

Roots in the Forest



CHINGFORD MOUNT CEMETERY

WALTHAM FOREST FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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PRESIDENT

Barrie Burton Esq

Chairman

Tim Valder-Hogg, Tudor Lodge, 55 Tower Road, Epping, Essex
Tel: 01992 610880 Email: t.a.n.hogg@ntlworld.com

Secretary

Mark Carroll, 41 Hornbeam Road, Epping, Essex CM16 7JU
Tel: 01992 813014 M: 07902 208028 Email: dr.mcarroll@gmail.com

Treasurer/Membership Secretary

Brian Unwin, 22 Dale View Crescent, London E4 6PQ
Tel: 020 8529 4907 Email: brian.unwin@ntlworld.com

Editor

Kathy Unwin, 22 Dale View Crescent, London E4 6PQ
Tel: 020 8529 4907 Email: kathy.unwin@ntlworld.com

Ejournals Co-ordinator

Gill Nichols, 221 Vicarage Road, Leyton, London E10 7HQ
Tel: 07793 558452 Email: gill.star@btpenworld.com

Committee member

Andrew Childs, 8 Sybourn Street, London E17 8HA
Email: andrewchilds88@gmail.com

Bookstall/Projects

Barrie Burton, 49 Sky Peals Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 9NE
Tel: 020 8527 4807 Email: barriefb49@gmail.com

Exchange journals

**Please send all printed exchange journals to Barrie Burton,
49 Sky Peals Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 9NE**

Roots in the Forest

The Journal of the Waltham Forest Family History Society

September 2021

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A Canadian connection

Original by D F G Pither, August 2008
Updated by J J Watts, November 2020

On 29 July 1874, Henry Handy, a porter by profession, died suddenly aged 38 leaving his widow Abigail to raise their five children, William Henry, Sidney, Samuel, Annie Abigail and Emily. Henry Handy was buried in Bow Cemetery, London.

BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of <u>South Hackney</u> in the County of <u>Middlesex</u> in the Year 18 <u>66</u>						
When Baptised.	Child's Christian Name.	Parents' Name.		Abode.	Quality, Trade, or Profession.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
		Christian.	Surname.			
18 Apric /	Emily Jane	Spencer Samuel Louisa	Sole	Melmsby Street	Gardener	W. Egan
No. 1518						
18 Apric /	Frances James	James Sarah	Lewis	Ford Road	Bellinmon	W. Egan
No. 1514						
18 Apric /	Eliza Frances	Tom Eliza	Nicholson	Easton Place	Labourer	W. Egan
No. 1515						
18 Apric /	William Henry	Henry Abigail	Handy	Terrace Road West	Ware houseman	W. Egan
No. 1516						

Baptism record of William Handy, 1866

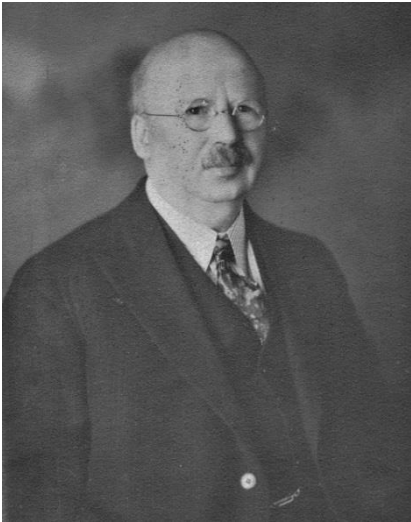
Life must have been very difficult for Abigail, a continual struggle trying to raise her five children. Her only source of income was made by cleaning other people's homes. The conditions for many were quite terrible: overcrowding, disease and poverty were common in Victorian London.

At the end of 1875 and with life probably becoming more difficult by the day, Abigail took a momentous decision to place two of her boys

into care and on 28 March 1876 William Henry and Samuel were admitted to Macpherson Homes.

The Annie Macpherson Homes was a charitable childcare organisation similar to Barnardo's but its method of recording family information was not so comprehensive. Since its inception, The Annie Macpherson Homes had developed a policy of emigrating children from England to Canada as an answer to the terrible conditions in London, and in May 1876, less than two months after being admitted, Samuel aged 6 and William Henry aged 10, along with other children of similar circumstances, were migrated to Canada. It must surely have been a terrifying ordeal for children of such a young age to have been sent to Glasgow to embark on a boat for a journey some 3,200 miles across the Atlantic Ocean to a strange and alien environment and one wonders what went through their minds as they made the long crossing.

By 1877 the two boys had been settled with their Canadian families. William Henry was placed with William G and Sarah Anne Brown,



William Handy

Methodists and farmers in Arthur, Wellington in North Ontario. Samuel was placed with Gilbert and Janet Curry, Presbyterian farmers in Elderslie, Bruce, North Ontario. Most children went to farmers to work on the land. Their progress with these people is briefly documented in their respective files and the placements were subsequently confirmed from the 1881 Canadian Census. Both boys appeared to have settled well into their new lives and favourable progress reports suggest that both William Henry and Samuel had adjusted well to Canadian life.

With the exception of the 1901 Canadian Census where Samuel is recorded, very little additional information has been found regarding Samuel's life in Canada. However, Samuel, who had subsequently become a farmer in his own right, married Mary Harris, a 49-year-old

bookkeeper, in the village of Hastings, Ontario, on 13 September 1932, passing away in 1949.

With regard to William Henry, it is known that he was to become a successful businessman residing in Toronto, and from a visit to the Toronto Reference Library in Young Street, it has been possible to piece together from the City Directories an outline of his life in the city.

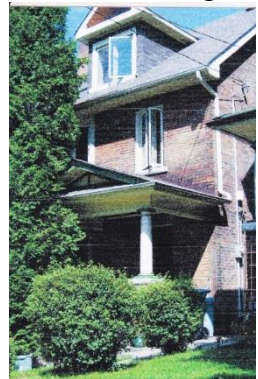
Before 1910 there is no record of William Henry in the city, but he appears on the 1911 Canadian Census as a salesman living at 214 Fern Avenue, Toronto, along with his mother Abigail, sister Emily (who married John Alfred Gee in Leytonstone in 1899 with three children by John), Nancie Hilda born 1902, John William Eric born 1906 and Frank Kenneth born 1911 in Canada. The Census record shows their year of immigration as 1910. It is perhaps comforting to know that William Henry was eventually reunited with his family and that he was able to bring them over to Canada to enjoy a better life.

1899 Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church, in the Parish of Leytonstone in the County of Essex								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
70	July 22nd 1899	John Alfred Gee	26	Bachelor	Farmer	Leytonstone	Albanus Alban Gee deceased.	Merchant
		Emily Handy	25	Spinster	-	Leytonstone	Henry Handy deceased.	Farmer
Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Protestant Church by <i>Henry Handy</i> after licensed by me, <i>H. J. Bellison</i> Vicar.								
This Marriage was solemnized between us, <i>John Alfred Gee</i> and <i>Emily Handy</i>			in the Presence of us, <i>Henry Handy</i> and <i>Albert Gee</i>					

Marriage of Emily Handy and John Gee

What happened to his two other siblings? Well, Annie Abigail (our grandmother) married Herbert Watts on 1 August 1887 and Sidney, who was a salesman and carpet buyer, married Helen Pearson on 10 August 1907.

The 1910 Toronto City Directory, Streets Section, shows that Fern Avenue, where William Henry was to spend his life, was unfinished, ending at number 214, so it would appear that William bought 216 Fern Avenue in 1911 newly built. Subsequent City Directories list William as a travelling salesman in 1912 to 1915, with John Alfred Gee also a traveller in 1914/15.



216 Fern Avenue

By 1920 John Alfred Gee had become an insurance agent living with his family at 156 Sorauren Avenue. Nancie Hilda was a bookkeeper with Torcan Fancy Goods Ltd. Sadly little Frank Kenneth had died in July 1915 aged 4.

Our great-grandmother Abigail Handy died on 15 June 1920 at 156 Sorauren Avenue and is buried in the Prospect Cemetery, York, Toronto, this becoming the Canadian family grave.

William Henry was shown as living at 216 Fern Avenue and by 1925 the records show that John Alfred Gee, by now a traveller again, and his family had moved back into 216 Fern Avenue. By this time Nancie Hilda had become a stenographer with the Toronto Transit Corporation (TTC), but no record could be found of John William Eric Gee, or Eric as he was to be known.

The 1930 City Directories show John Alfred Gee with family and William Henry continuing to live at 216 Fern Avenue, and by this time Nancie Hilda had become a clerk at the TTC. Between 1930 and 1935 John Alfred Gee moved his family to 394 Runnymede Road, a wide tree-lined road leading off Bloor Street, a major thoroughfare and shopping area, and Nancie Hilda was now a secretary at the TTC. William Henry continued to live on his own at 216 Fern Avenue but by 1940 he had taken in a lodger by the name of Sydney H Wigg.

In 1940 John Alfred Gee became a manufacturer's agent and Eric appears in the City Directories for the first time, living at 394 Runnymede Road with his parents and sister. He is listed as a clerk at the City Parks Department.

William Henry Handy died at 216 Fern Avenue on 6 July 1941 aged 76 but an obituary could not be found for him in either the *Toronto Star* or the lesser newspaper the *Globe and Mail*. Emily Gee inherited 216 Fern Avenue from her brother William under the terms of his will, of which we hold a copy. The Directories for 1941 and 1942 show no change at 394 Runnymede Road, and Sydney H Wigg continued to lodge at 216 Fern Avenue.

By 1943 the Gee family had moved from 394 Runnymede Road back into 216 Fern Avenue again, where Eric is listed as a resident and

Nancie Hilda is in Passenger Services Information at the TTC. The same information is recorded for 1944 except that Nancie Hilda has moved first into the Executive Department and then into Public Relations at the TTC. The entry for Eric bears the abbreviation “act ser”, repeated again in 1946, which was active service in WW2 in the Royal Canadian Artillery.

In 1947 John Alfred Gee died at his home on 12 August and an obituary for him was placed in the *Toronto Star* of which we hold a copy. Eric is listed once again as a clerk at the City Hall Parks Department and Nancie Hilda continued to be an employee at the TTC. The 1948 entry is virtually the same as for 1947 except that Emily is now listed as householder at 216 Fern Avenue. The 1949 entries are identical except that Eric is no longer listed and he could not be found in any subsequent City Directory.

We found that in 1952 Eric Gee married Lenora Aileen Graham, who was known as Aileen, had a son Graham in 1954 and a daughter Judith Lyn in 1956 who died in 1969. Eric died in 1977 of heart disease and is buried, along with Judith, in Markdale Cemetery, Oakville, Ontario, in the Graham family grave.

From 1950 to 1961 the entries are unchanged with Emily continuing to be shown as householder and Nancie Hilda employed at the TTC. In 1962 Emily Gee died aged 87. Nancie Hilda inherited 216 Fern Avenue and continued to live there until her death in 1993, with the house passing to a friend in her will, a copy of which we have.

There are phone directory entries for Aileen in Toronto until 2001. We recently found a death entry for Aileen Gee in the *Oakville Beaver*, a twice-monthly weekend newspaper, for April 2000. It shows she is the mother along with father John William Eric Gee of a Graham Gee with wife Wendy of Langley, British Columbia. We have found and are in regular contact with Graham Gee, who is our second cousin. He did know of his Handy family and was surprised to hear from us, his relatives in the UK. We are now looking into the Gee family as we feel Graham has current relatives besides us in the UK and are in the process of sending him copies of all our Handy/Gee documentation, pictures etc.

All the Handys and Gees, including Abigail, Samuel plus his wife, Emily, Nancie and Frank, are buried in the family plot in Prospect Cemetery, Toronto, for which have pictures of a large, engraved memorial about 8 feet high.

GEE, Aileen - Suddenly on Thursday, April 13, 2000 at the Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, in her 74th year. Beloved wife of the late J. W. Eric Gee. Loving mother of Graham and his wife Wendy of Langley, B.C. and predeceased by daughter Judith Lynne. Friends will be received at the Ward Funeral Home "Oakville Chapel", 109 Reynolds Street, Oakville on Saturday from 2-4 and 7-9p.m. Funeral Service in the Ward Chapel on Sunday April 16th at 2p.m. Interment and Committal Service to be held at Markdale Cemetery, Markdale, Ontario on Monday April 17th at 1p.m. In memory of Aileen, donations may be made to "Connectcare" c/o Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, 327 Reynolds St., Oakville, Ontario L6J 3L7

Obituary for Aileen Gee



Abigail Handy's memorial stone

Because of their 100-year privacy rule it is not easy to trace people in Canada and has taken us about ten years to find Graham!

MORE GENETIC GENEALOGY

Mark Carroll

Introduction

In 2020 I wrote about how DNA testing had further informed my family history research (ref 1). The outcomes had led me to considerable success with uncovering my Indian/Pakistani heritage, with finding a few more distant cousins in my paternal Scottish lines and maternal ORRISS lines, but no luck with the origins of my elusive maternal 2x great-grandfather, Thomas William SMITH (?1851-1932). At that time I had had DNA samples analysed from six family members: myself and my sister, a 1st cousin, and three 2nd cousins once removed. Now a maternal 1st cousin once removed, Connie, was willing to undertake a DNA test for me, and in the meantime there had been other developments – all described here in this update report.



Fig 1. Hedley (top centre) and Dorothy Rouse (top right) and family members, c1935

Connie's Jewish ancestry

My maternal great-aunt Doll – Dorothy Emmeline née Smith (1911-2010) – was what one might call a ‘character’: a feisty, warm-hearted lady and a twice-married publican’s wife (Fig 1). She used to talk family history with me on my occasional visits to her home near Leicester, but I grew to appreciate that not all she told me was 100% accurate. Once she told me that her first husband, Hedley ROUSE (1909-1985), had Jewish ancestry, but I thought nothing more about it.

Connie is Doll and Hedley’s second child; she also has a younger sister, Sue. On Connie’s maternal side she shares the same Orriss-Smith ancestry as I have (Fig 2), so I reasoned that her DNA might help me with the Smith side of our family tree. She would of course have 50% Rouse DNA, which was of no direct interest to me, though it was no doubt to her. She knew little about her father’s family history, though it was thought to have Jewish, Spanish and Dutch inputs – all rather vague at this stage.

When Living DNA analysed Connie’s genetic material, the outcomes surprised me: she was 98.5% British and 1.5% “Arabian”, but many of her DNA cousins had Jewish-looking surnames or were from eastern Europe. At that point I had no genealogical evidence for either connection. There was though on her paternal side a Maney EMANUEL (1804-1873), possibly Jewish, who had married in a church in Norwich in 1842. One of Connie’s DNA cousins was able to help me: Maney’s parents, Joseph Emanuel and Elizabeth SOLOMONS, had married in 1798 in the Great Synagogue in east London. Other matches confirmed their own Ashkenazi ancestry – many of those Jewish families emigrated from eastern Europe to escape persecution there in the 19th century.

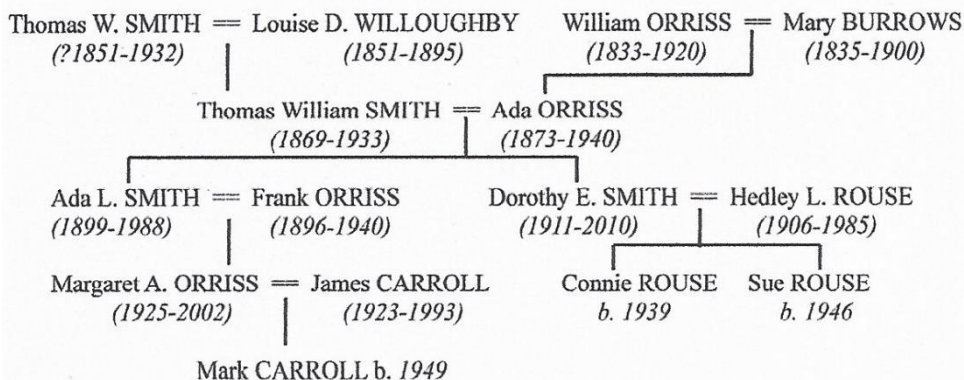


Fig 2. The author’s partial Orriss-Smith family tree

I uploaded Connie’s raw DNA data to the Gedmatch website (ref 2) in order to locate more matches. By using a triangulation method (ref 3) I was able to identify those DNA cousins with Jewish heritage; of Connie’s top 100 matches, 47 were Jewish. The simplest explanations for such a scenario are:

- (a) Hedley was 100% Jewish;
- (b) Doll was 100% Jewish;
- (c) both Hedley and Doll were 50% Jewish;
- (d) one or other of Doll and Hedley had a biological father who was 100% Jewish but was not the man they called Dad – a non-paternity event.

I could rule out any Jewish ancestry on Doll's side, because if that were the case, I too should have Jewish DNA cousins, and I do not. On Hedley's side, one line in his family tree is not enough to explain so many of Connie's DNA cousins being Jewish. For the time being this outcome remains a mystery.

Connie's non-Jewish ancestry

On the Rouse side of Connie's family tree I was able to establish a genealogical connection with two of her DNA cousins. One, Irene, had a great-grandmother called Ethel May Rouse (born 1896, Medway, Kent), so she and Connie are 2nd cousins once removed. Another, Jonathan, had a very well-researched family tree, with a paternal great-grandmother called Anna Jane Rouse (born 1863, Bury St Edmunds); hence he and Connie are 3rd cousins once removed. He also confirmed that, to his knowledge, the Rouse family line from south-west Suffolk had no Jewish heritage. However, another DNA cousin of Connie's was sure that in the past some Jewish families concealed their faith and ethnicity, for a variety of reasons.

On the Orriss side, I recognised the names of some of the matches. One, Judy, was descended from a Samuel FITCH (1740-1774) of Hundon in Suffolk, as are Connie and I – through his daughter, Susan. Judy and Connie are thus 5th cousins, and autosomal DNA testing rarely finds a common ancestor so many generations back in time (ref 1). On the Smith side, I had no joy. There were several female DNA cousins of Connie's with the Smith surname, but they were all women who had married a Mr Smith.

One other odd finding had come to light some months previously. I had been tested by both Living DNA and Ancestry DNA. The latter company has a tool called ThruLines, which links DNA test outcomes with the family trees submitted by testees (ref 1). In my case there was a distant cousin with the username TJayE90, who was apparently a

great-grandson of Doll's, yet I had no idea who he was. In a Christmas card sent to Connie's sister Sue in late 2020, I described this puzzle. Sue though quickly explained the situation: he was Toby, the first-born son of her eldest daughter, Kate. Over the years he had lost contact with his family, but the DNA outcome showed that, as expected, he was related to me: we share descent from my maternal great-grandfather, Thomas William Smith junior (1869-1933). Like so many other DNA cousins, he did not respond to my email.

My Indian/Pakistani heritage

As explained earlier (ref 1), my biological paternal grandfather was an Indian student at university in Scotland in the early 1920s, Abdul HAMID. Realistically I was unlikely to be able to study his family history by means of traditional documentary research. The outcomes of the DNA test had, however, put me in touch with numerous distant cousins of Indian or Pakistani heritage. From one of them, Sher Ali, I obtained a 1965 paper-based family tree going back to 1750, plus an old family photo from the 1930s that showed, among others, Abdul and his father, Abdul AZIZ, my great-grandfather (Fig 3). At the Partition of India in 1947 the family emigrated to the newly-formed Pakistan; there in Lahore, Abdul and one of his brothers, Rahim, lived as next-door neighbours.



Fig 3. Abdul Hamid (left) and his father, Abdul Aziz (right), c1930

Sher Ali put me in touch with his mother, Saba, a granddaughter of Rahim's; she now lives in west London. We have spoken several times on the phone, and once the Covid pandemic restrictions are lifted, we hope to be able to meet up. Saba gave me a great deal of information on her family back in Pakistan that filled in some of my gaps, and she described how she used to chat in the 1960s to her great-uncle Abdul, my grandfather. She is thus a living link with my Indian/Pakistani family.

Grouping one's DNA cousins

Ancestry DNA currently lists over 350 of my matches – 4th cousins or closer – and many more distant relatives. How can I determine the genealogical connection to each of these DNA cousins, without going through the laborious task of contacting each one individually? Also, in my experience only 1 in 4 people responds to my email, and even then they might know little about their family history. Ancestry's ThruLines tool can help (ref 1), but its value depends critically on one's DNA cousin having a well-researched family tree.

Dana Leeds has described another approach to addressing this problem (ref 4). In her grouping method you go through your top matches down to about 40cM of shared DNA. For match number 1 you use Ancestry's Shared Matches tool to identify who shares DNA with match 1 – and hence with you. They will all be somewhere in your list; in an Excel file you colour-code all those matches. You then take the next highest match who is not already colour-coded and repeat the process, using a different colour to identify all those shared matches. You do it again with the next two highest matches, using two more colours. The result should be four columns, each with a different colour and corresponding to one of your four pairs of great-grandparents (Fig 4). If you know the genealogical link to any one of the DNA cousins in a given colour, then all the matches in that column should relate to the same branch of your family tree. However, the method did not work for me! Column 1 represented my DNA cousins with an Orriss connection, as expected, and column 2 represented those of Indian/Pakistani heritage, but in Columns 3 and 4 I was back to my Orriss-related DNA cousins again. Why was this? When I reread Dana Leeds' website I found the answer: endogamy. I described earlier (ref 1) how my maternal grandparents were 1st cousins, so my mother received Orriss DNA from both of her

parents instead of just one. This double inheritance confuses the situation with regard to genetic genealogy: some of my distant maternal cousins share with me far more DNA (in cM) than one would expect, and the Leeds grouping method does not work. However, for most family historians it should be a useful tool. If you do not feel confident using an Excel spreadsheet, then there are YouTube videos online explaining how to adapt Ancestry's Shared Matches tool to achieve the same goal using the Coloured Dot method.

1	LEEDS MATCHING METHOD FOR DNA GROUPING						
2		cM	Orriss 1	Indian 1	Wallace?	Orriss 2	Orriss?
3							
4							
5	Rodney GOLDUP	175	Yellow	Brown			
6	Zachary KHAN	172		Brown			
7	Daniel MILLAR	118	Yellow			Green	
8	Karen SAUNDERS	116			Black		
9	molys31	116					
10	gher_ah89	113		Brown			
11	William CUTMORE	108				Green	
12	Doreen KOWALSKA	97	Yellow			Green	
13	Matthew BANISTER 515	96	Yellow			Green	
14	Barbara HOPPER	96	Yellow				
15	Paul ARLOW	93					Light Green
16							
17	Brenda RYAN	67					Red
18	Susan HOPPER	67	Yellow				
19	greenpako80	62					
20	Claire BERRY	58				Green	
21	Donald RICHARDSON	57					Red
22	Peter FISHER	54					
23	Bridget NIEMANN	53					
24	TjayE90	51					
25	Grant PORTER	49					Light Green
26	Blair FLINN	44		Brown			
27	Isaac KHAN	44					

Fig 4. Dana Leeds' grouping method applied to the author's top DNA matches

The elusive Mr Smith

So, I was left with the puzzle concerning the origins of my elusive maternal 2x great-grandfather, Thomas William Smith (?1851-1932). Without a birth certificate or census entries for 1851-1871, the information on him was limited: his father possibly had the same names, and either his date of birth or baptism might have been 29th January 1851, either in London or in Ongar (Essex). I have read how other family historians have successfully used DNA to identify the missing father of an illegitimate child (eg ref 5), but that author had several advantages over me, including a birth certificate (and hence the mother's name and location at that time) and a baptism entry in a church register.

My working hypothesis is that Thomas might have had a sibling (or other family member) who had children with descendants who would

be my present-day DNA cousins. One of them might be able to take me past my ‘brick wall’. Is this feasible in practice? I needed first to test the hypothesis. Just suppose that I did not know the identity of the parents of another maternal 2x great-grandfather, William Orriss (1833-1920) (Fig 2) – how could I find them? One of my DNA cousins on Gedmatch is *Vena, with whom I share 26.3cM – theoretically a 5th cousin or 4th cousin once removed. In fact, she had tested with Ancestry, whose ThruLines tool showed that we are actually 3rd cousins once removed. Her DNA kit is managed by her great-nephew in Queensland, Australia, John GAVEN, with whom I have had extensive correspondence in the past. John would have told me that he and Vena are descended from William’s sister, Jemima Orriss (1830-1916) (Fig 5), and that their parents were in fact William Orriss senior and Harriet née MITSON. So, my working hypothesis does work – at least in principle.

? == ?

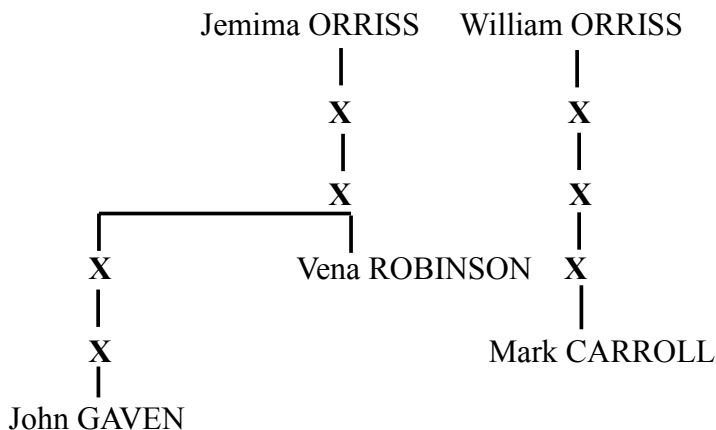


Fig 5. Genealogical connections between DNA cousins

In another approach I took a male DNA cousin with the surname Smith. Ancestry’s ThruLines tool told me that he was Kyle Smith, a descendant of James Ridge Smith, my maternal 2x great-uncle. He could not help me with my ‘brick wall’, but I could use him as the starting point for a trawl through those DNA cousins of mine on Ancestry who are shared matches with him, and thus with me. There was Toby, of course – described earlier – plus five more, two of whom I

could identify as descendants of James Ridge, as with Kyle. The other three were ‘orphan’ DNA cousins, and frustratingly they were also the ones who had not responded to my email. However, this approach might not necessarily work. First, any Smith-related DNA cousin who had got past my ‘brick wall’ would probably have uploaded the relevant family tree to Gedmatch or to Ancestry. Secondly, the three ‘orphan’ DNA cousins might have DNA passed down to them not only from Thomas but also from Louise Duval WILLOUGHBY (1851-1895) (Fig 2), his first wife. Perhaps I need to try a similar approach but use the matches identified by Gedmatch. The latter website is more precise than Ancestry, as it can tell you the exact DNA segment on which chromosome that is shared in common, not just that you share some DNA.

Conclusions

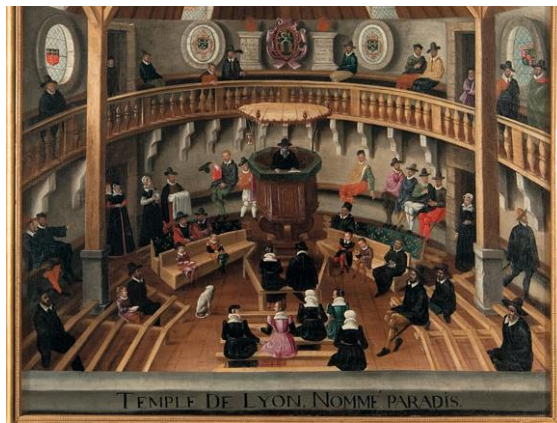
There are still some loose ends in my genetic genealogy work. Covid-related lockdown will have to be lifted before I can meet up with distant cousin Saba on my paternal Indian/Pakistani line, and with a maternal relative, Susan, on my Smith line. One request to them will be if they have any old family photos of relevance to me. No DNA cousin has yet been able to provide me with a photo of my maternal great-grandfather, Walter Orriss (1861-1929). Above all, I remain frustrated with the ‘brick wall’ represented by my maternal 2x great-grandfather, Thomas William Smith (?1851-1932). In January 2022 the 1921 census entry for him might confirm where he truly believed he was born: London or Ongar. Before then I might have made contact with a DNA cousin descended from a relative of Thomas’s who can enlighten me. If so, what will I have left to worry about with regard to my family history research?!

References

1. Carroll, M (2020) *Roots in the Forest* September 2020, pp13-27; *More progress with genetic genealogy*
2. Gedmatch – available URL: www.gedmatch.com
3. Triangulation – available URL: www.yourdnaguide.com/ydgblog/2019/7/2/dna-triangulation
4. Leeds grouping method – available URL: www.yourdnaguide.com/leeds-method
5. Holford, P (2020) *Cockney Ancestor vol 168*, pp16-23; *An illegitimate birth: an impossible brick wall?*

My father was convinced that his family ‘came over with the Huguenots’, based on the fact that our family name was Crispin which he believed was a French name. My quest to discover the truth of this began a few years ago and I was delighted when I found more than a kernel of truth in the assertion. There is a French connection, although only through marriage – the actual linking surname is Martin.

When my great-great-grandfather John Crispin married Mary Ann Martin he married into a family whose line can be traced back to the 1680s in France – a line that began in Picardy, where my 9th great-grandparents – Marie Desmarest and Esaie Martin – married at the Oisemont Protestant Temple. Oisemont is a commune in northern France in the area of the Somme, Picardy, and is about 129 km north of Paris.



Jean Perrissin, Le Temple de Paradis, v 1565.

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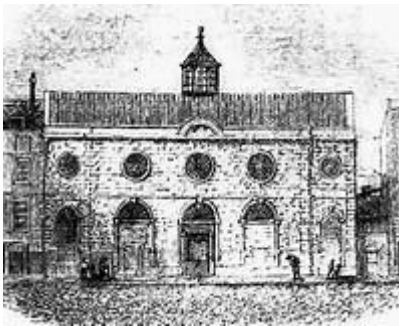
*an example similar to the Oisemont Protestant Temple, accessed on
www.musee-reforme.ch Nov 2020*

The following chart shows my French antecedents from Picardy in the 17th century, through to Spitalfields and beyond to the present. Much of this can be confirmed as the French refugees did keep comprehensive records; some of the dates remain uncertain and there is still some research to be completed for the Martin/Desmarest ancestry, but the connections have been established with a high degree of certainty.

The Martin family – Picardy & London, 17th century			
Esaie Martin 1632-1702	Married 1668 Picardy, France	Marie Desmarest 1638-1743	8x great-grandparents
Jacques Martin 1683-1740	Married 1707 France	Marie Husson – possibly German	7x great-grandparents
Jacques Martin 1714-1793	Married 1737 Stepney, London	Elizabeth Picard 1717-?	6x great-grandparents
Isaiah Martin 1739-1806	Married 1760 Shoreditch, London	Mary King 1742-1813	5x great-grandparents
Isaiah Martin 1769-1860	Married 1792/3 London	Susanna Howard* 1768-1834 (also has French ancestry)	4x great-grandparents
Thomas Isaiah Martin 1795-1855	Married 1816 London	Lucy Payne 1795-1860	3x great-grandparents
Mary Ann Martin 1819-1883	Married 1847 London	John Crispin 1816-1874	Great-great-grandparents
The Crispin family – London, late 19th century			
William Crispin 1852-1890	Married 1876 London	Mary Rayment 1856-1915	Great-grandparents
Horace Rayment Crispin 1886-1959	Married 1911 London	Sarah Abbott 1887-1955	Grandparents
Chris Eric Crispin 1917-2001	Married 1943 Lincolnshire	Margaret Helen Simpson 1920-2006	Parents

Crispin and Martin ancestry table linking Picardy and London

Susanna Howard, shown with an asterisk in the table, married Isaiah Martin in 1792 in London, and is also descended from French immigrants. Her parents were Thomas Howard and Susanna Ledoux. This ancestral line can be traced back to the marriage of Jean Mallandain and Martha Baudouin in Normandy in 1678. Their son Pierre married at the Wheeler Street Church in Spitalfields, London, in 1709. Pierre's bride was Susanne Mole, and in 1711 their third daughter Susanne was born – Susanna Howard's grandmother and Mary Ann Martin's 3x great-grandmother, adding another strand to the Huguenot line.



Artist's impression of Wheeler Street Church, London (Wikipedia)

The origin of the name ‘Huguenot’ is unknown, but the word was used in France by Catholics as a derogatory term for those who wished to follow the Protestant faith. In 1598 Henri of Navarre had signed The Edict of Nantes, which allowed Protestants to practise their faith in France provided they did not upset the Catholics – history shows us how effective that idea proved. When Louis XIV came to the throne in 1643, persecution of Protestants increased. Eventually Louis decided everyone in France should become Catholic, and in 1685 introduced the Edict of Fontainebleau, revoking the Edict of Nantes and making life very dangerous for Protestants, who were required to convert to Catholicism. If they refused they were subjected to bullying, torture and imprisonment. Churches were closed and their ministers ordered to leave France.

Huguenots were forbidden to leave France but unsurprisingly many of them did seek refuge in other countries – they fled to Holland, Switzerland, Germany and England. This prompted the first known use of the word refugees to describe those fleeing from persecution and violence, although sadly there have since been many more examples through the centuries.

The symbolism of the Huguenot cross is interesting. The cross itself represents the death of Christ and victory over death and impiety; it has eight points, each of which symbolises one of the eight beatitudes – see Matthew 5:3-12¹ – part of what is known as the Sermon on the Mount. The fleur-de-lys, which is found on the French coat of arms, appears four times on the Huguenot Cross, giving a total of twelve



The Huguenot Cross (Wikipedia)

¹ The Holy Bible

petals, one for each of the twelve apostles – interestingly this includes Judas Iscariot, Christ’s betrayer. The pendant dove signifies the Holy Spirit and is sometimes replaced with a pearl shaped like a tear. Designed at a time when few people could read, this symbolic cross was intended as an outward sign to others that the wearer was a member of the true faith.

The Huguenots followed the faith of John Calvin, a French theologian and reformer from Geneva.



John Calvin (Wikipedia)

Calvin in turn had been influenced by the Augustinian theology, the aim being to “live together in harmony, being of one mind and one heart on the way to God”.² St Augustin was originally a Catholic, and the Catholic-Protestant ideologies have seesawed since Henry VIII wanted to divorce his first wife and was excommunicated by the Pope. Henry pronounced himself Head of the Church of England, starting a series of religious persecutions that still resonate today. If you are interested in knowing more, Google “history of catholic protestant conflict” to find several websites that explain the history and differences between the ideologies. One difference, for example, that I was unaware of until undertaking this research is that the Catholic Bible has more books in it than the Protestant version.³

In the years following 1685 and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, around 50,000 French refugees arrived in London alone. Many of them settled in the Spitalfields area which, though once covered with fields and nursery gardens, now became home for these first immigrants

² www.theaugustinians.org

³ www.christianitytoday.com

fleeing from persecution. ‘Spital’ is an old word for hospital usually reserved for those with contagious diseases and particularly for poor people. Many of the original refugees were silk weavers, and they brought little with them apart from their skills. In 1687 a committee was set up to raise funds to relieve their poverty. The first report of this committee in December that year declared:

*13,050 French refugees were settled in London, primarily around Spitalfields but also in the nearby settlements of Bethnal Green, Shoreditch, Whitechapel and Mile End New Town.*⁴

There was already a silk-weaving industry in this part of London, and the influx of refugees was not without its problems, but many of them had great skills which helped improve the industry and they were eventually absorbed into life in the city. Soho became known as Little France due to the number of craft workshops set up by the Huguenots. The area later became known as Petty France, and until 2002 housed the London Passport Office;⁵ it is currently home to the Ministry of Justice.

The refugees settled, became integrated into city life, worked hard, and raised their families.

By the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789 France once again allowed Protestants to practise their faith in freedom. However, more than 100 years had passed and the countries to which the original refugees had fled had become home to their descendants who had no wish to go back, despite the intermittent difficulties encountered in the silk trade. They had adapted to their environment and most of them decided to stay. It is said that one in six of us now have Huguenot ancestry.

Some of the larger houses in London’s East End were built for the weavers and silk merchants during the 17th and 18th centuries and they had extra-large windows to let the light in enabling the weavers to work later into the night. The following picture demonstrates the way the light comes through the windows onto the weaver’s loom, and how the weavers’ living accommodation was often arranged so that work could continue while family life when on around it.

⁴ www.huguenotsofspitalfields.org

⁵ now based in Eccleston Square near Victoria Station



Spitalfields Weaver, date unknown, picture courtesy of Spitalfields Life, used with permission

By the beginning of the 20th century only a handful of weavers were left in the area but the silk-weaving industry in this part of London is honoured in both Spitalfields and Bethnal Green with street names and buildings. Examples include Crispin Street in Spitalfields – a road leading to Christchurch, where many of my ancestors were baptised and married. Two pictures, taken in October 2014, show the name on both sides of the street – one clearly quite old, and the other a more modern sign above a local restaurant. The Crispin Street appears to confirm the French origin of the name, as this was an area of French refugee settlement.



Crispin Street old and new



*Christchurch, photo from 'Spitalfields life'
18 Feb 2012, used with permission*

Another example of commemoration is Weavers' Fields in Bethnal Green, which was named in 1963 by the London Council as a tribute to the Huguenot silk weavers. Located in the heart of this part of inner London, Weavers' Fields now has a children's play area, sports field, and artworks on show which celebrate the silk weavers' work: a fitting combination of past and present which has become a popular place for local people to enjoy.

Brick Lane in Whitechapel links Bethnal Green and Spitalfields and houses a building which reflects the ever-changing cultural diversity of the East End of London. Established in 1743 as a Protestant chapel by the Huguenots, it later became a Jewish Synagogue in the mid-19th century. Since the 1970s it has been a Muslim place of worship and still serves the community in this capacity today.

It is hard to calculate the percentage of Huguenot ancestry coming down through the centuries. Thus far it seems the 9th generation were all of French extraction, as were the 8th; this could be a little diluted by the possibility of a German lady marrying into the Ledoux family line, but the evidence I have found demonstrates our family did indeed 'come over with the Huguenots'.

As I said earlier, there is a kernel of truth in there – possibly more than a kernel, as the female line of descent is so strongly connected to the Huguenots. The Crispin line remains less clear, so my research into the origins of the male French connection continues.

* * *

A to Z of FAMILY HISTORY – G is for

GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE (GRO) www.gro.uk

Holds records of births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships, stillbirths and adoptions in England and Wales. You can check for the mother's maiden name in the birth indexes and the age at death in the death indexes. You can order copies of certificates from the GRO to help you research your family history and family tree. Best site to use as some others charge more than the cost of certificates.

GENES REUNITED www.genesreunited.co.uk

A website, originally known as Genes Connected, is a genealogy website that was launched in the UK in 2003 as a sister site to Friends Reunited. It has over 13 million members and over 780 million names listed. Chargeable site from £4.95 per month.

GOOGLE www.google.co.uk

Google LLC is an American multinational technology company, founded in 1998, that specialises in internet-related services and products, which include online advertising technologies, search engine, cloud computing, software and hardware. It often produces some amazing articles or sources for your ancestors when you search by name.

The GOUGH MAP www.goughmap.org

The Gough Map is internationally renowned as one of the earliest maps to show Britain in a geographically recognisable form. Yet to date, questions remain of how the map was made, who made it, when and why. This website presents an interactive, searchable edition of the Gough Map, together with contextual material, a blog and information about the project and the Language of Maps colloquium.

GUILD OF ONE NAME STUDIES (GOONS) www.one-name.org

This Guild is a UK-based charitable organisation founded in 1979. Dedicated to promoting the public understanding of one-name (surname) studies and the preservation and accessibility of the resultant information. A **one-name** study is different from most Family Research. It concentrates on those with a single surname, even if they are not related. Researchers often start by following a single line.

* * *

BOOK REVIEW

Mark Carroll

The Chester Creek Murders, by Nathan Dylan Goodwin, 2021, Amazon, £8.99 or less, ISBN 9798575329886

I was familiar with previous books by Nathan Dylan Goodwin, a Sussex-based author and keen family historian. They featured Morton Farrier, a so-called forensic genealogist with a keen mind and with expertise in solving mysteries by skilful deployment of tools familiar to us as family historians. He also has friends in useful places and a mystery in his own personal life. Some of these books have been favourably reviewed by me in the past (see, eg, *Roots in the Forest* September 2017, p30). The author's latest novel changes direction somewhat but also retains some of the hallmark features of his earlier works. The scene this time is Pennsylvania, on the east coast of America, and the main investigator is a genetic genealogist called Maddie, who applies DNA analysis to the solving of 'cold cases' from the past, where the perpetrator was not identified. Such approaches are permitted for American police forces but not in the UK, hence the relocation of the action. In the process the author has had to devise a fresh cast of characters speaking American English, with American lifestyles, and using some sources that will be unfamiliar to English family historians. My fear was that the overall effect would crash and burn somewhere mid-Atlantic, but the author creates a convincingly realistic depiction of the American setting.

The Chester Creek Murders concerns a series of rapes and killings of attractive young women over 35 years earlier in a suburban community near where the borders of Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey

meet. The murderer's DNA was recovered from the crime scenes, but at that time there were no effective methods for analysing it. Since then, genetic genealogy has come to the fore. Although more commonly used by family historians like ourselves, it can also be applied in forensic investigations, and this is what Maddie's team does – with impressive results. They compare 'markers' in the killer's genetic material with those of the millions of people who have taken a DNA test. The outcome is a set of numerous living 'DNA cousins' who fall into nine clusters. For each cluster the team identifies a key individual, and they then work back through the generations to find all of his or her 3x great-grandparents. From those couples they then work forwards in time to identify all their present-day descendants. One of them must be the killer. The techniques involved will be familiar to those of us with experience of genetic genealogy, but for those yet to undergo a DNA test, the author introduces at key stages in the storyline some 'useful idiots' who need everything explained to them in layman's terms (except for "endogamy", curiously). Along the way there are twists and turns, red herrings and critical insights, with an occasional dollop of good luck. The personal problems of Maddie and her team members cause distractions at certain points in the investigation, but they do not forestall the inevitable outcome.

The book is written with the author's characteristic verve and attention to detail. The setting and the investigation themselves are totally convincing. There is indeed a Chester Creek surrounded by the townships named in the book; triangulation of autosomal DNA and linkage between Y chromosomal markers and family surnames are indeed techniques of genetic genealogy; the characters and their lives are authentically American. Also authentic is the coronavirus pandemic that starts to emerge as Maddie's team embarks on the investigation in early 2020. There are some nice touches, such as the RootsTech conference in Salt Lake City, and the homeless Lonnie, who provides the occasional helpful pointer. The storyline is well crafted – a real page-turner of a genealogical whodunnit – with enough loose ends to form the basis of a second book in this series. The proofreading has been excellent, and it is clear from the acknowledgements that the author has gone to great lengths to consult relevant American experts so as to ensure authenticity. I still prefer the familiar English charm of the Morton Farrier mysteries, though I can thoroughly recommend this one too.

ROOTS TECH 2021: A MASSIVE ONLINE GENEALOGICAL EVENT **Barbara Harpin & Mark Carroll**

Introduction

In recent years the Mormon Church based in Utah, USA, has organised a family history conference in Salt Lake City annually, in February, called RootsTech (www.familysearch.org/rootstech/rtc2021). Clearly such an event appeals mainly to American genealogists, for few of us in the UK could afford such a trip there. However, 2021 was different – after nearly a year of the COVID-19 pandemic, overseas travel was banned in most countries. The organisers therefore wisely decided that if RootsTech 2021 was to go ahead, it would have to be delivered online. In recent months many genealogical events have reverted to online delivery, with attendant gains and losses: on the one hand people from around the world can enjoy them from the comfort of their own home, but on the other hand there is a loss of personal contact and interaction. Moreover, for the organisers it would be a huge logistical challenge to deliver a high-quality event to a massive number of participants – in actual fact there were over 1 million across the three days (25-27 February 2021), and the authors were two of them. Here, we report on our experience of the event and consider its value and how one can make the most of future such virtual conferences.

How the event was organised

Registration for the event in advance was easy, though one needed to have a FamilySearch account. The conference had several major strands: plenary sessions and talks by experts; electronic ‘booths’ to display the products of genealogy-related companies and family history societies; professional help sessions; and the chance to connect with cousins worldwide who were also attending. The focus of the event was obviously genealogy, but there was also emphasis on other social aspects, such as music and art. The talks by experts, grouped into themes, were publicised in advance, so one could ‘bookmark’ those of personal interest. They were to be made available on the YouTube platform at any time over the three days, as well as for the following 12 months, so there was no pressure to view them all over a limited period. However, the organisers needed to bear in mind worldwide time zones for those components scheduled at a particular time.

Mark's experience

I had had some prior experience of an online family history conference, having attended the one organised by the UK Federation of Family History Societies in November 2020. My feelings about it were mixed: many of the talks were good, I received some helpful professional advice, but the experience was spoiled by technical glitches. For RootsTech 2021 I had two major objectives in mind:

1. to learn as much as possible about approaches to genetic genealogy;
2. to receive some professional help with tracing my elusive maternal 2x great-grandfather, Thomas William SMITH (?1851-1932) of London – where was he in the censuses of 1851, 1861 and 1871?

Early on I decided to avoid the plenary sessions, the electronic booths and the cousin-contacting service. For the latter one had to submit one's key surname, and I was unsure what that should be – certainly not my own surname, which is of little genealogical interest to me, and certainly not Smith, which is too general. I did though register my interest in having a professional help session on the Monday evening following the event. To that end I was asked to submit some information in advance relating to my main aim for the session, with basic details of my Thomas William Smith; this was helped by my having previously uploaded information relating to my family tree to the **www.familysearch.org** website. I also bookmarked all the expert talks on genetic genealogy, of which several were likely to be of relevance and interest to me.

During the three days of the conference my main involvement was limited to the occasional accessing of expert talks. These were typically about 20 minutes long, presented very professionally and without technical glitches; some of the topics were such that the content had to be split into two parts. The best talks were those that provided not just the theoretical background to the subject but also gave real-life examples drawn from the presenter's own family history research; also, where there were pointers to websites where one could learn more. Some of the latter have proved very helpful to me. I am still working my way through the expert talks of interest, but at least I know that I have until early 2022! The other focus for me was the professional

advice session. Ronda FOSBURG, whom I ‘met’ online via Zoom for 20 minutes at 8pm on the Monday after the conference, was a delight to work with. She had lived in England for several years and was an experienced family historian, so was familiar with the English genealogical records. I did feel sorry for her though, as a Smith family from London is a genealogist’s worst nightmare, and after 20 years of searching I have still not found my Thomas William Smith in the censuses prior to 1881. Ronda did point me in two useful directions: to use the Address Search function for the pre-1881 censuses on the website www.findmypast.co.uk, as I knew where Thomas was in late 1871; and the website UKCensusOnline, which would provide an alternative transcription to those websites that I had already tried. She also suggested looking in the FamilySearch research wiki online for details of missing census records, as well as the parish where Thomas likely lived in 1871. She gently reprimanded me for not including my sources on the Carroll family tree on the FamilySearch website, as those details would help other genealogists.

Barbara’s experience

Having attended the very first RootsTech London conference in October 2019, which was heralded a great success, I had hoped to attend the next. However, we had a very busy few days then, Thursday to Saturday, and paid a fortune to stay up in London, so decided we would just attend for one day in future. In February 2021 I helped the Essex Society for Family History (ESFH) on the Thursday with a session 5–7pm in their electronic booth with two others, John and Elizabeth, but no one visited, so we were just looking around the site and chatting. It really helped that we also had a Zoom meeting open non-stop for all the helpers to pop in and out of, to get quick information and help.

When the three of us were ‘on duty’, someone was always looking at the booth. I offered to be available if needed over the next two days, but was not called. We did have 3+ people on the rota available to cover the whole three-day event – mornings, afternoons and evenings – as it was a worldwide event with all the different time zones catered for. We had a debrief Zoom meeting on the Thursday, and ESHF are delighted with being involved in RootsTech 2021. They offered a special discount on membership: 25 months’ e-membership for £8 until April 2023. They

covered the cost of the booth – £540 I think, which is probably why no other UK county societies took part. The ESFH were able to help many people, sometimes looking up the query and getting back to answer their questions.

I copied many of the conference's free downloads and set my playlist with subjects I was interested in, and only viewed a few at the actual timetabled session. When I went back in on the Friday, I first added another generation of great-great-grandparents with basic info on FamilySearch to see if I had a connection, but did not hear from anyone – just FamilySearch with hints which I already had. I didn't do much on the Saturday but spent much time online on the Sunday. I plan on looking at my playlist a bit at a time – that is the great advantage of having a year to use the site.

It's so often that I advise other people to prepare and know exactly what help they need from where at a conference, but I did not plan in advance. I should plan ahead when I realise I want help with something, so that it is ready for the next opportunity. Most of my ancestry is in the UK anyway, but I do have Caribbean and South African connections and a cousin in Canada, plus a distant cousin in Australia/New Zealand.

Conclusions

As with many consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020/21, family history events in the future are likely to be organised online, at least in part, and we will need to be able to derive the maximum benefit from them. They are not always easy to navigate for those with limited computer skills, but the RootsTech event was presented as professionally as possible. The authors' experience is that it is best to have a plan of action in advance, with some finite achievable objectives. That way, you can focus your attention on those aspects of most interest to your own family history research.

On Friday 13th August, ten members of the Society met up at La Rocca in Chingford Mount for a very enjoyable lunch (Fig 1).



Fig 1. La Rocca Italian restaurant

After the meal our Chairman, Tim, led a walk around Chingford cemetery. Fortunately, the rain kept off and we were able to cover a lot of ground. The walk started with a short talk by Tim on the history of the cemetery. It was opened in May 1884 and covered an area of 41.5 acres on the site of Caroline House which stood opposite Chingford Old Church. It was run by a private company until the 1970s when the running of the cemetery was taken over by the London Borough of Waltham Forest.

We were then joined by the cemetery manager (Fig 2) and he showed us some of the shrapnel found on the site where a bomb dropped during WW2. He also told us about the research that has been done on some of the people who are buried in the cemetery.

We then started the tour and Tim showed us the spot where the bomb fell and how the gravestones had been left flat as they fell. He then went on to show us the sites of the common graves which in some cases have headstones. We walked past the spot where the chapel had been and on into the cemetery extension, where there is a war memorial and some of

us were able to have a sit down. He also told us about the German airmen who had been buried in this part of the cemetery during the war but have now been moved to another burial ground.

This is where I left the walk to exit at the top gate, but Tim carried on back to the main entrance and had a few more interesting memorials to point out.



Fig 2. Outside the offices in the cemetery

THE LAST WORD

Kathy Unwin

Have you checked out our website recently? New records are being added to it all the time as well as exchange journals from other societies.

In October we will be meeting again in the hall but the AGM in November will be on Zoom. We do intend to hold some meetings on Zoom in the future as it makes it possible for people who do not live locally to attend.

**Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month
(except August) at 8pm
either at Spruce Hill Baptist Church Hall, Brookscroft
Road, Walthamstow E17 or on Zoom**

Subscription rates

UK

Individual £15	Ejournal £12
Household £18	Ejournal £15
Institutions £15	Ejournal £12

Overseas

£19	Ejournal £12
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DIARY

October 12th	Workshop in hall: A family history puzzle – Mark Carrol
November 9th	AGM – on Zoom
December 14th	Talk in hall: Auntie’s old photos – Jeff Harvey
January 11th	Quiz and social in hall
February 8th	Workshop – TBC
March 8th	Talk – TBC

Waltham Forest FHS



The Society covers an area largely defined by the River Lea, M25 and A11/A104 roads. This includes the London Borough of Waltham Forest, comprising the old Essex metropolitan boroughs of Chingford, Leyton and Walthamstow, and extends to Waltham Abbey in the north

© Waltham Forest



Family History Society

If undelivered, please return to:
Kathy unwin, 22 Dale View Crescent, E4 6PQ