

Roots in the Forest

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The Lighthouse
Markhouse Road
Walthamstow

WALTHAM FOREST FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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Roots in the Forest

The Journal of the Waltham Forest Family History Society

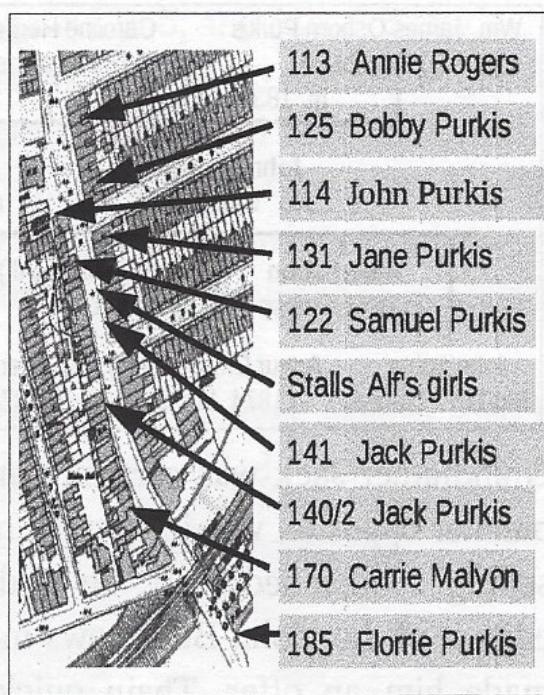
September 2018

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Part 1

For more than 60 years the name Purkis was prominent on a number of shop fascia boards in Wood Street. They were fishmongers, butchers, greengrocers and florists, and besides the nine different premises they had occupied in the street at one time or another, there were market stalls as well.



It all began when an ambitious young greengrocer, Albert John (Jack) Purkis, my grandfather, saw the way that Walthamstow was changing. The small estates were being sold for development, houses were going up, people were moving in, and the daily demand for all things consumable that came with them needed to be serviced: it was an opportunity not to be missed.

‘Jack’ moved to Wood Street in 1897, buying out an existing greengrocer, James Goodwin, at No.142.

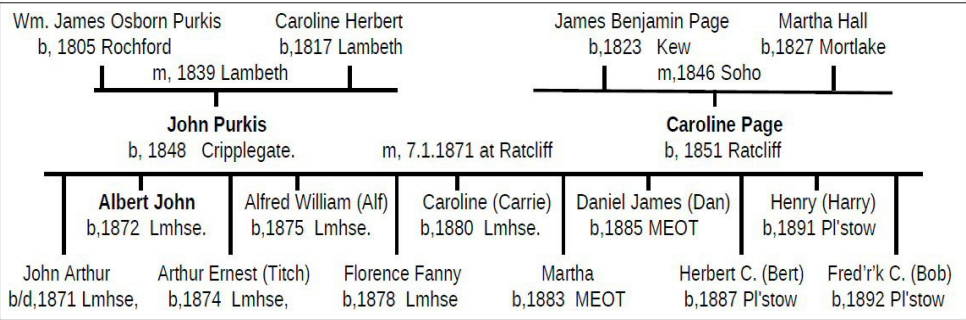


Although only 24, Jack had already owned a shop in Angel Lane, Stratford, and knew the business. He had a capable wife, Matilda Jane (Rogers), that he could rely upon to front the shop, and he employed two of his younger brothers to serve customers.

A hard taskmaster, Jack was soon running a flourishing business and before long he'd expanded into No.140 next door. The whole family were involved, with the children joining in as soon as they were big enough to lift anything, and it was here in the accommodation above the shops that my father was born in April 1900.

Compared with what he had known at West Ham, Jack liked Walthamstow, and with his business now firmly established, he set about persuading his ageing parents to join him there.

His father and mother, John and Caroline, were soon to oblige and by the turn of the century, together with the rest the family, they had moved into No.114.



Grandfather Jack was certainly an opportunist: upon hearing that Edwin Thain, the butcher opposite, was in trouble, he bought him out cheaply. Thain had been caught selling condemned meat; he said the story was to be made public in tomorrow's edition of the *John Bull* news magazine and that it would kill the business. Jack made him an offer, Thain quickly accepted. Jack now owned the shop and the problem, but he had a plan. He figured that if he could keep the story away from the shop's customers he would still have a viable business. So early the next morning he sent his boys out on their bicycles to visit all the local newsagents and buy up every available copy of *John Bull*. It did the trick.

Leaving Jane with the greengrocery, Jack was now a butcher. He retained the staff who knew about meat and made one of them, Tommy Cox, manager.

*Grandfather 'Jack' Purkis,
outside No.141, his daughter
Louisa (Tab) was the cashier
and the delivery boy Bunter
(Bill), my Dad*



As well as the two shops, Jack ran a busy wholesale side to his greengrocery business and he would hire out his vans and traps when it suited him. With several fingers in the pie, the Purkis's were not badly off. Before the Great War they had one of the first privately-owned cars in the town; they had the telephone and the shops were fitted with the most recently developed gas lights, making them the best lit in the street. Surplus money was invested in diamonds and property –

banks (and the Inland Revenue) were not to be trusted.

The census return for the year 1901 explains what was happening at No.114. It lists the household as ... John and Caroline Purkis (Ma and Pa), their son Alfred (now 25), teenagers Martha, Daniel and Bert, young Harry and Bob, and Albert Brockley, a lodger, nine in all. It also revealed their occupations. We learn that great-grandfather John and Alfred were trading as horse dealers, that Dan and Bert worked with them and that Brockley was employed as a stable boy. Daughters Carrie and Martha are listed as laundresses. Missing from the list were Florence and Titch, who were now married and away, with Titch trading as a florist at the old family shop at Church Street, Plaistow.



These remarkable pictures show John, my great-grandfather, standing against what is probably the window of the 'Dukes Head' pub which was opposite his shop, and his wife Caroline standing in front of No.114. Vegetables are set out on display and rabbits can be seen hanging above them. Today it is numbered 12 Marlowe Road and is no longer a shop, but the building is still there and is recognisable as the one in the picture.

John died in 1910. Caroline died in 1916, and her son, Jack, my grandfather, died aged 43, just a few days later, both of them said to have succumbed to a virulent flu bug that was widespread at the time.

Jack's untimely death was, of course, devastating, but Grandma Jane simply took over and carried on: she kept the greengrocery business going and she left Tab and Tommy Cox to do the same with the butchers. However, early the following year she left Wood Street to become the licensee of 'The Royal Oak' public house at Sewardstone. Taking her family with her, she left Harry, her son-in-law, with Nos.140/142 and leased the butcher's shop to Tommy Cox. Later she said that she had moved into the country to avoid the German bombing which had just begun.

At the time of Caroline's death, her boys had all married and now had businesses of their own. Bert had stayed on at No.114 and kept that shop open. I well remember his wife, Aunt Ada, selling rabbits, poultry and eggs there in the 30s.

Harry, who had Jack's original greengrocery shop, died in 1938. His son, Harry, had always worked with him and together with his wife Bubbles, and daughters Marlene and Victoria, they kept 140/142 open until it was compulsorily purchased and demolished by the Council in about 1970. It had been in family ownership for 73 years.

Uncle Bob had a milk round. Bob lived in North Road, at the back of No.114, close to where Jim Richell, my sister Betty's husband, had grown up, and Jim knew Bob's side of my family better than I did; we lived in a small world. Betty says that Uncle Bob was a keen coarse fisherman and that one night, fishing by the river, he drifted off to sleep and fell in. By such tales are we remembered.

Alf's girls all worked hard. Florrie (very religious) had a fruit

shop opposite Barrett Road; her younger sisters, Bubbie, Iris and Margie, and Bert's daughter, Flossie, had salad and fruit stalls across from the 'Flower Pot' pub. Jimmy Lloyd, Bubbie's husband, was the last person to hold a Wood Street stallholder's licence. When I went shopping with my mother she would stop to talk to one or other of them, so progress was often slow. As a family, they were a happy bunch and wonderfully kind.

Great-Aunt Carrie had a florist shop at No.170.

I never knew Florence, Martha or Dan. As a young man Dan had lived and worked with his father, but I had always understood that he was a greengrocer with a shop at Plaistow. I now know that Titch (the florist) had died aged 44 in 1918, and it is highly likely that Dan had joined up with his widow, Kate, to keep that shop open, albeit as a greengrocer's. Dan knew the area well enough, it was where he'd grown up, but, so the story that I was told goes, there were security problems. Wholesalers sold bananas not in boxes as today but in huge bunches, just as they were when they were hacked off the tree, and they often had surprises hidden inside. Dan let it be known locally that on one occasion, as the bananas were being split up, a poisonous hairy spider 'as big as your hand' had crawled out and had scampered away among the vegetables at the back of the store room. Security was never a problem after that.

When the war ended Jane returned to Wood Street. With greengrocery now in the hands of her brothers-in-law, she opened a fish shop at No.131; her son John worked with her and Sam and Bill joined in as they returned from their war service. They must have been doing all right; they soon had their own lorry and were able to employ William (Bill) Reynolds as a driver/dogsbody.

Matilda Jane knew exactly what was happening around her, she ran a tight ship, but she was generous. When unemployment was rife during the 30s, Grandma would send out fish on Sunday morning to a few families that she knew would otherwise have no dinner that day.

Socially we did not mix with the Purkis side of the family: our close connection had died with Grandfather, but from childhood my grandmother had grown up into a tightly-knit family and it was to that family that we were bound.

Each Christmas a Rogers family party was held in the large front parlour over Grandmother's shop (whilst young cousins told each other ghost stories in a darkened room downstairs). Mum and Dad shared the piano playing, Dad for dancing, Mum playing from the dots when someone sang from music. The parlour floor would bounce by several inches during the dancing and there was always speculation about when it would finally cave in under the pounding.

Jane Purkis standing outside her shop which had been decorated for the Coronation, 1937



The shop was demolished in 1940 when a bomb fell onto the next-door premises killing the proprietor and his dog. Grandma and Tab were sheltering in the shop when the building collapsed above them. We were in the shelter at Fyfield Road and we knew that bombs had fallen nearby: Dad was at home with us, Thursday afternoon, early closing. When the 'all-clear' had sounded he went to the front gate and said to a passing stranger, "That was close". "Yes", said the stranger, not knowing who he was talking to, "Purkis's fish shop got one".

Dad set off at once to his Mother's fearing the worst and then worked with others long into the evening to release his Mother and Sister from the rubble. They were saved because the stout beam and floor that bounced with party dancing fell and wedged across the shop's display slabs keeping the weight of the fallen roof and masonry off them. Aunt Tab was trapped under it for several hours whilst debris was removed and afterwards went to hospital, but although they were badly shaken and bruised they both escaped OK.



Cousin Doug standing at the front of the bombed shops. The fascia board 'J. PURKIS & SONS' can be seen in the left foreground. Above it, propped up by the legs of the display slabs is what remains of the parlour floor from above which saved Gran and Tab.

Having lost their home when the shop was destroyed, Grandmother and Tab moved into a house in Upper Walthamstow Road and the business of selling wet fish was continued from her son Sam's fried fish shop which was directly opposite the bombed premises.

Matilda Jane reached her 80th year in 1955. At her celebration party were her family and the many friends that she had gathered over the years.



80 years young, she is pictured here at the party with her four surviving sisters and sister-in-law, Carrie (Caroline 'Purkis' Malyon).

Back row: Carrie, Fanny, Louisa

Front row: Annie, Jane, Caroline

With typical good humour the sisters often referred to themselves as 'the set of jugs' after the well-known Victorian ornaments.

Grandmother died on 10th March 1957. Her funeral cortège filled Wood Street; seven hired cars followed the hearse, each

one covered in flowers, and more cars joined on behind as it made its way to Walthamstow Cemetery.

After fronting the shops for the best part of 50 years, it was said that she knew and was known by everyone in Wood Street. On the day of the funeral they lined the street in their hundreds to pay their last respects, such was her reputation.

In this picture of the funeral, the second shop on the left is No141, it carries Tab's name, L.J.Lindsey. It was Jane's final home, she'd stayed on in Wood Street until the day that she died, and it is rather poignant that it was at No.141 that her husband Jack had died some forty-one years earlier.



Introduction

1918 was a significant year for Great Britain in numerous respects, with several centenaries being duly marked in 2018. The most momentous is arguably the end of the Great War, with the Armistice being signed on 11th November 1918. A linked military centenary is that of the formation of the Royal Air Force, following the amalgamation in April 1918 of the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) and the Royal Flying Corps (RFC). Of local significance is the existence from 1915 to 1918 of an RNAS aerodrome at Chingford, described in the book *Chingfliers & Chingboys* (ref 1). Political events of 1918 still resonate today, with the limited extension of voting rights to women then, following the vigorous campaign of the suffragette movement and others. An election in 1919 meant that the electoral roll needed to be revised, with account also having to be taken of all those military personnel who had not yet returned from the fighting abroad. They still had voting rights, so an Absent Voters List (AVL) was drawn up in each constituency. That for Walthamstow 1918–19 has survived, but that for Leyton has been lost; Waltham Forest FHS has digitised the Walthamstow list, available on the Society's website (ref 2). One positive outcome of the Great War was the establishment of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) in 1917 (ref 3). One of its activities was the marking of graves of service personnel who died in the 1914–18 war. Churchyards and cemeteries in the Waltham Forest area contain many such CWGC headstones, with their distinctive design and construction. Some casualties of the Great War died elsewhere but their bodies were brought back by the family for interment in our area.

So, the purpose of this article is to mark the centenary of the end of the Great War by highlighting some of its impact on Waltham Forest. It will do so by describing the contribution of

the Chingford aerodrome to the war effort; by emphasising the genealogical value of the AVL for Walthamstow 1918–19; and in this first part of a two-part article, by presenting the distinctive features of the lives of two local young men who were both pilots in and casualties of “the war to end all wars”.

The CHILD family of Leytonstone

The word "hero" is over-used these days, but it could rightly be applied to two brothers from Leytonstone: Jack Escott and James Martin CHILD. They were both pilots in the Great War; they both shot down several enemy aircraft; they died within a few months of each other in late 1918; and they were buried in the family grave in Chingford Mount Cemetery (Fig 1) (ref 4). In 1911 they were living at 83 Kings Road, Leytonstone, with their parents and siblings in a mid-terrace seven-roomed house. The boys appear to have enjoyed a comfortable middle-class upbringing, with their father being an accountant. He himself had forged a successful career despite his inauspicious start in life: he was illegitimate.



Fig 1: Headstone of Child
family grave
(courtesy of Chris Hunt)

Tylney Harris Child had two distinctive forenames, yet my research into his origins was initially stymied by the elusive nature of his father in the usual genealogical records. (The first name certainly caused confusion for later transcribers of the Victorian censuses, as it was routinely written down as Sydney – a mistake that has been perpetuated by later family historians.) Tylney's birth in 1857 was registered under the surname Child by his mother, Harriet Eliza BURRUS, but no father was named. Curiously, she had married a William Henry READ in Kent in 1845, but he was not living with her and Tylney in 1861. In fact, they were with a George Child in Newington, Surrey (now south London); Harriet described herself as his wife, though there is no record of their marriage. By 1868, when she remarried in Brixton, she called herself a widow with the surname Read. At this point in my construction of the family tree, I was somewhat confused. However, all became clear when I found Tylney's baptism in the parish registers for London churches on the Ancestry website (Fig 2).

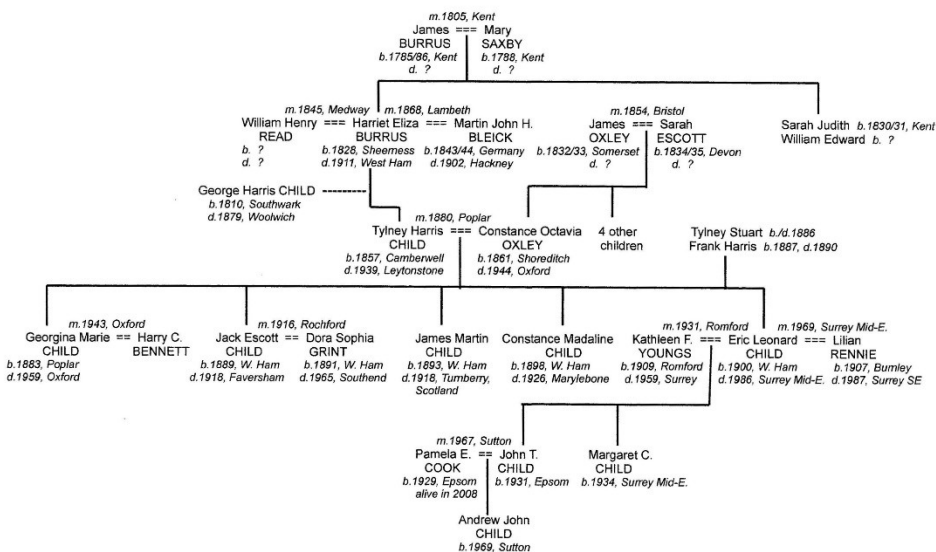


Fig 2: Family tree of Tylney Harris Child

He was stated there to be the son of George Harris Child, a wine and spirit agent of Peckham, who was 17 years older than Harriet. Perhaps she had been his housekeeper before developing a much closer relationship with him? Tylney himself died in early 1939 in Leytonstone.

Jack Escott Child

Back to James, the younger brother (1893–1918), and Jack (1889–1918). In 1906 a 17-year old Jack was working for the Midland Bank at its Eastcheap branch in the City of London. Three years later he joined the Army as a gunner in the Royal Garrison Artillery in the East Anglian (Essex) Regiment of the Territorial Army (ref 5). By 1913 he had risen to the rank of corporal, before being re-engaged in 1915 for the duration of the war (Fig 3). A year later he married Dora S GRINT in Rochford, Essex.



Fig 3: Jack Escott Child in uniform c1915

In early 1917 Jack was posted to the RFC Cadet Wing at Denham, Bucks, where he was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant and underwent training as a pilot. The course itself was rigorous: two months of basic military training, then two

months of aeronautics, followed by three months of flying practice (ref 6). The latter was particularly dangerous: by the end of WW1, 8,000 trainees had died. Their average age was 18, and a newly-qualified 2nd lieutenant was paid £5 12s 6d per week, with 12s extra for each day he flew. Having qualified, Jack was posted to 45 Squadron, then serving in France and later in Italy. Over a ten-month period in 1917–18 he flew Sopwith Camel airplanes (Fig 4), with which he successfully downed five enemy aircraft; he thereby attained the coveted status of 'Ace'.



Fig 4: Sopwith Camel (courtesy of Wikipedia)

In September 1918 Jack returned to England, attached to the 188th Night Training Squadron based at Throwley Aerodrome near Faversham in Kent. It was there that he succumbed to pneumonia – probably a victim of the virulent “Spanish ‘flu” epidemic that killed millions in Europe soon after the Great War. He died on 3rd September 1918 at Lees Court Military Hospital. His body was returned to the family for burial in Chingford Mount Cemetery (Fig 1). His widow Dora never remarried; she remained in the Southend area and died there in 1965.

James Martin Child MC

Shortly after 1911 James emigrated to Canada, where he worked for a bank and then a mining company. He also joined a militia unit, but in November 1914 he enlisted with the 30th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. In October 1915 the Canadian Army discharged him so that he could return to England, at his own expense. There he was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant in the 13th Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry.



Fig 5: James Martin Child in uniform c1915

He later transferred to the Manchester Regiment with promotion to captain (Fig 5). However, by early 1916 he had apparently decided that his ambition was to fly, so he underwent pilot training with the RFC in Yorkshire. He was then posted to 19 Squadron in France to fly SPAD VII aircraft for 12 months, followed by a spell with 84 Squadron flying SE5a planes. Over a seven-month period in 1917 he shot down eight enemy aircraft and thus became an 'Ace', just like his older brother. These feats of derring-do led to the award of

several medals: in Britain the Military Cross “for conspicuous gallantry”, and in Belgium the Chevalier of the Order of Leopold II, and the Croix de Guerre (ref 7).

In February 1918 he came back to Britain. By April that year he had been posted as a flying instructor with the rank of Flight Commander to the 1st School of Air Fighting based at Turnberry, Ayrshire. It was there that he met his death. The RAF service records refer to a “motor car accident”; however, the death certificate states a “motor cycle accident” at 6.23pm on 23rd August 1918, resulting in a compound fracture of the skull that caused instantaneous death. The fullest – and possibly most accurate – account of the tragedy comes from a report in a local newspaper (ref 8). Apparently, two RAF aircraft collided in mid-air over Turnberry and plunged to earth. The two occupants in one of the planes were killed outright, but the other pilot had a miraculous escape. Captain Child arrived on the scene on his motorbike and offered his assistance. Shortly afterwards, when returning to base, he was involved in a fatal collision with a trailer being pulled by a lorry along the very dusty road. His body was returned to the Waltham Forest area for burial in the family grave in Chingford (ref 4). James Child was also awarded the Victory Medal and the British War Medal (ref 9) to add to his Military Cross. However, these marks of honour were no doubt of little consolation to Tylney and Constance Child, who in the space of less than a fortnight suffered the tragic loss of their two eldest sons.

Tracing living descendants

Jack and James had two sisters, who both died childless, and a younger brother, Eric Leonard (born 1900, Leytonstone) (Fig 2). The 1939 Register provided useful information on Eric's family. At the outbreak of World War 2 he was working in Worthing, Sussex, as a bank clerk – following in the footsteps of his father and two brothers. His wife, Kathleen (née YOUNGS),

worked unpaid in a hotel there, and cared for their son John T, a scholar (born 1931 and hence dead by 2018, since otherwise his entry in the 1939 Register would have been redacted). John and his wife Pamela appear in the 2008 electoral register with their son, Andrew John (born 1969), living in Sutton, Surrey. The family were still there in 2014. However, I have not been able to contact them – a shame, as they no doubt have much to tell about Eric's illustrious aviator brothers in the Great War. Also, there will be a special ceremony in November 2018 in Waltham Forest, to be organised by the Western Front Association, at which fallen airmen and airwomen of WW1 will be honoured. If only a living descendant of the Child family of Leytonstone could be there ...

[To be continued]

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Chris Hunt (Western Front Association, East London branch) for permission to use material from his book on RAF/RNAS/RFC personnel who died in 1914–19 and who are buried in the Waltham Forest area (ref 10).

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THE START OF WALTHAM FOREST FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Barrie Burton (No.8)

I started my family history back in 1975 after helping an American aunt, WWII GI bride, Church of the Latter-Day Saints and sister to my father. It was suggested by my mother that I help her as I had once worked as a Solicitor's Clerk in Kingsway (six months in 1961) and knew my way around Somerset House.

By this time the Birth, Marriage & Death Registers had been moved out of Somerset House to St Catherine's House (the corner of Kingsway and Strand). Wills were still being kept at Somerset House and Census records in Portugal Street. Anyway, I was hooked. Computers were something only the Government and banks used.

Then in the latter part of 1978 my eldest son noticed an article in the Walthamstow *Guardian* saying that there was to be a meeting to start a Family History Society in Waltham Forest. The inaugural meeting would be in a room at Walthamstow Swimming Baths, so off I went, becoming member No.8 and my son was No.9. Our first President was Sir William ADDISON, Chairman (no political correctness then) was Miss I E KAHARANS, Treasurer was Mr G FOWLER and Secretary was Mrs Muriel RESON.

We then moved our meetings to Wood Street Library and produced our first newsletter in November 1978. According to that newsletter, our membership was as follows: 1. Mr George FOWLER (Treasurer); 2. Mrs Muriel RESON (Secretary); 3. Miss I E KANARENS (Chairman); 4. Mrs V E GIBSON (Committee); 5. Mr R BRUNNING (Committee); 6. Mrs M BATSFORD (Committee); 7. Mrs E GREEN; 8. Myself (Committee) 9. My son (Committee); 10. Mrs D E DEACON; 11. Mrs M THURLOW; 12. Mrs P KIRBY; 13. Mr J M DAVIES; 14. Mrs BRUNNING; 15. Mr D G SILVER; 16. Mrs SILVER; 17. Mr R FAIRMAN; 18. Mrs FAIRMAN; 19. Mrs V BUCKLEY; 20 Miss J E TREVALLION; 21. Mrs J M M GARTLEY; 22. Mrs M BARFORD.

Quotes from that Newsletter:

'As soon as we are able to join the Federation of Family History Societies we shall have the means, through their "News & Digest", of being in touch with Societies not only in the U.K., but in Europe, North America, New Zealand, Australia and every part of the World where FHS's exist. The Devon FHS began with 6 members in November 1977 and now has 600 – in just one year – due in large part to membership of the Federation and the resultant publicity.'

Sounds nice and clean cut, but, in reality, it was not so. In fact, unknown to us at the time, the Federation had set about setting up Societies in all the English counties where there were none. So for the London area we had East Surrey (there was also a West Surrey), North West KENT (there was already a Kent), then there were the three Middlesex Societies (West, Central, London & North Middlesex). I think, but am not sure, that only one of those three still exists. Then we had the East of London and that is where our problems started. They had certain members that were totally against us existing as we were E4, E10, E11 & E17 and that was part of East London, even to the point of objecting to our membership of the

Federation. But we have survived and now work in tandem, all for the good of Family History.

Another article concerned visiting St Catherine's House where all the Birth, Marriage & Death Registers were held: 'My first visit to St. Catherine's House: After having my bag searched, we made our way down the centre gangway. Aisles led off either side, where the ledgers were kept. (It was just like going to a jumble sale – people rushing about!) Rule 1 – take an accomplice with you to do the heavy work of lifting the ledgers from the shelves. Rule 2 – be ruthless. Keep a place at the table for the ledgers, don't worry about other people poking you with bags and umbrellas – stand firm! What lovely handwriting in the ledgers and ho, what joy – we have made a start!'

What do I remember of my visits? Yes, the books were big and heavy, and you did have fight to keep your place at a table. If the place was particularly busy I would set up in the Deaths area or 1840s area as these could be less busy. The down side was that you had to carry the ledgers further. But the most frustrating thing was not being able to find the book you wanted due to the person before you just putting it into the nearest gap on the bookshelf, which could be years away (distance, not time) from where it was supposed to be. At the time I was collecting all the BUTTERIS's with spelling deviations (just under 10,000 with 33 different spellings) so I got special permission to use a miniature tape recorder, which for some reason seemed to upset the professionals (probably fore-runners of the Heir Hunters).

Names being researched in that first newsletter

Name		Member
BARFORD	Cambs	2
COPLESTON	Devon	2
EDWARDS, EASTWOOD	Clerkenwell	6

GRAINGER	Cambs	6
MEGIT	Lincoln	3
HEROD	-	15
EVERY	Dorset	8



WALTHAM FOREST FHS AT CHINGFORD FESTIVAL Mark Carroll

Waltham Forest FHS had never before had a stall at the Chingford Festival, a major annual event in the social calendar of the north of the borough, held this year on 9th June 2018. The Committee had long wanted to publicise the Society more widely in that part of our 'patch', so we bit the bullet and coughed up £80 for a stall on the day. Was it worth it?

The event coincided with Barrie Burton (President) finalising the production of two pop-up banners displaying various aspects of family history and publicising the Society. How effective would they be? We had also printed flyers describing our 40th anniversary Open Day, to be held on 6th October 2018, and others with our forthcoming programme of talks and workshops, plus our standard membership flyers. There were also the usual books and CDs for sale. Tim Valder-Hogg (Chairman), Mark Carroll (Secretary) and – at times – Kathy Unwin (Editor) and Barrie manned the stall during the 6 hours we were there.

The festival was certainly popular, we had a good pitch on the Back Green, and we made far more contacts with visitors than at other such events we have attended in the area. We ran out of flyers, even though we had printed up to 60 of each. Some visitors had already delved extensively into their family history, others were aiming to make a start (one day!), while some knew little about their roots. Most folk were from

Chingford or Walthamstow, but Latvia and Canada were also represented. One point that came over loud and clear was that all of us in Britain are 'mongrels and migrants', with diverse family roots. We heard some amusing and fanciful stories, including one local man claiming to be descended from Spanish nobility via Ireland and the Armada! Where do these family tales come from?! The new banners were a great success, as they attracted people's attention enough for us to start a conversation with them (Figure 1).

To recoup our outlay of £80 for the WFFHS stall on the day, we would need to recruit eight new members – unlikely, but we shall see. The event certainly helped to raise the Society's profile in that part of Waltham Forest. Yet £80 would pay for the fees of one or two speakers at our monthly meetings. As ever, it comes down to money and our priorities.



Figure 1. WFFHS stall at Chingford Festival. Tim is talking to a visitor (left), and the new yellow banners are visible on either side of the stall.

Celebrating 40 years

Waltham Forest



Family History Society

On Saturday 6th October 2018

we are holding an open day at Vestry House Museum, Vestry Road, Walthamstow, E17 9NH. We will be in the Garden Room from **11am to 4.30 pm.**

There will be talks on how our families lived and worked, family history help-desks, as well as displays on family history.

The archive and search room will be having a drop-in open day from 11am to 1pm and from 2pm to 4.30pm (accessible only by stairs).

More information at **www.wffhs.org.uk**

Born 1940 in North Brighton, Victoria, Australia, I had no interest in genealogy until the arrival of six grandchildren within six years of one another (1998-2004). All I had picked up from my older siblings over the years was that our father, FRANCIS GEORGE WYATT, and our grandfather, FRANK_WYATT, had migrated to Australia in 1911 ahead of the rest of the family. This was with the help and encouragement of George Frederick Wyatt (younger brother of our grandfather and who was Manager of Scott's Antarctic Expedition 1910-12). Hence, I started researching in 2005. This was a great boon when all the grandchildren during their early State School years asked me their ancestral origins.

I have had a great journey in England - not yet completed; from Exeter, Beaminster, Holborn, Hackney, Wanstead, to Walthamstow. I pay tribute to my grandfather (FRANK) his son (our father FRANCIS GEORGE), his wife Alice and the two older girls with the three younger children who arrived in Australia 1911 and 1912 respectively.

ALBERT ERNEST WYATT in the 1861 Census was working as a barman at "The Nightingale" pub in Wanstead where his father, James, had been the Beer Shop Keeper and died 1851. By the time he married in 1864 he was a Gardener and living in 10 William Street, Leyton. By 1871 with 4 children and living at Grove Lane, Chigwell, Essex, he was a gardener, domestic servant. By 1881 the family had moved to Walthamstow.

FRANK WYATT was born 16 May 1872 in Chigwell, Essex, England. He was christened on 26 July 1885 in St Peters, Walthamstow, Essex, England, along with most of his siblings. Frank was the eldest son of Albert Ernest **WYATT** (Gardener)

and Emma **MARLER**. There were ten children in the family; eight sisters and a younger brother George Frederick **WYATT** born in 1879. On 12 June 1898, aged 26, he married Alice **TYLER** in the Parish Church, South Weald in County Essex. Her father, Joseph **TYLER** was cited as a Farm Bailiff.

At eighteen Frank was employed as a Gardener/Servant at Knott's Green Mansion, Leyton, Essex. When their first-born Eleanor Carr **WYATT** was two, they were living at Terrace House Stables, Friarstile Road, Richmond and Frank was a Gardener/Domestic. In 1903 when son Francis George **WYATT** was born he was a Nurseryman Master and the family lived at 137 Barclay Road, Walthamstow, Essex. Seven years later, when the second son, Stanley Marler **WYATT** was born the family were living at 30 Raglan Road, Walthamstow. The 1911 Census records that Frank, Alice and five children lived at 180 Shernhall Street, Walthamstow (now West Ham). At that time Frank was a Nurseryman, working "own account", growing plants at home.

George Frederick **WYATT**, younger brother of Frank, was by 1910, manager to Robert Scott's "British Antarctic Expedition". It was he who encouraged and paid for Frank and his son, Francis George, to embark for Australia on board the "GEELONG" 27 July 1911, leaving at home his wife, Alice, with five children, the baby Miriam **EMMA** being just four days old. They arrived in Melbourne, September 1911. For a time, father and son stayed in Fawkner, Victoria, but moved to lodgings in 291 Bay Street, Brighton, (just opposite the Bay Street Theatre). The remainder of the family sailed on the "BALLARAT" departing London 11 April 1912 and arrived at Melbourne in May 1912. Frank found work at Billilla Mansion, Halifax Street, Brighton, where he worked as a Gardener for many years. By the early thirties Frank & Alice had moved to 24 Ferguson Street, Brighton, their own home. Frank, a widower in 1940,

was living at 9 Shasta Avenue, Brighton, with his son Stanley Marler **Wyatt** (Plumber with the business Thompson & Wyatt, Church Street, Middle Brighton). Frank was 68 years of age and died at "Berklea" Private Hospital, Kooyong Road, Caulfield, on 30th June 1940. He was cremated at Fawcner Crematorium with his ashes placed in a small brick vault under stone at the head of the "WYATT" grave (Church of England ZJ 23) Brighton General Cemetery with his wife and daughter.



Frank Wyatt at 24 Ferguson Street, Brighton, with grandson, Alan John, 1932.

ALICE TYLER was born 1870, Kelvedon Hatch, Essex. She died on 23 February 1937 in Brighton and was buried in Brighton General Cemetery (CofE ZJ23) with her third daughter Alice May (Bib) **WYATT** who died in 1926 at 20 years of age from tuberculosis. The ashes of her second daughter DORIS **KILBY** (nee WYATT) are interred at the same site.

In 1871 Alice was 10 months of age and was one of seven children at home on census night. Her father, Joseph **TYLER** was then a Licensed Victualler at "The Eagle" Public H (sic), Kelvedon Hatch where they lived. Her mother, maiden name Sarah **FOX** had re-married when her first husband, William **SKINGLEY** died at 34 years of age leaving her with five children. Sarah & Joseph had four children together. By 22 years of age Alice was a servant and living in Brentwood, Essex. Her culinary skills were excellent as she had worked in kitchens of Manor Houses; it was Alice who inspired her daughter in law Jessie to excel in the kitchen!

Alice on her trip to Australia in 1912 had daughters Nell (13), Doris (10), Alice (6), son Stan (2) and the youngest, Miriam, eight months old in her charge. She died at aged 66 having lived 25 years in Victoria.



THE LIGHTHOUSE METHODIST CHURCH

The church is situated at 120 Markhouse Road in Walthamstow. It was built in 1893 to replace a house in Myrtle Road that had previously been used for meetings. Captain King, of The Bullard King Steamer Company, was a supporter of the church. He donated the site and paid for the building. King asked architect J Williams Dunford to design the building with a nautical theme, even though it is 35 miles from the sea. The lighthouse originally had a revolving light which was used on Sundays during the service. The church struggled with debt during the First World War and was damaged by incendiary bombs during the Second World War but is still in use today.

The interior of the building is also of special architectural interest despite the alterations which were made in 1979. Originally the church was one large space with a balcony providing further seating above the ground floor. The balcony was filled in to create a solid floor, downstairs was divided into smaller meeting rooms and the sanctuary was moved to the top floor. The dark wood pews are original and face a stained-glass window which is on permanent loan to the church. The stained-glass window is on an internal wall, so it is illuminated by an electric light behind the leaded glass.

THE LAST WORD**Kathy Unwin**

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Society, we are holding an open day at Vestry House Museum and there will also be a celebration at our AGM in November. I hope many of you will be able to attend.

A renewal of membership form is included in the journal.

Online records at www.wffhs.org.uk

BAPTISMS	Start	End
Chingford	1865-07-02	1877-10-07
Holy Trinity Leytonstone	1876-01-27	1899-01-11
Marsh Street Congregational	1788-01-13	1837-06-04
St Peter's in the Forest	1844-10-20	1916-12-08
Waltham Abbey & Leyton Wesleyan	1818-07-05	1837-07-09
St Mary's Walthamstow	1834-06-29	1856-02-10
MARRIAGES		
St John's Leytonstone	1848-08-21	1852-01-11
St Peter's in the Forest	1844-11-18	1942-10-17
St Mary's Walthamstow	1651-11-20	1788-10-14
Chingford	1837-09-20	1911-06-03
BURIALS		
Chingford	1791-01-02	1963-04-16
Marsh Street Congregational	1788-01-18	1835-07-19
Paradise Row Baptist	1825-08-22	1857-04-23
Queens Road Cemetery	1872-10-02	1969-12-19
St John's Leytonstone	1834-05-30	1979-04-25
St Lawrence and the Holy Cross	1813-01-03	1878-05-07
St Mary's Leyton	1783-10-12	1984-06-22
St Mary's Walthamstow	1743-04-08	1979-12-18
St Peter's in the Forest	1845-12-21	1949-09-26
MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS		
All Saints Chingford	1585-08-03	1977-00-00
St Peter & St Paul Chingford	1856-01-11	2016-00-00
Chingford Mount Cemetery	1799-08-27	2016-09-30
Holy Innocents High Beach	1880-00-00	2012-06-11
Marsh Street Congregational	1787-07-00	1877-11-00
Paradise Row Baptist	1770-01-05	1893-07-23
St John's Leytonstone	1830-00-00	2016-00-00
St Lawrence and the Holy Cross	1066-10-14	1938-11-22
St Mary's Leyton	1610-00-00	1985-03-08
St Mary's Walthamstow	1436-10-28	2016-07-18
St Patrick's RC Cemetery	1907-05-26	1979-01-30
St Peter's in the Forest	1843-00-00	2012-06-23
Queens Road Cemetery	1848-03-14	2015-08-20
St Thomas Upshire	1908-01-01	2012-02-06
Waltham Abbey Old Cemetery	1914-12-08	1921-03-31
Waltham Abbey New Cemetery	1940-04-24	1947-11-04
War Memorials	1914-11-11	1918-06-02
West Ham	1918-11-10	1918-11-10

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each
month (except August) at 8 pm
Spruce Hill Baptist Church Hall, Brookscroft Road,
Walthamstow E.17

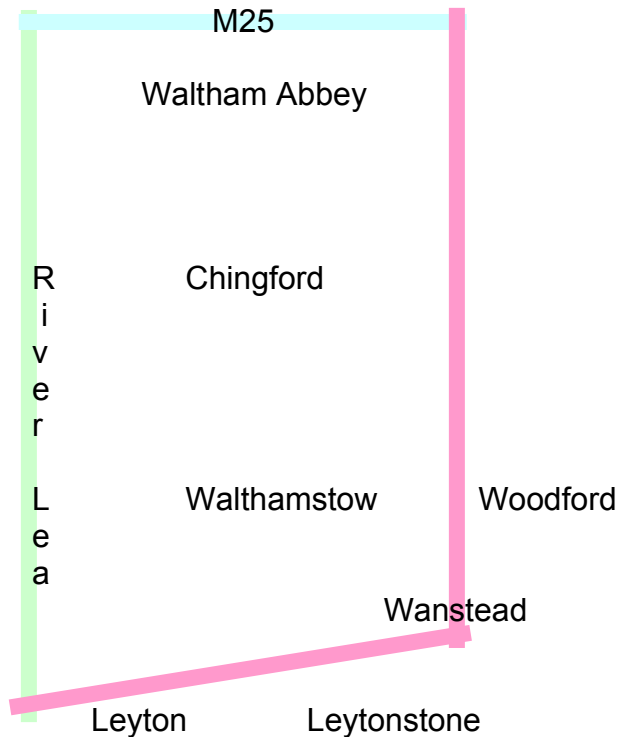
Subscription rates
UK: Individual £10, Family £12, Institutions £12
All overseas members: £14

ALL ARE WELCOME, PLEASE COME AND JOIN US

DIARY

October 9th	Talk – DNA Analysis: The Future of Family History? Donna Rutherford
November 13th	AGM
December 11th	Talk – Insanity in the Family Kathy Chater
January 8th	Quiz on family and local history
February 12th	Talk – My Life Growing Up in Walthamstow Mo Shanks
March 12th	Workshop - Researching Family Businesses and Bankruptcy

Waltham Forest FHS



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

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Family History Society

***If undelivered please return to:-
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