



East Surrey

Family History Society



Journal

Volume 46
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September 2023

Tower Bridge
see page 36

East Surrey Family History Society

Founded 1977

Registered Charity No. 286659

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Members must quote their Membership Number in all correspondence

The Society **Research & Advice centre** is at Lingfield & Dormansland Community Centre, High Street, Lingfield. It is open every month (except August and December) on the second Saturday from 10.30 a.m. to 3.00 p.m., and on the fourth Wednesday from 10.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

Journal of the

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The deadline for the December 2023 Journal is 10.00 a.m. on 1 November

All contributions should be sent to the Editor, whose contact details appear opposite

From the chairman

Our programme of talks on Zoom continues and I will soon be looking at topics for next year. The talk on maps held by the National Library of Scotland has already been chosen, by common consent. Their collection of maps is impressive and the ability to pin sites and to layer their maps on screen has to be seen to be fully appreciated. We have some other ideas in mind but if you have come across a particularly interesting topic or speaker you would like to recommend, please do email me at chairman@eastsurreyfhs.org.uk.

I am aware that sometimes the filter system on our website traps my emails, so if you do not receive an acknowledgement from me please try again. Once we have a short list members can vote again for their preferred topics as people seem to like doing that.

We are also gearing up for the next Virtual Family History Fair, which will be held on 27 January 2024. If you haven't joined us before, we run it using breakout rooms on Zoom so if you come you can talk face-to-face with representatives from other societies. At the last fair one of our members was able to talk to people from six

different societies and she had all her questions answered in one morning. Why not join us?

Partly because the format of our fair was so successful and partly because the method of interaction with attendees at other online fairs is mostly through typed questions, we have decided not to man our stalls at these fairs on a continuous basis. We plan to use our stall at the Really Useful Family History Show in November to market our own fair while providing an email link for attendees who may have a question for us. If you have burning questions our research team at Lingfield, led by Rita, is always happy to help.

We have arranged another Talk with Tea at Surrey History Centre as described on page 7 and we have a new venture planned in the form of an online shared transcription event, again using Zoom breakout rooms. The project is outlined on page 33 and we would be delighted if you would join us.

If you have any other ideas for the Society, we would love to hear from you. Maybe you would like to join the Trustees? Please think about it.

Enjoy your family history.

Research Centre report

Rita Russell

We have been regularly adding to our Name Index (see further details on page 20) this summer and now have at least 551,000 names in 251 sets of records as I write at the end of July. Look under resources on the website and go to Name Index for the list of places included in the index and details on how to access the names. Two large sets we are tackling are Westminster Lying-in Hospital records and Surrey Justice of the Peace records.

Shown below are a few of the records we hold that are not yet on the Name Index: these may go in the Index at some stage but in the meantime I am happy to search them for you, free of charge, if you think you have a connection.

Burstow Parish registers 1547–1685 & Monumental Inscriptions
Carshalton Savings Bank – Index 1824-28 & Depositors 1859-1864
giving some details of members, their families and witnesses
Caterham Graveyard memorials to 1955, including Military graves, for
St Mary's church and the adjoining cemetery
Cheam Rate book for 1730 to 1753
Clapham - census returns for 1811 & 1821
Crowhurst Monumental Inscriptions

The current list of the books that are available to members for just the price of postage is shown in the members' section on the website. If you would like a copy I can always email one to you (my contact details are inside the front cover of the

Journal). Alternatively you can enter the following code into Google and it will come up with the current list – bit.ly/3HxJSBq

I am currently updating the information for the Research Centre for the website.

If you're wondering why ESFHS is transcribing records for a Westminster hospital, the General Lying In Hospital was opened in 1767 as the New Westminster Lying In Hospital in Westminster Bridge Road, Lambeth. It admitted single and married women. In 1818 it changed its name to the General Lying In Hospital, and it moved to York Road in 1828.

Zoom meetings

Links for live talks and recordings will be emailed to members.
Links for live talks *only* will be found on the Society's website.

September: Monday 11, 10.00 am (*recording played Monday 11 at 8.00 p.m.*)

The Medway Prison Hulks

Jeremy Clarke

Jeremy is the Education Officer based at the Guildhall in Rochester so if you have convict ancestors, he will be able to tell you all about their lives if they served all or part of their sentences in the Medway hulks before transportation.

October: Tuesday 10, 8.00 pm (*recording played Wednesday at 10.00 a.m.*)

Free Antiquarian Resources on the Internet

Phil Isherwood

Phil is known to us for his very clear and organised talks. This time he will be explaining how to find old books and documents in digital libraries on the web and how to consult or download them. He will be including examples from JStor, the Hathitrust and Google books. If you have exhausted Ancestry, FMP and so on, this session could help you to the break through you need.

November: Monday 13, 10.00 am (*recording played Monday 8.00 p.m.*)

What's at Sutton Archive

Abby Matthews

Abby is the Sutton Archivist and she will be talking about what's at Sutton Archive, how to access the collection and plans for the future.

December: Tuesday 12, 8.00 p.m. and Wednesday 13, 10.00 a.m.

Just a Family History Minute

hosted by Hilary Blanford

Your moment of fame. Write a few words about one of your family, read the rules elsewhere in this journal and join us for some pre-Christmas fun.

Group meetings

Lingfield Group

- Sep 27 DNA and your family tree Anne Ramon
Less of a lecture – more of a discussion on how DNA can help with understanding results, research and solving brick walls
- Oct 25 Civil Courts before 1875 Sarah Pettyfer
This talk sets out the history and development of the Civil Court system prior to 1875 along with where and what records may be found
- Nov 22 How to get the best from free family history websites Hilary Blanford
Hilary will focus on some of the lesser used options on FreeBMD before looking at other websites. She will not cover FamilySearch
- Dec no meeting

Southwark Group

- Oct 12 Visit to the Wellcome Library with access to the Reading Rooms and Exhibitions *[note that this date is a Thursday]*
- Dec 11 Lunch in Southwark

All members are welcome, though numbers will be limited for both events. Please book with the Southwark Secretary. Joining details will be sent to those who have booked shortly before the event.

Group details

Lingfield: Secretary: Rita Russell 01342 834648 {lingfield@eastsurreyfh.org.uk}
Lingfield & Dormansland Community Centre, High Street, Lingfield RH7 6AB

Richmond: Secretary: Veronica McConnell 01372 363015 {richmond@eastsurreyfh.org.uk}
The Richmond group meets on the second Saturday of alternate months, so 14 January, 11 March, 13 May, 8 July, 9 September and 11 November. Our meetings in the ground floor cafe at National Archives Kew are informal.

Southwark: Secretary: Hilary Blanford 01634 685219 {southwark@eastsurreyfh.org.uk}

Please check the Society website www.eastsurreyfh.org.uk for future meetings and last-minute alterations.

From the Membership Secretary

June Hayles

Hello, everyone. I am your new Membership Secretary. As you may know, Ann Turnor stood down from this post at the AGM in May. Ann's legacy is a long one and I thank her on your behalf for the support she has given the Society in the past, and I give my personal thanks for the well-documented handover. I also thank you for bearing with us as the transition has been made and, fingers crossed, everything has gone smoothly.

A new broom is always associated with change, isn't it? I hope this change might prove useful. On the envelope that your printed journal was delivered in, you may find on the label one or both of the abbreviations, which will follow your Membership Number: SO (short for Standing Order) and GA (short for Gift Aid).

At renewal time, which is annually in January, we hope these may aid your understanding of how you have subscribed in the past. For those who do not have 'SO', this means that your subscription has previously been paid via a different method: by online transfer, cheque or through Parish Chest, for example. No 'GA' indicates you have not signed the ESFHS Gift Aid form. You can find more detail on renewing on our website by following the 'Membership Renewal' link under 'About Us' from the home page. More information on renewal for the year 2024 will appear in the December issue of the Journal.

Please do contact me with any queries on your membership whenever you wish; I look forward to meeting you at future events.

If undelivered please return to:
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Talk with Tea with Julian Pooley – 5 October

at Surrey History Centre

This time Julian will be talking about 'Discovering the History of your Home'. Of course, the techniques can be applied to any home, and sometimes investigating the homes of your ancestors, perhaps using information from census returns and wills as starting points, can be very rewarding as well as helping you to see your ancestors in the context of their time.

We always start these talks with tea or coffee and cake and finish by

examining original documents selected by the Centre staff for us. The talks are priced at a modest £5. Our teas are always very sociable occasions so do join us and bring your friends and relations.

There is a car park on site but you are advised to use the drivers' Satnav code GU21 6NU. Otherwise, you will find yourself confronted by the steps at the front entrance and then you have to drive round the block to find the rear entrance.

Booking can be made on line or by phone (01483 518737) or online at <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/culture-and-leisure/history-centre/events>
The address is Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 6ND (GU21 6NU for drivers).

Join our IO chat group – This is a Private group for East Surrey Family History Society members to share information and ask questions.

Just send an email addressed to eastsurreyfhio+subscribe@groups.io

There's no need to enter a message title, or any other information. Just press Send. We will check you are a member and then you'll be able to access and contribute to the io group.

There are over 200 message threads already!

Meeting Report

Report by Christine Peel

Assisted emigration at the start of the 19th century

Judy Hill

10 May

Dr Judy Hill, a freelance lecturer and researcher, started her talk by emphasising the difference between emigration at the beginning and end of the 19th century; and that this talk concentrated on the former.

Emigration in the 18th century (of about 0.02% of the population and caused by population increase from the 1760s) was restricted to certain cohorts: the upper and middle classes with their servants, and soldiers granted a new life as a reward for service. The poor could not afford to go. Destinations were the Caribbean, North America and the Southern Colonies; the long passage to Australia precluded much travel in that direction.

Convicts had been sent to the USA from 1718 until independence, and after that date to Australia. At the end of their seven-year sentence some returned to Britain, but many stayed. Transportation as a punishment was abolished between 1865 and 1868, but the attitude to emigration remained negative in the minds of the poor, who feared they

would die of hunger and not be able to return. The passage to Australia, despite being a long one of between 10 and 17 weeks, was safe and no shipwrecks are recorded.

By 1830 Australia needed more labour and state-aided emigration commenced, as there had been some years earlier to the USA from Ireland and Scotland. Emigration was opposed by Lord Grey in 1826, and by Thomas Malthus, but between 1790 and 1815 150,000 took up the offer from England and Wales and 32,500 from Scotland. The Irish potato famine led two million to leave, mostly for the USA. During the century 650,000 (some 0.74% of the population) left the British Isles for the USA.

Another trigger was a dramatic fall (almost 50%) in the price paid for wheat at the end of the Napoleonic war, meaning that agriculture lost its stability and workers were evicted. The influx of returning soldiers, the introduction of farm machinery, the decline in domestic industries and loss of grazing and fuel collection

rights also contributed. Stories of fortunes to be made in North America proved tempting to those in extreme hardship. Landowners started to offer help with passage: the owner of Rum paid for its inhabitants to go to Canada and the parishes of Headcorn and Benenden paid for 20 villagers at £8 a head and 27 at £10 - £13 a head respectively to go to New York, with the local MP supplying £1,000. The Sandhurst churchwarden accompanied them to the docks. Advertisements tempted those who could afford the passage (£4 10s per adult, £2 10s per child), but there was little work on the coast of the USA. Settlers were allowed to buy farms over a four-year period and in Canada there were free land grants.

William Cobbett recorded rural depression and prophesied rebellion, which in fact happened in the Swing Riots of 1830-32, following a succession of poor harvests. Norfolk and the south-east, firstly Kent, saw most of the riots. Activists were not only agricultural workers, but also artisans, and the declared desired outcomes varied. Trials of 1976 prisoners were held in 90 courts over 34 counties and 19 were executed.

505 were sentenced to transportation, but fewer sailed.

As a result, poor relief was increased under the 1834 Poor Law Act Section 62 and emigration, now funded by rate payers, was viewed more positively. Even so clothing, provisions, and other things were needed during passage and even more to start a new life on arrival. Nevertheless in 1834, 3,354 emigrants from Norfolk and 1,083 from Suffolk departed. To qualify for free passage, one had to be under 40, capable of labour, of good character, vaccinated against smallpox and in certain agricultural occupations. Those receiving poor relief and workhouse inmates were excluded. The poor soil at home, especially in Norfolk, was a reason for agricultural labourers to head for the USA and Canada, with 320 emigrating in 1835.

By contrast the government funded emigration to Australia using money from the sale of land out there. The cost was reduced to £16 for an adult and £8 for a child and even some workhouse residents took advantage of this. Cabin passengers, paying between £70 and £120, were not subject to any of the

restrictions indicated above.

Emigrants were employed on arrival, could save some money and move on. The Australia emigration scheme was well-organized and the ships used were properly maintained and safe.

Emigration schemes involving New Zealand largely had a missionary purpose to the Māori people. There were advertisements and meetings to promote these expeditions and between 1839 and 1843 8,000 people went out, with later peaks in the 1870s and 1880s. Many emigrants were Quakers or non-conformists who encouraged others from the same church group to join them.

Travel to the ports was by cart and most emigrants were young families with children and equal numbers of adult males and females. This contrasts with the situation later in the century when most were single males. The type of employment that they were involved in also differed. Potential emigrants often had to wait many days in difficult conditions for their ship to dock if the weather was inclement.

Emigrant letters from Canada are an important source of

information about conditions for the families in their new life. One reveals how impressed they were that the employees dined with their employers, highlighting the difference in Britain at the time.

These letters contrast with opinions expressed by Cobbett and by Charles Buller who thought that the system “shovelled out paupers to where they may die.” Evidently the letters were published to encourage further emigration and some might have been redacted, with those presenting only a negative view not being published.

Liverpool was the main port of departure for trans-Atlantic travel. Ships would dock, unload cotton and timber, and return with slate and other cargo as well as emigrants. Later, Southampton was more important, followed by London and Plymouth.

These merchant vessels were sailing ships. Those on the transatlantic route were small and conditions for the emigrants cramped and insanitary, particularly in stormy conditions. Passengers had to supply their own food and other provisions for the five-week journey, 90% of them in steerage. There might be 150-300 in the lower deck,

with no number limit and no safety regulations, resulting in many lives being lost. The spread of cholera was a further problem. It originated in the far east and progressed through Europe to Canada and the USA, where quarantine was finally introduced (although not for the cabin passengers). The effect on the emigrants was to instil panic and although there was meant to be a surgeon on board this was not always adhered to.

The 3rd Earl of Egremont arranged the Petworth Emigration Scheme of 1832-37, which helped 2,000 to emigrate to Canada. The passenger ships in this scheme, which went from Portsmouth to Montreal, were clean and well-run, with well-paid surgeons to supervise medical conditions, and rules for cleanliness and clothing required. There were no recorded shipwrecks and no overcrowding, but it was ahead of its time as not until 20 years later (in 1855) did the

Passenger Act stipulate minimum conditions. The parish paid for some equipment for the emigrants, including a Bible and Prayer Book. In addition to those from West Sussex parishes, some of those who took part in this project came from Dorking, under a subscription scheme, but also from the Isle of Wight. After landing in Montreal, the emigrants were taken to Toronto across Lake Ontario. It is known where they settled and were given jobs and, within a generation, they could buy their own farms.

The advent of steamships brought many changes and there is little information surviving from this earlier period apart from Lord Egremont's initiative, as passenger lists were only introduced in 1889. For more facts after 1834 one can refer to the Annual Reports of the Poor Law Commission and to Susannah Moodie's book, *Roughing it in the bush*.

Meeting Report

Report by Lorna Thomas

The Great Fire of Tooley Street

Hilary Hartigan

10 July 2023

The Great Fire of Tooley Street in 1861 is really the culmination of the story of James Braidwood, founder of the world's first municipal fire service in Edinburgh in 1824.

However, the story of this fascinating man and his significant role in the development of firefighting begins 61 years earlier in 1800.

James Braidwood was born in Edinburgh in 1800, the tenth child of Janet Mitchell and Francis James Braidwood, a cabinetmaker. The family lived in College Street next to Edinburgh University. By 1810 the family owned an upholstery firm, Braidwood and Son, in Adam Square and were living in Roxburgh Square.

James passed the entrance exam for the Royal High School in Edinburgh, east of his home. Aged 10 he witnessed a large fire that broke out in Park Hill where illegal fireworks were being produced. The near-volcanic eruptions that ripped through the buildings captured the imagination of the young Braidwood. It influenced his choice

of career and how he put his knowledge to good use.

Braidwood continued his education as a surveyor, and was particularly interested in how to make buildings safe. He was known to walk the streets of Edinburgh carefully noting its thoroughfares, buildings, and warehouses, and in particular their foundations and construction materials.

At the time, firemen were employed by insurance companies. The firefighters were paid on a first-come, first-served basis and it was not uncommon for buildings to continue to burn whilst the firefighters were arguing amongst themselves! The machines used to pump water were not particularly effective, whilst the firemen had little protection and little or no training.

A major fire in the city in April 1824 destroyed a printing works. Braidwood suggested connecting water pumps to make them more effective. In October that year the city decided to appoint a Master of

The Great Fire of Tooley Street

Hilary Hartigan

Fire Engines, and at the age of 24 Braidwood was appointed to the position. His training as a surveyor gave him exceptional knowledge of the behaviour of building materials and housing conditions in the Old Town of Edinburgh.

On 15 November 1824 another major fire engulfed warehousing in the Old Town and became known as the 'Great Fire of Edinburgh'. The seat of the fire was on the third floor, but the hosepipes supplied could not reach that far and the fire spread throughout the large warehouse and to buildings beyond.

Following the Great Fire, Braidwood appointed to the service expert tradesmen – slaters, carpenters, masons and plumbers – who could apply their various fields of expertise to firefighting. He also recruited experienced mariners for an occupation that required heavy manual work in hauling engines and trundling wheeled escape ladders up and down Edinburgh's steep streets, and nimble footwork when negotiating rooftops and moving through partially destroyed buildings. He personally designed four Fire Stations and instituted uniforms for firemen in what

became known as the Caledonian Fire Brigade. He introduced an "Incident Book"; he taught firemen self-discipline and efficient methodologies for firefighting, such as taking the fire hose on the outside of the building not carrying it inside and up flights of stairs. He also insisted that crowds were controlled by the police. He designed new and more efficient fire engines and escape ladders. He instituted the idea of keeping records and introduced the 'science of siting fires'. Most significantly, he introduced the idea of 'fire doors' to the local building owners – a practice still at the heart of fire prevention and control today!

His many original ideas of practical organisation and methodology, published in 1830, were adopted throughout Britain.

Braidwood took these ideas with him to a new appointment in London. On 21 June 1834 he became Superintendent of the Combined Insurance Brigades (later the London Fire Engine Establishment) which had been instituted by Sun Insurance in an effort to get people to work together to fight fires. That same year, on 16 October, he was

The Great Fire of Tooley Street

Hilary Hartigan

largely personally responsible for saving Westminster Hall from being completely destroyed by fire.

In 1843, Braidwood and his methods brought a huge fire on the east side of London Bridge under control that had the potential to destroy all shipping and trade at Topping Wharf and the surrounding area.

His insight went beyond the physical side of firefighting: he undertook a pastoral role in London, introducing visits to firemen and their families by the City of London Mission.

Braidwood was distinguished for his heroism on the occasion of great fires in Edinburgh (1824) and London (1830).

On 22 June 1861 fire broke out at Cotton's Wharf near London Bridge Station. The warehouse was stacked with tallow (for candles), turpentine and other oils, all of which were extremely combustible. As the fire took hold it melted the tallow, which ran in streams under the warehouse. Combustible material had been stored against the walls, which smouldered and eventually exploded just at the point

when Braidwood was taking refreshment to his tired men. The falling wall crushed him. It took two days to recover his body. It was later discovered that the fire doors, which should have slowed down the progress of the fire, had earlier been left open for the convenience of the workmen.

His heroism led to a massive funeral on 29 June in which the funeral cortege stretched 1.5 miles (2.4 km) behind the hearse. The fire, which continued to burn for a fortnight, caused damage valued at £2,000,000, equivalent to £198,550,000 in 2021 and was considered the worst fire since the Great Fire of London in 1666.

Braidwood is buried at Abney Park Cemetery, Stoke Newington, London, not far from the Stoke Newington Fire Station. His wife, Mary Ann Jane Braidwood (1806–1871), was buried with him.

Braidwood established principles of fire-fighting that are still applied today. He was exceptionally far-sighted, and deserving of his title as "The Father of the British Fire Service".

Princess Mary Christmas Gift Boxes

The gift boxes were the idea of Princess Mary (later the Princess Royal) who was the 17-year-old daughter of King George V and Queen Mary. She organised a public appeal to raise funds to ensure that 'every Sailor afloat and every Soldier at the front' received a Christmas gift in 1914. Public support raised the sum of £162,591 12s 5d, so eventually around 2,620,019 servicemen and women received a box. Each contained a Christmas

card, a photograph of Princess Mary, and an assortment of items, either tobacco, cigarettes and a lighter, or confectionary and a writing case for non-smokers. The

boxes were despatched in three batches and a fourth set was sent later to returned prisoners-of-war.

The notes on the Forces War Records website explain, 'After the

cessation of hostilities, the Princess Mary, through Sir Ernest Goodhart, wrote to all regiments requesting they submit the names of those men who had been captured on or before 25th December 1914 so that these men could also be sent – somewhat belatedly – the Princess's gift.

Correspondence from Sir Ernest Goodhart's office and the lists of men that were sent to him survive today in an Imperial War Museum collection, and it is the transcriptions

of those lists that are published. The information supplied by regiments varies in detail and in some cases repeats information supplied by prisoners-of-war care committees

or similar. It is a valuable source of information, often giving a man's date of capture, his home address, next of kin address, other information and notes.



Meeting Report

Report by Lorna Thomas

Genealogy in early British censuses, 1086-1841

Colin Chapman

7 July 2023

Colin introduced his talk by explaining that he would be talking about pre-1841 listings of people made by five groups in particular:

- The Monarch or Government at national or local level; affecting county, ridings, sokes, hundreds, rapes etc. Give evidence of raising money; identifying loyalties ; military and naval; planning infrastructure such as roads, etc.
- The Established Church (Roman Catholic prior to the Reformation and Anglican Church of England) – provinces, archdioceses, dioceses, sees, archdeaconries , rural deaneries, parishes. As above: raising money; checking attendance; pastoral activities; religious influence.
- Manorial Lords – lists of tenants – honours and manors. Lists confirming tenancies; recording fines, etc.
- Associations (clubs, etc. run for the benefit of members) – individual members, national and local levels. Would have lists of members and receipts of subscriptions.
- Individuals – academic records; personal interests; financial rewards etc.

Colin gave many helpful examples of 'lists' drawn up for a huge variety of information gathering sources, which would be too numerous to include in this report. These range from the Domesday Book ordered by William the Conqueror (1086) to the early census of the 19th century that preceded 1841. Many records cited can be found at *The National Archives*. All the 'lists' referred to above are available in Colin's book: *Pre-1841 Censuses & Population Listings in the British Isles* (available via Amazon!).

I am indebted to Christine Peel, who has provided a list of Colin's references specifically about Surrey lists, as follows:

- ◇ Domesday Book for Surrey ed. John Morris, showing original and transcript. registers in the Public Record Office, 1711- 1731, Surrey Record Society, 10 (1921)
- ◇ Mills, M.H. ed., The Pipe Roll for 1295, Surrey Membrane. Pipe Roll 140, Surrey Record Society, 7 (1924)
- ◇ Daly, A. ed., Kingston upon Thames Register of Apprentices, 1563-1713, Surrey Record Society, 28 (1974) (these are also available through the National Archives: IR1/Docs (1711-1811))
- ◇ Surrey Taxation Returns. Fifteenths and tenths. Being the 1332 assessment and subsequent assessments to 1623, Surrey Record Society, 11 (1932)
- ◇ St Saviour's Southwark 1629 Muster of Watermen, listing the men's names, ages and numbers of voyages
- ◇ Craib, T., Surrey Musters (taken from the Loseley mss.), Surrey Record Society, 3 (1914-1920)
- ◇ Meekings, C.A.F. ed., Surrey Hearth Tax, 1664: being an alphabetical list of entries in the record, Surrey Record Society, 17 (1940)
- ◇ Jenkinson, H. ed., Surrey Apprenticeships from the

Colin provided a great deal of information and certainly proved that if you look beyond the term 'census' and look for 'lists' a wealth

of information is available about our forebears, but it may be under a different title.

Lloyd George “Doomsday” survey on The Genealogist

Malcolm Lee

I write this as a very amateur user who has no affiliation whatever with *The Genealogist* other than an annual subscription.

Having created a skeleton family tree from birth, marriage and death records, it comes alive by adding the flesh from other sources. One such source is the Lloyd George “Doomsday” Survey (LGS), which gathered information in 1910. Its primary objective was to collect information about property, and so it is those family historians who are seeking to widen their knowledge about where their forebears lived that will gain most from it.

So far *The Genealogist* has catalogued the LGS for London, and has recently moved out to the home counties to the north and west. The information can be searched by name or address or by using their MapExplorer facility. This presents the user with a street map (you can choose from several, ancient and modern) with a pin for every house once you have zoomed in sufficiently. This makes it very easy to find out about neighbours and also, for the property you are interested in, gives census return information and tithe information

gathered in the 1830s and 40s.

There are many similarities between LGS and the information gathered in the tithe surveys. So if you are used to using these (many are available on *The Genealogist* in the same structure as the LGS) you can expect to gather similar types of information.

So *The Genealogist* makes it is very easy to obtain the timeline of occupation for a particular house up to the 1939 Register, insofar as the record detail permits.

Returning to the LGS, for each property there are four Field Book pages. In spite of a clear form structure, information is often filled in in haphazard way and can be very incomplete.

As a bare minimum, on page 1 you will almost always find the head of the house who lived at the property and the owner, if different. Sometimes you get the address of the owner. This, on its own, is a valuable feature if your ancestor owned property in 1910. The information enables MapExplorer to plot the property owned by someone on a map with the records sitting behind the map pins.

Review of the Lloyd George “Doomsday” Survey

Page 2 describes the property. Space is limited on the form and so much abbreviation is used and the usual handwriting quality lottery applies. Work through that and you usually get a good appreciation of the layout and almost invariably a comment on the decorative order, in my instances not usually very complimentary. Very often the administrator fills in information for one property in a terrace and just refers other properties back to that one for their description. Then follows a valuation.

Page 3 should give an estate agent type description of the property and an ownership history, but it is often blank. Where ownership information is present it can be hard to decipher, but if present can certainly fill in knowledge gaps. It is a sort of 1910 Zoopla.

Page 4 is laid out for a long list of valuation information and is usually blank. Where I have found it filled in I have not learnt how to make any use of it.

I can see how that a well filled entry could help break down ‘brick walls’, mainly from the occupancy and ownership information, but this must be comparatively rare. Its main value comes from finding out more about people you are already well aware of. However, some entries can be very disappointing in their content.

For some properties a combination of the 1830s tithe survey, the 1910 Lloyd-George survey (both are on *The Genealogist* for the London area) and Zoopla will give an extremely rich historical record, with census information helping to fill the gaps.

Just like *Ancestry* and *FindMyPast*, *The Genealogist* has its unique features and drawbacks. For a family historian wanting to tie down and flesh out where their London ancestors lived they will find that *The Genealogist* offers a very useful capability that I find is worth paying for.

Name Index

Sue Adams

What is the Name Index (NI) and how can I use it?

- It is a large database of surnames and associated forenames (or initials where full forenames are not available) taken from poor law, baptism, burials and monumental inscriptions plus lots of other miscellaneous indexes such as Magistrates' minutes
- All recent ESFHS indexes are on the NI and other indexes that are in a suitable format are gradually being added to it
- The NI will continually grow and improve so come back from time to time to see what has been added

How much does it cost and what do I get?

- You buy a voucher (£5.00) under **Research/Look-ups in our Name Index** via Parish Chest <https://www.parishchest.com/researchlook-ups-in-our-name-index-11573.php>
- Please include your email address to enable us to get in touch
- Alternatively you can send a cheque for £5.00 (sterling) to our Search Co-ordinator Rita Russell 1 Rose Cottages Plaistow Street LINGFIELD RH7 6AU
- Please remember to include the names you are interested in, plus as much detail as possible, particularly dates.
- Using either method, you will receive a list of relevant names to help with your research. When the name matches then get back in touch with our Search Co-ordinator for the additional information

The Name Index will also be available to search at ESFHS events such as the AGM and Online Fair plus some other family history fairs.

West Norwood (South Metropolitan) Cemetery

Sue Adams

The cemetery, in Norwood Road, London SE25 7JU, was one of the first Victorian cemeteries to open in London, and is home to over 65 listed monuments. It was known as the South Metropolitan Cemetery when it first opened in 1837.

Lambeth Council took over management of the site in 1965, and there are burials up to 1983 (though some of the later ones are cremated remains).

ESFHS has just indexed this cemetery, which is now on our Name Index. (For details of the Name Index see the article on the previous page or on our website.) Included in the index is the grave number, grave owner (sometimes with an address) and names of the deceased buried in the grave with dates.

The following observations were made while indexing.

- In many cases the grave owner is not buried in the grave – I do not know why!
- Although addresses of the owners are mainly in the South London area, there is a large geographical spread of other addresses. These range from other parts of what is now Greater London such as Mitcham and Croydon but other far-flung places such as Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and Paris
- There are very poignant details of infant or stillborn children but sometimes no names are included
- The grave with the most burials includes 17 people dating from 1848 to 1920.

New London maps from Alan Godfrey

In a recent newsletter Alan Godfrey announced a series of new large-scale plans of London that definitely complement their existing 25-inch maps. Each will include a 1st edition map of c.1870 with a more heavily reduced version of an 1890 map on the reverse, together with a 2,000 word introduction, slightly shorter than on the general maps but still providing a comprehensive package.

The marriage of Richard Swan and Emma Knight

Nicholas Smith

When my mother left school and went to work, she found herself in the medical centre of a large factory (Kynoch) in Birmingham, near the Aston Villa football ground. The factory grounds extended nearly a mile from north to south and the same from east to west.

She became good friends with a lady we always knew as Auntie Swannie or, more formally, Nurse Swan.

When I left school, I went to work in the same factory, not in the medical centre but in the research laboratories, and Swannie helped me to prepare for my change of scene. Not long after I started work there, Swannie died. The funeral cortege paused at the south gate of the factory, and I joined it and went to the interment.

I recently wrote to the cemetery office, and they quickly came back with "The late Annie Swan can be found in section 174 grave number 49765 in Witton Cemetery. Please find attached a copy of Witton site map to help locate the grave."

I looked up her death on FreeBMD and found nothing for A Swan, but I did find an entry for Clara A Swan with a death in Birmingham Registration District in 1964 Q4, age 77. Could this be the one, I wondered?

My next step was to look at the 1939 register for her road, Cuckoo Road. This was so named, the story went, because when it was being built they could hear cuckoos in the area. The road is still there, very close to the M6. I found the entry for 91 Cuckoo Road and it shows:

Emma Swan, born 11 January 1854, widow, blind Robert Swan, born 1 February 1882, metal caster Clara Swan, born 6 June 1887, Nurse, St John Ambulance
--

So that all tied together.

I then looked for them in the census for 1911 and found at 91 Cuckoo Road:

The marriage of Richard Swan and Emma Knight

91 Cuckoo Road, Aston, Birmingham

Head of household – Emma Swan, aged 58 born in Great Houghton, Northampton, widowed

Other members of the household (all had been born in Birmingham)

Robert George Swan, age 29

Clara Ann Swan, age 23

Rose Swan, age 20

Alice Maud Swan, age 17

Louisa Swan, age 13

John Henry Godson, age 26 (Boarder)

Clara was shown as a Press Worker in an Ammunition works, which is precisely what went on at the Kynoch Works.

My curiosity was aroused on two points:

When did Annie's father die?

When did her mother (Emma) move from Great Houghton to Birmingham?

The 1901 census shows Emma as a widow, living not at 91 Cuckoo Road

but two doors away at number 95. My recollection of the road is that all the houses were very similar, and formed a large terrace of Victorian dwellings.

Emma is shown as a Laundry woman, and Clara Ann is shown as Annie (the name by which she became known) rather than Clara.

There was still no indication of the father of Clara Ann, so I hunted for him in the 1891 census. In the village of Little Houghton I found

George Knight, age 64, born in Little Houghton

Hannah, his wife, age 62, born in Great Houghton

Emma Swan, his married daughter, age 37, born in Great Houghton

Rose Swan, his grand-daughter, age 8 months, born in Birmingham

The marriage of Richard Swan and Emma Knight

So Emma had been visiting her parents with the new baby at the time of the census. But where were the rest of her family?

The 1891 census also shows a Robert Swan, born about 1882, living in Argyle Street, the road that backs onto Cuckoo Road. But is this Emma's brother? None of the other information on the census record suggests that it might be. The places of birth don't look right. All that is 'right' is the age of Ann, the sister of this Robert.

I tried another tack.

FreeBMD shows a marriage in 1875 q2 in Hardingstone (Northamptonshire) registration district between Richard Swan and Emma Knight. The date and place, and the name (Knight) look right, so without going to the expense of buying a copy of the marriage certificate, let's see what else we can find out about Richard Swan. Is he in the 1881 census?

I found his church marriage record – 20 May 1875 – in Little Houghton, and he is shown as aged 34, so he was born in about 1841. Emma is shown as aged 22, which ties in with the other information so far obtained. Both are shown as residing in Little Houghton at the time. His father's name is shown as Robert Swan, a labourer, and her father's name is shown as George Knight, also a labourer.

Using the date of 1841 for the birth of Richard Swan, I then found a record of a death registered in Aston (the area which includes Cuckoo Road) in 1897 Q4.

So have I found the father of my mother's friend, Nurse Swan?

I think the only way to find out now is to send for (and pay for) the death certificate of Richard Swan, who died in the Aston area in 1897. So far, I've been able to find all this out using my Ancestry subscription and FreeBMD without incurring additional expense.

If anyone has any further information about this family, I should be delighted to hear from them. Please contact me at nixmith@uwclub.net

Just a Family History minute

*with apologies and acknowledgement to the Beeb**

At the December Zoom meetings (12th and 13th), we will be playing *Just a Family History Minute*. We had a great deal of fun playing this last year for our Christmas party, so by request have agreed to repeat the game. If you are interested in participating you will need to scribble a few words about your family member, or other family history related topic. It's a good idea to read it out loud to time yourself to one minute. Marda Dixon published her contribution in the March edition of our journal, so you might like to re-read it to get an idea of the number of words.

We adjusted the Beeb's rules a bit, so although no deviation is

allowed, as in the original rules, hesitation is permissible and repetition is mandatory as you must hide a word in your one-minute-talk and repeat it at least four times. Words such as because, therefore, etc., are excluded from this rule and 'great' does not count. Topics can be anything connected with your family history and the aim of the game is for others to guess your hidden word.

If you would just like to join us and try to spot the hidden word you would be very welcome, as we did not have a 100% success rate here. Just register as normal for a Zoom meeting.

*For overseas members and non-radio 4 listeners, *Just a Minute* is a panel game broadcast by the BBC on Radio 4. Participants have to speak for one minute without hesitation, deviation or repetition. Originally chaired by Nicolas Parsons, it is now hosted by Sue Perkins. Panellists have included people such as Kenneth Williams, Clement Freud, Derek Nimmo and Paul Merton.

DNA and your Family Tree

Anne Ramon [4730]

The September meeting at Lingfield on Wednesday 27 September will be about 'DNA and Your Family Tree' and I'm hoping it will be interesting and informative. I shall be the Speaker, so a lot of this is up to me, but I hope you will want to contribute. Our focus will be on using DNA results to explore who the people are on our family trees, and how to do this, either by ourselves or by enabling our enthusiastic nearest and dearest. I will try to explain how your own DNA test results can help to build your tree and offer some warnings on what they may reveal.

Maybe you have already documented most of your relatives – that is indeed a wonderful achievement – and if you took a DNA test this might help someone else on their family history journey. In return your generosity might yield interesting facts, unearth photographs and reveal family stories you never knew.

Maybe you have a brickwall in your paper-based research that you can't shift. Your DNA Match List can suggest new avenues and new places to investigate and people who might be able to help you.

What if you've received your test results but you don't recognise anyone?

Maybe you have concerns about privacy, or maybe you'd like to help but you don't want anyone to contact you and you certainly don't want to answer any questions. How can you help, but keep in the background?

We'll explore these topics and more in the meeting, which starts at 2.30 p.m. The Research Centre at Lingfield will be open from 11.00 a.m. and I plan to be there then, so if anyone would like a private word, or you'd like a second opinion on your DNA results, I'll be happy to help. If you'd like to book a private half-hour (or so) chat, please email me at secretary@eastsurreyfhs.org.uk.

The Peckham Society

Belinda (surname withheld by request)

The Peckham Society was founded in 1975, and now produces a magazine every quarter. Although its website is not always updated regularly, the magazines are beautifully produced and contain many knowledgeable and well-researched articles about Peckham, its history, and the people within who have gone on to great things. Letters to the editor are also chosen for publication, adding to the wealth of knowledge and memories of Peckham.

And this is where I come in. I have created a massive Word document that is an index of every letter ever published in *The Peckham Society News*.

If a married woman writes in about memories of her two schools, the names of its heads, the names of three friends and the name of the sweet shop she used to buy her sweets in, I will index that letter under her married name, her maiden name, and under the names

of the head teachers mentioned, the three friends and the sweetshop. If any names ring bells with people, they write in, remember one another and old friendships are rekindled, sometimes from across the world. It's a nice thing to happen.

But there is more! There is also access to the articles, which have also been indexed over the years by Derek Kinrade. If you would like access to them, please click on this link: www.peckhamsociety.org.uk/?page_id=219

If you see something of interest then please email the editor of The Peckham Society at secretary@peckhamsociety.org.uk and tell her what magazine you would like to have sight of.

If it's just a short article then she is happy to scan and email it to you, but otherwise the paper magazine will be £2 each (including postage) if one is available.

News from Surrey Heritage

Julian Pooley (Public Services & Engagement Manager)

I am delighted to report that, following the retirement of Jeff Dowse at the end of March, we have successfully recruited a new archive and local studies conservator. Rachel Marsh joined us on the 19th June and is already settling in well to the task of conserving the precious materials in our care. We are now in the process of recruiting a Foyer Supervisor, and I hope to have news on that post in time for my next report.

Our amazing volunteers continue to forge ahead with a range of projects. Jenny Payne has recently completed indexing the Chertsey Union Board of Guardians minutes; all 11,158 entries will soon be searchable via a pdf file on our website, Surrey records online - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk) so, with the help of Mike and Mary, we are now nearly two thirds of the way through our project to index all the Poor Law Board of Guardian minute books. They are a fantastic resource and a great way to understand more about the Unions and how they worked (or didn't on some occasions).

Our project with Surrey Record Society to transcribe every reference to Surrey printed in the *Gentleman's*

Magazine between 1731 and 1868 has now reached the 1840s. Our team of volunteers have ploughed through 110 years of the magazine and transcribed about 1.7 million words. The Society hopes to publish the first volume, covering 1731 to 1754, in 2024. The range of work undertaken by our volunteers is very wide and growing all the time. Our project 'Surrey in the Great War: A County Remembers' continues to benefit from the labours of Viv, Sara, Phil, Ian, Nigel and Denise. Diane is indexing the Chertsey School of Handicrafts pupil registers. Hundreds of our postcards are being catalogued by Linda and Barry and Barry is also helping us with our Broadwood archive; Lewis is continuing to share his expertise on Dame Ethel Smyth, and Marion and Rachel are helping with cataloguing projects. We have what has been described as one of the best collections of mental and learning disability archives in the English-Speaking world. Our online catalogues make this accessible to a global audience, but without the amazing work undertaken by Guy, Jill and Louise to create indexes to these records and Brenda's skills in digitising the hundreds of glass plate

News from Surrey Heritage

photographs of patients, the thousands of personal stories in these collections would remain just needles in a very large haystack. I'd like to record my thanks to all of the volunteers who help us to make our collections so much more accessible to a wider audience.

I would also like to express my thanks to the members of Surrey History Trust for their invaluable support over the past year. The Trust acts as our 'Friends' organisation, raising funds through membership subscriptions and events that we can draw upon to support our work. As we no longer

have a budget for purchasing historic documents when they come up for sale, we rely very much on the Trust when we seek to rescue, preserve and make accessible Surrey materials that appear at auction, on ebay or in a bookseller's catalogue. In the course of the past year we have acquired the items shown in the box below with their help.

The Trust also funded the renewal of our Zoom licence, enabling us to continue our programme of online talks. The twenty talks we held last year were attended by 531 people and generated £2,655 of much-needed

Diary of John Graham Reid of Brockhamhurst Farm, Betchworth, 1917-1922.
A watercolour painting c.1847 of Send Church by Georgiana Nicholls (b.1814)
A series of Surrey County Cricket Club yearbooks, 1959-2014
An album of watercolours of Dorking, Isle of Wight and Peak District, some by H White, and prints and engravings, 1840s
Grey wash drawing entitled 'Churchyard at Guildford' by John Monroe, 1830s, discovered by our former colleague, Duncan Mirylees, to actually represent Dorking churchyard
Graphite sketch of 'The Old Rectory, Albury', by Alexander Monroe, 6 Aug 1835
Watercolour of 'House at Badshot Lea, Surrey', by C J Newcome, 1870s
Drawing entitled 'Guildford Surrey 1824' by A Baas
Drawing of St Mary Magdalene church, Reigate, 19 Jul 1842
Watercolour painting of a windmill 'near Godstone' by Anthony Devis (1729-1816), late 18th cent
Records of The Old Surrey and Burstow Hunt, including handbook, stud books, diaries, memoir, photographs and cuttings, c.1875-1937

News from Surrey Heritage

income. If you are not already a member of Surrey History Trust, please look at their website (search for "Surrey History Trust") to see the full range of support they are able to

provide and to follow a link to their membership page. It costs £15.00 a year to belong, and every membership fee goes to support our work.

Recent Accessions at Surrey History Centre

7139add5

The Hall School, Weybridge: additional records, including prospectus, photographs, articles and biography of Eva Margaret Gilpin, 1925-1989

10491

Surrey County Cricket Club: collected memorabilia of Brian Griffiths (1910-1988), lifelong member of the Club, including fixture lists, scorecards, booklets and other printed items, 1919-1987

10493

Robert Boyton (d.2013), local historian of Horsell: research papers relating to the church of St Mary the Virgin, Horsell, and the parish of Horsell in the context of north west Surrey, early 20th cent. to 2008

10494

Horsell, St Mary the Virgin: additional parish records, sometime in the care of Thomas Collins and FE Bray, churchwardens, including accounts, and papers relating to the repair of the church tower, 1900-1947

10497

Epsom Garden Society: records including minutes, programmes and newsletters, 1930s-2020s, and records of Epsom Garden Flower Club (later the Flower Arrangement Section of Epsom Garden Society), 1960s-2010s

10498

Swayne and Tunnel families of Merrow, sometime churchwardens and overseers: Merrow parish poor rate and distribution account books, 1791-1861

Recent Accessions at Surrey History Centre

10501

Slyfield Green, Guildford: sale particulars, 1910; Brockham Lodge, Betchworth: agreement to lease, 1850

10503

Printed pamphlet, 'The Hard Case of Sir Polycarpus Wharton, Bart', regarding his lease of Chilworth Powder Works, c.1710

10504

St Joseph's Convent School and Preparatory School, East Molesey: records including pupil admissions, photographs, scrapbooks and prospectuses, 1950s-1980s

10505

St Mark's church, Wyke, Normandy: church record by The Arts Society Woking and Arts Society Mayford Church Recording Group, 2023

10506

St Clotilde's Convent, Guildford: booklet of sepia photographs, c.1900-c.1910

PXadd8

Pen and ink drawing of Christ Church, Epsom Common, possibly original illustration for 'A Hand-Book of Epsom' by C J Swete (1860)

Online and In-Person Surrey Heritage talks 2023

14 September, 7.30 p.m.

United Reformed Church Hall, Kings Road, Fleet, Hants GU51 3AF

Out of Sight, Out of Mind? Sources for the history of Surrey's mental hospitals, 1700-1990

A talk by Julian Pooley for the Fleet and Farnborough Group of Hampshire Genealogical Society. All are welcome.

Online and In-Person Surrey Heritage talks 2023

5 October, 2.00-4.30 p.m. at Surrey History Centre. Tickets £5.00

Tea and Talk: Discovering the Story of Your Home, with Julian Pooley

This event is for Members of the East Surrey Family History Society only. Places are limited to 30.

Every house has a history. Whether it is a cottage in the Surrey Hills, a terraced house in a large town or a semi-detached in suburbia, there will be a story to tell about the land it is built upon, the builders who constructed it, changes to its shape and fabric by later extensions and renovations and the diverse families and people who have lived it – some for generations, others for just a couple of years. Anyone who has enjoyed watching David Olusaga's fascinating studies of individual

houses in Bristol and Leeds in the series 'A House Through Time' will have wondered what stories about their own homes might be discovered through similarly forensic archival research. This talk discusses some of the many sources that we hold at Surrey History Centre that will start you off on that journey.

After the talk there will be an opportunity to see a display of sources for house history in our searchroom.

14 October, 2.00 p.m. at Surrey History Centre. Tickets £5.00.

George III's illnesses and his doctors

A talk by Mike Ramscar based on his recent book exploring the 'madness' of George III and the links between his doctors and the county of Surrey.

For further details, see our [Heritage Events](#) page.

Online and In-Person Surrey Heritage talks 2023

11 November

Maps for Local History

A one-day symposium organised by Surrey Local History Committee at Surrey History Centre. Speakers will include Mary Alexander, Jane Lewis, Anne Sassin and Martin Stilwell.

For full details, and to book a place, see the Heritage Events page on our website or the Events page on the Surrey Archaeological Society website, Local History Symposium - Maps | Surrey Archaeological Society (surreyarchaeology.org.uk)

We are currently planning our autumn season of talks and events, both in-person and online, so please check the Heritage Events page on our website for details. The meantime, many of our talks are now available for purchase via our online shop and there is a list of them, with a link to the shop on the Heritage Events page.

Wanted: 40 Members to give an hour

Hilary Blanford

Amongst its collections, Surrey History Centre holds the burial register of Netherne Hospital, which has never been indexed. We would like to rectify this situation and I have come up with an innovative method of doing this.

Online transcription days and the like have become a regular feature of the genealogists' calendar but I recently experienced a very effective and enjoyable way to transcribe records. I went to a transcription evening where

Wanted: 40 members to give an hour of their time

somebody read several pages of baptism entries to me and I typed everything into an Excel spreadsheet. It helped too, that she was experienced enough to tell me that, 'this Johnson had an h and no t, this Sara did not have an h and this Anne had an e' and so on. I think you all get the message. We were able to romp through five pages of the register in an hour.

It struck me that we could replicate this session online, using Zoom with breakout rooms. Some of you have used breakout rooms before, especially those of you who attended our virtual online family history show so my suggested method is that we run a Zoom meeting, using some 20 breakout rooms.

Members would need to register in advance so we can distribute a copy of a single page to each couple together with an Excel spreadsheet already formatted with the appropriate headings. We could provide people with a table in Word if that is their preferred format and we can read that into an Excel document after the event.

Members would work in pairs – one person to read the register entries and one to type the entries into an Excel spreadsheet. I think we will probably be sending out a Google document or something similar so if you want to participate you can tell us whether you want to read the register entries or type them into a document formatted to your choice or you don't mind. You might also like to name your preferred partner for the event.

I'll also run some sessions beforehand for people to learn how to use breakout rooms; perhaps a morning session and an evening one. At the end of the event we could share a glass of wine or coffee and cake (bring your own!) and regale each other with any curious findings or notes in the margin. And say well done to each other.

The proposed date would be Monday 30 October, that being the first dark evening after the UK clocks go back. And I might tweak the arrangements slightly if we discover some dreadful pitfall!

A gaggle of Aunts

This poem was discovered by Robin Brand in a book, *Once upon a Wessex*, by Norman Kemish (published by Norpet). Although efforts have been made to trace the holder of the copyright these have not been successful; we do, however, acknowledge copyright where it exists.

*My Aunt Matilda's not my aunt
And neither's Auntie Flo
Who only lives with Uncle George;
They're just good friends, you know.*

*And Cousin Fred can't really be,
If what they say is true.
He looks just like the milkman,
Not a bit like Uncle Lou.*

*I've got a great aunt: Auntie Maud.
We never see her, though;
She lives in Hemel Hempstead
And that's much too far to go.*

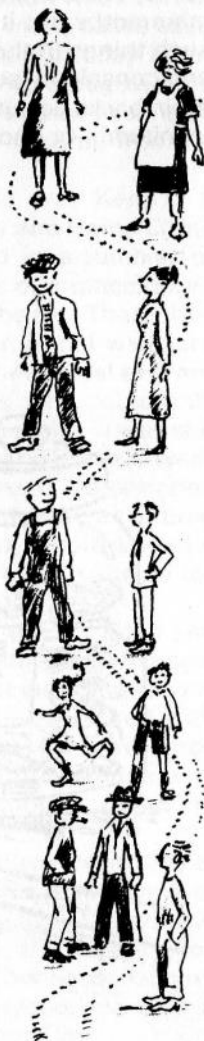
*There's Uncle Ben, the plumber,
He has trouble with his phlegm
And lives with that odd pimply boy.
Dad says he's 'one of them'.*

*Then Cousin Nell, the daughter
Of my mother's Cousin Jim,
Who's married to his brother's wife,
So we don't speak of him.*

*There's Harold who's the step-son
Of my father's Cousin Matt;
A second cousin really,
But he's only half of that.*

*Whether Fred is Cousin Ted's
Was never ever proved,
But if he is, then he must be
My cousin, once removed.*

*There's Jim and Bob and Uncle Claude:
A list that never ends.
I think I'll just forget the lot
And concentrate on friends.*



London's answer to the Eiffel Tower

Rosemary Radley

The train slows down awaiting the signal to enter London Bridge Station. As we pass the southern end of Tower Bridge I take the opportunity to glance across it, and I delight to catch a glimpse of this wonderful edifice, not to mention seeing it raised, gives me a thrill. London had grown socially and commercially, and the old London Bridge was now inadequate for the hundreds of people that lived and work in the area, not to mention the hundreds of ships that daily made their way up the River Thames, then had to wait to enter the Pool of London. There was a desperate need for a new Bridge.

Grandmother Alice Kate Anderson, née Stevens, told me that both she and her friend, Hilda Margaret Sutherland, née Harris, my other grandmother, both of whom lived in Queen Elizabeth Street next door to each other, close to the city-end of the new Bridge were looking forward to being present at its official opening.

The Tower Bridge hadn't always been there; indeed, it's not as ancient as some imagine. It is so-called because of its close proximity to the ancient Tower of London. The

Opening Ceremony of the new Bridge was undertaken by the Prince of Wales, soon to become King Edward VII, on behalf of his ageing mother. This may have been because Her Majesty the Queen had voiced objection to the building of a new Bridge so close to the ancient Tower of London. The last bridge downstream from central London was London Bridge, which meant that the people of Bermondsey wanting to cross the Thames either had to walk upstream to London Bridge or go further downstream to board the Woolwich Ferry. At the end of the 19th century the Corporation of London decided that another bridge over the Thames was needed to further trade and to meet public demand. The Corporation requested the Bridge House Estates to discuss the desirability of a new Bridge: It had to be elegant and strong; tall ships had to have access to the Pool of London; and, in addition, it had to meet the need of pedestrians. A committee was set up to consider the proposal.

After a much-heated discussion it was finally agreed that the design should be put out to competition. Before the grand opening, the

London's answer to the Eiffel Tower

chairman had submitted to London's eloquent engineers the case for a new Bridge: "It was short of a scandal that while our Empire overseas is increasing apace, progress in our own capital city is constricted by the monstrous inadequacy of our streets and highways." "A new road Bridge? It will be the ruin of us all!" declared one member aggressively. "You go cutting the port in half, and the food will be rotting in the ships' holds! And then where will London be?" complained another. "We need safe open river access to our wharves. Why, this bit of the Thames is the very gateway to London! Now this... A new Bridge? It had best be a strong one. It's scarce five years since the wind brought the Tay Bridge down. If such a thing was to happen in the midst of the city..." warned a wary voice. The competition was won by Horace Jones, but not everyone favoured the proposed new Bridge. At that point, the chairman interjected: "Britain's finest engineering talents were invited to submit their designs. And most ingenious they are! A rolling bridge, a duplex bridge, a spiral roadway to ease the approaches..." "No bridge must be

built near the Tower of London," opined a wary voice, dismissively. "Progress in our capital is restricted because of lack of highways," stated a supporter. "Passengers must always have access across the river!" declared another. "I declare that no bridge be built close to the Tower unless it combines the utmost strength with the finest elegance; the greatest utility, with the utmost beauty." I thank the Bridge House Estates for the above information.

The Day of the Grand Opening of the New Bridge is about to begin. A babble of cheering voices thronged the air! Then, silence! The great crowd was hushed and the formal ceremony began: The Prince of Wales touched the control, the giant mechanisms deep inside the Bridge began to stir into life; and the great bascules rose, as did a thundering shout of applause from the crowd. My two grandmothers-in-the-making now lived in the road leading up to the Tower Bridge, and both were present in the crowds waiting to witness the opening of the new Bridge, joining the crowds awaiting the arrival of the Prince of Wales who was to perform the Opening Ceremony.

London's answer to the Eiffel Tower

To quote the report in The Times, "The Royal procession started out from Buckingham Palace and had made its way down the Mall to the Strand, along Fleet Street to the Mansion House, where it was joined by the Lord Mayor and Sherriffs of the City of London. We are told that the pageantry of the day outshone all previous pageants." "The carriage carrying their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales and their procession entered from the northern end of the new Bridge as the clock in the Tower of London struck noon." The Times' account concludes, "It was an unforgettable day for the people of London." It had taken eight years to build the new Bridge and cost an enormous sum of money in those days. Both grandmothers must have been among the first to walk across the newly-opened Bridge.

The Good Old Days

One is easily tempted to imagine how much better things were in the 'good old days': surely, there must have been less noise, less dirt, less obnoxious smells etc. all very debatable. One only has to look at Hogarth's paintings of London, of course, to prevent too romantic an

idea about the past. In many respects, the 'good old days' were far from good, let alone better. Life for many at the southern end of the Tower Bridge was one of great poverty, with low wages, prevalent sickness and slum living-accommodation; parts of Bermondsey were grim and grimy. However, grim poverty was not the case for every inhabitant; there were the comfortable poor and others that were entrepreneurs, with their own small businesses. But, as is so often the case, the entrepreneurial moved out to fairer climes. When speaking of the new Bridge, my grandmother always used the definite article because of the Bridge's closeness to the ancient Tower of London. The well-known, but controversial, Doctor Alfred Salter had hard words to say about such as they. He considered (perhaps rightly!) that the entrepreneurial should remain in Bermondsey to share their lot with the suffering poor. But the Doctor deserves another article! My 2 x great-grandfather, Samuel Stevens, was a Master Baker. He was one of the better off: far from being a humble profession, the trade of baker was generally well-respected,

London's answer to the Eiffel Tower

and quite lucrative. Indeed, Samuel bears this out: he rented two properties in Thomas Street; he employed one man in the bakery and three servants in his household.

To return to the presence of horses in London Town, noise pollution was abundant. Great was the mêlée caused by the wheels of horse drawn wagons rumbling along the cobbled surfaces, not to mention the clattering of horses' hooves, the smell of horses' sweat, and the jostling of the numerous horse-drawn carts, coaches and omnibuses; with coachmen cracking their whips, shouting out commands to the horses, and all in competition with the bellow of horses neighing.

I think it comes as a surprise for us today when we learn that not all were in favour of the erection of a new bridge. Even Queen Victoria had evidently voiced an objection to the prospect of a new bridge. Her Majesty branded the claim that it would beautify the area as 'bosh'. She believed it would make London

more vulnerable to attack, as France and Russia were still expected to invade. Fortunately, the forward-looking party won the day. Designs for the new bridge were invited for competition; and the design-winning submission was that of Sir Horace Jones, Chief City Architect to the London Corporation, designer of Smithfield and Leadenhall Markets. Sir Joseph Bazalgette, at that time Chief Engineer to the London Corporation, was no doubt involved in the bridge's construction.

It took ten years for Tower Bridge to become a public spectacle and a 'must' for foreign visitors. The chairman was later to say, "It is a task fraught on all sides with the most severe difficulties, but I truly believe that Horace Jones's engineering skill has boldly met these difficulties and fairly overcome them". Horace Jones never saw the towers take shape, for he died early in 1887, a few months after receiving his knighthood.

to be continued

Membership and Members' Interests

New members

- 10751 Leonard Reilly - leonard.reilly@googlemail.com
- 10752 Michael Pantlin – michael@pantlin.nl
- 10753 Paul Nixon - paulcanixon@gmail.com
- 10754 Carolyn Ramsbottom – carolynramsbottom@yahoo.co.uk
- 10755 Lyn Otway - lynotway@gmail.com
- 10756 Louise Sellars - lgsellars@gmail.com
- 10757 Shelagh Alletson - shelagh.alletson@gmail.com
- 10758 Adrian Gault - adrigault@aol.com
- 10759 Pamela Ashton – pamski1@btinternet.com

Changes to email addresses

- 3696 Ken Read – kenread1939@gmail.com
- 5218 Stephen Larkin – sbclarkin@gmail.com
- 7162 Susan Stride – geostride@btinternet.com

Members' Interests – Rita Russell

I have not received any updates from anyone this past quarter. There must be a few new members who could add their name interests to

our records. If it helps I can forward a copy of the relevant form for completion and return by post or email.

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