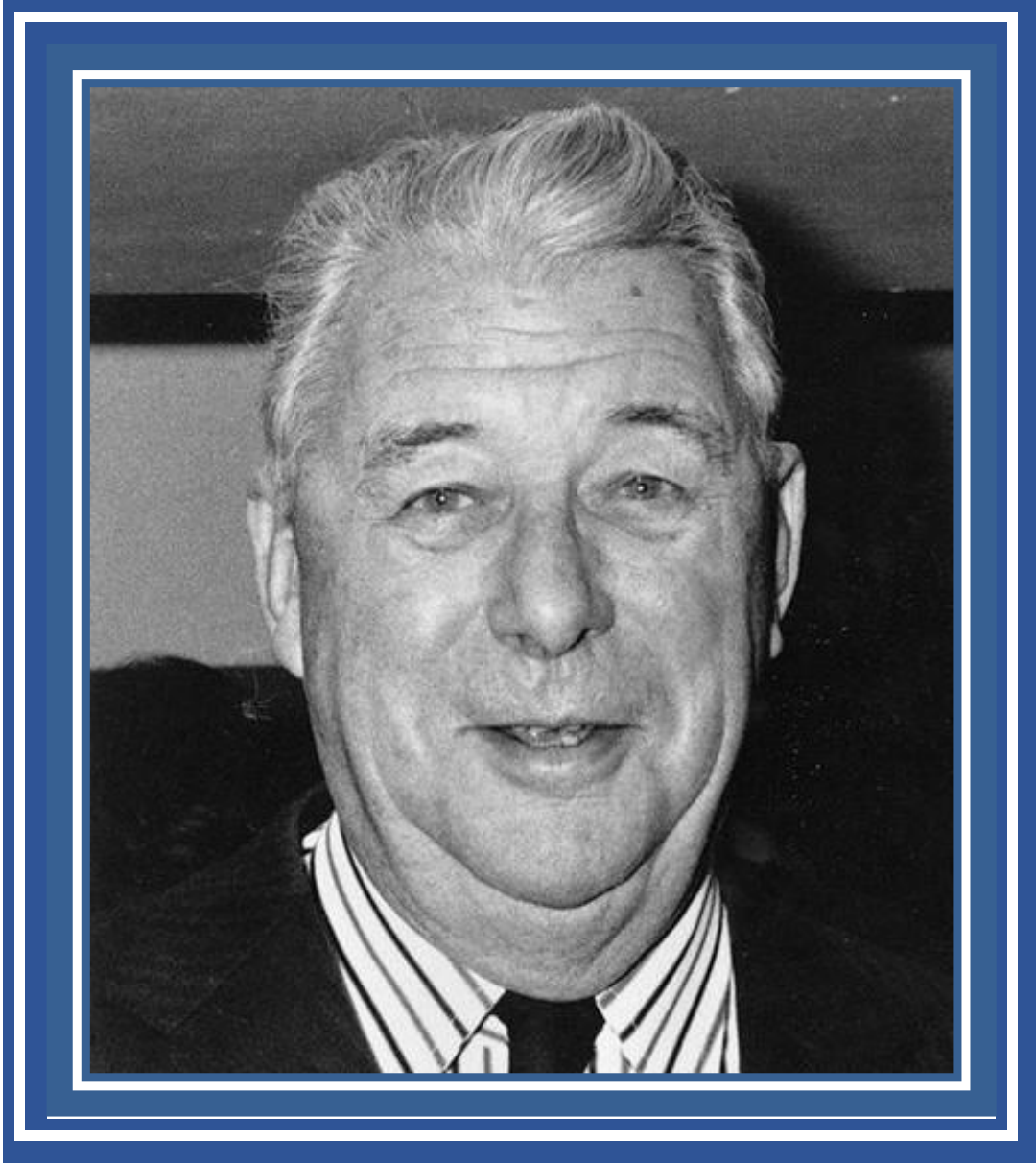


Roots in the Forest

March 2022



Sir Frederick William Pontin

WALTHAM FOREST FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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Roots in the Forest

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March 2022

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ADVANCED TOOLS FOR GENETIC GENEALOGY

– Mark Carroll

Introduction

Like many people who have had their DNA tested, I have spent the past couple of years using the tools of genetic genealogy to locate previously unknown cousins (ref 1). My primary aim in this quest was to try and break through the most resistant ‘brick wall’ in my family history research: to find the origins of my maternal 2x great-grandfather, Thomas William SMITH (?1851-1932, London). Without my having found his birth certificate or baptism or entries for him in the censuses of 1851, 1861 and 1871, his ancestry is obscure. My hope is that he had a sibling who had descendants, one of whom has also taken a DNA test. I had previously used the free basic tools available on the GEDmatch website (ref 2), and they had allowed me to make contact with some DNA cousins on the Smith branch of the family, but we all faced the same impasse. My secondary aim concerned my Indian heritage. I have several partial family trees relating to some of my Indian and Pakistani DNA cousins, but they do not join up. Could further DNA analysis help?

What I now had in mind was to extend my genetic genealogy research by paying a supplement to use GEDmatch’s Tier 1 tools, which allow more refined analysis of one’s DNA matches. So it was that in June 2021 I spent a lot of time viewing videos on YouTube that describe how to use advanced techniques of genetic genealogy (eg Family History Fanatics, ref 3), as well as online blogs by genetic genealogists (eg Roberta Estes, ref 4). Here I describe some of the significant outcomes of this approach.

GEDmatch’s advanced tools

For \$10 one can use the Tier 1 tools of GEDmatch for one month – long enough to apply them to one’s own DNA test outcomes and to those of known DNA cousins. There were four tools in particular that I was keen to use:

1. *The MRCA Search tool*: This allows you to find DNA cousins whose family trees match yours to some extent and hence allow you to identify your most recent common ancestor (MRCA).
2. *The Lazarus tool*: One can “resurrect” a dead parent by recreating their DNA, if two children and other relatives have tested.

3. *Triangulation*: If you are a DNA match with person A and also with person B, that does not necessarily mean that A and B are related. What you need to know is whether A and B share the same DNA segment as you have. This is true triangulation, and it indicates “identical by descent”: the three DNA cousins concerned are all descended from a common ancestor.
4. *Clustering*: Similar to triangulation, but a more visual approach involving more than two matches. I have previously described the Leeds method for cluster analysis that assigns DNA cousins to groups corresponding to one’s four pairs of great-grandparents (ref 1).

Let’s consider each of these tools in turn, how I used them and what they told me. There are also some Tier 1 tools that were not available to me. The Phasing tool allows you to identify which DNA segments you have inherited from your mother and which from your father. You can then assign any DNA match to the appropriate half of your family tree. However, as both my parents died many years ago, their DNA cannot be tested. For similar reasons, I could not use the My Evil Twin tool. You inherit only half the combined DNA of your parents, and this tool allows you to identify the missing 50% – but only if both your parents have tested.

The MRCA Search tool

To use this tool you need to have uploaded not only your raw DNA data to GEDmatch but also your family tree in the form of a GEDCOM file. I had previously used the free GEDCOM Search tool on GEDmatch but had found it unsatisfying. Its algorithm, when applied to my mother’s maiden name of ORRISS, would identify incorrect matches – for example, with MORRIS and NORRIS. With the advanced tool one can specify the degree of accuracy of the match. With a low level in the range 1–3, one would pick up numerous false matches, but it would also allow for variant spellings of a surname in the past. With a high level in the range 8–10, one could be confident of the validity of the match. At level 3 the advanced algorithm still returned too many incorrect matches for me, such as BOURNE for BONE. I found level 5 suited my purposes best.

The tool returned two valid ‘hits’ for me: DNA cousins with a matching family tree. One was Paul ROWLINSON, with whom I had

previously made contact – his ancestor was a sister of my maternal great-grandmother, Caroline WALLACE (1861-1919) from Hundon in Suffolk. The other was apparently an eighth cousin, Keith THURMAN. We only share 15.3cM of DNA, so he falls below my usual cut-off of 20cM for contacting DNA cousins, and thus I had not found him previously. He and I are both descended from William WORLIDGE, baptised 1666 in Lidgate, Suffolk, the ancestor of my maternal Orriss line. Autosomal DNA analysis does not normally take one further back in time than six generations, but my mother's family has an unusual feature: her parents were first cousins. This situation – known as pedigree collapse – means that my mother inherited more Orriss DNA than would be expected, and thus I am more likely than usual to be able to detect such distant cousins. The value of the MRCA Search tool is of course critically dependent on the accuracy and the extensiveness of the family trees contributed by oneself and by one's DNA cousins on GEDmatch. My search involved the computer program comparing my kit with about 900 others, but the tool would be much more powerful if more people would upload their family tree to GEDmatch.

The Lazarus tool

As well as myself, I had previously paid for DNA tests for my sister Vicky, a first cousin Lynn (my mother's niece), my mother's first cousin Connie, and three second cousins once removed of mine (2C1Rs): Lesley HARDWICK, Sid Smith and Michael Orriss. I thought it would be a fun thing to do to use their raw DNA data to re-create my mother's genetic material, nearly 20 years after her death. GEDmatch's Lazarus tool is not perfect, however. The maximum amount of DNA it can recover is about 3000cM, with 1500cM being a "good" result. Also, the recreated DNA is a blend of that person's parental DNA – not split into maternal and paternal chromosomes, as it would be for a living person.

To start with I input just the DNA kits for myself, my sister, Lynn, Connie, Lesley, Sid and Michael. The tool also asks you to input the DNA kit for the target person's spouse – my late father in this case, or his relatives. I know several DNA cousins who share my paternal Scottish and Indian ancestry, so I went their kits. The outcome of this first Lazarus attempt was 2137cM of my late mother's DNA recovered, with a mere 6.7cM of spouse DNA excluded – a very good result. I tried again, this time adding the kits of a further 15

DNA cousins who were known to be related to me on the maternal side of my family tree. The outcome was a slight improvement, to 2163cM of total DNA recovered. This allowed GEDmatch to assign a new kit number to my late mother, Margaret Orriss, who now lives on in their database. There are limitations to how one can use such Lazarus kits, but it has allowed me to locate some more maternal DNA cousins.

Triangulation

In genetic genealogy one is primarily concerned with identifying those DNA cousins who are “identical by descent”, rather than “in common with”. The former are those who share an ancestor with oneself, and GEDmatch’s Triangulation tool locates such DNA cousins. However, you need to make the right choice of relative to commence the analysis. It obviously cannot be you, nor any of your close relatives – such an attempt would identify mainly known close cousins with large amounts of shared DNA. The best kind of person to use is a second or third cousin, or someone at that degree of separation. I decided to use my 2C1Rs, Sid Smith, Michael Orriss and Lesley Hardwick, in order to investigate the two main branches of my maternal family tree. I also applied the tool to the DNA kit of Jamal NAJM, who I knew to be the grandson of Jamal Uddin AZIZ, the eldest brother of my paternal grandfather, Abdul Hamid Aziz (ref 1). I also tried the tool with various other DNA cousins. In each case I started with the default parameters for the lower and upper limits for a DNA match, but the virtue of this tool – as we shall see – is that one can adjust the limits to suit one’s purpose. A typical output of this tool is shown in Figure 1.

1	EE1772546	James Martinez	jamesmar38@yahoo.com	XV6197072	*Vicky F	dr.mcarroll@gmail.com
1	DX3229164	Lynn Orriss	dr.mcarroll@gmail.com	MV7311086	*Connie R	dr.mcarroll@gmail.com
1	MV7311086	*Connie R	dr.mcarroll@gmail.com	XV6197072	*Vicky F	dr.mcarroll@gmail.com
1	DX3229164	Lynn Orriss	dr.mcarroll@gmail.com	FE7656783	andrew lane	roseandrew@btinternet.com
1	FE7656783	andrew lane	roseandrew@btinternet.com	XV6197072	*Vicky F	dr.mcarroll@gmail.com

Figure 1. Pairs of DNA cousins who triangulate with the author on chromosome 1. Most of the names are close relatives of the author, but James Martinez (top row) is a distant cousin of Indian heritage and Andrew Lane (bottom row) is an unknown DNA cousin

With Sid as the ‘prime’ person, the Triangulation tool returned two columns of kit numbers, corresponding to pairs of DNA cousins who share the same DNA segment with Sid. Some of these cousins had names familiar to me, others were new. The pairs of most interest to me were those that included the name of one of my close relatives with known Smith ancestry: my sister, Connie, and Lesley, plus myself of course. The second person in each pair must be “identical by descent” and share a common Smith-related ancestor with us. The same reasoning applied to the pairs of DNA cousins who triangulated with Michael (for the Orriss folk) and with Jamal (for the Indian folk). With Lesley as the ‘prime’ person, the results were confusing: there were too many apparent matches with DNA cousins sharing a small segment on chromosome 15 at position 27–30MB. I had encountered this DNA section before as belonging to a “common pile-up area”: a region of genetic material that has been passed down the generations unchanged, and thus is of no value to genealogists. The family intermarriage that Lesley and I share probably contributes to this problem – her grandfather Orriss married two of the Smith sisters (but not at the same time!). However, I found that by raising the lower limit from 7cM to 10cM, I could eliminate most of these ‘false positives’.

The challenge now is to contact all the triangulated DNA cousins to see if between us we can identify our common ancestry. It will not be easy, as the amount of total DNA shared with some of them is low – often less than 20cM – and so the most recent common ancestor is many generations in the past. This is a particular problem with my Indian relatives, as the knowledge of their genealogy rarely extends beyond the grandparents’ generation.

Clustering

GEDmatch’s Clustering tool identifies not just pairs of DNA cousins who share a given DNA segment, but groups of them. They are thus likely descended from a common ancestor. The tool initially detects all the relevant DNA segments and cousins, and then in real time sorts them into clusters – a magical experience to watch on the computer screen. Each cluster is colour-coded; some matches fall into more than one cluster and they are coloured grey – see Figure 2 for a typical outcome. One can then choose clusters to submit to

Multiple Kit Analysis: Triangulation, or Segment Search, or Compact Display (similar to DNA Painter; ref 1).

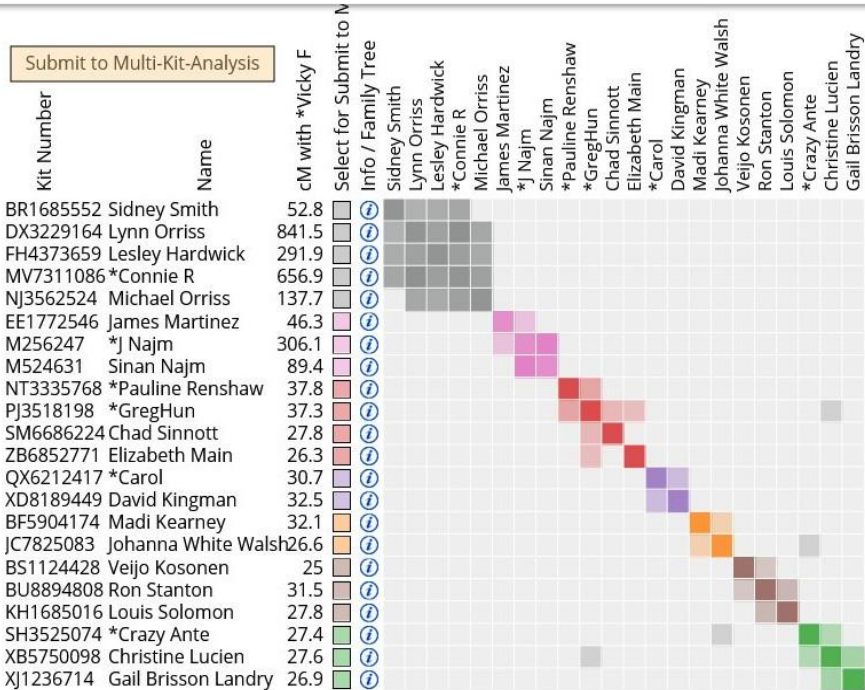


Figure 2. Clustering analysis for Vicky Carroll

With my sister Vicky as the ‘prime’ person and with the lower and upper limits of DNA match set for 7–1000cM, the tool initially identified a massive cluster of 54 DNA cousins – not a useful outcome, and probably a result of the pedigree collapse in our family. With limits of 10–1000cM, I could see a two-person cluster that included Paul Rowlinson (see earlier section on MRCA Search tool). The other person was Rhonda SCOLLAN, with whom I had previously made contact. Like Paul, she too is descended from a sister of my maternal great-grandmother, Caroline Wallace. So at least at this point I could see that the tool had worked. With limits set at 25–1500cM, the outcome was a relatively small number of clusters containing a total of 83 kits. The first one included Sid, Lynn, Lesley, Connie and Michael; the second included Jamal and Sinan Najm (father and son), plus James MARTINEZ, an Indian-Mexican DNA cousin I already knew (and see Figure 1). The remaining clusters are presumably groups of DNA cousins who share an as yet unknown ancestry with Vicky.

By choosing appropriate clusters to submit to Multiple Kit Analysis, I could display the results in various ways. The Compact Map was visually the most appealing – as with DNA Painter, the shared DNA segment is colour-coded and shown at the appropriate position on the relevant chromosome. The display allows you to do a manual triangulation, as you can see the overlapping segments corresponding to the matches. As with the Triangulation tool described earlier, the outcome is a set of DNA cousins with whom one can make contact.

The results of Clustering were less successful with some of my other relatives. With Connie and limits of 20–1000cM, there were excessively large clusters that almost certainly relate to her Jewish ancestry. Cousin marriages are common in Jewish communities, with resulting high levels of endogamy, where living descendants share multiple small segments of DNA inherited from common ancestors in the distant past. Even with the lower limit set to the maximum value of 35cM, the tool still produced one very large cluster and many matches belonging to more than one cluster. With Jamal Najm, the outcome was a cluster that included the names of myself, my sister and James Martinez, plus several other matches; but also one very large cluster. Once again, intermarriage is common in Indian society, giving rise to endogamy.

Making contact with new DNA cousins

The advanced GEDmatch tools would only be really useful if they put me in touch with informative DNA cousins, one of whom might help me to break through my Smith-related ‘brick wall’. I tried first with those identified by the Lazarus tool that recreated my mother’s DNA. Four were already known to me but 11 were new. Of the latter, only three replied to my email, and none of those was able to establish a genealogical connection to my maternal family.

Next, I tried with the one new DNA cousin identified by the MRCA Search tool; this eighth cousin, Keith Thurman, did respond to my attempted contact. He was keen to reconcile the slight differences that we had in our respective family trees, despite our common descent from William Worlidge (bp 1666, Lidgate, Suffolk). I am confident that my tree is correct: I have viewed the original Bishops Transcripts version of the parish registers (PRs) for Lidgate, on vellum pieces held at the Suffolk County Record Office at Bury St

Edmunds; a distant cousin highly experienced in family history research had transcribed those PRs from copies on microfiche; and I have read the transcription of them by L Haydon WHITEHEAD, another accomplished genealogist who transcribed many Suffolk PRs in the 20th century. The area where Keith and I disagreed concerned the marriage of a Robert PULHAM and a woman with the surname Orridge in the late 18th century – he had Martha, whereas I have Amy. Boyd's Marriage Index at the Society of Genealogists confirmed that Robert Pulham married Amy Orridge on 20th September 1789 in Cowlinge, a parish adjacent to Lidgate. Keith might have to change his tree, but it is good to correct one's mistakes. A 1:1 comparison between my kit on GEDmatch and Keith's indicated that we share DNA segments of 7.3cM and 5.8cM on chromosome 16, of 6.7cM on chromosome 18, and of 5.2cM on chromosome 20. If these matches are not 'false positives', then we have inherited this genetic material from a known ancestor who lived in the 17th century!

X-chromosomal and other matching

When we talk about matching with DNA cousins, we are usually referring to the genetic material carried on the autosomes – in humans, pairs 1 to 22, excluding the sex chromosomes, X and Y. Females have two X chromosomes, one inherited from each parent; males have an X chromosome from the mother and a Y chromosome from the father. We all also have mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) located in small structures within the cell, outside the nucleus. This mtDNA is passed on only by a mother, but all her children inherit it. Together with the X chromosome, it too can be informative for the purposes of genetic genealogy.

GEDmatch and some testing companies identify cousin matches with shared DNA on the X chromosome. The latter has a rather unusual pattern of inheritance, depending on whether one is male or female. For a man, any DNA cousin with a matching segment on the X chromosome must lie on the maternal side of his family tree. For a woman, any DNA cousin with a similar match cannot lie on the paternal grandfather's line. In either case one can narrow down considerably where one should look for the family connection to such a DNA cousin. Analysis of mtDNA, on the other hand, is a specialised procedure generally only used by professional genetic genealogists. However, it was employed to dramatic effect in 2014 in

confirming the identity of the skeleton of King Richard III, discovered buried under a Leicester car park.

For simplicity, the maternal X^S chromosome is shown as being shared. Rhonda and Vicky could equally as well share the paternal X^W chromosome.

I tried using X chromosome matching on myself and on my close relations. The matches between us were as expected, but others were more interesting and informative. For example, my sister Vicky matched Rhonda Scollan (see earlier section on Clustering). From our shared family tree one can see how this might be (Figure 3). If I had not already made contact with Rhonda and established how we are related, we could have fairly easily identified the link between our families by focusing on the appropriate part of our shared tree, consistent with the X chromosome match. Interestingly, I myself do not have an X chromosome match with Rhonda; presumably my mother passed on to me her other X chromosome, that from the Smith side of our family. Vicky also matched with a Pauline RENSHAW, who has strong Scottish roots. This X-chromosomal segment has probably been inherited via our father from our Scottish paternal grandmother, Isabella MACFADYEN.

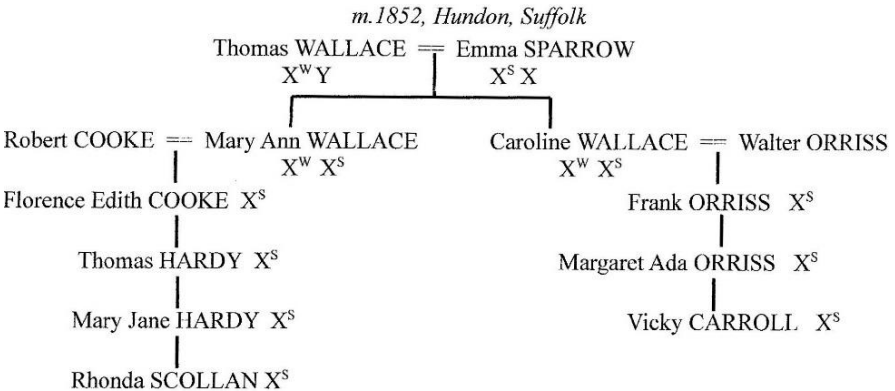


Figure 3. Inheritance of the X chromosome in DNA cousins

Conclusions and future research

GEDmatch's advanced (Tier 1) tools did not allow me to make progress with identifying the origins of my elusive maternal 2x great-grandfather, Thomas William Smith. He was in the Barbican area of the City of London when he married there in 1869, and in some

censuses he said he was born in London but in others in Ongar, Essex. Of course, finding a London-based Smith man in the mid-19th century is a genealogist's worst nightmare! Perhaps I now need to focus on his Y chromosome, which is passed on unchanged from father to son. Barring a non-paternity event in the recent past, such as illegitimacy, Sid Smith should have inherited the same Y chromosome as my Thomas William had, as would the latter's brother or uncle. Any direct male-line descendants of the latter two men should likewise have the same Y chromosome, and with luck one of them might have taken a DNA test. In principle those men should also have the Smith surname, but who knows if that was the true family name of my Thomas William? People lie, but the DNA does not. Anyway, I have recently paid Family Tree DNA to carry out a detailed analysis of Sid's Y chromosome – the Big-Y700 test – in the hope of finding other men who share it.

On the Orriss side of my maternal family, I was hoping to find a DNA cousin who might have a photo of my great-grandparents, Walter and Caroline (see Figure 3). This hope has not been realised. On the other hand, with the MRCA Search tool I did locate an eighth cousin with whom I have a common ancestor born in Suffolk in 1666. In this case the DNA analysis corroborates the documentary genealogical research – a particularly satisfying outcome. The presence of pedigree collapse in my Orriss family, with its first-cousin marriage of my maternal grandparents in 1922, seriously complicated the analysis using some of GEDmatch's advanced tools. However, the same situation no doubt helped me to locate an eighth cousin. I have also recently paid to have Michael Orriss undergo a Big-Y700 test. One component of the latter test identifies male DNA cousins with a common ancestor within a genealogical time-frame, but a second component also looks into the deep ancestry of the Orriss line, thousands of years before the present.

Perhaps the most satisfying progress with my recent genetic genealogy work has not been with GEDmatch's advanced tools but with the Pakistani DNA cousins identified by the earlier autosomal DNA matching (ref 1). One of them, Sinan Najm, suggested I contact his aunt Amber, older sister of Jamal Najm. She in turn pointed me in the direction of Abida ASIM, daughter-in-law of Abdul Rahim Aziz, another older brother of my grandfather, Abdul Hamid. Abida in turn

put me in touch with Shazia, wife of Imran Aziz, one of the Pakistani grandsons of my grandfather. Imran and I have both inherited 25% of our DNA from Abdul Hamid – but a different 25%, so an autosomal DNA test on Imran should identify more DNA cousins with our shared heritage. Shazia and her family were going to Pakistan to visit their family in late 2021, and they hoped to find out more about our shared family history by talking to members of the older generation there. Perhaps they will enable me to join up the partial family trees that I have received from various Pakistani DNA cousins. No doubt there will be yet more adventures to come in my genetic genealogy research!

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BOOK REVIEWS

– Mark Carroll

***Tracing Your Ancestors Using the UK Historical Timeline*, by Angela Smith and Neil Bertram, 2021, Pen & Sword Books, £12.99 or less, ISBN 978-1-39900-332-2**

How do we put the lives of our ancestors into the context of their place in history? What events shaped their development, attitudes, careers, health and so many other aspects of their lives? These are questions that are of interest to us all as family historians, as we seek to put “flesh on the bones” of the bare family tree. We also want to know what records are available that might shed light on the past in relation to our ancestors, where they are located and when they began. This book addresses many of these issues. It is particularly relevant to those of us – like myself – who have always wanted to write up a detailed account of our family’s history and to publish it, either online or on paper. So in reading this book, I had three questions in mind:

1. Would it have helped me in 2018 when I was writing my own book?
2. Would it provide relevant background to the life and times of my maternal ancestor, Thomas Worldige (married 1597 in Lidgate), a yeoman farmer from Suffolk?
3. Could it explain why my maternal 3x great-grandfather, William Orriss, and his brother both died in their 20s within a few weeks of each other in 1832?

One of the authors (Smith) is a historian by training, the other (Bertram) is now a social worker. Together they have addressed British and Irish history over the period 1066–2020. Each century is allocated its own chapter. Within the latter the text is organised by year and is divided into three columns: Socio-Cultural Timeline; Monarchy, State and Church; and a main column listing events of potential interest to family historians. The entries naturally become more frequent and more detailed as the centuries roll by. As ever in a compendium of this nature, one bears in mind the questions: Is this event worth including? What has been left out? The authors acknowledge that they have had to be selective – inevitably so – and some entries are common knowledge (eg Battle of Hastings 1066). On the whole they have struck a reasonable balance. From a personal perspective I had no interest in knowing the dates of so many coal-pit disasters, but I definitely *was* keen to know when the law changed to allow a widower to marry his dead wife's sister – as did my 2x great-uncle Frank Orriss senior in 1919.

The span of topics covered is considerable: maps, disease, religion, armed forces and wars, parish records, Poor Laws, emigration and immigration, colonisation, disasters, censuses and many more aspects of social change. Helpfully, the varying size of the British population is given across the centuries. All four nations of the UK are comprehensively addressed, plus Ireland; events overseas are also included where they had an impact on Britain. Throughout, one finds mentions of records of value to family historians, their locations and their origins. Nothing obviously significant has been left out, in my view. Would it have helped me when writing my own book? Yes, definitely, for there is relevant information in this book that I was not aware of. Does it illuminate the life and times of my ancestor Thomas Worldige in the early 1600s? Not really in any meaningful detail.

Does it account for the death of two young ag labs in Suffolk in 1832? Yes, possibly, as there was an epidemic of cholera in England in that year. The two men might also have been caught up in the Swing Riots of 1830 in East Anglia, as opposition grew to increasing agricultural mechanisation.

The style of writing is naturally brief, but clear. The text would have benefited from better proof-reading to eliminate numerous spelling mistakes and some duplication, particularly in the subject index. The brevity of some entries is frustrating. For example, the War of Jenkins' Ear took place in 1739, but there is no mention of who the warring parties were or why they were fighting. It would have been enlightening to know (and to add a reference to the entry in the subject index). The authors state that more information about any entry can be found on the Internet, but if one cannot discern the relevance of an entry to one's own family history research, why would one bother? Nevertheless, overall I think many of us will find this book a useful reference source, especially if you are writing a book or an article for our Journal.

***The Foundlings*, by Nathan Dylan Goodwin, 2021, Amazon, £8.99 or less, ISBN 9798481041421**

This is the ninth book in the Morton Farrier, forensic genealogist, series by Nathan Dylan Goodwin, and it is just as good as the others I have reviewed for this journal. The book weaves together three strands of storyline across two time periods: Morton's own present-day genealogical research into three foundling babies, one of whom is a half-sister to his "aunt" Margaret; the colourful past of Morton's own grandfather, Alfred, who had a turbulent relationship with Rosie Hart, a local prostitute and criminal with a successful line in black-mail; and the detective work of WDS Kathy Steadman, who was trying to find the mother of a fourth foundling baby abandoned in 1976. As before, the author makes clever use of his genealogical expertise to create a convincingly realistic programme of family history research, augmented in this case by DNA testing and genetic genealogy. He also knows Kent and Sussex so well that the description of the various locations there feel totally authentic. Morton is under time pressure to complete his report by Christmas – can he do it, whilst also attending to the needs of his own family? A

breakthrough comes from his realisation as to the significance of the setting where each of the four foundlings was abandoned, which in turn points to Rosie Hart being more malign than just a petty criminal. The story ends satisfyingly in the present day with a reunion.

This book can be read as a stand-alone story, but parts of it make more sense if one is acquainted with Morton's past from previous books in the series. Indeed, I found it useful early on to construct a family tree for Morton in order to clarify some otherwise potentially confusing names and relationships. It also helps if one is familiar with the basic concepts behind genetic genealogy, as this approach underpins some of the key developments in the story. As with any crime mystery, an occasional suspension of disbelief is required for the storyline to seem authentic. Nevertheless, it flows along at a cracking pace and is lucidly written, with occasional twists and turns in Morton's research and some welcome touches of humour. Furthermore, some of the potential ethical and personal dilemmas thrown up by genetic genealogy are realistically illustrated here. There are still a few loose ends for Morton to tie up in his ongoing quest to define his family's past, but no doubt these will form the basis of the author's next book in this series. I look forward to it enormously.

LOCATING MARRIAGES – Tim Valder-Hogg

A few years ago, I was asked about a missing church, or more exactly, registers for a church missing from the set registers deposited in the Waltham Forest Archives, and could I determine which one it was? The enquirer wanted to determine which church some people married at without needing to order up certificates for them.

The enquirer also made me aware of the Marriage Locator project at www.marriage-locator.co.uk hosted by the Guild of One-Name Studies. This project uses a feature of the process by which the GRO Marriage Index was compiled to allow one to take a GRO reference and determine from it which church the couple you are interested in were married at. The way the records work had interested me for some time, and I have a couple of books by Michael W Foster, who

was allowed to conduct research at the GRO, on the subject. “The Marriage Records of England and Wales (A Comedy of Errors)” books are enlightening.

To see how the marriage locator works, we need to understand the process a little. Until 2021, churches held two marriage registers. When full, or 100 years old, one register was sent to the Diocesan Repository, and the other was returned to the local registrar. In Waltham Forest, the Diocesan Repository is the Waltham Forest Archives, but for most of the rest of the Chelmsford Diocese, this is the Essex Record Office at Chelmsford. Every quarter, the minster would send a copy (made by hand) to the GRO of the marriages which have taken place. The GRO sorted these marriages into a fairly consistent order alphabetically by deanery (a collection of parishes by locality) and then by place. In 1902, this meant that marriages in the Rural Deanery of Walthamstow and Leyton were sorted Chingford, Leyton, Walthamstow, then by church dedication. Various factors affected the sort order: the creation of new churches or removal of others, the recognition of Leytonstone as a distinct place from Leyton, and a church being seen as a daughter church to another. Thus Leytonstone (St John’s) came after Leyton St Catherine, but Leytonstone St Andrew came after St John’s. Some clues can be obtained from the *London Gazette* which announces the make-up of the deaneries. In 1916, the Leyton deanery was arranged like this:

1. Leyton Saint Mary
2. Leyton All Saints
3. Leyton Christ Church
4. Leyton Saint Catherine
5. Leyton Saint Paul
6. Leytonstone Saint John
7. Leytonstone Saint Andrew
8. Leytonstone Harrow Green, Holy Trinity
9. Leytonstone Saint Margaret
10. Wanstead Slip, Saint Columba

By noting the first and last marriages for the quarter at each of the churches in Leyton, and using FreeBMD to establish the GRO page number for each marriage, the missing church was deduced to be St Andrew’s Leytonstone. The Q2 1901 sequence was established to be:

<i>Church</i>	<i>Page nos</i>
St Mary's	145-156
All Saints	157-163
St Catherine's	165-173a
St John's	175-184
Unknown	185-188
St Margaret	189-195

That order appears to persist in 1909 with St John's ending at 192, St Margaret starting at 199 and the pages 193–197 being the missing church. To prove this theory, I searched newspapers for a marriage at St Andrew's. Clive Parsons married Frances Mants Q2 1909 at St Andrew's, and the marriage has ref 4a 197.

You may notice from the above tables that the original Parish Church always comes first in the list followed by later churches alphabetically, and that page numbers for a church always start on an odd number. Pages with an "a" suffix have been added later, usually due to late returns to the GRO, after the book for the quarter was compiled. The slotting in of additional marriages keeps all the marriages for a church together.

We can see that although the number of marriages and the sorting logic change over time, marriages at a church are always held together at the GRO and occur in a block of page numbers. Having transcribed a number of marriage registers, I thought it might be interesting to contribute to this project.

The database which our website uses has the ability to give me the highest and lowest marriage entry numbers in a quarter. If I could extract them, I could look them up in FreeBMD or Ancestry. This sounds nice and quick because this gives a list of marriages to be looked at in a second or two, but the GRO Index look-up still needs to be done. I worked out a method of supplying a query to Ancestry using a program called *wget* supplying a name, year, quarter and volume; and getting back something, I can then read into a spreadsheet. I don't use spreadsheets for mathematical processes, and particularly not Excel because of its inability to correctly handle dates before 1900, so I used OpenOffice to process the results into tabular form.

As I started working through the registers, various mismatches became apparent. In family history, it's usually the things which aren't quite right which are interesting. This is what I found:

Even for a fairly specific query, Ancestry may return one or more results, or none. This means that I have to match up my file of answers with my queries, checking the mismatches with FreeBMD, adding missing answers and removing duplicate or incorrect ones. It seems that Ancestry is able to give different results to a search on different occasions, so that sometimes a record you know is there does not always show. Click refresh a bit later and it can then appear. I suspect that this may be a method of limiting load on their servers.

The Ancestry transcriptions of the GRO Index entries are sometimes incorrect and the name is not matched. One of the Ancestry marriage index databases has come from FreeBMD; however, this seems to lag behind what is on FreeBMD by some way. The other database does not seem to have had the same scrutiny and seems to have errors which would likely show up if double keyed (typed by two people). Looking at my results, this database seems to have many more errors in than the original GRO Index.

Occasionally a minister missed a page of marriages or completely neglected to file a return in a quarter, or even several quarters. The marriage of Silvanus Browning and Ann Chudley on Sunday 12th April 1857 at Chingford Parish Church does not appear in the GRO Index at all.

Another possibility is the minister forgetting the definition of "quarter". If I talk about quarters these days, everyone knows that I'm talking about something which starts on the first day of a month and ends on the last day of the third month. This has not always been so obvious. Have you ever wondered why the tax year runs to 5th April?

Until 1752 New Year's Day was on 25th March, and the quarter days were Lady Day 25th March (New Year's Day), Midsummer Day (24th June), Michaelmas Day (29th September), and Christmas Day. Until as late as the 1970s, rents were due on quarter days, and they were doubtless used for other purposes previously. Some ministers seemed to get confused about which quarter they were working to and sometimes didn't return marriages between the quarter day and

the end of the month. The following month they would sometimes forget this, and start at the first of the month, leaving those marriages not returned. The tax year is related to this. Until 1752 the tax year followed the Julian calendar year with the year starting on Lady Day, but the move to the Gregorian calendar meant adjusting by 11 leap days. The tax authorities did not want to miss out on 11 days of tax and so keeping the same number of days in the tax year moved the year end to 5th April.

Curiously a marriage of George Henry French and Ellen Elizabeth Corck on 29th Dec 1929 at All Saints Highams Park not only occurs in the marriage index for that quarter but also the following quarter, also in the West Ham registration district. Did they marry twice or was their marriage returned twice?

Another problem which wasn't immediately apparent was that there are errors in the GRO Index in spelling or page numbers. If there is a spelling problem, this can usually be dealt with by looking at a neighbouring marriage in the quarter, if there is one; but if the page number is wrong, how would you know? If you know the range of page numbers used by a registration district in a quarter, then you might be able to check for extreme errors, but not small ones. It is therefore important to get the reference for both husband and wife and check that they match.

Each page sent to the GRO has one or two marriages on it, which means that there must be one or two brides and a matching number of grooms indexed to each page. It is not uncommon to find an odd number of people indexed to each page. As the FreeBMD index becomes more complete, this becomes more a case of the original index being incorrect rather than the index being incomplete, with the original still showing five people on a page and three on another. In each case there is obviously an error, but given there are two marriages, which is incorrectly indexed? Just occasionally a father or a witness gets indexed instead or in addition to the bride and groom, which may help or hinder, depending on whether the name is additional or instead of one you are looking for. In July 1838 William Wood married at Chingford, but in the GRO Index, it is not he who appears but his father John.

Errors in the GRO Index are almost inevitable given the manual way in which they were compiled. Each time something was copied there was a chance an error could creep in. There was the first copy by the minister to return marriages to the GRO. How well could he read his writing or that of his curate? Then there was an indexing process involving names being written on pieces of paper or card, sorted and then copied into an index book. It seems likely that this process involved one person reading names and another writing them, presenting an opportunity for spelling changes. At some point some of these handwritten indexes seem to have been typed to make them easier to read. This presented an opportunity not just for name spelling changes but handwritten page numbers being misread.

Something which was not an error showed up as I processed one marriage register. Jonathan Taylor and Annie Elizabeth Drake appear as the first entry in the third quarter of 1881 in the Chingford marriage register. This does not appear in the GRO Index but the other marriage in that quarter at Chingford does. A look at the register entry shows that the entry was “Not used on account of a mistake made by the Rev. T. Burrowes – A.F.R.”. We have transcribed incomplete and unused entries which would not have been sent to the GRO in case they provide some useful information, as well as to make a complete record of the register. It isn't clear what the mistake was but perhaps one of the parties lived in Chingford and the minister copied the wrong entry from the banns register or started to make an entry in the wrong register.

A slightly wider search shows that Jonathan Taylor and Annie Elizabeth Drake do appear in the GRO Marriage Index in that quarter, but in the registration district of Ware, Hertfordshire. Presumably they married in the bride's parish, in the Ware registration district, so perhaps Jonathan was living in Chingford. Normally it would be necessary to look at the actual marriage entry, but being 1881 we can get an idea from the census. In 1881, a John Taylor, general labourer, was boarding with Mr & Mrs Young at Dun Cow, The Hatch. An Annie Drake is also to be found on the census in Wormley, which is in the Ware registration district.

Once one starts looking closely at these records, one becomes aware of some of the administrative changes which take place. I was looking up marriages in Upshire, and was restricting my results to a

single registration district. Uphire was in the Edmonton registration district along with Waltham Abbey and others because they had been in the Edmonton Poor Law Union. When civil registration was set up, rather than set up a completely new framework, it used an existing one, and it used that of poor law unions which had been set up in 1834. When I got to 1939, I stopped finding marriages in the GRO Index. The reason? Uphire had moved to the Epping district.

Other changes have taken place over time at the borders of districts. You can consult a list of these on UKBMD at: www.ukbmd.org.uk/reg/districts/index.html.

You might think that after 170 years or so, many errors would be eliminated by a little attention to detail, but as recently as 2011 the GRO newsletter was reminding ministers not to submit marriages from different quarters on the same sheet of paper, and to submit a “nil” return when no marriages had taken place. They even introduced a “marriage correction application form” due to the number of corrections being necessary, and there was some indication that the GRO needed to query as many as 50% of the returns made to them. There was then some improvement it seems, but in 2017 the GRO was still using terms like illegible, omission, multiple quarters on a single sheet, and timeliness.

The system introduced in May 2021 replaces marriage registers with a printed Marriage Document (called a Marriage Schedule for non Church of England marriages) which is issued by the local registrar with the information provided for the calling of banns, a licence or certificate. There is an opportunity to correct any errors at the time of marriage, before the document is returned to the registrar (within 21 days) so that a certificate can be issued.

There are a couple of practical differences that people may notice. It will no longer be possible for a minister to correct errors in a marriage register. Corrections now need to be made by submitting an application form to the GRO. Certificates are now only issued by the local register office or the GRO.

It remains to be seen whether the new system makes research more or less easy, and if records become more accurate.

ALIAS HENRY BRIDGEMAN, OR, WHAT CAN BE FOUND ON OPEN SHELVES!

– Barrie Burton

Years ago (early 1980s), whilst editor of the Waltham Forest FHS journal, I used to deliver all the local journals personally (when the weather was half-decent, on an old pushbike). It was on one of these runs that I was delivering to the Central Library, Walthamstow (before the fire). As usual, when visiting such a place, time was taken out just to wander along the open bookshelves, picking out books that looked at least half interesting and going straight to the index to see if any of the names I was researching were present (as one does).

Well, I picked on a small reference book (first mistake – I did not note the name of the book) and going over the index I came across the surname of EVERY. I first noticed a baron mentioned and thought “Very interesting, must make a note”. Then the entry beneath stated EVERY, Henry – Pirate. Blow the baron, what’s this pirate? Shiver me timbers! Making note of the reference in the book, which simply said EVERY, Henry – Pirate: MSS. of Marquess of Downshire Vol.1. 1645-1728. What did it mean?

Three months then passed and I was now delivering the journal again, this time giving Guildhall Library their copy. Again, I was wandering the open shelves, when suddenly a book title leapt out at me, “Marquess of Downshire”. Racking the old grey matter, I could not think why it should leap out at me, so the only way was to look at the index.

Lo and behold, there was Henry EVERY – Pirate, with references to the State Calendar Papers. Now this was getting better because if I was to do a 180-degree turn, rows and rows of books on the State Calendar Papers were on open shelves. There were State Calendar Papers for “Domestic”, “Treasury”, “Colonial Papers America and West Indies” and a few more, which I did not go into.

So, who was Henry BRIDGEMAN? This is supposedly the alias used by Henry EVERY when finally returning to England. And who was Henry EVERY? Well, he was supposedly born as John AVERY, near Plymouth in about 1665. Moreover, just to confuse matters even more, he also had the nickname of “Long Ben”.

In the early 1700s, Daniel DEFOE wrote about him in “Life, Adventures & Piracies of Captain SINGLETON”, and Charles JOHNSON wrote a play called “The Successful Pyrate”, which was performed with acclamation at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.



AVERY & EVERY are as surnames very changeable throughout my research. Even my own grandfather was born EVERY but married and died as AVERY. I will continue with using the name of Henry EVERY for the purposes of this article.

So what was the general story? A lot of things here are to be taken with a pinch of salt. Henry was first mate of a ship called the “Charles II” and was part of a mutiny concerning that and one other ship off a place called Corunna. He was then put in charge and sailed around Africa (no Suez Canal in those days). They then sailed up to Madagascar, doubling the size of their fleet on the way. It was then that they took a ship belonging to the Great Mogul (the most powerful ruler in India in 1659 to 1707), which included several of the greatest persons of his Court, plus one of his daughters. This ship was on its way to Mecca and you will see by the following documents that it also carried much gold, silver, etc. The Mogul then threatened to send a mighty army with fire and sword to extirpate the English from the Indian Coast. This caused great concern in the East India Company. It has not been possible to tie down the exact date this occurred, but it seems to have been around the beginning of 1694.

The main purpose of this article is to show what can be found on open shelves, and this is just a small section. I have started early to find out a bit more on the “Charles II” as you tend to get different ship names, plus a reference that I have states that Henry EVERY served in the Royal Navy.

Editor's note: The following is just a fraction of the information that Barry was able to find.

July 14, 1694, London. Calendar of State Papers. Domestic

Memorial to Sir John TRENCHARD by Sir James HOUBLON, Mr GERMAIN, Mr RIGBY and other owners of the squadron of merchant ships now riding in the Port of Corunna, for assistance in quelling mutinies on the ships: "James", Captain STREET, "The Dove", Captain HUMPHREY, and "The Seventh Son", Captain THOMAS, who will not obey the commands of General Don Arturo O'BRUIN (Arthur O'BRIAN?) who has been intrusted by those interested with the chief command. It is feared they will follow the example of the "Charles", the crew of which, in May last, seized upon the said ship, made one Henry EVERY their commander, and sailed out of Corunna in the night, leaving notice in writing of their intention of pirating on the English as well as on all other nations. Wherefore the owners request that the said ship "Charles" may be seized wherever it is found.

March 23, 1695, Barbados, Colonial Papers America &W. Indies

Governor RUSSELL to Lords of Trade and Plantations, I have received your orders as to the seizure of the ship "Charles the Second", she has not yet arrived here nor, so far as I know, at any of the adjacent Islands, I have communicated your order to the captain of the man-of-war whom I have sent to convoy merchant ships to Tortuga. Signed F. RUSSELL.

May 25, 1695, London. Calendar of State Papers. Domestic

At the same time there came in a Flushing from Guinea, who reports that the "Charles", whose commander, Captain AVORY, some time since, ran away with her from the Groyne, has ranged the coast of Guinea, and taken two Danish ships belonging to the company, AVORY then persuaded all the men but four, who came over as passengers, to join them in the wicked trade of piracy; so with the additional strength of the two Danish ships, they have gone to the Red Sea.

July 17, 1696, The Council Chamber, Whitehall. Calendar of State Papers. Domestic

Proclamation by the Lords Justices of England offered a reward of

£500 for the apprehension of Henry EVERY, commander of the ship “Fancy”, 46 guns and 130 men, which sailed “the seas of India” as a Pirate under English Colours. The said Every and other Englishmen and foreigners, to the number of about 130, ran with the said ship, then called “Charles (the second)”, from the port of Corunna.

July 22, 1696, Bristol. Report on MSS of Marquess of Downshire
Sir John Dutton COLT to Sir William TRUMBULL. Having seen last post a proclamation against one EVERY for rape and theft on the high seas at India, and here being one Captain Joseph FARRER come from Island of New Providence in a vessel of 30 tons called the “Sea Flower”, navigated with four men and a boy, all Irish in her passage hither touched at Dunfanaghy, near Londonderry, there discharged about 20 passengers, 13 men and 2 boys [who] worked as seaman, paying £10 each man notwithstanding for their passage; three more that went for gentlemen, and one woman paid £20 each, their names are Henry BRIDGMAN, Henry LEWES, his wife, one Fawkner, a north countryman, but remembers his Christian name; none of these came to Bristol, but were landed in Ireland; the Captain manning himself with four Irishman from Londonderry to bring ship hither, and the cargo she pretended here was four tons of Brazaletto. Upon rummaging the vessel we found casks in her for water such as usually belong to men-of-war, and turning one of them in the water out came a piece-of-eight, and five or six more were found in the ballast. The Captain upon further examination says that those people he landed had pieces-of-eight, and they took but one trunk ashore with them, which he believes was searched by a Custom House Officer.

Immediately upon landing they dispersed, pretending to be fearful of the press. I, being not satisfied with his confession, understanding there was a boy on board that came from New Providence, sent privately and examined him. He told me Mr TROTT was Governor of New Providence and that there was a great ship lying there at anchor about 35 or 36 guns, which he believes belongs to the Governor, but I take it to be the ship EVERY commands. My suspicion is by reason the Captain denied there was any man-of-war in the river, and finding such water casks on board, which he pretended to be taken out of a Dutch wreck in the Gulf, besides the great freight for the persons he pretends not to know, and who at landing dispersed in such a manner. The boy’s name is Garret

FITZGERALD, and the man-of-war in New Providence Island is the “Fancy”. I suspect that EVERY has dispersed his men and parted with his ship.

Aug 3, 1696, Examination of John DANN, mariner, of Rochester

Three years ago I was coxswain on the “Soldado Prize”, and deserted to go on Sir James HOUBLON’s Expedition to the West Indies under Don Arturo BOURNE. I went in the Charles to Corunna, where the ship’s company mutinied their pay being eight months in arrear. The men proposed to the master, Captain EVERY, to carry away the ship, which he agreed to, and they sailed from Corunna on 7 May 1693, with eighty-five men. The Captain and fifteen or sixteen men who refused to go, were set ashore. The first place we came was the Isle of May. [Here the narrative abstracted in No.111 is given in slightly greater detail up to the time of the ship’s arrival at Johanna, Madagascar.] Here we resolved to go to the Red Sea. Here we met two English Privateers, the “Dolphin” and the “Portsmouth Adventure”. The “Dolphin”, Captain WANT, was a Spanish bottom with sixty men on board, and had been fitted out at Orkills (? Whorekill), near Philadelphia, having left it two years ago last January. The “Portsmouth Adventure” had been fitted out at Rhode Island, about the same time; her master was Captain Joseph FARO, and the crew was about the same number as the “Dolphin”. Both had about six guns. They joined company with us and about June after twelve months we came to Liparan Island at the mouth of the Red Sea, where three more Sail of English came to us, one commanded by Thomas WAKE, another, the “Pearl”, William MUES commander, fitted out at Rhode Island, the “Amity”, Thomas TEW commander, fitted out at New York. The two first had six guns and about fifty men each, and the “Amity” from thirty to forty men. They all joined partnership, putting Captain EVERY in command. After lying there some time they sent a pinnacle to Mocha and took two men who gave them information as to ships coming down.

They then stood out at sea and back to Liparan, where after five or six days the Moors’ ships, twenty-five in number, passed them in the night; but hearing this from a captured Ketch they resolved to follow them. The “Dolphin” being a bad sailor was burned, and the men put on board Captain EVERY. The “Amity” fell astern and never came up, WAKE’s ship also lagged but came up later. Steering for Surat we

caught up one of the ships which we took after she had fired three shots. She had £50,000 or £60,000 on board in silver and gold. We shortly afterwards spied another ship mounting forty guns and carrying (or was said) 800 men. She stood a fight for three hours and yielded. We took from her in money and plate enough gold and silver to make up each man's share to £1,00, 180 men sharing in all, the Captain having a double share, and the master share and a half. The "Portsmouth" had no share, not having taken part in the fight. The "Pearl" had a share but this was taken away from them again, for when the "Charles" men changed with them silver for gold it was found that the "Pearls'" men had clipped the gold; so they gave them only 2,000 pieces-of-eight to buy provisions. Captain WANT then sailed into the Bay of Persia, the "Pearl" (I think) went to the coast of Ethiopia, and WAKE to an island near Madagascar, intending for the Red Sea the next time the Moors' ships were expected from thence.

Captain EVERY resolved to go straight to Providence. On the way the men mutinied, some being for carrying her to Kiau, belonging to the French near Brazil, but EVERY withstood it, there not being twenty men left that joined with him when they came to Madagascar, in latitude 21 degrees. There we left as many men as were inclined to stay, and in March or April we came to Providence, anchoring first off Thora Island, and sending a letter to Governor TROTT to ask for protection and liberty to go away, which he promised us. We made a collection of twenty pieces-of-eight a man, and forty from the Captain, as present to the Governor, besides Elephant teeth and other things to the value of £1,000. We then left our ship, which the Governor took, with forty-six guns in her, after which we bought a sloop, and EVERY with about twenty men sailed for England. Twenty-three other men bought another sloop and sailed under Captain RISBY to Carolina. EVERY and I landed in the north of Ireland at the end of June last, where parted and EVERY went to Scotland. I heard that he was in Dublin when I was there but did not see him. He had spoken of going to Exeter, being a Plymouth man. I obtained a pass from a landing-waiter for myself and seven more to go to Dublin; this man made some effort to detain me but let us go for three pounds' weight of gold. I hear he obtained money from other men also. I then went to London, but was arrested at Rochester, a maid having found my Gold quilted up in my jacket. I was bought before the Mayor and committed but kept my jacket in which were

£1,045 in sequins and 10 guineas, which are now in custody of the Mayor. The wife of the Quartermaster came home from Providence with us, and I lately saw her at St. Albans. The sloop we came home in was given to Captain Joseph FARO of the "Portsmouth Adventure". Captain RISBY's men landed somewhere near Galloway.

December 18, 1696, East India House, Colonial Papers America and West Indies

Narrative of Philip MIDDLETON, of the ship "Charles Henry" to the Lords Justices of Ireland, given on 4 August 1696. The ship "Charles Henry" first plundered three English vessels at the Isle of May of provisions only. Nine of their men joined her, mostly West-Country men. Thence she went to the coast of Guinea, where she took two Danes, from which they took a quantity of Elephants teeth, and divided eight or nine ounces of gold per man. Fourteen of the Danish crew joined them. Thence they sailed to Madagascar and Johanna, where twelve French pirates came on board, and afterwards took a French pirating junk (?) with about forty men who had good booty with them. These also joined them, and made them up to 170 viz., 14 Danes, 52 French, 104 English. From Johanna they sailed to the Red Sea and heard of two rich ships from Mocha bound to Surat, but passed them in the night, as they learned from a small junk which they took the next day. They came up with the smaller vessel, which made little or no resistance, but the great ship fought for two hours, having about 1,300 persons on board. The other had 700. They kept possession of both ships and all the crew except one man boarded her by turns, taking only provisions, necessaries and treasure, which was very great, but little in comparison with what was on board; for though they put several to the torture they would not confess where the rest of their treasure lay. They took great quantities of Jewels, and a saddle and bridle set with Rubies designed as a present for the Great Mogul. Several of the Indian women on board were, by their habits and jewels, of better quality than the rest. Having taken these prizes the pirates went to Rajapere for water, then to Mascarens, where all the Danes and French were set ashore with their share of the booty, amounting to £970 per man in value. Thence they sailed to Ascension, where they turned fifty turtle and found letters of two English ships having been there. This was March last; and at the latter end of April they arrived at Providence, having two days

provisions left. They gave Governor TROTT a present of twenty pieces of eight per man besides two chequeens of gold, on which he allowed them to come ashore, and gave them a treat at his house, at which one of the men broke a drinking glass and was made to pay eight chequeens for it. The men also presented the Governor with the ship and all on board her, including some Elephants teeth. The Deputy-Governor, Richard TALLIA, shared with TROTT in the booty. Here the Captain changed his name from EVERY to BRIDGMAN, and went ashore with about fifty men, who dispersed to several ports and bought sloops there. EVERY and nineteen men (names given) embarked in one of them called the “Seaflower” and landed about two months since twenty miles north of Lough Swilly by Londonderry, and thence came by land to Dublin.

EVERY went on to London, another of the leaders stayed at Londonderry. Another sloop commanded by HOLLINGSWORTH was chased into Dublin by a French Privateer. She had sixteen more of the crew of the “Charles Henry” aboard. Several of the crew went to New England, one to Pennsylvania, two went to Jamaica and returned to Providence, another remained with his booty in Providence, another was killed by a shark, another seen in Dublin. TROTT took several guns out of the ship (which mounted forty-eight) and planted them on a platform for defence against the French.

The Sea its History & Romance Vol.1 to 1697; Frank C. BOWEN

One of the first of the really famous pirates of romance is John AVERY, although the name is often spelt differently, and he frequently went under an alias. He was mate of a ship which the Spaniards hired in 1694 to transport their treasure from South America and also to act as a coastguard ship, but unfortunately when she & her consort arrived at Corunna the Spanish treasury was empty, on lying there waiting for their wages it is only natural that the crews should get dissatisfied & soon be ready for anything. AVERY collected the most promising men of both ships & seized his vessel the Charles II to go a-pirating.

That he was not as bloodthirsty as he is often described is shown by the fact that the Captains and the loyal members of the crews were allowed to go ashore unharmed, although AVERY knew perfectly well that the first thing that they would do would be to start a hue and

cry for him. He appears to have been scrupulously just to his followers, which was rather a rare thing with the out-and-out pirates, and after a number of minor prizes they took a valuable ship belonging to the Great Mogul. On the spoil of this prize the crew retired, but some of them were captured later & hanged after they had been acquitted once.

AVERY himself returned to Bristol a rich man and is said to have been so thoroughly cheated by the Good Quakers of that town that he died a beggar.

References:

1. Calendar State Papers, Domestic
2. Calendar State Papers, Treasury
3. Calendar State Papers, Colonial Papers America and West Indies
4. Manuscripts of the House of Lords
5. Barlow's Journal Vol.II 1677-1703

SIR FREDERICK WILLIAM PONTIN – Kathy Unwin

Frederick William Pontin was born in Walthamstow, on 24th October 1906, to Frederick William Pontin and Elizabeth Marian Tilyard. He was best known as the founder of Pontin's holiday camps.

In the 1911 census he is living with his mother and siblings in Walthamstow but there is no mention of his father and I have been unable to trace him (Figure 1). His parents do appear together in the 1939 census though and they had three more children.

Giggie Pontin	wife	24	Married	4	3	3	1/2												Walthamstow, London
F. William Pontin	son	4	X																Walthamstow, Essex
Stanley Pontin	son	3	X																Walthamstow, Essex
Henry Pontin	son	1	X																Walthamstow, Essex

Figure 1. 1911 census for 17 Coleridge Road, Walthamstow

Fred left George Monoux school without qualifications but did well in a career in the Stock Exchange before WW2. In 1929 he married his first wife Beatrice Dorothy May Mortimer and they had one daughter, Patricia. Neither are with him in the 1939 census when he

was living in Forest Glade, Walthamstow, with his brother and sister-in-law (Figure 2). Another puzzle.

52	do	26	1	Pontin Fred W	- M	24.10	05 M	Company Secretary
52	do	26	2	Pontin Henry G	- M	17.7	29 M	Incursion Clerk
52	do	26	3	Pontin Grace	- F	21.3	16 M	W D Rother

Figure 2. 1939 census for 52 Forest Glade, Walthamstow

In WW2 Fred was classified as unfit for military service but was involved in setting up camps for construction workers. This must have given him the idea for holiday camps. After the war, the first camp was set up in a former American army base at Breen Sands, Somerset. In the following years 29 more camps were built.

In 1968 he became Chief Barker of the Variety Club of Great Britain and in 1976 he received a knighthood for his services to charity. The company was sold in 1978 and Fred went on to live a long life. In 1999 he married his long-term partner, Joyce, and died the following year in Blackpool.

THE LAST WORD

– Kathy Unwin

As a child I had spent many summer holidays at holiday camps, but only one was at Pontin's. This was at Bracklesham Bay in the early 1960s and, as you can see in the photo, the old wooden chalets had been replaced by brick buildings, although still no ensembles!



My mother outside our chalet

Do you have any Pontin's memories?

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

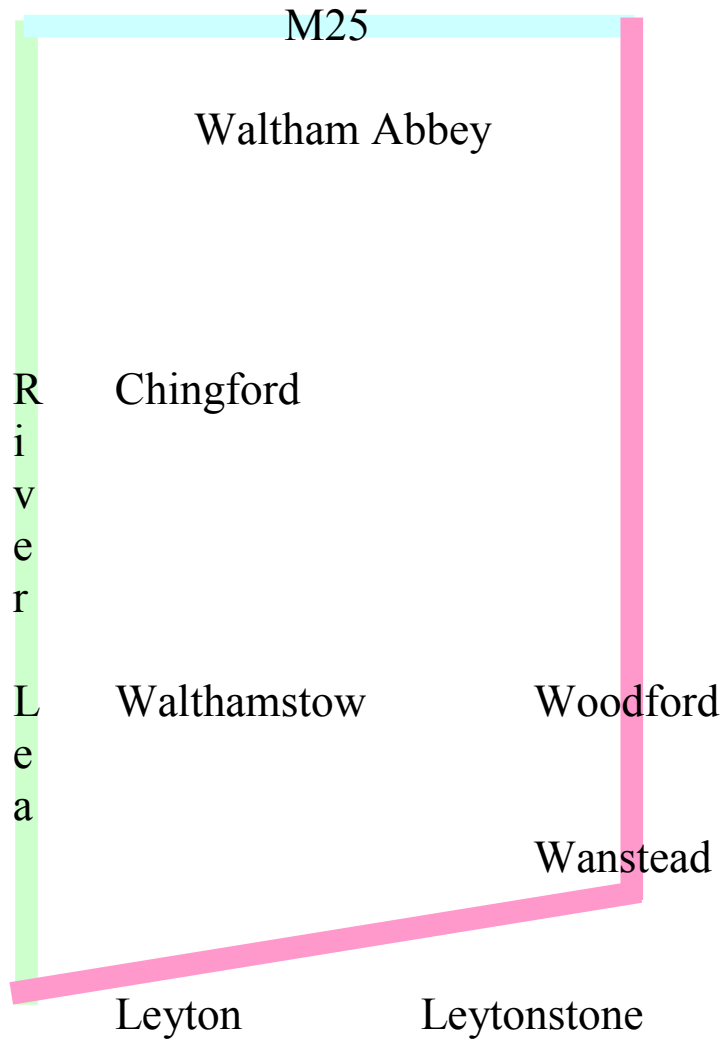
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DIARY

- 12th April** **Talk (Zoom): The paupers of the East End – John Walker**
- 10th May** **Workshop (hall): Putting our ancestors’ lives into historical context – Kathy Unwin**
- 14th June** **Talk (Zoom): A grandmother’s legacy: my family history – Jenny Mallin**
- 12th July** **Workshop (hall): The 1921 Census – Mark Carroll**
- August** **No meeting**
- 13th Sept** **Talk (Zoom): The Fairs on Wanstead Flats – Mark Gorman**

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

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Family History Society

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