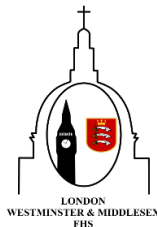


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METROPOLITAN

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LONDON WESTMINSTER & MIDDLESEX
Family History Society



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September 2023

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Cover picture: The *Griffin* pub in Whetstone was part of the ancient parish of Friern Barnet. Our new Parish Guide is out in September.

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EDITORIAL

Perhaps the biggest news recently has been the General Register Office's public roll-out of their beta service where you can get a digital copy of the original information on certain birth and death certificates, which can be viewed almost immediately and for only £2.50 each. Of course this is going to be of immense benefit to family historians. Those with common names, or even less common names in crowded London, will be able to find the correct person more easily, quickly and cheaply. Do let us know of any gems you come up with! See page 175 for more details.

'Spotlight On' is a new series which we hope will give more information about districts in our area which were not ancient parishes. It's not a new idea as there were similar articles in *Metropolitan* in the 1990s called 'Know your Patch' but we think it is one worth revisiting. This time we are looking at Agar Town, a small area near to Kings Cross in the parish of St Pancras.

You might think that the article on Epsom's Secret Resting Place on page 160 is nothing to do with us in north of the Thames but in fact it does. Author Kevin explains how 'inmates' often travelled between the main Victorian asylums and there are many people from our area buried at Epsom.

Talking of asylums, our latest Parish Guide is Friern Barnet. The ancient parish of Friern Barnet was part of the Finsbury division of the Ossulstone hundred subdivision of the county of Middlesex and is now part of the London Borough of Barnet. Once owned by the Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, it became much more well-known for housing Colney Hatch Asylum, which opened in 1851 as the second Middlesex County Pauper Lunatic Asylum. This institution was later known as Friern Hospital and only closed in 1993. The Friern Barnet Parish Guide is due out on 1 September.

We will be attending four Fairs in the coming months, the Family History Show at Kempton Park Racecourse in Surrey on 2 September, the Haringey Local History Fair at Tottenham on Saturday 7 October, the West Surrey FHS Family History Fair at Woking on Saturday 4 November and the online FHF Really Useful Show on Friday 17 and Saturday 18 November – see pages 156 for details.

Barbara, Elizabeth and Paul, the Editorial Team

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Our Society year runs from 1 October each year so now is the time to be renewing your membership if you have not done so already. Paying promptly really helps Sylvia, our Membership Secretary, as this is her busiest time of year. This will also ensure that you receive the December copy of *Metropolitan* and will be able to attend our Virtual and other branch meetings. Of course, there are other benefits to renewing your LWMFHS membership, such as the chance to submit the story of your London ancestors or your brickwall query to the journal. With membership starting at only £12 for a whole year, we hope you will agree that it is very good value!

There are various ways in which you can pay:

- You can set up a standing order payable on 1 October annually. If you have already done this, please could you check that your bank knows to pay this into our new bank account? This is a Santander business account, sort code: 09-01-29, account number: 70580978; the account name is London Westminster & Middlesex Family History Society.
- You can make a payment directly into this bank account.
- You can pay through Parish Chest directly from our website here: <https://www.lwmfhs.org.uk/membership> or use this link on our page on the Parish Chest website: <https://www.parishchest.com/london-westminster-middlesex-fhs-4577.php>
- If you wish to pay by cheque, fill in the Subscription Renewal form from the June issue of *Metropolitan* and post this together with your cheque to the Membership Secretary.

Please make sure that you include a reference with your payment, whichever of the above you chose, otherwise the Society will not know who the money is from. One which includes your name and membership number would be ideal. Your membership number can be found on the email notification of your electronic *Metropolitan*, or the address sheet with your paper copy.

The Society will also be out and about in the months ahead at various family history fairs. These are always interesting events and we look forward to meeting existing and potential members, friends and visitors on these occasions. If you have never been to a fair, why not come to one of these? If you can help us for an hour or two, that would be great news too.

Elizabeth Burling

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

On 3 May 1943, a Boston BZ227 from 107 squadron took off from RAF base Great Massingham with three servicemen aboard. The target of that day was an electrical power plant at Ymuiden, in The Netherlands. The plane was shot down by the anti-aircraft guns from the heavily defended port of Ymuiden. There were no survivors. The body of navigator, Flying Officer Herbert Horatio GAUNTLETT (service number 118636) washed up on the beach of Castricum, The Netherlands. He is buried at Bergen cemetery a few miles north of Castricum.

I am writing a book about Castricum in the Second World War. The book will be about the 72 airmen that washed up on the shore of Castricum during five years of war. I want to honour Gauntlett and his crew in my book. They will never be forgotten.

I am looking for information about Gauntlett and hopefully a photograph of him. Herbert Horatio GAUNTLETT was the son of Herbert and Louisa Mary GAUNTLETT from Sudbury, Middlesex. Maybe there are still relatives living in the Sudbury area?

Hopefully you will be able to help me a little bit further with my research.

John Heideman, Non-member

Email: johnheideman@casema.nl

Note: Herbert Horatio and his twin brother Harold Donovan were born in Brentford in 1909 and were living in Ealing at the time of the 1911 census. Harold married Gladys M JOLLEY in 1936 in Hendon and the couple were living in Luton at the time of the 1939 Register. Harold and Gladys had a son in 1939 and a daughter in 1944, both in Luton, so there might well be some family who are contactable.

Further to the most enjoyable Virtual Branch talk of 13 July, which was 'Above and Below: exploring a pre-reformation church and churchyard' by Celia Heritage. In the Q & A I asked about the Samuel PROUT picture showing a burial in the interior of a church which had hatchments on the walls. I discovered the picture on the [https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/fine-art-prints/Samuel-Prout/202297/Arundel-Church-\(lithotint\).html](https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/fine-art-prints/Samuel-Prout/202297/Arundel-Church-(lithotint).html) web site and it is of Arundel Church in Sussex.

This takes on a Kevin Bacon moment (six degrees of separation) as my initial interest was on the hatchments but Francis CUFFLEY was put into Arundel by Oliver CROMWELL in 1653 and died there in 1656. He was a Captain of a company of Sir Richard ONSLOW's regiment of Surrey Foot. On a Sunday in June 1646 he preached to the troops about to march on Basing House. "Captain Cuffly, an honest godly man of Gilford (sic) who goes out with them upon this design, preached unto them and after sermon they marched towards Farnham, and so for Basing".

There is a list of vicars in the church which includes Francis CUFFLEY. Looking back at the photographs I took many years ago I can see that there are some hatchments high up on the walls. I think I now need to go back to Arundel and study and record them just in case one relates to Francis.

Thank you again for an interesting and productive talk.

David Cufley, Member No. 196

The June *Metropolitan* is extremely interesting for me. Sheila Clarke gave a lot of information about a carpenter John HEDLAND and especially about the years 1593-1608 in and around London.

In those years Württemberg (South of Germany) had a brilliant and extremely intelligent duke: Herzog G FRIEDRICH 1 (reigned from 1593-1608). As he was rather ambitious, he absolutely wanted several European orders, especially The Order of the Garter. He rather often went to London to meet Elizabeth 1 and after her death to meet James 1, in order to convince them to give him The Order of the Garter.

To persuade them he sent lots of peasants and peasants' sons of Württemberg to help them cultivate their fields. Those peasants very often did not want to leave Württemberg yet they simply had to. Their Herzog wanted them to.

They did not only speak the German language, since Herzog FRIEDRICH 1 had made his county a Protestant county after the Reformation. He had accepted refugees from several countries where they had been persecuted by the Catholics: from Hungary, Austria, Italy, Bavaria etc and lots from France after several thousand protestants had been killed in the Bartholomäus-nacht (St Bartholomew's Day Massacre) in 1572.

They were mainly silk weavers, carpenters, needle-makers, wool weavers, joiners and had other practical jobs. Great Britain operated a 'free soil' policy at that time, everyone setting foot in Britain could consider themselves free. Friedrich 1 of Württemberg still wanted The Order of the Garter (he had already had a replica at the porch to Tübingen Castle). James 1 refused to come to Tübingen to confer it to Friedrich, yet he sent an English

representative, Lord SPENCER of London, who came to Tübingen. Friedrich 1 got the Order in Stuttgart. Afterwards they all went to Tübingen on 3 November 1603 and enjoyed several days there hunting in the nearby forest of Schönbuch, near Bebenhausen. After several festive activities the English group went back to London in 1603.

Elisabeth Roller, Member No. 7822



The Sun (London), 13 November 1846

MR EDMUND ROBINS will SELL by AUCTION, on the Premises, on TUESDAY next, at Eleven, The pleasant COTTAGE RESIDENCE which has recently been enlarged, and presents a gentlemanly abode for a small family; it is agreeably situate, commanding extensive views, and CALLED THE MILES PITT FARM, WITH 55 ACRES OF RICH MEADOW LAND, lawn, kitchen garden, and conservatory, situate AT MILL HILL, WITHIN TWO MILES OF HENDON, and nine from London, to which an omnibus passes daily. There is a coach-house, three-stall stable, cowhouse, and all conveniences; it is held for 21 years, at a low rent. On the same Day will be Sold the GENUINE HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, embracing every essential for family comfort, and in excellent condition, china, glass, an ELEGANT BROUGHAM CARRIAGE, A PONY CHAISE, A CHAISE DOG CART, excellent harness and saddles, garden tools, iron roller, TWO HORSES, A PONY, CAPITAL MILCH COW, tumbrel cart, 42 iron hurdles, wooden ditto, quantity of fire wood, manure, and a variety of useful outdoor articles.

The residence may be viewed, and particulars had on the premises; the Castle, Hampstead; Swan, Hendon; the inns at Barnet and Edgware; of Edward Elkins, Esq., Solicitor, Newman-street; and at Mr Edmund Robin's offices, Covent-garden. The effects may be viewed the day preceding the same.

ESTHER LAVINIA POTTER ‘WHO NEEDS NONE’

by Dawn Adams, Member No. 6025

When Edwin POTTER signed his will on 5 September 1893, he mentioned each of the nine surviving children of his first three marriages (there was no issue of the fourth) – ‘... the remainder to be divided among all my children in equal shares (except Esther she needs none ...)’. At probate on 31 May 1894, his estate was valued at £1,472 6/4d (about £150,000 in 2023)⁽¹⁾.

Why did Edwin think that, alone of his offspring, Esther had no need of further monies? On 22 October 1892 at St Simon Zelotes Church in Chelsea, Esther Lavinia POTTER aged 26 married by licence Richard Charles Montague STYLE, undergraduate of Trinity College Cambridge aged 22. The witnesses were Giuseppe BAZZI, a Soho restaurateur and his wife Mary. The groom was the only child of the Rector of South Warnborough, Hampshire, a living worth £594 a year, in the gift of St John’s College Oxford. Rev. Charles Montague STYLE had been a Fellow of that college, before marrying his cousin, Jessie MARSHAM, in 1867 (Fellows were expected not to marry). The Rector had five servants, and few parishioners. Jessie was the daughter of Robert MARSHAM, Warden of Wadham College, Oxford and Lord of the Manor of Caversfield, where he had his (newly rebuilt) country house.

Edwin POTTER’s life had been very different: born in Hertfordshire in about 1821, briefly a soldier, then a police constable in London, he was called in 1852 to be a missionary for the London City Mission, serving the slums of Westminster and addressing meetings to publicise that work and raise funds. In 1872, exhausted, he was placed on the Disabled List ⁽²⁾, and passed the remainder of his life as an occasional furniture dealer, dying in 1894 at the age of 73.

Esther’s husband did not complete his degree studies. Though the wedding was hastily arranged, they apparently never had children. In the 1901 census, Richard and Esther lived in Aldrington, now part of Hove in Sussex, Richard ‘living on his own means’: they kept a servant. By 1911 they had moved into Hove, with a cook and a housemaid: Esther’s 11 year old niece Florence Mavis MATTHEWS completed the household. Florence’s parents emigrated to California in 1908 with their younger children but Florence stayed and

became Esther's de facto adopted daughter. (Adoption, as we might understand it, was not made legal until the Adoption Act 1926.)⁽³⁾

Richard's father died in 1916 leaving an estate of £16,704 (about £985,000 at 2023 values). His widow would have had to vacate the Rectory immediately. In 1921, Jessie STYLE aged 89, Richard, aged 50, and Esther, aged 48 (actually 54), lived at 102 Sydney Place, Bathwick, Bath, with two servants. According to the press, Jessie's brother had died in 1901 and left £5,000 (2023 equivalent £500,000) in trust for Jessie for her life (then passing to Richard).

Jessie died in September 1922, leaving £4,799 (2023 equivalent £220,000). And a little while after that, Richard and Esther were living separately. In April 1924, Esther STYLE was the tenant of Sand House, Wedmore, Somerset, a substantial country residence, when she gave evidence at the inquest on her kitchen-maid. Esther's 'adopted daughter' Florence was married from that house in 1926. Meanwhile, in 1929 Richard STYLE was on the Electoral Register at Addison Gardens in Hammersmith with Olivia Blanche STYLE (Olivia Blanche DELPINE, born 1901), with whom he later moved to Hastings, where he died in 1945.

Esther moved on, and by September 1939, lived at Steyning in Sussex, with three other ladies of similar age: Elizabeth M A STRATTON, 71, divorced, private means; Milly Nina RITCHIE 63, married, retired company secretary; Rose A MORSE 63, married, lady's companion. Margaret POTTER, 37, performed domestic duties, unpaid. Two records are redacted. Having no Margaret in the POTTER tree, I assumed initially that this not uncommon surname was a coincidence.

Again a Will prompted a rethink. Esther's executor was Charles POTTER, retired shipping agent; her residuary legatees were Charles POTTER and his wife Margaret (Esther's estate was valued for probate in 1956 at £6,720 or £135,000 at 2023 values). Next question – who was Charles POTTER?

Charles William POTTER was the son of Esther's cousin, Charles William POTTER (1846-1929), confectioner of Kentish Town. And he didn't marry Margaret RIDDELL until 1966, probably because the wife he had married in 1906 was still living in Hythe, Kent. When I looked into Charles William Senior's family, I was greatly assisted by his daughter Caroline Evans

POTTER (Eva) having married the co-proprietor of the *St Pancras Gazette*. Their wedding on 31 December 1910 was fulsomely written up, with a list of guests, as were the funerals of Charles William Senior's first wife Ann (1 May 1910), his son Alfred (10 January 1911, aged 32), his second wife (29 March 1929), and his own (5 April 1929), all with lists of those who had been present and/or sent a wreath.

Charles William POTTER Senior was the son of Edwin POTTER's older brother, yet another Charles William (often called William Charles...). A police officer in London's East End, he had died in 1858 aged 39, when the future confectioner Charles William was 12 years old. Charles William married at the age of 18 in 1865 in Woolwich, occupation barman (his widowed mother kept a beerhouse in Ratcliffe). His bride, Ann HEARN, was also 18. The first reference to Charles as a manufacturing confectioner comes in the 1881 census, when the family was based at Litcham Street (now Athlone Street) in Kentish Town, mapped by Charles BOOTH as the only inky black one in a sea of 'red' streets.⁽⁴⁾ From there they moved to Kentish Town Road, with a final address of 69 Prince of Wales Road, described in the Lloyd George Survey as having a shop and parlour on the ground floor and two floors of two rooms each above that.

Nine of Charles William's children survived to adulthood. The censuses show that as soon as they were old enough, they assisted in the business. The eldest, Elizabeth Mary Ann, married Wilhelm STRATTON, a clerk from Islington, in 1898, when he was 25 and she 30. Almost immediately they set out for New Zealand, eventually settling in Hawke's Bay, from where they sent a wreath to Elizabeth's mother's funeral. However, in 1920 they returned to England and the 1921 census shows them in a hotel in Paddington, his occupation sheep farmer. When Wilhelm left the country for South Africa in 1926 (and for New Zealand in 1928), it was with a different wife, Grace Evelyn STRATTON (née DEAR), whom he married in New Zealand in 1931. Wilhelm's divorce from Elizabeth did not get into the available newspapers but the 1939 Register tells us it happened.

Charles William's other children were:

- Ada Caroline (1870-1964) who confused matters by calling herself Ada Edith throughout her life, even at her marriage to George WOOTTON. The *St Pancras Gazette* noted the WOOTTONs attending family events, and the probate register had 'otherwise Ada Caroline' as confirmation.

- Arthur Albert (1872-1937) worked as a sugar boiler for his father, married in 1894, had four children, then in 1907 publicly repudiated his wife's debts (in the *St Pancras Gazette*). By 1911, the children were boarded out and his wife was recorded as housekeeper to another man, with whom she remained. Arthur returned permanently to his father's address.
- Alfred Mackness (1878-1911) whose funeral after an illness was referred to above.
- John Frederick (1880-1962) (Fred), a modeller in plaster for the Veronese Company, responsible for work in several London theatres. He married Nellie VARNEY in 1899, lived in Hammersmith, and had five children.
- Charles William (1881-1971) shipping clerk, then shipping agent for a coastal shipping company, mentioned above.
- Caroline Evans (1885-1975) (Eva), married John WIDDICOMBE, the co-proprietor of the *St Pancras Gazette* in 1910. (She already had a son, William). Esther STYLE sent a wedding present. John died in 1936, then, in 1942, Eva married a widowed colleague of his, Edward TRASH. His mismanagement of a wartime savings club got him into deep trouble. He died soon after, in 1946. When Elizabeth STRATTON died in 1948, she left half her estate to Eva.
- Marguerite Ethel (1887-1954) (Rita). Rita married Henry George AVERY, a musician, in 1910. Although in the 1911 census she was at her father's house, in September of that year the AVERYs emigrated to New Zealand, living in Wellington, and then in Hawke's Bay. Elizabeth left Rita the other half of her estate. Rita died in 1954, and Henry in 1956, but in his will (image available on Family Search) he left £50 each to Eva TRASH and Rose MORSE, his sisters-in-law. This was my first clue to the identity of Esther's second housemate.

Rose Annie POTTER was born in 1876. By 1901, she was a milliner's saleswoman, and then I lost sight of her. If she was Rose Annie MORSE, where was the wedding? The nearest record was (online) from the British consul in Nice, for 1906, for 'St Maur MORSE' marrying Rose POTTER. Then in the lists of mourners from the *St Pancras Gazette* appeared a daughter and son-in-law, Mr & Mrs SEYMOUR. No SEYMOUR-POTTER weddings. Inspiration: Seymour can be a first name, potentially misheard by whoever was writing down the lists (and by the consul). So I looked for Seymour MORSE, and found a local Chartered Accountant, Seymour Leslie MORSE. He was named quite often in the press as executor or liquidator, until about 1908. Then in 1926 came a suit by Rose MORSE for separation

from her husband, Seymour Leslie, reported in newspapers from West London, where she had been given a temporary home by her brother Fred. Seymour and Rose had indeed married in Nice in 1906. Seymour said that his business had failed and he had to sell his house to pay debts (so had no money to support Rose). With his permission, Rose had gone with friends to Abyssinia from 1913-14 for her health. Rose claimed that on her return, he was living with someone else. At that time this would not be grounds for her to divorce him⁽⁵⁾. In 1915, she went to her sister in New Zealand; she seems not to be in the 1921 England census. The separation was granted, with an order to pay 10/6d a week. So Rose ended up with Esther, 'lady's companion'.

Though Charles William Senior was Esther's cousin, it was his children who were closer to her in age. These POTTER siblings seem to be mutually supportive, despite distance, but I wonder how the proportion of failed marriages compares to the norm.

The third lady who appears in the 1939 Register with Esther, Milly 'Nina' RITCHIE née ROYDS formerly WILLSON (1876-1940), had quite an interesting life too, but no family connection to the POTTERS or to our area. So I must leave her story for another to tell.

And I won't know about the two redacted lines for a while yet.

References

All newspapers and censuses via Find My Past; Lloyd George Survey via The Genealogist; electoral registers and Cambridge University records via Ancestry.

Notes

- ¹. All values based on the Bank of England Inflation calculator
- ². The London City Mission generously consulted their archives re Edwin Potter
- ³. *Researching Adoption* by Karen Bali 2015 Family History Partnership
- ⁴. see also *The Fields Beneath: the history of one London village* by Gillian Tindall 1977 and *Greater London: the story of the suburbs* by Nick Barratt 2012 Random House
- ⁵. *Divorced, Bigamist, Bereaved* by Rebecca Probert 2015 Takeaway (Publishing)



EVENTS

LWMFHS are going to be out and about at four events this autumn. Family history shows are good fun and interesting to attend, as you will know if you have ever been to one, and we are really looking forward to them. However, we would really love it if we could have some volunteers to help – we work on the basis that many hands make light work. No experience is needed, you will get free entry to the event and will have the chance to look around, and we usually provide some pretty decent biscuits too!

The Family History Show, London, is one of the largest family history shows in England and will be held on Saturday 2 September from 10.00-16.00 at Kempton Park Racecourse, Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey.

You don't have to have London Ancestors to come to this fair - they can be from anywhere in the country. LWMFHS will be attending again, along with many other family history societies and other related groups. There are two lecture halls with free talks and 'Ask the Expert' sessions. There is plenty of free parking on site or, for those travelling by train, there is a free minibus from the station. Refreshments are available all day. Tickets are £12 on the door or FREE if you volunteer to help on our stand! More information can be found on the website: <https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com/London/>

The Haringey Local History Fair will be held on Saturday 7 October from 11am-4.30pm at Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, Tottenham N17 8NU.

This free event is held at one of our local record offices and you can visit the Archive Searchroom to see special displays from their collections and talk to Archive staff to find out how to use the service and undertake research. There will be stalls from different local organisations from around the London Borough of Haringey showcasing the area's heritage. There will be a series of free local talks and the Old Kitchen will be serving teas, coffee and cake all day.

West Surrey FHS Family History Fair is taking place on Saturday 4 November from 10am-4.30pm at Woking Leisure Centre, Kingfield Road, Woking GU22 9BA.

This is an event which we have attended many times in the past and we are looking forward attending, as it is a few years since we were last here. There will be a large selection of West Surrey FHS research and reference materials

to look at and expert advice will be on hand with guest societies including us, local heritage groups; suppliers of data CDs, maps, software, archival materials and much more. There is free admission to the fair and free parking for 3 hours. For more information visit: <http://wsfhs.co.uk/pages/index.php>

FHF Really Useful Family History Show is an online event which will take place on Friday 17 November from 10am to 10pm and on Saturday 18 November from 10am to 6pm. On the Friday, the Exhibition Hall is free and anyone can go and visit all of the exhibitors and ask them questions. Tickets for the event cost £15 or £12 using our special LWMFHS discount code, see below. Tickets allow access on Saturday 12 November to workshops and presentations by leading experts as well. You can find out more information here: <https://www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/>

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Do you live near Kempton, Tottenham or Woking and could pop in for a while? Or do you have Tottenham or West Surrey ancestors and fancy attending one of these shows? Perhaps you were going to attend the Family History Show London anyway. Please contact Karen, our Events Team coordinator, if you would like to find out more at: events@lwmfhs.org

ST BOTOLPH WITHOUT ALDGATE AND WW1

By Alison Cook, Member No. 5039

I read with interest the article on the Society's FaceBook page in June about St Botolph without Aldgate. Apart from researching my own family history, I enjoy researching church war memorials and St Botolph's is one of those I have recently completed.

Inside the church is a wooden memorial panel to those men of the parish who lost their lives in the First World War – there are 26 names. Not all the men listed lived within the Parish; some worked nearby; some had been baptised/married at the church or had relatives living in the area at the time of their death. This is the story of one of those named on the memorial: Frederick James JACKSON.

Frederick James JACKSON was born in North Woolwich on 16 September 1892 to Harry Mayland and Louisa JACKSON (née GREENSLADE). Fred was admitted to Milna Road School, Woolwich on 29 June 1903, the same day as his brothers Harry and Albert; their home at the time was 47 Old Kent Road.

In 1911 Frederick is living with his parents (Harry Mayland and Louisa JACKSON) and siblings (Harry, Albert, Louisa and Lilly) at *The Ben Jonson's Head* Public House, No. 22 Goodman's Yard, Minories in the City of London. Frederick is a 'clerk' and his father is a 'publican'. Also with the family is a 'domestic servant', Lottie WILLES. *The Ben Jonson's Head* no longer exists but is mentioned here as having existed as early as 1827: <https://pubshistory.com/LondonPubs/Whitechapel/BenjonsonsHead.shtml>

In May 1913, Frederick enlisted in the army as Private 5/58 F.J. JACKSON, Machine Gun Section, 1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade. Although his service record has not survived there is an entry (and photo) for him in De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour. Frederick left for France on 8 August 1914, at some stage was promoted to Lance Corporal, but sadly was killed in action near Pilken on 6 July 1915. Looking again at De Ruvigny's there is a quote from Sgt P. BLENED of the MG section of his Battalion: "... he was trying to get his gun into action when he was wounded, first of all in the shoulder; this did not deter him, for he still endeavoured to do what he had set out to do, but unfortunately he was wounded again, this time in the face. He then had to

give up the attempt, and took to his right and opened fire, and it was while doing this that he met his death, for a piece of shrapnel entered the back of his head and died almost instantly”.

Frederick's Battalion were part of 11th Brigade, 4th Division and as such he would have seen action at the First Battle of the Marne (September 1914), the First Battle of the Aisne (also September 1914), the Battle of Messines (October 1914) and the Second Battle of Ypres in April 1915. The Battalion War Diary for 5 July 1915, states that Frederick was in billets in Elverdinghe (about 6km from Ypres). On the day of Frederick's death, the diary dedicates 8 pages to the events of 6 July.

There are 4 men I've been unable to identify in my research – if anyone can provide details on them I would be grateful: William J. SMITH; William G.H. STACEY; George STEPHENSON and Joseph WOOD.

Note: De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour 1914-1918 is a biographical record of military people who died in the First World War. It was intended to place on permanent record the name of every officer, non-commissioned officer and man of His Majesty's Forces, on land or sea, who was killed in action, who died of his wounds, or whose death otherwise resulted from the Great War. De Ruvigny's was not able to complete his work due to the scale of the casualties but some 26,000 people are mentioned of whom over 7,000 have their photograph included. Initially published in five books, the Roll of Honour can be searched online on Ancestry UK and on Findmypast.



ADVERTISING RATES

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EPSOM'S SECRET RESTING PLACE

you may have a family member there

By Kevin McDonnell, Member No. 8336

Epsom is well known as the home of The Derby, a highly popular and world-famous horse race held in June. It is also famous for its Epsom Salts (actually a compound of magnesium and sulphur) used for hundreds of years to soothe various aches, pains and skin conditions and originally well known as a purgative. Ironically, given the story I am writing for you, a soak in a bath of Epsom Salts is sometimes recommended for the relief of mental stress.

Now you are being let in on a little-known fact – Epsom is home to the largest abandoned psychiatric hospitals' cemetery (by number of burials) in the UK and probably in Europe. Horton Cemetery (<https://eehe.org.uk/?p=24725>) was used to bury the unclaimed or abandoned bodies of patients who died in the Epsom Cluster of Hospitals (<https://eehe.org.uk/?p=25027>) between 1899 and 1955. There are almost 9,000 people buried in the cemetery which was sold to a developer by the NHS in 1983. Up until its sale the 4.5 acres of Horton Cemetery were kept maintained and the grass regularly cut. There were few headstones, these having been discouraged by the hospitals' management committees for many years probably to make the maintenance task easier. The original grave markers which were simple in style did not give the name of the patient(s) buried in the grave, nor any dates, just a grave number. About 72% of the graves were only used once, 26% were used twice and the remaining 2% were used three times, perhaps most often due to grave number recording errors.

In the years since its sale the cemetery was left to grow wild and nature took the land back. It became home to badgers and foxes. With very little to identify the ground as a place of thousands of burials, man desecrated the land dumping old white goods and builder's rubble. Eventually it was unrecognisable as a cemetery and looked like a small forest but, at ground level, helped back towards the light by badgers and foxes, human bones started to appear on the surface. And one day in 2012 small boys playing like fox cubs on the ground brought home human bones. The police were called, a forgotten cemetery was rediscovered.

By this time most of the hospitals had closed. Local people were not really aware that a cemetery was in this impenetrable tree-covered ground that sits

between two busy local roads that join at a large roundabout at the north end of the ground. Some people had heard that it was a pet cemetery, others that it was a cemetery for horses, most had no idea that thousands of forgotten, abandoned and very unfortunate people, nearly all of them from London Boroughs were hidden there.

Various attempts were made by local councillors and even mayors to get something done about the disgraceful condition of this local land, a shameful example of complete lack of respect for the memory of so many people. There was talk of soldiers buried there, after all some of the hospitals had been used as military hospitals during both world wars. Some local people were intrigued and a very small local project discovered that the cemetery's burial records had been transcribed and published in the past by volunteers. Some quick use of spreadsheets showed that the burial records told a story that seemed to say that staying in the local psychiatric hospitals was not good for longevity, that in some periods the Horton Cemetery burial frequency was well beyond the burial frequency in the whole local area cemetery - especially when the hospitals were new, and that one hospital, Long Grove, accounted for 45% of the people buried in Horton Cemetery.

The small local research team knew that there was a story to be told and it was decided that those buried in the cemetery might be able to speak through genealogical research. Their stories might help get public opinion onside and help stop the developer or anyone else who owned the cemetery from ever building over it. We have learned that there is a mistaken common view that it is impossible to build on top of such cemeteries. In the early 2000s, less than 10 miles away, the site of Cane Hill Hospital, another London County Asylum, and its cemetery were sold and developed for housing. The 5,500 bodies in that hospital cemetery were dug up and cremated. Hardly any of the families of the people buried there were informed of this.

With the help of a local historian and her local history Facebook Group we appealed for volunteer genealogical researchers. Within two days the first such researchers came forward and were soon working on the stories. The Horton Cemetery Research project, probably the most unusual community genealogical research project in the country, perhaps in the world, was taking its first tottering steps. We were researching dead 'loonies', 'nutters', 'head cases', 'the mad', 'the insane', 'the retards', 'the psychos', 'imbeciles', 'lunatics', 'the barmy' ... the old slang derogatory names are many and even

the official language that was used to describe mental health patients in the 1911 Census would be unacceptable today. And so often, having completed the research for a story our volunteer genealogical researchers would say “She seems so normal to me, why did they lock her up?”

These dead people spoke to us, they made us weep, they filled us with pity, their stories showed how they fought to keep their families together and out of the workhouse, how they tried to protect family members, how women had baby after baby and lost so many of them, how people disappeared into these hospitals never to be seen by their families again. They made us so determined to get the stories out. They made us appreciate what we had and they never had: a National Health Service, rent controls, free education, unemployment benefit, social security, pensions, social housing, sick pay, paid holidays, help with child care, access to birth control, votes, so many rights, and yes, even health and safety. A long list of hard fought for rights that make the safety net that we have today. Perhaps most of all they showed us the truth of that old saying “There but for the grace of God go I.”

Our community genealogical research project is having some success. We have managed to get Epsom & Ewell Borough Council to add Horton Cemetery to the local Heritage Listing giving it a level of protection from development. (However, since then a council officer has described the cemetery as “Amenity Woodland”. Does this constitute respect for our dead mental health patients?) We have won an award from Historic England. We have attracted a partnership with King’s College, London and we are learning more all the time from our work. We publish all our researched stories free to all on our web site in surname alphabetical order here <https://hortoncemetery.org/the-people/horton-cemetery-stories/> . Please read them when you have spare time, please tell your friends and family about our work. We hope to encourage others across the country to set up similar projects on the abandoned psychiatric hospital burials in their local area. Some of this work has already been started in other places independently of our project.

Our researchers are ordinary extraordinary people, generous to society, giving their valuable time and amateur genealogical researching and story-writing skills to redeem the shame of Horton Cemetery. In doing so, they aim to protect the ground for ever, to bring these long suffering, abandoned and forgotten people back to life letting them speak to us, teach us, tell us

something of a little known, perhaps even hidden part of our history that was endured by so many people. The people who have published stories on our web site range in age from their 20s to their 80s, some have a post graduate education, many have not been to university, some are very experienced genealogical researchers, some are more-or-less beginners, some are natural story tellers some are not.

We work as a team and help and support each other, for example passing on hints, tips, discoveries etc. We ask our researchers to write their stories in chronological order, in their own writing / speaking style, we do not have a group or corporate writing style – we believe that this encourages writing from the heart – we ask people to express opinions, thoughts, musings, conjecture and uncertainty but to tell the reader when they are doing this. We also advise writers that where something is stated as a fact in the story it is backed up by research and proof, e.g. a link to a census entry, a baptism record, a workhouse admission / discharge record etc. Each story is reviewed by another researcher on completion and the review continues until both parties are happy that it is ready and then the story is published on our web site.

The review process is a dialogue. It can be done by phone calls, emails, by meeting up for a coffee etc. or a combination of these things. The reviewer is guided to encourage the writer. The objective of the review is to ensure that the story is accurate, that typos are corrected, that the story is understandable and clear. A simple example on clarity, especially when writing about families as these stories often are, is name differentiation, it is common to have a grandfather, father and son all named George and the reader must know which George is being mentioned. We have no project schedule, our volunteer researchers work when they can, when it suits them and their family/work commitments, when they feel in the mood to do it, when they have internet access etc.

There were eleven London County Asylums around London. Horton Cemetery was used by the five London County Asylums that were in Epsom. There were also about one hundred County Asylums in other areas around the UK all functioning in roughly the same timescale, mid 19th century to late 20th century. Most of these hospitals had up to two thousand patients and each hospital had a cemetery within the grounds or close by. Most of these cemeteries are still there today. Each of them is worth at least some

basic research and depending on the findings perhaps a more detailed subsequent project.

If you would like to learn more about our project on Horton Cemetery in Epsom or you might be interested in becoming a volunteer genealogical researcher on our project please contact me via email address at: hortoncemetery@gmail.com If you would like to learn more about psychiatric hospital cemeteries in your geographical area then I suggest that you find a local Family History Society and make contact with them to find out more. A good place to start your search is The County Asylums Project <https://www.countyaslums.co.uk/>

I believe that there are at least 150,000 unclaimed bodies of people buried in unnamed graves in old psychiatric hospital cemeteries or nearby cemeteries throughout the UK. I believe that these groups of people deserve memorials and if possible, their cemeteries transformed, at least in part, into memorial gardens. Too many of these people have been written out of their family histories and have ‘disappeared’ from our national story. I believe that we should support the great work of people in this country and others who try so hard to bring ‘mental health problems’ out of the shadows and into the light, to try and stop them being swept under the carpet. Many of these people do this by writing about their own mental health problems and are very brave to do it. Our lost old ‘mental health’ cemeteries, their many dead and the stories of these ‘lost’ people need to be brought into the light too to help today’s sufferers. Not just out from under the carpet but back from the grave to tell their stories.

Here are extracts from some stories that we have published in full. All of these extracts feature people who spent at least part of their lives in the areas covered by London, Westminster and Middlesex Family History Society today. Quite a few of these people were born in other parts of the UK but they ended up living in London and eventually being admitted to one or more of the Epsom Cluster hospitals, dying there and their bodies (for whatever reasons having not been claimed by family or friends for disposal elsewhere) being buried as paupers in unnamed graves in Horton Cemetery. Their graves are still there, their remains still in the ground but so far no cemetery map has been found therefore their grave is somewhere in the 4.5 acres of the cemetery. Perhaps being shared with a badger, a fox or under builders’ rubble or a discarded old fridge and they may be sharing their grave with somebody

else. Their relatives of today may have no idea of what happened to these people from their past or even know that they existed.

George HYATT, born 1877, given age 13 at the 1881 census, living with his Dad, a bricklayer, his Mum, a servant and 5 siblings at 112 Denmark Road, Willesden. There were 12 other people living in the house at the time. In 1898 George marries Rose ALDRIDGE, their son George Henry's birth is registered in June quarter of 1899, his death is registered in September quarter of 1899. George and Rose emigrate to the USA in 1907 and settle in New York. In 1915 George, Rose and their children George, 5 and Lillian, 2 come back to England with a proposed address in West Kilburn where George's Dad and Mum, John and Emma lived. John and Emma had had 11 children of whom 6 had died...

Joseph Thomas HONEY, born 1843 in Cornwall like his parents and siblings. In the 1861 Census Joseph is living in Victoria Street, Paddington with his parents and 4 of his siblings. At some stage he goes back to the West Country to find work but comes back to London...

Thomas William SCAMBLER was born in Westminster in 1823. In 1850 he married Ann MOORE in St Marylebone Church, Westminster. Thomas was a greengrocer like his father. He and Ann have 6 children and in 1877 Ann dies. Thomas marries again in 1886, he is 62 and his wife is 36. Thomas becomes violent and there is a court case...

Tottie FAY was born about 1850 in London but currently we don't know where, nor do we yet know her real name. She was a frequent visitor at Marylebone Police Court and others all over London. Her appearances were so frequent at Marlborough Street Magistrates Court that her own special book was kept for them. She was described as "The worst and wickedest woman in London.", had many aliases and her adventures were written about in newspapers all over the UK...

Catherine Louisa FRESTON (née EDWARDS) was born in Stroud, Gloucestershire in 1829 and in 1848, also in Stroud, married William Antony FRESTON, an Attorney whose father was a clergyman. By the 1861 census Catherine and William, their daughter Margaret, 11 and son Reginald, 9 are living with servants at 17 Abbey Gardens, Marylebone, London...

SPOTLIGHT ON: AGAR TOWN

Agar Town was a small and short-lived district in the ancient parish of St Pancras. It has its origins in a private estate of 70 acres purchased in 1810 by Yorkshireman William AGAR Esquire, who lived at Elm Lodge, near Pratt Street. He was a King's Counsellor, with chambers at Lincoln's Inn, and is known for strongly opposing the cutting of the Regent's Canal through his land. This seems to have been because he was trying to get as much compensation from the company as possible and when the canal was eventually built, he actually insisted on having his own wharf on it. William was a generous benefactor to the Unitarian Church and died aged 72 at Hastings on 5 November 1838.

Probate was granted on 8 December 1838 leaving his estate to his wife Louisa (née TALBOT) and family. She soon started granting building rights on parts of the land on the north side of the canal but only, apparently, very small plots on 21-year leases. The effect of this was that no reasonable builder would take such short leases and ordinary people, often very poor Irish families, took them and put up whatever sort of shack they were able to.

This 'extensive and ill-built district' stretched from King's Cross railway station, past the graveyards of St Pancras and St Giles-in-the-Fields, northwards to Pratt Street, Camden Town. There was no sort of infrastructure and ditches served as open sewers. Agar Town was described as a shanty town, with 'three or four room dwellings built of old rubbish and let to two or three families each'.

Frederick Smeeton Williams, in his *History of the Midland Railway: a Narrative of Modern Enterprise* (1876) describes Agar Town thus: 'In its centre was what was termed La Belle Isle, a dreary and unsavoury locality, abandoned to mountains of refuse from the metropolitan dust-bins, strewn with decaying vegetables and foul-smelling fragments of what once had been fish, or occupied by knackers'-yards and manure-making, bone-boiling, and soap-manufacturing works, and smoke-belching potteries and brick-kilns. At the broken doors of mutilated houses canaries still sang, and dogs lay basking in the sun, as if to remind one of the vast colonies of bird-fanciers and dog-fanciers who formerly made Agar Town their abode; and from these dwellings came out wretched creatures in rags and dirt, and searched amid

the far-extending refuse for the filthy treasure by the aid of which they eked out a miserable livelihood; whilst over the whole neighbourhood the gas-works poured forth their mephitic vapours, and the canal gave forth its rheumatic dampness, extracting in return some of the more poisonous ingredients in the atmosphere, and spreading them upon the surface of the water in a thick scum of various and ominous hues.’

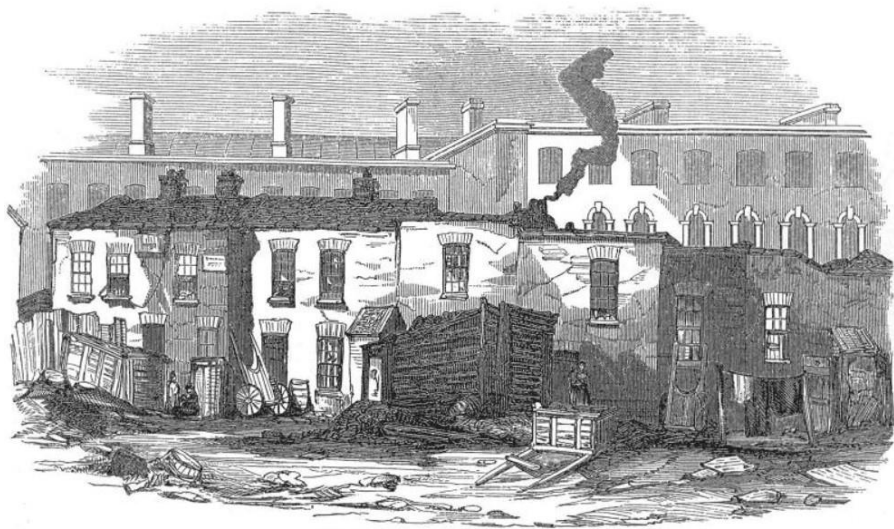


Fig. 3.—Paradise-row, Agar-town.

Paradise Street, Agar Town, with its ramshackle houses depicted in 1854.
The newly-built King's Cross station can be seen behind.

The 1851 census returns show that there was a school there – the Agar Town School was located in Salisbury Street. Teaching were widow Sarah POUND aged 66 and her unmarried daughters Emma aged 34 and Caroline aged 30. The three were still teaching there in 1861, when the school was described as a National Girls' School.

Agar Town also had its own church, dedicated to St Thomas. A temporary iron church had been built first to serve the district with a more permanent building with attached Ragged School being started in 1859 in Elm Street. These were never finished due to railway works and another church was built in Wrotham Road, opening in 1863. Its parish registers are at London Metropolitan Archives now and can be seen online on Ancestry UK. The church was damaged by bombing in the Second World War and has now

been demolished. The parish was united with that of St Michael, Camden Road in 1948.

Agar Town was largely demolished by the Midland Railway Company in 1866 in order to build St Pancras station. The residents moved to nearby Somers Town, a planned district built on land formerly owned by Lord Somers between Euston and St Pancras stations. Although the population of Somers Town were described as ‘working-class’ and ‘low’, the former residents of Agar Town were still better off there than they had been.

Sources:

Agar Town: <https://hidden-london.com/gazetteer/agar-town/>

Agar Town: <https://www.canalmuseum.org.uk/history/agar.htm>

Agar Town: <https://www.victorianlondon.org/districts/agartown.htm>

Frederick Smeeton Williams is quoted from Edward Walford, ‘Agar Town and the Midland Railway’, in *Old and New London: Volume 5* (London, 1878), pp. 368-373. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/old-new-london/vol5/pp368-373> [accessed 25 June 2023].

Mapping Poverty in Agar Town: Economic Conditions Prior to the Development of St. Pancras Station in 1866 by Steven P. Swensen (2006) available online here: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/22539/1/0906Swensen.pdf>

Parish Guide to St Pancras (LWMFHS, 2019)

St Thomas, Agar Town: gone but not quite forgotten... by Andrew Pink (2020), available at: <https://andrewpink.org/agar/>



NEXT COPY DATE

Please remember that the copy date for the next issue of *Metropolitan* is
1 November 2023

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

The Editors reserve the right to edit contributions.

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

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MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The research interests listed here were submitted by members between June and August 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: 8218; 8387; 8421; 8429; 8437; 8439

Name	Period	County	Parish / Area	Mem.No.
ABBOTTS	1750-1900	MDX	Islington	8439
BRACHER	1880-1950	MDX	Chelsea	8387
BYFIELD	1800-1975	MDX	Islington	8439
COLLYER	1850-1890	SRY	Battersea	8218
DUPPA	1643-1741	MDX	Holborn, Little Stanmore	8437
FEETUM	1754-1900	DUR	Darlington	8218
FEETUM	1840-1920	MDX	Holborn, St Pancras, West Ham	8218
FEETUM	1840-1870	SRY	Any	8218
FLEMING	1873-1940	MDX	Marylebone	8439
GIBBS	1741 to date	MDX	Limehouse, London	8437
GODIN	1760-1865	MDX	Hackney	8439
HAMMON	Early 1800s	MDX	Holloway	8218
HEBDEN	1750-1870	MDX	Any	8387
HOWARD	1800-1920	MDX	Marylebone	8439
HUGGINS	1800-1975	MDX	Islington	8439
NOYES	1675-1721	MDX	Covent Garden, Middle Temple	8437
OVENS	1820-1930	MDX	Peckham	8387
PAGE	c1870	SRY	Battersea, Lambeth	8218
PAGE	c1890	KEN	Woolwich	8218
SAMSON	1850-1941	LND	Any	8421
SANDERS	1920-1945	MDX	Hendon	8421
SANDERS	1880-1920	LND	Any	8421
TEMPLEMAN	1651-1698	MDX	Bridewell Precinct	8437
WALTERS	Late 1800s	KEN	Woolwich	8218

WARREN	1714-1809	MDX	Holborn, Theobalds Row	8437
WRIGHT	1840-1890	MDX	Mile End, Poplar, Stepney	8218
ZOLLER	1850-1960	MDX	St James	8387

SPECIAL INTERESTS

8387 **ZOLLER**, 22 Carnaby Street, London

8429 Transported female convicts of Westminster to Australia

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the new members, number 8429-8439 who have joined the Society over the past few months and wish them well with their research.

LONDON BOROUGHS COVERED BY LWMFHS



ANCESTORS IN WHAT IS NOW THE LONDON BOROUGH OF HARINGEY

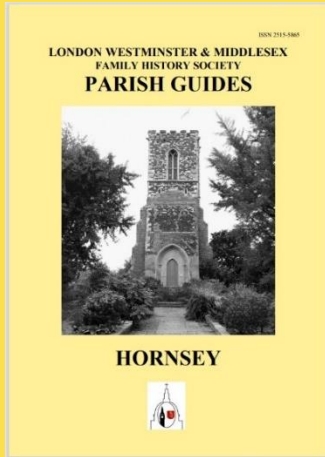
Before 1965, the London Borough of Haringey was divided into three Municipal Boroughs: Hornsey, Tottenham and Wood Green, which in turn were called Urban Districts from 1894-1955. However, since Tudor times, this area was covered by the Ancient Parishes of Hornsey and Tottenham.



Map of London showing Borough boundaries.

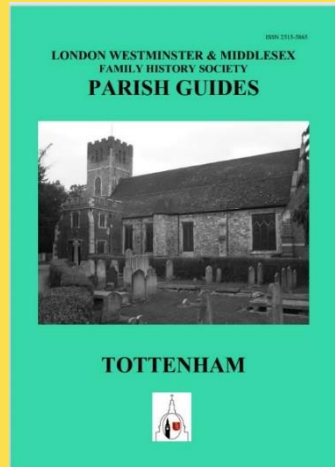


Our Parish Guides are based on these Ancient Parishes, although the information they contain goes from the earliest known records available right up to date.



Places in **Hornsey** Ancient Parish include Crouch End, Finsbury Park, Fortis Green, Harringay, Highgate, Hornsey, Manor House, Muswell Hill, Stroud Green and Turnpike Lane.

Places in **Tottenham** Ancient Parish include Alexandra Palace, Bounds Green, Bruce Castle, Bruce Grove, Noel Park, Seven Sisters, Tottenham, West Green and Wood Green.



You can buy these booklets or any of our other booklets here:
<https://www.paritychest.com/london-westminster-middlesex-fhs-4577.php>

BEGINNERS' CORNER

William the Conqueror ordered the first survey of England in 1086. This took several years to finish, became known as the Domesday Book and gives us an idea of life in Britain during the Norman period. Stored originally with the Royal Treasury at Winchester and then at Westminster Palace and Westminster Abbey, the Domesday Book is now at The National Archives, (TNA) at Kew.

In Tudor and Stuart times, every bishop was supposed to count the families of their diocese to determine the population. By the 18th century, the Government realised that it had no idea how many people lived in Britain and was worried that production of food and other resources would not be enough to supply the growing population. In 1800 the Census Act (or Population Act) was passed and the first official Census of England and Wales was taken on 10 March 1801. A census has continued to be taken every ten years (except in 1941, during the Second World War, when we were all otherwise occupied!).

The information for the 1801-1831 census returns was collected from every household by the Overseers of the Poor, helped by parish officials. The Government wanted to know the number of people in each area, their sex and age but not their name. Most of these early statistical returns were destroyed but a few survive and can be found in local libraries and archives. Occasionally an enthusiastic parish officer did include some names in his report. Dates for the early census returns are: 10 March 1801; 27 May 1811; 28 May 1821 and 30 May 1831. The Census Act also covered Scotland where schoolmasters had to do the count. In Ireland the first census was taken in 1821 (although this was largely destroyed in 1922).

The General Register Office (GRO) was formed by Act of Parliament in 1836 to deal with the civil registration of births, marriages and deaths in England and Wales which began in 1837. In Scotland civil registration began in 1855 and it was the Registrar General for Scotland who was responsible for their 1861 census. The task of organising the 1841 census returns was given to the first head of the GRO, the Registrar General John LISTER, with local officers of the Registration Service being responsible for the form-filling and counting. Every household was given a form to complete about everyone in the house on the night of 6-7 June 1841. This is the first census

that is of value to family historians, although it is less detailed than the later returns. It gives the forename and surname, age and sex of each member of the household, their occupation and birthplace - but only states if they were born in the census county, Scotland, Ireland or another country. Addresses are vague and ages for people over 15 years are rounded down to the nearest five years. Unoccupied houses were also listed. The population of England and Wales in 1841 is given as 15,914,000.

Census Returns continue to be administered by the Registrar General and were taken on the nights of the following dates:

Date	Reference Number
6 June 1841	HO 107, piece numbers 1-1465 inclusive
30 March 1851	HO 107, piece numbers 1466-2531 inclusive
7 April 1861	RG 9
2 April 1871	RG 10
3 April 1881	RG 11
5 April 1891	RG 12
31 March 1901	RG 13
2 April 1911	RG 14
19 June 1921	RG 15

‘HO’ refers to the Home Office and ‘RG’ the General Register Office – these were the government departments in charge of the collection of census material at the time.

The 1851 census is the earliest census to record a person’s exact address and which parish and county they had been born in. This can be extremely useful in bridging the gap from civil registration (birth, marriage and death certificates) to parish baptism marriage and burial records. Other information to be found on the 1851 census returns is the country of birth if not England and Wales and whether someone was blind or deaf and dumb.

The 1861 census recorded the same information as the 1851 one. A point worth noting, however, is that a fair number of pages have gone missing from this census – nobody really seems to know why but it is estimated that some 5-10% has gone. The pages which can no longer to be found are detailed in our Parish Guides and on The National Archives census pages.

New information included in the 1871 and 1881 form is that the last column now wants to know whether the person is: 'blind; deaf and dumb; imbecile or idiot; lunatic'. Extra information in 1891 was about employment status: whether employer, employed or neither employer nor employed and in 1901 whether someone is an employer, a worker or working on their own account (ie has their own business) or if they are working at home. The population of England and Wales in 1901 is given as 32,527,843.

In 1911, for the first time, the schedule filled in by each head of household was kept, rather than these being copied into enumeration books, so you can see your ancestor's handwriting. The 1911 returns asked married women how long they had been married, how many children they had had and whether these were still living or had died. The industry someone was employed in is also noted, along with the name of the employer if it was any government, municipal or other public body. Enumerators' summary books list every building, including churches, factories, institutions and also describe residences so you can see if it was a house and shop, a hotel, a private house etc.

The 1921 census no longer had questions about the length of a marriage, the number of its children and ones about disability. Age was asked for in years and months, 'divorce' became an option for marital status and further details about all employers were needed. Children under 15 were asked whether they were in full or part-time education and if their parents were still alive. People who had been married were asked for the number and ages of their living children. There are no enumerators' summary books. The 1921 census was released in 2022 and is only available online on Findmypast, who have digitised it, for several years. It can also be seen at The National Archives in London, the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth and Manchester Central Library.

The 1931 Census was destroyed on the night of Saturday 19 December 1942. A store in Hayes, Middlesex, used by the Office of Works, caught fire and the contents were completely destroyed. All the records of the 1931 census, schedules and enumeration books, were lost. However, a Register was taken on 29 September 1939 at the outbreak of the Second World War in order to produce identity cards. It contains the details of 41 million civilians who lived in England and Wales at that time and provides the most complete survey of this population between 1921 and 1951. Information recorded as

the name, address, gender, exact date of birth, marital status and occupation of people in England and Wales who were not members of the armed forces. Records of people born less than 100 years ago are closed unless they are known to have died. The Register was continually updated with women's married names whilst National Registration was in force and this continued until 1991, as the National Health Service used the Register until this date.

It can be useful to know a little about how the census information was arranged. For the purposes of civil administration, Registration Districts (RD) were created on 1 July 1837. Each district was divided into sub-districts, which were used for the registration of births, marriages and deaths and also for the censuses. Within the sub-districts, smaller Enumeration Districts (ED) were assigned to individual census takers.

Each census page has a unique number which pinpoints its origins, for example: RG10/385, Folio 25, Page 43. The series number comes first and indicates the year, here RG10 means 1871. Next comes the piece number, which is a volume of bound enumeration books, containing up to 200 sheets. 385 in this example is the piece number for parts of Amwell in Clerkenwell. The following number is the folio number, which uniquely identifies each sheet in a piece and is shown in the top right-hand corner of the page, next to the page number. This folio number refers to the page it is on and the following one. The page number is the last number in reference. This census reference number can be useful when trying to find an entry on a different website, especially when transcriptions differ.

There is also a schedule number for each entry on the page which appears in the left-hand margin and indicates a separate building. On the census page, double strokes (usually in the left margin) like this // indicate a new building whilst single strokes / indicate another household in the same building.

All the census data from 1841 to 1921 and the information on the 1939 Register has now been transcribed and indexed. The two main sites for searching the census returns are subscription services Findmypast (FMP) at www.findmypast.co.uk and Ancestry UK (AUK) at www.ancestry.co.uk. However, these are often free to use at Record Offices and libraries. Images of the pages can be viewed on computer and then saved and printed. FMP and AUK are the main two but you could also use The Genealogist at www.thegenealogist.co.uk/, Genes Reunited at www.genesreunited.co.uk,

My Heritage at www.myheritage.com/, UK Census Online at www.ukcensusonline.com or others. FreeCEN at www.freecen.org.uk/ is free to use but has transcriptions rather than original images and is not yet complete.

In order to access the transcriptions and images of the census pages, we have to use the indexes and search by a name. It is now the indexes that are so important to the researcher and this brings new challenges as the transcriptions can contain errors and we are all beginning to learn new tricks and ways of finding our ancestors names in the indexes.

Searches on FMP can be done by name or address. If you are researching the history of your house, using the address option will allow you to find the people living at your address back to 1841.

If the name of a person/family cannot be found, looking at the last known address may find them.

If you want to search all the people in a country village, then using the address option will allow a page by page search. In London, most searches are done by name.

Type name, year of birth (give or take a year or two), where born, residence, country and county into the search boxes. This usually leads to a list of people with that name – choose the one that is most likely and then transcription and image can be seen.

But, if the name in the original census has been transcribed incorrectly then the dreaded red sentences will appear that read ‘Your search criteria returned 0 results. Please redefine your search’ and we sigh and think ‘That’s rubbish, I KNOW they are there!’

One trick is to keep it simple and start by just entering the name. If this brings up too many pages of names, then narrow down the search results by adding the birth year, the place of birth or the County.

If the red sentences still appear then it is time to tick the ‘variants’ box or to use the ‘*’ symbol. These cannot be used together.

Tick the variants box and all names that sound or look alike are listed. SMITH would also find SMYTHE. Elizabeth would find Eliza, Elisabeth, Betty, Liz and Bessie etc.

In a wildcard search, the ‘*’ symbol can be used to replace letters. For example, the ‘H’ of the name HILLING can be mis-transcribed, (Killing, Willing, Filling etc) so try ‘*illing’ in the surname box. Try also ‘H*ing’ and Holding, Hailing, Harding, Holling and Hutching etc will be listed.

Two wildcards can be used, as in ‘*ollin*’ In this case names like Hollings and Collins will be listed. Try and imagine how the enumerator will have heard and written down someone’s name.

Ticking the variants box or using the ‘*’ plus the birth year and County in the search boxes will help pick out the correct person.

A question mark wildcard only replaces a single character, so ‘Ha?nes’ will search for both Haynes and Haines.

Putting an occupation in the optional keyword box can be helpful. For example ‘brick’ will find brickmakers and bricklayers.

Occasionally names were reversed (this sometimes happened in institutions) so try putting the last name in the first name field and the first name in the last name field.

Sometimes the full forename was not written down so try using just the initial. Try using the names of other family members.

If the ‘Advanced’ search is used other criteria can be added, occupation, marital status and another person in the household can also be named.

The AUK website is slightly different. Some spelling variants are automatically included unless you tick the ‘match all terms exactly’ box. When you have entered your terms and pressed the ‘search button’, sliding scales to broaden or tighten the search are then shown on the left. There is a keyword box where occupation or street name could be added. At the head of the resulting list will be good matches and below are possible matches. If you find the person you are seeking, AUK will show links to other records which are likely to be this person but do double check these.

In the end it has to be realised that some pages of census returns are in fact missing. These missing pages are listed on the FMP website. From the Home page, click ‘Help & Advice’, then from the list on left hand side of the page, under ‘Knowledge Base’ click 1841-1901 census and then click ‘known issues’.

Further reading:

TNA Censuses Research Guide: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/census-records/>

TNA 1939 Register Research Guide: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/1939-register/>



JOTTINGS

GRO digital image news

Some of you may be aware that the General Register Office (GRO) has been running a private beta group for the Online View digital image service. This was a scheme whereby the original information on certain birth and death certificates could be viewed almost immediately and for only £2.50 each.

As of 6 July, this service is now a public beta service so anyone can benefit from it. It covers birth records from 1837 to 100 years before the current date and death records from 1837-1887.

To access these, log in to the GRO's website as normal, then click on the box titled 'Order a Digital Image'. You will be asked if you want a birth or death image, then follow the prompts entering the information in the relevant boxes. Select the person you want from the list of names by clicking on the dot on the left – the option 'digital' should be one of those which comes up. Click on that. It will take you to a payment page and straight after that you will be able to view the image. The GRO uses WorldPay for payments so you need to have a credit card which is affiliated to Mastercard or Visa or a debit card issued in the UK.

Of course this is great news particularly for those with a common surname as it will be cheaper to find the correct person. Also, if you are not sure if a record in the index refers to the correct person, it is much less painful to find out. This is surely fantastic news for family historians!

LMA indexing project for Coroners' Records

At LWMFHS we are frequently asked whether there are any coroners' records surviving for particular events and this is never an easy question to answer. Of course the very size of London makes it more complicated. From the 18th century the ancient county of Middlesex was divided into two main Coroner's districts: the Western and the Eastern. There were also two liberties having their own Coroner: the City and Liberty of Westminster, and the Liberty of the Duchy of Lancaster. It is helpful to know which Coroner's district was involved as this can aid finding records but there doesn't seem to be a list of which parishes were in which district.

Also, as London grew, these districts were split up to form others, which were frequently changed. For example, the Middlesex Central Coroners' District was formed in 1862, taking 23 parishes and liberties from the Western District. In 1892 most of its area was transferred to the new County of London District. Middlesex Central District received six parishes from the

Middlesex Western District in 1915 but in 1926 the Central District in its entirety became part of the Eastern District of Middlesex (!).

There is some good news about these useful records. London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) has an ongoing project indexing Coroner's files from the London Central Coroners District. Each individual file will be given its own reference code and, more importantly for us, the name of the deceased will appear as a searchable term.

Notes are also being added to file descriptions which include the date the file was created (so more-or-less the Coroner's Inquiry date), age, sex, date of death, Coroner's verdict, and cause of death. File descriptions are being uploaded regularly to the online catalogue and so are searchable by name as soon as a complete year is indexed.

LMA have produced an online Research Guide to Coroners records for London and Middlesex which you can easily find from their home page: <https://search.lma.gov.uk/>

Slavery and the Bank of England

This is the title of an exhibition which explores the history of transatlantic slavery through its connections with the Bank of England and the wider City of London. For over 300 years, the slave trade took more than 12 million African people from their homes and families.

London together with Bristol were the key ports in the triangular trade to start with although Liverpool came to dominate the trade from 1740 until slavery was abolished in 1807. Individuals involved with the Bank were connected to slavery although the Bank's links were mainly via its role in the wider financial system. The guinea, for instance, is a tangible link between the City of London and the slave trade. The original guinea coins were made from African gold, which was transported to London by the Royal African Company, whose main business involved slavery. Of course, the guinea coin is named after the West African Guinea coast, which was the centre of the English slave trade. Slavery was only abolished when it was agreed to compensate slave owners financially for the loss of their 'property'. Former slaves received nothing.

This free exhibition, which reflects on how the wealth created through transatlantic slavery shaped the development of Britain, is open Monday to Friday 10am-5pm until February 2024 at the Bank of England Museum, Bartholomew Lane, London, EC2R 8AH. There is an accompanying online exhibition here: <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/museum/whats-on/slavery-and-the-bank>

Barnet Medieval Festival

LWMFHS members Clare, Elizabeth and Karen manned a stall at the Barnet Medieval Festival on Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 June at Byng Road playing fields. It was our first visit as a Society but the fifth year the event had taken place. The Festival had re-enactments of the Battle of Barnet (1471) and the Second Battle of St Albans (1461) as well as displays by the gunners, archers and mounted knights. There was also a medieval fashion show and craft demonstrations as well as food stalls, locally brewed beer and various history stands – our gazebo was between those of The Battlefields Trust and Barnet Museum.



The view from our stall of an army marching past!

We sold 18 Parish Guides, with our Hendon one being the most popular and Islington coming in a close second. It was good fun and an interesting weekend.

Second World War Memories

Many of us have Second World War-related stories and objects that have been passed down to us from our parents, grandparents and other family members. ‘Their Finest Hour’, a University of Oxford project launched in July 2022 and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, aims to empower local communities to digitally preserve these stories and objects

before they are lost to posterity. This is a follow-up to the ‘Lest We Forget’ project which did the same for the First World War.

They are looking for any war-related stories and objects, from the extraordinary to the seemingly ordinary. They want their archive to reflect the diverse experiences of all those affected by the war: men and women across the British Empire and the Commonwealth who worked in industry, on the land, or in other roles; ran households and fought a daily battle of rationing; served in or supported the armed forces; and even those who refused to go to war for political or religious reasons. They are also interested in preserving children’s experiences of the war and would like to hear about any relatives who refused to talk about their wartime experience.

Although this project had been going for a year before we heard about it, the organisers had not thought of contacting family history groups for their input. Consequently there are only a few months left for adding to this project. The easiest way is to submit stories and photos directly to them, The project will go live on 6 June 2024. More information and how to add your memories can be found on the website: <https://theirfinesthour.english.ox.ac.uk/>

Will there be censuses in the future?

A national census of the UK population has been conducted every ten years since 1801, apart from in 1941. All censuses since 1841 have included a complete list of all the residents of each household, with relevant information about them. Census records are released to the public after 100 years, making them an invaluable record for family historians. This may be about to change. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has opened a consultation on replacing future censuses in England and Wales with more regular data gathering from different sources. The consultation document describes proposals to gather data on the population using administrative data such as tax, benefit and border data. The ONS still hopes to collect a rich historical record of the population which will support future genealogical and social research. They are hoping for some input from current family historians and if you would like to have your say, the consultation is open until 26 October 2023 here: <https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics/>

Jewish Museum, Camden

This museum, which was at Raymond Burton House, Albert Street, London NW1 closed at the end of July. It is hoped that they will find a temporary pop-up style venue in Central London to showcase the collection whilst they look for a cheaper, long-term home.

MY SCOUTING ANCESTOR

By Janet Sutton, Member No. 6805

The Scouting movement arose from humble beginnings, with an experimental camp of 20 boys on Brownsea Island, Dorset from 1-8 August 1907. The man behind this was Robert BADEN-POWELL, who had fought in the Boer War. He followed up the camp with a book called *Scouting For Boys* in 1908, and later *The Scout*, a 1d weekly. There were a number of scout troops formed in 1908 and it has since grown into a world-wide association. Though the 1st Harrow Weald Scout troop was founded quite early, there is no record of the exact date. In a newspaper article in 1970 it stated that the troop were celebrating their Diamond Jubilee (making its founding 1909/1910).

This is the story of one of those early scouts in Harrow Weald – my great uncle – William George WELLS, known by his family as Will.



Wells family group, probably taken about 1907/1908.

Will was born 1 February 1899 at Bentley Priory Farm, Harrow Weald, Middlesex, one of 7 children of Robert Charles WELLS and Jemima Jane WELLS née QUARRY. His siblings were Frederick Charles (1894-1895) Edith Jemima (1895), May Clara (1897 - my grandmother), Florence Annie (1901-1903), Leonard James Herbert (1905) and Rose Emily (1909). Robert was

cowman/cattleman on local farms, including Greenford and Tewin, but mainly at Bentley Priory Farm, Harrow Weald, just off Clamp Hill (there is still a Lower Priory Farm, now livery stables). Will was baptised 5 March 1899 at All Saints Church,

Harrow Weald – son of Robert Charles & Jemima Jane WELLS, of Harrow Weald.

The 1901 census shows the family at 'Bentley Priory Farm cottage' Harrow Weald:

Robert C Wells	head	33	Cattleman on farm born Bushey, Herts
Jemima J Wells	wife	33	born Bushey, Herts
Edith J Wells	dau	5	born Harrow Weald
May C Wells	dau	3	born Tewin, Herts
William G Wells	son	2	born Harrow Weald

Little is known of Will's schooling and early life, though what information I do have comes from notes made by my late mother (her mother, May was Will's sister). She wrote down much of the family history as told to her by May. The WELLS children did some schooling at Greenford. If the weather was fine, they walked through fields near the canal. Otherwise, they went by the roads. Whilst living at Greenford, Will nearly drowned whilst trying to retrieve a stick from the canal (part of the Grand Union). His sisters May and Edie tried to help him. Luckily a man was passing by and managed to hook his walking stick into Will's clothing and rescued him. On arriving home, all three were told off for being by the canal in the first place. (Will was especially told off for spoiling his clothes as he was wearing his Norfolk jacket.)

Some schooling was also done at the All Saints Church School in Harrow Weald. On older maps, there is building marked as a school, next to the church itself. If there was a wedding at the church, the pupils were allowed out to watch. However, if there was a funeral, the children were sent home early. Will was a good scholar and was said to have taught his father to read by going through comics with him.

Will was said to be a healthy child, who had a lovely singing voice and was one of the solo choirboys in the church choir, at All Saints Church, Harrow Weald, taking over from the lead soloist on occasions. There is a report in the *Harrow Observer* newspaper on 9 June 1911, of the funeral of W S GILBERT (of comic opera fame), who was buried at All Saints church, and it says: 'The service was very simple, and was conducted by the Rector, the Rev. SFL BERNAYS and the Rev. FC SEAR, curate at All Saints', Harrow Weald. The choir boys were present, and with the congregation they sang the 90th Psalm and the hymn, *Jesus lives.*' Maybe Will was one of those choirboys?

In about 1909/1910, the Rev. FC SEAR, the curate of All Saints church started the 1st Harrow Weald Scout Troop. William's friend 'Jock' (or 'Jack') GIBSON persuaded Will's father Robert that it would be good for Will to join. Eventually both lads became Patrol Leaders. Will enjoyed all the activities involved including camping.

The Rev Francis Charles SEAR was born in 1875 at Southsea, Hampshire, the son of John SEAR, an inspector of machinery for the Royal Navy. According to Crockfords *Directory* Francis was an Associate of Kings College, London, ordained curate in 1898, serving in Moulsham, Eccleston and Hommerton, before moving to Harrow Weald.

On the 1911 Census the WELLS family were recorded at Bentley Priory Lower Farm, Harrow Weald:

Robert Charles Wells	head	41	Cowman on farm born Bushey, Herts
Jemima Jane Wells	wife	38	Married 18 years, 7 children, 5 living. Born Bushey, Herts
May Clara Wells	dau	13	School, born Tewin, Herts
William George Wells	son	12	School and milk boy born Harrow Weald
Leonard James Herbert Wells	son	6	born Watford
Rose Emily Wells	dau	1	born Harrow Weald

With them was a lodger, George BRIANT aged 34, a milkman on the farm, born Lytchett Maltravers, Dorset. Will's sister Edith was in service at the time of this census – and was recorded at the Loudon home. (Mr LOUDON was the farmer of Bentley Priory Farm, Robert's employer.)

In 1913 the Scout troop was in camp at Walmer. The photo of Will himself is 'taken' from the group photo. According to a newspaper item in the *Harrow Observer* March 1970 - Will earned many proficiency badges and 'Through the leadership of Wells and a handful of others, the troop soon had a bugle and 30 scouts'.

Sadly, Will's life was cut short soon after his 15th birthday, dying on 23 February 1914 at the Isolation Hospital, Stanmore – the cause of death being

diphtheria. He was buried at Harrow Weald in the churchyard across the road from the church. His sister May was courting at the time and her future husband (an ex-Regular soldier) remarked that it was as near as could be to a military funeral.



The 1st Harrow Weald Scout Troop at Walmer in 1913,
with William George WELLS on the far left.

The *Harrow Observer* on 6 March 1914 reported in great detail about the funeral and excerpts are quoted below:

‘ and the Harrow Weald troop of Boy Scouts (under Scoutmaster J SANDS) of which Wells was member, lined the path from the gate to the church door.’

‘ The scene was a very impressive one as the coffin covered with the Union Jack and the deceased lads hat and belt lying on it was borne slowly up the path between the two lines of Boy Scouts leaning with bowed heads on their staves’ .

‘..After the committal prayers, the Troop bugler, under Assistant-scoutmaster CRIPPS, blew very effectively the Last Post’.

Thanks to contact with a distant WELLS relation, I have photocopy of the undertaker's invoice for the funeral, dated 26 February 1914: 'To the interment at Harrow Weald Cemetery of William George WELLS aged 15 years who died 23 Feb 1914. To polished elm coffin, fitted, and lined with brass name plate, hearse, three carriages, attendance & bearers complete. £9 4s 6d'

Also a photocopy of the invoice from the monumental mason regarding the headstone: March 1915 - March 24th - to fixing in Harrow Weald Cemetery on the grave of the late William George WELLS - A hard stone, Head and foot stone as stated. £4 10s. To an inscription of 119 letters at the rate of 12/6 per 100 letters. 14s 10 1/2d. Cash paid out for fee £1 17s 6d - Total £7 2s 4d.

The headstone, though partially buried, is still visible at the churchyard.



When I first went to look for it back in the 1980s, I was unable to find it as the area was very overgrown and muddy. This corner of the graveyard was known locally as 'Boggy Bottom'. But on a much later visit, I found it, thanks to the assistance of a gentleman belonging to the church. The headstone reads: 'In loving memory of our dear son William George Wells who died February 23 1914 aged 15 years. "I heard the voice of Jesus say Come unto me and rest".'

The Wells headstone at All Saints, Harrow Weald.

Both his parents were later buried there, Robert WELLS who died on 27 August 1935 aged 64, and Jemima who died on 5 May 1958 aged 85.

What happened to the Rev. Francis SEAR and Jock GIBSON? - The Reverend moved on to Holy Trinity, Southall in 1913 (where he started

another Scout Troop). He was ordained vicar in 1918. He married twice, firstly in 1901 to Ellen Mabel GARDNER. She died in 1937. His second wife was Ethel Kate HEAD, whom he married in 1938. She died in 1949, Francis died the following year.

A little research was made into Will's friend Jock/Jack, and it seems probable that his name was Joseph, born 1897, the son of George (a coal merchant) and Ellen who lived at Roxwell Cottage, Harrow Weald. He appears to have joined the Seaforth Regiment as a scout and a letter home in *Harrow Observer* on 1 June 1917 reads: 'HARROW WEALD SCOUT IN FRANCE – Pte. Jack GIBSON, son of Mrs Gibson of Roxwell Cottages, Harrow Weald writes home an interesting letter from the Front. Previous to the war he was a Patrol Leader in the Harrow Weald troop of Scouts under the Rev. F C SEAR. He enlisted in the Seaforth's at the outbreak of war, when he was 17 years of age. He has been at the Front for nearly 12 months and is a runner in his Battalion. He writes home: "I have been in the trenches for 5 days, and it is the worst experience I have ever had. Forty of our men were surrounded and we had to fight our way out. As I was a runner, I had to get a message through, and I only got through by bombing my way out. Snipers and Maxims were all around, and a bullet went right through both my pockets, through my pay book and photo and my Testament. My gas helmet and rifle were blown away, but I am alive and kicking."

Jack survived the war, marrying Alice Winifred AWCOCK in 1924. On the 1939 register his occupation is Master boot repairer. He died in 1985.

Had Will survived to adulthood, he could have also been involved in the First World War. For someone who lived such a short life, it is surprising how much information I have about his 15 years. An ancestor I would have loved to have known in person.

Sources

British Newspaper Archives

Crockfords *Directory*

Ancestry and Find My Past (birth/death certificates, baptism and burial)

Notes made by the late Doris Louisa SUTTON née PHILLIPS, daughter of May Clara WELLS



WEBSITE NEWS

V2 rocket strikes – technical details

The V2 Rocket.com website is believed to be the most accurate list of the 3,000 or so V2 rocket strikes which took place in 1944-1945. The information has been collected from many sources that include bibliography ones, local Dutch archives, official German reports and eyewitness interviews. The authors discovered that much of the information found in previous publications contained numerous errors, which they have attempted to sort and correct. The website includes the date and time of the strike, the Battery which launched it together with the launch site and the effects of the bomb.

You can search for keywords, including place names. For example, looking for the word 'London' shows that some 1358 V2s were sent to London, with most being launched from the Netherlands. Narrowing down the search term to 'Islington' brings up nine mentions, the first being of one that fell on Sunday 5 November 1944 killing 31 people, seriously injuring 84 others and destroying 10 properties. You can find this website here: <http://www.v2rocket.com/start/deployment/timeline.html>

V2 rocket strikes – human casualties

The WWII V2 Rocket Attacks website is another one dealing with V2 damage but this one focuses on civilian casualties. Indeed, it is dedicated to the estimated 2,754 civilians who were killed by V2 attacks in the whole of the UK including London. It has been collecting first-hand accounts of these attacks and the website also has maps showing where the rockets fell and includes a timeline with details of the damage caused. Whilst ill health is unfortunately preventing future updates to this site, it is still possible to comment on content. This website is here: <https://www.wrsonline.co.uk/>

London County Council Bomb Damage Maps

These are the most detailed record of damage to the capital's built environment caused by aerial bombardment. They can be used by family historians seeking information on the precise degree of damage suffered by properties across the 117 square miles of the London Region 1940-1945. Copies can be seen on London Metropolitan Archives' 'Magnifying the Metropolis' website: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/london-metropolitan-archives/collections/magnifying-the-metropolis>

A map showing Greater London's Victoria Cross Medals

The Victoria Cross (VC) is the highest honour that anyone in Britain (and formerly the Commonwealth) can be given. It is awarded to military personnel who have shown outstanding bravery under enemy fire or threat. Of the more than 1,300 VC awarded, around 150 have gone to servicemen (and they are all men) from the London area.

The Londonist website has created a map of London's VCs, with the locations showing the last known addresses of the men, obtained from census data. Of course, many of these are from the area covered by LWMFHS. The map shows that bravery can stem from all quarters. Some VCs were awarded to soldiers who were clearly from the upper classes, as shown by addresses in Mayfair, St James and Portland Place. One recipient, John VEREKER, was a Viscount. On the other hand, plenty of medals were awarded to soldiers from middling or working-class districts, like Willesden and Wood Green, such as Charles William TRAIN of Finsbury Park. You can find this web page by putting 'Victoria Cross' into the search box on the Londonist website: <https://londonist.com/>

Train Tales

On a more light-hearted note, there is a YouTube channel 'loosely focused on London, trains, history and combinations thereof' which readers might find interesting. There are many videos about our area, such as 'Round Arnos Grove', which looks at whether architect Charles Holden could have done a better job than he did with Sudbury Town, 'The Unpleasant Origin of Mount Pleasant' about the development of Clerkenwell, and 'Holborn isn't really Holborn'. There are over 600 short videos on this channel, which is called Jago Hazzard and was created by T G Wright. You can find it here: <https://www.youtube.com/@JagoHazzard/videos>

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

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 (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

- 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?
- 12 October *The Georgian City* by Joe Studman. This lecture is not the developing West End but how in the eighteenth century the City of London became the heart of the Empire.
- 9 November *One Name One Place* by John Hanson. This lecture will explore the reasons behind why we start one name or one place studies, their benefits and also their pitfalls. It will also look at some of the options available for storing and sorting out your data. A handout is provided of the basics and websites discussed
- 14 December *Christmas in the City* by Jill Finch. Despite being known as a financial district, with a reputation for only thinking about money, the City of London does put on a bit of a show at Christmas. Trees are decorated, lights twinkle, and carols ring out from the churches. Ever since the Romans introduced the winter festival of Saturnalia to Londinium, the people who live and work in the Square Mile have celebrated in many ways. Join City of London Guide Lecturer Jill Finch, to enjoy the Festive Season with a virtual wander through the City streets.

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: barnetbranch@lwmfhs.org

- 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?
- 19 October 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
- 16 November As we don't meet in December, we will be having our Christmas social today, with nibbles.
- 21 December No meeting

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: raynerslanebranch@lwmfhs.org

- 4 September *An illustrated family history trail* by Chris and Tricia Sutton
- 2 October *Getting Started with Family History* by Karen de Bruyne
- 6 November *From Roxeth to The Royal Fusiliers* by Doug Kirby.
This is a story of the Great War.
- 4 December Christmas Party



All About That Place is an online challenge event celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Society of One-Place Studies. It is taking place from 22 September to 1 October. Inside their pop-up Facebook Group and on their YouTube channel, you'll be able to enjoy a plethora of free online bite-sized recorded talks from a wide range of speakers. Check the website of the British Association for Local History for details: <https://www.balh.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.



1939 Register

What does it mean on the 1939 register when it says ‘The record for this person is officially closed’? Has the person asked for their name to be removed? Has he or she died?

I ask because this is what I found in the register when I looked up my great-grandfather, Lionel Sillett BENHAM (b1871). By 1939 he had separated from my great-grandmother and appears to be living with his brother, Frank C BENHAM and wife Emily at 5 Ridgway, Horsham, Sussex. It seems surprising that he would move from Devon, where he lived for many years, to Sussex after war had been declared.

Living at the same address is a five year old boy, Geoffrey, who does not share the Benham surname. The person you’d expect to be living with a child is his mother. So could the person whose record has been closed have been the boy’s mother? Or am I leaping to assumptions?

Lionel would have been 68 years old and Emily, 56, so too old to be the boy’s mother. If Frank and Emily had adopted a child, I’d expect it to bear their surname. Another possibility was that he could have been a war evacuee but it seems too early for this to be the case.

Sally Cox, Member No. 7527

Note: If a record is officially closed, that is because the date of birth for that person is less than 100 years ago and so they might still be alive. (If you know that a particular person who has been redacted is dead and have their death certificate, you can have the record opened even if the date of birth is less than 100 years ago.)

The record of 5 Ridgway, Horsham in the 1939 Register starts with person 1, who is Frank, person 2 is Emily, Frank’s wife. Person 3 is the one which is officially closed and person 4 is Geoffrey A BRIALEY aged 5. The way this generally works is that person 3 would be a child older

than Geoffrey who must have been born between about 1923 and 1939 and so could potentially be alive and under the age of 100. FreeBMD shows that a Geoffrey A BRIALEY was born in 1934 in Stepney, with a mother whose maiden name was PARKINSON but we have not managed to find a sibling who could fit the bill.

We think your suggestion of an evacuee could well be correct - this would certainly not be the first one we have seen in the 1939 Register, early though it may seem. The Imperial War Museum says that the first wave of evacuees went on 1 September 1939, nearly a month before the Register was taken on 29 of that month.

PRING

After watching Janet Few's April talk to the Virtual Branch of LWMFHS, I wondered if you could help me with a similar problem to one that she mentioned.

My grandmother's name was Ann Pring SMITH (later to become WILLIAMSON) and I have wondered for a long time where the name Pring came from. I had assumed it was a family name but her father, Joseph SMITH married Elizabeth SCOTT (second marriage) who was born in Bendochy, Perthshire on 27 October 1829.

In all my family research I have not come across anyone with the surname Pring and I wondered if you had any ideas as to where the name might have come from. One of my great uncles was Donald Scott SMITH so they had used the family name of Scott for him and that made me wonder if Pring is also a family name but I have yet to find it. I do hope you can help me.

Sylvia Mann, Member No. 5254

Note: We noted that when Stephen FRY appeared on *Who Do You Think You Are?*, his paternal grandmother was named as Ella Florence PRING but it is not a common surname.

A really useful place to look at for information about names is one we first reviewed in 2010: the British Surnames website. This tells us that there are 2,515 people called PRING in the UK at the current time. Another page shows the distribution of the surname in the 1881 census, where you can see that the vast majority of Prings are in the West Country. You can find this website here: <https://britishsurnames.co.uk/>

THE TRILL CUP

Amongst my late father's effects I have come across a small medal, 1.5x1 inch in size (shown here on the left). On the back is engraved his name and 'The Trill Cup' 1932. He would have been 13 years old then. Would any one have any idea what 'The Trill Cup' was awarded for? Could it be for boxing or swimming, which I know he did around then. At the time he was living in the St Pancras area of London. He also attended Hawkshill boys' summer camps, which I believe was near Walmer in Kent. Maybe it was an award from there. I have tried Kent Family History Society but nobody knew anything. Any information or links would be very much appreciated.



Val Perkins, Member No. 7800

Note: We discovered that a Trill Cup was presented by the Bristol and District Lady Golfers' Alliance, donated by Esme Trill in 1971, but it seems unlikely that this would be awarded to a boy in St Pancras. Val had also found this and come to the same conclusion.

Looking in the British Newspaper Archive on Findmypast, a search for any mention of Perkins with keyword Trill Cup for 1932 produced far too many apparent results to be useful, not least as it seemed to include just about any Cup of whatever description awarded in that year. By removing the word 'Cup', however, with just Trill as the keyword, the results were reduced to 103. Unfortunately, none related to Val's father or any likely connection. A search for the specific term 'Trill Cup' produced just 2 results, neither of which had any relevance either.

Nonetheless, newspaper coverage is the most likely source for further information. With the regular addition of new records available online, including local and regional newspapers, a report may well become available at some stage in the future so we would advise a periodic delve into the newspaper archives.

TWO LOST LITTLE BECKET GIRLS

I have been looking for many years for the burial site of Amelia BECKET who was born 7 November 1862 in Footscray, Victoria, Australia. She died 16 July 1867 at St James Buildings Clerkenwell, her mother Mary Anne Becket née SEWELL was present at the death. Her father, Charles BECKET died in May 1865 on the voyage with the family back from Australia. I have the death certificates of the girls. The second lass is Thirza or Teresa Emily BECKET born 31 October 1865 in Cloudsley, Islington. She died 9 November 1867 at St James Buildings, Clerkenwell. I've not found them in Deceased Online. I have all details on the family background. Hoping someone can help us.

Carol-Anne Edwards. Member No. 8247

Email: caedwards3@bigpond.com.

Note: Burials can be notoriously tricky to find because anyone could be buried in any graveyard and there are no central records kept. It comes down to searching the most likely places and keeping going until you hopefully find what you are looking for. We can say for sure that the girls were not buried in Clerkenwell, as all of the graveyards were shut in the 1850s. The likelihood is that they were buried at one of the large private cemeteries which were built further afield to alleviate the need to bury Londoners. These are: Abney Park, Brompton, Highgate, Kensal Green, Nunhead, Tower Hamlets and West Norwood.

However, if the girls' burial was down to the Holborn Union (which Clerkenwell was a part of), they could be buried at Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey. The burial register is on Deceased Online but you might want to check if pauper burials were subject to the same notifications as others.

Alternatively, the Great Northern Cemetery opened in 1861 to provide cheap and convenient burials to those living in central London. A dedicated railway service was provided from Kings Cross. This cemetery is now known as New Southgate Cemetery and Crematorium and managed by the Westerleigh Group, who will conduct a paid search for mentions in the burial register and provide a transcription. You can contact them on Tel: 020 8361 1713.



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- 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

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