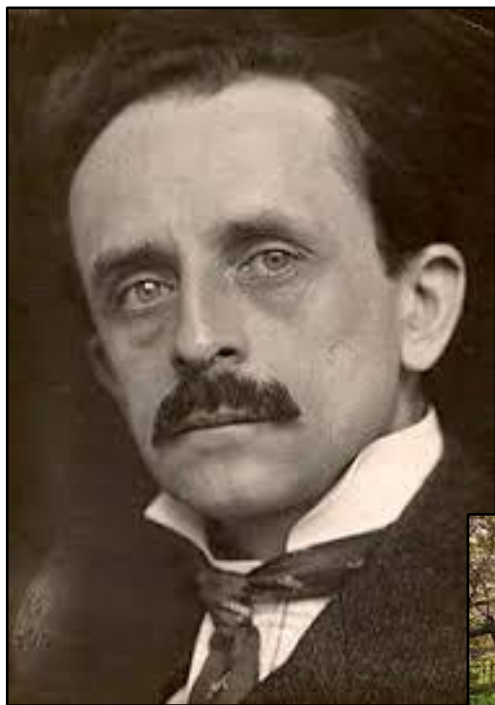




WEST MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY JOURNAL

VOL 35 No.4

December 2017



J M Barrie
Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens
Barrie's house in Kensington



WEST MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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If you wish to contact any of the above people, please use the postal or email address shown. In all correspondence please mark your envelope WMFHS in the upper left-hand corner; if a reply is needed, a SAE must be enclosed. Members are asked to note that receipts are only sent by request, if return postage is included.

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FUTURE MEETINGS



The following talks have been arranged:

21 Dec Christmas Celebrations

18 Jan Tracing Jewish Ancestors

Leigh DWORKIN

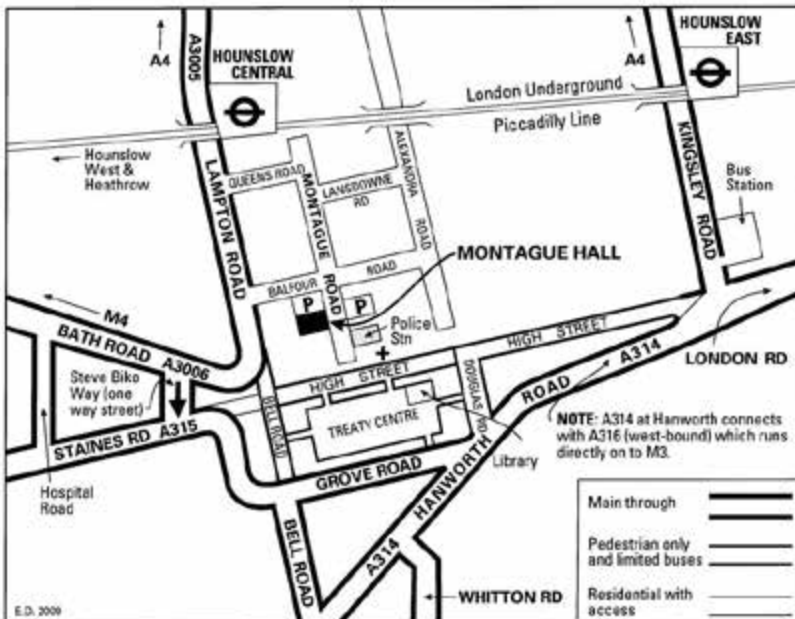
15 Feb The Layton Collection

James WISDOM

19 Mar AGM

Our meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at Montague Hall, Montague Road, Hounslow, TW3 1LD, and doors open at 7.15pm. Parking is available adjacent to the Hall.

Reference books, exchange journals from other societies and a bookstall – all can be browsed between 7.30 and 10pm (talks take place between 8pm and 9pm), and tea/coffee, or a cold drink, and biscuits are also available. Fully accessible.





As I highlighted in the September Journal, we are still seeking members to fill positions on our Committee. In March our Chairman, Kirsty GRAY, who has steered us through a difficult period, will relinquish her position as Chairman – would you like to take on this important post? Our Treasurer, Muriel SPOTT, will come to the end of her time as Treasurer, so if you have some book keeping skills, could you replace her? We welcome Cheryl FORD, who has been co-opted on to the Committee and her name will be put to the vote at the AGM.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the
Annual General Meeting of the
West Middlesex Family History Society
will be held at 8 pm on Thursday, 15th March, 2018
at Montague Hall, Montague Road, Hounslow

Reports will be presented by the Chairman and Treasurer and members will be asked to accept the accounts for the year 2017, and elect accounts examiners for the coming year.

Elections will be held for officers and members of the Executive Committee.

Members who wish to bring forward any matters at the AGM, are asked to write to the Secretary at the address below by 3rd January, 2018.

The agenda for the AGM will be included in the next issue of the Journal, to be published and distributed at the beginning of March, 2018.

Roland Bostock

Flat 8, 167 Park Road, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 0BP

After ten years as Editor I will be standing down in March, but Ann GREENE has agreed to take my place. As a former Librarian, I am sure the Journal will prosper under her editorship. Please make my final edition a memorable one by sending in your experiences in researching your family history.

WANT A LIFT?



At the Members' meeting on 21st September 2017, those members present were asked to consider if they were able and willing to provide lifts to other members who find getting to meetings a challenge. Below are details of those who have volunteered to be contacted by any other member who would like a lift. Do avail yourself of this service

If you are able to add your name to this page, just make contact with our Webmaster, Roland BOSTOCK, using the contact details as given below and providing similar information.

This list is also on our website under "Meetings" and hopefully additional names will be added between editions of the Journal.

Roland Bostock, who lives in **Teddington**, can do pickups from places such as:
*Hampton Wick, Teddington, Strawberry Hill, Hampton Hill
and Twickenham.*

Email: Roland@Bostock.net
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Isleworth and Hounslow

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Telephone: 020 8560 7492

ASHFORD

This article was first printed in the July 1989 Journal, with no attribution but was "Compiled from an information pack supplied by Spelthorne Library Service." I have brought it up to date. Ed.

Ashford derives its name from the River Ash, which flows through the western corner of the parish, and from a ford over the river on the road which enters the parish from Staines and Laleham. A stone bridge was built over the ford in 1789 by the Hampton and Staines turnpike, and is still known as Ford Bridge. The parish lies to the east of Staines, between the main roads from Staines to London and Kingston, which roads form the northern and southern boundaries of the parish respectively. Bronze Age artefacts have been found and it is believed that a hedge may have been present at that time.

In Domesday Ashford is spelt 'Exeford' and in the 13th and 14th centuries, it is 'Echelford or Echelesford'. At this time Ashford was part of the Hundred of Spelthorne, which included those parishes in the south-west corner of Middlesex.

The manor of Ashford was held by Westminster Abbey during the time of Edward the Confessor. A charter of King Edgar's time dates the donation of the manor to the reign of King Offa of the West Mercians, though there is some doubt as to its authenticity. In 1225 it was part of the lands given by the Abbot to the Convent of Westminster. It remained with Westminster Abbey until the dissolution of the monasteries, when it came into the possession of the Crown and Henry VIII included it as part of the honour of Hampton Court. The manor can be traced through successive owners to about 1800, when the land holding was broken up. The last remnant of the manor was that of Manor Farm, which in 1898 became a Golf Course, and the farm buildings were made into the club house. Initially it was called Manor Farm Golf Club but is now known as Ashford Manor Golf Club.

In the 19th century Ashford was still a small village clustered around an inn, a smithy and a few cottages at the cross roads from Staines, Kingston, Feltham and Laleham. In *Kelly's Directory* of 1852, Ashford is described as, "a beautiful village from its being surrounded by rich culture and woodlands. The people are dependant on agriculture."

The map shows Ashford at the end of the 19th century. Building is beginning near the station, with the roads just laid out. Today the area between the railway and Kingston Road is built over, except for the golf course. The Queen Mary Reservoir fills the area south of the Kingston Road, where Littleton and Astlham

Commons were. The main roads have remained the same, with the addition of the Staines Bypass, which runs from Ford Bridge to the north-west.

The church of St. Michael is first mentioned in 1293, when the rector of Staines was described as “of the chapels of Ashford and Laleham.” Its history from the 15th to the 18th century is confused but by 1760 it appears as a chapel of Staines and was served by a curate from there. It was demolished in 1856 and the present parish church, St. Matthew, was built some yards to the west, incorporating some internal monuments and a 12th century arch from the old church. The new church was designed in a Gothic Revival style by William BUTTERFIELD and the tower was completed in 1865. It was a perpetual curacy from 1860 to 1865, when it became a vicarage under the Parishes Act of that year.



St. Matthew



St. Hilda

In 1912 a daughter church, St. Hilda, was founded at the junction of Stanwell and Woodthorpe Roads, to serve the rapidly expanding community around the railway station. It was not completed until 1928 when the chancel was added. It is now a separate ecclesiastical parish.

The Roman Catholic Church of St. Michael revived the name of the first parish church. Building began in 1927 and it was consecrated in 1928, although building continued until 1938 and the tower was eventually completed in 1960. Non-conformists are served by two Methodist Churches: one in Clarendon Road and the other in

Ashford Common in Felthamhill Road; a Congregational Church was established in 1901 in Clarendon Road and there is a Salvation Army citadel in Woodthorpe Road.



Salvation Army Citadel

A Sunday School was established by the parish in 1817, from a fund subscribed to by the local inhabitants. In 1866, the Charity Commissioners authorised £300



The Welsh School, later St. David's School

to be expended on the building of a schoolhouse. The Welsh School (later St. David's School) was founded in 1857, in a building north of the railway station in Gothic Revival style, designed by Henry CLUTTON. St. David's School is now defunct but in 2010 its buildings and playing fields became the premises of St. James

Senior Boys School. Ashford County Grammar School was established in 1911 but was closed in the 1970s with the re-organisation of secondary education. It re-opened as Ashford Sixth Form College, then was renamed in 1975 as Spelthorne College. It was closed in 2007. The land was acquired by Inland Homes for housing, who began to demolish the Grammar School in February 2017, however this was stopped as they did not have the necessary planning permission.



Ashford Grammar School

There was a curious charity known locally as the 'Dog Charity'. This was from a bequest by Ann WEBB, whose will of 1801 left several charitable legacies to the parish, which were to take effect after the death of her little dog, Dan. The dog died in 1808 and the legacies came into effect from

October. One produced £7 a year and was divided between three poor men and three poor women. There was also a charity for chimney sweep boys in London, which replaced a yearly treat that she had given them in her lifetime. A list dated 1938, of the recipients who received money that year from the 'Dog Charity' is lodged at the LMA.

In 1834, with the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act, the parish became part of the Staines Union. When civil registration of births, marriages and deaths was introduced in 1837, Ashford was included in the Staines Registration District. In 1894, under the Local Government Act, Ashford was designated as part of the Staines Rural District of Middlesex, this was reorganised in 1930 and became the Staines Urban District. Middlesex County Council was abolished in 1963 and the Urban District was transferred to Surrey. Further re-organisation took place under the Local Government Act 1972, when the Staines and Sunbury-on-Thames Urban Districts were combined to create the present Borough of Spelthorne. However, Ashford is still referred to as 'Ashford Middlesex' to differentiate it from the Ashford in Kent.

The earliest estimate of the population of Ashford was that of 1547/8, when there were 77 people. It had grown little by the time of the Hearth Tax in 1664, which lists only 27 houses in the village, of which 22 were chargeable and 5 not chargeable; this gives an approximate population of 130. The largest house was owned by Martha WHITEING, with nine hearths: there were 5 other houses with more than three hearths and the rest had one, two or three. At the time of the first census in 1801, the population had grown to 264, a doubling of the population in 140 years. This is about average for the small rural communities of west Middlesex at that time. It had nearly doubled again by 1851, when the population was 497. The Railway came to Ashford in 1848, which led to further growth and the population had reached 1,019 by 1871. The population growth then started to accelerate, reaching 4,816 by 1901, 8,846 by 1931 and 21,000 by 1951.



Teddington War Memorial

Teddington War Memorial, in its quiet niche in front of Teddington Memorial Hospital, is a familiar sight to all who live and work in Teddington. The Service of Remembrance, held there on Remembrance Sunday, is always well attended. But have you ever stopped to take a closer look? How many names do you suppose are inscribed there? Do we know the stories that lie behind those names? Are any of your ancestors' names inscribed there? This article aims to help you answer some of those questions.

War memorials were set up all over the country shortly after hostilities ceased at the end of World War One. The general arrangement was that each local authority would set up a committee to manage the expenses and to collect names from families who had lost relatives, from newspaper reports and from any other sources. There

was no sure way to collect all the names whilst also wishing to erect the memorial in a timely manner. Hence it was almost universal that the larger war memorials would have to have names added after their initial unveiling and this aspect is very noticeable in Teddington's largest war memorial.

When you take a closer look at Teddington War Memorial, you will see that it is inscribed on all four sides with many names: 340 in total. In contrast to most war memorials, the names are grouped by the year in which they died. On the front, facing towards the road, the memorial starts simply with the words, "TO OUR GLORIOUS DEAD" and then lists 19 names of those who died in 1914. Beneath that the memorial continues with 59 names of those who died in 1915.

However, this is just the start. The whole of the right and left sides of the Memorial are used to list the 100 names of those who died in 1916. The back of the memorial was first used to list 36 names of those who died in 1917, 52 more names of those who died in 1918 and then six more who died in 1919. Beneath this are the words "LIVE YE FOR ENGLAND, WE FOR ENGLAND DIED".

These names are mostly in alphabetical sequence but it is also noticeable that names have been added above and below the main list, as later additions to the

Memorial. Clearly names kept being provided, for on the back of the memorial, above the lists already mentioned, a whole further section has been added under the title “Additional Names 1915-1918”. This is mostly in alphabetical sequence and includes a further 58 names, making up the total of 340 names as mentioned.

In respect of remembering those who died for their country in World War Two, there being little space for further names, the front of the memorial has these words, “1939-1945 and to record the gratitude of their fellow townsmen to those from Teddington who gave their lives for our freedom and safety, whether in the fighting services or on the home front. ‘WE WILL REMEMBER THEM’”.



One of the side panels



World War Two

This War Memorial is not the only war memorial in our town, not by any means. There is in contrasting style, the narrow column on a square base, just next to St. Peter and St. Paul at the other end of Broad Street. This also is inscribed with names of the deceased from World War One, with a small plaque added for World War Two, but the names on the base of this column are now extremely hard to read.

For those with an interest in such things, much effort has gone into locating all the war memorials in our area: in churches, in schools, in the National Physical Laboratory (NPL), in a golf club and even in a bus depot, and these are very well documented on the world wide web. The most thorough research into the lives behind the names has been carried out by the History Group of the Teddington Society: teddingtonsociety.org.uk in their ‘Online WW1 War Memorial for Teddington’ project.

Our Society has spent considerable effort to ‘find’ all the war memorials it can, not only in Teddington but across all of West Middlesex and some 16,000 names from these memorials, searchable by surname, are on our website: west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk . These records have also been uploaded to FindMyPast so that family history researchers across the world can search them.

Whilst on holiday this year we visited a Commonwealth War Graves (CWG) cemetery near Syracuse in Sicily. Compared with the enormous cemeteries in Belgium and France this one was quite small, with just over 1,000 burials. Like all CWG cemeteries, most of the interments were of British and allied servicemen, but also with a few of our former enemies – reconciled in death and cared for together in a calm and peaceful environment.



CWG Cemetery near Syracuse

My husband thought that some of his cousins had been killed in Sicily but a search of the cemetery records did not show up any familiar names. However, we decided to walk around and pay our respects to the dead.

We noticed that a few of the graves had pebbles carefully placed on top of the headstone. They were too carefully placed to have landed there by accident.

On our return we mentioned this to several people who said that they believed the stones would have been placed by visiting family members. Their dead relative cannot come home, but a piece of home can come to them. However, one day I was speaking to a Jewish acquaintance who said that she believed this was a uniquely Jewish custom. She also said that the stone did not have to have been brought from home, but could be taken from the cemetery grounds.

Everyone we spoke to agreed that they believed that the placing of the stone was a sign to the soul of their dead relative that they had been visited and had been remembered – a way of connecting the living with the dead.

If anyone does know how this custom began and whether what we have been told of its purpose is correct, I would be delighted to hear from them, via the Journal Editor.

Image: walkingthebattlefields.com

My husband and I both come from ordinary working class families. Recently I wrote an article for the Journal, telling of my unexpected connection to a Belgian Baron.

Now for my husband's side. His mother, Lambertine Betty WALLACE, (after her paternal grandmother, LAMBERTINE) along with an older brother, Robert Ernest (his mother did not like the names and he was always known as Peter), was sent to live with foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. LITTLE, who were market gardeners in Sipson. Betty knew nothing of her real family. Her brother was returned to his parents as a youngster but she was never claimed. At the age of five her parents stopped paying for her keep but Mr. and Mrs. LITTLE continued to look after her. In her 50s she was traced by her brother's family and was given a booklet they had written about their ancestry. (Incidentally, this started me on researching my own family). Although her parents were both dead, she found it difficult to form a relationship with the family, as she was very bitter about her upbringing. She died when she was only 62, before I had discovered that she was descended from Robert the Bruce, a firm favourite of hers.

It turned out that her great grandfather was Count Adolphe CAVAGNARI, of Italian/French ancestry. His son, Pierre Louis Napoleon CAVAGNARI, wrote that Adolphe was the son of a merchant of Vencie. Adolphe was married to Caroline LYONS-MONTGOMERY from a landed Irish family. He was equerry to Prince Lucien BONAPARTE, later Napoleon III.

They spent a lot of their time in Ireland and England and were frequently written about in the press. Lucien died and was buried in Chislehurst in 1873: the funeral being reported in *The Times* of 16th January 1873.

The Late Emperor Napoleon III

The police arrangements, we must say again, were excellent, and though the police stayed idle all day long, the greater praise is due to Captain BAYNES and Mr. Superintendent MOTT for their excellent keeping of the ground and arrangement of open spaces.

No less than 800 constables had come down from London, and Mr. Superintendent MOTT deserves praise for his excellent "dispositions". There was no crowding or hindrance of anytime through the day, and we have heard of no accident.

Presumably Count CAVAGNARI was at the funeral. He was my husband's great, great grandfather on his mother's line and Superintendent James MOTT was his great, great grandfather on his father's line. Did they meet?

LETTER FROM BLOEMFONTEIN

Bridget Purr

Mavis Sibley has found some local newspaper cuttings, dated 1899/1903, of letters from soldiers fighting in the Boer War. This is one of them, with his story.

Uxbridge Gazette, 21 April 1900

From Private E. EDGSON, No.6 Company, 2nd Coldstream Guards, Guards Brigade, South Africa.

Bloemfontein
March 20th 1900

Sir, - Allow me to thank you most kindly for sending me the *Gazette* which I have just received. I was very pleased to get some news of the old town; it put one in mind of old times to see a bit of Uxbridge news, as we have had a very rough time of it lately. Since we left the Modder River we have been doing a long march from Klips Drift to Bloemfontein, and have undergone some terrible hardships, marching on 2 biscuits and ½ lb of bully beef a day, sometimes doing 20 miles a day, and I can tell you it takes a bit of doing in the terrible heat and short food and water. You have no doubt seen by the papers that the brigade of Guards have done a record march in the history of the army, covering no less than 44 miles in 22 hours including sleep, and also carrying two days' rations of 5 biscuits and 180 rounds of ammunition, blanket and oilsheet. We arrived in Bloemfontein without even firing a shot, which greatly surprised all of us, but was very acceptable after the heavy marching we had done. We were supposed to march through the town at the head of the division, and we had a review the next day, and were inspected by Lord Roberts himself. He complimented us on the work which we have done, and was greatly surprised to hear that we were in the town, and added he hoped to have the pleasure of marching at our head into Pretoria. Oh, may it be soon, is the wish of every Coldstream out here. We are now lying in barracks lately occupied by the Free State Artillery before the commencement of the war, sleeping on the floor, about 50 in one room, which is very acceptable after what we have been through lately. We are able to buy bread at one shilling a lb. loaf; also jam at 2s. a lb. tin; also butter at 2s. 6d. a lb., and I can tell you there is a rush for it at that price. Again thanking you for sending me the papers. - I am yours respectfully,

Private E. Edgson.

Edward John EDGSON was born in 1879 in Uxbridge, the son of Martin E. EDGSON (b. 1852, Stoke Poges, BKM) and Mary Ann née THATCHER (b.1851, Cowley, MDX). He lived in Hillingdon with his parents and siblings, Florence E. (1881), Sarah A. (1884) and Arthur W. (1887).

On 2nd November 1898, Edward enlisted into the Coldstream Guards, giving his trade as a blacksmith. He arrived in South Africa on 21st October 1899, and took part in many skirmishes. With his Queen's South Africa Medal he was awarded clasps for battles at Belmont, Modder River, Driefontein, Johannesburg, Diamond Hill and Belfast. His service was not without blemish as on 28th April 1900, he was confined to barracks for 14 days for "Making a highly improper remark to a NCO." He was further confined to barracks after his return to England for going missing for about 12 hours in London on 21st June 1902, "telling the police a lie and using threatening language".



Queen's South Africa Medal

Suffering from rheumatism and bronchitis, he was transferred to Cape Town on 17th July 1901, and sailed for home on 27th September 1901, on the *SS Britannia*, arriving in Gosport on 18th October. On 2nd April 1902, he was recommended to serve only at home. He was finally discharged on 16th July 1902.



Clasps for South Africa

On his discharge papers he stated that his preferred trade would be as a valet as he had a certificate for nursing. However in 1911 he was a shopkeeper at 17 London Road, Reigate, working on his own account with help from his wife, Lily Maud Mary (née) PIPER, whom he had married on 12th March 1910, at All Saints, Acton.

He was re-engaged into the Army Reserve at Guildford on 1st November 1910. and was re-mobilized on 5th August 1914, but discharged on 1st November 1915. On 2nd July 1916, he enlisted into the Military Foot Police, this time giving his trade as a Policeman. He embarked for France on 21st April 1917, was promoted from Private to Lance Corporal, then Corporal but was demoted to Private on 20th March 1918, for "inefficiency". On 18th February 1919, he was invalided home to St. Luke's Hospital, Halifax, with eczema, but his hospital records stated that he had syphilis. He was finally discharged at Crystal Palace on 15th May 1919, with the rank of Lance Corporal. He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

During the whole of this period his address was given as 17 London Road, Reigate. He had three children, all born in Reigate: Gwendoline Maud, b. 3rd April 1912, Ronald Edward John, b. 29th November 1917, and Morleen F., born in 1921. He died in Reigate in 1930. If anyone is interested to look further into the records of Edward John EDGSON, there is a photograph of him on a family member's tree on Ancestry.

Sources: GRO, Census and Military records

As a child I had heard people refer to this 'Order' and assumed it was a derogatory term for folk who spent too much time in the pub. Imagine my surprise when, amongst some papers I inherited, was my Uncle's membership book. Uncle Frank was member number 79911.

Inside the front cover it proclaims:

DO YOU GOLLOP YOUR
BEER WITH ZEST?

If so! You are unanimously elected a Member of

Ye Ancient Order of
Froth Blowers

Life Membership 5/- with all the privileges of the proposed club house, including the use of corkscrews, sawdust, note and other paper, silver cuff-links etc.

THE ANCIENT GUILD (Circa 1924) exists to foster the noble Art and Gentle and healthy Pastime of FROTH BLOWING amongst Gentlemen-of-Leisure and Ex-Soldiers. After payment of Subscription you will be *Permitted* to Blow Froth off your own beer, other members' beer, and occasionally off non-members' beer, provided that they are not looking or are of a peaceful disposition.

The booklet carries on in this style for a further 21 pages, including 'The Froth Blowers' Anthem' – *The more we are together, the merrier we'll be*. There is a list of licensed premises which welcome members. Any member who recruits one new member is a 'Blower', 25 new members a 'Blaster', 100 new members a 'Tornado', 500 new members a 'Monsoon', 1,000 new members a 'Grand Typhoon' and anyone recruiting 2,000 new members became a 'Cloud-Burst'.

So what was this Order really all about? The Order flourished briefly between the wars to help deprived children. Inside the membership book is a, sadly undated, newspaper clipping reporting the death of one of the senior members.

The article continued:

"The charity was founded in 1924 by Herbert TEMPLE, after his friend, the eminent surgeon Sir Alfred FRIPP, refused a fee for an operation. TEMPLE thought the 'Tiny Tim' style of appeal for waifs and strays was 'threadbare', so he arranged for members to buy for five shillings, a pair of cufflinks which had cost him 2s. 8d. and gave the balance to the fund ... the world-wide membership reached 700,000 and raised £100,000."

PROPOSED CHANGES TO OUR CONSTITUTION



Our existing Constitution includes some references to quorums at meetings that were appropriate to the Society when membership was higher than it is today, but now need to be changed to reflect the lower numbers of our members.

This article identifies five small changes that are proposed for the Constitution. Members will be asked to support a motion at the AGM in March to bring these changes into effect.

The five proposed changes to the Constitution are as follows:

1. In clause 6(a) the existing requirement that Committee meetings require a quorum of “six” members will be reworded to say that a quorum shall consist of “no less than half the Committee” members. The further requirement that the quorum requires at least two Officers (Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary are the Officers) will continue unchanged.
2. In clause 6(b) the reference to the Chairman at “his” discretion, will be reworded to say at “their” discretion.
3. In clause 7(c) the requirement that an Extraordinary General Meeting can be convened at the request of not less than “twenty” full members of the Society will be changed so that it only requires the written request of “ten” full members of the Society.
4. In the same clause the requirement that a quorum at such a meeting shall consist of not less than “forty-five” full members will be changed so that a quorum of “twenty” members is sufficient.
5. The frequent references to Executive Committee, Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting are replaced by referring to the Committee, AGM and EGM, with explanation at the front.

Members are reminded that the full text of our Constitution may be viewed at any time from the “About us/Objectives” page on our website. This is the full text of the Constitution including the four proposed changes just mentioned.

CONSTITUTION



The Constitution of the WEST MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Terms used in this document:

AGM	= Annual General Meeting
Committee	= Executive Committee
EGM	= Extraordinary General Meeting

1. NAME

The name of the Society shall be the **West Middlesex Family History Society**.

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the Society shall be to promote and encourage the public study of Family History, Local History, Genealogy and Heraldry. In furtherance of these objects but not otherwise, the Society shall have power to:

- (a) promote, maintain and encourage the practice of, and dissemination of information on, Family History, Local History, Genealogy and Heraldry, by means of education or lectures or otherwise to Society members and interested members of the general public;
- (b) promote and maintain research into all aspects of Family History, Local History, Genealogy and Heraldry;
- (c) preserve records, archives and any other sources of material by transcription or otherwise;
- (d) publish literature; and
- (e) collaborate with other similar organisations and with such bodies as churches, libraries, record offices and educational institutions.

3. AFFILIATION

The Society may affiliate to the Federation of Family History Societies and shall have the power to guarantee its debts in the event of its insolvency up to the sum of £1, and may affiliate to other bodies whose aims are similar to its own.

4. MEMBERSHIP

(a) Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons who are interested in the objects for which the Society exists. Application for membership shall be

made in writing on a prescribed form. The classes of membership shall be as follows

- i. Individual;
- ii. Joint;
- iii. Corporate;
- iv. Honorary.

(b) Joint Membership shall mean two people residing at the same address, each of whom shall be entitled to one vote at AGMs or EGMs. Individual Members, Honorary Members and the representative of a Corporate Membership present at AGMs or EGMs shall be entitled to one vote each.

(c) The Committee shall be empowered to elect Honorary members.

(d) The Committee of the Society may, by unanimous vote and for good and sufficient reason, suspend or recommend the termination of membership of any member. That suspension to become termination or to be set aside by the membership at the next following AGM of the Society or an EGM convened in accordance with the procedure outlined in Clause 7 below, provided that such member will have the right to be heard (accompanied by a friend) by the Committee before a final decision is taken by the Committee to suspend or recommend termination. Termination may only be implemented subject to a two-thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote in favour of such termination.

5. SUBSCRIPTION

Subscriptions shall be payable at the time and at the rate recommended by the Committee and approved by members at the AGM, subject to a simple majority of those present eligible to vote. Any member who is three months in arrears with their subscription shall be deemed to have resigned from the Society.

6. COMMITTEE

(a) The Society shall be administered by a Committee consisting of not more than twelve members. The Honorary Officers of this Committee shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. A quorum shall consist of no less than half the Committee members which will include at least two Officers.

(b) All members of the Committee shall be elected by fully paid-up members who are present and voting at the AGM. Nominations for membership of the Committee must be submitted in writing to the Secretary so as to arrive not less than fourteen days before the AGM. If insufficient nominations have been received to fill the vacancies the Chairman of the meeting may, at their discretion, take nominations from the floor.

(c) Members of the Committee shall retire at the end of three years' service but may submit themselves for re-election on an annual basis for a further three years. No individual shall serve on the Committee for more than six consecutive years; such an individual may however be re-elected after a lapse of one year.

(d) Casual vacancies may be filled by co-option by the Committee.

(e) The Committee may appoint annually sub-committees, either ad hoc or permanently, which under the authority and approval of the Committee may nominate such persons as they consider appropriate including persons not members of the Committee.

(f) The Committee shall meet at least four times a year, and shall determine the rules and procedures to govern its own meetings.

7. MEETINGS

(a) The AGM of the Society shall be held during the months of February or March. Written notice of this meeting will normally appear in the preceding Journal or in writing at least 28 days prior to the event. A quorum at such a meeting shall consist of not less than twenty full members.

(b) The AGM will:

- i. receive the Chairman's report;
- ii. receive the examined accounts of the Society;
- iii. appoint one or more independent examiners;
- iv. elect the Officers and other members of the Committee; and
- v. transact any other business on the agenda.

(c) An EGM may be convened at the request of the Committee or at the written request of not less than ten full members of the Society, with prior notice given in the preceding Journal or in writing at least twenty-eight days before the meeting. A quorum at such a meeting shall consist of not less than twenty full members.

(d) Only those paid-up members present shall be entitled to vote at an AGM or EGM.

8. CONSTITUTION

(a) Subject to the following provisions of this clause, the Constitution may be altered only at an AGM or at an EGM of the Society of which proper notice has been given; such Notice to include notice of the Resolution setting out the terms of the proposed alteration. The Resolution must be passed by not less than two-thirds of the votes of Society members present and voting at the meeting.

(b) No such alteration may be made which would have the effect of making the Society cease to be a Charity at law.

(c) No amendment may be made to Clause 1 (name clause), Clause 2 (objects clause), Clause 9(a) (Committee members not personally interested clause), Clause 10 (dissolution clause) or this Clause without the prior consent in writing of the Charity Commissioners. Proposals for constitutional amendments shall be submitted to the Committee of the Society at least fifty-six days prior to the day on which the AGM or EGM is to be held.

(d) The Committee should promptly send to the Charity Commissioners a copy of any amendment made under this clause.

9. FINANCE

(a) The income and property of the Society, whence so ever derived, shall be applied solely towards the promotion and execution of the objectives of the Society as defined in Clause 2 above, and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly in any manner by way of profit to any member of the Committee or Society; provided that nothing herein shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable and proper repayment of out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Society or the payment of an approved fee when engaged as a speaker.

(b) The Committee or Treasurer on its behalf shall cause proper books of account to be kept with respect to all sums of money received and expended by the Society and the matters in respect of which such receipts and expenditure take place.

(c) Once at least in every year, the Society's accounts shall be examined by one or more independent examiners. The results of this examination shall be presented to members of the Society at the AGM.

10. DISSOLUTION

The Society may be dissolved by a resolution passed by not less than three-quarters of those members present with voting rights at either an AGM or EGM called for the purpose and for which twenty-eight days' notice has been given in writing. Such a resolution shall give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by the Society after all debts and liabilities have been paid, the balance left to be transferred to some other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to those of the Society.

11. TRUSTEES

The Committee, who shall be deemed to be Charity Trustees, may appoint Committee members or other members of the Society to be Holding Trustees for the Society to hold any property owned by it or held or to be held in trust for the Society.

FAMILY HISTORY NEWS



The Federation, in association with the Society of Australian Genealogists and the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations, has updated their *Our Australasian Really Useful*

Information Leaflet, which you can download for free from: ffhs.org.uk/tips/RUL-Aus-2017-0890.pdf

The leaflet focuses on how to research your ancestors if you live in Australasia but is also a great resource for UK family historians who may have had ancestors who went to Australasia, either because of forced transportation or due to emigration. It gives a long list of websites and has a how-to guide. It also lists family history societies that can help you with your research.

Railway Work, Life and Death. railwayaccidents.port.ac.uk



Britain's railways were one of the most dangerous places to work for much of the 19th and 20th centuries and accidents to workers were common. Mike Esbester has informed the FFHS of a new project, "Railway Work, Life & Death" which is making details available of some of the worker accidents that were investigated. So far they have

recorded details of railway employee accidents between 1911 and 1915 but they want to extend the project and want your input. They would like your feedback on the work already done and what you would like them to do next. If you would like to get involved, please get in touch with them.

railworkeraccidents@gmail.com

Northamptonshire Record Office

Enthusiastic campaigning by family historians and others has halted the plan by Northamptonshire County Council to cut free afternoon access to its record office and impose sky-high charges for much of the week.

After ten days of lobbying, including features on BBC Radio Northampton, the County Council has backed down. It has restored most of the cuts to free access hours and scrapped the plans to charge people £31.50 per hour just to use the search room. Visit the record office website to see the revised opening hours.

northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices

Second World War Veterans



As part of her PhD, Harriet BEADNELL is exploring the representation and identity of Second World War veterans and looking at the public and private image of veterans. Thus she would like to interview such veterans about their experiences as ex-servicemen or women. If you know anyone who could help her please email: heb533@york.ac.uk

Family Search has closed its microfilm distribution service due to the progress it has made in digitising its records. If you are unable to access its parish records from your own computer, you can still do so at local LDS family history centres.

Midland Ancestors is the new working name for the Birmingham and Midland Society for Genealogy and Heraldry and they have launched a new website at midland-ancestors.uk. Their main remit is Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

Poppies at the Tower of London



Did you buy a poppy from the WW1 centenary art installation at the Tower of London? A new project, *Where Are The Poppies Now*, would like to hear from members of the public so that they can 'pin' the location of the poppy and understand what it means to them.

wherearethepoppiesnow.org.uk

London Hackney Cab drivers are needed for a new oral history project aimed at London school children. The children are taught oral history techniques and then they will interview taxi drivers. Combined with personal and historic photographs and archive footage, the interviews will be part of a documentary to be premiered in 2018, at the London Transport Museum. Do you know a current or former cabbie? If they are willing to take part, please contact Matthew Rosenberg, 07979 107023, or mat@digital-works



Getting Online – Social Media and Family History – Why Bother? *Kirsty Gray and Carole Steers*, July

Kirsty began by telling us the names of some of the social media platforms which are available: Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest (a sort of pinboard and not very useful to family historians), LinkedIn (mostly used for business to business interaction) and Instagram.



LinkedIn



Resistance to using these platforms was shown to be because of the perception that there is too much rubbish on social media and it takes time – which we do not want to spare – to interact with other users. Although LinkedIn is mainly a business to business platform, it can be useful for finding people wherever they are.



Carole then told us more about **Twitter for genealogy**. Twitter has over 300 million users, with the average user being between 18 and 29 years of age. What an easy way to communicate with the younger generation! There is already a strong online genealogy community, so it is a great place to ‘meet’ fellow researchers and get help. You may find question-and-answer sessions, news of new collections and offers of help – all within the 140 character tweet limit. (A tweet is a message posted on Twitter).

To take the plunge:

- from the opening web page, follow the step by step guide to setting up a profile;
- add people to your time line. ‘People’ can be organisations such as West Middlesex Family History Society;
- you will be welcomed to the home page;
- get to know the # (hash tag), which is essentially a quick search tool;
- every Tuesday at 7pm BST is genealogy hour, which is a good place to start and ‘meet’ new people who share a common interest.



Kirsty explained that **Facebook** is probably the easiest platform to start with. It is widely used for keeping in touch with friends and family, but can also be used to make contact with people who have similar interests. Facebook is easy to use – you can use it as you want; there is no need to share photographs or information that you want to keep private. However, like everything in life, if you want to get something out, you have to be prepared to put something in.

A Facebook account does not have to reveal your true identity, so you can have both public and private profiles. If you want to be found, set up your profile as yourself; if you only want to connect with people that you have invited to be your Facebook friends, anonymise yourself. Facebook groups can be set up – anyone can join an open group, someone has to ask whether they can join a closed group, but someone has to be invited to join a secret group. Posting a Facebook message can be quicker and simpler than sending an email. If both parties to a Facebook conversation are online at the same time, they can carry on a real-time communication.

To get started with Facebook visit **facebook.com**; if you are not already a member there is an option to join. It is important to check your settings carefully to ensure that you do not receive unwanted emails from Facebook and you can also keep your profile private so only your friends can see your posts.

If West Middlesex Family History Society had a bigger community following us on Twitter or Facebook, we could actively promote the Society by engaging in dialogue with interested visitors to our profile.

So please, like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and tell the world about what a great Society we have here.

MS

Toleration or turmoil: English non-conformity and our ancestors. *Janet Few.* August.

Janet travelled all the way from North Devon to be with us in August and began by telling us about the HO 129 record set – the 1851 Ecclesiastical census, which is freely downloadable from the Digital Microfilm Project at The National Archives: discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C8993. At the time this census of Britain was taken, there were 113 distinct Dissenting denominations with 22,900 places of worship (60% of the total for all churches) and the aggregate attendance at morning, afternoon and evening services was 6,842,000. This represented 54% of total worshippers and was equivalent to a third of the population.

The impact of non-conformity was far reaching: from social order, population and work, to mental health and community cohesion. People were wary of those

who were 'different', with some people being more tolerant than others. Not much has changed in 166 years!

At the end of the twelfth century there were anti-Semitic riots with major discontent with the Jewish community. The Bible says you should not lend money but the Jews were very good at lending money and by nature, humans do not like to see others being more successful.

The Jews of Lincoln were, in 1255, accused of the murder of a young Christian boy and despite a lack of evidence, 18 people (of the 91 who were seized) were executed. The rest were pardoned. Within a few decades, in 1290, all Jews were expelled from England and they were not allowed to return until 1657.

In the 1640s the English Civil War took place and from this historical point forward, religion and politics have been much intertwined.

The Religious Society of Friends began as a movement in England in the mid-seventeenth century in Lancashire. Members are more informally known as Quakers, as they were said "to tremble in the way of the Lord". The movement in its early days faced strong opposition and persecution but it expanded across the British Isles and then in the Americas and Africa.

The impact of non-conformity on population was enormous. It began with the influx of the Huguenots and Walloons, who arrived from the Low Countries in the 1540s, on to 1657, when CROMWELL allowed the Jews back into the country. Later events included the arrival of French Protestants, as the result of the 1685 Revocation of the Edict of Nantes; the Sephardic Jews who arrived from Russia between 1880 and 1914; and the Jews in the 1930s, who arrived from Germany and Austria, etc.

This was mirrored by the exodus of people, some of which was chosen and some enforced: from the expulsion of the Jews in 1290, to the departure of the Puritans to the New World in 1620, to the Catholics between 1660 and 1789, and the Methodists during the nineteenth century.

Not everyone had the initiative and drive to emigrate. Longer distance movement was more likely to be undertaken in the higher socio-economic groups and Janet shared several sources to highlight this point. [see below]

Religious movements, particularly the Jews, the Quakers and the Huguenots, had an impact on work: the Jews were money lenders, the Cadbury and Fry chocolatiers were Quakers and the silk weavers of Spitalfields were Huguenots.

Non-conformity also had a bearing on mental health and the 329 volumes of the Bethlem Hospital Patient Admission Registers and Casebooks (1683-1932) can be found on FindMyPast. They include staff records, minutes of the governors' meetings from 1559, and individual casebooks of patients admitted to the hospital. Well worth a look.

So, what was the glue which held our communities together back in history? They were the events which encouraged everyone to turn out. Has that changed to this day? No, not really. Janet added that living in rural Wiltshire, her community is held together by many events, including the world's largest Bike Meet, an annual duck race, Heritage Week, the Christmas Parade and more. Not every town or village will have their own events, sadly, so why not consider helping to provide the 'glue' in your community? KG

Associated links:

[bath.org.uk/uploads/tlh-downloads/The Local Historian 40.2 text.pdf](http://bath.org.uk/uploads/tlh-downloads/The_Local_Historian_40.2_text.pdf) – “Zion's people who were the English Nonconformists? Part 1: Gender, age, marital status and ethnicity”, article by Clive D. FIELD.

fau.quaker.org.uk/search-view – The Friends Ambulance Unit (1914-1918) was a civilian volunteer ambulance service set up by a group of Quakers during World War I. Its members from 1914-1919, both Quaker and non-Quaker, totalled over 1,000. A Friends' Ambulance Unit first went to Dunkirk in October 1914, under the auspices of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem.

jewishgen.org – the home of Jewish genealogy.

Heir Hunting – the Real Deal, Kirsty Gray, September

Kirsty Gray is our current Chairman and the Managing Director of Family Wise Limited. She began by telling us that she dislikes the term “heir hunting”, preferring to call the activity “heir tracing”, and that heir tracing as portrayed in the television programme, “Heir Hunters”, bears little resemblance to the reality of her work.

What is heir tracing? It is about finding the beneficiaries of someone who has died intestate and with no known relatives. This is where the heir-tracing firms come in. Their business is to trace potential heirs and then to sign them up for a percentage commission of the estate. The names of people who have died intestate are found in the **Bona Vacantia** list (or Unclaimed Estates List), which is published online. The **Bona Vacantia** list is published every day but appears at an unspecified time each day between 8am and 5pm, which adds to the excitement. The list is open for anyone to look at, so the commercial firms are not only competing with each other, but with non-professionals who recognise a name.

In the case of intestacy, who is entitled to make a claim on an estate? Given that several people may eventually be traced, there is an order of priority as to who has the greater claim. First in the order of priority is a spouse or civil partner. A civil partner must have gone through the formal civil-partnership ceremony. An unregistered partnership based on having lived together for several years is not admissible. Next in order come any children of the deceased or grandchildren.

If there is no spouse or civil partner and no children, priority of claim then goes to brothers and sisters of the whole blood (i.e. descended from both parents of the deceased). If there are none of these, then half-blood siblings may be able to claim. If none of the above survives, or they are untraceable, then the search goes back up the family tree to the level of the deceased's grandparents.

If no beneficiaries come forward or can be traced within twelve years, the estate is claimed by the government. Between twelve years and thirty years, claims can be made but it is up to the government whether they are willing to admit the claim.

Supposing that an heir-tracing firm or individual has identified beneficiaries, who is entitled to file a claim on the estate? Again, the answer is "almost anybody". An individual who believes they have a claim, or anyone acting on their behalf: solicitor, genealogist, friend or heir-hunting firm may file the claim. And there are a lot of heir-hunters out there – there is no legal requirement for academic training.

Is heir-tracing worth it? How much are the unclaimed estates worth? Up until April 2013, the lowest limit for inclusion on the Bona Vacantia list was £5,000. Since then, however, the limit has been dropped to £500, so it has become more of a gamble.

How do you decide? The Bona Vacantia list offers the following information: name of the deceased, date of birth, place of birth, marital status, aliases, place of death and date of death, with varying degrees of accuracy. There is no indication of the value of the estate so the heir-tracing firms have to take a gamble on which ones may prove to be worth their while. The informants may be a bank or a hospital, some of whom are easier to work with than others, which may influence their selection of cases. Finally, there are other heir-tracing companies looking at the same list. And there are a lot of heir-tracing companies.

With the decision made, what happens next? The heir-tracers unpick as many errors in the basic information as they can and begin the search. Once the heirs have been identified, they have to be located and contacted. Sometimes this can be done very quickly but ethically speaking it is not a race and it is not about 'door-stepping' potential heirs to get them to sign with your firm. Initially you are breaking the news of a death to someone, which should not guarantee that you get the contract (even if a contract is signed, there is still a 14-day cancellation clause). It is about empathy, explaining the process and being completely transparent and open.

Having contacted an heir, Kirsty will then ensure that her research is correct and will offer to make a claim on and administer the estate on the heir's behalf. When approached by companies, potential heirs are often anxious about whether it is legitimate or a scam. A letter can be made more legitimate by containing the

name of the deceased person, their date of birth and date of death. This allows the recipient to check their family tree or contact a family member to check before contacting the heir-tracing firm to discuss a contract. Most companies work on a percentage-basis, but beware of extra or hidden costs.

- Has the company included VAT in their price? If they have not, your share of a small estate, minus the firm's 12% commission and VAT at 20% of that commission will diminish.
- Some companies outsource the legal work, incurring further costs for the beneficiary

Once the tracing has been done and the contract with the heir has been signed, the beneficiary still has to provide proof of their identity. There is still often confusion over what constitutes a valid proof of name. A bus pass is not valid, but the following (amongst others) are:

- NHS medical card
- Letter from the Department of Work and Pensions
- Birth certificate – but only if it is the original one and not a certified copy
- Firearms and shotgun certificate

In the event of not having any of these, a letter from your GP confirming your identity will suffice. Proof of address is also required and while mobile phone bills and TV licences are not accepted, the following (amongst others) are:

- Mortgage statement
- Paper copy of utility bill – but only if issued within the previous three months
- Bank statement

Once the claim is ready for submission to the government, the heir-tracer gathers together the contract, the name and proofs of ID of one beneficiary (even if representing more than one) and the relevant GRO certificates; draws as concise and brief a family tree as possible and sends it off to the Government Legal Department at Croydon. If all goes smoothly and the claim is accepted, you are referred to the referrer and all the paperwork must be sent off to them. However, even at this point, you cannot assume that the administration of the estate is yours. There may be other companies who have put in a claim for the estate.

Until about 12 months ago, the system was first-past-the-post, so that the first solicitor/company/individual to get their paperwork approved won the administration of the estate. Now, however, heir-tracers can find themselves in a battle with others to negotiate who administers the estate. This can be a very difficult process. Only at this stage will you discover exactly what the estate

comprises. It could be literally anything. Kirsty described several cases from her own experience which graphically illustrated this.

To finalise an estate you need to find everybody who is a beneficiary. A beneficiary does not have to claim their entitlement but if they wish to disclaim, they must do so in writing. However, the heir-tracer must engage with each person and determine their wishes. The estate cannot be settled until all the beneficiaries have been traced. In the event of an heir proving untraceable (whether intentionally or not), Missing Beneficiary Insurance will allow the case to be settled, provided it can be proved that due diligence has been shown.

Some questions:

- How do you actually find out where the heirs are living?
Tracing the whereabouts of heirs can be done through various means. FindMyPast has electoral rolls up to 2014, and there are commercial services like 123.com, but often simply Googling a name may also bring results – they may be a company director, treasurer of a local society, be on Facebook or LinkedIn.
- Is it hard to trace heirs who were adopted before 1927?
Yes, you may be convinced you have traced the right person, but finding a record that is acceptable as proof is another matter. AG

LONDON METROPOLITAN ARCHIVES JOINT USERS' FORUM

Carole Steers

I was asked to attend the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) Joint Users Forum on behalf of the Society on 20 September 2017.

The meeting was held at LMA and there were a number of other societies in attendance, along with some academic users of the archive. After a quick hello and introductions the meeting got underway with a 'digital update' from the senior archivist, David LUCK. David explained that the Corporation of London are looking to move the computers over to using Windows 10 during the first two weeks of November. The public computers, and the catalogue itself, are now more stable but they are aware that there remain problems with printing. David also mentioned that the WiFi in the building is no longer supplied by LMA and instead is supplied by O2: you have to sign up but it is free, and is a much better service. The catalogue will be updated before the end of the year to provide better access to research guides, and digital access, and will also include relevant articles that have been published.

Geoff PICK, LMA Director, then provided an update on how the larger Corporation of London views LMA and its future. The building itself is one that can be used in a disaster (and so it is not going anywhere), and the LMA is specifically mentioned as a heritage asset in the New Corporation Plan, which sets out the vision of the Corporation over the next five years. However, they have been told that they have to make a 2% “efficiency saving” which equates to between £60,000 and £80,000 per annum. Geoff did state that at present there are no plans to make cuts to staffing levels, and this saving needs to be made across the ‘Chair of the City’ department.

The LMA have had a number of successful events over the last year, including London History Day, London Open House, and a live ‘Facebook’ interview with Tony ROBINSON. They will be continuing the programme of events, and in December they are launching “Criminal Lives” which focuses on criminals and transportation to Australia between 1780 up to the 1920s. In 2018, there will be events across the LMA and the Guildhall Library focusing on the role of women in London. The LMA is also going to become the hub for the British Library’s sound archive, which has received funding from the National Lottery.

The LMA will be closed for two weeks from the 2nd of November 2017, for the annual closure.

Following the LMA updates, each attendee gave an update on their society, or their academic body. It appears that most of the Family History Societies are experiencing the same issues: namely falling membership, lack of volunteers taking up substantive posts on the committee, and finding people who are able to drive to various events. A couple of the other societies also run drop-in sessions in local libraries, with one charging for the sessions (with a discount for members to try to increase their membership).

Else CHURCHILL, from the Society of Genealogists (SoG), was also in attendance and fed back that their new website was due to be launched on that day and that a new membership structure (for new members) has been introduced. They have now introduced ‘Associate’ memberships for those who wish to use the website only. The learning zone will be re-vamped and the plan is to offer more online courses. The microfilms from the London History Centre that were previously accessible at Kew have now been moved to SoG, and are accessible under the usual library conditions, that is if you are not a member you have to pay a small fee to enter the library.

Finally, I am glad I was able to assist the Society in attending, as I know that the middle of the day on a Wednesday is not ideal for many. I would encourage everyone reading this to have a think about how they can help the Society, as moving forward is the only way we will survive.

WEST LONDON LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE, Part 2

This year's Conference was held on the 25th March 2017. Talks relevant to the West Middlesex area have been reported by Yvonne MASSON.

Bypassing Crowded Brentford: the impact of the new Great West Road upon West London. *James Marshall*



Brentford High Street, 1909

At the turn of the 20th century, the surroundings of Brentford were still rural. Brentford High Street had always been congested, especially with waggons and carts passing through from the surrounding market gardens – as early as 1836 there were proposals to bypass the High street.

Before WWI there were few motorists, as only the more wealthy had cars. As traffic began to build up, reports suggested that the road network was inadequate. 100 miles of new road were proposed, including a Great West Road, which would leave Brentford High Street “free of traffic”. However, the new road actually led to the urbanisation of the surrounding countryside and only ten years after its opening, a local map showed the area had completely changed, with suburban sprawl and ribbon development.

On the 31st July 1914, an Act of Parliament was passed to enable the road to be built, but work did not begin until 1920 and a section between Lampton and Syon Hill was opened in 1923 by King George V. Builders began to line the road with houses, initially with desirable properties, aimed at the middle classes. A shortage of housing had led to a torrent of new building after WWI and semis could be had for £755.

Local authorities also provided council houses, in the spirit of ‘Homes for Heroes’. This led to a high proportion of families with children moving to the area so new schools were needed, especially for 11-14 year olds as the school leaving age had been raised to 14. This also attracted young teachers to the area.

On what was all this prosperity founded? On industry, especially electrification such as was supplied by a new local power station, Bridge Road Generating

Station. New, Art Deco-style factories were built, designed to impress passing motorists. Hudson Motors Ltd. came from Detroit – car bodies imported and finished in West London reduced import duties. Firestone was next to arrive: the growing number of motorists needed tyres. Other factories were built for Pyrene Fire Extinguishers, Gillette, built in 1936 on Syon Hill, Beechams in 1937 and Coty, Smith's Crisps and Bakers' Soldering Fluid. After the



Firestone factory

outrage over the demolition of the Firestone factory during the bank holiday weekend of 1980, some of these Art Deco factories were listed.



Car showrooms were soon attracted to the locality, such as Packard Cars in 1931. Despite radio licenses costing 10s., thousands of people were applying for one every day and Burgoyne Radios were there between the Wars. MacFarlane Lang biscuits moved in to Osterley, where employees had their own recreation hall, first aid room, canteen, etc. Many

women were now being employed, for example on the wrapping machines.

Before WWI, vehicles employed by the companies were mostly horse drawn but later steam powered lorries arrived. Soldiers training for WWI learnt to drive in Osterley Park. Horse drawn vehicles had a range of about 15 miles, so were adequate for those in the market garden belt to get their goods into London, but motor power meant that food could be brought into London from farms further away, thus releasing the market garden land in the Brentford area to developers. So the urbanisation of West London was made possible by the development of electricity and the motor lorry.

Images: bhsproject.co.uk c20society.org.uk ebay.co.uk

Something in the Air: the rise of aviation in West London. *Oliver Green*, a Research Fellow at the London Transport Museum.

The first person to manufacture aircraft in West London was Tommy



Sopwith Camel

SOPWITH, whose company, Sopwith Aviation, was based in Kingston and used mass production methods to build the Sopwith Camel, which was the major fighter aeroplane in World War One, and the Sopwith Pup. After the end of the war, planes were now needed for different purposes and Sopwith Aviation went into liquidation.

The first commercial flight was from Hounslow Heath, and was operated by the A. T. & T. Company (a forerunner of British Airways). It took off in 1919 for Le Bourget, Paris, carrying passengers, newspapers, Devonshire cream and grouse. The first trans-Atlantic flight was that of John ALCOCK and Arthur BROWN in 1919. They flew a modified First World War Vickers Vimy bomber from St. John's in Newfoundland, to Clifden in Connemara, County Galway, Ireland. Their reconstructed plane is now in the Science Museum.

Aviation became popular in the 1920s and already posters foretold that everybody would one day be travelling in planes – but would the future be in aeroplanes or airships? Pioneer flyers had Hollywood-style status and huge crowds were at Croydon Airport to welcome home Amy JOHNSON from her solo flight to Australia: her plane is also in the Science Museum. People would go to Hendon and Croydon just to see the planes and Croydon's control tower still stands – it is now a museum.

Imperial Airways was the first 'national' airline but found it difficult to decide on what type of business to concentrate. Long haul flights required a series of 'hops' so took a long time and it was still mostly government officials who travelled by air, which gave them quicker connections to the Empire. The company had to be subsidised as not enough people were flying. Commonly it was thought that the Germans were "doing it better" and more modern-looking, all metal planes were being produced in both Germany and America. Lufthansa planes had the swastika logo on their tail and received the Nazi salute.

Imperial Airways promoted itself as a luxury airline with planes that were safe as they had four engines and were comfortable even if they were not fast or carried many passengers: they even took a long time to get to Paris. They decided they needed faster, more modern planes, and in 1937 they ordered a fleet of flying boats (HP42s, of which no examples remain) which became their standard plane: they were built at Shorts in Rochester.

In 1938 Neville CHAMBERLAIN went on three occasions to see HITLER, flying not with Imperial Airways from Croydon but from Heston Airport with a company called British Airways (no connection with the present company of that name). They were a rival to Imperial Airways in Europe and they used imported American aircraft, such as the Lockheed Electra – was this to impress the Germans? Heston Airport closed in the 1970s and is now partly covered in housing, an industrial estate and the M4, although one concrete hangar still remains. Heathrow did not exist in the 1930s as an airport.

During the Second World War the Government decided that Heathrow would be ideal to develop as a civil airport and as this was wartime, there was no public enquiry. It opened in 1946 initially with the public areas in tents and with a layout of runways enabling planes to take off in different directions according to the wind. Perhaps it was a big mistake but, as Oliver pointed out, it now forms an economy in itself and is probably unstoppable.

Although there has been no continuous plan for transport development in this country, there has been continuous development from the 1950s onwards. After WWII, Imperial Airways was gone and in came the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) and British European Airways (BEA) for Europe, plus the short-lived British South



Airbus A380

American Airways (BSAA). In the 1950s came the Comet jet airliner but the Boeing 707 became the main international aircraft. In the 1970s Concorde was developed with the French, but it always had a limited clientele. Now there is the double decker airliner, the Airbus A380.

There is a museum at Heathrow and groups and societies can visit the Waterside Building

Images: pixdous.com en.wikipedia.org

WORLD WIDE WEB

A survey of new records that recently have been published on the web.

Ancestor Homes is a new website based upon a private collection of property deeds in England and Wales, dating from the 1660s. Also included are original marriage certificates, wills, leases, conveyancing records, etc. The index is free and scanned copies can be downloaded for £19.99 per document.

ancestorhomes.com

Ancestry's recent additions include: parish registers for Dorset and Shropshire; Valuation records 1838-1929, Land Tax records 1797-1832 and Petty Sessions 1854-1915, all for Bedfordshire; London Poor Law School District Registers 1825-1918 and School Admission and Discharges for London 1912-1918; 1861 Workhouse Register; RAF records 1918-1940; Anglican parish registers for Sydney, New South Wales; New York Death Index 1880-1956 and the 1930 US Census.

ancestry.co.uk

Families in British India have added nearly 10,000 entries from the Registers of Bengal Army European Soldiers for 1790-1839.

search.fibis.org/frontis/bin

Irish Civil Registration records, 1845-1913 are now available on Family Search.

familysearch.org

Find My Past has added Parish Records for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Leicestershire; Somerset, Thames and Medway, Warwickshire and Wiltshire; MIs for All Saints Fulham, Bristol, (Gloucestershire), Herefordshire, Staffordshire and Yorkshire; Middlesex Marriage Licenses 1446-1837 and Clandestine Marriages 1667-1754; Burials for Bunhill Fields non-conformists 1713-1826, Lincolnshire, Monmouth and North West Kent, plus 76,000 additions to the England Billion Graves cemetery index; more entries from Billion Graves for Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland, the US and Wales; birth, marriage and death indexes for New Zealand and for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster; Middlesex Protestation Returns 1641-2; Muster Rolls for the Marine Corps, 18C and 19C; 1851 Canadian Census.

findmypast.co.uk

Fold 3, the military website, also has personnel records for the RAF, 1918-1945.

fold3.com

FreeCen has been relaunched with a new look in line with its sister site of Free UK Genealogy, which contains FreeCEN, FreeREG and FreeBMD, the latter being due for a revamp this year. freecen2.freecen.org.uk

The Genealogist has added new war memorials mainly from Leicester and Bedfordshire; personal and professional directories for 1921; TNA records of Criminal Registers, England and Wales (HO77) and the Registers of Convicts in Prison Hulks *Cumberland, Dolphin* and *Ganymede* (ADM6).
thegenealogist.co.uk

Historic Maps are now available to view free of charge, as the National Library of Scotland has completed its three-year project to put the full collection of historic maps of England and Wales, 1841-1952, on line.

maps.nls.uk/os/25inch-england-and-wales

The Libraries and Archives of Canada have placed the 1921 Canadian census online. Although 16 sets of the Canadian census are available via Ancestry, this is the first free set to be available.

bac-lac-gc.ca

Railway accidents for 1911-1915 are now online in a new, free database after collaboration between the University of Portsmouth and the National Railway Museum. The database can be downloaded as a spreadsheet from 'The Accidents' page at

railwayaccidents.port.ac.uk

ScotlandsPeople has added more than 37,000 records of breakaway Presbyterian sects: births and baptisms, banns and marriages, deaths and burials.

scotlandspeople.gov.uk

Scottish Indexes has added 40,000 entries to its index of mental health records, 1858-1915 held by the National Records of Scotland.

scottishindexes.com

PASSWORD UPDATE

To access the search facilities in the Members' area of our website, the following passwords must be used:

October-December:
January-March:

Latest date for submission of articles for printing in the subsequent Journal:

7th January 7th April
7th July 7th October

I WANT

While re-organising some files, I came across this, which I thought might evoke some sympathy! I do not know where it came from, or who wrote it so I apologise if I am breaching copyright. I suspect it originated in America and was printed sometime in the 1900s. Ed.

I want ancestors with names like Rudimentary Montagnard or Melchizenick von Steubenhoffmannschild, or Spetznatz Giafortoni, not William Brown or John Hunter or Mary Abbott.

I want ancestors who could read and write, had their children baptized in recognized houses of worship, went to school, purchased land, left detailed wills (naming a huge extended family as legatees), had their photographs taken once a year – subsequently putting said pictures in elaborate isinglass frames annotated with calligraphic inscriptions, and carved voluble and informative inscriptions on their headstones.

I want relatives who managed to bury their predecessors in established still-extant (and indexed) cemeteries.

I want family members who wrote memoirs, who enlisted in the military as officers and who served in strategically important (and well documented) skirmishes.

I want relatives who served as councilmen, schoolteachers, county clerks and town historians.

I want relatives who ‘religiously’ wrote in the family Bible, journaling [sic] every little event and detailing the familial relationship of every visitor.

In the case of immigrant progenitors, I want them to have arrived only in those years wherein passenger lists were indexed by National Archives and I want them to have applied for citizenship and to have done so only in those jurisdictions which have since established indices.

I want relatives who were patriotic and clubby, who joined every patrimonial society they could find, who kept diaries and listed all their addresses, who had paintings made of their houses and who dated every piece of paper they touched.

I want forebears who were wealthy enough to afford, and to keep for generations, the tribal homestead, and who left all the aforementioned pictures and diaries and journals intact in the library.

But most of all, I want relatives I can FIND!

A DIVORCE BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT AND A MARRIAGE AT SUNBURY

John Seaman

The Times reported on Thursday, 15th March 1787, that the Bill to dissolve the marriage of William FAWKENER with Georgina Ann POYNTZ, and to allow him to marry again, was read for the first time on Tuesday. Elizabeth MAYO, fille de chamber, gave evidence of Mrs. FAWKENER's adultery.

On Friday, 13th April 1787, *The Times* reported that The Honourable John TOWNSHEND, the son of Lord TOWNSHEND, and Miss Ann POYNTZ, who was the wife of William FAWKENER and divorced from him by Act of Parliament, were married at Sunbury on Tuesday.

NEW MEMBERS

The Society welcomes all new members. The list below comprises those from whom surname interest forms had been received at the time this issue of the Journal was prepared. The interests themselves are listed below.

S293 Mrs. Ellen M. Stuart, 2 Strathcar, Down Road, Tavistock, Devon,
PL19 9AG emstuart1@gmail.com

SURNAME INTERESTS

Surname	Dates	Place	County	Member
CONDON	1840-1860	Chiswick	MDX	S293
HEARNE	Aft.1850	Fulham area	MDX	S293
HEARNE	c.1900	Chiswick	MDX	S293
KNIGHT	19C	Heston area	MDX	S293
MITCHELL	1890-1900	Hammersmith area	MDX	S293
TAYLOR	Bef.1790	Ealing	MDX	S293
TAYLOR	1820-1850	Chelsea	MDX	S293
TAYLOR	19-20C	Hammersmith	MDX	S293
TAYLOR	19-20C	Chiswick	MDX	S293
WARD	Bef.1830	Hounslow area	MDX	S293
WARD	Aft.1870	Hammersmith	MDX	S293

INDEXES HELD BY MEMBERS

These indexes are intended as aids to research in the West Middlesex area. For Society members look-ups are free (please quote membership number), unless otherwise stated. For non-members there is a fee of £5. Please note that all enquirers must supply a SAE if a reply is required by post. If an email address is given, holders of the Index are happy to receive enquiries by email. Unless stated otherwise, cheques should be made payable to the holder of the index, not the WMFHS.

WEST MIDDLESEX FHS INDEXES

Roland Bostock, bostocr@blueyonder.co.uk

West Middlesex Monumental Inscriptions. Acton, Ashford, Cranford, Chiswick, Ealing, Feltham, Fulham (recorded 100 years ago), Hampton, Harlington, Hayes, Heston, Hillingdon, Hounslow (United Reformed), Norwood Green, Perivale, Staines, Teddington, Twickenham and Uxbridge.

West Middlesex Settlement Records. Chelsea, Ealing, Friern Barnet, Fulham, Hammersmith, New Brentford, Shepperton, Staines, Stanwell, Uxbridge.

*Richard Chapman, Golden Manor, Darby Gardens, Sunbury-on-Thames, TW16 5JW
chapmanrg@btinternet.com* . Cheques to West Middlesex FHS.

Marriage Index. Pre 1837 marriages in West Middlesex with partial coverage elsewhere in the county. Please supply places/dates/surname variants if known.

Mrs. Wendy Mott, 24 Addison Avenue, Hounslow, TW3 4AP. wendymott@btinternet.com
West Middlesex Strays. People from or born in our area, found in another area.

*Mrs. Bridget Purr, 8 Sandford Lane, Greenham, Thatcham, RG19 8XW
bridgetspurr@waitrose.com*

West Middlesex War Memorials. Substantial name-list material, consisting of public, churches', schools' and companies' memorials, etc. for WWI, WWII and earlier wars where they exist; list not yet complete; information on any other memorials you know of would be welcome. When making an enquiry please include any information on village or town where you might expect a name to be mentioned.

PARISH RECORDS

Mrs. Margaret Cunnew, 25 Selkirk Road, Twickenham, TW2 6PS

Chiswick Parish Registers, St. Nicholas. Baptisms marriages burials 1813-1901.

Chiswick, 1801 Census

Ealing Parish Registers, St. Mary. Baptisms 1779-1868, marriages 1797-1857, burials 1813-1868.

Hanwell Parish Registers, St. Mary. Baptisms marriages burials, 1813-1855.

New Brentford Parish Registers, St. Lawrence. Baptisms marriages burials 1802-1837.

Old Brentford Parish Registers, St. George. Baptisms 1828-1881, marriages 1837-1881, burials 1828-1852.

Mrs. Wendy Mott, 24 Addison Avenue, Hounslow, TW3 4AP. wendymott@btinternet.com

Harmondsworth Parish Registers. Baptisms marriages burials 1670-1837.

*Mr. P. Sherwood, 5 Victoria Lane, Harlington, Middlesex, UB3 5EW
psherwood@waitrose.com*

Harlington Parish Registers. Baptisms, marriages, burials, 1540-1850.

Mrs. M. Sibley, 13 Blossom Way, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 9HF.

mavikensib@aol.com For more than 3 names, please write for an estimate of charge.

Hayes Parish Registers, St. Mary. Baptisms marriages burials 1557-1840

Hillingdon Parish Registers. Baptisms 1559-1909, marriages 1559-1910, burials 1559-1948 (churchyard) and 1867-1903 (cemetery).

Isleworth Parish Registers, All Saints. Baptisms 1566-1919, marriages 1566-1927, burials 1566-1942.

Isleworth Register of Baptisms: Brentford Union Workhouse, Mission Church, Wesleyan Methodist Church, extracts from Register of Baptisms.

Ms. Carol Sweetland, 36 Diamedes Avenue, Stanwell, Staines, TW19 7JB.

carol.sweetland@btinternet.com

Stanwell Parish Registers. Baptisms 1632-1906, marriages 1632-1926, burials 1632-1906. Also available on FreeREG. Name database 1632-1906.

MISCELLANEOUS INDEXES

Mr. A. Rice, 46 Park Way, Feltham, TW14 9DJ. secretary@feltham-history.org.uk

Feltham Index. An expanding collection of transcripts and indexes relating to the parish of Feltham. Donations welcome, payable to Feltham History Group.

Mr. Paul Barnfield, 258 Hamworth Road, Hounslow, TW3 3TY

paulbarnfield@hotmail.co.uk

Hampton Wick. Records of this village collected over 40 years of research.

Mrs. M. Sibley, 13 Blossom Way, West Drayton, Middlesex, UB7 9HF

mavikensib@aol.com

Newspaper Index. Births, marriages and deaths, court cases, accidents, etc. taken from local newspapers 1894-1925.

Mr. Brian Page, 121 Shenley Avenue, Ruislip, HA4 6BU. brian729@blueyonder.co.uk

1641-2 Protestation Returns of Middlesex. This has been indexed. You will secure a printout, which includes variants. Cheques made payable to West Middlesex FHS.

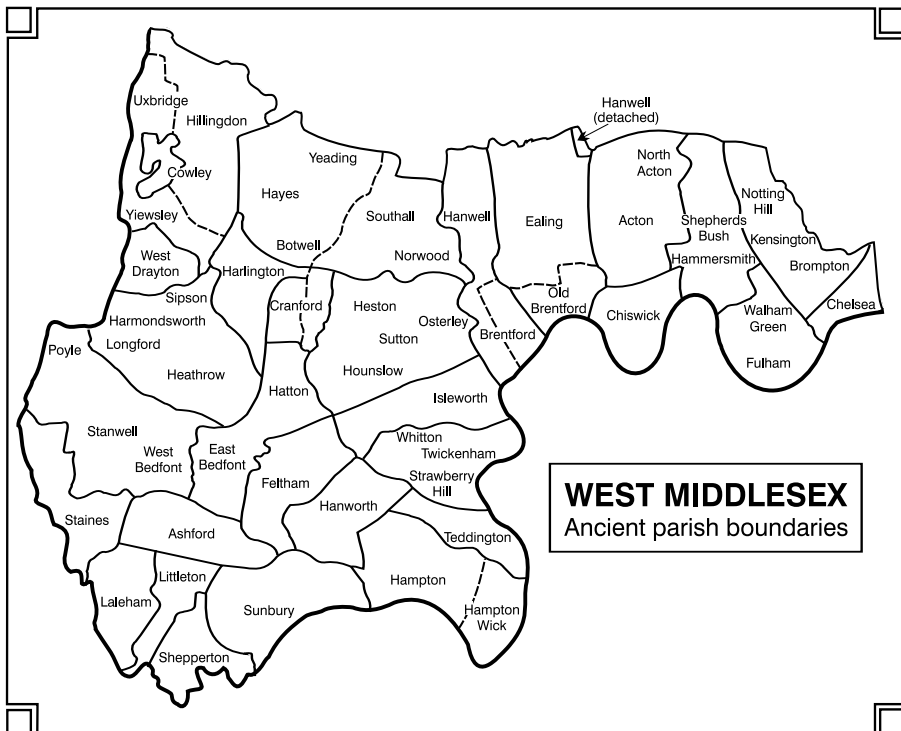
Miss Valerie Walker, 32 Cunnington Street, Chiswick, London, W4 5EN

G.R.O. Certificates. A number of original GRO birth, marriage and death certificates have been kindly donated to the Society by members and are available for purchase at a cost of £1 per certificate. Please check on Society website for current list. Cheques should be made payable to West Middlesex FHS and please include an sae.

Front Cover

James Matthew BARRIE (1860-1937) was born in Scotland, where he was educated and began a career in journalism. Eventually turning to writing novels and plays, he moved to London and it was while he was living in the Bayswater Road, opposite Kensington Gardens, that he wrote *Peter Pan, or The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up*, which had its first stage performance in 1904. The copyright of the play was presented to the Great Ormond Street Hospital. The famous statue of Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens was created by Sir George FRAMPTON.

Images: rbklocalstudies.wordpress.com en.wikipedia standard.co.uk



West Middlesex Family History Society Area of Interest

Acton, Ashford, East Bedfont, Chelsea, Chiswick, Cowley, Cranford, West Drayton, Ealing with Old Brentford, Feltham, Fulham, Hampton, Hanwell with New Brentford, Hanworth, Harlington, Harmondsworth, Hayes with Norwood, Hammersmith, Heston, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Isleworth, Kensington, Laleham, Littleton, Shepperton, Staines, Stanwell, Sunbury, Teddington, Twickenham and Uxbridge

If undelivered, please return to:

West Middlesex FHS
c/o Pat Candler, 57 The Vale, Feltham, Middlesex, TW14 0JZ