

ISSN 1365-8883



Vol. 15 No.3

Autumn/Winter 2001

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(To be sent all items for publication in the Witheridge Times - family news,  
articles, etc., and all requests for copies of the certificates held by the  
Witheridge Society)

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Continued on back cover



Volume 15 Number Three

Autumn/Winter 2001

**CONTENTS**

**PAGE**

Editorial	2
Family News	3 and 4
New Members	5
What A Party That Was!	6
Elizabeth Maude Witheridge	7
A Devonshire Couple Re-visited	8 and 9
A Place In The Family	10, 11, 12, 13 and 14
Bryant Family Tree	15
Wood Family Tree	16 and 17
Finders... Seekers	18, 19, 20 and 21
Proceed With Caution	22 and 23
Subscription Reminder	23
Witheridge Re-Union 2002	24, 25 and 26
Beauchamp Henry - Again	27 and 28
Hammett Family Tree	29
Who was John Gunn?	30 and 31
Christmas Greeting	32

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**VISIT THE WITHERIDGE SOCIETY WEB SITE!**

**<http://www2.ebtech.net/~kathpaul>**

## *EDITORIAL*

Dear Readers, For the last time in year 2001, we hope to present you with articles on a variety of subjects, concerning several families, and as you read give a thought not only to the content, but to the contributors who have gathered information, and taken time and trouble to send it to us. Ask yourself if you have any information which would be of interest, and send it to us, or send us your comments on the magazine and its contents.

Two articles here draw attention to mis-information, and we recommend that you read these and remember!

This year has been one of hardship and tragedy around the world. The attacks on America are foremost in mind, but nearer to home the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in cattle and sheep, has been a disaster for many. The outbreak in Devon, on which I commented in the Summer issue, died down in September, and this is the first week (mid October) in which no new cases have been reported anywhere in Britain. Devon was very badly hit, but the counties of Cumbria and Northumberland were even more badly affected, and the tourist industry in all areas has suffered.

Large areas of the country have no grazing animals, and some people say that the countryside will never be the same again, with many farmers bankrupt and unable to re-stock their farms. What would our farming ancestors have made of it all? If you have photographs of our hills and fells with roaming sheep and cattle - treasure them!

I would like to look into the future and say that I am sure that next year will be a better year, but as I am unable to do that I can only hope and pray for our readers to have a good two thousand and two. Graham and I join in sending our very best wishes to all our members, with hopes for a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

*Joyce and Graham.*



## FAMILY NEWS

It is with sadness that we report the death, on the 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2001, of Member 129, Mrs. Mavis Witheridge of Rockingham, Western Australia.

Her daughter, Mrs. Carmel Wiseman, wrote to me telling me of her mother's last days, which were such that Carmel could not wish her mother linger with her any longer.

We remember Mavis's visit to England in 1995, when we had the pleasure of meeting her and laughing at her graphic descriptions of Witheridges she had met who were but names to us. Our interest in her branch of the family was first aroused by John, and research revealed a marriage of a Polly Witheridge to an Alfred Percy Witheridge. Considerable research was needed to find out what relationship, if any, these two persons bore to each other before they were married, and the answer was surprising. Of even more interest to us was that Mavis, née Courts, was married to William Alfred George Witheridge, a grandson of Polly and Albert, and actually knew Polly!

Several Witheridges were gathered at our house when Mavis visited, and we were all entertained by her comments on the Witheridge family in general - she repeated them several times - "Good looking, and all had beautiful hair, but A FUNNY LOT!!!"

I looked forward to Mavis's interesting letters, and I know that she will be missed by many people.

We send our sympathy to Carmel and family in their loss, and our thoughts are with them in their time of grief.



The terrible events in New York on September 11<sup>th</sup> caused those of us who know her to worry about Annette Witheridge, a journalist who lives in downtown New York. We sent an urgent brief e-mail, and received a reply to the effect that Annette was 'in the thick of it' but all right. Thank you for replying Annette, we hope to hear more later.

Our representative in New Zealand, Velma Metcalfe, tells us that their winter had a few cold spells with hard frosts which caused water pipes to burst in some parts of Wellington - a most unusual occurrence there. Velma's husband, Rodney, now has a job with Radio New Zealand. This is fine, but he has to be at work at 5.0. a.m., although this has its compensations as he is free from 3.0 p.m.

Velma has been having trouble with her throat, and has been diagnosed as having a rare disorder called spasmodic dysphonia, which causes muscle spasms which affect her voice. She says that she is pleased that she has been able to have treatment, which involves 3 -4 hours in hospital, and a rather unpleasant injection. The good part is that her voice is improved and speaking is easier, although she will have to continue with the treatment every 3 -4 months from now on. We wish her well.

Member No 181 Mrs. Gwenda Mason

Please note that Gwenda's e-mail address is:-

**[gwenda@masonfam.co.uk](mailto:gwenda@masonfam.co.uk)**

Member No. 157 Mrs. Sharon Brydges

Sharon's correct mailing address is:-

**Mrs. Ted Brydges,  
8902-17 Avenue,  
North Battleford,  
Saskatchewan,  
Canada  
S9A 2T9**

Sharon's e-mail address is:-

**[ted.bridges@sk.sympatico.ca](mailto:ted.bridges@sk.sympatico.ca)**

## NEW MEMBERS

Mem. No. 184 **Mr. Robert Frank Tuck**  
**Mrs. Audrey Tuck**

2, Pardy's Hill,  
Corfe Mullen,  
Wimbourne Minster,  
Dorset,  
BH21 3HW

(1) Robert Frank Tuck and Audrey, née Boniface (2) Frank Tuck and (3) May Scott (4) Frank Scott and (5) Lily Miriam Witheridge (6) Francis Robert Witheridge and (7) Sarah Jane Curtis (8) Robert Witheridge and (9) Emma Shepherd (10) Robert Witheridge and (11) Ann Light (12) Arthur Witheridge and (13) Elizabeth Bowden (14) John Witheridge and (15) Alice Tamlin (16) John Witheridge and (17) Margaret Brooking (18) John Witheridge and (19) Elizabeth ? (20) Arthur Witheridge and (21) Mary? (22) Arthur Witheridge and (23) Johane Edgecombe.

Robert's line, now resident in Dorset, goes back through the Poole and Bournemouth area, to Plymouth and to Ermington. His connection with other members of the Witheridge Society can be traced from his relationship to Arthur Witheridge and Elizabeth Bowden, and he is related to all the families of the Ermington line.

We welcome Robert and Audrey, who herself has a very interesting name, and we hope that they will derive benefit and interest from their association with the Society.

*I have an apology to make to Robert and Audrey, as I should have included their names in the Summer edition of the magazine- please accept my apologies. Joyce, Editor.*

## **WHAT A PARTY THAT WAS!**

Or, as we might formally call it "What a North American Re-Union that was"! Kathy and Paul Witheridge of Ontario, and John Witheridge of Orono, who lives closest to the venue, organised this gathering for Witheridge families and friends over the weekend of 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2001.

It began with an evening meal at the Port Darlington Marina at Bowmanville, which is a beautiful venue. Bowmanville was where the Witheridge families from Bradworthy, England, first settled when they arrived in Canada in 1841. They worshipped in the Ebenezer Bible Christian Church there - now the United Church, and Witheridges lie buried in the cemetery.

The Re-union meeting was held in the Church hall, and various 'certificates of achievement and merit' were presented by Kathy in a light hearted ceremony. Kathy also presented a book about the Witheridge families to the Curator of the Bowmanville Museum.

The itinerary for Sunday included a visit to Witheridge Farm, and Henry Farm, which has a Witheridge connection. The present owners of Henry Farm were entertained to lunch the previous day. The former home of Edgar Witheridge at Bowmanville was visited, Bowmanville Cemetery, and the Archibald Winery for Wine Tasting, but I am not sure which came first!

Our Witheridge Web Site had a report on the event, and the local newspaper carried an item on the Re-Union.

The 63 visitors included families and friends from America, Canada and England, some of whom had never met before, and did not know of each other previously. It seems that it was a joyous weekend with the question being asked at the end "When is the next Re-Union?"



**ELIZABETH MAUDE WITHERIDGE**

**Born 30<sup>th</sup> June. 1871. died 11<sup>th</sup> October. 1957**

Information from Barbara Di Mambro

Elizabeth was the third child of George Witheridge (Bradworthy family) and Susan McWat(t)ers. She married Patrick Arthur English (born Tipperary, Ireland) in Darlington, Ontario, in 1889. They moved to Bedford, Quebec, after the birth of their first child - Mary Edna - my grandmother.

They eventually moved back to Ontario, settling in Toronto. Patrick died in 1905 before the birth of his fifth child, Ina. Elizabeth re-married Harold Hannah and became known as Granma Hannah. When she died, Elizabeth was buried beside Patrick and their son, Homer, in St. John Norway Cemetery, Toronto, Ontario.

There are many descendants from this line living across Canada in places such as Richmond Hill, Thornhill, Waterloo, Peterborough, Brooklin, Geraldton, Aurora, Ottawa, Brantford, Sault Ste.Marie-Ontario, Grand Prairie, Edmonton, Calgary-Alberta, Victoria, Westbank-British Columbia, Carmen, Winnipeg-Manitoba. One family lives in California.

Anyone interested in more detail and family charts may contact:-

Mrs. Barbara Di Mambro  
49, Addison Street, Richmond Hill, Ontario, L4C 9N1  
Phone 905-737-4394, fax-905-737-5054 email [abns@home.com](mailto:abns@home.com)

## **A DEVONSHIRE COUPLE RE-VISITED**

by Joyce Browne

The Devonshire couple were William Crossing, who wrote the "Guide to Dartmoor", and his wife, Emma Witheridge.

Sheila and I collaborated on researching this couple, and I wrote "A Devonshire Couple" and Sheila wrote an article on Emma Witheridge Crossing which appeared in the 'Dartmoor News' of July, 2001. Imagine our feelings when, in the same edition of the 'Dartmoor News' Sheila found an article by a Mr. John Bainbridge, giving news of the surprising discovery, in the attic of an old hotel in Princetown, of a diary written by Emma Crossing.

Even more surprising were the contents of the diary, which John Bainbridge describes as "pure dynamite" He said that he was so shocked that he read all through the night and into the next day and goes on to say "For the diary leaves not a shadow of doubt that Emma, not William, was the real Dartmoor expert, and that Emma penned many of the works that made William famous".

Whilst it was rather pleasant to discover that the Witheridge half of the partnership had such talent, it was not pleasant to view William as a Victorian despot, unwilling to admit to his wife's abilities or to have them acknowledged by the public.

In an entry given as 11<sup>th</sup> August, 1898 the diary says " ....He, (William) has scanned my written notes and bid me to put them in good order, which I have done. Once again I have pleaded with my dear husband to let this new account of moorland history be published under my own name, but William is adamant. He says it is not seemly for a work of topographical interest to appear under the name of a lady and therefore, as the master of the household, it must be published under his own."

There is much more, and Mr. Bainbridge's article concludes: "Book jackets will need to be altered and bibliographies amended. Dartmoor will never seem to be quite the same again."

Before we start altering and amending - hear the conclusion of the matter.

Sheila wrote to the Dartmoor News, asking for the address of the author, and asking where she could see the diary. (I could hardly wait to have a sight of "Emma's perfect copperplate writing") She received a reply from John Bainbridge:

**"I have to come clean and admit that the diary has no author but**

**myself"**

He said that his purpose in writing it was to make modern authors check their sources and to combat the nonsense about Dartmoor which appears in so many publications.

He also complimented Sheila on her article and said that it showed real research had gone into it.

For my part I am pleased that, after all, William has turned out to be the gentleman we thought he was, but there is a moral here somewhere!

It may be, that had we been able to check dates and places given in the supposed diary, we might have found discrepancies which would have revealed that it was a figment of the imagination (and what an imagination!) so - the moral is - check your sources, or at least ask your informants where their information came from.



## A Place in the Family?

by Kim Cook

### Witheridge Farm, Exton, Somerset

#### Part II -Musical Houses!

*We have already seen that in 1841 Witheridge Farm at Exton had been occupied by John Wood and his family. The evidence suggests that the family had been living there in 1835, and may have been there even earlier than that. By 1851 John Wood's son William had taken over, occupying the 16<sup>th</sup>-century house built in the style of the old Devon longhouses. The farm, which had covered 134 acres in 1851, dwindled to 100 acres in 1861, but by 1871 had grown to 160 acres.*

By 1881, the picture has changed considerably. William Wood is no longer at Witheridge Farm, but has moved in with his daughter Sophia and her husband. Sophia, who twenty years earlier had been a dairymaid, is now the wife of John Howe, who farms 160 acres at Limy Close, Exton. They have three daughters, Annie J, Elizabeth A and Ada S, aged seven, five and two respectively. William Wood, father-in-law, aged 73, is described as a widower and a retired farmer. So, at some time between 1871 and 1881, William's wife Ann had died, and William had retired.

The 1881 census reveals the whereabouts of another of William's daughters. His fourth child, Elizabeth, had been born circa 1838, during the family's unexplained time in the Midlands. This information enabled me to recognise her as the wife of another member of the Howe family! Elizabeth, who was living at home in 1861, had left by 1871, presumably to marry Thomas Howe, also a farmer, and 13 years her senior. By 1881, 55-year-old Thomas Howe is farming 336 acres at South Quarne, a hamlet just north of Exton, employing one labourer and three servants. His wife, Elizabeth, is aged 42, and her place of birth is shown as Dudley, Staffordshire. Also in the household are Mary A Down, aged 17, and Annie M Down, 15, both nieces and general servants, both born in Exford, and William J G Wood, aged 3, a nephew, who had been born in Exton. William is presumably the child of either Charles or John, but his father does not appear to be in the locality.

This census entry provides a clue as to the possible whereabouts of another

of the Wood daughters. If the two Down girls are daughters of one of Elizabeth's sisters, then the rest of the family might also be in the area. Sure enough, the census index shows that in the village of Exford, William Down, a 56-year-old blacksmith is living with his wife Ann, and children Bessy J, William J, Herbert C and Ada E (aged 9, 7, 4 and 1 respectively). Ann's age is given as 44, and her place of birth Exford. This tallies exactly with the details for Ann (née Wood), so it seems that this is indeed Elizabeth's sister, and that two of Ann's older children are living with their aunt and uncle, who have no children of their own at home.

William Wood's eldest daughter Charlotte and her husband William Holloway have moved away from Exton, and are now in Kingsbrompton, where 49-year-old William is described as a 'farmer, retired'. They now have five children at home, William, aged 22, a wheelwright, Henry George, aged 13, a labourer, and Charity F, Lucy Jane and Albert Charles, aged 11, nine and four respectively. The eldest daughter, Mary, who in 1871 had been a 15-year-old servant in the house of her grandfather William Wood at Witheridge Farm, is now a maid in the household of Rev Frederick Hancock, Rector of Meshaw in Devon.

A search of the IGI revealed that William's daughter Emma had married, in 1871, George Wright. In 1881, George and Emma were living at Venne Cottage in Upton, a village about half-way between Exton and Clayhanger. With them was their daughter Ada S, aged 9, and Sophia W Down, aged 13, described as a servant. This proved to be the daughter of Emma's sister Ann. Ann and her husband William had farmed out their two eldest daughters to live with another sister, Elizabeth Howe, while their four youngest children and a lodger stayed at home.

Of Priscilla Wood, who would by now have been 46, there is no trace, nor have I yet found any evidence of a local marriage. However, the IGI search produced more information about the Wood family, which I have included on the family tree.

John Wood, who was living at Witheridge Farm with his father in 1871, is no longer in Exton, and does not appear to be in Somerset at all. Likewise, Charles, who had been at Huckham in 1871, has also moved on with his wife Jane and children William and Jane. In 1881 William and Jane Wood would have been 15 and 12 respectively, but there is no trace of them in Exton or in the near neighbourhood.

Instead, Huckham is now occupied by the Bryant family, originally from Devon. Daniel Bryant, aged 41, was born in Clayhanger, Devon, and his 41-year-old wife, Loveday, had been born in Hockworthy. They have two daughters, two-year-old Laura, also born in Hockworthy, and one-year-old Emily, born in Huntsham. Daniel is described as a 'farmer out of business'. How this can be when he is living on a 100-acre farm, I am not sure!

So with all the Wood family gone from Witheridge Farm, who had taken over? The 1881 census shows that Witheridge Farm, now 161 acres (just 1 acre larger than in 1871), is occupied by Exton-born Robert Howe, aged 28, his 27-year-old wife Susannah (born in Cutcombe), and three servants, Emily Phillips, George Baker and William Stevens.

It is tempting to think that perhaps Robert Howe is the son of Thomas (b 1825) and brother of John. Elizabeth Wood could have been Thomas's second wife, and therefore step-mother to her own sister Sophia! That is certainly one possibility, but there are others. In 1881 in the Exton area, there are at least nine adult males with the surname How or Howe.

At Kendle, a 250-acre farm in Exton, there is Samuel Howe (67, born Exford) with his wife Frances, their daughter Joan Clatworthy (22, born Kingsbrompton) and her husband John Clatworthy, aged 26, a farm bailiff, as well as Samuel's sister Grace (78, born Exford) and brother John (77, born Exford).

At Red Door, another 250-acre farm in Exton, there is a second Robert Howe, (49, born Exton), his wife Maria (54), and their children Mary (29, born Exton), Anna (25, born Cutcombe), Lucy (19), and Thomas (14), both born in Exton, as well as Joseph How, a 65-year-old agricultural labourer born in Exton, described as a servant. There is no indication of any relationship between Robert and Joseph, but it is possible that this Robert is the father of the one now at Witheridge Farm.

Still more members of the Howe/How family are at Clarkes, in Kingsbrompton, where John How, aged 71, is a stonemason. He must have had children, for living with him and his wife Jane are their grandchildren Ann How aged 6 and Annie How aged 2. It's unusual to come across two children in the same family with the same Christian name, so were these two children sisters, or were they cousins?

I tried to resolve this query by checking entries on the IGI. In the course of

these checks I discovered that Elizabeth Melhuish, who married John Wood in 1807, was the daughter of John Melhuish and Margaret Howe - yet another link between the Wood and Howe families. However, the areas of Exton, Exford, Kingsbrompton and other surrounding parishes are positively crawling with Howe families, and without further corroborative evidence, it would be rash to make assumptions about their relationships to one another.

Whatever the truth of the various Wood and Howe relationships, both families have gone from Witheridge Farm by 1891. At least four generations of the Wood family, and one of the Howe family, had lived and worked at Witheridge Farm. Where did they go, and who moved in to replace them?

Between 1881 and 1891, the three key families in this narrative, the Woods, the Howes and the Bryants, seem to have been playing musical houses.

Huckham Farm, occupied by Charles Wood in 1871 and by Daniel Bryant in 1881, is now occupied by Charles Wood's brother-in-law John Howe and his family who had been at Limy Close ten years earlier.

Witheridge Farm is now occupied by the Bryants, who were previously at Huckham, (more musical houses) although Daniel's age is now shown as 59, and Loveday's as 50! Of Laura (who would now have been 12) there is no mention, but 11-year-old Emily has been joined by a brother Charles, aged 9, born in Exton.

What brought the Bryants across the border from Devon into Somerset? An important clue lies in the details recorded for another farm in Exton. In 1881 Widlake Farm, a 300-acre holding, is occupied by Thomas Bryant, a 66-year-old widower who had been born in Clayhanger, Devon. With him are two unmarried daughters and a son - Harriet, aged 35, Emily aged 30 and Samuel aged 34. Harriet and Emily are shown as being born in Hockworthy, while Samuel's place of birth is given as Clayhanger. Ten years later, in 1891, Widlake farm is occupied by Samuel Bryant, a 39-year-old farmer born in Clayhanger. Samuel's much younger wife Jane (her age is given as 26) was born in Huish, Somerset, and their children Sidney, aged 4, and Edith, aged 2, were both born in Exton.

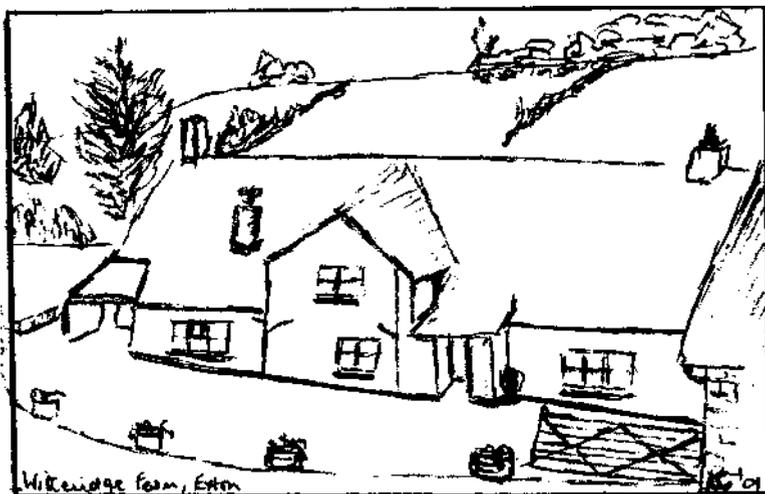
From the information given in the 1881 census, it seems likely that 41-year-old Daniel was also the son of Thomas, and brother of Samuel. However, the ages given in the 1891 census are less favourable to this theory. In those ten

years, the Bryants seem to have undergone a very strange ageing process! Between 1881 and 1891, Daniel has aged 18 years, and his wife Loveday nine years, while brother Samuel has aged only 5 years! Certainly the ages recorded in 1881 would seem to be the accurate ones. The spelling of Samuel's name as Bryand in 1891 may have been the result of a local enumerator misinterpreting the soft local burr. Interestingly, both Daniel and Samuel chose brides from Hockworthy. The brothers had apparently moved with their father when he came to Somerset.

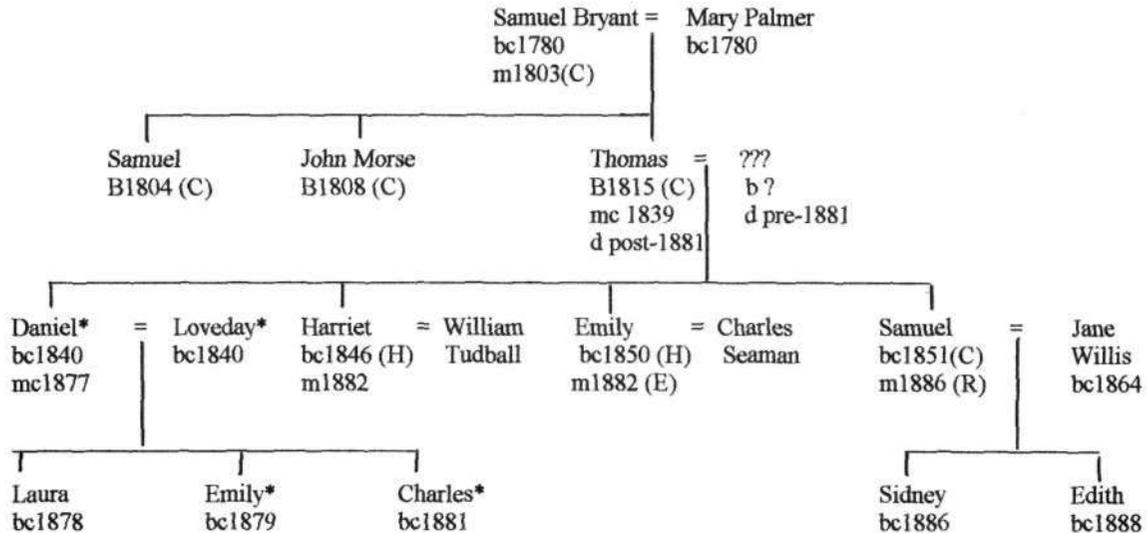
A search of the IGI revealed some additional information about the Bryant family, but Daniel's birth is not listed there. However, as there seems to be only one Bryant family in Clayhanger at that time, given the other evidence, I feel sure that Daniel is the son of Thomas.

Of the Wood family there is no trace in 1891, unless there are any descendants in the female line not yet identified.

During the fifty years for which census returns are currently available, Witheridge Farm had been occupied by various members of the Wood, Howe and Bryant families. There is no evidence that Witheridge Farm was ever occupied by a family called Witheridge. So could the name have come from the fact that this was, and still is, sheep farming country? Or could the farm have been occupied by Witheridges at some stage in the more distant past? Part III of this article reveals some surprising discoveries.



## THE BRYANT FAMILY OF WITHERIDGE FARM, EXTON



### KEY

C = Clayhanger, Devon

E = Exton, Somerset

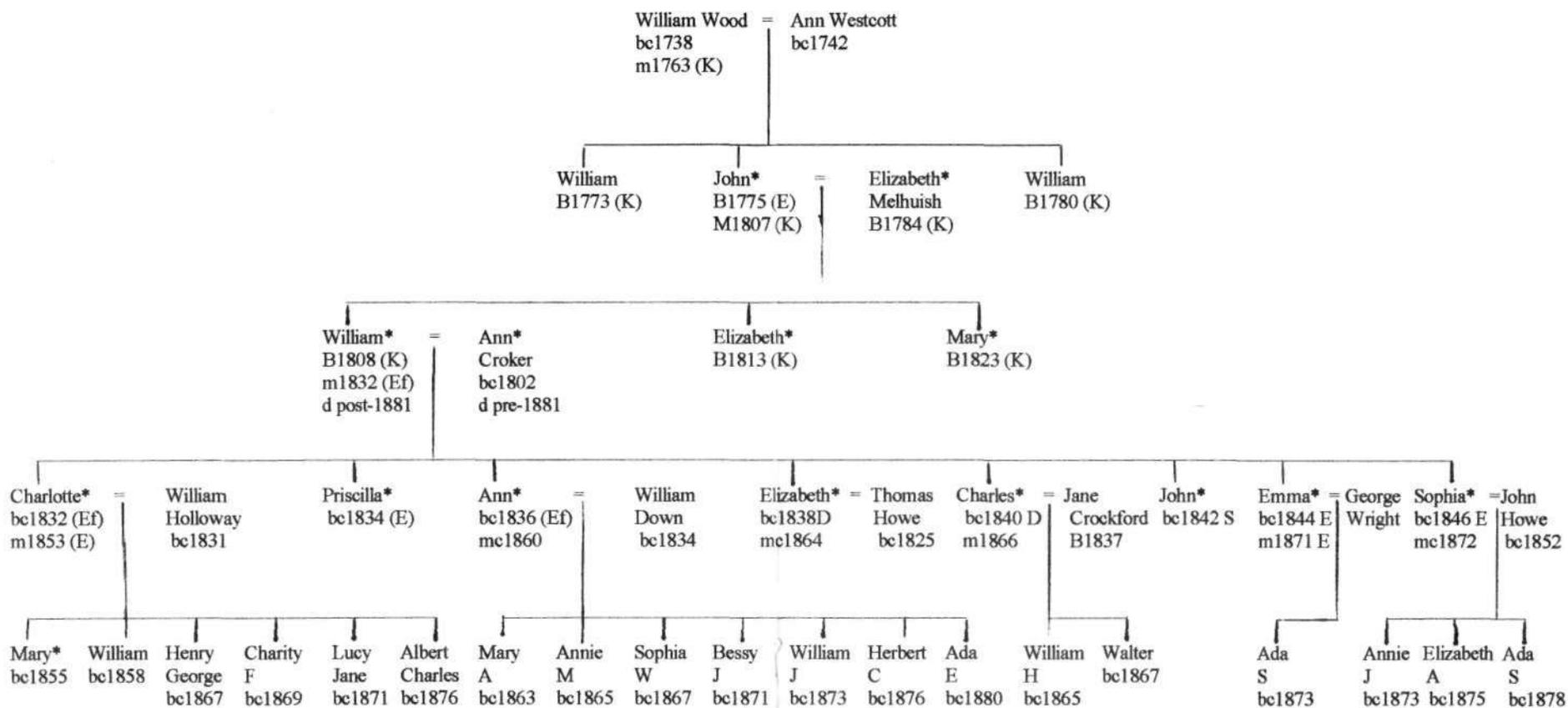
H = Hockworthy, Devon

R= Raddington, Somerset

\* = known to have lived at Witheridge Farm

Compiled by Kim Cook from information available, October 2001

## THE WOOD FAMILY OF WITHERIDGE FARM, EXTON



**KEY**

- D = Dudley, Worcs
- E = Exton, Somerset
- Ef = Exford, Somerset
- K = Kingsbrompton, Somerset
- S = Sedgely, Staffs.
- \* = known to have lived at Witheridge Farm

Compiled by Kim Cook from information available, October 2001

## FINDERS ...SEEKERS

Kathy Witheridge, seeking information from a new Web Site of Ellis Island, found a list of Witheridge names, which we are investigating as far as possible.

Ellis Island, New York, was the reception centre for immigrants and visitors to the United States. Many immigrants with unpronounceable last names were issued with papers in an abbreviated version of their name, but the Witheridge name seems to have remained intact, although some of the ages given may not be reliable.

Here is the list, followed by a second list with more detail, but not necessarily of the same people:-

Francis Witheridge arrived in US 1892 age 20 years  
Miss Witheridge of Tilbury, arrived in US in 1903 age unknown  
George Witheridge of London, arrived in US in 1908 age 49 years  
Charles Witheridge arrived in US in 1914 aged 26 years  
Bernard Edward Witheridge of London, arrived in US 1922 aged 26 years  
Leeba Percival Witheridge of Dartford, arrived in US in 1894 aged 27 years  
Charles R. Witheridge arrived in US in 1896 aged 21 years  
Robert Wetheridge of Porthleben ? Porthleven? arrived in US in 1910,  
aged 27 years

Name:	Frank Witheridge
Ethnicity:	British, English
Place of Residence:	Tilbury
Date of Arrival:	10 Jul 1920
Age on Arrival	29 years
Gender:	Male
Ship of Travel:	Anglo Chilean
Part of Departure:	London, England

This passenger is a member of the ship's crew

Name:	Robert Wetheridge
Ethnicity:	England, English
Place of Residence:	Porthleben, England
Date of Arrival:	23 Jul 1910
Age on Arrival:	27 years
Gender:	Male
Marital Status:	Single

Name: (continued) Robert Wetheridge  
Ship of Travel: Philadelphia  
Port of Departure: Southampton, England, UK

Name: Bernard Edward Witheridge  
Ethnicity: Great Britain  
Place of Residence: London, England  
Date of Arrival: 16 Oct 1922  
Age on Arrival: 26 years  
Gender: Male  
Marital Status: Single  
Ship of Travel: Orduna  
Port of Departure: Southampton, England, UK

Our investigations lead us to:-

Francis Witheridge arrived 1892, aged 20 - this points to a birth date of 1872, and the only candidate we know is Frank Witheridge, born 1892 in New Jersey. He was the son of Francis George Witheridge who was born in 1868 in Salcombe, England, and subsequently went to America. Francis George was descended from the South Milton and Thurlestone family. Our information on this branch of the family comes from the investigations of David Witheridge of Minneapolis.

Miss Witheridge of Tilbury - arrived 1903, age unknown -remains unknown  
?any ideas?

George Witheridge of London arrived 1908 age 49 years. Based on a date of birth of 1858/9 this is likely to have been George Causey Witheridge, junior, of the Bideford family. He lived in the St Pancras district of London with his wife, Margaret Rumsey, and by 1908 they had six children. He certainly returned to London and was the informant of death of his mother, Mary Ann Bussell who died in London in 1910.

Charles Witheridge arrived 1914 aged 26. The name 'Charles' does occur in the South Milton/New Jersey family, but the dates of birth do not fit. In England a 'Charles' was born in 1886, in Swansea, and I pursued this line of enquiry for some time until I found that this Charles died in 1912. Can anyone tell us who was the Charles who travelled to America in 1914?

Bernard Edward Witheridge arrived 1922 aged 26 years. Bernard Edward was born in Constantine, Cornwall, in 1895, and was the son of John Witheridge and Mary Ann Thomas of the CombeMartin family. His father was a grocer and general dealer who moved to London after a bankruptcy. Bernard returned from America and settled in Cornwall, and died in Redruth in 1960. It would appear from the GRO indexes that he married in 1952, but as the administration of his Will was left to his sisters, Norah and Kathleen Witheridge, it seems unlikely that he had children, or that his wife survived him.

Leeba Percival Witheridge of Dartford, arrived 1894 aged 27. Leeba Percival, the daughter of Jacob Thomas Witheridge and Charlotte Caroline Hardwick, of the Ilfracombe/CombeMartin family who had moved to Newcastle and then to Fulham, London, was born in 1881 (well documented) This indicates that either the date of arrival given is not correct or the age given is not correct, but if the arrival date is correct then she would have been only 13 years old. We do know that Leeba Percival went to America where she married a Luke Gallagher, but we do not know of any issue from this marriage.

Charles R. Witheridge arrived 1896 aged 21 years. The 'R' stands for 'Roberts'. Charles Roberts Witheridge, born 1874, in Tynemouth, England, was the son of Thomas Witheridge, of the CombeMartin family, and Ann Serena Roberts. We did know that he went to America, but have no other information. His nephew, another Charles Robert Witheridge, was born and remained in Tyneside and was the father of our member, Carol Goins.

Robert 'Wetheridge' of Porthleben arrived 1910 aged 27 years. The place of residence is likely to have been 'Porthleven', Cornwall, and the most likely Robert is the boy born to Robert Witheridge and Elizabeth Ann Kitchen in 1880 - again the date of birth does not quite fit. 'Robert' is a name occurring in the Porthleven family, who belong to the CombeMartin family. The Robert born in 1880, married in Helston and lived in Porthleven, and died in Kerrier, Cornwall, in 1939.

Any additional information will be welcome.

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Members of the South Milton and Thurlestone family may be interested in a tit-bit of information given to us by Sheila Jewell. This is a record of two burials in Bigbury, South Devon:-

10<sup>th</sup> August 1875      Mary Ann Witheridge, aged 72  
24<sup>th</sup> September 1875      John Witheridge, aged 72

These were John Witheridge, son of Andrew Witheridge and Abigail Tabb, and his wife Mary Luckham. The GRO indexes show these deaths as being in the Kingsbridge registration district.

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From Kathy Witheridge comes a note of four burials in North Devon Cemeteries:

In High Bray Churchyard there is a marble headstone which is inscribed "In loving memory of William Witheridge, Bray Town, High Bray, who died April 27, 1904 aged 60 years. Peace Perfect Peace."

Another marble headstone reads: "In loving memory of Elizabeth, beloved wife of the late William Witheridge, who passed peacefully away Jan. 18, 1943, in her 83<sup>rd</sup> year. Loved by all."

Ref. Nos. OR511;GO37B

These headstones are in memory of William Witheridge, the son of Edward Witheridge and Mary Gear, and his wife Elizabeth Gibbs. William and Elizabeth stayed put in the Barnstaple area, but others of Edward and Mary's children left Devon for Bristol and Salisbury.

In East Buckland Graveyard lie a son and daughter-in-law of William and Elizabeth Gibbs. A marble headstone records: "In loving memory of Mary Maria Witheridge, who passed away February 28 1964, aged 76 years also William John Witheridge, beloved husband of the above, who passed away June 3, 1967, aged 82 years"  
Reference No. O/R 326; O/R 333; G 091A

We have William John's birth certificate, so we know that he was the son of William and Elizabeth Gibbs, and we know that he married in 1911, but we do not know the maiden name of Mary Maria.

We do not have a record of any children of William John and Mary Maria, and, as far as we know, he had only one sibling, a sister, Mary E. born 1880.

## **PROCEED WITH CAUTION**

by Sheila Jewell

Research on Beauchamp Henry Witheridge has led us to enquire into the Hammett family, 'Hammett' being the maiden name of Dorcas Witheridge, Beauchamp Henry's mother.

Jennie Smith has sent most interesting notes on the ancestry of Dorcas Hammett - interesting, but not accurate. Jennie herself is not convinced of the accuracy of these notes, but sent them as a background to our researches. The story is from the internet, designated as 'The Spracklen Surname Research Page' and gives the lineage of a group of men known as 'The Tolpuddle Martyrs'. These men lived in Tolpuddle, a small village in Dorset, in the early nineteenth century, and were Trade Unionists. Although belonging to a Trade Union was not illegal, these men were accused of administering illegal oaths (it was thought for the purpose of stirring up industrial trouble) and in 1834 they were sentenced to transportation to Australia for seven years. Although there was a public outcry at the savagery of the sentence, they were not pardoned until 1836, and they returned to England.

It is not our purpose here to go into the accuracy of the story of their lives subsequent to their return to Dorset, but one of the men was named **James Hammett**, and the list of his children is identical to that of 'our' Hammett - Henery or Henry with Dorcas (who married George Witheridge) named as one of them.

It would be interesting to think that one of our families had a connection with such famous men, but in another article in the magazine you will see that I have found the parentage of Henery Hammett, and the names of his children, all confirmed from the Parish registers, census returns and other documents. Dorcas was the child of Henery Hammett, and not the child of James, and it is doubtful whether Henry and James had any connection.

Searching the Internet for family names can sometimes be useful, but one should always be aware that the information is not necessarily about the family you are seeking.

Research takes time, and one should always work back from oneself or parents, with documentation. The 1881 Census for England, Scotland and Wales is very useful when you can get back to that date. When consulting the I.G.I. remember that only 70 per cent of Devon Parishes are on it, and always search and check the original sources of Parish registers.

Other sources available are School records which can be helpful after 1870. Town and County Record Offices hold Overseers of the Poor records containing lists of names of those who were receiving money and help. Apprentice lists show names of children who were apprenticed out owing to unfortunate circumstances.

Settlement records show those people who were trying to gain settlement in a Parish in case they fell on hard times and needed financial help. Tithe maps and Land Tax assessments are useful to find owners and tenants of land.

These are a few of my favourite things!

I do fear that Internet research can give false hope and the wrong information - so proceed with caution!

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#### SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Subscriptions to the Society are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2002. The current rates of subscription are:-

Overseas Members	£12.00
Family Membership UK	£10.00
Individual Membership	£7.00
Students and Members on Benefits	£5.00

Cheques should be made payable to **THE WITHERIDGE SOCIETY**, and sent to:-

Mr. Richard Witheridge,  
2, Apsley Road,  
Newbridge,  
BATH, Somerset  
BA1 3LP

## Witheridge Day 2002

At the 2001 AGM, it was agreed that the 2002 Reunion would be in Kent. An offer was made to organise the Kent reunion in the Medway area, so that members could enjoy a guided tour of the historic Chatham dockyard. However, this has not materialised.

In September, while Paul and Kathy Witheridge were in the UK, a number of members gathered to meet them for lunch. At this stage it was decided that there was an urgent need to make alternative arrangements for the Kent reunion, and Kim Cook agreed to take on the task. This she could do only if a venue could be found close to her home.

It was therefore decided to hold Witheridge Day 2002 in Tenterden. This attractive and historic town, with its wide, tree-lined High Street, and a wealth of fascinating buildings of all ages, is justifiably known as The Jewel of the Weald. Among the excellent hotels is the Collina House Hotel, which is away from the main road, with grounds overlooking an orchard. With sufficient reservations we can have a group discount. Roy and Kim have offered to hold the AGM itself in their home, which is not far from the hotel. As with the last reunion, we are offering a choice of interesting and historical local visits.

Food and drink would have interested our ancestors just as much as they do today's Witheridges. Mills were a key factor in providing food, and every village had either a windmill or a watermill within reach. The Tenterden area has many surviving mills which are open to the public. Two that are close together are the Swanton watermill and Willesborough windmill, and it should be possible to visit both in an afternoon.

Water was not the safe drink it now is, and many of our ancestors would have drunk beer, wine, cider or juices made from fruit or other plants. Kent was a great centre for hop growing, and Tenterden Museum has a special section devoted to the hop industry. Tenterden also has a vineyard which produces award-winning wines, as well as other traditional drinks such as elderflower cordial. The vineyard has a rural museum, plant centre, herb garden and cafe, and tours of the winery are available.

Close to the vineyard is the Ellen Terry Museum at Smallhythe. This beautiful Tudor house, now run by the NT, was once the home of the famous

actress, and now houses a theatrical museum, with a barn theatre in the grounds.

The Kent and East Sussex Railway runs restored steam trains from Tenterden, across the Rother Valley to Bodiam Castle, another NT property. Bodiam, built in 1385, is now largely ruined, but it is possible to see the shape and form of the original structure, which was a family home as well as a fortification. Combined tickets are available for the two-way steam train journey and entrance to the castle.

Other local attractions include the C M Booth motor museum at Rolvenden, the famous Great Dixter gardens, and Sissinghurst Castle Gardens, once the home of Vita Sackville West and now an NT property. Tenterden parish church is a beautiful historic building which has links with Lord Nelson (his daughter Horatia married Rev. Philip Ward, vicar of Tenterden). Tenterden also has an excellent leisure centre with gym facilities and a pool where the shallow side slopes gently like a beach. The old-world port of Rye, with its famous pottery, is within striking distances, as is the designer outlet centre at Ashford.

Details of prices and opening times for next season are not yet available for most of these places, but members who have access to the internet can find more information at the following websites, and sites linked to them.

Tenterden	<a href="http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/mbett/town.htm">http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/mbett/town.htm</a> <a href="http://www.ukpages.net/kent/tentdn.htm">http://www.ukpages.net/kent/tentdn.htm</a> <a href="http://www.ashford.gov.uk/pages/liv5.htm">http://www.ashford.gov.uk/pages/liv5.htm</a> <a href="http://www.villagenet.co.uk/rotherlevels/villages">http://www.villagenet.co.uk/rotherlevels/villages</a>
Collina House	<a href="http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/collina.house">http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/collina.house</a>
Vineyard	<a href="http://www.chapelDownwines.co.uk">http://www.chapelDownwines.co.uk</a>
Mills:	<a href="http://www.kentwindmills.co.uk">http://www.kentwindmills.co.uk</a> <a href="http://burt2000.dhs.org/Kent_Windmills">http://burt2000.dhs.org/Kent_Windmills</a> (underscore after Kent)
K&ESR	<a href="http://kesr.org.uk">http://kesr.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.seetb.org.uk">www.seetb.org.uk</a>

National Trust     <http://www.Nationaltrust.org>  
(Bodiam  
(Sissinghurst  
(Smallhythe)

Enclosed with this issue is a two-part form. Please use one half to reserve your accommodation directly with the Collina House Hotel as soon as possible.

Many tourists flock to Tenterden in May to enjoy the orchard blossom tours, so we can't guarantee that Collina House would be able to accommodate late reservations. Once we have a number of reservations, an appropriate discount will be available. However, should anyone decide to come at the last minute, we hope to be able to arrange alternative accommodation nearby.

Please indicate, on the other half of the form, which of the sightseeing options you prefer, and return this section to Kim, who will then try and arrange the visits which most people have requested.



## **BEAUCHAMP HENRY - AGAIN!**

by Joyce Browne

Our search for the reason why Dorcas and George Witheridge should name their son 'Beauchamp Henry', led us into a search for the Hammett family, since the name does not occur on the Witheridge side.

We found that Dorcas had a brother of that name, but it seemed that we could not get back into the next generation, and we could not find Beauchamp Hammett himself on censuses. This was explained when Jennie Smith sent us a history of Beauchamp which revealed that he had become a sea captain, and emigrated to America, and died in Nova Scotia, Canada. There was also an internet history which gave Dorcas and Beauchamp as the children of a James Hammett, one of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, but we knew from the start that this was not correct. We knew that Dorcas and Beauchamp were the children of Henry, or 'Henery' and Mary Hammett, but we could not find a marriage for Henery and Mary, although Sheila Jewell searched the registers of Kingsbridge, Dodbrook and Malborough. Sheila also searched the registers of Kingsbridge, Dodbrook, Churchstow and Totnes for the Hammetts

An extensive trawl through census records revealed some information: In 1841 Henry Hammet and his wife Mary were living in Fore Street, Kingsbridge, with their three children, Henrietta, aged 4, Beauchamp aged 2, and Dorcas aged 8 months. Henry's occupation was that of 'Barber'

Other Hammetts were living in Fore Street - Robert Hammett, a cabinet maker aged 43, and his wife Maryann and family. He was Henry's elder brother. Henry's mother Mary, and his sister, also Mary, were living in Fore Street, as were two other Hammett families, who may or may not have been related.

In 1851, Henry and Mary were still living in Fore Street, and Henry is described as a 'Hair Draper'. Their child, Henrietta, was living with Henry's sister Mary, as was Laura Hammett, another niece of Mary's, but in addition to Beauchamp and Dorcas, Henry and Mary now had Arabella aged 8, John Lampton aged 5, and Mary Prowse aged 3. Sadly, Henrietta died and was buried in Kingsbridge in May, 1852.

Still living in Fore Street, Kingsbridge in 1861, Henry's occupation is given as 'hairdresser'. Children Beauchamp, Dorcas and Arabella have left, and son John L, is recorded as 'Lampton', Mary aged 13 is there, and an addition to the family - son Charles aged 6.

The Directories for the areas of Totnes, Dodbrook, Kingsbridge etc., showed several Hammetts in trade as hairdressers, which would lead to the supposition that they were related in some way.

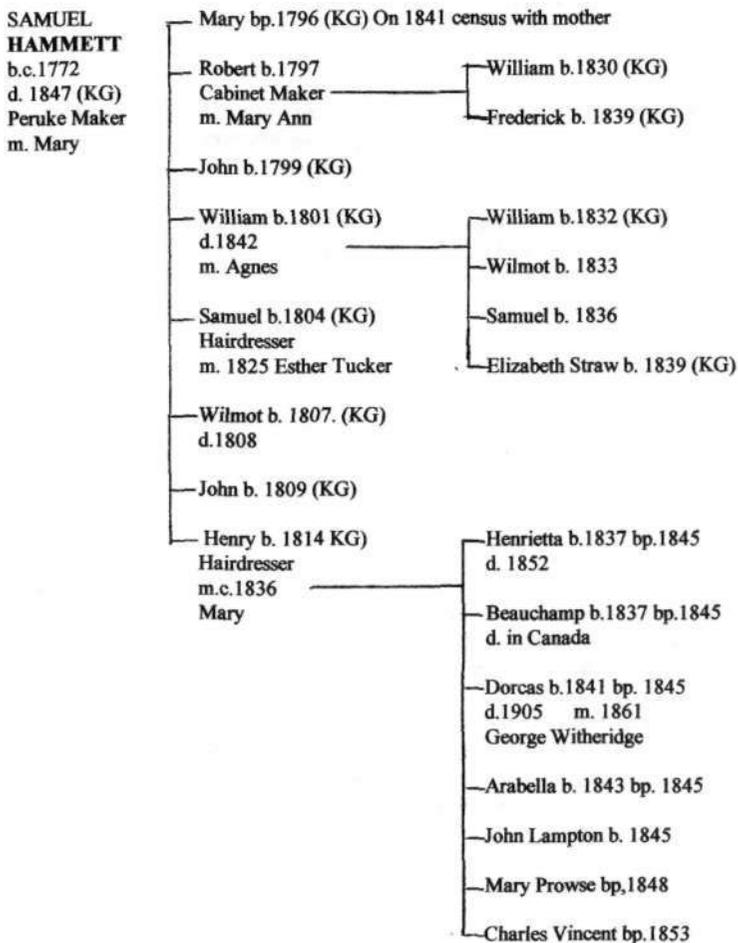
Sheila decided to go back to the registers of Kingsbridge, which are so difficult to decipher that Sheila thought that there must have been some thing wrong with the Vicar - he made so many errors! This time she began further back in time, and found Henry! He was the son of Samuel Hammett a peruke (wig) maker, and Mary, and was baptised at Kingsbridge on the 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1814.

Samuel Hammett was buried at Kingsbridge in 1847, aged 75, which would indicate a birth date of c. 1772, making it feasible that he was the father of Henry. There is another possibility as another Samuel Hammett features in the registers. He is Samuel, a barber, and he married an Elizabeth Efford in 1778, but as the first child registered to a Samuel is recorded for 1796, this makes it more likely that the first Samuel we mentioned was the father of Henry.

Sheila has been able to construct a family tree from her findings, which we reproduce here. Although she has not found another Beauchamp, Sheila noted that the inhabitants of the places she searched seemed to give their children very fancy names. One was called 'Horatio Bonaparte' - a conflict of loyalty if ever I heard one!

Another curious fact emerged - notice the dates of baptism of Henry and Mary's children. Although the first child, Henrietta, was born in 1837, she and four other children were not baptised until 1845, when they were all baptised on the same day, the 18<sup>th</sup> May.

**THE HAMMETT FAMILY OF KINGSBRIDGE, DEVON**



Dorcas Hammett and George Witheridge had issue of 8 girls and 5 boys

Constructed by Sheila Jewell from information available October, 2001

## **WHO WAS JOHN GUNN?**

by Alison Smith

In amongst family photos was a small picture of an elderly man and his dog. It was half of a 2 x 2 black and white photograph from the forties or fifties. The reverse gave his name to be JOHN GUNN.

A family scrapbook revealed the information that John Gunn was Auntie Tiney's cousin. Auntie Tiney was the younger sister of my grandmother and she never married. Who was John Gunn? He had to belong to me, somehow! We tried the maiden name of the sisters' mother, but could find no 'Gunns'.

We enquired on the Glamorgan Digest as another photograph told us that he lived in Cardiff and was 77. By this time the 'scrapbook' revealed that John Gunn had been knocked down on October 17<sup>th</sup> at the junction of North Road and Colum Road in Cardiff after Evensong at St. Alban's Church, and that he died in hospital a few days later. Joseph A. Williams, a Cardiff fruit merchant, was driving the lorry which knocked him down.

Williams appeared in Court before Mr. Guy Sixsmith, the Stipendiary Magistrate, and pleaded guilty to driving a motor lorry as a provisional licence holder without supervision, failing to display a distinguishing mark, and using a motor lorry not provided with mud guards. He was fined £6.00.

John Gunn's funeral was conducted a few days later by the Rev. John Lewis. Nowhere did the article give the year that this took place. We knew so much about this man, probably more than about most other family members - but who WAS John Gunn, and what was he to us?

We searched again through some family letters, written to each other by the brothers and sisters of my grandfather, between 1901 and 1908. On re-reading these letters we found John Gunn mentioned several times, and discovered that he was Second Mate on the SS Adana, which visited London, Liverpool and Cardiff. Was that why John had made his home in Cardiff? Most of the times that John was mentioned the writer went on to speak of 'Percy'. Now we wanted to know - who was Percy? Might John and Percy be brothers? A check on the 1881 census gave two GUNN families with brothers John and Percy as sons. Were either of those 'our' John Gunn? We had no idea, except that one family were in Essex, but the

other family were in Oxfordshire, in a village close to where my grandfather went to work. Was this the connection? How could we find out?

We still didn't know what year John was born, nor when he died. We knew that the accident was on October 17<sup>th</sup>, which we assumed was a Sunday, but which year? My son-in-law sat with my Prayer Book which gave dates for Advent Sundays to work out on which years the 17<sup>th</sup> was a Sunday, and he came up with 1954. That seemed about right, looking at the photo.

We again made a request on the Glamorgan Digest, asking if anyone had any information. Someone replied saying that he had rung the Cardiff Crematorium the previous week and it had worked for him. He helpfully supplied the telephone number.

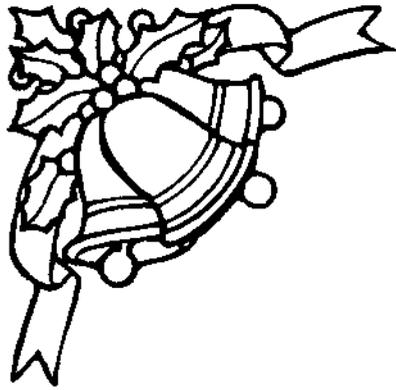
Cardiff Office were indeed extremely helpful, but no- no John Gunn or any other Gunn in 1954 - but wait - there was a John Gunn in 1948, and he was 77. That's our John! They also told us that his wife Mary (more information) was not buried there, but were able to supply a grave number and the fact that there was a headstone. That suggested that they probably had children, for the widow to live with. But who WAS John Gunn?

We returned to the 1881 census, now with a probable birth date, to find that John and Percy were part of the Oxfordshire family, with father George a merchant, and mother Sarah born in Tadmarton. That is where Grandfather's mother was from! John Gunn's mother and my grandfather's mother (my great grandmother) were sisters.

Our kind friend in Cardiff e-mailed us a photograph of the grave and a transcript of its inscription. He was also able to find and send us a copy of the obituary from the South Wales Echo, which tells us that John and Mary had two sons, John and George.

Now we know exactly who JOHN GUNN was. He was cousin by marriage to MARY GRACE WITHERIDGE'S oldest daughter. Mary Grace married James Welch in 1876.

*(This investigation is an example of persistence from which we should all take heart. Mary Grace was the daughter of Thomas Witheridge of Bradworthy - see article "A Little Bit of Mystery" in the Witheridge Times, Summer 2001. Ed.)*



## CHRISTMAS EVE

... and the night shall be filled with music,  
and the cares which infest the day  
shall fold their tents like Arabs,  
and as silently steal away ...

TO ALL OUR READERS

TO WISH YOU A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



**OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY** - continued from front cover

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Representative Canada and North America	Mrs. K.M. Witheridge, 343, Bright Street, Sarnia, Ontario, Canada N7T 465
Representative New Zealand	Mrs. Velma Metcalfe, 49 Chester Road, Tawa, Wellington, New Zealand

**Committee Members:**

Mr. Jason Cook 2, Rusthall Close Addiscombe, Croydon Surrey CRO 7YH (Responsibility for liaison on Youth projects)	Mr. Mark Witheridge, 27 Shenley Fields Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, Warw. B29 5AG
Mrs. Barbara Finemore 1 Corfe Avenue Hartley Vale Plymouth, Devon PL3 5SQ	Mrs. Carolyn Green 2 Thornhill Gardens, Newport, South Wales NP10 9GA

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2002 ARE DUE ON 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY!**

Subscriptions should be sent to the Membership Secretary:-

**Mr. Richard Witheridge**

Address on inside front cover

THE WITHERIDGE SOCIETY WEB SITE:

**<http://www2.ebtech.net/~kathpaul>**

