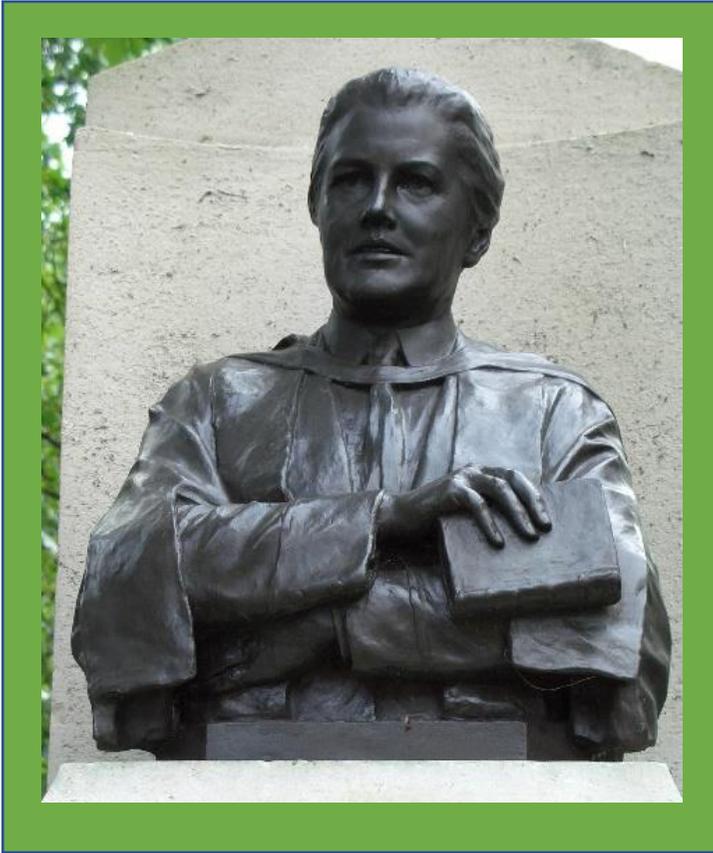


# Roots in the Forest



**Dame Louisa Brandreth Aldrich-Blake DBE**

**WALTHAM FOREST FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

**March 2020  
ISSN 0143-215X**

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# Roots in the Forest

## The Journal of the Waltham Forest Family History Society

March 2020

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# LEYTON HOUSE AND ITS FAMILIES

Mark Carroll and Tim Valder-Hogg

## Introduction

In our family history research, we tend to focus on the people and their relationships. Yet equally important are their homes and their place in the local community. What were their living conditions like, where did they worship and work and go to school and socialise? Basically, what was life like for our ancestors?

At the Open Day which Waltham Forest FHS organised at Vestry House Museum in October 2019 we chose as a theme “Families in their community”. To illustrate this theme, we presented two visual displays that showcased two significant homes in the Waltham Forest area and the families who occupied them over the centuries. One of them was Leyton House in Church Road, Leyton (see Figures 1 and 2). Before the Victorian railway came to Leyton, the area was rural – an ideal retreat for rich families whose fathers worked in the City of London. Here we trace the history of Leyton House and some of its resident families from the 1500s to its demise in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.



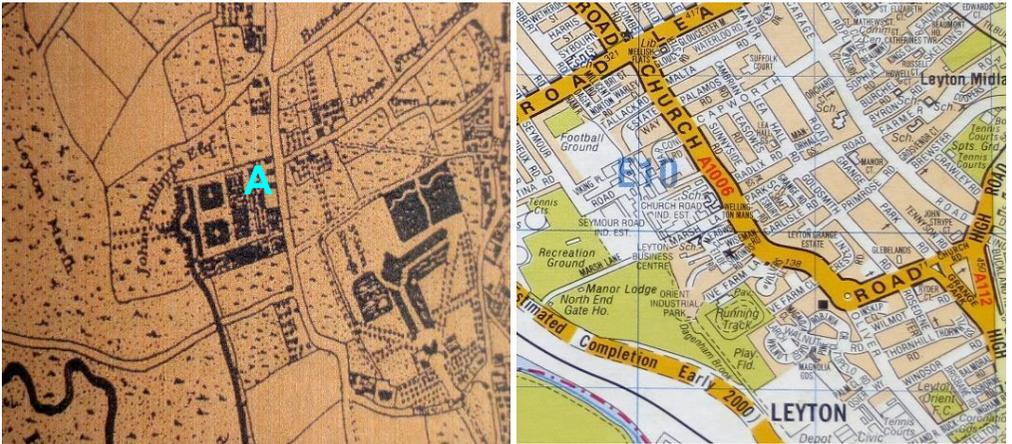
*Figure 1. Leyton House in 1897*

## The Lodge family

Thomas LODGE (1558-1625) was born in West Ham and lived in the first Leyton House from 1595 to 1625. His father, Sir Thomas Lodge, was Lord

Mayor of London (1562-63). Educated at Oxford University, Thomas junior embarked on legal training but did not qualify – his interest leant more towards literature. He undertook some exciting sea voyages abroad before settling down to write plays and novels, one of which provided the inspiration for Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*. Later in life he studied medicine in France and at Oxford University.

Thomas married first in 1583 against the wishes of his father, who disinherited him. Around 1600 he also became a convert to Catholicism. He left England for France in 1606 but returned to London to practise medicine and died there in 1625.



(a)

(b)

**Figure 2. Area associated with Leyton House in (a) 1741 and (b) 2019**

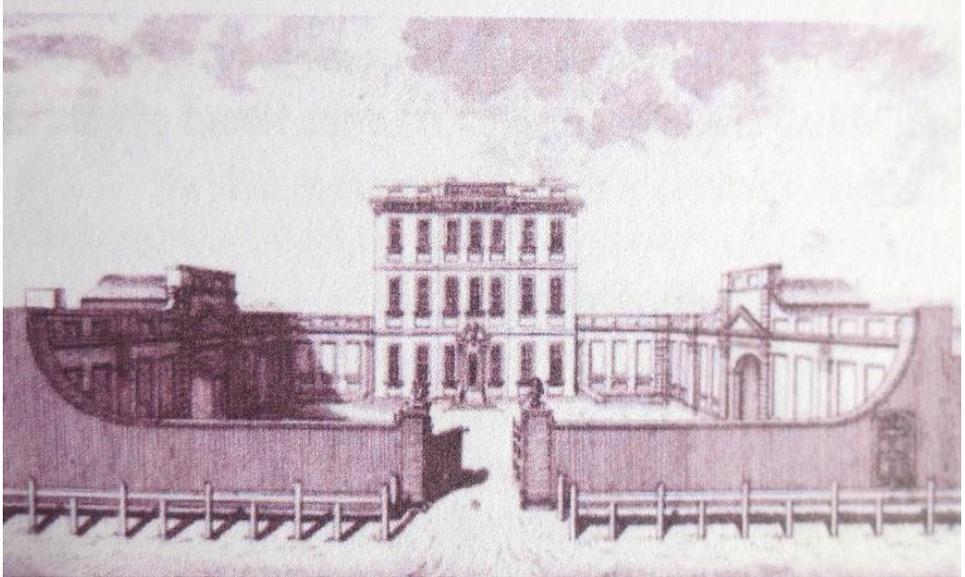
*A 1741 map (Fig 2a) shows Leyton House [at A] at the west end of Capworth Street, with Leyton Marshes to the west of the house. A modern map is provided for comparison (Fig 2b).*

## The Huguenot families

In the 1650s Leyton House came into the possession of two Huguenot brothers, Charles and Pierre MARESCOE. They were wealthy weavers and merchants who had fled France to escape religious persecution of

Protestants there. Charles's wife, Leonora, took over the running of their company after the death of her husband in 1670.

Their daughter Anne married another Huguenot, David GANSEL. They moved to Leyton House in 1695 and rebuilt it considerably (Figure 3). David was active in local society: as churchwarden, constable and Overseer of the Poor. On his death in 1710 Leyton House passed to his son, David junior.



*Figure 3. Leyton House around 1700*

### **The Cotton family**

After the Gansels, Leyton House passed through the hands of several owners: John PHILLIPS (from 1720 to 1755), Captain John MORE (1758-64), and John STORY and his widow (1765-85). Joseph COTTON (Figure 4a) and his family lived there from 1790 to 1803. He was a director of the East India Company, a Fellow of the Royal Society and a wealthy merchant. The family moved in 1803 to Walnut Tree House in Leytonstone before his death in 1825.

Joseph's son William was born in Leytonstone in 1786 and educated at Chigwell School. He was an inventor, a successful businessman and a philanthropist (Figure 4b). He was High Sheriff of Essex (1838) and Governor of the Bank of England (1842-45). He had many new churches built in the East End of London before his death in 1866.



Figure 4a. Joseph Cotton FRS



Figure 4b. William Cotton FRS

### The Solly family

Isaac SOLLY and his family bought Leyton House in 1803. As a significant merchant in the City and in the London Docks (Figure 5), he supplied hemp and timber to His Majesty's dockyards. He was made bankrupt in 1837 and left Leyton House in 1838.

The Solly family were regular attenders at the non-conformist Marsh Street Meeting House, in what is now High Street, Walthamstow. His children were baptised there, including his son Henry (Figure 6) (ref 1).

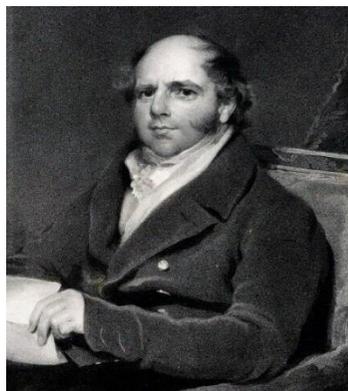


Figure 5. Isaac Solly

Henry son of Mr Isaac Solly & Mary his  
wife was baptiz'd by me Jan<sup>y</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> 1814  
E. Logan

Figure 6. 1814 entry in the register for the baptism of Henry Solly

Isaac’s daughter Charlotte (1803-71) was a feminist, scholar and writer. She became the first Mistress of Girton College, Cambridge University, in 1869. Isaac’s son Henry (1813-1903) was a noted social reformer. He supported many radical causes, such as anti-slavery, universal suffrage and free education. In the 1860s he took a leading part in establishing a nationwide network of working men’s clubs.

**The Sidney family**

Thomas Sidney (1805-89) acquired Leyton House in 1839; he was a politician and tea merchant (Figure 7). He progressed from City Councillor to Alderman and finally to Lord Mayor of London, 1853-54. He and his wife Sarah had seven servants in 1841 and four in 1851, as can be seen from the census entry for Leyton House that year (Figure 8). Sarah died in 1857 and has a memorial plaque in St Mary’s Church, Leyton.



*Figure 7. Thomas Sidney*

Thomas’s daughter Ellen married Rev Edward G MOON in 1851; he was with the Sidney family at the time of the census (Figure 8). Edward’s father was also Lord Mayor of London, directly succeeding Thomas Sidney.

<i>Occupant</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Born</i>
Thomas Sidney	Head	46	Alderman & Tea Merchant	Staffs
Sarah Sidney	Wife	42		Norton
Ellen Sidney	Daughter	19		Leeds
Edward Moon	Minister	26	Clergyman	London
Sarah Heath	Servant	29	Cook	Kirtenton
Emma Russell	Servant	26	Housemaid	Woolwich
Eliza Serain	Servant	23	Housemaid	Bognor
Wm Robertson	Servant	22	Footman	Scotland

*Figure 8. 1851 census entry for Leyton House*

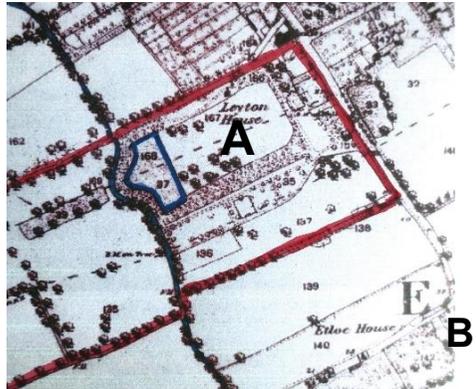
## The Morris family

William MORRIS (1834-96) is perhaps the most famous of Walthamstow's sons (Figure 9). His family lived in Leyton House from 1856 to 1871. William was born in Elm House, Walthamstow, to William senior and Emma née SHELTON; his father was a financier in the City. In 1840 the family moved to Woodford Hall, adjacent to Epping Forest. In 1847 his father died unexpectedly, and the family moved to Water House in Walthamstow. His widowed mother Emma relied financially on the income from the family's copper mines in Devon.

Emma moved to Leyton House in 1856, where William used to visit her. In 1861 the family had six servants and in 1871, eight. On the 1861 map (Figure 10) the house is outlined in blue and the extent of its grounds in red. Etloe House lies just to the south-east of it.



*Figure 9. William Morris*



*Figure 10. 1861 map of Leyton  
A = Leyton House; B = Etloe House*

## St Agnes's Orphanage

The Roman Catholic Cardinal Nicholas WISEMAN (Figure 11) lived in Etloe House from 1858 to 1864; a blue plaque on the house commemorates his residency at that time. There being no Roman Catholic church in Leyton until 1897, services were held in the house's chapel. After he moved out, St Agnes's Orphanage was established there.



*Figure 11. Cardinal Wiseman*

In 1871 only William Morris's mother Emma and his sister Henrietta remained in Leyton House. When they left that year to live in Much Hadham, Hertfordshire, the orphanage was re-established in their former home, which was renamed Park House.

The *Morning Advertiser* of Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 1872 (ref 2) contained an article on the Roman Catholic pauper schools used by the St George's Hanover Square Poor Law Union. A Mr Hodgson PRATT and a Colonel NEWDEGATE reported on their visit that year to St Agnes's Orphanage, which at the time had 97 boys under 7 years of age. Their comments were not entirely positive: *[The boys] are managed by four sisters of the Order of St Vincent de Paul, assisted by a dozen servants. It is a fine old manor house, with very extensive and well-wooded grounds, with lake and gardens. The absence of certificated teachers the sisters accounted for by saying that the rules of their order did not admit of their employment. Messrs Pratt and Newdegate hesitate to give a decided opinion of the adequacy of the arrangements for the due training, instruction, and health of the children, whom they found dirty and unkempt, and many of them afflicted with ophthalmia, no care being taken to isolate the sufferers from those who were free from the disease (an eye infection associated with conjunctivitis).*

In late 1879 newspapers carried a story of a Mary Ann WALKER, who had died shortly after leaving the orphanage, having been there for four years. Her grandmother alleged that she had been neglected while there; that she was dirty when she left, suffering consumption, insufficiently clothed, and not given enough food. After some deliberation the inquest jury returned a verdict of "Death from consumption, accelerated by insufficient clothing, improper food, and want of timely medical assistance". However, it turned out that Mary Ann Walker was at the orphanage as a servant. She was not a clean person, but the managers felt unable to force her to bathe if she did not want to. Other servants confirmed that there was sufficient food to eat, and at the time of her illness she had requested her father to thank the Mother Superior and the doctor for the kindness she had received at the home. Naturally the newspapers made more of the allegations than of corroborated facts.

Subsequent reported inspections of the home seem to have been more favourable. The Shoreditch Observer (ref 3) reported a visit by a committee for the Shoreditch Board of Guardians. "They had seen the

*children chargeable to Shoreditch at St. Agnes Schools Leyton, St. Mary's Walthamstow and Manor House, Chigwell. The Committee had pleasure in recording in the visitors' books of the several institutions their satisfaction at the provision made for the children, and the bright and happy appearance which all presented."*

In 1881 London-born 37-year-old Sister Mary BURNS of the Order of St Vincent de Paul was in charge of the orphanage. She was supported there by the Canadian-born chaplain, Wilfred QUAlFE, and by nine young nuns, three of whom were born in Ireland. Sister Burns was succeeded in 1888 by Sister Josephine MURPHY. She was also from Ireland, and twelve years later in 1901 she had 175 children at the orphanage. There was clearly no shortage of customers! Six of the eight nuns (including Sister Josephine) were from Ireland, as were all three resident teachers. Most of the orphans came from London, though some came from parts of south-west Essex now in London Boroughs, such as West Ham.

### **The end**

The London Electric Wire Company had been established on land south of the orphanage in 1899. When the orphanage moved to new premises in nearby Vicarage Road in 1900, the company acquired Leyton (or Park) House. After the house was demolished in 1912, for a while its gates remained as the sole reminder of what had lain beyond (Figure 12).



*Figure 12. Leyton House gates (c1930)*

The company merged with Thomas Smith's wire works in 1912, becoming the London Electric Wire Co & Smith's Ltd; in 1921 it employed over 1,300 workers. In 2007 David CHAPMAN of Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society wrote a booklet on the history of Leyton House (ref 4). When he went to visit the site that year, he found it occupied by a new housing estate, with only a decrepit brick wall opposite the end of Capworth Street as a reminder of the house's former glory. Yet in its day it had been the home of numerous illustrious families, who over four centuries were associated with international trade, banking, religious tolerance, social reform, and the Arts and Craft movement.

## Acknowledgements

Some of the text and the images in this article are taken from the book by David Chapman (ref 4) and the Wikipedia website (ref 5); the 1930 photograph of the Leyton House gates came from the Vestry House Museum collection, Walthamstow. We thank the National Portrait Gallery for permission to use the image of Thomas Sidney.

## References

1. The records of the Old Meeting House chapel in Marsh Street, Walthamstow, have been digitised by Waltham Forest FHS and are available on their website: [records.wffhs.org.uk](http://records.wffhs.org.uk)
2. Available URL: [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)
3. *Shoreditch Observer*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September 1898, p3 c4 [available online as in ref 2]
4. Chapman, D I (2007) *Leyton House and the Walthamstow Slip*; available online at: [www.leytonhistorysociety.org.uk/Leyton%20House%20for%20Parc%20hments%20v1a.pdf](http://www.leytonhistorysociety.org.uk/Leyton%20House%20for%20Parc%20hments%20v1a.pdf)
5. Available URL: [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)

# BOOK REVIEW AND PERSONAL COMMENTARY

Mark Carroll

27 November 2019

## FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH CHALLENGES AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

Ian Waller, 2019, Sheringham: Family History Partnership, £8.95 [ISBN: 978-1-906280-57-4]

### Overview

Ian Waller is an experienced and highly respected genealogist who has in the past given a talk to Waltham Forest FHS and has written several books on various aspects of family history (FH). This book mirrors the talk he gave to us, in which he claimed that everyone – even our most elusive ancestor – left a record of some sort. So in principle there should be no ‘brick walls’ in our genealogical research! In practice it is not so simple, as we know. In this book the author describes how a blockage can occur and how it can be overcome. It is full of sound advice, allied with a rigorous approach to record-keeping and a strategic approach to one’s research. It also acts as a concise summary of the many sources available to us – described in more detail in comprehensive texts such as *Ancestral Trails* by Mark Herber. The writing style is lucid and easy to follow, if spoiled in a few places by typos, repetition and grammatical errors. Yet throughout, the author maintains a positive outlook that is designed to make readers think carefully about their evidence and to reinterpret their conclusions regularly.

The book is divided into ten main chapters, followed by a ‘challenge case-book’ and a comprehensive index. The author begins by describing how ‘research challenges’ can arise – or ‘brick walls’ to you and me – and by maintaining that most can be overcome by diligent research. He outlines some common misconceptions, before taking a closer look at basic record interpretation and understanding. He then suggests some practical steps you can take to overcome or avoid inadequate research. Although the emphasis is on primary sources, one chapter is given over to secondary sources and supplementary records – those created at a later date. He writes at length, with examples, about the variations in names used in the past, and offers advice on reading old handwriting. He also proffers

suggestions of more modern approaches to overcoming challenges, such as the use of social media, online discussion groups and DNA testing. He emphasises the need for ‘genealogical proof standards’ if one is to have confidence in one’s family tree. Throughout the book there are helpful tips that summarise effective approaches. Finally, the ‘challenge case-book’ provides several practical examples of a blockage and how one might go about overcoming them – one assumes they would work in practice (he does not say)!

I liked this book. It would have been improved by having more images and further examples to illustrate key points. Yet the research tips scattered throughout the text help to augment the book’s main messages. As the author states at the end: re-examine everything; search all possible sources; look for additional name variations; and work collateral lines (eg siblings). Your ancestors definitely left records! And, as new or different records, indexes and sources become available, a current problem might be solved at some future point.

### **Key points and tips**

Let’s look in more detail at the author’s key points. He lists 13 ways in which research challenges can arise – in addition to adoption, bigamy and illegitimacy, of course:

1. inadequate research;
2. undertaking narrow-minded research;
3. researching the wrong individual or family;
4. running out of ideas for tracing a missing ancestor;
5. searching in all the wrong places;
6. changes of name;
7. looking for the person YOU ARE looking for [get it? I didn’t];
8. having different or conflicting ‘base’ information;
9. not using all available information;
10. difficulty reading or interpreting handwriting in documents;
11. not “power searching” [whatever that is];
12. not having sought help;
13. not being patient or persistent enough.

These problems translate into situations we have all faced in our FH research:

- (a) a missing ancestor, or one not in the census;

- (b) two people with the same names born at the same time in the same location;
- (c) cannot find a marriage, but the couple were definitely having children;
- (d) the relevant record is lost or destroyed;
- (e) 'missing' birth or death record.

Four of these possibilities certainly apply to my own family. In particular, I cannot trace the origins of my 2x great-grandfather Thomas William SMITH (1851-1932), because I cannot find his birth certificate, nor locate his entry in the censuses before 1881 (Figure 1). Having the very common names that he did does not help either! These days our researching has become easier with online sources, but beware of transcription errors, particularly a wrong initial letter in a surname. The example the author gives concerns his BURTON family, where the surname had once been mistranscribed as RIWTON – would *you* have found it? In my own case I have tried searching online in the pre-1881 censuses with AMITH in the surname search field, without success. I have also tried inputting Smith as the forename – some enumerators put the forename and surname in the wrong columns, apparently – but again, no joy. There were a surprising number of sons with the forename Smith, including one Smith SMITH!

Household:		1881 British Census Household Record					
Name	Relation	Sex	Age	Birthplace	Occupation	Notes	
<u>Thos. Willm. SMITH</u>	Head	M	Male	30	West End	Carman	
<u>Louise Dural SMITH</u>	Wife	M	Femal	29	Farringdon St, Middlesex, England		
<u>Thos. Willm. SMITH</u>	Son	U	Male	11	London, City Of Cripplegate, London, Middlesex, England	Scholar	

**Fig 1. 1881 census entry for Thomas William Smith, his wife and eldest son**

The father cannot be found in the earlier censuses. One problem is that he changed his birthplace in the censuses of 1891 and 1901, compared with the “West End” he stated here in 1881.

TIP 1 – Kill off every ancestor before researching further.

TIP 2 – Use family reconstruction methods to assemble information on each family member, and then look for patterns.

TIP 3 – Occasionally go back over your old data and review it in the light of what you know now. Look for new records that complement your earlier research.

TIP 4 – Make use of military service records, wills and newspapers.

TIP 5 – Consult the *original* parish registers, which may have information missing from modern transcriptions (eg the name of the reputed father of an illegitimate baby).

TIP 6 – Interview relations regularly – but do not interrogate them!

TIP 7 – Do not view historical events from a modern perspective. Try to put your family's life into its historical context.

TIP 8 – A 'missing' family might have moved for work or a better life. Try to establish traditional routes of travel, then consider emigration.

TIP 9 – Information on an 'official' document is only as good as that provided by the informant. Use multiple sources.

TIP 10 – Do not rely completely on someone else's research.

TIP 11 – If you cannot find a BMD entry in the GRO indexes, try the local registration office. Try *all* the commercial websites and not just FreeBMD; each transcribed index has its strengths and weaknesses.

TIP 12 – If a birth or marriage is missing from the indexes, widen your search to earlier/later years.

TIP 13 – Throughout the Victorian period around 1 in 20 couples never married formally or underwent a 'clandestine' marriage of dubious legality.

Certainly, many of the above situations have occurred in my own FH research. It was only the arrival of the 1911 census data that allowed me to confirm the supposed 1920 death certificate of my 2x great-grandfather, William ORRISS (Figure 2); he had moved away from his usual residence in Suffolk to live with his married eldest daughter in Essex [TIP 3]. His age at death is wrong, but the informant was the Master of the Workhouse, not a family member [TIP 9]. Interviewing my great-aunt Doll in her 90s revealed previously unknown intermarriages between my ORRISS and SMITH and MEARS families [TIP 6].

21	Seventh March 1920 Minster House Stanway R. F.	William Orriss	Male	89 years	Wormingford, R. F. Agricultural Labourer	1. Cancer of Face Certified by Philip Lawton M. R. C. S.	A. H. Gosling Occupier Minster House Stanway	Seventeenth March 1920	L. R. Allen Registrar.
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**Fig 2. Death certificate of William Orriss (1833-1920)**

His age is wrong on the certificate, and his usual place of residence was Hundon in Suffolk, not Wormingford in Essex. But do not be deterred by apparently incorrect information.

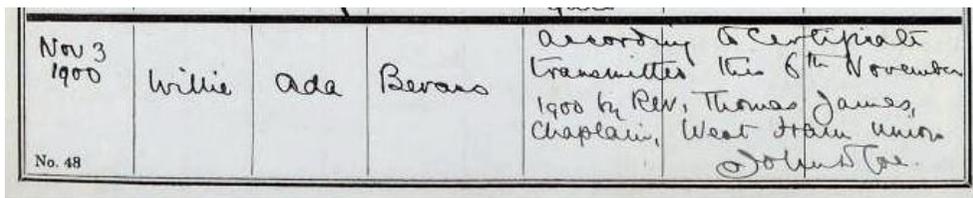
### **Anomalies in census and baptism records**

In this long section of the book the overriding advice is to be flexible in your online searching, using the mantra “less is more” when filling in search fields. The author also tells an amusing story of how the number of ‘deaf and dumb’ individuals increased sharply in the 1881 census, as many enumerators were writing that description against the entries for all the babies they came across! However the main anomalies in census returns are: enumeration error; refusal to complete a return; pages missed in filming; houses missed by the enumerator; change of street name or house number; people in institutions being recorded only by their initials; soldiers and sailors abroad; people who travelled.

TIP 14 – Always find your family in as many censuses as possible.

TIP 15 – Do not assume that all baptisms were performed as infants.

Birth in a workhouse may have resulted in a baptism there. In the case of WFFHS, baptisms in the chapel of West Ham Union Workhouse were recorded in the registers for nearby Holy Trinity Church, Leytonstone (Figure 3). Death records capture more of the population than do births/baptisms or marriages, but even then can be problematical (eg travelling or suicide away from one’s usual place of residence). Wills and death duty registers are useful adjuncts to death records; even some ag labs left a will!



**Fig 3. 1900 entry for a baptism in West Ham Union Workhouse (WHUW)**

The chaplain of WHUW sent a record of the baptism to the vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Leytonstone, so it could be recorded in that parish register. Note that no father's name is stated – in those days unmarried mothers would often give birth in the local workhouse.

### **Overcoming inadequate research**

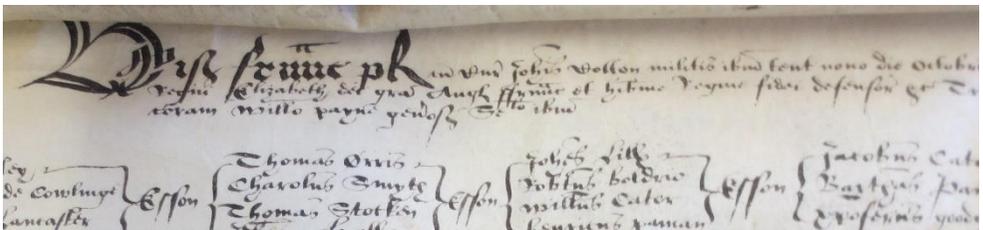
The author advises checking repeatedly and verifying each element of your work. A foolproof process involves: plan your research systematically; follow the paper trail through multiple records; stay focused on a single goal; use a 'working pedigree' to capture your research; record in detail your source information; and continually analyse your research outcomes.

TIP 16 – Having a visual family tree in front of you when researching reminds you of the information you still need to find.

Regardless of occupation or social status, most people generated around 100 different records during their lifetime. The author goes on to describe the many and varied sources of record, associated with education, illness, working life, published material (eg newspapers), the armed forces, the British abroad, public responsibilities (eg oaths of allegiance), poverty, land and property ownership, dealings with the law, and death. Some of these sources are under-used or neglected, eg ecclesiastical courts and manorial records. Of the latter two, I have found my maternal ancestor Thomas WORLIDGE in the records of the Court Leet for the manor of Lidgate in Suffolk. In 1613 he was elected the village's official taster of bread and beer for that year – one of the less onerous community tasks, presumably! However, although I know he married there in 1597, I have not been able to trace his origins in any records (so far).

## Names

Names lie at the heart of our FH research, and yet name variants abound: use of a second forename or nickname or pet name (eg Doll instead of Dorothy); variations in spelling, especially in the earlier records; even a change of surname, for a variety of reasons. Some forenames occur repeatedly within a family, often associated with a traditional naming pattern (eg the first son being named after the father's father). Many families used the mother's maiden surname as the baby's second forename. In my case my great-uncle Orriss SMITH was given it as his *first* forename; at school his teachers often reprimanded him for dropping the H in his supposed forename of Horace! Nicknames were common in the past: Margaret could become Maggie, Rita, Madge, Greta, Peggy, even Daisy (from the French). Changes of surname were not uncommon; examples include: anglicisation by immigrants; illegitimate children taking the name of their mother's new husband; a child brought up by maternal grandparents taking the latter's surname. Aliases were also used in the past, often by under-age army recruits and criminals. This situation certainly applied to the family of my Thomas Worlidge (alias ORRIDGE and WORLICHE and ORRISS in several records), and altogether I have found over 40 surname variants for him and his descendants (Figure 4). Officially sanctioned name changes were sometimes recorded by deed poll or Royal Licence, and published in *The Times* newspaper or the *London Gazette* – as when my own father in his 30s formally adopted the CARROLL surname of his stepfather.



**Figure 4. Record of the 1588 meeting of the Court Leet in Lidgate, Suffolk**

The record (in Latin) starts with a preamble followed by the names of the jurors. In the first entry of the second column my ancestor Thomas Worlidge appears as “Thomas ORRIS”.

## **Overcoming research challenges**

Here the author recommends viewing a negative search outcome in a positive light, for it allows you to eliminate an incorrect line of enquiry. If you do get stuck, try asking an FH buddy for help: sometimes a fresh pair of eyes can provide a new insight. The Q&A sections of FH magazines can also generate helpful ideas, as can sharing information in discussion groups online.

TIP 17 – If you repeatedly get negative research results, then you are probably looking in the wrong place.

TIP 18 – Use multiple sources, as a single record is unlikely to provide you with all the information.

Other sources of help include online forums, podcasts, posted family trees, wikis, website blogs, and even your local FH society! DNA testing is a valuable adjunct to traditional FH research methods: it can verify predicted connections, provide evidence of ancestral origins, and put you in touch with long-lost cousins. The author also advises caution, as DNA results can reveal an unexpected skeleton in your family cupboard; they will also certainly *not* provide you with a ready-made family tree. He has some helpful advice on how best to contact DNA cousins.

TIP 19 – Of the three types of DNA test available, use the one(s) appropriate to your research challenges, and use the results to complement your own research.

## **Genealogical proof standards (GPS)**

Are you absolutely sure of the correctness of all your FH data and conclusions? If so, they should meet the following criteria:

1. Reasonably exhaustive research has been conducted.
2. Each statement of fact has a complete and accurate source citation.
3. The evidence is reliable, and it has been skilfully correlated and interpreted.
4. Any contradictory evidence has been resolved.
5. The conclusion has been soundly reasoned and coherently written.

Analysing and evaluating evidence is a process that should be regularly addressed. Ideally two (or more) sources will corroborate facts. If not, consider the following:

(a) when, why and where were the records created?

- (b) is any relevant information missing or incomplete within the records?
- (c) how was the information compiled and recorded?
- (d) who created the records?
- (e) how reliable is the information in the records? Are the sources primary (contemporaneous) or secondary (derived from primary sources, or written later)?

Finally, the author urges us to remember that the records we use were not created for the benefit of future family historians. Also, if you have eliminated every possible fact or interpretation, including the impossible, then whatever remains must be the truth! Despite all his sound advice though, I have yet to trace the origins of my elusive Thomas William Smith.



## **A to Z of FAMILY HISTORY**

**Barbara Harpin**

### **E is for ...**

#### **ECCLESIASTICAL CENSUS RETURNS**

Held at TNA under HO 129

Ecclesiastical census returns of churches and chapels, endowments, sittings, estimated attendances on 30 March 1851 and average numbers during the preceding 12 months. In a few cases the papers include returns of the educational census 1851.

#### **EDUCATION**

The first cathedral schools were formed in the 6<sup>th</sup> century and continued to be closely linked to religious institutions until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for those who could afford to pay. Charity and Free schools supported by benefactors enabled many more children to attend. By the 1880s, education was compulsory for children aged 5 to 10, with a gradual rise in leaving age through the years. Many school records exist, mainly in CROs and local archives, some online, and can be very useful in providing dates and verifying ages, and reports on attendance and how children attained grades. Sometimes they list previous schools and onward establishments, or a reason for leaving.

## **ELECTORAL REGISTERS**

The electoral registers, also called an electoral roll, voters roll or poll book, is a list of persons who are eligible to vote in electoral districts and who are registered to vote. Introduced as a result of The Reform Act 1832, they were kept in paper/book form, and now stored at most CROs, more recent ones in main libraries, and many online. The electoral roll records the name and address of the voter, and their eligibility to vote.

## **EMIGRATION**

Emigration, to leave your home to reside in another country (immigration). Passenger ships kept lists, many made available, to give date of leaving, age, previous address and proposed address. Many held at the TNA but also in CROs, Local Archives and Online. Naturalisation records also available.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

Many CROs have company records which can give details of our ancestors' careers, giving a much greater insight into their lives. Some professions have their own records, ie Nursing, Doctors, Police, Port of London Authority, Sainsbury's, Undertakers, etc.

## **ENUMERATOR**

The name given to the person who collected information, often by visiting every dwelling in order, to gather information about the occupants. A census was normally carried out every ten years from 1841 and is not made publicly available for 100 years. The categories were: address, name, age, status as to marriage and where born, with more details being added in later years. The 1911 Census was completed by the householder and often shows their signature.

## **ESSEX SOCIETY FOR FAMILY HISTORY**

Most counties have their own societies, East of London and Essex being our nearest. Many boundary changes happened through the years and as some of Waltham Forest was previously in Essex or East of London, records may be available in their CRO. Some have lots of information available on their website, some only viewable by their members.

Whilst checking transcriptions of the 1930 marriage register entries for SS Peter and Paul, Chingford, I came across a curious case. Margery Graimes FOWLER, 17, was due to marry Hubert Alfred CARR, 22, on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1930, but the provisional entry had been crossed out. However, the relevant record was present on the FreeBMD website, as the wedding had gone ahead on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1930. Margery's father, Walter Fred, an engineer, was deceased, but one of the witnesses was her 30-year-old brother, Reginald. Presumably he knew the exact age of his younger sister.

In February 1936 a case came to the Divorce Court in London whereby Margery Graimes Carr née Fowler asked to have her marriage annulled on the grounds that she had been under-age at the time. In fact, she was 15 years and 11 months old on her 'wedding day', when the legal minimum age according to the 1929 Marriage Act was 16. She told the court that she had lied about her age because she thought she would look foolish if she gave her real age. She had led her 'husband' to believe she was 17. The petition was undefended, and the marriage was annulled. The case was widely reported in the newspapers of the day, both in Essex and worldwide. At the end of 1936 the death was recorded of a Margery G Fowler, aged 22 – was this the same Margery? And what were the events that led up to her sham marriage?



## **GREAT ANTI-VACCINATION DEMONSTRATION**

**Geoffrey King**

The following article appeared in several newspapers. A London-based one was the *Islington Gazette* on 11 September 1884.

Henry Crisp, shoemaker, of Walthamstow, was released from the prison at Holloway on Wednesday morning. Some time ago, Mr Crisp was fined 6s 6d for refusing to have his child vaccinated, and the money was paid. A fortnight ago, he was summoned upon a similar charge, when he was fined £1 7s 6d, including the costs. Failing to pay this he was committed to gaol for 14 days. As soon as he entered upon the period of his incarceration, the following placard was posted on the front of his business premises, printed in bold type:

**“Vaccination Acts. – H. Crisp, Selborne Road, Walthamstow, begs to give notice that he has been sent away from home, family, and business because he conscientiously objects to obey a law, and inflict untold misery upon, and cause, it may be, premature death to, his child. His present residence is, and letters should be addressed to, Holloway Gaol. Friends and patrons will please take notice that his business premises are closed for fourteen days. They will be re-opened on or about the 11<sup>th</sup> of September, when he trusts to receive their continued support and interest, for he believes that he has simply done his duty to his family and the country in endeavouring to preserve the life of its future citizens.”**

At half-past eight a few of his relatives and a large number of friends of the anti-vaccination movement took up a position at the entrance to the prison. They were accompanied by the “Victor” Anti-Vaccination Band from Greenwich. At 20 minutes to nine the prison gates which guard the entrance to the gaol were swung back, and Mr Crisp emerged from prison seclusion, once more a free man. His meeting with his daughter (Alice Maud, born 12 April 1883) and wife was of an affecting character, but the band striking up, amid loud cheers, the inspiring strains of the “Conquering Hero”, soon restored Mr Crisp to his wonted demeanour. As he left the precincts of the prison, and appeared in the midst of the crowd gathered together to welcome him, round succeeded round of cheering, and the band proclaimed him “A Jolly Good Fellow”, his retirement to an adjacent hotel for breakfast being enlivened by “Auld Lang Syne”. Mr Crisp expressed himself as willing to return to prison rather than permit his daughter to be vaccinated, for, he says, he has had one child “legally murdered”, and he will take care that he does not lose another by the same means. During the period of his incarceration, Mr Crisp says he has been treated in exactly the same manner as the ordinary criminals who are undergoing sentence. The hardest portion of his term was during the first four days, when he was unaware of the mode of carrying out the prison rules; but by the fifth day he had got sufficiently familiar with prison life to enable him to pass away the dreary hours of the day less wearily. Each day he “enjoyed” one hour’s exercise with other prisoners on one of the common parade-grounds. He had three meals daily. For breakfast and supper, he had eight ounces of bread, and for dinner a pint and a half of “stirabout”, consisting of three ounces of Indian meal or three ounces of oatmeal. A printed copy of the dietary appeared on a wall in his cell, and it was, as far as he could say, fully

adhered to. Asked how he was described on the prison calendar; Mr Crisp said his “crime” was described as “Refusing to have his child vaccinated”. He said the next imprisonment would not be nearly so hard as the last had been for him, for he should know then “how to go on”. At nine o’clock a procession, headed by the “Victor” band, was formed, consisting of a number of carriages containing anti-vaccinators representing Peckham, Plumstead, Holloway, Walthamstow, Norwich, Ipswich, Norwood, Croydon, and other places. Conspicuous among the decorations and emblems borne aloft by occupants of the several carriages was one bearing:

**“There is no liberty in that country in which a citizen has not complete control over his own health, both mental and bodily.”**

Another prominent placard read:

**“Henry Crisp, of Walthamstow, has been in Holloway Gaol for fourteen days imprisonment as a convict, imprisoned for defending his liberty, and protecting his child from legalised murder, by refusing to have it vaccinated. We are met to honour a brave man by carrying him home to Walthamstow in splendid triumph.”**

Miss Jessie Craigen delivered an address from one of the carriages, after which the following resolution was unanimously carried:

**“That the present company pledge themselves to use all legitimate means in their power to oppose compulsory vaccination.”**

The procession then moved down the Caledonian Road en route for Walthamstow, where a meeting was held.

### **Note**

There is no doubt that this refers to Herbert Crisp, father of Alice Maud Crisp, my wife Pamela’s grandmother. Whether Henry was adopted for confusion purposes, or that was how he referred to himself, is not known. Herbert had two children prior to Alice:

- Elizabeth Sarah Crisp, born 21 March 1879, died before June 1879.
- Herbert George Crisp, born May 1881, died 17 August 1881, cause Bronchitis 10 days, Diarrhoea 3 days.

Was vaccination practised within three months of birth?

Understandably, Herbert would attribute these early deaths to some cause, but later children fared no better. Two of the next three after Alice Maud were:

- Florence Daisy Crisp, born 7 September 1885, died 15 October 1885, cause of death Whooping Cough 5 days, Bronchitis 4 days.
- Herbert Harvey St Quintin Crisp, born 3 January 1889, died January 1890, age 1.

There were nine children, of whom four died in infancy. Whether any of the three who were not vaccinated would have survived is debatable. From the birth and death certificates of the children, Herbert Crisp moved within the area as the family grew, living in Chace Road, Woodford, in 1879, Beulah Road in 1883, Greenleaf Lane in 1885 and High Street, Walthamstow, in 1889, as well as Selborne Road.



## A STRANGE COINCIDENCE

**Mark Carroll**

I had my DNA analysed in 2018 with two genetic genealogy companies. One of them identified a woman called Angela THOMAS, who lives near Cambridge and who was predicted to be a 3<sup>rd</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> cousin. However, we could not find a common ancestor in our family trees, even though I gave her an extensive list of all the surnames in my birth brief. I mentioned to Angela that I had recently written a book on my maternal ORRISS family. She responded by observing that she has an elderly neighbour across the road from her called Jean Orriss. “Wouldn’t it be funny if you two were related?” she said, more in hope than expectation. Well, it turns out that Jean and I *are* related! My 4x great-grandfather, Thomas Orriss (1756-1838), is her 3x great-grandfather, who lived in the Suffolk village of Hundon. So, I have discovered a long-lost cousin by chance and without the help of DNA analysis, but I have yet to establish the link with someone with whom I share DNA. At least Angela knows which book to give Jean for her next Christmas present!

# PROGRESS WITH ONLINE RECORDS AND TRANSCRIPTIONS

Tim Valder-Hogg

## 1821 Census

In the summer of 2018, I spent a very hot day at the Waltham Forest Archives photographing the 1821 censuses for Leyton and Walthamstow. These are traditionally seen as not very useful, containing only the names of householders and not others who lived there. There is in fact more information in the census which can be used if you are prepared to match it with other records. It includes the number of people living in each house, split into age bands and sex. Given that you have a surname for most people living in the house, ie family but not servants, you can make use of marriage records to determine the head of household's wife's first name. As you have the ages of children, you can look at baptism records to determine the names of the children and get a more accurate date of birth. I tested this out on one Walthamstow family, and was disappointed not to find baptism records. When I investigated, I discovered that the family had come from Leyton, and all the children were baptised there. I just needed to look further than the same parish.

This reminds us why the censuses were conducted in the first place. With industrialisation, the population was moving around much more at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century than it ever had before. It turned out that was mostly the case in what was to become the area of the West Ham Union. The census was to establish the population and demographic changes.

The 1821 census index is now online, but if you want the detailed numerical information, which we have also transcribed, please get in touch.

## Marriages

Unlike others, we are transcribing almost all the information in the marriage register including occupations, abode, condition at marriage, whether by banns or licence, and the minister's and witnesses' names – effectively a complete transcription.

In our first set of registers, St Peter in the Forest, some things jumped out. The registers included three marriages by special licence. The special licences were all required because the marriage did not take place

in the church but in Forest School Chapel. All three marriages were of members of the Guy family who were long associated with the School and the St Peter's.

### **Marriage index project**

An enquiry, last year, showed that the whereabouts of the registers for St Andrew's, Leytonstone, is unknown. They should have been deposited in the diocesan archives years ago, but were for many years kept at the church. It is thought that they left the church 10–20 years ago, but so far they have not turned up. The enquiry alerted me to the Marriage Finder project [www.marriage-locator.co.uk/](http://www.marriage-locator.co.uk/) which enables people to find in which parish (church normally) marriages took place, using the GRO Index quarter, volume and page number. This relies on a feature of the way indexes were compiled. Marriages in a church are entered into the GRO records in the order they took place. Marriages at each church are then placed in a sequence which was thought to be alphabetical. After examining records from a number of parishes, and the *London Gazette*, we deduced that St Andrew's marriages were indexed between St John's, Leytonstone, and Holy Trinity, Harrow Green. To confirm this, I searched newspapers for a marriage at St Andrew's. Clive Parsons married Frances Mants, Q2 1909, at St Andrew's, and the marriage has reference 4a 197.

Churches have the following page numbers for Q2 1901:

St Mary's 145–156

All Saints 157–163

St Catherine's 165–173a

St John's 175–184

Unknown 185–188

St Margaret 189–192

That order appears to persist in 1909 with St John's ending at 192, St Margaret's starting at 199 and pages 193–197 being the missing church. St Andrew's therefore appears to be the unknown church.

I stumbled on what appears to be the reason for the order in the *London Gazette* of 4 February 1916, which gives a schedule of the Walthamstow and Leyton Rural Deanery which was to be divided to create the Leyton deanery. It lists the churches in this order:

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

Note that 1 was Leyton St Mary and 6 was Leytonstone St John.

We can now see that the order was alphabetical if you differentiate between Leyton and Leytonstone and ignore “Saint”.

Marriage registers transcribed:

<i>Place</i>	<i>Records</i>	<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>
St Peter in the Forest	1786	1844-11-18	1942-10-17
St Thomas, Upshire	50	1937-03-06	1957-07-20
Chingford	3121	1829-06-21	1944-07-22
St Edmund, S Chingford	400	1923-07-22	1940-04-13

We are now slowly moving southward through Waltham Forest, transcribing marriage registers between 1837 and the Second World War. There are registers in the pipeline for St John’s, Leytonstone, St Saviour and St James, Walthamstow, and All Saints, Highams Park.

### **School admission registers**

We decided that it would be nice to transcribe something different. Taking expressions of interest into account, we decided that school admissions registers would be it, and have started transcribing registers for Maynard Road and Mission Grove Schools. Not all schools in the Borough have registers in the WF Archives. Walthamstow schools are well represented, Leytonstone somewhat less, and in Chingford only one school had deposited registers. Registers in Waltham Forest Archives

start in 1880 with Boundary Road Infants School and continue up to 1977 for Blackhorse Road Infants School, though they are kept closed until 100 years has elapsed from dates of birth.

The formats of the registers vary, but include name, a parent or guardian's name, date of birth, abode, date of admission, any previous school, date of leaving, and reason for leaving or next place of education. Although there is some genealogical information in these records, they tell one where people were living between and after available censuses. Sometimes the records indicate parentage other than expected as additional surnames used might be entered, or there may be different surnames at a given address. We must remember that families frequently had more than two children and might be spaced 1½ to 2 years apart, so there might be a number of entries for a given family at a time when much was happening in their lives.

### **St Mary's group**

The St Mary's group (Kathleen Partington, Barbara Durack and Lesley Drake) are now working on monumental inscriptions (MIs) for the final section of St Mary's, Walthamstow, graveyard. This is the largest section of the graveyard and has by far the most readable monuments in it, but they are now nearing completion.

### **Chingford Mount**

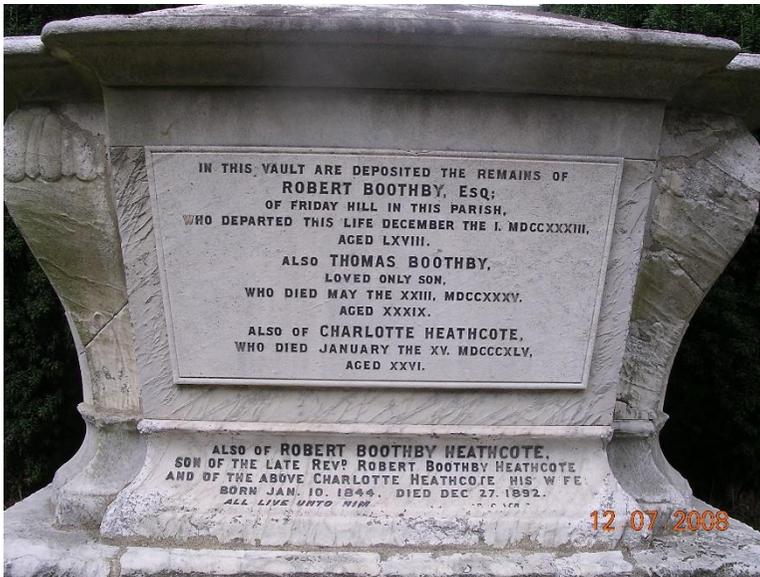
It was an early idea that the Society might transcribe the MIs at Chingford Mount, but one that would never start until Queens Road Cemetery was finished. In 2013 I transcribed a pilot section which told me a bit about the cemetery, and this confirmed it would be a long job. It is a task I have restarted as a background project. Unlike previous projects, I am not transcribing inscriptions in most cases but taking photographs and indexing the names and dates on the monuments. This is much quicker than transcribing MIs, and a few acres of the cemetery have now been covered.

At our open day last year, we had a display of information on Friday Hill House and its occupants. One interesting piece of information came from a report in the *Pall Mall Gazette* dated 4<sup>th</sup> April 1916 (it also appeared in other newspapers).

## ESSEX MAN'S STRANGE BURIAL INSTRUCTIONS

*Mr William Edward Boothby-Heathcote, of Friday Hill, Chingford, Essex, and Chingford Lodge, New Walk-terrace, York, who died on December 13 aged sixty-two years, leaving estate of the gross value of £162,374, directed that a surgeon shall certify that decomposition has set in, "and in fact is really dead," his heart transfixed with a proper surgical knife, and his body buried in the family vault with the knife still in the heart.*

William was the son of the Rev Robert Boothby-Heathcote, rector of Chingford.



*The Boothby vault. William's inscription is on a separate stone slab, which was originally on the side of the steps going into the vault.*

Louisa Brandreth Aldrich-Blake was born in Chingford on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1865 and was baptized at Ss Peter and St Paul on 3<sup>rd</sup> September by her father the Rev Frederick James Aldrich-Blake. Her mother was Louisa Blake Morrison. They moved to Welsh Bicknor in Herefordshire when she was a child and Louisa had a home there until her death.

No. 763.		Susan Ann				
Sept. 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Louisa Brandreth	Frederic James & Louisa Blake	Aldrich-Blake	Chingford	Curate of the Parish.	F. Aldrich-Blake Curate
No. 764.						Curate

*Entry for Louisa in the baptism records of 1865*

Louisa graduated with first-class honours from the London School of Medicine for Women, gaining a Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Medicine and a Medical Degree. She then gained a Medical Doctorate from the University of London in 1894, following this with a Master of Surgery in 1895, and was the first British woman ever to receive this qualification. She then went on to be appointed an assistant surgeon at the New Hospital for Women and Children in London. At the Royal Free Hospital Louisa became the first woman to hold positions as surgical registrar, anaesthetist, an anaesthetics lecture, and ultimately a consultant.

During the First World War, Louisa travelled to France, during her holidays between 1914 and 1916, aiding the military hospitals with Dr Frances Ivens from the Anglo-French Red Cross Hospital. She helped out as a visiting surgeon at the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps Hospital and performed surgery on the front line. She also influenced the War Office to allow women to enlist to be a part of the medical staff. Louisa wrote to every female clinician on the General Medical Register to ask if they would consider volunteering for the Royal Army Medical Corps, and 48 enrolled, many of whom were sent to Malta.

Louisa also worked on clinical research and was the first to perform operations for cervical and rectal cancers. In 1924 she was vice-president of the BMA's Section of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Louisa was devoted to training students at the London School of Medicine for Women (now the medical school of University College London) and she became the Dean in 1914 whilst also working as a volunteer at the Canning Town Women's Settlement Hospital. Her encouragement for women to join the medical field almost doubled the school's population during the First World War.



Dame Louisa Aldrich-Blake died from cancer on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1925, and in that year's New Year's Honours List she was named a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire. There is a statue of Louisa in Tavistock Square (see cover photo).



## **THE LAST WORD**

**Kathy Unwin**

I have changed the subject of the cover photo, in this journal, from buildings around Waltham Forest to famous people born in the Waltham Forest area. I would like to hear your comments on this, especially if you have any other suggestions for cover photos.

I have also included a newspaper report for William Boothby-Heathcote. Newspaper reports can be a useful source of information that you would not find anywhere else. This can also be seen in the vaccination article. Do you have any interesting reports (good or bad) about your family?

**Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month  
(except August) at 8 pm**

**At Spruce Hill Baptist Church Hall, Brookscroft Road,  
Walthamstow E17**

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**ALL ARE WELCOME, PLEASE COME AND JOIN US**

**DIARY**

**March 10<sup>th</sup> Workshop - Writing up your family history**

**April 14<sup>th</sup> Talk – My ancestor was a pirate – Sue Paul**

**May 12<sup>th</sup> Workshop – Reading old handwriting – Mark**

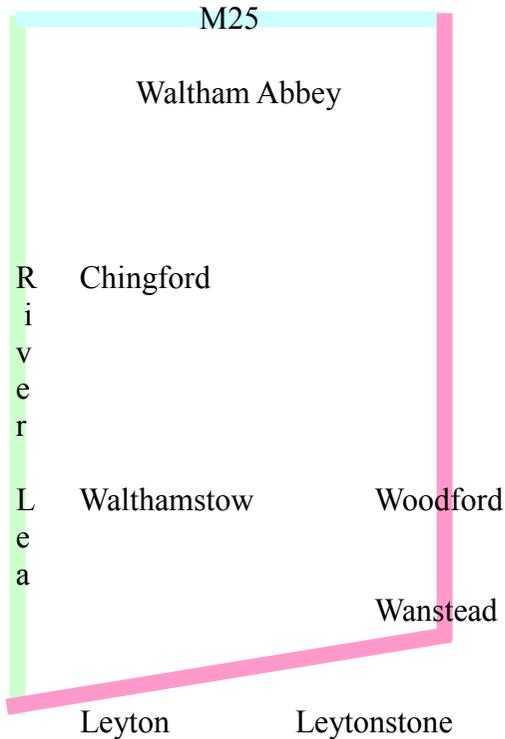
**June 9<sup>th</sup> Talk – Auntie’s old photos – Jeff Harvey**

**July 14<sup>th</sup> Workshop – Family memorabilia**

**August No meeting**

**Sept 8<sup>th</sup> Talk - To be confirmed**

# Waltham Forest FHS



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

© Waltham Forest



Family History Society

If undelivered, please return to:  
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