



WEST MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY JOURNAL

VOL 41 No.3

September 2023



www.west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk



WEST MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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Subscriptions	Standard: £15 per annum.
Subscription year	1 January to 31 December

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. Please enclose a SAE if a reply is needed.

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Contents

Future Meetings	2
Christmas Festivities	4
Would you like help with your family history	7
Correction of errors	7
WMFHS Matters	8
Monthly Talks	9
The Hunts of Harmondsworth and Harlington	22
The Repair Shop	26
Tales from the Cemeteries	27
Members Discounts & Passwords	30
Family History Fairs	31
Indexes held by Members	32

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All articles and other items for the Journal should be sent to: Mrs Ann Greene 39 Broughton Avenue Richmond Surrey TW10 7UG	Exchange journals from other societies should be sent to: Mrs. Margaret Cunnew 25 Selkirk Road Twickenham Middlesex, TW2 6PS
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Queries concerning non-delivery or faulty copies of this Journal should be sent to:
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FUTURE MEETINGS



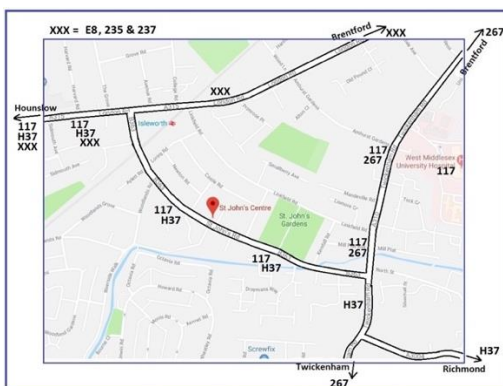
The following talks have been arranged:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------|
| 21 st September | Why I am a Suffragist not a Suffragette.
<i>Adele discusses the difference between the two groups and her preference for being a Suffragist.</i> | Adele Emms |
| 18 th October | Hounslow Heath and Highwaymen.
<i>For over 100 years, Hounslow Heath was seen as the most dangerous place in England because of the prevalence of highwaymen – among them Dick Turpin and Claude Duvall.</i> | James Marshall |
| 16 th November | Convicts Galore
<i>A tale of the British penal system, transportation and the Royal Navy</i> | Hilary Blanford |
| 21 st December | Christmas Special.
<i>We are inviting members to bring along their stories of “brick walls” and how they broke through them</i> | Our Members |

When and How We Meet

Our meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at St John's Centre, St John's Road, Isleworth, TW7 6RU. Members and guests can attend in person or via Zoom.

St John's Centre is fully accessible. A small carpark is adjacent to the Centre which is also close to a mainline railway station (Isleworth – South Western Railways) and is well-served by local buses. The H22 now also runs where 117 & 267 are shown.



To access the Zoom meeting, go to and click <http://www.west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk/content/meetings.aspx> which will take you to our **Meetings** page. Halfway down the page you will see the instruction **Start Zoom**. Click on this and it will take you to the **Meeting Registration** page where you can fill in your details as requested.

Members of Hillingdon FHS (www.hfhs.org.uk) and East Surrey FHS (www.eastsurreyfhs.org.uk) have an open invitation to join any of our Zoom meetings without charge and offer our members a reciprocal invitation.

Christmas Festivities



Too early! I hear you cry, but it isn't. You all have work to do to make this event a success!

This Christmas, we want your contributions about your “brick walls” and how – or if – you have solved them.

Please aim to speak for about 5 minutes on what your brick wall is and allow a further 5 minutes for discussion.

As usual, our meeting will be a hybrid one, with “Zoomers” and “Roomers” all able to contribute and maybe offer suggestions. But if you would like to join in without attending, please email or post your contribution to the Editor (email and postal address on the inside front cover) clearly marking it **Christmas Brick Wall**.

N.B. We don't guarantee to solve your problems but hopefully we will all get some enjoyment out of comparing when, where and possibly how your ancestor went missing.

Contributions and Advertisements

The WMFHS Journal is your magazine so contributions of all kinds are welcome, not to say necessary! Your contributions can be articles, cries for help, snippets of information, whatever you like.

Articles should be between 800 and 1200 words in length. Longer articles can be submitted but may have to be published in two parts depending on space. Formatting: please set the document out as an A5 document with normal margins and single line spacing.

They can be emailed or sent by post. The editor's postal address is to be found on the inside of the front cover.

Email: editor@west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk

If emailing an article, please submit any illustrations in a separate folder from the actual article.

If a quote or image is used that is not the author's own, the attribution must be given. If the attribution is not known, please state this.

Copy submission dates:

15th January, 15th April, 15th July and 15th October.

Advertisements

NB: We only accept advertisements relating to family history.

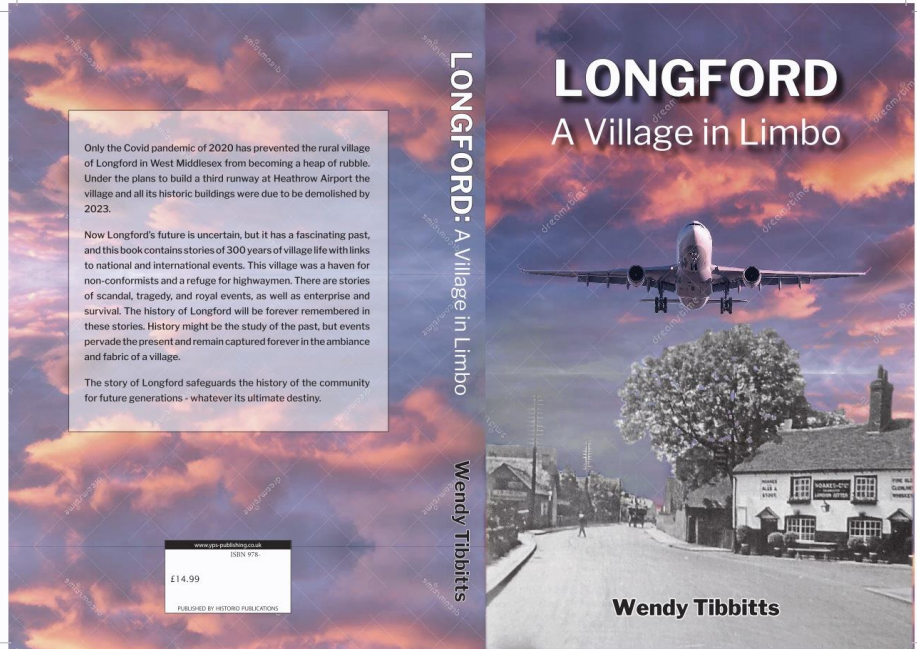
Rates:

Full page: £25 (members) £30 (non-members)

Half-page £10 (members) £15 (non-members)

Quarter-page £10 for both members and non-members.

Advertisement



Under the plans to build a third runway at Heathrow Airport, the village and all its historic buildings were due to be demolished by 2023. Only the pandemic of 2020 saved it. Longford's future is uncertain, but it has a fascinating past, and here are stories of from the past 300 years. A haven for non-conformists; a refuge for highwaymen; stories of scandal, tragedy, and royal events, as well as enterprise and survival.

Currently available from Amazon. £14.99



Use your mobile phone QR scanner to look inside the book

Would you like help with your family history?

Since the pandemic, we have cancelled our monthly face-to-face Advice Sessions at Feltham Library and have now begun offering advice by email. This allows our more far-flung members to access help. Email us at advice@west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk with your query and give us an idea of what you want to achieve. If you prefer to make an enquiry by post, write to the Secretary (address on the inside cover of this Journal).

Other members may be able to help with your query. If you think putting your enquiry in the Journal may help, please ask us to do this. Replies can be directed to you through the advice email (see above) if you do not want your contact details published.

Please note: we do **not** offer a genealogical research service.

If you would like to use the services of a paid genealogical research agent, the best place to start is the Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives (www.agra.org.uk). They have a list of people who are trained and accredited and will help you interpret their findings.

Corrections for the June Journal

There were some errors in our June Journal.

The article on **William Lofthouse Heald** by John Seaman contained the following error. The Shackleton expedition ships *Discovery* and *Terra Nova* were wrongly classified as *HMS*. The *Discovery* was in fact a Royal Research Ship (RRS) while the *Terra Nova* was a Steam Ship (SS).

NB. This was the result of editorial oversight and not the fault of the author.

The second error occurred in our Members News on page 38.

In reporting the death of **Mr Malcolm Hailwood**, his surname appeared as **Hallwood**. We apologise to his family for this error.

West Middlesex Family History Society Matters

Resignation of Kirsty Gray.

Those of you who regularly check our website or who attended the July Members' meeting will be aware that Kirsty Gray has resigned from her post of Chairman and also from the committee. There was a serious disagreement on a policy matter at the last Committee meeting and Kirsty felt she was left with no option but to resign. She is remaining as a member and has said that, as always, she will offer help when she can.

GRO certificates

The GRO in Southport have been conducting private Beta-testing on the delivery of digital image birth and death certificates for a while, and have now launched their public Beta-testing version.

It is a great new service; the image appears in your GRO Orders in an astonishingly short time. You can then download this onto your computer and save it. No more pieces of paper to store (unless you want to). And a single certificate is only £2.50 which is a huge saving.

Obviously, you can only order these online and will need to set up an online account with the GRO first, but this is easily done. Just go to the website www.gro.gov.uk and get started.

Want more talks?

Don't forget we have reciprocal arrangements with Hillingdon FHS and East Surrey FHS.

Members of both these societies have an open invitation to join any of our Zoom meetings without charge, and they have reciprocated.

Details of their websites are on page 3 of the Journal.

Monthly Talks *Roland Bostock, Yvonne Masson, Ann Greene*

The 1841 Brentford Flood

May

Val Bott



Val became interested in the 1841 Brentford Flood at the turn of this century. It required extensive research into the event from the local newspapers reporting on it, which was a lot harder to do then than it is now. She produced a book on the subject which was published in 2002. A few copies remain purchasable today on Amazon.

The root cause of the flood was a long exceptionally cold spell in the middle of winter, followed by a dramatic rise in temperature resulting in a fast thaw. The cold, recorded as just 5° Fahrenheit on the 7th January, was followed by much rain, hail and sleet between the 10th and 15th of the month, and then a fast rise in temperature to 52° Fahrenheit on the 16th January. The cold had frozen the topsoil to a depth of 8 inches so that while the top surface of the earth thawed, the ground below remained frozen. The excess water could not be absorbed and flowed directly into the **River Brent**, which then rose rapidly to flood-level. The part of **Brentford** most affected was the land lying

within the bend of the **River Brent** as marked on the map shown above. The **River Thames** is to the right.

The flood was very sudden, occurring in the middle of the night. **Police Constable Smith** was on duty where the canal separates from the main flow of the **River Brent**. At 2am on Sunday the 17th January he observed the height of the river rising rapidly and causing boats moored in the canal area to break free from their moorings, thus causing further damage downstream. The bridge over the river, on the west side of **Brentford**, has three substantial arches, but the river quickly rose to within a few inches of the top of the arches. The loose boats and loose timber in the river, carried down by the current, smashed into the bridge thereby blocking the flow of water even more.

There were many acts of heroism during that night, as reported in the newspapers. In one such case there was a drawing of a child being handed over from a boat to a woman in a house through an open window. The story ran "The **Ayres** family ... managed to rescue all seven children of the **Tolley** family by dragging them through a window as the boat passed by".

Once the flood itself had subsided, a desperate need for charity arose. Many of the boat families on the river and canal were far from home. Ordinarily they would be using their boats to do business on the river. However the thick ice on the River Brent meant they had already been in a precarious position before the flood came and, in many cases, washed away their boats. The people of Brentford, including their Vicar **Dr. John Stoddart**, were very generous to those finding themselves homeless. They swiftly organised food, clothing and shelter and the Poor Law overseers started issuing coal to households which had been flooded. On the 17th January aid was given to 90 people, 60 of whom could not return to their boats. On the 18th January 68 people were assisted, and by Thursday 21st January 70 people were still being assisted.

Substantial sums of money were raised from the wealthy and the citizens of **Brentford**. Two funds were created, one to support the boatmen who had lost their livelihood, and one to support the cargo owners who had also lost a lot of their cargoes when their barges capsized or sank in the flood.

Val's investigations showed that a total of some £300 was dispensed by the two funds; £84 to the boatmen and their families for loss of property; £35 to



the same for 11 days living expenses; £34 to the crews of 15 barges for their loss of property, and £154 to many poor families in the town for coal and for their loss of food and possessions, ranging from 10/- to £3 per family. To put these sums into perspective the average worker's pay at the time was sixpence a day.

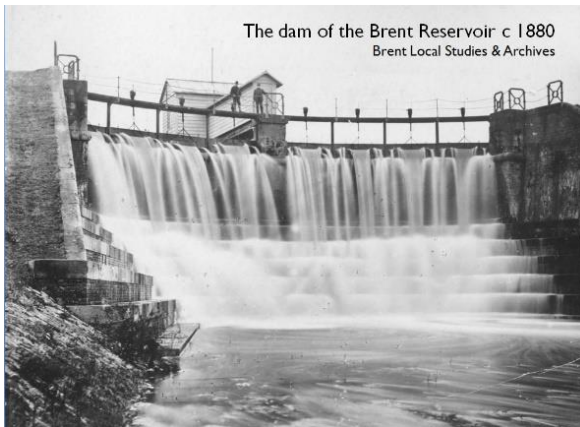
The boatmen themselves were not without initiative. The event brought many sightseers to **Brentford** eager to see what damage had been caused. The picture on the left shows a small boatload of people come to get a closer look at the damage done by the river. Passengers were charged one halfpenny each to be taken on such a trip. The *Times* also reported on 20th January that "Carriages filled principally with elegantly dressed ladies have been rolling into the town from all parts ... their fair occupants, not satisfied with viewing the scene of devastation from the bottom of Boar's Head Yard, sought a nearer view from the bridge".

There was another business opportunity too. Dredgers from **Lambeth**, aware that many barges had lost their cargoes in the river, appeared on the scene to raise the sunken cargo and sell it back to the owners, making a quick profit on the deal. However, the inhabitants of **Brentford** would have none of this, and determined to raise the sunken cargo using their own means, sending the **Lambeth** dredgers on their way.

There remained the problem of making the river navigable again, and who would pay the cost. Although much arguing took place at the local hostelry, *The Three Pigeons*, there was no agreement over who should pay the costs, but the boatmen whose living depended on navigating the river obtained what help they could, and the river was soon made navigable again.

From a detailed look at the newspaper reports of the day and the accounts of the disbursement of the donations, Val was able to draw up a list of the boats which had been lost, and their cargoes, which were of all sorts, perishable

cargoes such as wheat, and non-perishable cargoes such as coal and iron. The owners of these boats were not all local by any means, but had used the



The dam of the Brent Reservoir c 1880
Brent Local Studies & Archives

waterways to trade, many of them being based in the **Midlands**, such as **Warwick** and **Birmingham**.

Inquests followed into the several deaths that had occurred in the early hours of 17th January. A general finding from these inquests was that a great deal of the damage caused on the river came from 'timber floats' which had been stored in

the canal, and had broken loose to damage anything in their path, and in particular had piled up against the main bridge over the river. The height of the flood water, at its peak, was said to be 20 feet above its normal level. **The Regents Canal Company**, which managed the canal where the timber floats were stored, came under severe criticism during these inquests, and were called upon to repair the reservoir section of the canal to avoid any recurrence of the timber floats escaping again from the canal area. The Company tried to avoid admitting any blame for the incident, but eventually spent £1700 constructing the waste weir beside the dam (shown in the picture above) which still exists today.

The question arises : had **Brentford** had suffered other floods from its river? Records show that there was a great flood in 1682 when sufferers were reported to have lost £718. Later floods also occurred, one in 1903, and a potential flood during the great storm of 1987 when fast action in managing the water flow at the weir prevented another disaster.

Historical London Crimes June Jonathan Oates

Jonathan has written many books about criminal history especially those occurring in London. For this talk he focussed on three, one each from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries and involving very different crimes - housebreaking, murder and espionage

During 1734-1735 the **Gregory** gang had been committing numerous crimes near London. Initially deer stealers, they later began attacking isolated farms at night. On 4 February 1735 five of the gang, **Samuel Gregory, John Fielder, Joseph Rose, John Wheeler** and a certain **Richard Turpin** met at the *Black Horse* pub in **Westminster**. Gregory told the others that as a blacksmith he had shod the horses of **Joseph Lawrence**, a farmer of **Edgware**, just North West of **London**, 'an ancient man of over 70 years of age', and 'worth a good deal of money'. They determined to rob the man. At the *Nine Pin and Bowl* alehouse at **Edgware** they drank two or three pots of beer each, then stayed an hour and a half at the *Queen's Head* at **Stanmore** before setting off for **Joseph Lawrence's** isolated house, arriving there between 8 and 9pm. **Fielder** entered the sheep yard and took hold of the sheep boy, **James Emerton**, who later said in court that **Fielder**: 'holding out a Pistol, said he would shoot me if I offer'd to cry out. There were four more with him. He took off my Garter and tyed my hands. They asked me what servants my master kept and I told them. They said they would not hurt me but would knock at the door, and I should answer and they would give me money. One of them knocked and my fellow servant answered the door, and they all rushed in with pistols'. The servant **John Pate** recalled in court: 'I unbolted the door. They came in with pistols in their hands. We had two candles in the room and I saw their faces plainly. They put a cloth over people's eyes, ty'd my hands and carried me into the room where the boy was'.

Wheeler, later testifying against his fellow gang members, said that **Lawrence** and his maid were also tied up. '**Turpin** pulled the old man's breeches down and dragged him into another room and beat him to discover where his money was. **Gregory** took the maid up to the garret and lay with her there, as afterwards he told us'. Maidservant **Dorothy Street** was making butter in the backhouse. She recalled: 'They rushed in upon me and tyed my hands ... one

of them swore I should shew him where my Master's money was. I said I did not know, but he carried me to the garret, where he bolted the door, and threw me on the bed. He had two pistols, and swearing he would shoot me if I would cry out, he lay with me by Violence'.

Lawrence recalled: 'They swore at me and demanded my money. They took off my neckcloth and tied it over my eyes. They took down my breeches and took out of my pocket a guinea, a six and thirty shilling Portuguese piece and between ten and twenty shillings in silver. They said they must have more and they would make me shew where the rest of my money was. They broke open a closet and took out two guineas, ten shillings, a silver cup, thirteen silver spoons, two gold rings and what else they could find...They whipt me with their bare hands as hard as they could strike, so that I was black the next day. They broke my head with their pistols. They took a kettle of water off the fire and threw it upon me...They swore they would rip me up and burn me alive if I did not tell them where the rest of my money was. One put a bill to my leg and swore he'd chop them off. One of them held a knife under my chin and threatened to cut my throat. Some pulled me by the nose and dragged me about by the hair of my head'.

The thieves also took linen and plate. They left **Lawrence** and his three servants locked in the parlour and threw the key into the garden. At **Rose's** lodgings they divided the spoils, all later valued at £27 15s. **Wheeler** was unhappy about his share of the booty: 'they cheated me in every respect, so out of sixty pounds I had four'. This does not square with the above valuation so perhaps he was adding the booty of other robberies. **Mary Brasier** sold most of the items within the next two days.

But the gang's luck soon ran out. One report says that on Tuesday 11 February **Richard Wood**, the publican of the *Nine Pin and Bowl* alehouse, saw a horse belonging to one of the gang outside premises in **Bloomsbury**. He found a constable who gathered together a few men. Entering the ale house they found a woman and three men drinking punch. **Wood** knew the men as three of the gang, **Felder**, **William Saunders** and **Wheeler**, and they were arrested 'after some Resistance' - they had five pistols between them. Taken next day before **Robert Hind** JP, '**Wheeler**, as may be supposed, began to foresee that they would be discovered, and sufficient proofs found against them whereupon he would confess and inform against the whole gang and so he

did', providing names, addresses and descriptions of all the gang members who had not yet been taken. Possibly **Hind** suggested he turn King's Evidence to save his life and claim some of the reward money. From his information names and descriptions of all the wanted men were posted on all the turnpikes leading out of London.

On 17 February, the Constable of **St. Margaret's** parish, **Westminster**, learnt that some of the gang were to be found at **Mr Lloyd's** chandler's shop on **Thieving Lane**, alias **Bow Street**. He swore eight people (including **Thomas** and **Joseph**, sons of farmer **Lawrence**) to assist him. They found **Rose**, **Walker** and **Mary Brasier** in the chandler's back room. **Rose** and **Walker** tried to resist arrest by pointing pistols but were overcome. **Turpin** was, according to a biographer, **Richard Bayes**, also apparently in the room, but left via a window and rode off on his horse, but there is no contemporary corroboration for **Turpin's** presence there. At a property near **Thieving Lane** where some of the gang had been lodging some of the stolen goods were found together with an armoury of 15 pistols, bullets, a bullet mould and several powder horns.

Between 26 February and 1 March 1735 at the **Old Bailey**, **Fielder**, **Rose**, **Saunders** and **Walker** (and **Gregory** and **Turpin** *in absentia*) were indicted for breaking and entering, theft and assault. The victims of the attack and **Wheeler** gave evidence in court and some of the stolen goods, and the armoury, were produced. The jury found them guilty and they were sentenced to death.

On 10 March **Fielder**, **Saunders** and **Rose** were among those hanged at **Tyburn** (near the present **Marble Arch**); **Walker** had died in **Newgate**, but was later hung in chains along with them. The condemned men 'appeared bold and undaunted', 'shewing outwardly no great signs of repentance'. Suits of chains having been prepared for them and gibbets erected on the **Edgware Road**, the remains of all four hung there for some time. **Gregory** was captured in **Hampshire** later that year and hanged at **Tyburn**. **Turpin** turned highwayman and then cattle thief and was hanged at **York** in 1739 as a horse thief. In the next century he was transformed into a hero, **Dick Turpin**.

The Murder of Elizabeth Camp

Jonathan then moved forward in time to a mysterious murder on the railways. In 1897 **Elizabeth Camp** was 33 years old and worked as housekeeper in the *Good Intent* tavern in **Walworth**. Engaged to **Edward Berry**, a fruiterer, whom she had known all her adult life, they were planning

to marry at **St. Paul's** church in **Hammersmith** in March 1897; they had arranged to meet at **Waterloo** station on the evening of Thursday 1 February, having already spent some of the early afternoon together before **Elizabeth** boarded a train at **Waterloo** to visit her sisters. Firstly she met **Annie** and her husband in **Hammersmith**, then went on to see her other sister in **Hounslow**, spending a couple of hours with each. Finally she entered a second class carriage at **Hounslow** to return to **London**, on the grounds that 'second class passengers are a better class of people' but her sister had warned 'that may be so, but third is safer for women'.

Elizabeth was last seen alive, reading a magazine, when the train stopped at **Putney**. A man sat opposite her. When the train arrived at its final destination, **Waterloo**, and the passengers had alighted, a cleaner found her corpse, which had been thrust under the seat. It was still warm and the 'head was shockingly battered'. There were splashes of blood in the carriage and her umbrella had been broken.

Next day a search along the railway line found a pestle with blood and hair attached to it between **Putney** and **Wandsworth** - the murder weapon, suggesting that the murder occurred between these two stations. It was uncertain if the pestle was one for medical use or one used in gold or brass work but its history was never ascertained. There was no obvious motive. **Berry**, her fiancée, who had waited for her at the station said that sometimes she carried large sums of money, but this was presumably only when she was engaged on her employer's business. Her sister recalled that they had been doing some shopping that afternoon and **Elizabeth** had spent almost all that she had with her. Her jewellery was not missing though her purse was.

Various men were suggested as her killer, among them men seen leaving the train along the route. As it was thought the killer would have left the train as soon as he had committed the murder, investigations were focussed on those who left at Wandsworth, one such being a man of five feet six or seven, with top hat and frock coat, moustached and about 30, seen to leave a second class compartment in a hurry. A barmaid at a pub in **Vauxhall** said a man had entered and demanded brandy: 'He appeared to be in a nervous and excited state...he trembled as he lifted the glass to his mouth, and some of the liquor was spilt'. He was in his 30s, wore a mackintosh and bowler hat and one of his fingers was injured. This was **Austin Stockwell** who had been injured

when repairing a bicycle - he was cleared. A more probable suspect was **Thomas Stone**, a **Hounslow** man who had spent some of the afternoon in question with **Elizabeth** and her sister there. His movements later that day were unknown, but there was no evidence against him. **Berry** himself had an alibi as he had been with his brother in the hours leading up to his planned rendezvous with his fiancée. A former lover of Elizabeth's, **William Brown**, was at work all that evening at a pub in **Walworth**. Theories abounded: that it was a medical student who had previously worked with Elizabeth at a hospital and was so inflamed with desire he killed her with a pestle; another that she had been lending money to a relative who might have wanted to avoid repaying her; that a lunatic killed her with no motive whatever. But it is probable killer and victim were mutual strangers.

The inquest concluded this was murder by person or persons unknown. The railway company offered a £200 reward, but it was never claimed. Nine years later a soldier serving in **South Africa** confessed to the murder but it was only because he wanted to return home.

The Kroger case

The last crime took place when the Cold War was at its height. **Peter** and **Helen Kroger** seemed to be a respectable middle class, middle aged couple who lived at **45 Cranley Drive, Ruislip**. She was a housewife and he ran a bookshop in the **Strand** and they were on good terms with their neighbours. But one evening in January 1961 Detective Superintendent **George Smith** of the Special Branch arrived at the front door. **Peter Kroger** answered and **Smith** recalled: 'He invited me into the lounge and I said "I would like to see your wife as well". A few moments later **Mrs Kroger** came in and I said to them both "I am Superintendent **Smith** of the Special Branch. I would like you to tell me the name and address of the gentleman who comes and stays with you every weekend, particularly the first Saturday in every month"'. The **Krogers** said they had lots of friends. When told they were to be arrested and their property searched, **Mrs Kroger** asked to stoke the boiler. This was agreed to as long as her handbag was searched first. Inside was an envelope containing writings in Russian, information in code, names and addresses, plus a piece of glass with microdots on it which could store a mass of information. Hidden in the house, which had an unusual amount of security devices, were found numerous espionage devices: a powerful microscope able to read information from microdots; specially coated cellophane which

the KGB used to make microfilm; parts of code machines; microfilm reader; large sums of American dollars and New Zealand passports; transmitters able to communicate with Moscow and which had recently done so. Not found until 1977 was another radio transmitter hidden in the garden.

The **Krogers** had been working in conjunction with **Henry Houghton** and **Ethel Gee** who were employed at **Portland Naval Base** and were being paid by a man from the **Soviet Embassy** who was known as **Gordon Lonsdale**. They passed Admiralty secrets to **Lonsdale** who then relayed them to **Kroger** who put them in books he sent to 'dealers' in the Eastern bloc. The **Krogers** were actually Americans **Morris** and **Lona Cohen**, idealistic Communists who met Soviet agents in **America** in the 1950s before arriving in **London** where they met **Lonsdale** in about 1955. They had been passing on secrets for a number of years without being detected. **Houghton** and **Ethel** were in it not for political reasons but for money. The weak link in the chain was **Houghton**, who had a well-known weakness for drink, and how he was able to afford this expensive habit on a naval clerk's pay became the subject of investigation. He, **Ethel** and **Lonsdale** were tailed and the trail led investigators to the **Krogers'** home, which was watched from a neighbour's house before police closed in. Both the **Krogers** were sentenced to 20 years in prison but were exchanged in 1969 for a British man arrested in **Russia**. The drama was made into a film in 1961 titled *Ring of Spies* and **Houghton** was played by one **Bernard Lee** who later became M in the James Bond films.

The information for these subjects comes from various sources. For the **Gregory** gang there was the contemporary press, the Old Bailey Online website (oldbaileyonline.org) for the trial, Treasury papers and the first biography of **Turpin**, published in 1739. The **Elizabeth Camp** case featured widely in the press, but unfortunately there is no Metropolitan Police file about the investigation. For the **Krogers** there is a mass of documentation in Foreign and Home Office files as well as those of MI5, which can be viewed at the **National Archives**.

The experiences of an evacuee to Canada during WW2

July Patricia Williamson

Patricia began her talk by establishing her **West Middlesex** roots. Her grandfather came from **Sunbury**; her great-grandfather had been employed

as a gamekeeper at **Kempton Park**, before it became a racecourse and her father had been a boat steward on one of the islands.

In 1940, the family were living in **Harrow** and she could have expected to be evacuated to one of the safe areas of **Britain**. So how did she come to be evacuated to **Canada**? It goes back to family history again. **Patricia's** aunt **Frances**, her mother's younger sister and always known as '**Ting**', had met a Canadian soldier during WW1 and later married him. He was one of many English emigres to **Canada** who came back to fight in WW1. In 1940, The Canadian government set up a refuge scheme for English evacuees and many Canadian families signed up for this. Auntie **Ting** and her husband offered to take all five of **Patricia's** family but in the end, it was only **Patricia**, aged almost 9 and her older sister **Brenda** aged 15. It was presented as an opportunity to "go and visit Auntie Ting" and **Patricia** was delighted. There was little time to prepare and discuss it. It was only when they actually left **Harrow** on 6th August 1940 that she realised her oldest sister **Margaret** and her parents were not coming too. It was the start of a very long journey, starting from **Liverpool** on the *SS Oronsay* (see picture below).



The evacuees were split into groups of ten under the supervision of a chaperone who took them to meals, supervised their activities and took them up on deck daily for lifeboat drills. The groups were all kept firmly separated.

Many people were very seasick including **Patricia's** sister **Brenda** – **Patricia** was one of the lucky ones!

It was a long and dangerous journey. The *Oronsay*, zig-zagging across the Atlantic Ocean to avoid U-boats took 10 days to reach **Halifax, Nova Scotia**. A month later, the *SS Benares* left **Liverpool** on a similar evacuation voyage; 4 days in, it was attacked during the night by a German submarine and sank, with the loss of nearly everyone on board. After that the government-sponsored evacuation voyages were scrapped.

Arriving in **Halifax** was not the end of the journey. The evacuees were then put on a train and carried across **Canada**, stopping at **Montreal, Toronto** and across the Canadian prairies to **Winnipeg** and finally **Edmonton**, where **Patricia** and **Brenda** were the last of 350 children to disembark. They had been travelling for 14 days. But even this was not the end of their journey. They had to travel another 100 miles north to **Colinton**. They arrived there to find that their uncle was unable to meet them off the train. He was a farmer and it was harvest-time, so **Patricia** and **Brenda** were met by one of the townspeople who then drove them up to their uncle's farm.

Their uncle's opinion on first seeing them was that **Patricia** was far too thin and decided they should fatten her up. They did this so successfully that within a year, her weight had doubled and her father, an amateur artist, in a birthday letter wrote a cheeky illustrated limerick about it.

Patricia's new home was a 500-acre farm, 7 miles from the nearest town. Grain was the main crop but there were also sheep, pigs, a dairy herd and ten horses kept for farm work. The cream from the dairy herd was collected weekly and in summer it had to be stored in a disused well to keep it from going sour.

Both **Patricia** and **Brenda** still had to go to school. There was a 1-room schoolhouse on the edge of the farm and about 17 pupils. There was a wellhouse to provide water for the children, a barn to stable the horses for pupils who had to ride to school and 2 privies, 1 for boys, 1 for girls. The teacher was only licensed to teach up to Grade 9, but **Brenda** should have been in Grade 10. She studied by correspondence course in the school until she reached Grade 12 and then she moved to **Edmonton**. After graduating from high school, she went to work for the Royal Bank of Canada.

Patricia missed her very much and was so lonely that eventually her parents agreed she could go and study for her higher grades in **Edmonton** under the Guardian Scheme. She went to live with a couple but it wasn't a happy time. They liked to go out a lot, leaving **Patricia** to mind their children. But at least she got to see more of **Brenda**. Around this time, **Patricia** developed a very bad sore throat. Her guardians said it was nothing serious and she soldiered on. **Brenda** thought differently and insisted on calling the doctor. **Patricia** ended up having her tonsils out and going back to the farm to recuperate. She eventually went back to **Edmonton** but with a different and wonderful set of guardians who took their responsibilities very seriously. They sent her to Sunday School where she met **Nan** who became a lifelong friend.

On turning 18, **Brenda** had applied to go back home to **Britain**. It was a lengthy wait but finally, in 1944, she got a passage home. Before she left, she gave **Patricia** a silver bracelet which she still has today. The passengers on her boat (a very small one!) were not supposed to fraternise with the crew but, needless to say, they did and **Brenda** married one of them a year later.

Patricia finally left **Canada** in July 1945 and arrived home in August - almost 5 years to the day from her departure. She was thrilled at the thought of seeing Brenda again, but daunted by the idea of seeing her eldest Margaret, now 23, working in an office and very sophisticated. She also found post-war Britain a great disappointment. It was very grey and dull after the comparative luxury of **Edmonton** and food was still rationed. Fortunately food parcels soon began arriving from her guardians and from Nan's parents.

She took up her education again in **Harrow**, being taught in a group of other returned evacuees. The teacher had a hard time of it as they were all at different stages, but in 3 years, they were all up to School Leaving Certificate level.

Patricia has many memories of her time in **Canada**; the diversity of the population; the winter sleigh rides with her cousin recognising each neighbour's different sleigh-bells; and seeing the Northern Lights.

The Hunts of Harmondsworth and Harlington Wendy Tibbitts



I first came across the **Hunt** family when I was researching the farming community of **Heathrow**. In the 1910 Valuation Survey book for **Harmondsworth**, at the National Archives, it showed that **Heathrow Farm** (now under Terminal 3) was being farmed by **W.J. Curtis** and his family, but it was part-owned by another man called **Hunt**¹. This led me to include the **Hunt** family in my research about **Harmondsworth**. I traced **Frederic Hunt**, in 1911, to **Burford House, Caversham, Berkshire** where he had been living and working as a private secretary. Why was he there when he was once a major farmer in **Harmondsworth**?

The **Hunt** family inherited **Harmondsworth** land from the **Atlee** family with whom they intermarried. Each generation had several sons, many of them called one son, **John**, and each son went into business either in **London** or in farming. They acquired property in **Hillingdon, Ickenham, Harmondsworth, Harlington** and **Ealing**. Even up to the twentieth century, there were various

John **Attlee's** in **Hounslow, Hammersmith, Heston** and spread around West London ². In 1666 both the **Hunt** family and the **Attlee** family were paying Hearth Tax in **Harmondsworth** and both families continued to own land in the parish for the next 200 years. From wills, I have found the land passed down through a succession of John **Attlees** and in 1758 the daughter of one of them married John **Hunt**. From 1781 a John **Attlee** was farming **Manor Farm** in **Harmondsworth** for absentee landlord, John **Powell**. **Manor Farm** was the largest farm in the parish and therefore the largest employer. In 1801 the tenancy of **Manor Farm** passed to John **Hunt** and on his death to his son, **Attlee Hunt**, who was already running **Heathrow Farm**. The succession of the land becomes clearer from here on. **Attlee Hunt** and his wife, **Maria**, had 6 sons and 5 daughters although not all the sons enjoyed the farming life. The **Hunts**, like most of the farmers of **Harmondsworth** and **Harlington**, were Baptists. Therefore the children were expected to marry into other Baptist families, which restricted their choice of spouse. The eldest son, **John Attlee Hunt**, married **Eliza Pewtress** from **St. Pancras** and for a while was farming in **Harmondsworth**, but by 1851 he had moved to **London** and was running a boarding house. The second son, **Josiah**, had a farm in **Uxbridge Road, Hayes**. The third son **Benjamin** was "afflicted" and was supported throughout his 69 years by his brothers and sisters. The fourth son, **Samuel**, was destined to take his father's place as tenant of **Manor Farm** and owner of **Heathrow Farm**. He was 32 when his father died, and although his mother took over the running of the farm, she needed **Samuel's** help, until her death in 1848 ³. That was also the year his first son, **Frederic**, was born. Samuel had married **Caroline Tillyer**, from another Baptist **Harmondsworth** farming family, in 1845 at the age of 41. The year after **Frederic** was born, another son, **Samuel Charles**, arrived, followed by a sister, **Caroline**, and a brother **Edward** who was only eight when his mother died in 1868. Three other children had died young.

In 1871 **Samuel Hunt** of **Manor Farm** was farming 276 acres, but this was the decade that the agricultural industry was beginning to go into a depression and keeping a farm viable was stressful. **Samuel** was widowed in 1868 and by 1881 had retired from running the farm. He was still living in the farmhouse with his son **Frederic** who now had the full responsibility for the farm and was changing the type of crops he grew to be able to ride out the

slump in wheat sales. **Frederic** was 33 and unmarried. His brother **Samuel Charles** had been helping on the farm, but had married a **London** girl in 1874 and had left the farm. In the 1881 census **Samuel Charles** and his family were living in **Egham** where he was working for the local council. He, rather bitterly, adds his occupation as “formerly farmer – given up by loss”. It is not clear whether the “loss” is due to the farm losing money, or whether he had married outside the Baptist faith and therefore was now considered an outsider to the family. Whatever the reason, there was some residual tension within the family as illustrated in subsequent Wills.

Frederic had been so busy running the farm that he didn’t have time to marry until 1883 when he was 35. His bride was **Florence Ward** of **Stanwell** and he brought her home to **Manor Farm** where they lived with his widowed father who died in 1885 aged 81. **Heathrow Farm** was put up for auction soon after his death. This is when **W.J. Curtis** and **F. Hunt** decided to buy the farm as a joint enterprise. **Frederic** struggled on at **Manor Farm**, but in 1896 he held an auction at **Manor Farm** selling 120 items of Live and Dead farm stock and furniture because he is “giving up farming”⁴. In the same year **Frederick** gave up his lease and handed **Manor Farm** back to the absentee landlord, **Percy H.G. Powell-Cotton** ⁵.

Frederic was active in the community, serving as Chairman of the School Board ⁶ and the Secretary of the **Harmondsworth** branch of the Young Men’s Christian Association. He was also quite vocal in his political views. He spoke at the National Farmers Club in **London** in 1883 on the proposed Agricultural Holdings bill. As a member of the National Council of the YMCA he would travel all over the country to attend meetings giving passionate and “pithy” speeches in order to expand the reach of the Association to all towns and villages and raising funds to send missionaries to **China** ⁷. One of these missionaries was his brother **Edward**, who was now a solicitor in **Uxbridge**. At the age of 28 he boarded a ship on 29 November 1888 for a 6-week voyage to **Shanghai** ⁸. Before he left, **Edward** wrote his Will, in which he appointed his brother **Frederic** and his sister **Caroline** as executors, and requested that the money from the sale of his real estate be divided between the family, but that the portion for **Samuel Charles’** family was to go into a trust fund for the benefit of his wife and children. Along with the will, in the London Metropolitan Archives, was an unopened envelope marked “Not to be

opened until the will is proved". A conservator unsealed the envelope for me. I was the first to read the contents since 9 July 1888. The contents illustrated the rift between **Edward** and his, now secular, brother's family, "I desire that no money in my will be used for the education of these boys except under the strongest and strictest evangelical influence."

Whilst in **China**, **Edward** met and married **Alice Whitford** in the Cathedral in **Shanghai** in 1894. In 1900 they fled from **Zhejiang** to **Shanghai** to escape the massacres of missionaries in the Boxer Revolution. Both died early in 1922 in **China**, within seven weeks of each other. Each had written new, identical, Wills in 1909 . By this time it seems **Samuel Charles** had been forgiven and there were no restrictions in the distribution of the couple's assets among his brothers and sister and their children. His brother **Samuel Charles** died later in 1922 and **Frederick** at a later date. None of them returned to farming or **Harmondsworth**. They were the last of the farming **Hunt** family in **Harmondsworth**.

Sources

¹ *The National Archives' reference PROB IR58/39632*

² *Ancestry.com*

³ *The National Archives' reference PROB 11/1876/288*

⁴ *Middlesex Chronicle 29/8/1896*

⁵ *The Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies 134.1960*

⁶ *Edinburgh Evening News - Wednesday 18 February 1885*

⁷ *Reading Mercury - Saturday 10 November 1888*

⁸ *London Metropolitan Archives ACC/0538/2ND DEP/1864*

I hope that some of you have been watching this programme on TV. For me, it has brought back happy memories.

In the early days of the Society, **Dick Raine**, one of our members, used to arrange coach outings to various destinations. The one which has left me with the greatest memories was to the Repair Shop in the Weald and Downland South of England. It was on open land, fairly near the coast and, to our surprise, we were shown in to an empty swimming pool. There was no water in the pool, and on one long side there were several raised rows of seats where we sat.

We had a commentary on what was happening. Repairs from local electrical shops and factories were being carried out at either end of the baths. During the war the staff had been working with locally made electrical war equipment, some of which was highly secret. Now the local shops and local people were using the skills of the equipment workforce. It is likely that the swimming bath was used on site just to raise income by taking in paying customers like us. There was a building nearby which is probably the building which we now know as the Repair Shop. It was part of the tour and we did go in there. I do remember glass cabinets containing smallish items, probably waiting to be mended or returned to their owners.

On the surrounding land very early thatched houses, from a heavily bombed London district, had been relocated, while more modern homes for the owners were being built in their original location. We didn't manage to go into the lovely old thatched houses, but a few of us spent some enjoyable time with one family, who were living in a tent until they could go to their new home.

I wish I could remember more as it was such an interesting site. But it was rather a long time ago. Unfortunately, I have mobility problems so I have been unable to go to meetings. But hopefully I can now pick them up online.

Tales from the Cemeteries

Headstones are fascinating sources of history and the inscriptions range from the standard to the curious, from the bald statement to the richly-detailed, and sometimes the over-the-top-sentimental. We have some great offerings in this issue. If you have any information in your family tree about the first one, do please let us know!

The two images below were taken by **Roland** in the **New Brentford Cemetery**. The simple heartfelt inscription reads:

“In loving memory of (Tommy) Sgt. Dennison Middx killed in action April 25 1915 aged 22 from Ethel whom he loved”

Research is still going on to find out who **Ethel** was. It would wonderful to discover her story and publish an article on her story.



Bedfont Cemetery offers a headstone that might seem rather over-sentimental but is nonetheless sincere and deeply felt.



Left page of book: In / loving memory / MARGARET ANN / COLEMAN / (MAGGIE) / who passed away / 16th July 1999 / To the world / she was just a part / To me / she was the world.

Right page of book: In the early hours of the morning / I held your hand in mine / I looked at your beauty / sleeping for the longest time / In the early hours of the morning / I gently kissed your face / I hid your image inside a place / that time could not erase / In the early hours of the morning / my heart began to break / as the light came to touch your eyes / from this world you'd not awake / In the early hours of the morning / I lay my head upon your hand / and whispered not to be afraid / When you passed into the promised land / in the early hours of the morning / you gently slipped away / As the light in my eyes grew darker / and my heart grew heavy that day / in the early hours of the morning / I knew your life had ceased to be / You were like a beautiful bird / happily set free.

And finally in **Hounslow Cemetery**, the mystery of **Clara Jackson** and **Lilian Clare Stenner**.



The words are: In / loving memory of / my dear wife / CLARA JACKSON / died May 4th 1937 / aged 69 years / Gone from us but not forgotten / Also my dear wife / LILIAN CLARE STENNER / daughter of above / died Dec. 5th 1946 / aged 55 years / Thy will be done.

Did he marry his own daughter or stepdaughter? Both seem unlikely. The answer, after some research, is a misprint and should perhaps have read “Also my dear daughter”?

Lilian Clare Stenner was born **Lilian Clare Jackson** in 1891, the only daughter of **Edwin Jackson, a painter**, and his wife **Clara nee Keen**. The family originally lived in the **Paddington** area.

There is an interesting note in **Lilian’s** school records. She suffered from paralysis after an attack of diphtheria and her sight was weak. A reminder that diphtheria was a deadly disease in those days.

She married **Alfred James Stenner** in 1922 and died in 1946, only 9 years after her mother **Clara**.

MEMBERS' DISCOUNTS

Find My Past

In May 2016 the Society signed a new contract with the Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS) relating to the terms under which we supply data to Find My Past. As part of this contract Find My Past has made available a discount of 15% on all new subscriptions, or Pay as You Go payments, taken out by our members. All you have to do is to enter the appropriate discount code as given below:

For Subscriptions the discount code is : *****

For Pay as You Go the discount code is : *****

These codes are valid up to the end of this year.

Forces War Records

The Society has arranged a useful discount for our members of 40% when you take out a subscription with Forces War Records. You should register your details with them by visiting www.forces-war-records.co.uk and going to their *Login/Register* page. The discount code is *****

PASSWORDS

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2023 *****

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2023 *****

Family History Fairs and Events

Excellent news! We have not just one but **three** in-person shows lined up for the autumn.

* **The Family History Show**

2nd September, Kempton Park, 10.00-16.00

Tickets – Earlybird offer (at time of going to press) 2 tickets for £12

Free parking.

Further details at <https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com>

* **St Mary's Open Day**

16th September, St Mary's Church, Church Street, Sunbury-upon-Thames
10.00-16.00

Access to church records and a chance to learn about the bells (and try bellringing!), plus tea, coffee and ice-cream.

Free admission

* **Surrey Family History Show**

4th November, 10.00-16.00 Woking Leisure Centre, Woking,

Free admission.

Free parking for 3 hours.

Further details at www.wsfhs.co.uk

* WMFHS will have a stall at these events. Further information is available at:
www.west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk/content/fairs.aspx

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.

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.

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 a sae.

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 Hanworth Road, Hounslow, TW3 3TY

paulbarnfield@hotmail.co.uk

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

Front Cover

Image: Top: The Great Barn at Harmondsworth
Bottom: The Five Bells pub at Harmondsworth

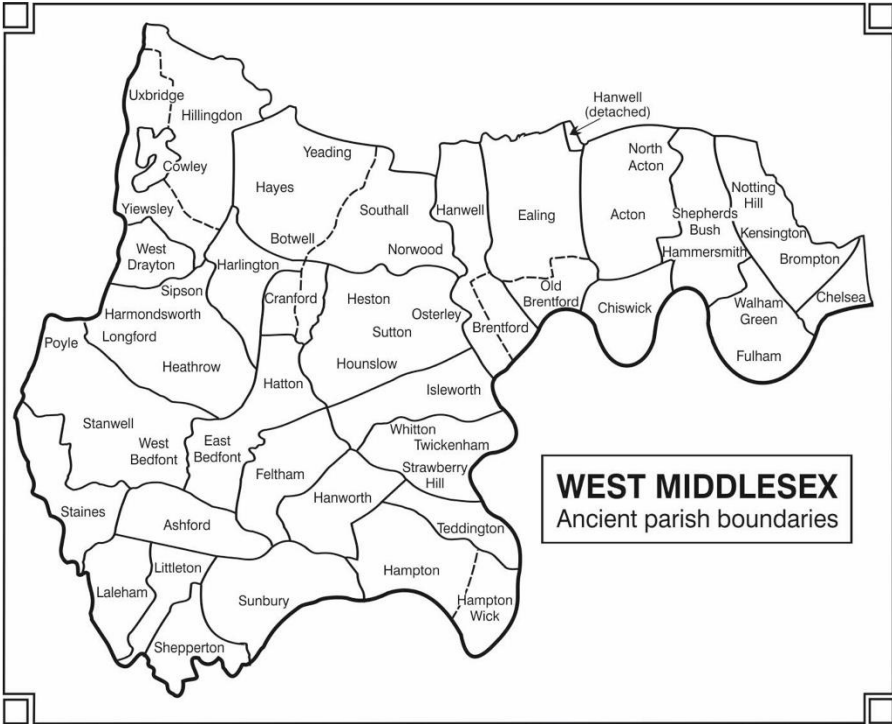
The Great Barn at Harmondsworth dates from the early 1400s and was built on land acquired by William of Wyleham, Bishop of Winchester to endow Winchester College. It is the largest intact medieval timber-framed barn in England and measures 192 ft long and 37 ft 6in wide.

It was used until the 1970s. After falling into disrepair, it was bought by English Heritage in 2011.

It is open to the public on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month.

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West Middlesex Family History Society

Area of Interest

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

Printed by Joshua Horgan Print and Design

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Published by West Middlesex Family History Society

Registered Charity No. 291906

ISSN 0142-517X