGHAM, spymaster to Elizabeth 1, and poet, courtier and soldier Sir Philip SIDNEY whose daughter was christened in the church in 1585. Other notable Elizabethan families with connections to St Olave's include the Devereaux Earls of Essex, the Bacons, and the Knollys. In 1554 Queen Elizabeth chose St Olave's for a thanksgiving service on the day of her release from the tower, and 1576 saw the burial of the first Inuk (Innuite) in England. The church would later become famous for its association with Samuel PEPYS but to John HEDLAND it would simply

have been heart of his community and an important part of most parishioners' lives.



King James by Lord Eythin,
from an oil painting in the
collection of Colonel Alexander
J. King of Tertowie,
public domain

Apart from references in records of the Royal Armouries the few other details of John's life are contained in his will. His wife was named Gertrude and their children were Edward George (baptised 1591), Anne (baptised 1593), Mary (baptised 1594), George (baptised 1591) and Francis. Francis was buried at St Olave's in August 1593 and Mary also appears to have died young. I have been unable to find a baptism date for Edward by 1609. He must have been old enough to take on the role of Royal carpenter. Edward was left 'three score and ten pounds' - around £21,000 in today's money. Gertrude was named executor, and she and the other children would inherit the rest of his estate, with Gertrude also getting 'the Interest and terme of years yet to come on a tenement in Harte Street late in the occupation of one Earnest a surgeon.' There is mention of another property with 'frontage in Abchurch Lane', suggesting John may have become wealthy through his work. A later John

HEDLAND appears in the Carpenters Company Minute Books of 1700

taking ‘John RICH, sonne of Stephen RICH of the Tower of London’ as apprentice and again in 1721 when Emanuel PIERSENNE, watchmaker of St Brides, sees his son John Emanuel ‘bound to John HEADLAND for seven years.’

I began by admitting there was no evidence John HEDLAND was a member of my family but as I researched his life and times a picture emerged of an ordinary citizen of London at momentous time in British history: a family man living in a vibrant, multicultural area with more than a whiff of notoriety, and a tradesman whose skill saw him rise to the role of carpenter to the royal household but who also remembered the less fortunate members of his community – and I was left hoping that there might be a link between my family and the ‘well good wright’ of St Olave Hart Street.

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Local Histories: A History of Southwark: <https://localhistories.org/a-history-of-southwark/>

Stuarts Online: <https://stuarts-online.com>



The church of St Olave, Hart Street.

CHEQUER STREET SCHOOL, BUNHILL ROW

By Elizabeth Burling, Member No. 4992

This school has its origins in the Hope For All Sunday School, which had been founded by the Methodist Chapel in Chequer Alley (now Chequer Street), south of Old Street and west of Bunhill Row. The *Shoreditch Observer* of 1 June 1867 describes the area as ‘a very unsavoury locality ... which is inhabited by a portion of the poorest, the most illiterate, and not least criminal of the population of the great metropolis’. According to the 1851 census statistics, there were over 54,000 people here in St Luke Old Street parish, which lies directly north of the City of London. The chapel was part of the City Road Methodist circuit and was set up in the 1860s.

Sunday schools were particularly important in helping to educate poor children who might have to work during the week and would have no other chance to be educated - around 500 had been attending the Hope for All Sunday School. It was well-known London philanthropist Lord Shaftesbury himself who laid the foundation stone of the Chequer Alley school-chapel, with the intention of helping the people of this ‘much neglected district’. The *London City Press* of 6 July 1867 writes that the chapel could comfortably seat 200 people, the infant school part had space for 100 children and the main part of the building was a school-room with room for over 300 scholars. It was intended to be a Ragged School, that is, to provide free education to poor children and in 1871 the schools were noted to be ‘open free every day in the week, twice in the evening and all day on Sunday’. Minutes of the Schools and Chapel dated 1865-1897 are at LMA, Ref: N/M/016.

A search of historic newspapers uncovers quite a lot of information about the school and people connected with it. The *Islington Gazette* of 29 December 1871 reports a Christmas dinner prepared for the children of the Hope Schools, Chequer Alley, who would not otherwise have had one. About 700 children were fed, along with a few of ‘the really half-starving aged people of the district’. After singing ‘Hark, the Herald Angels Sing’, the children were served with bread, roast meat (mutton and beef) and baked potatoes, followed by plum puddings. Each child was presented with an orange at the end of the meal. The *London Daily Chronicle* adds, ‘The emaciated figures of the children showed how appropriate was the provision of the feast for their due enjoyment of Christmas-day.’ This supplying of Christmas dinner seems to have been a regular event. ‘A Children’s Dinner in Whitecross

Street' in the *London Evening Standard* of 26 December 1879 offers a similar report.

By 1872, the school is stated to be a 'penny school', which meant that parents had to pay a penny a week for their children to attend – Chequer Alley was no longer a Ragged School. The London School Board acquired the schools, still also known as the Hope Schools for All, together with a portion of the Society of Friends' Bunhill Fields Burial Ground in 1874 with the intention of improving the existing school and enlarging its playgrounds.

A well-reported court case of September 1876 concerned Edward MARTIN, described as a 'scantily-attired, half-starved looking man, a cane-rib umbrella maker of Warwick-court, Whitecross Street', who was summoned on behalf of the London School Board for neglecting to send his daughter, Ann, aged 9, to school. Ann had been attending 'Mr MAY's school' in Golden Lane, where she received some education and also some second-hand clothing. School Board officers had made Edward take her away as they said that the school was not up to the Government standard. He then took her to Chequer Alley School but the master said he could not have Ann until she was better dressed and the same thing happened at Brackley Street School. Edward argued that it was due to his poverty that Ann 'was continually running the streets' and though it was 'a bitter thing' he did not think it should be punished as a crime. However, the magistrate said Edward was bound to send his child to school and sent him to the House of Correction for three days, in lieu of a fine of 1 shilling with costs of 2 shillings.

In 1882, a proposal was put before the School Board to make Chequer Alley a free school but the local religious schools strongly objected to this. They felt that this would ruin them because they would also have to somehow provide free education or children would leave their paid-for schools for the free Board Schools. The proposal was rejected at this time.

The school appeared widely in the national press again in 1884, when Margaret PAINTER, Rachel PAINTER, William PAINTER and Henry Alfred GODFREY were summoned to appear at Clerkenwell Police Court on a charge of assaulting head mistress Matilda CARON, infant head mistress Eliza Ann INCH and head master Edward GAY at Chequer Alley Board School on 12 May. The teachers were cross-summonsed for assaulting Rachel and Margaret PAINTER and Henry Alfred GODFREY. Apparently,

the daughter of Rachel and William PAINTER, a girl aged 9 called Kate, had been subjected to corporal punishment on account of being absent from school without leave and ‘idleness while there’, with a ‘moderate blow’ administered by a cane on each hand. Rachel PAINTER came to the school later that day, accusing Matilda CARON of abusing the child and calling her a liar. Rachel then struck Matilda with ‘a violent blow’. A general scuffle between all of the participants ensued. Eliza Ann INCH was knocked out for two hours, Edward GAY ended up on the floor being pummelled by Margaret and William PAINTER with Henry GODFREY whilst Matilda CARON was forced to wean her baby due to the punch to her chest. On the other side, Rachel PAINTER was grasped violently by the throat by Edward GAY, who also threatened to throw her down the stairs. William PAINTER was found guilty of common assault and fined £3, Margaret PAINTER of malicious wounding and sentenced to six weeks’ hard labour, Rachel PAINTER of common assault and sentenced to two months’ hard labour. Henry GODFREY was acquitted and Edward GAY was found not guilty.



Chequer Street School in 2023, now converted into flats.

Chequer Alley Board School was rebuilt and enlarged in 1888, with space now for 355 boys, 355 girls and 458 infants. The area continued to be drenched in poverty, though. In 1889 a story was reported in the *Blackburn Standard* and elsewhere concerning Lucy BINDEN, who attended the school. Lucy’s mother made paper bags for a living and had been forced on

several occasions to cut off Lucy's hair in order to make it into paste brushes for her work, as she could not afford to buy any.

The school seems to have been called Chequer Street School from about 1900 but both names were in use in the newspapers for some years. Records from around this time are at LMA, Ref: LCC/EO/DIV03/CHE.

Admission and discharge registers: girls	1897-1915	LMA
Admission and discharge registers: infants	1912-1925	LMA
Log books: mixed	1899-1928	LMA

Around the time of King George V's coronation in 1911, one of the many celebrations was a treat for school children to be held on 30 June at Crystal Palace. Two of the children selected to attend, Willie MOGRIDGE and Edwin NUBBER of Chequer Street School, had no boots and so were expecting to attend bare-foot. One child had had a pair of boots but these had worn thin and, despite him having patched them with 'odd bits of leather and other things', they had eventually fallen apart. The *Daily Mirror* reported the story and readers sent in clothes and money, raising £17 12s 6d – enough to provide new outfits for 45 poor children. An article describes how their old clothing was tied together with bits of string and little more than rags. An accompanying article of 29 June has a photo of seven out the boys from the school putting on their new footwear – how fabulous if they were your relative, to discover a picture of them! Fifteen boys received clothes, strong cloth Norfolk suits with shoes and shirts if needed. Twelve girls at the school also received new outfits – navy blue cotton frocks with fancy white pinafores – to wear to the party.

If you had relatives in this area, you will be interested to hear that our Parish Guide to St Luke Old Street is due out on 1 July.

Sources:

British Newspaper Archive at Findmypast
London Metropolitan Archives



THE MYTH OF THE IRISH NAVVY

By Robert Barker, Member No. 5617

As a family historian, railway enthusiast and lifelong Wembley resident, Elizabeth Burling's article 'Wembley and its Railways' in the March 2023 *Metropolitan* was my kind of article. I would question one point which may be of interest to members living outside Wembley. Did large numbers of Irish navvies really descend on us in 1801 to build the Grand Junction Canal, and again from 1834 to build the London & Birmingham Railway? I suspect not.

We have two stereotypical figures from that era. Firstly there is the navvy. He is a man of superhuman strength, working with hand tools on civil engineering projects, well paid but living in primitive and squalid huts. He is oblivious to the law of the land, pugnacious, blasphemous and drunken. Then there is Poor Paddy, who arrived in England destitute and half starved in the wake of the Potato Famine of 1846. No way could he suddenly work as a navvy, though he might become one after building himself up, at the risk of violence from existing English and Scottish navvies. Irishmen here before 1846 had probably arrived as seasonal harvest workers and then moved on to canal or railway building.

So who were the canal and first railway builders who disturbed the peace of Wembley? Many would indeed have been Gaels, but Highland Scots driven from their homes by the Clearances which took place contemporaneously with the age of canal building. Others would have been English former agricultural labourers whose wages had been kept down following the Speenhamland decision of 1795. Men from the Fens were especially valued for construction through marshy land. Thirdly after 1815 there were former soldiers in the Napoleonic Wars, used to camp life and in need of employment.

Only a small proportion of those who worked on canal and railway building contracts were true navvies, perhaps one in 30 or 40. It would vary according to the terrain, as navvies were concentrated on embankments, cuttings and tunnels. They were skilled civil engineering workers, whom contractors were keen to employ on successive contracts around the country. The rest were unskilled labourers, mostly recruited locally when a contractor could offer better pay than farmers. According to Peter LECOUNT, assistant engineer to Robert STEPHENSON in the building of the London & Birmingham

Railway, the contractors who built their line recruited 15,000 to 20,000 men in this way. Many would not wish to return to farm labourer's low pay, and go on to other railway contracts, some acquiring the skills of a true navvy.

It is possible to trace the career of such a man with the aid of normal genealogical resources and books on railway history. Many census enumerators turned a blind eye to the transient community of intimidating nomads building a railway through their patch, but the records we do have show that railway building was far from being an Irish monopoly. My mind was far from such matters when I researched a relative of my Mother's, Abraham ILLINGWORTH, who married Mary LISTER in 1859 and worked as a Bradford wool warehouseman for the rest of his life.

His household in 1871 included three mysterious nieces, Elizabeth, Harriet and Jane UTTLEY, aged 21, 19 and 12 respectively, all born in 'Wales, Glamorgan'. In 1861 they had been living with their mother in lodgings in Edward Street, Llandaff, Cardiff. No father is mentioned, the head of the household being their mother Ann UTTLEY, aged 37, with children James 13 born Pyle, Elizabeth 11 born Pyle, Harriet 9 born Llanover, Joseph 6 born Hereford, Eliza 4 born Newbridge, Monmouthshire, Jane 3 born Llandaff and Sarah 4 months born Llandaff. Research showed that Mary LISTER's sister Ann had married John UTTLEY in 1846, with a son, Samuel, on the way. The sequence of places of birth pointed to railway building. John and Samuel evaded the 1861 census, doubtless living in a temporary encampment where the enumerator feared to tread. As John's daughters reached puberty, he appears to have sent them to live with his brother-in-law Abraham. It was a case of, "Put 'em in t'mill. They'll earn their keep".

Pyle is on the route of BRUNEL's broad gauge South Wales Railway, building of which began in summer 1846, and opened the Chepstow to Swansea on 15 June 1850. Llanover is a village south of Abergavenny, close to the Newport, Abergavenny & Hereford Railway. Construction began in 1851 and the line opened on 2 January 1854. Harriet, born in Llanover, was the only one of John and Ann's children besides Samuel to have a birth certificate. John was probably in Hereford working for the famous contracting firm of Peto, Brassey and Betts to make 17.5 miles of line completing the route to Gloucester. It opened on 1 June 1855. Newbridge is close to Crumlin, reached in August 1855 by a branch of the Newport, Abergavenny & Hereford Railway from Pontypool Road. A huge viaduct

had to be built over the Ebbw valley at Crumlin before the line could be extended further on 1 June 1857. These dates tie in perfectly with the UTTLEY children's births.

One more child of John and Ann appears in the 1871 census, eight year old Alice, born at Lostock Gralam near Northwich in Cheshire. Clearly John was working on the line from Northwich to Knutsford, opened on 1 January 1863. In 1871, John, Ann and their children Samuel, Eliza, Sarah and Alice were living in the Oxgang Huts in the parish of Langcliffe, north of Settle, Yorkshire. John and Samuel were working for John ASHWELL of Kentish Town, London, contractor for the southern end of the famous and well documented Settle & Carlisle Railway.

The age of railway building was almost complete. Samuel had married Mary MORRIS in Merthyr Tydfil in 1870. In 1881 they were living in Lincoln with brother James as a lodger, both working on railway construction. A 4 month old daughter, Alice J had been born to Mary in Pickering, suggesting that the brothers had until recently been involved in building the single track local line from Pickering to Seamer near Scarborough, opened on 1 May 1882. By 1881, 56 year old John UTTLEY was 'semi retired' to a sedentary life in Bradford, working as, of all things, a draper.

Sources

The History of the Railway connecting London and Birmingham by Peter Lecount (1839)

The Railway Navvies by Terry Coleman (Hutchinson, 1965)

The Railway Navy by David Brooke (David & Charles, 1983)



NEXT COPY DATE

Please remember that the copy date for the next issue of *Metropolitan* is
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The research interests listed here were submitted by members between March and May 2023.

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 below, please go to our website, click on Members Interests (in the list on the left), type in your interest name, click **Go** and then click the surname and then **Contact** and an email will pop up which will allow you to send a message to that member.

Interests shown are from members: 8315; 8416; 8419; 8428

Name	Period	County	Parish / Area	Mem.No.
BROWN James	1851-1925	MDX	Westminster	8416
BROWN John	1817-1888	MDX	Homerton, Westminster	8416
BUTLER Eliza	1821-1911	MDX	Bishopsgate, W'minster	8416
GOODING	1750 to date	MDX	Any	8315
GOODING	1750 to date	LND	Any	8315
LANGLEY	1750 to date	MDX	Any	8315
LANGLEY	1750 to date	LND	Any	8315
MALEY Elizabeth	1849-1901	MDX	Shoreditch	8416
MORRIS Ruby E	1879-1962	MDX	Tottenham	8416
PRESTON	1800-1820	MDX	St Marylebone	8428
RAYNER	1795-1950	MDX	Harrow, Pinner	8419
RAYNER	1851 to date	Any	Any	8419
ROBINS John	1749-1831	MDX	Clerkenwell	8416
ROBINS Thomas	1772-1859	MDX	Clerkenwell	8416
RUNNALLS	1750 to date	MDX	Any	8315
RUNNALLS	1750 to date	LND	Any	8315

SPECIAL INTERESTS

- 8416 The Coach & Horses Public House, 29 Greek Street, Soho. 1845-1854
 8416 John and Thomas ROBINS, Silversmiths, London
 8419 John Rayner 1823-1905 in Greenford, Hayes, Pinner and Sudbury

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the new members, numbers 8415-8428 who have joined the Society over the past few months and wish them well with their research.

LWMFHS PUBLICATIONS

Our Parish Guides are little books crammed with as much information as possible about the Ancient Parishes in our area. We aim to inspire family historians and to help you locate ancestors in places that you might not have thought of looking before. Each guide starts off with a brief history of the area and a description of where the main archives for the parish are located. There are then many different sections about the various types of records that relate to the parish, with a description of what they are and information about where these records can be found. This full list of those available to far is shown overleaf. Coming next are St Paul Covent Garden, followed by Monken Hadley.

Our Monumental Inscription booklets were researched by our founder societies in the 1980s and subsequently published on microfiche. We have been updating these and reissuing them as booklets. In checking them for publication, any gaps and anomalies were checked against the Burial Registers in order to try and find out who is referred to on the gravestones. If anyone would like to help with these, with typing or with checking against the gravestones, please contact our Projects Co-ordinator, Elaine Tyler by email at: projects@lwmfhs.org.uk

We also have 2 census guides naming the streets of Westminster and the City of London, taken from the 1851 census returns.

Booklet	UK	Europe	Rest world
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April Vesey, Treasurer

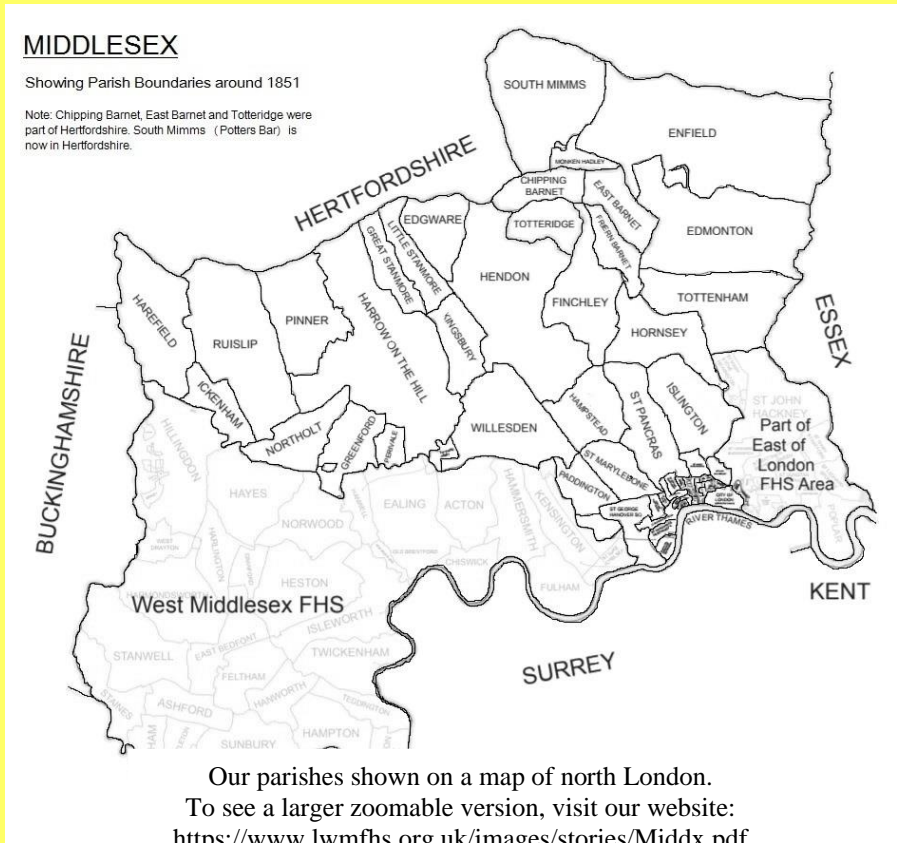
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The prices quoted in this table include the booklet plus postage and packing and are correct at time of going to press.



THE GALVINS OF GRACECHURCH STREET

By Dennis Galvin, Member No. 1046

My paternal great grandfather was Joseph William GALVIN who was born in 1847 and joined the Royal Navy Training School at Fishguard in 1861. At the time of the 1871 Census he is recorded as being a 'Leading Seaman Gunner' on *HMS Lord Warden* which was on duty at Naples in the Mediterranean.

I feel sure at one time he must have been docked at the Royal Navy Dockyard, Deptford along the Thames where he would have met my great grandmother Sarah Gayler RABBATTS, a Deptford girl. It was probably for this reason after 10 years' service that Joseph paid £12 (a considerable sum then) to buy himself out of the navy and join the City of London Police. They married at St Paul's church, Southwark (just across from Westminster Bridge) on 30 March 1874 (I think Sarah may have been in service in that area - as nothing is indicated on the marriage certificate).

My great grandparents moved into Crown Court, Aldgate where there were many other City Police families, probably because they were considered on duty 24 hours a day and they could be called out quickly for any riots etc. on this side of London. My grandfather James Patrick was born here (St Botolph Sub District) on 22 May 1878. My father always said he went to a good school and that wherever they lived neighbours would knock to ask him to read out their letters for them.



Joseph William Galvin, photo taken by the Imperial French Photographic Company, 352 Strand, London.

In 1880 Joseph, Sarah and family moved to 19 Gracechurch Street (City Parish of Allhallows). Joseph left the City of London Police in 1887. Still at

grandparents lived until 1922 when my great grandfather died (sadly, my great grandmother Sarah died (age 39) on 21 December 1889.

Incidentally, one of the aunts I mentioned also passed on to their daughters (my cousins) that all the city children used to gather and play on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral in the evenings! and also that their grandfather Joseph knew everybody in the Strand and Fleet Street.



My grandfather James Patrick GALVIN (third from left) seems to be fitting in new street electric lamp posts somewhere in London (c1920s).



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See inside front cover for address.

MARDELL AND OAKLEY OF TOTTENHAM

By Michael Gandy, Member No. 38

I was brought up in Sydenham in South East London and nearly all my mother's ancestry is in East Surrey and West Kent but her father, Alfred Edward MARDELL (1888-1963), was born in Tottenham and was the eldest son of Alfred Edward MARDELL (1865-1949), a grainer, and Ada SLOPER (1866-1958). Ada was from Eltham, Kent, and they moved down there after a couple of years. In fact they weren't married when Grandpa was born but after two children they married in 1890 at St James the Great, Bethnal Green. This was the well-known church where a vicar with good intentions married couples without formality and at cut rates, so that you could simply turn up any Sunday and be married on the spot. There were twelve couples married on the same day as Alfred and Ada (they were the twelfth) but it all got to be a scandal as drunken Cockney couples did not take it seriously so the Vicar was stopped after a few years. I have always wondered if Ada didn't mind living over the brush near Alfred's family but wasn't prepared to move near her own family without being respectable.

The Mardells came originally from Hertfordshire where our family were at Shephall, near Stevenage, in the 1500s and other branches were at Datchworth and Knebworth. They must originate with the Mardley Heath in Welwyn and in Hertfordshire the name is often written and pronounced Mardle. However, we always pronounced it Mardèll - with the emphasis on the end.

James Mardell (1773-1827)

Over 250 years ago our line moved from Shephall to Great Amwell and then Much Hadham but shortly after 1800 James MARDLE and Elizabeth SCHOOLING (m.1797) moved south to Tottenham with two children. It's a straight run down the Hertford Road and James was a coachman so perhaps he moved because of his employer.

The next three children were born at Tottenham but then the family started to move about. George was born at Ilford; Frederick was born at Maidenhead, Berks; my Henry was born at Leytonstone and the youngest child Louisa was born at Wanstead. Some time after 1817 they came back to Edmonton and settled in Claremont Street, off Fore Street. This is south of the present junction with the North Circular on the eastern side of the road

and is almost the last street in the parish. James had a single sister Ann who also lived in Edmonton and died there in 1819 aged 40.

By this time the older children were grown up. Harriet had a baby called Cornelius in 1822 and then she married William STOCKS in 1827 (in Clerkenwell). However, the other children were still single when James died in Claremont Street in December 1827 aged 54.

Young James was the next child to marry (in 1830). He was a horse keeper and lived in Eaton Place, Claremont Street, and had 14 children. Next his elder sister Maria married Thomas FURY in 1832 when she was 32. She had an illegitimate child a few months before but apparently no children with Thomas. In 1851 she was a widowed washerwoman lodging in Eaton Place with her single brother William. He was a coachman and in 1838 he had been examined for settlement in Aldgate workhouse when he said he had worked for Mr WHATMARSH of Tottenham at £27 a year for three years from 1822. He didn't have a settlement anywhere else.

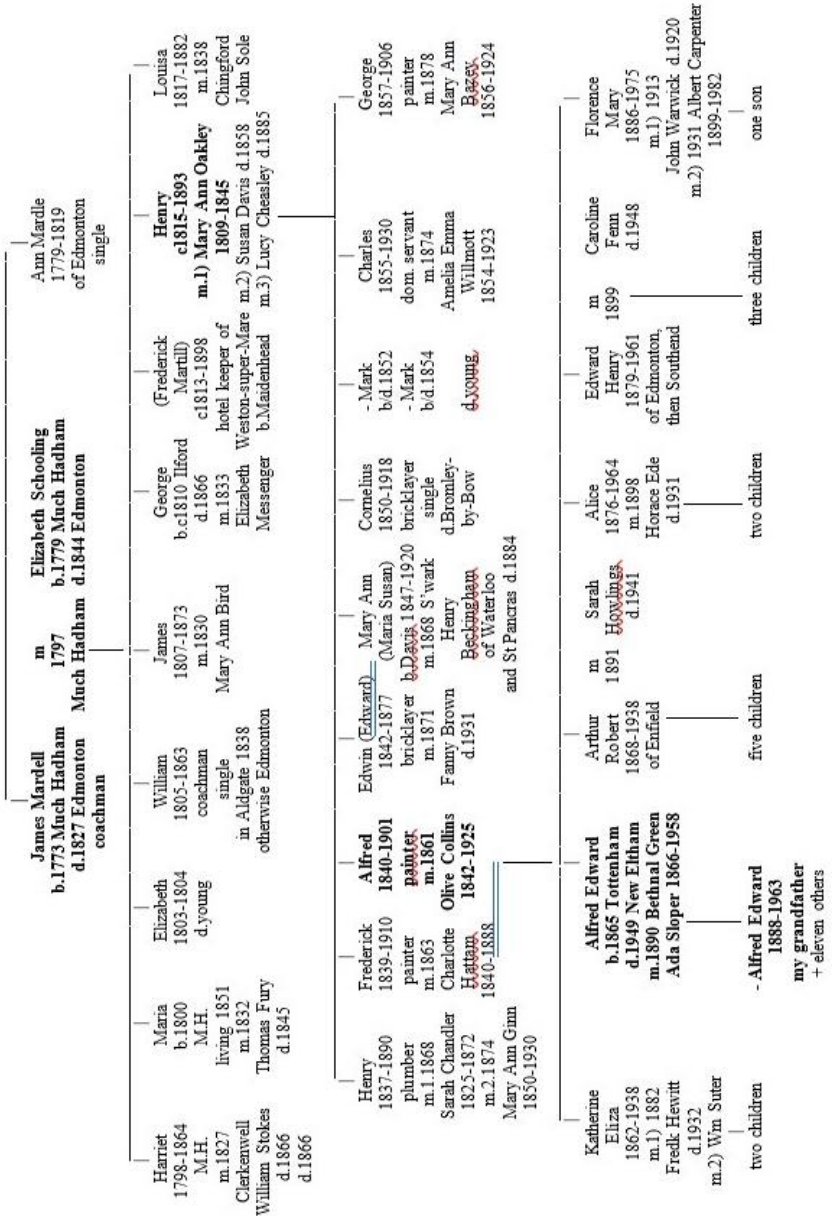
George was a labourer. In 1841 he was at Tanner's End where Silver Street now is. Tanners End Lane is still there - opposite the North Middlesex Hospital.

Frederick (c1813-1898) married at Edmonton in 1834 and went on to be a hotel keeper at Weston-super-Mare. Off my radar but maybe they were all in contact.

Louisa married John SOLE in 1838 at Chingford. They lived in Eaton Place as well but had no children. After Henry's first wife died his son Edwin went to live with her and she brought him up (and outlived him).

In 1841 pretty well everyone was in Eaton Place: Elizabeth MARDLE (James's widow), William and Hannah SCHOOLING (her parents), and Maria FURY, William MARDLE and Louisa SOLE (her grown-up children). Elizabeth died there in 1844 aged 65 of 'spasms'. In 1851 George, Louisa, James, Maria and William were all still living there next to each other while Henry was nearby in Union Row (now Brantwood Road), just south but over the border into Tottenham. It is not until the 1871 census that Eaton Place was empty of Mardells.

MARDELL OF EDMONTON AND TOTTENHAM



Henry Mardell (c1815-1893) and Mary Ann Oakley (1809-1845)

Henry was our ancestor and married Mary Ann OAKLEY at West Hackney in 1836. Her father was long dead but she was in the middle of a large family and her mother lived in Lloyd's Yard in the High Street (Tottenham).

The Oakleys had been in Tottenham longer than the Mardells. Lawrence OAKLEY married Alice BULL at St Giles-in-the-Fields in 1765 but Alice was from Enfield and was the daughter of John BULL and Elizabeth ALDRIDGE who married at the Fleet Prison in London in February 1735/6. Both families go back further in Enfield.

Lawrence OAKLEY was a carpenter. He and Alice lived for a while in Stoke Newington but were in Tottenham by 1771; however, both died in middle age (1787 and 1790).

In the next generation William OAKLEY (1773-1819) was also a carpenter and lived in Tottenham all his life. He married Rebecca ROSE (1778-1856) whose father was a coachman. She was born in Greenwich but lived in Tottenham from 1798.

Henry and Mary Ann had four sons and then she died in December 1845 of 'puerperal convulsions' so obviously connected to the next birth. No baby was buried with her so presumably it was a stillbirth. At that time he was a baker (making bread, I imagine, not selling it).

Henry was left with young children aged 8, 6, 5 and 3. He took up fairly quickly with Susan DAVIS and their eldest daughter Maria Susan was born in the summer of 1847. From then on he was a house painter (which seems a big change) but still at 11 Union Row. By 1851 he and Susan had another child, Cornelius, presumably named after his cousin. His sons Frederick and Alfred were with them aged 12 and 10. Henry was with his grandmother Rebecca OAKLEY and Edwin was with his aunt Louisa SOLE, Henry's sister.

During the 1850s the family grew. First came two little boys called Mark who both died young (aged 5 months and 7 months), then (no hurry!) Henry and Susan married at West Hackney in 1854. I don't know if there was any particular reason for getting married then: it was 5 days after the burial of their second son Mark but it was by banns so must have been arranged while

the baby was still alive. Charles and George followed in 1855 and 1857 but then Susan developed tuberculosis and died in 1858 aged 39 leaving four children (aged 10, 7, 3 and 1). The four boys by the first wife were aged between 14 and 20.

Unfortunately young Henry (b.1837) had got into trouble. He appeared at the Old Bailey in 1853 and was found guilty of the theft of half a crown from Francis WOOD. He was 15 and was sentenced to six months. Less than a year later he came up at the Old Bailey again. This time he had stolen 6 lbs of suet from William ROBERTS, a butcher. John GILES was also carrying some but said he had not stolen it and the two boys accused each other. Henry was sentenced to twelve months and recommended to be sent to a Reformatory School. Oh dear.

Once again Henry senior remarried. His new wife was Lucy CHEASLEY and they were married in 1860 at West Hackney (Henry's third marriage at that church though I don't think he ever lived in that parish). Lucy said she was 31 in the following census but she was actually 38 and there were no children. In 1861 they were at 17 Church Road, Tottenham, with his children Maria, Charles and George. The two boys were aged 6 and 4 so Lucy must have become their mother in practice. Cornelius and Edwin were with Louisa SOLE while Frederick and Alfred (now 20 and 22) were with their aunt Maria OAKLEY. Henry junior was in White Hart Court lodging with a family called CURTIS and next door to the GINNS whose daughter Mary Ann he married many years later. Fanny BROWN was also there whom Edwin married later.

Alfred (my ancestor) married Olive COLLINS later in 1861 and Frederick married in 1863. Henry married in 1868 and so did Maria and about this time Edwin took up with Fanny BROWN whom he eventually married in 1871. In the census that year she was living with her mother and children (including one of Edwin's) at 2 White Hart Court, at the eastern end of White Hart Lane. Alfred and Olive were at no 3, Mary Ann GINN was at no 4 and Edwin MARDELL was lodging at no 5. There were only five houses in the court and relatives of ours lived in four of them!

Henry's first wife was Sarah CHANDLER who was 12 years older than him (and died in 1872 without children). Mary Ann GINN was 13 years younger than him so there were 25 years between the ages of his two wives.

In 1871 Henry and Lucy were at 17 Castle Place, Church Road, which may be the same as 17 Church Road where they were in 1861. Charles and George were still with them but Charles married in 1874 and George in 1878, both fairly young.

Lucy MARDELL died at 4 Tebworth Street of cerebral haemorrhage in 1885 (aged 64) and at some point Charles and his family moved in. Henry died there in 1893 and his daughter-in-law told the inquest: 'He has been living with me for some years. He enjoyed good health till a week or two ago when he seemed to break up. On Friday he went to bed in his usual health. I did not hear anything of him till 6am when I went to see him when I found him laying on the floor dead. He had struck his head on the floor as he fell.' She said he was 82 but I guess he was a bit less (78 or 79?).

Altogether Henry had seven sons, six of whom married and all of whom stayed in Tottenham, so he had a growing family of local grandchildren, all Mardells. Frederick, Alfred, Charles and George were all painters and glaziers, Henry was a painter but also a plumber and Edwin and Cornelius were bricklayers, a trade they may have got into via Daniel COIL who lived with their aunt Louisa SOLE. The family had drifted a bit south from Union Row and White Hart Court and from the late 1870s they lived in various roads off Church Road and Park Lane. Many years ago I read *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* (about painters in Hastings) and wonder if that reflects their lives (though it's Edwardian) - but my people were not as poor as them.

Edwin died in 1877 of pleurisy and smallpox aged 34, registered by his aunt Louisa SOLE. I think he left three children. His widow Fanny didn't remarry and in 1911 she declared that she had seven children, all living. However, they can't all have been his; even her son Charles MARDELL was born a couple of years after Edwin died.

The others did not make very old bones either. Henry died in 1890 aged 52, Alfred died in 1901 aged 61 and George died in 1906 aged 49. Frederick died in 1910 aged 70; Cornelius (who was single) died in the workhouse at Bromley-by-Bow in 1918 aged 67; Maria BECKINGHAM, the only daughter, died near Watford in 1920 aged 74 and Charles died in 1930 aged 75, by which time he had outlived his eldest three children. Henry's widow Mary Ann died the same year and Fanny, Edwin's widow, the year after. The

other wives had already died and the only one to make 80 was our Olive (Alfred's widow) who died in 1925 aged 84.

Frederick's wife had died long before (in 1888) and most of their seven children (all girls) went into service and left the area. By 1911 Mary Ann was in Walton-on-Thames and Rose in Thames Ditton. Their cousin Isabella (daughter of Henry) was in Sydenham. My Alfred of course had already moved over to Eltham about 1890 (before Henry died) and didn't come back.

Grandson Frederick got into trouble like Henry, more childishly but more seriously, and he too came up at the Old Bailey in 1895 for setting fire to a hay stack in a field in Lordship Lane and causing damage estimated at £150. He and some other boys truanted from school and went up there and he and Harry BINKS set light to the stack. They had already started a fire in a shed but it had gone out. John FIELD said they did it because they wanted to see the new fire engine turn out but the boys all blamed each other. Frederick was sentenced to three days imprisonment and twelve strokes with a birch rod.

Amongst Henry's children only Maria left the area. She married Henry BECKINGHAM at Christ Church, Blackfriars Road, in 1868. He was a horseman/cab driver and they lived in Waterloo between Stamford Street and the Cut. Her son Thomas was a taxi driver in Kennington and her son-in-law William LAMB was a bicycle maker and then a motor fitter. Horses, bicycles, cars – evolving with the new technology.

When Henry died there were 40 grandchildren, all brought up in Tottenham apart from the Beckinghams and only one baby had died. Five great grandchildren (plenty more later). Three of the grandsons died in World War One, one at Gallipoli: George and Alexander (sons of George) in 1915 and William (son of Henry) in 1917; also one great grandson Frederick (son of Alfred in New Eltham) in 1916. George's son George had been a career soldier and was stationed at the Tower of London in 1901.

Alfred Mardell (1840-1901)

Alfred was a house painter/grainer/joiner. He married Olive COLLINS at All Hallows, Tottenham, in 1861 when he was 20 and she was 19. She was born in 1842 at Toys Hill, Brasted, in Kent, but brought up in Westerham. She had an aunt Mary Ann RHODES (née GATLAND) living in Edmonton and in

1861 she and her sister Kezia were living with her in Snells Park Road. Shortly after her own marriage her cousin Martha GATLAND married James HILL of Fore Street, Edmonton, a gardener and nurseryman who eventually settled at Barrowfield Nursery, north of Church Street, Edmonton, and just east of where the Great Cambridge now runs.

After more than 20 years in White Hart Court Alfred and Olive moved to 30 Sutherland Road (parallel to Vicarage Road where we lived between 1974 and 1976). Between 1896 and 1898 they moved to 57 Sutherland Road (unless it was the same house renumbered) and Alfred died there in 1901 aged 61 of heart disease.

Over 25 years they only had six children. Kate, Alf and Arthur came more or less straightaway in 1862, 1865 and 1868. However it was then 8 years until Alice was born in 1876, 3 years till Edward in 1879 and another 7 years till Florrie was born in 1886 when Olive was about 44. By this time Kate was married and had her eldest child Fred, born in 1883 when Olive was 41. So she was a grandmother before she had finished being a mother.

Grandchildren did not come very fast, or in large numbers. Only Alf had a big family (12 of whom two died young); Kate had two, Arthur had five, Alice had two and Edward had three. Florrie did not marry until she was 26 and her only son was born in 1919, many years after the other grandchildren. The next year her husband John Warwick died aged 34, perhaps of something related to the war.

I don't know how long Olive stayed in Sutherland Road after Alfred's death. Her daughter Alice was in Argyle Road, very close, Kate and Edward were in Edmonton and Arthur was in Enfield. Only Alfred was out of easy reach. By 1906 she was at Barrowfield Nursery with Joe Hill, the son of her cousin Martha. In 1911 she was still with them earning her living as a monthly nurse but later she went to live with her daughter Florence at 30 Stanley Road, Edmonton, on the north side of Church Street and close to the Hill nursery. She died there in 1925 aged 84.

Alfred and Olive have a nice stone in Tottenham Cemetery and they both left wills. Olive's will left her daughter Florence 'all my furniture, plate, plated goods, linen, glass, china, books, pictures, prints, musical instruments and all other articles of personal, domestic or household use or ornament' and

£50. I was very impressed when I first read it (musical instruments!) but I soon decided it was just a lawyer's stock phrase - I don't suppose she had all that stuff.

After Olive's death Kate and Florrie (who were 23 years apart in age) both went down to Portslade/Brighton. Kate's grown up son was there and Florrie was a widow with a young son. In 1931 she remarried Bert CARPENTER (when she was 45 and he was 32). She lived till 1975 (aged 89) outliving her four HEWITT and EDE nephews, Alf's four eldest children, three of Arthur's and two of Edward's!

By then the youngsters had moved away. Fred HEWITT emigrated to Canada by 1908 and married out there, Bill MARDELL went in 1911 with his new wife. Fred MARDELL went in 1913 but came back with the 60th Battalion, Canadian infantry, and was killed. My grandfather Alf had 6 children in Deptford and his brothers and sisters were in or around New Eltham. Kate's other son George HEWITT stayed around Portslade; some of Arthur's children moved to Colchester, Edward's two girls went to Southend and his son, also Edward, lived at Rhymney, near Cardiff, so none of Alfred's descendants stayed in Tottenham, or even North London - until I came back!



JOTTINGS

Wren 300 Festival

Christopher WREN was born in 1632 in East Knoyle, Wiltshire. After attending Oxford University, Christopher junior was appointed Professor of Astronomy at Gresham College in London in 1657. Of course, he became a prolific and respected architect in the City, designing the rebuild of St Paul's Cathedral, another 51 churches and many other London buildings. He died aged 91 in 1723 at his house on St James's Street.

The Wren 300 UK national festival in 2023 marks the 300th anniversary of his death with a programme of exhibitions and events celebrating his life. For example, every Tuesday at 11am until 12 December 2023 you can join a walk, led by a City Guide, which visits some of Wren's churches. There are a plethora of other interesting walks (which all must be booked in advance) together with concerts, exhibitions, lectures and much more. For further details, visit the Wren 300 website: <https://wren300.org/>

90th Birthday Celebrations in Southgate



Stan Rondeau (second from right) cutting the cake for the birthday celebrations. Photo credit, Mervyn Maggs, Southgate District Civic Trust.

The 13 March was the 90th birthday of Southgate tube station and also of our own Stan RONDEAU, Member No. 4118, who can be seen here about to cut the birthday cake, helped by Enfield mayor, Doris JIAGGE.

To mark the opening of the station in 1933, Southgate District Civic Trust organised a programme of special events at the station. There were tours, including some of its hidden areas of the station, an exhibition of historic images, a street party, a vintage Routemaster bus to go round and live music from *The Skam*.

Southgate Station is regarded as an Art Deco icon. It was conceived by architect Charles HOLDEN (1875-1960), who also designed many others in our area from Sudbury to East Finchley. Southgate Station is now Grade 2* listed by Historic England as a 'particularly important building of more than special interest'. You can read the full listing on the website here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1188692>

Blackfriars Bridge

You may have heard on the news that Blackfriars Bridge, which crosses the River Thames from Blackfriars on the north bank to Upper Ground on the south, is currently being renovated. The bridge was opened by Queen Victoria on 6 November 1869 and replaced one built of Portland stone which had been constructed in the 1760s. The refurbishment started in 2021 and is expected to take three years with an estimated cost of almost £15 million. However, this will not be a burden on the public purse because it will be paid by the bridge's owners, the Bridge House Estate Charity.

This organisation was established by Royal Charter in 1282 with the responsibility for the maintenance of London Bridge – then the only one over the Thames in London. Money was raised from tolls and also from the rents of the buildings on the bridge. Property was acquired, starting with some bequeathed by Peter de Colechurch, warden of London Bridge in 1163 and by Henry Fitz Ailwyn, first Mayor of London in 1189. Monies raised were and are used to maintain London Bridge, as well as Blackfriars Bridge, Tower Bridge, Southwark Bridge and the Millennium Bridge with surplus funds being used for charitable purposes.

The archive of Bridge House Estates is at LMA, Ref: CLA/007 and includes the following, which might mention your ancestors: bridgemaister' accounts rolls 1381-1398; bridgemaister's annual accounts and rentals 1404-1850; weekly payments 1404-1445 and 1505-1849; rent and arrears books, 1707-1941 and papers relating to individual properties owned by the Trust. Many personal names are mentioned in the pdf file of the collection on the LMA website.

Ministry of Defence Service Personnel Records

In February 2021, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) began the transfer of historic service personnel records to The National Archives (TNA). These documents are a record of a person's time in the military and typically contains information such as record of service, disciplinary and conduct sheets, service postings and information noted when they first signed up.

In April 2023 the first tranche of these MOD records went on to TNA's online catalogue and were available to order to view at TNA. The records are from series WO 420 and relate to members of the Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers regiment whose date of birth is greater than 115 years ago. These were the first of 9.7 million records that will be transferred over a six-year period. On 2 March, TNA announced that Ancestry UK has been awarded the contract to digitise these records.

Edgware and Green Shield Stamps

Islington-born entrepreneur Richard TOMPKINS (1918-1992) founded the Green Shield Trading Stamp Company in 1958 after visiting the USA and seeing a thriving and popular loyalty programme involving trading stamps, Sperry & Hutchinson's 'Green Stamps'. This had been established in America in 1896 by Thomas Alexander SPERRY (1864-1913) and Shelley Byron HUTCHINSON (1864-1961) and reached the peak of its popularity in the 1960s.

Green Shield stamps were a similar sales promotion scheme, whereby shoppers were rewarded with one stamp for every 6d (2½p) spent. The stamps which were stuck into a little book which, when full, could be exchanged for gifts from a catalogue. A new headquarters office block was built in Station Road, Edgware in the early 1960s. The building, Green Shield House, was later renamed Premier House and has now been converted into flats.

The Green Shield company became Argos in 1973 and items in the catalogue could be bought with a mixture of stamps and cash. The stamps were gradually phased out. Argos is now part of the Sainsbury group, whose archive can be searched online here: <https://www.sainsburyarchive.org.uk/>

You can discover more about how to find mentions of ancestors in the Edgware area in our Parish Guide, published on 1 May.



Premier House, formerly Green Shield House.



WEBSITE NEWS

Connected Histories

This website brings together a range of digital resources which relate to Britain between 1500 and 1900, These include British History Online (a digital library of primary and secondary sources), images from the British Museum, British newspapers 1600-1900 from the Burney Collection held in the British Library via Gale, Charles Booth archive, Clergy of the Church of England database 1540-1835, Convict Transportation Registers database 1787-1867 (from The National Archives' HO11 collection), the House of Commons Parliamentary Papers from 1688 onwards, London Lives 1690-1800 (itself a collection of 15 datasets), the Victoria County History books and quite a few more! Although some of the sources are pay-per-view, the Connected Histories project means that you can search in them for free.

The website had a series of research guides under headings such as 'crime and justice' and 'family history', which discuss relevant content and give suggestions for search strategies and further reading.

You just never know what might turn up! You can access this website here: <https://www.connectedhistories.org/>

British Pathé

British Pathé is considered to be the finest newsreel archive in the world and is a treasure trove of 85,000 films unrivalled in their historical and cultural significance. Spanning the years from 1896 to 1978, the collection includes footage from around the globe and includes the historical collection of Reuters news agencies too. The archive is available online for free via YouTube and their website: <https://www.britishpathe.com/>

If you have found a useful website perhaps you would consider writing a short review for METROPOLITAN or let the Editors know of it? See inside the front cover for email and postal addresses.

Have You Changed Your Email Address?

Please make sure you let Sylvia know by emailing your new address to:
membership@lwmfhs.org.uk

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. There is a £3 charge for each

subsequent entry and for all entries from non-members. Don't forget to include your contact details and your membership number.



Thomas CHAMBERS

I have been having great difficulty finding the birth details for my grandfather Thomas CHAMBERS, born 1869 or 1870.

He married my grandmother Minnie LOWE née PETTIFER on 9 September 1912 in St Peter's Church, Paddington. On the marriage certificate his age is given as 42 and his occupation as taxi driver. He was the son of Thomas CHAMBERS, a clerk, deceased. They were both living in Paddington. The 1921 census gives his age as 53 years and 2 months and his occupation as taxi driver employed by Mr DAVIS of Queens Mews, Bayswater. The family was living in Cirencester Street, Paddington.

He may be the Thomas CHAMBERS living at 185 Old Street, Shoreditch in the parish of St Mark whose occupation in the 1901 census was given as Mail Driver. He died in Paddington Hospital in 1928 aged 58 and his occupation was given as Motor Cab Driver on his death certificate. He died of toxæmia and gangrene of the leg so possibly the result of an accident.

I have been unable to match the places of birth given in the census returns with places of birth for any child registered as Thomas CHAMBERS (no middle name) in the GRO index of births.

Does anyone know of a register of taxi drivers for the early part of the last century which would give his date of birth, or of any other way I could find out this information?

Linda Guilfoyle, Member No. 7856

Email: Linda.guilfoyle2019@gmail.com

Note: Unfortunately there is no register of taxi drivers, so the way forward would seem to be to follow Thomas's trail backwards to try to locate his birth information.

You would think it ought to be relatively easy to find Thomas in the 1911 census returns, given that it is the year before his marriage, but it is not. There is a Thomas CHAMBERS born about 1869 in Paddington and

who is a Motor Cab Driver but he is living at 92 Great Western Road with a wife, Mari CHAMBERS who was born about 1855 in Kings Langley. Unusually, there are no details given of the marriage, as was required. We could not find any other mention of this couple.

When Thomas got married in 1912, both he and Minnie gave their address as 64 Amberley Road. Using an address search on Findmypast, there were six households at 64 Amberley Road with a total of 24 people in them but no-one with the surname CHAMBERS. Minnie LOWE, widow, general shop keeper and her children (plus her brother) were all at 16 Cirencester Street in 1911. Minnie seems to have had a shop here until at least 1921.

The 1901 census returns are equally mysterious. We agree that the man in Shoreditch seems to be the best candidate to be your Thomas. However, this man said he was born in Camberwell, Surrey, We could find no other trace of a Thomas CHAMBERS born in Camberwell.

Going further back, to 1891, there is a Thomas CHAMBERS who had been born about 1868 in Paddington who was living with his sister Annie CHAMBERS, who had been born about 1856, also in Paddington. This Thomas is a Horse Keeper, which fits quite well with someone who later relied on driving for a living. Annie and Thomas are at 151 Ledbury Road, Paddington in 1881 with their mother, Sarah Ann CHAMBERS. All three are there in 1871 and with them is Ellenor JONES, Sarah Ann's mother. This family can be easily traced back to the baptism of Sarah Ann, daughter of Abraham Richard and Elleanor JONES, who was born 15 November 1829 at St Mary Paddington and baptised on 28 February 1830 at Great Queen Street Wesleyan church. We do feel that this is the best candidate to be your Thomas but you will perhaps need to find some DNA or other confirmation to say for definite.

Where were my family buried?

I was wondering if you could help me try and locate the burials of my family, which originated from Market Place, Finchley (the BOLDING side), with my paternal grandmother mainly in Hornsey (the BARRETT side). They lived in Finchley, Muswell Hill, Hornsey and Islington.

I managed to visit East Finchley cemetery and the office there were really kind and looked up ten BOLDING ancestors for me. They emailed me a map

and the plot numbers. Sadly when I went there my great great grandparents had no headstone, which I think will be the case for other graves but it would still be nice to know where they are so I can leave flowers. I also visited Holy Trinity church in Church Lane and Finchley cemetery.

Other cemeteries charge to look for ancestors. Islington and Camden charge £16 to research one grave. I have an Ancestry membership but not all the records tell you where people were buried.

Julie Wratten, Non-Member

Email: julie.wratten@hotmail.co.uk

Note: You are quite right when you say that most burials will have had no headstone but there should be a record of where the graves are. There is no easy way to find out where relatives might be buried but we have tried to help with our Parish Guides - we notice you have our Finchley Parish Guide and hope you found it helpful.

Muswell Hill comes under Hornsey ancient parish. Burials continued at St Mary Hornsey until 1892 - you could check the burial register online at Ancestry to see if the names you are looking for are there. This is the only church in the ancient parish which had a burial ground. The churchyard was made into a Garden of Remembrance in the 1950s. Luckily, we have published a booklet with plans of the monumental inscriptions of the churchyard which records all its known gravestones. The nearest cemetery to Hornsey and Muswell Hill is Highgate Cemetery. The Burial Registers from 1839 to 2010 are at Camden Local Studies and Archives, and online at pay-per-view website Deceased Online. Highgate Cemetery has its own website and will conduct a search for a burial. Although a search will cost £40, for this you will get a copy of the Burial Register, digital photographs of the grave, a copy of the original cemetery map showing the location of the grave, a modern map and access for up to four people to be shown the actual grave at the cemetery.

Islington parishioners could be buried at a variety of churches in the parish. Burial registers for St Mary, Upper Street, date from 1558-1893; Holy Trinity, Cloudesey Square from 1829-1854; St John the Evangelist, Pemberton Gardens from 1829-1854; and St Mary Magdalene, Holloway Road from 1895-1916.

Islington and St Pancras Cemetery, which opened in 1854 and is actually in Finchley, is a more likely bet, though. There is a site map on their website. We believe you can search the registers yourself free of charge at the cemetery but the records are also online at Deceased Online. Trent Park cemetery, run by the London Borough of Islington, opened in 1960 at Cockfosters Road, Cockfosters, London EN4 0DZ. The burial registers from 1960-2000 are also on Deceased Online.

So, it looks like Deceased Online would be the best place to start. Searching is free but you would need to register and pay to be able to access scans, transcriptions and images from the site, which you can find here: <https://www.deceasedonline.com/>

RAYNER of Rayners Lane

I am looking for any information on the Rayners that originally lived in Rayners Lane, Pinner and their descendants:

Daniel RAYNER (1819-1862) married to Hannah (Ann). Children: Charles David 1844, Daniel 1846, William Thomas 1849, Susan 1852

George RAYNER (1820-1855) married to Anne. Children: Phoebe 1845, George 1847, Thomas 1852

John RAYNER (1823-1905) married to Jane. Children: John George 1847, George William 1849, Matilda 1851, William 1854, Sarah 1856, Jane 1858, James 1860, Robert George 1862, Arthur 1869

Daniel and George both remained and died in Pinner. John moved to Sudbury, Hayes and Greenford.

Sharon Holland, Member No. 8419

Email: sharonmholland@hotmail.com

Note: There are quite a few records relating to this family online at Ancestry, starting with the whole family with their probable parents (George and Martha) and sister (Susan) at Pinner Place in the 1941 Census returns. Have a look at the suggested records that appear on Ancestry but bear in mind that they are only suggestion - double check that the facts fit with what you already know.

For some unknown reason, the baptisms of George and Martha's children do not all show on the search but they are there. We typed in 'John' born 1819 at Pinner into the search engine, which gave us access to the parish register and then used the forward and backward arrows to find the

baptisms. *George*, son of *George* and *Martha* RAYNER, labourer of Pinner, was baptised on 19 September 1819, for example. It's worth looking at earlier and later dates too - there was a son Daniel baptised in 1816 as RAINER and may be others.

There is a website currently being built dedicated to Rayners Lane which has a page on the Rayners. It was not filled up at time of going to press but would be worth a look later: <https://raynerslane.uk/>



BARNET MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL

Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 June 2023

Barnet Elizabethans Rugby Club, Byng Road, Barnet EN5 4NP

Barnet Medieval Festival commemorates the Battle of Barnet, which was fought at dawn on Easter Sunday, 14 April 1471, in thick fog at Gladmore Heath, the precise location of which is no longer known. This was a key battle in the Wars of the Roses, during which Richard Neville, the Earl of Warwick was killed, securing the throne for Yorkist King Edward IV.

This Festival will have battle re-enactments, living history, a medieval market, demonstrations, music, entertainment, food and drink and more.

It is a great day out for the whole family.

London Westminster & Middlesex FHS will be there!
Please email eventsteam@lwmfhs.org.uk if you can help.

Tickets cost £5 for adults, £2 for children.
There is only very limited parking on the site.

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

FORTHCOMING BRANCH MEETINGS

Virtual Branch – Talks are on the second Thursday of the month. ‘Doors’ open at 7.45 for an 8pm start. To attend, you have to initially register an interest by emailing: virtualbranch@lwmfhs.org.uk (This is once only - you do not need to register for each talk). The details of each Zoom meeting will then be emailed to you a few days prior to the event as well as being announced in *Metropolitan*, on our website and Facebook page.

The talk will be recorded (with the speaker’s permission) and reshown the following morning at 10am 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.uk

- 8 June *In and Out of London* by Ian Waller.
Many researchers find it difficult and somewhat daunting when their ancestors move into or around London. Research in the capital has its own challenges which can easily be overcome. This talk suggests how to do it.
- 13 July *Above & Below: Exploring a Pre-Reformation Church and Churchyard* by Celia Heritage.
Celia will take you on a trip round the parish church and churchyard, help you to learn, observe and appreciate many different aspects of these places, which were the centre of village life for religious and secular reasons too.
- 10 August *Streets Paved with Gold? Immigrants in Victorian London* by Dr Frances Hurd.
London has been a magnet for centuries, offering the hope of a better life to people from all over Britain and from overseas. Personal stories reveal what life was like for these new arrivals.
- 14 September *Street Names of Soho* by Rob Kayne.
This talk will show how street names were bestowed to reflect land ownership, historical events, architects and builders, and local activities. Sometimes we don’t know but making a guess can be just as interesting. And where was Pesthouse Close?

Barnet Branch – Talks are on the third Thursday of the month from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at Lyonsdown Hall, Lyonsdown Road, New Barnet, Hertfordshire EN5 1JB.

Branch Contact: Clare Pollitt, Email: barnet@lwmfhs.org.uk

- 15 June *The Story of Bunhill Fields Burial Ground in London* by Chris Wilkins Malloy, a City of London Guide. Bunhill Fields, an old burial ground which became known as a nonconformist cemetery.
- 20 July Online Look-up Session: need help with some research? Want to look up something on a website that you don't usually subscribe to? Come along and get other members' help and advice. Bring a laptop or tablet if you can and make use of the free WiFi.
- 17 August *Walter Brown, from Rickmansworth baker's son to Tottenham grocer* by Karen de Bruyne
- 21 September Travel and Migration - where did our ancestors manage to get to and from and why. What sort of transport would they have used at that time?

Rayners Lane Branch – Talks are on the first Monday of the month. Doors open at 1pm for a 1.30pm start at Roxeth Community Church, Coles Crescent, South Harrow, Middlesex HA2 0TN.

Branch Contact: Tricia Sutton, Email: rayners_lane@lwmfhs.org.uk

- 12 June *Not the first Monday – take note*
Rayners Lane from the start to the 1950s by Pat Clarke, who is a well-respected local historian in the area.
- 3 July *The impact of climate change on our ancestor's decision to relocate.* A Family Tree video
- 7 August No meeting
- 4 September *An illustrated family history trail* by Chris and Tricia Sutton

FOCUS ON FACEBOOK

By Elizabeth Burling, Member No. 4992

Kirsty's ancestor James WEST (keeper of a beer shop) died aged 38 on 12 April 1849 at Kensington, due to a fracture of the skull he obtained from accidentally falling from a cart. The Coroner, T WAKLEY of Harefield Park, was the informant. Kirsty was wondering if she could access any coroner's records relating to the death – she had tried the British Newspaper Archive but had not found anything.

Funnily enough, I had spent the last few days trying to sort out what is available regarding coroner's records and it is extremely complicated! Apart from anything else, coroner's reports were seen as the personal property of the coroner and were not necessarily kept. Sometimes inquisitions (a one-page document giving the verdict, name, date, time, cause and place of death with the signatures of the jurors) and depositions (statements of witnesses which may contain more information about the particulars of a death) were returned instead of, or in addition to, the account. A register of inquests might also be kept. These should note inquest date, name of deceased, address and place of death, cause of death, the verdict, and the coroners' expenses. They do not add significantly to the information contained in a death certificate. In 1921 it was advised that any coroner's reports from before 1875 should be retained but also that ongoing reports need only be kept for 15 years, so many coroner's reports have not survived.

Kensington appeared in the County of Middlesex Western Coroners District at this date but reports of inquests in the Middlesex Sessions archives (at London Metropolitan Archives) stop at 1838 and registers of inquests (in a separate Coroners' archive, also at LMA) don't start until 1856.

Looking in the British Library catalogue, there wasn't a newspaper specific to Kensington before 1853 (*West London Guardian and General Advertiser*) but there are other more general ones - *The Weekly Times* was published from 1847-1885, *The Daily News* 1846-1912, *The Guardian* 1846-1951, *The Express* 1846-1869, *Daily News* 1846-1912 and many others which had a shorter time span. Most will not have been digitised yet but will be eventually –keep checking! LMA or other archives centres might also have a collection of news clippings of this sort of thing - it is worth asking them.

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.

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- Set up a standing order payable on 1 October annually (bank details below);
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- Pay through Parish Chest directly from our website lwmfhs.org.uk, or our stall on the Parish Chest
- Post a cheque to the Membership Secretary (details inside the front cover) giving 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).

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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.**