

ROOTS and BRANCHES



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ROOTS AND BRANCHES



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All Saints Church, Waldringfield

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COMMITTEE'S COMMENTS

The Committee continues to meet via Zoom to discuss how the Society is doing. Unfortunately after the successful Speakers Meeting in October with Pip Wright telling us about 'Penal Transportation' which was very well attended, the second lockdown began and so we have not been able to meet again.

Our March speaker, Charlie Haylock has been re-booked for December 2021; other speakers will be re-booked when we know more about the easing of lockdown and all the rules and regulations.

The Committee have been looking at holding a Speakers Meeting via Zoom as many other FHS are doing. Some speakers are happy to do this; others prefer the face to face type of meeting.

I am happy to say the Sarah Doig who was to take our meeting in February has kindly agreed to present her talk '**Celebrating Suffolk Women**' as a virtual talk via Zoom in March. If you would like to attend this meeting then please see Page 7 for how to register. I would think that the way lockdown is going our May Speaker's Meeting will also be via Zoom.

Ann Sanderson has recently emailed all those whose email addresses we have to assess how many of you would like to try a Zoom Speakers Meeting. If you haven't received an email from Ann this means we either don't have an email address for you, or the one we have is incorrect, so please send your email address to Ann Sanderson so that we can keep in contact and you don't miss any of our Zoom talks.

Linda Negus
Membership No: 0620
Secretary

EDITOR'S NOTES

This is the first issue of what I hope proves to be a better year for us all. I, and I should think many of you, have now had your first vaccination jab, it gives us hope to look forward to a more normal 2021.

I have received some articles from members for this issue, thank you for your support especially Roger Sutton who has three articles in this issue.

Many of you may be aware that many Family History Societies and other organisations now give their talks and meetings via Zoom. You will see from page 4 that our March talk by Sarah Doig will be via Zoom. Registration is essential for you to receive the Zoom log-in details. See page 7 on how to register for the talk.

Mark Mitchells will also doing his talk in April via Zoom. So make sure that we have your correct email address if you want to join in with these talks.

So far, we have no news on when Broadway House will be opening, but once the government starts to release parts of the lockdown I'm sure we will have more news then.

Keep well and safe.

Linda Negus
Membership No: 0620
Editor

DIARY DATES

10th March 2021 **Celebrating Suffolk Women: a pot-pourri of stories about the County's famous and not so well known women.**
Sarah Doig
THIS IS A VIRTUAL TALK VIA ZOOM

A pot-pourri of Suffolk women, some well-known and some far less so, all of which achieved great things in their chosen field. Sarah Doig explores the fascinating lives of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and her sister, Millicent Garrett Fawcett, as well as the novelist Norah Lofts. She tells the story of the surgeon and herbalist Catherine Tollemache, Britain's first woman commercial portrait painter, Mary Beale, and many more of our county's heroines

14th April 2021 **A History of the Suffolk Landscape**
Mark Mitchells
THIS WILL BE VIA ZOOM

For many people the Suffolk landscape *is* the landscape of England – passed down to us through the paintings of John Constable. But the Stour he painted has lock gates, a sure sign of Man's intervention! This illustrated talk will examine the changes which have occurred in Suffolk across the centuries and show the ways in which they have left their mark on the county today.

12th May 2021 **The Mayflower**
Cathy Shelbourne
THIS WILL BE VIA ZOOM

Celebrating the 400th anniversary (1620-2020) of this famous ship and its 'sinners and strangers' that sailed to the New World in search of a new life. It is claimed that 25m Americans are descended from these pioneers.

Monthly Meetings are held at 7.30 pm on the second Wednesday of the month at Broadway House, Orwell Road, Felixstowe IP11 7DD

Meetings are free for members, but if you wish to bring a guest they will be charged £1.00. Refreshments (tea, coffee and biscuits) are available at the end of the meeting.

Did You know..... that whilst the first known example of a handmade, wooden, Advent Calendar dates back to 1851, Advent Calendars as we recognise them today were first mass-produced in 1908 by Gerhard Lang who worked at the Reichhold & Lang printing office in Munich.

Counting down the days to Christmas can be traced to the 1800's when German Lutherans began to mark out the days leading up to Christmas by burning a candle each day or by marking a wall with chalk. This counting down the days from the 1st December is different from the season of Advent, as observed by the Church where the tradition developed that Advent, is observed on the four Sundays before Christmas Day.

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SPEAKER'S MEETING—MARCH

We are delighted to announce that we will be resuming our Monthly Speaker Meetings in March, on the usual second Wednesday of the month.

As very many other societies, clubs and churches have found, Zoom is a very useful way to hold meetings, and we will be using Zoom.

Perhaps you are already using Zoom for other purposes, but if you are not familiar with Zoom, do please send an email to fxfhs@hotmail.com and say so. We can then get someone to contact you and provide all necessary help and guidance: it's all quite straightforward and nothing to get het up about.

Our speaker will be Sarah Doig, who spoke to us a couple of years ago as well as previously. Her topic will be "Celebrating Suffolk Women – a pot-pourri of stories about the County's famous and not so well known women, all of whom achieved great things in their chosen field".

The fascinating lives of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and her sister Millicent Garrett Fawcett, the novelist Norah Lofts, the surgeon and herbalist Catherine Tollemache, Britain's first commercial portrait painter, Mary Beale and many more of our county's heroines.

Places are limited and only available by registration. Send your request to register to fxfhs@hotmail.com with the words [**Zoom Registration**] in the subject line of your e-mail.

This method of registration will ensure that the registration procedure works smoothly and efficiently and will result in our being able to send out to you the information you will need in order to log in to the meeting.

Please note that there will be no charge for joining in. It's part of your annual membership package along with Roots & Branches.

DID YOU KNOW.....in 1641 an order was given by the House of Commons that required all adult men to swear allegiance to the Protestant religion. These are called Protestation Returns. The returns were organised by parish and are a valuable seventeenth century census substitute, significantly taking place at the start of a civil war. Those refusing to take the oath, such as Quakers, were often also recorded as such. The majority of the returns are held at The Parliamentary Archives and many have been transcribed by family history societies. The useful publication compiled by Jeremy Gibson and Alan Dell describes all surviving Protestation Returns and their location: 'The Protestation Returns, 1641-1642, and Other Contemporary Listings', (Federation of Family History Societies, 2004).

The Parliamentary Archives have digitalised all they hold and made them available online. These images have been attached to the relevant catalogue record through their online catalogue and are organised by country, then town or parish. <https://archives.parliament.uk/research-guides/family-history/protestation-returns-for-family-history/>

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MY AUSTRALIAN RELATIVES

Quite recently I had my autosomal DNA tested by Ancestry. This test delivers matches from all sides of the family, because our autosomal DNA is inherited from both parents who in turn inherited it from their parents.

Perhaps the biggest surprise is that my ethnicity estimate shows I am 7% Norwegian. This has to be as a result of the invasions of Northern Britain and Ireland by the Norwegian Vikings over a thousand years ago. I had already established that I have Irish ancestry from Dublin. This city was founded by the Norwegian Vikings and was finally recaptured by them in 917.

I was also surprised by the number of 4th cousins identified, which stands at 334 as at 31 July 2020. Ancestry maps show how my relatives emigrated from the UK to other English speaking countries over the period 1825-1925. I have distant cousins in the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. My mother Eileen was a Pickering and I had already found Pickering cousins in South Africa. Presumably none of the South African cousins had taken an Ancestry DNA test, which was why South Africa did not feature in these results.

Australia has always been a country that has interested me. Such a huge country and so far away, yet with strong family, linguistic and cultural ties to the UK that have lasted for over 200 years.

Before I received the Ancestry Report, I had discovered only one relative who had emigrated to Australia during the 19th century. As you search through 19th century Census returns, you become aware of relatives who have disappeared between Censuses. This happened to my Sutton great grandfather. I never discovered the reason for his absence.

My paternal line is working class. My maternal line is middle class. Most of my maternal ancestors belonged to the commercial middle class who ran their own businesses. I classify myself as lower middle class.

The Ancestry Report has found genetic links between individuals in Australia and myself in 17 instances. There are four time-frames: 1825, 1850, 1900 and 1925. Within each time-frame, Ancestry lists various locations. The 1825 time-frame lists the following locations:- Taree, Sydney, Launceston – Tasmania, Geelong and Adelaide. All I know is that I have a genetic link to each of these locations. It could be through any one of my genetic lines.

Taree is in New South Wales, to the north of Sydney. The transportation of convicts to New South Wales stopped in 1840. My relative may have been a convict. The emigration to Sydney may have been linked to Taree. My relative may have been a convict. In 1828 the population of New South Wales was only 36,598.

Adelaide was chosen by Colonel William Light as the site of South Australia's first settlement. Launceston housed the worst convicts.

The 1850 time-frame shows even more emigration to Australia by my relatives:
South Australia – Port Lincoln, Mount Gambier
Victoria – Melbourne
New South Wales – Young, Sydney
Queensland – Ipswich (just outside Brisbane), Carters Towers

By 1900 emigration by my relatives was slowing down to only Adelaide, Brisbane and Sydney. This pattern continued for 1925 with only Sydney and Melbourne.

Somebody in Melbourne has contacted me. He was adopted, but his DNA analysis indicates that his father was one of my Suttons. He has also found a half-sister in Melbourne with whom he shares a father. She knows almost nothing about her father.

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A Year Book of the Commonwealth 1972. Her Majesty's Stationery Office

A Brief History of the Normans, the Conquests that changed the face of Europe.

Francois Neveux 2006

Roger Sutton

Membership No. 1126

THE LATEST NEWS AFTER LOCKDOWN

Yesterday, 22nd February, the PM gave a map of how he thinks we will be coming out of this current lockdown.

According to this our Annual General Meeting will be able to be held as a face-to-face meeting. It will be held on Wednesday, 9th September, more details in the June issue.

Indoor entertainment and activities will start no earlier than 17th May; so this means that our April and May meetings will be virtual meetings via Zoom. Members will be contacted nearer the time to register for the talks. Once again, please make sure we have your correct email address.

Linda Negus

Secretary/Editor

NORFOLK ANCESTORS

William Elvey (5 x Great-Grandfather) married Elizabeth 1 Oct 1733 at Garvestone with Thuxton. Their son William Elvey was baptised 1734 at Shipdham, William married Elizabeth Weeting (bap 1737 at Elsing) 12 Oct 1761 at Yaxham. (William was a widower.)

William and Elizabeth had three sons

John Elvey bap 29 Dec 1764

Robert Elvey bap 1 Aug 1767

William Elvey bap 20 Dec 1768 all born at Gressenhall.

Garvestone with Thuxton, Shipdham, Elsing and Yaxham are all villages just south of Dereham. Gressenhall is just north of Dereham. The Church of St. Mary, Gressenhall is situated about a mile from the village.

Tragedy struck in 1769 when the baby William dies and was buried 28 Mar 1769; six days later the Father was also buried 3 Apr 1769, both in Gressenhall, so Elizabeth was left with two small sons.



In 1776 the site of the 62 acre Chapel Farm at Gressenhall was purchased and the “House of Industry” was built where the poor could work for their keep. This came too late to help the widowed Elizabeth.

With reference to the Gressenhall Museum’s website and their “timeline”,

1834 cholera and scarlet fever struck and a sixth of the inmates died.

1834 with the “Poor Law Amendment Act” the House of Industry become “The Workhouse”.

1854 the practice of oakum picking was introduced for the able-bodied.

1917 50 German prisoners of war were housed in the East wing.

1948 The National Assistance Act finally closes the Workhouse and Gressenhall becomes a county home for the elderly.

June 1974 and Feb 1975 the last residents were rehomed elsewhere. 1976 Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse became a Museum of Norfolk Life – and is well worth a visit.

Elizabeth Elvey went “back to her roots”. 21 Apr 1772 she remarried at Southburgh, to John Stacey. She died aged 89 years and was buried 13 Feb 1822 at Cranworth, Norfolk.

At some stage the two brothers John and Robert Elvey moved to Great Bircham, near Sandringham, presumably for work.

John Elvey (3 x Great-Grandfather) married Ann Doyle at Great Bircham.

Robert Elvey married Rose Jarvis 26 Apr at Gt Bircham.

There is an 1811 census of Gt Bircham showing 1 male and 3 females in the John Elvey household.

There were 72 households altogether in Gt Bircham.

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John and Ann had five children all born at Gt. Bircham.

Jemina b 2 Mar 1791

Mary b 10 Oct 1793

John b 25 Jun 1795

Charlotte b 30 Dec 1796

Ann b 28 Jul 1801

Sadly the baby John died age 1 and was buried 10 Jun 1796, which meant there was no male to carry on the name but the name Elvey has been carried on to this day through the female line. John Elvey who was born in Gressenhall lived to the good old age of 95 years. He died 15 Sept 1859 in Gt Bircham.

Two sisters married two brothers.

Ann Elvey married Robert Duffield (2 x Great Grandparents).

Charlotte Elvey married John Duffield.

Ann Elvey and Robert Duffield were married 27 Jun 1822 at Bircham St. Mary. Robert Duffield was a farmer of 13 acres and a carrier travelling from Kings Lynn to Norwich every week.

Robert and Ann had nine children. Three boys died in infancy and only one son survived. Their daughter Elizabeth (Great Grandmother) married John Seaman Marsters 16 Jan 1861 at Great Bircham. In 2010 we found their gravestone in Gr. Bircham and it was still in a good condition.

There must be a good number of my ancestors buried in Gt. Bircham Churchyard., the Elveys, Duffields and Marsters.

The Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Great Bircham is situated in the centre of the village and was built in the early 14th century. Great Bircham has a working windmill which is a grade II listed tower mill. It was built in 1846, and fell into disrepair. The restoration of the mill began in 1977 and finished in 1983.

The mill is open to visitors and makes a lovely day out. My Grandchildren had great fun baking and eating little loaves of bread.

Pamela Smith

Membership No: 1180



SID SUTTON'S SECRET WAR WORK

Sid Sutton was my great uncle. He was born on 20 January 1895 at Eynesford, Kent. He was the youngest of eight children of George William Sutton, a police sergeant, and his wife, the former Susannah Wellard. Because George was a policeman, he was posted to various locations in Kent and so most of his children were born in different places. By 1912 both of Sid's parents were dead, so it wasn't the easiest start in life for him. In February 1911, aged 16, Sid joined Dover Post Office after passing the Limited Competition. He was to remain at Dover Post Office for the rest of his long career. Indeed, it was at Dover Post Office that I first met Sid. My parents, sister and I were on holiday in Blean, Kent in the 1950s and we dropped in to see him while he was at work.

Sid served with distinction in the trenches in the First World War, rising to Sergeant. Back in Dover, he was a Sorting Clerk and Telegraphist, becoming an expert in Morse Code, which was part of his day-to-day duties. The Morse Code was invented by Samuel Morse (1791-1872). It was a code for sending messages, each letter of a word being represented as a series of short or long radio signals or flashes of light. Even before the Second World War started, it was clear that the German Luftwaffe was the strongest and most menacing of all foreign air forces. Finding a way of listening to bomber and pilots' communications about their operations and intentions would be crucial. From September 1938 Neville Chamberlain, the UK Prime Minister, realised that war with Germany was inevitable and told his senior colleagues, "Gentlemen, prepare for war".

In 1924 Sid married Ellen Gillow and in 1928 their only son Phil Sutton was born. Sid was hugely proud of his son, who rose to become a Bank Manager and a member of Crawley Development Corporation in West Sussex.

It was Phil who told me in the 1990s that during the Second World War Sid worked for the 'Wireless Interception Service' ('Y Service' for short), also known as MI8. Behind the celebrated code-breaking at Bletchley Park in Buckinghamshire lay another secret. Before the messages of the German war machine could be decoded, thousands of mainly young men and women had to locate and monitor endless streams of radio traffic around the clock and transcribe into Morse code at a speed few have ever managed since.

Those chosen for this demanding job were usually Grammar school boys and girls, often still in their teens. There were special selection procedures. They had to pass an IQ test above a certain score. They had to be assessed as being capable of working under pressure. They had to have the patience to sit waiting for hours for an enemy station to come to life and to remain alert. Training lasted 19 weeks. In that time they were taught Morse code, wireless procedures and electromagnetism. All those who formed part of this Wireless Interception Service had to sign the Official Secrets Act. Total secrecy was the order of the day. You were not allowed to tell your own family where you worked. You were not even allowed to tell your work colleagues what work you were doing. The reason was simple. The Germans had encrypted their Morse Code messages, using Enigma coding machines. These machines were simple to use and very portable, yet capable of producing millions upon millions of potential letter combinations. The Germans considered these Enigma codes to be completely invincible. But the country's finest minds at Bletchley Park (including Alan Turing) had managed to crack the German Enigma codes. The Germans did not know about the Bletchley Park operation. If they had known, they would have tightened up their security measures to such an extent that all of Bletchley Park's efforts would have been nullified.

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Sid was 44 when the war started and 50 when the war finished. He was therefore a generation older than the grammar school boys and girls recruited at the start of the war. The advantage that Sid had was that he was already, on a daily basis, doing work involving the Morse Code.

I have virtually no information about the work that Sid did during the Second World War. I do know that he worked at night. According to Sinclair McKay's book "The Secret Listeners" (2012), it is likely that he worked an 8 hour shift, while women worked a 6 hour shift. As Sid lived in Dover and worked at Dover Post Office, it seems likely that this shift work was at Dover Post Office. If this shift work continued for the whole duration of the war, it suggests that, despite his relatively advanced age, Sid was as capable of doing the work as those a generation younger.

American HRO receivers came to be used throughout the Y Service. The dials were intricately and exquisitely engineered, which resulted in pinpoint dial accuracy, especially vital if an operator had subsequently to find the same frequency again. You were told what frequency you were monitoring. You had to try and find it. You twiddled the knobs. Sometimes you would get a clear signal. Sometimes it was very difficult or it would move slightly. There was always a second operator monitoring the same frequency at the same time. Y operators had to write with one hand while keeping the other hand on the tuning knob, as the set would drift off frequency, so that the operator had to retune slightly.

Every dot, every dash had to be listed. Every message was logged and dated. If you didn't know a letter, you didn't guess. You just left a space and carried on. Motorbikes in Dover would be sitting, waiting, before careering throughout the night (and day) to reach their Buckinghamshire destination. It was always a 24 hour operation. Bletchley Park were waiting to crack the codes and work out what the Germans were up to.

After the war Sid resumed his usual duties at Dover Post Office. By March 1955 he was an Inspector. I went down to Dover on several occasions to visit him in the 1960s and 1970s. Sid died in June 1984, aged 89. He had served his country devotedly during both World Wars.

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1. Sinclair McKay "The Secret Listeners". How the Y Service intercepted German codes for Bletchley Park 2012
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3. Christopher Booker "Article about Neville Chamberlain" Sunday Telegraph, 6th January 2019

Roger Sutton

Membership No: 1126

DID YOU KNOW.....that the first time the phrase Diamond Jubilee was used was for Queen Victoria in 1897 to celebrate her 60th year on the throne. Before that time the term 'Jubilee' was used when celebrating a 50th event. The qualification 'Golden', which we use today, would not have been needed. Queen Victoria had celebrated her 'Jubilee' in 1887 and a new term was needed for the 1897 celebrations. The motifs we now use to describe different jubilee events are taken from those originally used to describe wedding anniversaries, such as the Diamond for the 60th.

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WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION - UPDATE

In the June 2020 issue of Roots and Branches, I wrote about 'Project Alias', involving editing entries on pension cards for soldiers who had died during World War I.

That project is now complete and I took part in the next set of work which entailed going through the same cards and adding or correcting home addresses that had been missed or entered incorrectly when the cards were created. This work has made it even easier to find ancestors who fought and died in that war.

At the time of writing, I am helping to index part of volume 2 of 'The Bond of Sacrifice'. This book has been digitised and contains biographical details and, in most cases, photographs of officers who fell during World War I. Some of the entries contain an astonishing amount of information, so it is slow work, reading as I index!

Recently, the Western Front Association in association with Ancestry/Fold3, has released World War I pension cards for soldiers who survived. The 'soldiers died' set was incomplete as millions of records were lost thanks to the efforts of the Luftwaffe in World War II. However, the 'soldiers survived' set is complete and includes varying details of every soldier who applied for a pension, even if their claim was rejected.

In due course, we will be going through these cards, presumably repeating the alias and hometown exercises, so I shall not have idle hands for the rest of this year, I suspect.

For anyone researching the First World War or relatives who were involved in the war, these records can open doors, so are well worth checking out.

Steve Deacon
Membership No: 1195

GENEALOGICAL NEWS

A new online repository – **CatholicArchives.ie** – has been launched to facilitate greater access to collections of material held by Roman Catholic communities in Ireland. The benefits of such a central repository include the provision of a platform for smaller archives to receive greater exposure, while researchers can enjoy free online searching and browsing of a wider range of material, catalogued to international standards, from archives that normally have more limited access arrangements. The catalogue is fully searchable, by names, places, events, subjects and archival institution, allowing for cross-referencing and browsing by users. Thus far, the site holds collections from the following archives: The Passionists - Ireland & Scotland, Glenstal Abbey, The Sisters of St. Joseph Chambery and the Irish Capuchin Provincial Archives.

THE 1921 CENSUS

FindMyPast has been selected as The National Archives' commercial partner to make the 1921 Census of England and Wales available online. It will be published in full on FMP in early 2022. The 1921 census is the most comprehensive census to be opened to the public since records began in 1801.

The 1921 census is a household census taken in June 1921, and paints a picture of the UK population nearly one hundred years ago. It holds information on every household, vessel, institution and overseas residencies that were part of England and Wales in 1921, plus the Isle of Man and Channel Islands. Also included are merchant ships in the waters of England and Wales, all ships of the Royal Navy and army and (for the first time) RAF units stationed overseas. This will include units on occupation duties following the First World War, or based in territories newly under British administration as a result of the war, such as Mesopotamia (modern Iraq).

A full entry on a standard household schedule will contain:

- full address of the property
- names of persons in each household
- relationship to head of household
- age (this was now required as years and completed months, rather than just years as in previous censuses)
- sex
- "marriage or orphanhood"
 - ◇ For those aged 15 and over this field recorded if you were single, married, or widowed, and for the first time D was to be recorded for those whose marriage had been dissolved by divorce
 - ◇ For those under 15 this recorded if both parents were alive, father dead, mother dead or both dead.
 - ◇ This field will again show the impact of the First World War with a greater proportion of widows recorded than in 1911, and 730,000 children recorded with "Father dead" versus 260,000 with "Mother dead".
- place of birth and nationality for those born outside the UK
- occupation and employment
 - ◇ if in whole or part-time education
 - ◆ principally for recording those at school or university, but could also include adults taking evening classes
 - ◇ Employment
 - ◆ For those employed, name and type of employer, otherwise recording "employer", or "own account". Those out of work are instructed to give their last employer and add "out of work"
 - ◇ Place of Work - employer's address (except for those in private employment such as domestic service)
- Number of children or stepchildren under the age of 16
 - ◇ To be filled in by married men, widowers and widows, a total number followed by a cross in a box for each age that was applicable to a child or stepchild.

Other types of schedule for institutions/prisons, merchant vessels, or the armed forces add some additional questions about function within the institution, and rank or trade rather than occupation for the armed forces. Schedules used in Wales and the Isle of Man include an additional language question, asking if each person spoke Welsh (or Manx), English, or Both, while the armed forces schedule asks additionally if the person can speak Welsh or Gaelic (in addition to English).

It was the first decennial census to be conducted under the Census Act 1920. The original act can be viewed at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo5/10-11/41/contents/enacted>.

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THE PLAGUE AND MY ANCESTORS

For most of the 20th century the plague that was endemic in Britain from at least the Black Death of 1348-1350 until its mysterious disappearance after 1666 was generally thought to be bubonic plague transmitted to humans by fleas carried by rodents. This view was challenged by Graham Twigg in "The Black Death: A Biological Reappraisal" (1984) and then by Susan Scott and Christopher Duncan in "Biology of Plagues: Evidence from Historical Populations" (2001), which concluded from historical and epidemiological evidence that the plagues that created such havoc in Britain for more than three centuries were caused by a virus that was spread by droplet infection.

The rise and decline of an outbreak of plague can be traced through the record of burials in parish registers once they were introduced in 1538. Earlier evidence is more impressionistic. In the popular imagination the plague of 1665-1666 is particularly associated with London because 20% or (100,000) of the total population of 500,000 died. However, the towns on or near the coasts of the South East and East Anglia were badly affected, including Deal, Dover, Sandwich, Rochester, Colchester, Cambridge, Ipswich and Norwich.

Two of my ancestors in Deal died of the plague. Throughout the time of the plague the Second Dutch War was being fought in the Downs in the English Channel between 1664 and 1667. In September 1665 256 seamen and soldiers were landed from a hospital ship off Deal and lodged wherever accommodation in Deal could be found. Richard Watts, the Notary Public, was outspokenly critical:

"If the Commissioners of Sick and Wounded had thought to hire a house and place as many as possible there with nurses, the contagion might have been contained."

Watt's reports were dramatic. In June 1666:

"At Deal from three to eleven die daily of the plague."

In July 1666:

"The distemper is very violent at Deal, sweeping away whole families."

In the same month Colonel Titus reported that:

"They die most sadly at Deal. Scarce any house is clear from infection It scarce leaves above one in a family and at least 400 have died in Deal in five weeks."

The plague spread to Dover, Sandwich, Canterbury, Maidstone and also to Boulogne. Watts himself and many in Deal moved to nearby Walmer, which seemed free of infection, probably because Walmer had plenty of space, whereas Deal was becoming overcrowded. In August 1666 it was reported that "three quarters of those who stayed in Deal are dead and by 31 August 20 die a week of the plague in Deal."

It was at this point that my ancestors died of the plague. Henry Cavell was born in Sellindge in 1607. He moved to Deal in the 1620s. He became a blacksmith on the shingle beach at Deal. On 29 October 1632 he married Sara Pittock at St Leonard, Deal. Her grandfather Richard Pittock was a blacksmith and pilot of deal. In 1600 he was Deputy (equivalent of Mayor) of Deal.

Sara died of the plague in August 1666 and was buried on 20 August 1666 at St Leonard, Deal. Henry Cavell died of the plague and was buried on 1 September 1666. By this time the worst of the plague in Deal was over. Their son Henry Cavell (born 1647) survived and is my ancestor. It seems reasonable to assume that by the time of the plague he had already moved out of the family home, which was why her survived. On 21 October 1675 he married Bennett Austen, a member of a prominent Roman Catholic family.

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Sandwich was less badly affected than Deal. Nevertheless, 170 townsfolk died, including Matthew Peake, the Mayor. He was descended from Nicholas Peake and Edward Peake, both of whom were local Members of Parliament and my ancestors. They were also the ancestors of Bennett Austen.

Dover was very badly affected. As late as October 1666 deaths were still occurring at a rate of 40 or 50 a week. In all, there were at least 900 plague deaths in Dover, which lost approximately 30% of its population.

Once the epidemic that began 1665 had run its course, plague never returned to the British Isles. No satisfactory explanation for the disappearance of plague is available.

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Roger Sutton

Membership No: 1126

LOCKDOWN PASTIMES

During these socially restricted times, we have all probably turned to board games, jigsaws and playing cards to pass the time. But as a change from indoor interests, we have discovered a new hobby of Geocaching. This is a sort of treasure hunt on a small scale which is especially suitable for socially distanced activity.

It involves following clues to find tiny hidden capsules outside, roughly the size of an AA battery. These contain a rolled up log inside to sign and date. Using GPS (global positioning system) co-ordinates, participants access directions using a mobile phone app. There are over three million geocaches worldwide, which include seven in the vicinity of Felixstowe Prom. Cryptic clues are provided, which sometimes help! For example Veni, Vidi, Vici leads to a find in the crook of a horse chestnut tree.

Happy hunting! Ann Sanderson Membership No: 1292

WEBSITE UPDATE (Cont)

- USA, Mississippi, U.S., Provincial Archives, 1820-1951
- USA, North Carolina, Historical Records Survey, Cemetery Inscription Card Index, 1700-2018
- USA, North Dakota, Naturalizations, 1873-1952

USA, Sumter County, Alabama, U.S., Circuit Court Files, 1840-1950

Tipperary County Archives

Minute Book of the Corporation of Clonmel from 1687 to 1718

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WEBSITE UPDATES

Findmypast

- Bedfordshire Gaol Registers 1801-1901 (51,712 records)
- Dorset burials: Melcombe Regis, 1570-1933, Weymouth, 1885-2001 and Wyke Regis, 1887-1992
- Herefordshire Prison Register Index 1849-1915
- Court of Great Sessions in Wales 1730-1830
- Kirkby Stephen Petty Sessions 1874-1901 (2,233 records)
- Ireland, Londonderry (Derry) City Cemetery Burials 1853-1961
- Ireland, Dublin City Cemetery Burials 1805-2006
- Australia Victoria Births 1918-1920
- USA, New York Roman Catholic Parish Baptisms and marriages

FamilySearch

- Devon, Plymouth, Militia Records, 1625-1831
- Devon, Plymouth, Parish Chest Records, 1556-1950
- Westminster, Marylebone, Census, 1821
- Australia, New South Wales, Assisted Immigrants Inwards, 1828-1890
- Australia, Victoria Petty Sessions Registers, 1858-1985
- Germany, Saxony, Diocese of Dresden-Meissen, Catholic Church Records, 1621-1976
- Norway Census, 1870
- Uruguay, Catholic Church Records, 1726-2000

USA

- Colorado, Military Discharge Records, ca.1919-1972
- Florida, Military Discharge Records, ca.1837 - ca.1970
- Georgia, Military Discharge Records, ca.1890 - ca.1966
- Georgia, Tax Digests, 1787-1900
- Indiana, World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1940-1947
- Iowa, Marriage Records, 1941-1951
- Pennsylvania, Historical Society of Pennsylvania: Births and Baptisms, 1520-999, Pennsylvania, Congregational Records, 1620-1991,
- Virginia Voter Registration, 1902-1970
- West Virginia Voter Registers, 1866-1890

Ancestry

- Calendar of Prisoners, 1868-1929
- After-Trial Calendar of Prisoners, 1855-1931
- Prison Commission Records, 1770-1951
- Registers of Habitual Criminals and Police Gazettes, 1834-1934
- Lancashire, England, World War II Home Guard Records, 1940-1945
- Westminster, London, England, Non-Conformist Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1841-1964
- Wiltshire, Non-Conformist Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1810-1987
- Yorkshire, Archdeaconry of Richmond, Church of England Marriage Bonds, 1611-1861
- Canada, Newspapers.com Marriage Index, 1800s-1999
- Germany, Deaths of German Citizens Abroad, Registers from Berlin Standesamt 1, 1939-1955
- USA, WWII Army Deserters Pay Cards, 1943-1945
- USA, Delaware Church Deaths, 1750-1886
- USA, District of Columbia, Glenwood Cemetery Records, 1854-2013
- USA, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, Public Library Records, 1848-1980
- USA, Maryland, Baltimore, Locks Funeral Home Records, 1936-2007

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Membership enquiries to be sent to the Membership Secretary

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