



# WEST MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY JOURNAL

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Flip-Flap and Colonial Bandstand,  
Franco-British Exhibition, London 1908



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# WEST MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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<b>Society website</b>	<b>west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk</b>
<b>Subscriptions</b>	All categories: £15 per annum
<b>Subscription year</b>	1 January to 31 December

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## FUTURE MEETINGS

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The following talks have been arranged:

18 <sup>th</sup> March	Grave tales and memorials	Graham Sutherland
15 <sup>th</sup> April	Upstairs, downstairs	Jackie Depelle
20 <sup>th</sup> May	Registers of electors for family historians	Eric Probert

Our meetings are normally held on the third Thursday of each month at St John's Centre, St John's Road, Isleworth. However, the Centre is currently closed until further notice due to the Covid-19 crisis, so we are now holding meetings for members via Zoom. This is completely free – all you need is your internet! (Reports of Zoom meetings held in November and December 2020 and January this year can be found in this issue of the journal.)

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

Our virtual doors open at 7.30pm.

**N.B.** *If you're interested in attending talks by Zoom but don't trust your memory, email our Secretary [Secretary@west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk](mailto:Secretary@west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk) and you will be sure of getting an email reminder.*

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021

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### **Please note the change to previous arrangements!**

In the December issue of the Journal we advised members that we expected to hold the Society's 2021 AGM on Thursday March 18<sup>th</sup> at St John's Centre, St John's Road, Isleworth, also adding that members would be advised in good time if there was any change to this schedule.

The Executive Committee has now decided to postpone the AGM for three months, to Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June, in the hope that we will be able to hold the meeting at St John's Centre. However, having proved that we can hold the AGM by Zoom if necessary, it has further been decided not to postpone the AGM beyond June. Therefore the AGM will be held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June either at St John's Centre or by Zoom, as Coronavirus restrictions allow.

An Agenda for the AGM will be included in the June journal.

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## Members Discounts and Passwords

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### Find My Past

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

For Subscriptions the discount code is \*\*\*\*\*

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

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

### Forces War Records

The Society has arranged a useful discount for our members of 40% when you take out a subscription with Forces War Records.

You must register your details with them in the normal way: go to their website at [www.forces-war-records.co.uk/register](http://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/register)

Then when you search their records, at some stage you will be asked to take out a monthly or annual subscription. That page includes the option of entering a discount code. Enter \*\*\*\*\* in the space provided.

### PASSWORDS

JAN-MAR 2021 \*\*\*\*\*

APR-JUN 2021 \*\*\*\*\*

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## Advice Sessions during lockdown

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We are not able to hold our usual face-to-face sessions at the moment, as social distancing makes it impossible. We can, however, offer advice via email and are very happy to do so. Roland and Ann have even done one Advice Session via Zoom and would be happy to do more.

Don't forget that it is not just the committee who can offer advice. We have a worldwide membership and they may hold the key to your mystery!

If you have questions about your research, or the best way to preserve photographs and documents, please send them to us – if one of the committee can't resolve them for you, we can publish your cry for help in the Journal and tap into a wider resource.

One day, we will surely be able to reinstate our face-to-face sessions. To make sure you don't miss the date when we can restart these sessions, please keep checking the Society website:

**[west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk/content/advice.aspx](https://west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk/content/advice.aspx)**

### ***Finding people and working out the true story* Francis Howcutt**

***November (via Zoom)***

Most family historians use Census records, although we should remember that they weren't created for our benefit, but to assemble facts and figures for the government. However because everybody was (ostensibly) included, they are uniquely valuable for finding people. The 1841-1911 censuses are now indexed and digitised and available on a number of websites so the task of finding individuals should be easier but requires a subscription to e.g. Ancestry, The Genealogist or Find My Past. Only the 1881 census is available free of charge, having been produced in a cooperative effort by various family history societies, probably making it more accurate than the other census transcriptions. If your local library has a subscription to the library editions of Find My Past or Ancestry, this will provide free access to all the census years. There is an online article on the England censuses on Family Search Wiki. The next census to be released will be 1921 – the images plus index will appear initially on Find My Past in January 2022. Later it may be available elsewhere.

It may be possible to find people before 1841: for 1801-1831 names of householders and other family members were recorded in certain places. The University of Essex has produced a free introduction and guide to these particular records.

What do the census records tell us? Remember they are not original documents direct from the householder. The records of 1841-1901 are copies made into notebooks by the Enumerators from information obtained from householders using printed forms. So there are transcription errors, plus the fact that some householders were illiterate so somebody else completed their form. An Enumerator included a written description at the start of their District which describes the area covered and usually setting the order of the route taken when collecting the forms, so this may help pinpoint where relatives lived if no street address is given against their entry. Look up the address on Google Earth – but remember numbers and names of streets may have changed over the years. Do use maps: the National Libraries Scotland have placed online a marvellous collection of large-scale maps covering the entire country. When using the 1911 census we see the



digitised actual forms as completed and signed by the head of the household (by then people were better educated). Also for 1911, Ancestry has images of the Summary Books, extracted by the Enumerators from the householders' returns (under Card Catalog, type 1911 Census + England). For the 1911 census there was a lot of preparation beforehand. Officials did a reconnaissance, listing addresses and householders who were likely to be present on census night: useful as it gives a bird's eye view of the Enumerator's round. It might give the name or number of a building, name of occupier, whether a property is inhabited or uninhabited etc.

The contents of the different censuses vary, with the 1841 census containing the fewest details; the later censuses have more information. In 1841 for ages of people over the age of 15, a multiple of five years was used, rounded down, so 18 becomes 15, 61 becomes 60; fortunately sometimes the Enumerator did put down the real age. In 1841 people were asked "were you born in the county in which you are living?" The answer is only given as Yes/No. Born outside the country? (i.e. England): the Enumerator put down 'S' for Scotland, 'I' for Ireland, 'F' for foreign parts. The 1851 census includes precise ages and birthplaces and adds family relationships and marital condition. The same form was used in both 1851 and 1861 but changed for 1871, with more questions, including conditions such as blind, lunatic, etc. Further questions were added in 1891: are you an Employer, employed, self-employed; number of rooms occupied by the family if less than five. In 1901, more employment categories: working on own account or working at home? 1911 included the nationality of people born overseas, infirmity included feeble-minded, and number of rooms even for larger dwellings (so if the family were in the same house 20 years before, you can work out how many rooms they had then). Plus a useful additional section: married couples were asked how many years married, number of children born alive, still living or have died. Widows/widowers might include their expired marriage; sometimes the Enumerator crossed this off, as it was not officially required, not because it was untrue.

Don't assume everything is accurate, complete or true, especially with relationships: 'daughter' can mean daughter-in-law or stepdaughter (especially if the head of household has remarried – watch out for when second wives had the same forename as the first wife!). Birthplaces can be inaccurate or vague, particularly in the case of 'Visitors' (who may well be relatives). Ages are often inconsistent in subsequent censuses – perhaps

deliberately so, or they simply didn't really know their age (Francis warned that 'Full age' on a marriage certificate might be untrue – they could be much younger). Children missing from a later census: there was high infant mortality – some children who died as infants didn't make it into the census at all. Cousin confusion: there could be two or more cousins with the same name, same age, born in the same town – the children of fathers who are brothers.

Missing people due to migration? Even poor people moved about the country, on a temporary or permanent basis, especially after the advent of rail travel. Sometimes they emigrated abroad – the US censuses are free on Family Search. Were they doing army service? An enormous number of men were in the army for a time. They may be indexed on Find My Past from muster rolls, regiment by regiment: a large collection of names. If you can find out which regiment, the monthly musters may tell you where they were. Sometimes they were posted abroad, e.g. India. For some who died on active service, their records were thrown away, but not always. Also look in regimental records. Persevere.

Relatives in institutions: workhouses, prisons, lunatic asylums. Francis found his great great grandfather in Pentonville Prison in London but he had been moved around a number of prisons – so don't assume convicts stayed in the same prison.

Potential problems with records and indexes: sometimes people are recorded with names different from what we expect. Or they may be recorded at two different addresses. Why? It could be they were recorded at the family home when they were actually staying with a friend or relative. But a whole household might be at two different addresses: perhaps they were in the process of moving? Children and young adults were often not in the family home as they were living with relatives, or working in service away from home. Legibility: the 1841 census was recorded in pencil, so can be hard to read. But sometimes the ink used in subsequent censuses is worse! Francis advised consulting more than one website: sometimes different films have been used. Another big problem is the (numerous) indexing errors, only some of which have so far been corrected. If unsuccessful in using an index, use another site with hopefully not the same mistake and an individual may appear. The initial letter of a surname may have been wrongly copied, so even a fuzzy search won't reveal the person. Find My Past indexes allow

“wild cards”, using asterisks in place of letters, for as much of the name as you like; Ancestry requires that you put in at least three letters. It is possible to carry out searches without specifying the surname: use the forename, age, or another person in the household. Or you can search by address: available for 1901 and 1911 on both Find My Past and Ancestry: put in the full address or the street: it will home in on the locality – you may find people that way. There is the opportunity to download records to your own computer, allowing you to retrieve information quickly. As quality of images varies, save the clearest version. Include the whole household; if they are sharing with another household, include them: sometimes they are relatives. With institutions like workhouses, it’s a good idea to include its name in the file name, so you know later what it was. Francis has folders for different families. If there are a lot of records for one family, create folders called e.g. “Census”, or “1939”, to include year of census, census place, then surname, forename.

Francis’ final advice: use other sources too, e.g. Parish Registers, Bishops Transcripts, local directories, the 1939 Register. Newspapers are essential: millions of pages have been scanned using Optical Character Recognition, and although this makes mistakes it is better than having to read through a lot of newspapers. Even humble people appear in newspapers, and a large proportion of the population did announce births, marriages and deaths.

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### ***Christmas get-together***

***December***

This year unfortunately we were unable to organise our usual Christmas social evening, but managed to have a fairly convivial get-together via Zoom involving wearing of festive headgear and a Quiz with questions on the subject of Middlesex assembled by committee member John Seaman with our Chairman Annie Greene acting as Quizmaster.

### ***The Plague Doctor***

***David Bell***

***January***

*No PowerPoint was required for this presentation: just David with a number of props standing before his video camera.*

David’s story began with his first day of retirement at the age of 60. As he came down to breakfast that day, his wife had been scanning the property pages and decided that the ideal place for them to move to for a good

retirement would be the village of Eyam (pronounced Eem please) in the Peak District of Derbyshire, where an attractive house had come to the market. While David had his doubts about making such a move he did in the end embrace it. Eyam was well known for having suffered appallingly during the bubonic plague outbreak of 1665, but was also much applauded for its role in preventing the plague spread further to the north than its boundaries. David resolved to make a proper study of the Great Plague of 1665, and Eyam's role in coping with it.

The Great Plague started in London in 1665 and by the time it ended, 18 months later, virtually coinciding with the start of the Fire of London, it had killed an estimated 100,000 people, almost a quarter of London's population. Of course the major contributor to its horrific death toll was the lack of medical knowledge at the time, such that the real cause of the plague was overlooked while medical cures a plenty were tried.

The lack of medical science, and the sore plight of those suffering disease, meant that quack doctors of all types could set themselves up in practice, and promise all manner of cures to the afflicted. Cures at that time were generally associated with the disease they were meant to heal in some visual way. For example a stick of celery, having some resemblance to a human bone, was prescribed for diseases affecting people's bones. Mushrooms, with some resemblance to the human ear, were prescribed for diseases of the ear, and David could not resist the temptation to advise us that a peanut and two garlic bulbs, which he quickly illustrated from his store of props, were prescribed for that dreaded male disease of erectile dysfunction.

When the plague struck it acted fast, typically just 7 days from the start of the infection until death, and few survived the ordeal. The unrealised cause of the disease was fleas infected with bacteria, and carried from place to place by the city's rats. The disease caused terrible pustules to appear all over the body, and quickly led to gangrene affecting the fingers, toes, the nose, and men's private parts, leading on to the death of the diseased person.

Those, including qualified doctors and King Charles II, who could afford to leave London, did so. Those who were left behind did what they could. Thinking that the origin of the disease lay in the appalling smell of the city, people carried onions with them to ward off the smell, or they would smoke their clay pipes. David told of the case of Eton College where all the boys were required to smoke clay pipes during their classes - quite a picture that

conveys. David did of course have his own clay pipe to show us just what he meant.

The authorities did come to realise that the disease was being passed person to person and encouraged people to keep their distance from one another. Animals were also suspected of passing on the disease, and all dogs and cats in London were killed in a desperate effort to slow the epidemic. Killing the



cats is likely to have resulted in even more infected rats spreading the plague through the city. David continued with his props. Hot brass bells were

sometimes used to draw the pus from body sores. Even a hot flat iron was used to scorch and kill the infection in the pustules. Leeches were used of course, and David showed us the detail of a pendant he had been wearing all the while, a rather graceful ABRACADABRA pendant as the image shows, and thought to be able to charm away the disease.

David then turned back to the story of Eyam in particular, and its fate at this time. Eyam, being far from London, had escaped the ravages of the plague, and was in fact prospering. Being more prosperous, the village



tailor, **George Viccars**, was looking to obtain more cloth for his trade. At the pub a stranger offered to get him cloth if he were paid in advance to do so. Taking a gamble on the stranger, George gave him the money. A month went by with no cloth arriving, but then one day a bundle of second-hand clothes was deposited by his door. The

unfortunate tailor had no idea that the stranger had gone to London to find the clothes there. The clothes were infested with fleas carrying the plague, and within a week not only George but all his family had died of the plague. Eyam had become an infected place. The village as a whole had no knowledge of the Great Plague raging in London, but the rector of the church,

the Reverend **William Mompesson** realised the great danger to Eyam and its surrounding villages, and he ordered from the pulpit that the village enter a form of lockdown. No-one must meet with those outside the village, but food and other necessities must be left in places for the people of Eyam to pick up. Over a period of 14 months up to September 1666 there were 260 deaths in the village from a population of 350 people. Finally the plague had run its course. Over time it came to be recognised what a sacrifice had been made by the good people of Eyam. They had the misfortune to suffer great losses from the plague but by their action of self-isolation the Great Plague of 1665 never infected anyone further north than the village of Eyam.

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## The Boscher Family and Bellevue House in Twickenham

Jeff Allen

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The Boscher family had links with Twickenham throughout most of Queen Victoria's reign, but then left the area following financial losses. For much of the time the family residence was Bellevue House on what is now Staines Road (formerly Hanworth Road).

The story begins sometime before 1841. **Edouard Charles Boscher** was an émigré from France in 1825. Quite why he left France has not been discovered, but the timing does coincide with the end of the reign of Louis XVIII and political upheavals. Edouard was a "Gentleman", living on private resources, with no declared trade or profession. By 1828 he had married **Elizabeth Phillimore** in the parish church of Fulham, with both of them living in Chiswick at the time. By 1841, Edouard (by then known as Edward) and Elizabeth had moved to Hampton Road, Teddington, with their 8 year old son (also **Edward Charles** {2}). Interestingly, in the 1841 census the neighbouring entries in Hampton Road are for persons who are "Houseless in tents", and the next following neighbour is **William Keene**, a Minister.

Twickenham had a strong link with French émigrés, having been the home of **Louis Philippe**, Duc d'Orléans (declared King in 1830) at one time. This may have been what attracted the Boschers to move to the area.

Edward applied for British Naturalisation at the end of 1849. By 1851, he and Elizabeth were living at Hanworth Road, Twickenham (since renamed Staines Road) and by 1853 the records show the first mention of Bellevue House in Hanworth Road. Bellevue House was a substantial building between what is now Manor Road and Belmont Road. In the 1911 census, Bellevue House is shown as having 18 rooms, and the map at the end of this article shows significant grounds compared with the surrounding houses. Elizabeth died at the age of 85 in 1871, and Edward died just six months later in June 1872. They were both laid to rest in Oak Lane Cemetery (plot 129), alongside Elizabeth's sister **Mary** and her husband, **James Earnshaw** (a former Surveyor General of Customs), who had pre-deceased them.

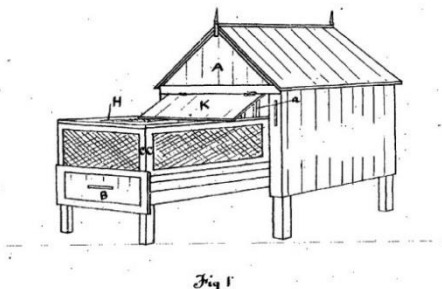
Meanwhile, their son (**Edward Charles {2}**) had married **Annie Ramsay** in



**Edward Charles Boschier{2}**  
**1832-1913**

1865, and in 1871 they were living in Longleat Villa in Twickenham with their eldest two children (**Annie** and **Edward Charles{3}**). Longleat Villa was then in Popes Grove, but this has since been renamed Popes Avenue (no.59). After his father's death, Edward Charles {2} and his family moved to Bellevue House, and by 1881 they had two daughters and two sons living with them, with two other sons dying in infancy. The family in 1881 had a cook, housemaid, nurse and coachman – so clearly a substantial household. Around this time, Edward was also active in the London Entomological Society, had a large aviary where he held and observed birds, and had letters published in *Nature*. He was also a member of the Brentford Board of Guardians. So definitely a well-to-do Victorian family at this stage.

At some point in the 1890's a business was set up in Belmont Road (adjacent to Bellevue House) as a Greenhouse Maker. This seems to have been run primarily by the youngest son, **Harold Percy**. The products seemed to be smaller items such as chicken houses and the like. Harold won a number of prizes for his designs and he held a 1894 UK patent for "A Portable, Collapsible, and Damp- and Vermin-Proof Hen and Chicken House and Run".



It is only supposition, but it may well have been this business which resulted in the "fall from grace" of the family, the result being severe financial straits which

resulted in bankruptcy being declared in 1904 and all the household being sold off. The auction of the goods was conducted by **Mr W A Smelt** over 3 days in February 1904. The goods included a "valuable collection comprising 90 cases of British birds and butterflies and entomological specimens, all



carefully set up in cabinets and cases. Full size billiard table with accessories, also antique and modern furniture ... contents of the residence, including four pianos, organ, noble pier glasses, clocks and bronzes, Axminster, Persian, Turkey and Brussels carpets and rugs ... A large quantity of useful furniture and bedding, etc. ... collections of plants with camelias, lilies, etc.; also a quantity of miscellaneous effects."

Of the children, they all followed quite different paths ....**Annie** married **Alfred Light**, a Bandmaster of the 21st Hussars. They moved around (as military families often do), and ended their time in Ontario, Canada. **Edward Charles** {3} became an artist and by 1894 was running the Strawberry Hill Art School with **George Tabor**. This was located in Bromley Villa, which is next door to the former family home of Longleat Villa (both properties in what is



**Edward Charles Boscher {3} (1867-1935)**  
– Self Portrait

now Popes Avenue, Twickenham). Having married **Bertha Smith** in 1898, and with a young baby, by 1901 he had transferred his artistic skills to become a draughtsman with the Railway, based in Watford. Presumably this gave a more reliable income?

Daughter **Constance** lived at Bellevue until 1904 (when the Boscher family left Twickenham). She married **Anthony Parker**, a clerk, who was also living at Bellevue House in 1901 (possibly working for the Greenhouse business?). They moved to Worthing and lived together with her father (Edward Charles {2}) and mother Annie.

Once the bankruptcy occurred in 1904, **Harold Percy** took a very different course. Whether it was to escape the bankruptcy with a fresh start, or some other reason, he next popped up in Natal, South Africa as a member of the Natal Rangers, who were involved in suppressing the Bambatha Uprising: a Zulu revolt against British rule and taxation in Natal, South Africa, in 1906. He sent a letter to his mother in Worthing in 1906 (9 June), and the envelope still exists (it appeared in a Spink Auction in 2007), headed "From No 191 H.P. Boscher, B Coy, Natal Rangers, Field Force Natal ... On Active Service". What

his fate was beyond this date is not known, although he was awarded the Natal Medal for the campaign and does not show up in records of wounded.

And what about the fate of Bellevue House after 1904? In 1911 the occupants were a **Harold Evelyn Holding** with his sister and half-sister. He was a solicitor, who had run the 800m (half mile?) in the 1908 Olympics.

By 1918 the occupants are a **Thomas Arthur Ball Harris** (a doctor) and his wife **Amy Louise**. They remained there until at least 1924. Between 1924 and 1927 it appears that Bellevue was split into apartments and renamed Melbury House (which is the name of the “modern” flats there now) – it is referred to as 108 Staines Road (between 106 and 128).

In 1938 there are no entries for 108 (or 128) Staines Road in the electoral register. Also, there are no entries for 108 Staines Road in the 1939 Register. (Odd aside – the occupant of 128 was a **George Ritchie** who was a “Buyer collector of animal fats bones and offal for making glue” .... Let’s hope he didn’t bring his work home !!!). In 1955 no mention of 108 Staines Road or Melbury House in Belmont Road, but by 1959 Melbury House (the new flats – nos. 1-12) now show in Belmont Road ... so they must have been built between 1955 and 1959.

*What Bellevue House looked like is a puzzle. We have been unable to find any photographs of it – although it sounds to have been quite impressive. If anyone has any more details, or ideally a picture, then please do get in touch ([jeffallen.sue@btinternet.com](mailto:jeffallen.sue@btinternet.com)).*

**1894 Map showing Bellevue House (Copyright Ordnance Survey)**



And my link to this story? .... My partner, **Susan**, is a Boscher. She is the Great Grand Daughter of Edward Charles Boscher {3} (1867-1935).

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## Extract from the WMFHS Poor Law Records Roland Bostock

*I am continuing to transcribe the available West Middlesex Poor Law records, which is a rather lengthy business as each Settlement Examination tends to have its own very human story. Here is a detailed one from Fulham in 1790.*

**16 February 1790. ANN BRAND and her two children.**

She was born in Spitalfields, London and is 39 years old. She never married or gained any settlement. When she was 4 her father **William Brand** went to live in Putney, Surrey as a journeyman bricklayer for 4 or 5 years when his wife **Mary**, this examinant's mother, died there. Her father put her out to board with a **Mrs Wood** of Putney at 3/6 per week which he paid for a short time, and then he left Putney in a clandestine manner leaving her with Mrs WOOD. About 2 or 3 months after her father left her, **Mrs Layton** at the *Half Moon*, Putney found out where he was and applied to him and proposed taking this examinant to live with her there to which her father agreed. She never knew what terms or agreement was made. Mrs LAYTON took her to her own house where she continued for 2 years and was employed in nursing the children, working at her needle and such household tasks as she was capable of doing for 2 years. Hearing that her father was back in business in partnership with **Mr Hitchcock**, a bricklayer of Water Lane, Blackfriars, London, she wished to go to him so Mrs LAYTON took and delivered her to her father. Her father and Mr HITCHCOCK were in partnership in a house in Water Lane at £25 pa for ¾ year, and becoming distressed both went away clandestinely, and her father died soon after in a lodging in a Court in the Strand. 14 years ago she took to live and co-habit with **John King** and they had 5 illegitimate children with 2 now living: **John** (11) and **Ann** (6), both born in Putney.

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## The West London Local History Conference 2020

Yvonne Masson

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*This year's conference, its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, with the theme **Celebrations and Commemorations**, planned for March 2020. Due to the Covid pandemic, it was rescheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> November and was held successfully via Zoom with over 50 attendees. Starting at 10am, a midmorning break was inserted so attendees could make themselves refreshments, and also a lunch break of three-quarters of an hour. Here follow summaries of two of the day's talks.*

**An Aristocratic Funeral – the mourning and burial of Sir John Maynard of Gunnersbury in 1690**, by James Wisdom, Chairman, Brentford & Chiswick Local History Society.

At Gunnersbury Museum James came across a notebook which listed the items used and expenses incurred for the funeral of **Sir John Maynard**, barrister and one-time Keeper of the Great Seal. He had owned and lived at Gunnersbury Manor where he built a large house and died there in 1690, his funeral being held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1690, seventeen days after his death, and organised by his fourth wife, **Margaret Vermuyden**. It would have been an obligation that Sir John should have an "Heraldic" funeral normally managed by the College of Arms, but Margaret apparently didn't go to them: workers from the estate and the Undertaker (one **Morris** of Cheapside, who alone was paid today's equivalent of £43,000) took over the whole process. The whole house was "hung dark", with black fabric draping rooms, pillars and banisters etc. to a cost of £70. The floor of the large State Room where the lying-in-state was to take place was covered in either rushes or matting to make for quiet movement and candles burned in sconces: cost £20. In the middle of the room the coffin, a double affair consisting of a lead coffin containing a "bed of sweets" – flowers and herbs – surrounded by a wooden case (the body would have been embalmed), the whole surrounded by a rail: "hearse" in former times meant a framework (probably made by a local blacksmith) surrounding the coffin during the lying-in-state, or a framework around the coffin in the church. The coffin was draped with a coat of arms, helmet and crest, sword, mantle, and gauntlets – all hired (£22), plus a wreath, and shield with family arms. 20 (paid) mourners to act as ushers were loaned appropriate clothes plus 52 (paid) mourners were to stand in shifts at the corners of the coffin for an hour at a time. Mourning rings alone

cost £177. There were more expenses for the funeral procession from Gunnersbury House, along Gunnersbury Lane to St Mary Ealing: cloaks for 8 mourners who rode before the bier, plus heralds and pages: children of Christ's Hospital were frequently hired to walk in funeral processions; dozens of "escutcheons" – painted shields – were carried in the procession bearing various coats of arms, all in this case painted by an artisan who was in dispute with the College of Arms for possibly "bogus" representations he had produced in the past. Plus expenses for flambeaux and tapers: perhaps this funeral was held in the evening? Tickets would have been produced for the church ceremony. The church was also decorated, which may have helped disguise the fact that St Mary Ealing was at the time in a very bad state of repair. Guests would have been invited back to the house for wine and biscuits. The total cost of the funeral was £1380, some £166,000 in today's money (one Scottish funeral had bankrupted the family). Margaret later married again, to the Fifth **Earl of Suffolk**. Sir John's will was so complex it took 50 years and an Act of Parliament to settle it.

**Come to the White City: the exhibitions at Shepherd's Bush 1908-1914**, by Keith Whitehouse, Chairman, Fulham and Hammersmith Historical Society.

The first exhibition on the site – the Franco-British Exhibition - grew out of the Entente Cordiale between Britain and France, and was to show colonies, industries and trade of the two nations - basically a trade exhibition with public amusements. A large international committee was formed and money borrowed to stage the exhibition, which made a profit. They chose a Hungarian immigrant, **Kiralfy**, to organise the show; he amassed an £8m fortune from shows he organised. When he died he was buried at **Kensal Green** cemetery; his wife later had him moved to Brooklyn, New York to be re-interred with family members. At Shepherd's Bush 200 acres of farmland and old brickfields were acquired. Good local transport links were an important factor. To serve the site the Central Line was extended to Wood Lane Station. People mainly came by train: they could buy an all-inclusive ticket including admission to the Exhibition, which ran for 5 months. The origin of the White City name was not actually because of this exhibition's buildings, but borrowed from an 1893 exhibition at Chicago which had white buildings lit by electricity and became known as the White City. When work began in January 1907 it was very cold: the silver spade used to break the initial sod bent when dug into the ground (when it later went on sale at auction the telltale repair showed it to be genuine). Thousands of labourers

gained employment at the site, building pavilions, lakes, grassy areas, walkways. When the exhibition opened, Lyons were the caterers (alcohol was at first banned, but later allowed). Pavilions showed industries of different countries in the British Empire: one Canadian exhibit was carved in butter; the Daily Mail newspaper had a pavilion where copies were printed which the public could buy. Postcards, popular in the Edwardian period, were produced of the Exhibition, over 800 designs – there was an Exhibition Post Office where you could post your postcards bearing a special postmark; “double” postcards, folded over, incurred a surcharge. There was an Irish Village called Ballymaclinton, sponsored by McClinton’s soap, where “colleens” demonstrated Irish crafts. Special Exhibition medals (made in Birmingham) were issued. There were also plenty of souvenirs to buy such as china ornaments, silver spoons with the French and British flags, and a “vesta”, a small metal box to carry vesta matches, which could be hung handily on a watch chain. One big attraction was the Flip-Flap (see our cover picture), a scissors-like ride, the two halves of which rose vertically then crossed before descending again.

The Exhibition attracted 8 million visitors: it was a roaring success. In 1908 the Olympic Games were staged at the site for which a stadium was built. Britain won 56 gold medals. The present marathon distance of 26 miles, 385 yards was established when the starting line was placed at Windsor Castle for the convenience of the Royal Family; the original winner of the race was disqualified because he was helped up when he fell. The stadium was taken over by the Greyhound Racing Association in 1927; they moved to Wimbledon in the 1980s. Other exhibitions followed on the White City site: in 1909 the Imperial International Exhibition, similar to the Franco-British Exhibition but with other countries invited to take part; in 1910 the Japan Exhibition: little was then known about Japan. These attracted fewer people: by then the buildings on the site were deteriorating. It continued to be used for exhibitions till 1937, although in WWI some of the buildings were used for the manufacture of aeroplanes. Part of the site became the BBC TV Centre and media village and even later surviving buildings on the site were cleared away for the Westfield shopping centre. A small Japanese pavilion was moved to Kew Gardens.

During this strange summer when we all had to learn new behaviours, three of us - **Margaret Cunnew**, **John Seaman** and **Muriel Sprott** met up for our permitted outdoor exercise in **Twickenham Cemetery**.

This is an interesting place to visit, open-air of course and uncrowded, so it ticked all our boxes. One of Margaret's grand-daughters had identified the graves of several Belgians in this cemetery. Naturally we had to go and have a look. Two of the graves were fairly normal civilian graves with inscriptions in French which we could translate easily. More interesting were the graves of



two Belgian soldiers with their national flag at the top of each headstone. The inscriptions on these were in Dutch, but we were able to work out that both of them had 'Died for Belgium', one in December 1917 and the other in November 1918. Thanks to the Ashworth family we learned that Pieter de Witte was in the Transport Corps.

Why were these people buried in

**Pieter de Witte** grave Twickenham? John searched the online

newspapers but found nothing of relevance.

Muriel mentioned it to one of her cousins who is a very keen amateur genealogist.

Janet quickly found the link:

<https://stmargarets.london/archives/2017/04/belgian-wwi-memorial-commemorated.html>



**John and Margaret at the obelisk**

This website told us that the Pelabon Munitions Works employed Belgian refugees and disabled servicemen at the works in East Twickenham. Being curious, the three of us enjoyed an afternoon of outdoor exercise on the banks of the Thames near Richmond Bridge.

We found the monument - quite a plain obelisk but decorated with the words 'Memories flow through me like a boat flows down the river' in Dutch, English and French. There was also a descriptive board with an illustrated history of the Pelabon Works and some photographs of workers. It appears that there were so many

Belgians living in the area it was known as The Belgian Village on the Thames.

In the same paved area was a descriptive board giving the history of Richmond Ice Rink which had been built on the site of one of the Pelabon works. We were interested to read that the Rink was sold with permission to redevelop the site provided that a new Rink was built. That was in 1998 – and we're still waiting for the new Rink...

**Postscript:** My local councillor told me that the requirement to build a replacement ice rink was time-limited and that time has now expired, so now we shall never have a new ice rink.

[www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org) - Commonwealth War Graves Commission website includes these Belgians on its listing for Twickenham Cemetery.



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## The Eileen Stage Coastguard Index     Sarah Minney

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As a returning member of the West Middlesex Family History Society, I was delighted to receive a copy of the December 2020 issue of the Journal. I was interested to read the summaries of the Monthly Talks that had taken place over the last few months via Zoom.

However, I was disappointed to note that the summary of the September talk “What Did They Do?” by Mia Bennett mentioned but did not give the origins of the Coastguard Index held by the Society of Genealogists.

As I was not a member at that time and therefore did not “zoom in” on this talk, I cannot be sure that the history of this Index was not in fact covered. Therefore, just in case, for the record I will detail it here.

The Index was created as an almost lifetime’s work by a lady called Eileen Stage. Eileen lived in Twickenham and at least once a week she and her team of volunteers visited the National Archives and combed the records of the Coastguard Service extracting names and details of hundreds of men.

This information was put onto slips of paper, sized around 4” x 3”. Any more information found on the man was put on the same slip. It should be pointed out that this work was done in the days before we all had computers at home and records had yet be digitised – no spreadsheets or computerised databases, all done by hand. When the Index was large enough, Eileen advertised its existence in the journal of her local family history society, the West Middlesex Family History Society, of which she was also a stalwart committee member. She charged a small fee to search the index, this fee then being used to cover some of her costs. If she was able to find information on the man sought, she would then make a note on the same slip of the enquirer’s name and address so that should anyone else enquire about the same man, she could pass their details on, thereby possibly putting distant family members in touch with each other.

When Eileen became unwell and finally passed away, her husband contacted two close colleagues to arrange for a suitable home to be found for the Index, which had taken over Eileen’s front room. An approach was made to the National Archives to see if they would accept it, which they did, and

accordingly it was transported from Twickenham to Kew and stored in a basement room at the Archives. Sadly, that is where it sat for around two years gathering dust whilst someone decided what to do with it. Eileen's colleagues were not happy and after this time asked the National Archives what, if anything, was going to happen to all the excellent work and information. After a while they received a reply advising that the Archives felt that the Index did not relate only to information from the Coastguard records but also had Census Return entries plus enquirers' details, and therefore did not really fit their criteria. They also stated that the time, money and volunteers needed for the digitisation that was required were simply not available at that time; there were many other projects that needed attention first.

Following discussions with other Archives users, it was suggested that perhaps a more suitable home could be found, and to this end the Society of Genealogists was approached. They were delighted to accept the Index and within 24 hours of permission being granted, it was all collected from Kew and transported to SoG's home, Charterhouse Buildings in the City of London.

Once there, volunteers were found and a digitisation project began. It was a big task to sort all the slips out and I think a very worthwhile one. Access is now available to members of the Society of Genealogists to a very good source of information on what our Coastguard ancestors did as well as some genealogical information. Many of the Coastguards had also seen Royal Navy service and this can give a link to an ancestor's earlier career at sea.

So, Eileen, on whatever cloud you are now sitting, we thank you and your team of volunteers for all the wonderful work you did in creating this very useful source of information.

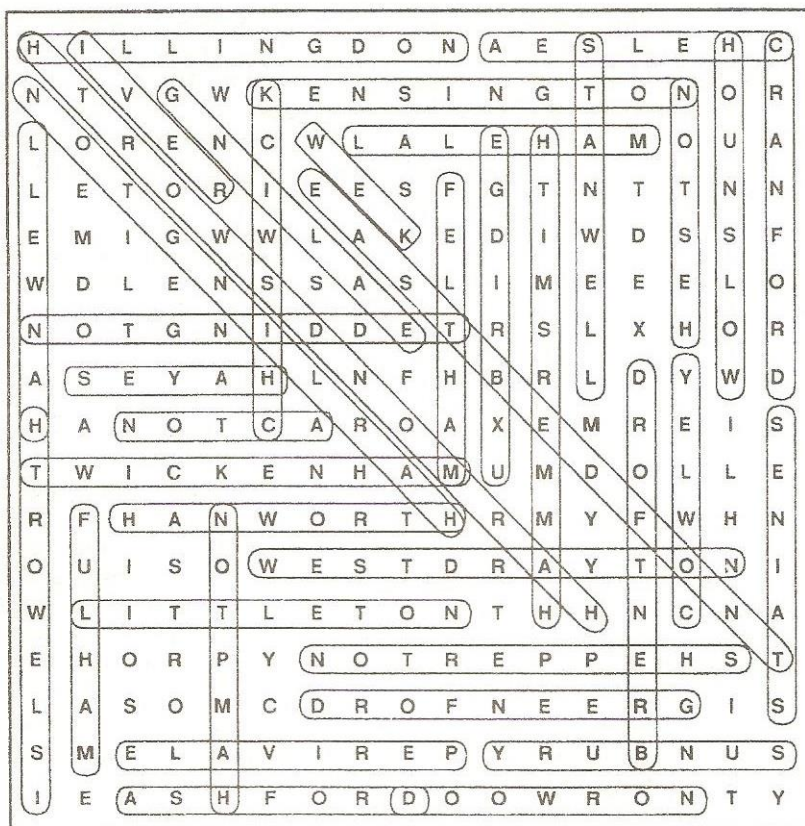
Useful web sites:

[Society of Genealogists, Genealogy, Family Trees and Family History - Society of Genealogists \(sog.org.uk\)](http://societyofgenealogists.org.uk)

[Discoveries in the Coastguards' Index on SoG Data Online - Mia Genealogy \(miagenealogy.com\)](http://miagenealogy.com)

## Wordsearch Solution

The solution to the Wordsearch puzzle that appeared on page 16 of the December 2020 issue is given below. The two out-of-county parishes included were Kew and Iwer, and the 33 unused letters spell out, in order (left to right, top to bottom) WEST MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY



I last wrote about website updates in the December journal, since when there have been a few additions beyond simply adding to our various databases and the recording of past events, as in the News Log page:

<http://www.west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk/content/newslog.aspx>

As Secretary of the Society I am sent information that I know is relevant to our members. When meeting at St. John's Centre we would post these news items on our notice board there, which of course is not happening at present. Hence the recently introduced website page, called simply Notice Board:

<http://www.west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk/content/noticeboard.aspx> where I place these items. Members are invited to send me information to be posted there. The information needs to be kept short, and works best if it has a natural expiry date, and a link to where more information can be found.

In November committee member Brian Page drew my attention to a newly created Etymology map of Middlesex; it shows the derivations for many of our parish names. Our maps page: <http://www.west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk/content/parishmap.aspx> already has three alternate maps of our area, so this has been added as a fourth map option.

If, like Brian, you have any suggestions for yet more information that you think our website should/can provide do please send them to me:

[webmaster@west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk)

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## Family History Fairs

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The Family History Federation will be running another Really Useful Family History Show online on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021, 10am to 4pm with virtual stalls run by various family history societies and organisations, to whom questions can be put or items purchased by attendees. Tickets are £10, available from their website. West Middlesex Family History Society will be an exhibitor at the fair. <https://www.fhf-reallyuseful.com>

RootsTech London, a large family history fair hosted by Family Search International will be held in Autumn 2021. You can sign up on their website to receive announcements of their plans. Sessions and talks from previous RootsTech events can be accessed via their website: <https://www.rootstech.org/?lang=eng>

I have been researching my family history on both my mother's and my father's side for some 40 years and am still, on my father's side, stuck at my great great grandparents. Having my DNA tested in late 2019, although introducing me to a host of distant and not-so-distant cousins, has not helped me with that particular brick wall. My Scottish husband, on the other hand, had his DNA tested only a few months ago and with the help of DNA matches, other researchers' family trees, and following through established lineages, has gone racing back on both sides to his umpteenth great grandparents.



The latest revelation is that there is a strong possibility he is descended on his mother's side from Susannah, born 1667, daughter of the Duke of Hamilton and Anna of Herzog; her parents both claimed descendency from none other than one of the most famous Scots of all, Robert the Bruce, who therefore would be my husband's 21st great grandfather. I hope it turns out, after some more delving, to be true. Not bad for a few months dabbling in family history. Perhaps as family historians we should all take a leaf out of Robert's book when he was hiding in the cave and watching the spider's continual efforts to climb a thread and spin its web, which inspired him to go out and conquer. If at first you don't succeed....

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## Contributions and Advertisements

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

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

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

Email: [editor@west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@west-middlesex-fhs.org.uk)

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

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

Copy submission dates:

15<sup>th</sup> January, 15<sup>th</sup> April, 15<sup>th</sup> July and 15<sup>th</sup> October.

### Advertisements

*NB: We only accept advertisements relating to family history.*

Rates:

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

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

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

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## New Members and Surname Interests

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***A warm welcome to new and rejoining members! We give below the names of our newest members and the latest additions to our Surname Interests.***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Membership Number</b>	<b>Address/Location</b>
Ms Judith Ayala	A122	Sevenoaks, Kent
Mr John Chapman	C284	Goring-by-Sea, W.Sussex
Ms Michelle Drinkwater	D177	Chalfont St Giles, Bucks
Ms Lynn Hutchings	H293	Chessington, Surrey
Mrs Doreen Jones	J89	Devizes, Wilts
Mrs Sarah Minney	M212	Twickenham, Middx
Mrs Jade Nunn	N57	Staines, Middx
Mr Barry Purdon	P167	Staines, Middx
Mrs Chris Wooster	W215	Ashford, Middx

This has been a bumper quarter for surname interests, so we have had to put them on the next page. Just looking at the variety of places of origin proves that our ancestors did not just stay in one place all the time!



<b>Surname</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>County</b> (Chapman Code)	<b>Member's No.</b>
Allchurch	19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> C	Hampstead	MDX	M212
Barfoot	19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> C	Deptford area	LDN	D176
Barfoot	19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> C	Pimlico area	MDX	D176
Barfoot	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> C	Plumstead area	KEN	D176
Baylis	17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> C	Evesham	WOR	M212
Bradley	19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> C	Hampton area	MDX	D176
Bradley	19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> C	Putney area	SRY	D176
Drinkwater	19 <sup>th</sup> C	Hayes	MDX	D177
Gould	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> C	Kingswinford area	STS	D176
Gould	19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> C	Twickenham area	MDX	D176
Parsons	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> C	Wheathill area	SAL	D176
Parsons	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> C	Tugford area	SAL	D176
Pinneberg	20 <sup>th</sup> C	Kingston	SRY	M212
Poole	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> C	Turville Heath area	BKM	D176
Poole	19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> C	Pimlico area	MDX	D176
Purdon	Any	Any	Any	P167
Rogers	20 <sup>th</sup> C	Camberwell	SRY	M212
Rogers	20 <sup>th</sup> C	Wembley	MDX	M212
Ruff	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> C	Sunbury area	MDX	D176
Ruff	19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> C	Twickenham area	MDX	D176
Ruff	19 <sup>th</sup> C	Slough area	BKM	D176
Ruff	19 <sup>th</sup> C	Maidenhead area	BRK	D176
Swapp	20 <sup>th</sup> C	Montrose	SCT	M212
Timberlake	19 <sup>th</sup> C	Hayes	MDX	D177
Tiptod	17 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> C	All areas	SFK	M212
Warren	Before 1980	Teddington area	MDX	P167

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## Indexes held by members

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These indexes are intended as aids to research in the West Middlesex area. For Society members look-ups are free (please quote membership number), unless otherwise stated. For non-members there is a fee of £5. Please note that all enquirers must supply a SAE if a reply is required by post. If an email address is given, holders of the Index are happy to receive enquiries by email. Unless stated otherwise, cheques should be made payable to the holder of the index, not the WMFHS.

### WEST MIDDLESEX FHS INDEXES

*Roland Bostock, [bostocr@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:bostocr@blueyonder.co.uk)*

**West Middlesex Monumental Inscriptions.** Acton, Ashford, Cranford, Chiswick, Ealing, Feltham, Fulham (recorded 100 years ago), Hampton, Harlington, Hayes, Heston, Hillingdon, Hounslow (United Reformed), Norwood Green, Perivale, Staines, Teddington, Twickenham and Uxbridge.

**West Middlesex Settlement Records.** Chelsea, Ealing, Friern Barnet, Fulham, Hammersmith, New Brentford, Shepperton, Staines, Stanwell, Uxbridge.

*Mrs. Wendy Mott, 24 Addison Avenue, Hounslow, TW3 4AP. [wendymott@btinternet.com](mailto:wendymott@btinternet.com)*

**West Middlesex Strays.** People born in our area, found in another area.

### PARISH RECORDS

*Mrs. Margaret Cunnew, 25 Selkirk Road, Twickenham, TW2 6PS*

**Chiswick Parish Registers, St. Nicholas.** Baptisms marriages burials 1813-1901.

**Chiswick, 1801 Census**

**Ealing Parish Registers, St. Mary.** Baptisms 1779-1868, marriages 1797-1857, burials 1813-1868.

**Hanwell Parish Registers, St. Mary.** Baptisms marriages burials, 1813-1855.

**New Brentford Parish Registers, St. Lawrence.** Baptisms marriages burials 1802-1837.

**Old Brentford Parish Registers, St. George.** Baptisms 1828-1881, marriages 1837-1881, burials 1828-1852.

**G.R.O. Certificates.** A number of original GRO birth, marriage and death certificates have been kindly donated to the Society by members and are available for purchase at a cost of £1 per certificate. Please check on Society website for current list. Cheques should be made payable to West Middlesex FHS and please include an sae.

*Mrs. Wendy Mott, 24 Addison Avenue, Hounslow, TW3 4AP. [wendymott@btinternet.com](mailto:wendymott@btinternet.com)*

**Harmondsworth Parish Registers.** Baptisms marriages burials 1670-1837.

*Mrs. M. Sibley, 13 Blossom Way, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 9HF.*

[mavikensib@aol.com](mailto:mavikensib@aol.com) For more than 3 names, please write for an estimate of charge.

**Hillingdon Parish Registers.** Baptisms 1559-1909, marriages 1559-1910, burials 1559-1948 (churchyard) and 1867-1903 (cemetery).

**Isleworth Parish Registers, All Saints.** Baptisms 1566-1919, marriages 1566-1927, burials 1566-1942.

**Isleworth Register of Baptisms: Brentford Union Workhouse, Mission Church, Wesleyan Methodist Church,** extracts from Register of Baptisms.

*Ms. Carol Sweetland, 36 Diamedes Avenue, Stanwell, Staines, TW19 7JB.*

[carol.sweetland@btinternet.com](mailto:carol.sweetland@btinternet.com)

**Stanwell Parish Registers.** Baptisms 1632-1906, marriages 1632-1926, Burials 1632-1906. Also available on FreeREG. Name database 1632-1906.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS INDEXES**

*Mr. A. Rice, 46 Park Way, Feltham, TW14 9DJ.*

[secretary@feltham-history.org.uk](mailto:secretary@feltham-history.org.uk)

**Feltham Index.** An expanding collection of transcripts and indexes relating to the parish of Feltham. Donations welcome, payable to Feltham History Group.

*Mr. Paul Barnfield, 258 Hanworth Road, Hounslow, TW3 3TY*

[paulbarnfield@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:paulbarnfield@hotmail.co.uk)

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

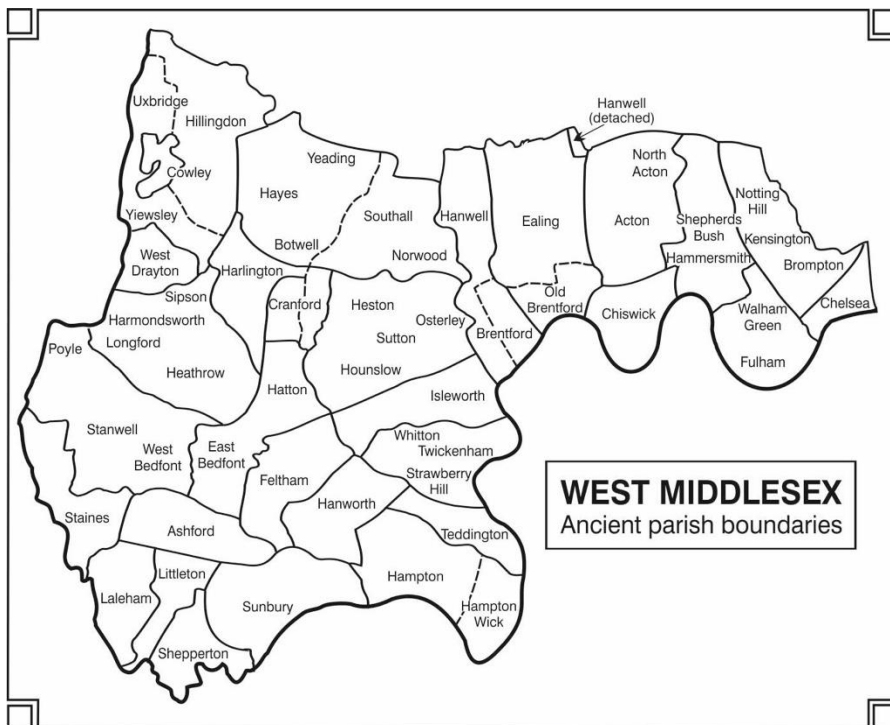
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## **Front Cover**

“In the Elite Gardens, showing the Flip Flap attraction, Franco-British Exhibition, White City, 1908”

Reproduced from an original postcard published by Valentine & Sons Ltd.,  
Dundee, London and New York

Photographer: Unknown



## West Middlesex Family History Society

### Area of Interest

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

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