



Family Roots

Family History Society for Eastbourne & District
www.eastbournefhs.org.uk



Memorial Houses, Victoria Drive,
Eastbourne.

Vol. 38.2 November 2023



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Copy deadlines for articles please.

January 15th, April 16th, July 16th & October 16th.

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(With s.a.e. Please)

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Editorial

The cover image is of Eastbourne War Memorial Houses in Victoria Drive. They are a group of six houses built in the 1950's to house disabled ex-servicemen and their families. There is an inscription on the plaque which reads 'THIS PLAQUE WAS UNVEILED BY/ HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE/ ACCOMPANIED BY/ THE WORSHIPFUL MAYOR OF EASTBOURNE/ COUNCILLOR MAURICE SKELTON/ ON 26th AUGUST 1992/ TO COMMEMORATE THE 40th ANNIVERSARY/ OF THE COMPLETION OF THE HOUSES/ '

Source IWM The cover image © 2023 J Titmuss

I thank those of you that have sent in articles, without your contributions there would be no magazine! Talking of magazines have you read the exchange magazines on our website?

At long last I have full fibre broadband, this makes maintaining the website so much easier, no more waiting ages for files to upload; for example the individual files for index of names on CD database could, and has taken over 20 minutes. Now it is lightning fast.

Well that is another year nearly over and I wish you all a peaceful Christmas and New year.

Till next time John Titmuss

Life in Wartime Eastbourne

Speaker: Alan Wenham

Family Roots meeting – Thursday, 1st June 2023

By: Jenny Wootton

Alan's talk on wartime Eastbourne covered both World Wars. In World War 1 the occupants of Eastbourne were only observers of what was happening over on the Continent and initially life was not severely disrupted. In the summer of 1914 the Sussex Agricultural Show was held, the Channel fleet visited the town and all was well.

Within five weeks of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in August 1914 England was at war. Recruiting posters and publicity calling for volunteers began to appear in the local papers. 2,000 men from Eastbourne signed up, often by groups of workmates from large companies. Eastbourne Council Bus Company encouraged their employees and helped by subsidising wages. Claude Lowther, local MP and owner of Herstmonceux Castle, raised the Southdowns battalions (known as Lowther's Lambs) for the Royal Sussex Regiment by going door-to-door asking for volunteers. On 30 June 1916, just before the battle of the Somme, those battalions were virtually wiped out by enemy action, 'the Day Sussex Died'.

By Easter 1915 not much had changed in Eastbourne. A lot of bands played at the bandstand and theatres were open daily to raise morale.

Horses and vehicles were donated by locals and funds were raised for the war effort. Manufacturing of aircraft and munitions was started in the town. Caffyns garage on Marine Parade and Seaside Road were turned over to aircraft manufacture and 75 planes were built in Eastbourne. A lot of women were on the workforce as most of the men had signed up to fight.

Troops assembled in the surrounds of Eastbourne ready to embark for France. Large military camps were established at Spot Farm and Whitbread Hollow on the Downs, and soldiers were billeted with local families in the town. A sergeant and policeman would go round knocking on doors to find rooms for the troops and families were not allowed to refuse.

Sea planes had been manufactured in Eastbourne for the navy since 1912 on a site near the Crumbles. Eastbourne Airfield near Lottbridge Drove (opposite the present Tesco's supermarket) was the principle naval flying school in the country. 750 aircraft were built in Eastbourne for the navy. The Royal Naval Airship Station was at Willingdon and was one of the main patrol stations looking for U-boats in the Channel. 35 merchant vessels were sunk by U-boats off Newhaven.

Public information was posted on massive posters around the town. Civilian evacuation drills were compulsory and the police were responsible for air raid warnings.

Eastbourne became a Red Cross town, where casualties arriving from the front by train were treated in large houses that had been hastily turned into hospitals. Sixteen ambulance trains arrived in the town carrying many seriously injured soldiers. The Summerdown camp was founded to care for those soldiers who needed lengthy recuperation from their injuries. It could accommodate 35,000 men who were all issued with a blue uniform so they could be easily recognised as recovering soldiers and not pacifists or cowards. They became known as the 'Blue Boys'. The Eastbourne population was very supportive of the Blue Boys and welcomed them into the town, issuing them with free bus passes and arranging entertainment.

Women became more involved in supporting working life at home, in construction work, farming, making munitions. Rationing only started in 1917 when sugar was in short supply, but by 1918 fruit, vegetable and flour were also running low. The Chatsworth Estate provided a number of free allotments so families could start to grow their own food. Coal was also in very short supply by the time the armistice was signed in 1918. The main war memorial to men and women from Eastbourne who lost their lives in the First World War was commissioned in 1920 and unveiled in November of that year. 1,052 people from Eastbourne were killed in WW1.

Eastbourne was more prepared for war in 1939 as they had seen the build

up happening on the Continent. Local defence volunteers, WVS, auxiliary fire and police, air raid wardens had all been recruited two years ahead. There were fire wardens on every street. Gas attack drills had been practised. When the Second World War was declared in 1939 the country was ready.

The Liverpool Scottish regiment were stationed in Eastbourne, and later a Canadian regiment, housed mainly in the Meads area, with manoeuvres being practised on the Downs. The role of women became prominent to maintain the war effort, and boys and men of a “certain age” were encouraged to join the Home Guard (‘Dad’s Army’) to defend local towns and villages. Fund raising was undertaken to buy a Spitfire and enough money was raised in two weeks for one aircraft. England was very reliant on food from abroad and rationing was reintroduced to support the limited supplies that were able to get passed the German blockades. An attitude of ‘make do and mend’ was adopted as far as clothing was concerned. All women between 18 and 60 had to register for war work and could be directed to anywhere in the country.

At the beginning of the war evacuation became very important to bring people out from London to safe towns like Eastbourne. The local MP Charles Taylor promoted Eastbourne as a safe town and in the early weeks of the war 20,000 families from the East End of London arrived by train and had to be accommodated in the town. As Eastbourne prepared

for invasion and the bombs started to fall in the summer of 1940 those 20,000 people had to be moved back from the coastal town and, along with 30,000 inhabitants, were evacuated to the West Country. Eastbourne became a Forward Defence Zone. Alderman Alice Hudson, the lady mayor, did a brilliant job organising the evacuation. Many children were evacuated while their parents remained in the town, and free air raid shelters were given to those who stayed, as well as large public shelters arranged around the town.

Eastbourne was heavily bombed, and was deliberately targeted to disrupt communications prior to the planned German invasion. The Royal Observer Corps was set up to spot enemy aircraft as they flew over in order to give early warning of attack. The town sustained many tip-and-run raids, with aircraft flying in low, shooting over the town for a few minutes, and then flying away. Lord Shawcross authorised the Eastbourne 'cuckoo', a rapid siren warning system, which gave immediate warning of a raid allowing nineteen seconds to find shelter. Thanks to all the preparation before the war only 200 Eastbourne residents were killed in the six years of war, despite the many buildings destroyed. The Council gave support for re-housing and supported restaurants to help feed the homeless. Stores remained open throughout the war, though many had to be moved from bombed out buildings. Eastbourne started planning for peace from 1943 and when VE Day came

in 1945 the Council had to start planning to rehouse all the returning population. There were bomb sites everywhere, and a huge housing crisis caused by the damage. All the gardens and parks in the town had been dug over and ploughed for food production, and it was many years before the town returned to normal and was able to welcome tourists again.

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From the Jevington Parish Registers.

Contributed by: J Tyhurst.

8th January 1734.

There was a violent storm here about noon, which blew both my Barns down, as it were in an instant. It is reckon'd to have done more mischief in England ye the great storm, November 26th 1703.

6th July 1753

Whenever it shall please God to take me to himself, I desire that my body may be buried in the vault in the Churchyard where the bodies of my two sons lie, Simon Manningham.

19th September 1797

John Henty privately baptised aged about one month when a brick fell down the chimney onto his head while in his mother's arms. Received into the Church September 24th.

What Really Happened to my Great-grandmother's First husband?

Contributed by: Ailna Martin.

On 11th July 1850, my Cornish great-grandmother, Sarah Brown Bray, married Thomas Henry Rowse in St. Austell, Cornwall. It would seem from studying the General Register Office indexes that the spelling of Thomas Henry's surname predominates in Cornwall, whereas elsewhere the spelling Rouse is favoured.

Thomas was a mariner and I have been able to trace his career as he progressed through the ranks as a merchant naval officer prior to Sarah's second marriage to my great-grandfather, James Dunn, on the 7th March 1869. On her marriage to James Dunn the Parish Register of the Church of St. John the Baptist, Toxteth Park, Liverpool it stated that she was a spinster. This is plainly incorrect as I have the certificate recording her first marriage. However, when I obtained a copy of Sarah's marriage certificate to James Dunn from the General Register Office, her status was recorded as "widow". Both husbands were mariners and despite extensive searches, including the registers of deaths at sea and local newspaper announcements, I have been unable to find a record for the death of Thomas Henry either as Rouse or in the commoner version of Rouse.

Sarah brought her two daughters from her first marriage to her

second marriage. Her eldest child, a son, also named Thomas Henry, had sadly been lost at sea, drowned, when only 20 years old. When her elder daughter, Sarah Jane Rouse married James Lawrie Kerr on 23rd July 1871, there was no mention that her father had died, although Sarah's second husband, James Dunn, was one of the witnesses who signed the register. However, when the second daughter, Elizabeth Maud Mary married on 27th December 1890 Thomas Henry was recorded as "Chief Officer, deceased."

I know from records that early in his career as a mariner, Thomas Henry sailed in a brig, "Edward Boustead", which was registered to one of the oldest shipping companies in Britain, Thomas & James Harrison.

Harrison's archives are held at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in Liverpool, but their policy is, unhelpfully, that any research must be done in person. I have searched the records of the Lloyd's Shipping Registers online but the only reference to the "Edward Boustead", concern the building of the ship, which give a very full description of the process and the port at which it was registered, which was Liverpool. In a book about the history of the Harrison Line the "Edward Boustead" is described as a brig, but the Lloyd's Register record referred to above describes it as a ship, the difference between the two is that a brig is a smaller vessel than a ship. Unfortunately, I have so far been unable to find any crew lists on which Thomas Henry is recorded. And so, at present, this remains one of my "brick walls".

News from Canada

We have had an email from David Maynard in Alberta Canada. David was at a meeting earlier this year to introduce his partner Dianne Hooper and to announce they were emigrating to Canada, his brother Bob has been there a number of years.

6th September.

Hi to all members, I have been here six months now and have settled into Canadian life now with Dianne. Weather is hot and much smoke haze from all the forest fires that are around in BC. I have started on my immigration papers for permanent residency.

Regards to all not forgetting June and cousin Christine

From David Maynard and Dianne Hooper

—000—

Using Find a Grave

Contributed by: Rosalind Hodge.

Find a Grave is a valuable tool for family historians. Now part of Ancestry it was launched in 1998 as a website that allows the public to search and contribute to an online database of virtual cemeteries and graves worldwide. The site and information it holds is free to access unlike Ancestry or Find my Past which requires a subscription. There are now over 226 million memorials on the database which have been added by

volunteers or groups such as the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Anyone can become a volunteer contributor. You may want to do this just to add your family's memorials or you might want to become a regular contributor perhaps recording graves in a local churchyard or cemetery.

It is a simple process to register as a member. Once registered you can do as much or as little as you wish. You can contribute by creating new entries and when you create a new memorial you become the manager and control the content as editor of information. You also can submit additional information to existing memorials by suggesting edits or adding photographs. Perhaps a memorial has already been created for one of your family members and you know further information, perhaps their date and place of birth or interesting biographical information. You can send a suggested edit with this information and it goes to the manager of that memorial. If someone has created a memorial, for example of your family member, you can also request it be transferred to your management. This will be at the discretion of the original manager but is worth requesting.

To create a memorial you only need the person's name and the location of their burial or memorial, e.g. cemetery, churchyard etc. Once created there is the facility for photographs of the grave, memorial or the person. There are additional boxes for maiden name, nicknames, date and place of birth, date and place of death, for spouses and dates of marriage. There is a large box for biographical information where personal details can be

added. If you have details of the person's spouse, parents, siblings or children these can all be linked but that is dependant on those people being on the Find a Grave site. If not on the site and you have enough information you can add and link them.

A section for the transcription of the memorial inscription is very useful as often gives the exact date of death which is generally not available online through civil registration or burial records. There is provision for a plot number, GPS location and the condition of the grave. There is a special category for famous people but that is dependant on the site considering them famous.

I started photographing headstones and memorials in Willingdon and Jevington churchyards seven ago and in 2019 decided to add them to Find a Grave. Initially I created the memorials with the name, place or burial, date of death and the photograph of the stone. During lockdown I went back over entries adding inscriptions and places and dates of birth I had researched. If a spouse is registered I link and add the date of marriage and look for other family members to link. In this way a family group can be created and potentially several generations. You may know where a family member is buried but not have a photo of a grave or it may be unmarked with no headstone to photograph. It is still important to create a memorial entry for that person with the information you have. If an unmarked grave I often add a photo of the church or churchyard.

Once you have registered to the site and created a memorial you can receive messages via the website. No one can contact you directly through your personal email address. These messages may be suggesting edits, corrections or providing additional information. As manager of a memorial that you created you can choose whether to accept or decline the suggested edits or additions. In the majority of cases the information is very helpful and you can add it. Occasionally it doesn't match documentary evidence so in that case you can decline and give a reason. There is also the facility to add a tribute, a flower or symbol or message to any memorial on the site.

We love walking often visiting country churchyards and with a mobile phone it is easy to take any number of close up photos of headstones and graves. Don't forget memorials inside the churches too which can be very interesting. I often keep these photos for winter days or when time allows and gradually add them to the site. By doing this you will be helping other researchers.

Two relatives I found by chance were my great great grandfather's elder sisters. Sarah and Elizabeth Wooller were born in Milton Street Arlington 3 July 1818 and 7 June 1819. I had not been able to trace them following their marriages but through Find a Grave I discovered they emigrated to America both settling in New York. Sarah died 25 Feb 1904 and she and her husband Llewellyn Bodle have a very large elaborate memorial in Glenwood Cemetery New York. Elizabeth died 8 Apr 1892

and is buried with her husband Jesse Savage in Washington Street Cemetery. Added to the entry of both sisters are detailed obituaries from the local papers. In these I found the date of their departure from London, the names of the ships and exact dates of arrival, where they settled, home addresses and how long they had lived there. Details are given of their husbands and the successful businesses they set up. Their children and grandchildren are all named. Recorded are the causes of death, their interests and some events in their lives as well as details of their funerals. I knew none of this information so Find a Grave was the means of me discovering all this. I messaged the creator of the memorials thanking her and have now been able to link these two sisters to their brother my gt gt grandfather, their parents and back to their gt gt grandparents. I am now hoping to contact some of their descendants.

Find a Grave can tell you so much more than where a person is buried and by adding a memorial you can be helping someone with their family history research.

<https://www.findagrave.com>

Program for 2024

January 4th - Jean Renwick - Zoom.

In an extensively illustrated talk, Jean Renwick discusses delving into libraries, archives and on-line sources to record the lives of the descendants of Elizabeth Addy, the Doncaster woman memorialised in the

brooch inherited by the author.

February 1st - Ian Porter - Zoom.

The Real Downton Abbey: Domestic Service before the Great War.'

March 7th - Graham Bandy.

The talk not only includes identifying badges, but how to date old military photographs, and covers the various uniform changes from the 19th century onwards. The talk will be illustrated with original uniforms and several other things of interest, including original WW1 QAIMNS Nursing items from his collections.

April 4th - AGM/Kevin Newman.

Kevin will be telling tales of Sussex Smugglers and smuggling, and letting those attending in on the wonderful world of smuggler speak. So if you too want to find if you should 'act like a Owler', 'sow a crop', take hold of a 'tuckstick' or wander into the 'Bo-Peep'.

May 2nd - Nick Barrett.

'Family history and the media: behind the scenes of Who Do You Think You Are?'

June 6th Chris Kempshall

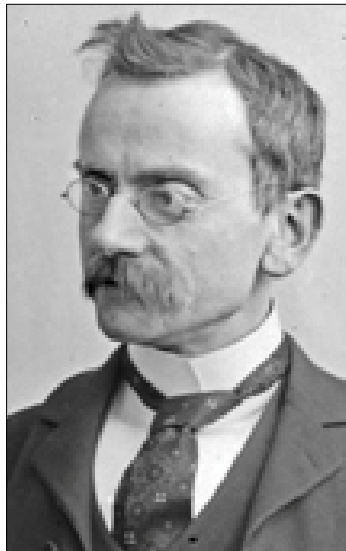
will give his talk on 'East Sussex Women and the first world war'.

THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF ELLIS KELSEY 1866 - 1939

SPEAKER KEVIN GORDON

Family Roots meeting – Thursday, 6th July 2023

By: Jenny Wootton



Kevin Gordon was pleased to be able to give his talk again on the photographs of Ellis Kelsey, (which he originally gave on Zoom in January 2021 during lockdown) this time to a live audience, and was able to illustrate it with many more of Kelsey's photographs of local scenes of Eastbourne and towns nearby. All the images were taken from digital copies of glass plate slides held by the Seaford Museum,

and Kevin acknowledged the help of Ben Franks from Seaford Museum for his work in digitising the slides, and Nat Gonella from Eastbourne Local History Society for collating and organising the photographs for his talk.

Kelsey was a pioneer of photography and was adventurous in the way he approached picture taking, capturing many photographs in rain and snow, at nighttime, in low light, to achieve some amazingly clear pictures.

Seaford Museum holds over 2,300 glass plate slides taken by Ellis Kelsey, and Kevin included a wide selection of digital copies from the collection,

including early photographs of Richmond, Surrey, the family's home village in the Isle of Axholme, Lincolnshire, from his travels in England and Europe, as well as many views of Eastbourne.

Ellis Kelsey's parents were Joseph and Martha. Joseph was a tailor and owned a haberdashery business in Richmond, supplying linens to wealthy customers including Queen Victoria and Buckingham Palace. Ellis was born in 1866 and his sister Edith was born in 1870, and the family lived in Richmond until 1891, when they moved back to Westwoodside in Lincolnshire. Ellis's earliest photographs were taken about 1890 in Richmond. His family were well off and could afford to support his expensive photographic hobby.

In 1893 Joseph retired and the family moved to 'Melwood', 22 Upper Avenue, Eastbourne, a large house with good views over Whitley and Cavendish Bridges. Ellis had studied music and the 1911 census gives his occupation as Professor of Music. He was an Associate of the Royal College of Music. He took several photographs inside his home, which was typical of the ornate interiors popular at the time, with walls covered in paintings and ornaments, and including the music room with its large pipe organ. Ellis was obviously proud of his photographs as several were shown framed and hanging on the walls.

The Kelsey family liked to travel around England, especially to the West Country, Isle of Wight and London, and Ellis took his camera everywhere

he went. He also took many photos on the Continent, through Switzerland, Austria and Italy, travelling with his sister Edith. Ellis and his sister lived with their parents until Martha died in 1914 and Joseph in 1919. Both are buried in Ocklynge Cemetery. Ellis and his sister then moved to King's Drive, Eastbourne in 1920.

Ellis Kelsey took thousands of photographs during his lifetime. As well as Seaford Museum, The Keep in Brighton has several albums, there are collections in Doncaster Central Library and the National Railway Museum, as well as several in private hands. Ellis had a fascination with railways and took many photographs of steam trains. He liked to experiment with all different techniques and lighting and many of his views are very atmospheric. The collection in Seaford Museum includes half-plate and quarter-plate negatives, glass plates, lantern slides and stereographs. He mastered the technique of photographing views at night and in fog using long exposures, and was not afraid of drawing in (or early Photoshopping!) details, for example by enhancing light beams from the lighthouse.

Ellis went out in all weathers and captured scenes of everyday life around the town and in Lewes, Newhaven harbour, Seaford, Pevensey and Westham, Hastings, Rye, Polegate, Willingdon and along the clifftop at Beachy Head. He was skilled in composing detailed images, capturing reflections off rain soaked pavements, and sunshine and shadows. He was

a very brave photographer bearing in mind he was not able to see the finished view until he had developed the photograph at home, unlike today's instant digital photography.

Many of his photographs of Eastbourne give a good insight into the development of the town, and Kevin's knowledge of local history enabled him to add interest to his talk by adding extra historical details. Ellis liked to photograph people in their natural environments, giving a great image of social history, but he also took many posed portraits, as well as pets and still life photography. Between 1899 and 1914 he submitted photographs to the London Photographic Society, winning many prizes. He experimented with early colour photography and one of his first ones was a view of the Old School House in Meads Road, Eastbourne taken in 1913. Ellis also exhibited his photographs in Eastbourne, and published articles in photographic and scientific magazines.

Ellis Kelsey married Elizabeth Woods on 15 October 1931, and moved to Heathfield Road, Seaford with his wife and sister Edith. He died on 13 October 1939 and is buried in Seaford Cemetery.

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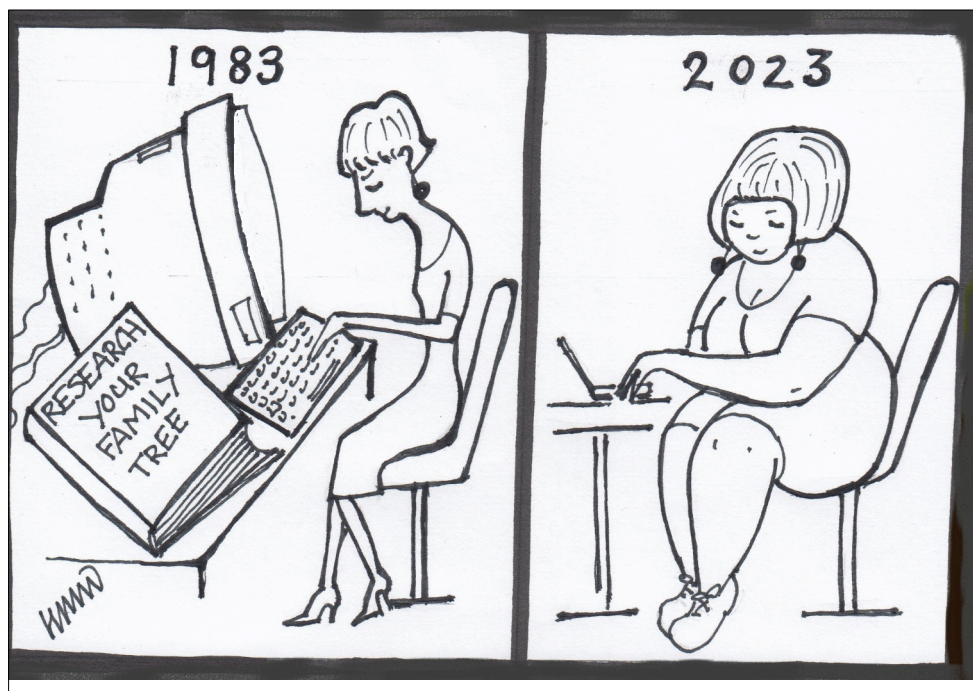
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October 1939 and is buried in Seaford Cemetery.

(The photographs with this article are from digital images created by Ben Franks from the original glass plate slides held in Seaford Museum.)

CARTOON

BY: HELEN WARREN



**WORKING WITH FIND A GRAVE
AND FRIENDS OF OCKLYNGE
SPEAKER -DANIELLE WESTON**

Family Roots meeting – Thursday, 3rd August 2023

BY: JENNY WOOTTON

Danielle is one of the founder members of Friends of Ocklynge Cemetery and has used her knowledge of researching her own family's graves through Find-A-Grave (FAG) to add hundreds of graves in the cemetery onto the FAG website. She set up a memorial on FAG to her parents, and when her sister died she added some history and family photographs. Using Family Search and FAG she now helps others find family graves, linking missing family members together.

Danielle volunteered as a FAG photographer in Sussex, responding to requests from families outside the area for photos of ancestor's graves, and through that she discovered Ocklynge Cemetery. A lady from Kansas, Missouri (Danielle's home town) requested a photograph of Annie Fenwick's grave, which Danielle found in Ocklynge, which linked to a tragic drowning in the States. The lady was so pleased with the photograph that she offered to undertake research for Danielle in Kansas. The overall purpose of FAG is to preserve a record of gravestones for families, and to help connect family members with lost relatives. Danielle

now concentrates most of her searches in Ocklynge, and is eternally grateful to Family Roots who transcribed all the known headstones in the cemetery over ten years ago. This has enabled her to easily locate a grave, and if it is no longer readable she cleans the grave, taking before and after photographs. She then takes the GPS location and adds that to FAG, with the photographs, plot number in the cemetery, and the grave details, and links it with other family graves in the cemetery. This enables any family members who come to the cemetery to easily find the grave again.

Danielle described how she located a grave for another family in the USA, looking for the name Cornwell. Using the memorial inscriptions list she knew the names of other graves in the right location but only found a lump in the ground where she expected the Cornwell grave to be. She prodded the lump and hit a stone, and after carefully clearing the ground and cleaning the small stone she was able to send a photograph to the family in Missouri.

While helping to clear overgrowth of the graves as part of work of the Friends of Ocklynge Cemetery Danielle uncovered the grave of Matthew Freeman, a survivor of the sinking of the 'SS Lusitania' in 1915 during WW1. This fascinated Danielle so she did some research into his family history, and that is now uploaded on to FAG together with a photo of Matthew. She has also recorded details of the records she researched on

Ancestry on the FAG site.

Putting the GPS coordinates into the app on a Smart phone it is possible to open up a map of the cemetery which will then walk you straight to the grave you are searching for. Whenever Danielle uploads details of a grave she also adds the GPS coordinates so others can easily find it.

The graves in Ocklynge Cemetery all have numbers, some can be found on the back of a headstone but many only relate to the number in the burial registers. One confusion that can lead people astray if they have a grave number is that the same number can appear in a 'consecrated' part of the cemetery or an 'unconsecrated' section. This caught Danielle out when she was looking for the grave of John Jasper and had been given the grave number C115. Section C is divided into consecrated and unconsecrated. Danielle knew the names on the graves either side and that the Jasper grave had a vase, but she could not find it where she expected until she realised she was looking in the unconsecrated part. A small 'c' after the number indicated it is in the consecrated section, and she eventually located the vase but no headstone. Using her sturdy prodding stick she found the headstone buried deep underground, and after returning later to clear the ground and clean the stone she was able to take a good photograph of the inscription.

Danielle now has a database of all the names and GPS coordinates for graves she has uploaded to FAG. Wherever possible she has taken a

photograph of the inscription, one of the whole grave and the location, and is willing to help others find their ancestors graves in Ocklynge Cemetery. The National Federation of Cemetery Friends lists cemeteries all round the country, and have researchers who can help find graves in other areas of the UK.

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'Orphan certificates' Clarification

We had a post on our Facebook page asking if orphan certificate meant the person was an orphan.

This is not the case, we use the term 'orphan' to show that a certificate was purchased from the GRO but on receipt was found not to be the person being researched.

We are sorry for any confusion, the pages on the website have been updated and now include the wording 'as they were found to be not the person being researched'.

Head over to our website, we may have a certificate for your ancestor.

www.eastbournefhs.org.uk

Ed.

A Clandestine Marriage

Contributed by: Peggy Westwood

I decided to look for the marriage of my 6x great grandfather William Sageman to Elizabeth Ivory. On Ancestry I found the marriage under London England Clandestine Marriages and Baptisms Registers 1667 to 1738. Copies of the original registers are on Ancestry and they are clear to read.

There are three records of the marriage. Interestingly the first record is earlier than the second two that have the same date. In all the marriages the bride and groom are noted as Spinster and Bachelor. Looking at the records it seems all couples are listed as Bachelor or Spinster.

William Sageman male Bachelor

Elizabeth Ivory Spinster

Marriage date 5/7/1737

Officiating ministers: Gayman, Ashman and others not listed.

Fleet notebooks-(Burnford) 1667-1754.

Name William Sageman Hus B

Gender Male

Event type Marriage

Marriage Date 18 Jun 1738

Marriage Place London, England

Residence Measom in Surrey

Spouse Elizabeth Ivory Sp
Spouse Residence Windsor in Berks
Piece Description Fleet Notebooks (Burnford), 1738 Jun-Jul
Officiating Ministers: Ashwell, Wyatt, Dare, Barret, Gaynam, Wigmore
[Burnford's Register] (1736 Jun 23–1739 Sep16)
Fleet Notebooks (Burnford), 1738 Jun-Jul
William Sageman of Mealsom in Surrey Husb B & Elizabeth Ivory of
Windsor Berks. 18/6/1738.

As soon as I saw the words 'clandestine marriage' my curiosity was aroused. Clandestine marriages were those that had an element of secrecy to them. Perhaps they took place away from a home parish and without either banns or a marriage licence. An irregular marriage was one that took place either away from the home parish of the spouses (after banns or a licence) or at an improper time.

From 1667 to 1754 marriage within a church came with certain restrictions. Banns required a couple to post an announcement of the intended union three weeks prior to the marriage. Banns could be waived by obtaining a license but church officials could also dictate where and when a couple could marry. There were residency requirements required and times during the ecclesiastic calendar when marriages were not to be performed. Parental consent was required when either party was under the age of 21.

Clandestine marriages were performed by institutions that considered themselves exempt from church canon or clerics who simply flouted church regulations.

Prisons like the Fleet and the King's Bench Prison became popular destinations for couples interested in quick, no questions asked marriages because of the number of clerics imprisoned for debt who had nothing to lose and welcomed the income. Many of them lived in the 'Rules' or 'Liberties', which were areas around the prisons where prisoners could pay for the privilege of living outside the gates.

Naturally the next question is 'Why a clandestine marriage?'

William was a gypsy and probably not a desirable husband. Elizabeth was not under the age of twenty one years and although I haven't found a baptism for William there is no reason to assume he was under the age of twenty one years. Elizabeth was baptised on the 22/4/1702 in St Dunstan's Church Stepney, London. Her parents were Robert Ivory and Elizabeth. She would have been 35 years old at the clandestine wedding.

There is also a marriage for Elizabeth:

Elizabeth Ivory Female

18/10/1720 in St Dunstan's Church, Stepney to

William Shon, Ratcliffe, Stepney, London, Butcher, Lime House,

William Shon was buried on 26/6/1737 in St Dunstan's Church,

Stepney. This is nine days before the first clandestine wedding so it wasn't a bigamous wedding. It is possible Elizabeth didn't know her husband had died.

I can only find one child for Robert and Elizabeth Shon:

Baptism 24/6/1737 William Shon at St Dunston, Stepney Son of William and Elizabeth

At the clandestine wedding Elizabeth also reverts to her single surname of Ivory and claims to be from Windsor in Berkshire. I can find no record of her in Windsor but that doesn't mean she wasn't there. She could have named the place she came from recently rather than where she was born.

I cannot find a baptism or another marriage for William.

William and Elizabeth Sageman lived in Surrey after their marriage. William Sageman was buried on the 20/3/1797 at West Horsley in Surrey.

Elizabeth Sageman died on February 24th 1802 and was buried on February 24th 1802 at St Katherine's, Merstham. Died of old age.

Notes on the burial entry: Widow of William Sageman – Poor House in 1802 Age 101 years.

Sources:

Clandestine Marriage Indexes on Ancestry

Information about clandestine marriage from Wikipedia

Parish Records on Ancestry

Compton Place

Family Roots Visit

By: Helen Warren



Image Jenny Wootton ©2023

On Thursday 7th September Family Roots' members, plus a few guests, visited Compton Place, Eastbourne for their annual outing. Our guide was Tony, a nice enough fellow but no public speaker! He was also somewhat confused concerning the history of the house and the people who had owned it, lived in it or visited.

It was arranged that there were two Family Roots' groups, the first met at 6.00 while I was in the second group, who were supposed to begin the tour at 7.00 but in fact started at 7.15 as it began to get dark!

Compton Place is part of the Chatsworth Estate having been in the custody of the Dukes of Devonshire since the 18th century. It is now leased and run as a school for foreign students. It is a grade 1 listed building and although looking run down and in need of considerable

refurbishment still retains much of its charm and original features.

This Palladian style mansion was built on the site of a red brick Jacobean house which belonged to the Wilson family and was known as Borne Place. Sir Spencer Compton, Earl of Wilmington, leased it and then bought it, remodelling it in 1726 working with the architect was Colen Campbell. However, Campbell died in 1729 before the building was completed so William Kent completed the work. The house is rich in plaster ornamentation and includes the only known portrait of Colen Campbell, it is done in plasterwork.

The Cavendish link was forged in 1782 when Lord George Cavendish, son of the fourth duke, married Elizabeth (Betty) Compton, the only child of Charles Compton of Compton Place, on 27 February 1782 in London. Their descendant the seventh Duke of Devonshire, inherited the land in 1834, and drew up plans to transform Eastbourne into a modern resort.

On our visit we admired 18th and 19th c. family portraits, ornate plasterwork, an exquisite ‘pierd de dura’ (marble mosaic work) fireplace and the service quarters with laundry, drying area and enormous stove. In the Duchess’ bedroom we also saw the scratched window glass, for me, one of the saddest stories attached to this house and its history.



Scratched in the corner of a windowpane says, Alex, 1892.

Princess Alexandra of Hess, was one of Queen Victoria’s grand-

daughters. Two years later she married Nicholas, Tsar of Russia. The same Nicholas and Alexandra who were assassinated, with their children during the Russian Revolution. A tiny bit of history poignant with tragedy.

Last century, after the death of a few dukes close together, the family were rocked by death duties and were forced to sell off a lot of their assets in Eastbourne and the house was rented out to a ladies' finishing school. Their most famous student was Benazir Bhutto. She was also assassinated later in life. How extraordinary! Another extraordinary thing is, the duke at that time, with the help of his son, was chopping down a tree in the garden of Compton House when the duke felt ill and the doctor was called. The doctor who attended the duke was Dr John Bodkin Adams. This was the same doctor who was accused of murdering 163 patients but was acquitted after a trial, however, doubt still hangs over him and he was known to have disliked the duke because he was a freemason. Dr Adams had a hatred of freemasons. The duke died three hours after the doctor's examination. The mystery remains – did the doctor kill the duke?

Death duties also forced the family to sell some of the land around Compton House and developers built several tall blocks of flats in front of the house, which of course, meant the house was overlooked. It is said that a recent duke loved Eastbourne and the house so much he wanted to bring the house back into the family and spend time there, but his wife

said she refused to live in a house overlooked by the hoi polloi.

One day, the duke decided to visit the house to see how things were going, and as he walked down a narrow corridor used by the students, he stopped suddenly beside a huge 18th century painting of a brother and sister. “What’s that doing there?” he is reputed to have asked. “It’s worth a quarter of a million pounds!” The painting was carted off to the duke’s other home – Chatsworth. But the school had become fond of the painting and wanted a copy. It now hangs in the same narrow corridor as the original and the story goes that the brother depicted in the painting suffered from the gambling sickness and was in serious debt. He came out of a gambling den one night and was attacked in the street. He woke up in chains on a ship in the middle of the ocean. He was taken to Jamaica and was kept as a slave for seven years until it was deemed he had worked enough to pay off his debts and he was allowed to go back to England (his father paid his fare). Another extraordinary story involved with this house!

What a fabulous place to visit. I hope the language students realise how lucky they are. Despite all it was a most interesting visit, and I am so pleased that I joined the tour.

News

Find My Past have released new parish record data for Gloucester, with 102,489 records being added. 200,00 newspaper pages with a 'brand new' title from Essex being added. these require a FMP subscription to view, or you can pay to view. They have introduced a new three month premium subscription to access all records,

Family History Federation have a monthly news letter 'Really Useful Bulletin' with lots of interesting articles on all aspects of family history. Also a diary of events from Family History societies around the country. Anyone can sign up and it is free.

Seen on Family Tree

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has expressed its delight at the decision of the UNESCO World Heritage Council to inscribe 51 Commonwealth war cemeteries and memorials with World Heritage Status.

RootsTech, the world's largest genealogy conference, has announced that registration for RootsTech 2024 is now open – and has also revealed the theme of the conference...

IF YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY OF MEETING AN ANCESTOR WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE AND WHY?

Contributed by: June Johnson.

After many years of research and coming up against brick walls do ever think what questions you would like to ask a particular Ancestor if you met them?

Who - George Simmonds {various spellings} is one person I would like to have met. He was born in 1857.

Why – because he had a son, Charles born 1882, who never lived with him during any of the census but lived with Grandmother, George's mother, until he himself married.

Why – His parents only had one other child at that time and she was a 3 years of age.

Why - Did George earn a decent wage for his living? How much rent did he have to pay? How many rooms did they occupy and if they all had their own beds to sleep in? Did his wife have to go to a pawn broker, on a Monday morning, pawning her wedding ring to help with the rent and food?

Why -Did they ask questions about their own Ancestry, or like many of us, leave it too late and the person died. Did they know their own parents

and grandparents forenames? As a child I never referred to my elders except by their titles of Mother, Father etc.

I can come up with many other questions for just this one person.

The list is endless but we would have a lot of fun if only we could ask them. Sometimes putting pen to paper we might be able to see through the brick walls.

—000—

South Metropolitan Gas Company

Workman's Visit to French Battlefields.

Reprinted from Family Roots Magazine Vol 3.4 April 1989

The following article has been received from Eileen Eldridge (nee Aukett) member 176, who writes :

“It is an account written by my husband's Grandfather of a workman's visit to the Western Front at the end of November 1918,, less than 3 weeks after the cessation of hostilities.

Apparently It was to have taken place in June of that year but the Germans made a big push at that time and the Allies were under considerable pressure and so the visit had to be postponed. Makes you appreciate the very thin line between victory and defeat!

It has all been copied exactly as he had written it, in indelible pencil on the unused pages of an LCC school notebook originally used by his

youngest son for shorthand practice.

It only came to light within the twelve months as a blank page was on the top — although we had the exercise book in our house since we cleared the family home in 1970! Some of the sentence construction is a little quaint — poetic licence I feel. When I looked up some of the words I was doubtful about, I found he had used them quite correctly but not in the sense we use them today. Before moving to London S.W.8. in 1901, he had been a police constable on the Isle of Wight: for about 20 years. So he was used to recording things exactly as he saw them! His eldest son Percy was killed in November 1917 at Cambrai after only six months service"

29th November 1918 Left Victoria Station 6.15 am. Arrived Folkstone about 9 am. Embarked on S.S. 'Victoria' for Boulogne about 10 8 am. Arrived at Boulogne about noon. All ordered to don lifebuoys - a precaution against stray mines. Passed minesweeper at work — passage fair (no incident),

Motored to Chateau Therlington on outskirts of Boulogne.

After luncheon motored to St Martin camp for a gas lecture and test, whole party having to don gas masks and pass: through gas chamber (a disagreeable experience) . Returned to billet at Chateau Therlington – Received every comfort and attention.

30th November Motored via Samer to Chateau Geziancourt, a distance of 68 miles, for luncheon. Afterwards motored to Albert, La Boisselle, Butts

de Warlencourt and Bapaume. Returned to billet at Chateua Gezincourt. First evidence of war seen near small town of Bougencourt, trees bearing marks of gun fire and barbed wire, now and then a house more or less damaged and some totally demolished. Further onwards evidence growing stronger all the time and every house more or less damaged, none untouched. Previous occupants 'God knows where'. Shell holes everywhere.

The face of a beautiful country scarred beyond imagination and healing But the condition of Albert was more terrible still. Previously a small town of about 7,000 inhabitants, none of whom ' remain, it is now a scene of indescribable desolation. Hardly a single house can be repaired, most of them being merely heaps of bricks.

The Cathedral damaged beyond all thought of restoration. Universal interest has been centred on this Cathedral owing to the hanging figure of the Virgin Mary which has Since disappeared, whether under the debris or taken by the Boche 'not known' but probably the later (being metal) and excavation will decide later.

Damage to Albert caused principally by the Germans and [later by us - but with this difference — Germans bombarded it whilst partly inhabited, but Qur bombardeent followed evacuation. Altogether a terrible

example of the destructive power of modern artillery.

From Albert proceeded to La Boissell, a village utterly demolished had and near which we stood on the edge of crater caused by our miners 1st July 1916 blowing about 400 fms sky high. Crater estimated 40 yds diameter and 20 yds deep. Country around terrible scarred – no civilisation visible — nobody but Chinese coolies, German prisoners and British soldiers engaged on salvage of war materials being seen. Proceeded further to Butte de Warlencourt, scene of Titanic struggle earlier in the war. Three monuments erected to the memory of British and Colonial troops on summit. When Jerry made his advance in March and regained the ground he erected a fourth in memory of his troops — the whole country is here full of shell holes, looking like an immense nutmeg grater, seamed with trenches everywhere. Damaged tanks, a burnt out train and disabled guns meet the view and roadside dumps of salvaged material are frequent. The county apparently irretrievably ruined. Went on to Bapaume, another deserted town mined by the Bosche. Many houses totally down, all remainder unfit for habitation. Here Germans billeted their troops in cellars which are a speciality of the place — we later on utilised them for same purpose, before finally being driven out. The Huns took away a bronze statue from the central square. Motored back to billet at Gezaincourt overawed with the scene of destruction,

(To be continued)

MAP OF "DISTRICT"

Showing parishes for "Family Roots" local research.



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Alciston * Alfriston * Arlington * Berwick * Bishopstone *
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East Dean * East Hoathly * Eastbourne * Folkington *
Friston * Glynde * Hailsham * Heathfield * Hellingly *
Herstmonceux * Hooe * Jevington * Laughton * Litlington *
Lullington * Ninfield * Pevensey * Ringmer * Ripe * Seaford *
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