

Ewhurst History Society Journal



Welcome to the winter issue of the Ewhurst History Society Journal. Once again, we have some really interesting articles all written by members.

Three of the four members who spoke at our Christmas Family History meeting have written up their presentations. John Greenwood spoke about his Cornish ancestor Digory Isbell, who built an annex to offer shelter to travelling Methodists preachers. John Wesley visited six times. The Family History evening continued to evolve as, by an amazing coincidence, and unknown to either of them previously, our next speaker, Duncan Wesley, was exploring his family connection to John Wesley! Sadly, his research could not confirm a direct link to John Wesley, but did throw up a possible link to Arthur Garret Cowley Wesley, The Duke of Wellington, whose grandmother was related to our next speaker, Sylvia Wright! Sylvia's own presentation was about her family connection to the famous polar explorer Francis Leopold McClintock and the search for the Northwest Passage.

On a local note, I have written about a Nature Diary kept by three women at High Broom, a house on Pitch Hill, over a period of nearly 90 years. Martin Lockwood, who is also a churchwarden, has written about the restoration of some raised brick tombs in Ewhurst Church. Finally, I have added a note about the new information board recently erected in the Horseblock Hollow / Justice's Seat carpark, dedicated to the SOE agents who trained at nearby Winterfold.

		Page
John Greenwood	My Ancestor Digory Isbell	2
Duncan Wesley	The Noses Have It?	4
Sylvia Wright (née McClintock)	The Northwest Passage and Francis Leopold McClintock	7
Janet Balchin	The First Cuckoo	11
Martin Lockwood	Recent repair work in Ewhurst churchyard	14
Janet Balchin	New information board about Winterfold secret agents during WWII	17

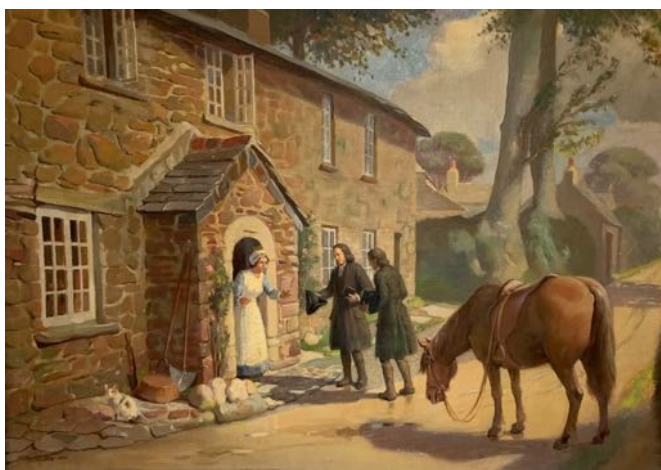
If you have an idea for an article (approx. 1,000 words and a few illustrations) please get in touch with the editor at janet.balchin@googlemail.com

MY ANCESTOR DIGORY ISBELL

By John Greenwood

My ancestor Digory Isbell, born in about 1718, was a stonemason and builder who lived in the hamlet of Trewint, near Altarnun in Cornwall. In 1739 he married Elizabeth Burnard. Both families were well established in the area, and the Burnards could trace their ancestry back to the 1500s in the villages of St Breward and Blisland on the slopes of Bodmin Moor.

Digory had, it is said, built his cottage in one day, no doubt with the help of all his friends, and in that way established his ownership of it. It faces the old road from Launceston to Bodmin, a bleak 20 mile stretch of road across the moor with few inns or places of rest. So, when two very tired strangers knocked on the door in August 1743 Elizabeth, who was on her own at the time, offered them bread, butter, milk, and hay for their single horse which they were taking it in turns to ride. Elizabeth was impressed by how the men gave thanks before and after their food and then asked her if, on their return, she would permit them to preach in the house. She did not understand what was meant, but discussed it with Digory when he came back from work that evening. He listened and then recalled the text from the Bible *'Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers for thereby some have entertained angels unawares'* (Hebrews 13: 2).



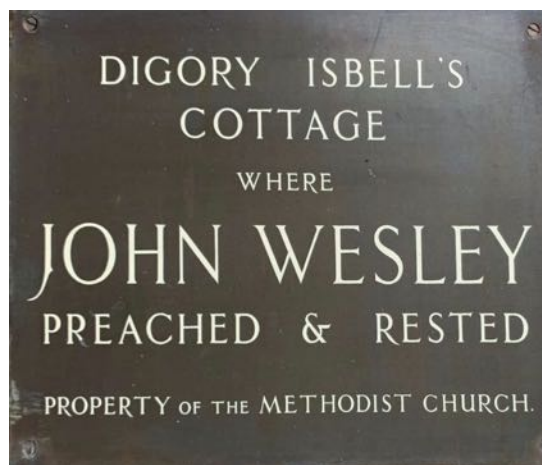
Some weeks later, one of the men, John Nelson, arrived at Trewint having been soaked to the skin while crossing the moor. They greeted him, took his wet clothes, rinsed, dried and ironed them and that evening they sang a hymn and prayed together. Digory told his friends and neighbours who then came to the cottage early the following morning to hear the visitor preach. Digory and Elizabeth were so impressed by what they had heard that they

decided to open their house to any of these itinerant preachers who might come their way.

Methodism had begun as a group of religious societies formed for the deepening of the spiritual life among their members, and were initially within the framework of the Anglican church. Their acknowledged leader was the Reverend John Wesley. One of these societies had been formed independently at St Ives in Cornwall, and when Wesley had been made aware of it, he decided to travel there with three of his helpers, John Nelson, John Downes and William Shepherd. It was on this journey, in which the men travelled in pairs, that John Nelson and John Downes paid their first visit to Trewint.

Meanwhile Digory and Elizabeth, reading their Bible, came across the story of Elisha and the Shunamite woman who, noting the holy man who regularly came past their house, persuaded her husband to build a special room for him to use when he looked for shelter (2 Kings 4: 8-10). Impressed by this story, Digory built a small extension at the back of his house with two rooms, one up and one down, and furnished them simply. This extension was used by visiting preachers and became known as the 'prophet's chamber'. John Wesley himself is recorded as visiting there six times between 1744 and 1762.

On the first occasion, on 2nd April 1744, he preached to a large congregation outside the front porch, and was then guided by Digory across the snow-covered moor. On another occasion he officiated at the baptism of Digory and Elizabeth's third child Hannah.



Above: the cottage today and the plaque by the door.

In 1769 a turnpike road was constructed over the moor, improving the access to west Cornwall. Digory built further cottages adjoining his. Meanwhile, travelling preachers stayed at the cottage and weekly meetings were held there for spiritual fellowship. Toward the end of the century the cottage became too small for these meetings and in 1795 a dedicated chapel was built at Altarnun. This was further enlarged in 1836. Digory died in 1795 and Elizabeth survived, bedridden, deaf and blind, until 1805. A large altar tombstone was erected in Altarnun churchyard, possibly by their son James (1756-1840), who was also the builder of Dartmoor prison.



The cottage fell into decay, although its story was not forgotten. After World War 2 a trust was set up to look after it and it was restored and furnished and opened to the public. It is a place of pilgrimage for Methodists and is believed to be the smallest Methodist preaching place in the world. A 'pilgrims' garden' was built opposite.

The cottage remained closed during Covid and there is now a new curator. However, thanks to the local Methodist community the cottage was opened for Joan and myself in June 2022 in the course of a journey round Cornwall. The lower room of the original cottage contains a display of items relating to Wesley and his followers, while the upstairs room acts as a meeting room. The two rooms of the 'prophet's chamber' are sparsely equipped with furniture of the age.

I am descended by eight generations from Digory and Elizabeth through their daughter Mary. Her grandson John Whitford moved to West Bromwich, no doubt in search of work, and his great-granddaughter was my paternal grandmother Jennifer Marguerite 'Daisy' Turner who was born in Northampton.

Further information about the cottage can be found at www.lamc.org.uk/wesleycottage2020.

THE NOSES HAVE IT?

By Duncan Wesley

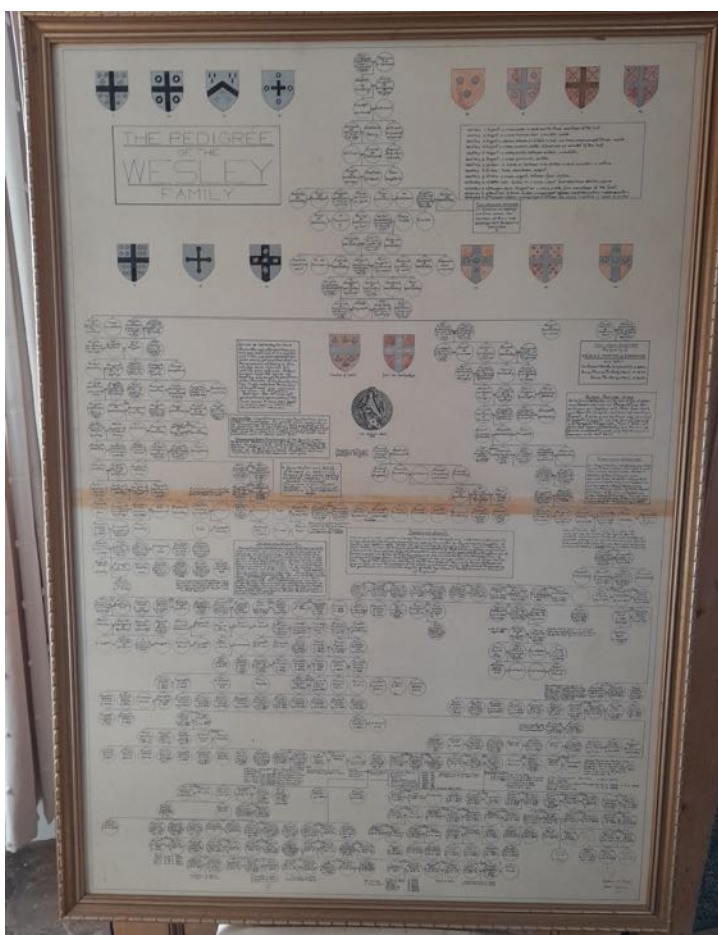
I have often wondered if our family is related to the Methodist and hymn-writing Wesleys, but have never done any real research. My knowledge of my family tree only went back as far as my great-great grandfather, William, born in 1811. My grandfather, his father and grandfather were all carpenters. My father, whilst being an Electrical Engineer, was also very practical with wood, having built our first TV back in 1956. I, too, have picked up an interest in woodwork having made our first bed, a coffee table, a shed, chest of drawers and my wife's sewing box. There are also a few males with the middle-named Charles in my immediate family tree but I don't know if there is any significance there. My father was AC Wesley and I am DC Wesley.

My interest in the Wesleys was given a shot in the arm when our granddaughter, Freya, took a book, which her mother Sarah Wesley had signed, into her primary school. Freya's teacher Kate Carmichael sent me an email saying *"I couldn't believe it when I saw Freya's book which reminded me of one of my grandmother's and then I opened it and just where my grandmother would have written 'Marjorie Wesley', Sarah Wesley was written"*.

It turns out that Marjorie Wesley was the great-great-granddaughter of Charles Wesley, and her husband had spent 13 years researching the Wesley family tree which goes back to 900AD. Kate invited us to visit her and take a look at her copy of the tree, the original of which is now in Charles Wesley's house in Bristol.

We visited Kate and saw the family tree which is a very impressive work of art put together before modern digital systems were available. It starts around 900AD when a Guy de Welswe was made a Thane of Somerset in 928. On it there was a branch that moved to Ireland in the 12th or 13th centuries where they became minor nobility, there was the whole family history of the Methodist Wesleys, including a member who was suffocated at birth by the midwife and another killed by a Saracen, presumably in the Crusades. Sadly, we could not see any connections between Kate's tree and mine as it was at that time.

Some years later I took an Ancestry DNA test which showed that I was 98% northern European, 2% Welsh, and I found I had a 1st cousin in Chester and a 3rd cousin somewhere else. Using the Ancestry

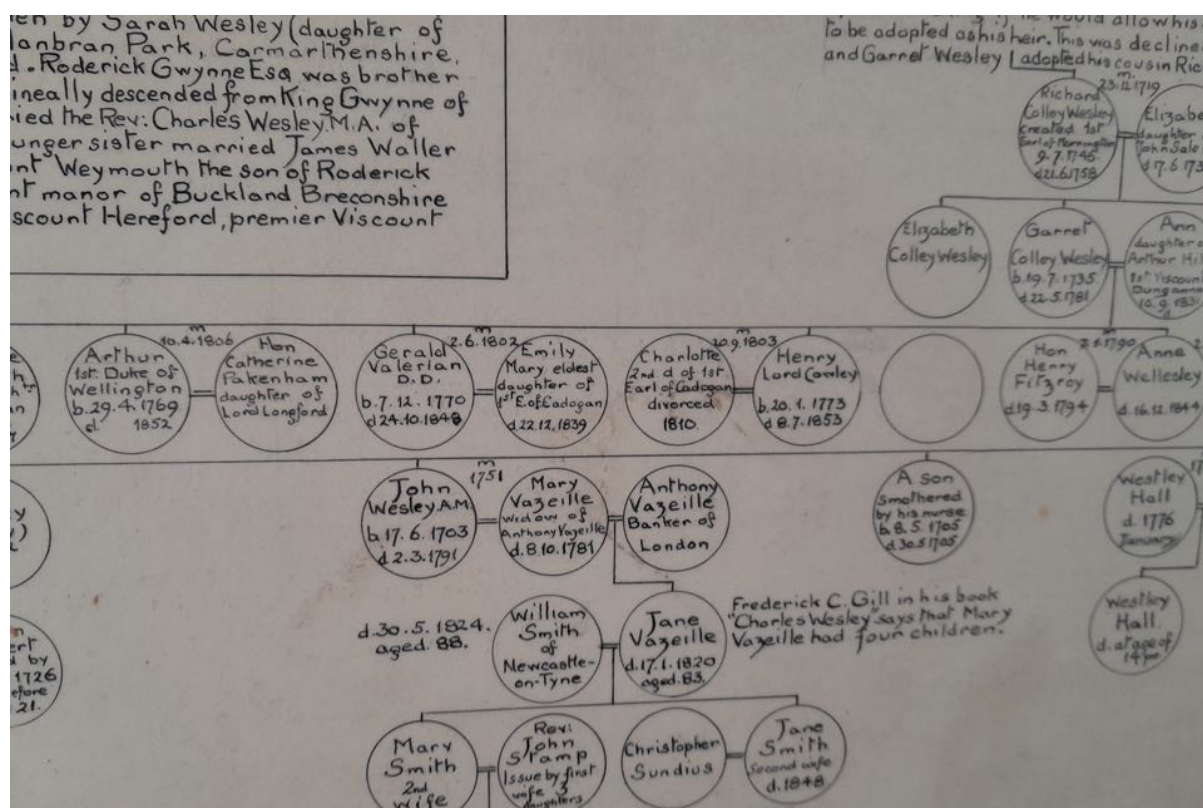


site and with some help from my 1st Cousin I discovered *Thru-Lines* on Ancestry which showed that this 3rd cousin was descended from my great-great grandfather but had also been able to trace back a further three generations.

These three new generations consisted of two Johns and a Charles which I felt was encouraging and so we went again to see Kate's family tree. Unfortunately, once again we could not see a direct connection between anyone on my tree and on Kate's tree. As we had a number of Johns and Charles in our tree, I looked into all those in Kate's tree only to find that virtually all the Johns had died in childbirth and in fact Susannah Wesley had two Johns who died before THE John Wesley survived. Most of the Charles seem to be very musical and did not have any children. All I could find about the first John on my new tree was that he died in 1762 some 5 years BEFORE his son Charles was born!

The first additional John on this new tree was also a carpenter. After a bit of thought about the four generations of carpenters in my family and my interest in woodwork coupled with the fact that my musical ability is non-existent, and, assuming that musical ability and woodworking were inheritable characteristics, I concluded that it is very unlikely that I have any direct connection the highly musically gifted descendants of Charles Wesley.

I therefore decided to look elsewhere in Kate's tree which took me back to the Irish branch. At the age of 60 Garret Wesley, one of the Irish nobility, had no sons or daughters who could inherit, so he asked Charles Wesley if he could adopt his son Samuel. This request was denied but he was allowed to adopt a cousin, one Richard Cowley or Colley.



Arthur 1st Duke of Wellington is the first circle on the left. He was descended from Garret Wesley and Richard Colley Wesley - see circles top right.

Richard Cowley/Colley married, and they had a son whom they named Garret, who in turn married and had a number of children one of whom was named Arthur. Arthur went to Eton where he was an average student, after which he joined the Army where he excelled. Arthur was sent to India for 10 years where he was very successful and rapidly promoted. Upon his return to England, he felt his status required an additional syllable in his surname which he duly changed to Wellesley. Some years later he became the 1st Duke of Wellington whose grandmother is in some way related to Sylvia Wright.

This same story is related in Antonia Fraser's book about the Iron Duke '*The Years of the Sword*', but she casts some doubt on the adoption part. I found this strange because he is actually named Arthur Garret Cowley Wesley and his brother is named Richard Colley Wesley. If he was not the grandson of the adopted relative, why does he and his brother carry those names?

Whilst I so far have not found a direct connection to the Duke of Wellington there is one last conclusive piece of evidence. Ever since I can remember my father has always said that we are related to the Duke of Wellington for two reasons: -

1. We have the same surname
and
2. The Duke and my father have very similar noses!



THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE AND FRANCIS LEOPOLD McCLINTOCK

By Sylvia Wright (néé McClintock)

Last year, when I talked about the various people associated with my mother's family home, Smedmore, I touched upon the Franklin Expedition and Commander James Fitzjames. He was the captain of The Erebus that set out with The Terror in 1845 in the search for the Northwest Passage. The expedition, led by Sir John Franklin, was one of a long line of attempts to find a sea passage to the Pacific Ocean through what is now the Canadian Arctic.

Christopher Columbus was probably the first recorded attempt to reach the Far East by a western sea passage when he left Castile in 1492 and made landfall in the Americas. It wasn't until 1576 that the stated intent of Sir Martin Frobisher's first voyage was an attempt to reach Cathay by a passage to the northwest. There would be great benefits in time and expense in such a route, as well as avoiding conflict with both Portugal and Spain that had divided the non-Christian world, as then understood, between them. Ferdinand Magellan was the first to round South America into the Pacific in 1520 but the passage was so arduous and hazardous that it was never commercially viable. There was no Suez Canal until 1869 or Panama Canal until 1914 which explains the large number of expeditions prior to Franklin's time and the subsequent attempts.

The Franklin Expedition of 1845 was considered to be the most well equipped of them all to date. Expeditions usually over-wintered in the Arctic stuck in the ice and sailed in the short summer months and could last for three years. When nothing had been heard from the expedition in early 1848 the search for Franklin began. The Admiralty were so concerned about the lack of news about the expedition that in March 1850 they offered a £20,000 reward for any parties discovering and effectively relieving the crews of Her Majesty's ships Erebus and Terror and £10,000 to anyone who could provide intelligence that leads to the same or that first succeed in ascertaining their fate.

This is where Francis Leopold McClintock comes into the story and forms a link, via James Fitzjames, between my mother's family home of Smedmore and my father's family. Francis Leopold was born on 8 July 1819 and educated in Dundalk, County Louth in Ireland where he was the second son of Henry McClintock, collector of customs in Dundalk and formerly an officer in the 3rd Dragoon Guards.

In 1831 a Captain Charles Paget was commissioning the sloop, HMS Samarang, and had at his disposal a nomination as cadet in the Royal Navy, which patronage he transferred to his 1st Lieutenant, William McClintock-Bunbury, who in turn offered it to his uncle Henry. The offer was accepted and Henry's son Leopold, just before his 12th birthday, entered the Navy as a gentleman volunteer and was despatched at 24 hours' notice in charge of a customs officer named Perkins. Perkins took him by sea and coach to Portsmouth where he handed the boy over to the Samarang. On 26 July 1831 HMS Samarang sailed for Rio de Janeiro to serve on the South American station and eventually returned to Portsmouth in December 1834.

In July 1845 he was commissioned and initially served aboard HMS Gorgon on the South American station. When his ship was beached off Montevideo, he distinguished himself in the salvage operations and thus gained further promotion. He later served in HMS Frolic in the Pacific.

There was nothing in the early phase of his career to suggest that McClintock would break out of the normal naval routine. However, in 1848 he volunteered to take part in an expedition to search for Franklin and during the course of his naval career he went on four Arctic expeditions, all of which were to search for Franklin.

In February 1848 he transferred to HMS Enterprise as 2nd Lieutenant and accompanied Sir James Clark Ross and HMS Investigator in the search for Franklin. The ships were frozen in the ice for 11 months at Port Leopold and this time was used to explore as much of the area as possible and to carry out a variety of research work. It was also usual for a wide variety of pastimes and entertainments to keep the crew in good spirits.

In February 1850 he was appointed as 1st Lieutenant of HMS Assistance with the four-ship expedition led by Capt. Horatio Austen. When his ship was beset in the ice in the winter of 1850-1851, he made an epic sledge journey across Griffith Island, travelling 760 miles in 80 days.

On return home in October 1851, he was promoted to Commander and in 1852 was appointed to command HMS Intrepid in Sir Edward Belcher's Arctic expedition, with HMSs Resolute, Assistance and Pioneer. During the winter of 1852 he undertook several sledging expeditions and on one travelled 1,368 miles in 106 days. The expedition was beset by such difficulties that in August 1854 Intrepid and the three other ships were abandoned and the crews returned to England in relief ships. On his return he was promoted to Captain.

During his Arctic expeditions McClintock had perfected methods of travelling by sledge and by 1854 he was one of the most experienced Arctic explorers in the Royal Navy.

When it was realized that her husband must have come to disaster, Lady Franklin devoted herself to trying to ascertain his fate. By the use of influence and offers of sizeable rewards for information about him she instigated or supported many searches. She sponsored seven expeditions herself to find her husband or his records and her efforts made the expedition's fate one of the most vexed questions of the decade.

In 1857, Lady Franklin selected McClintock to lead a private search expedition for her husband's party in the steam yacht Fox that she had purchased and had strengthened to resist the polar ice. The Fox set sail from Aberdeen in July 1857 and after a year locked in the ice off Greenland, McClintock eventually reached a point in the channel between North Somerset Island and Prince of Wales Island in September 1858 and the ship was prepared for winter once again.

Hunting, exploration and depot parties braved temperatures of -44°C and as animals became scarce and winds became fierce the crewmembers busied themselves below deck, some by studying navigation. The new year was welcomed with improvised celebrations. By February, animals began to return with the increasing sunlight. Sledge teams departed to extend the search in February 1859, with temperatures no less severe.

In March, they met four Inuit returning from a seal hunt. One of them wore a naval button that came, he said, from a group of Europeans who had starved near a river. Two days later, McClintock met the rest of the group and purchased other Franklin relics, mostly silverware and buttons. While none of the

natives had seen Franklin's crew alive, several had seen their remains and told of a group of survivors from a three-masted ship crushed by the ice west of King William Island.

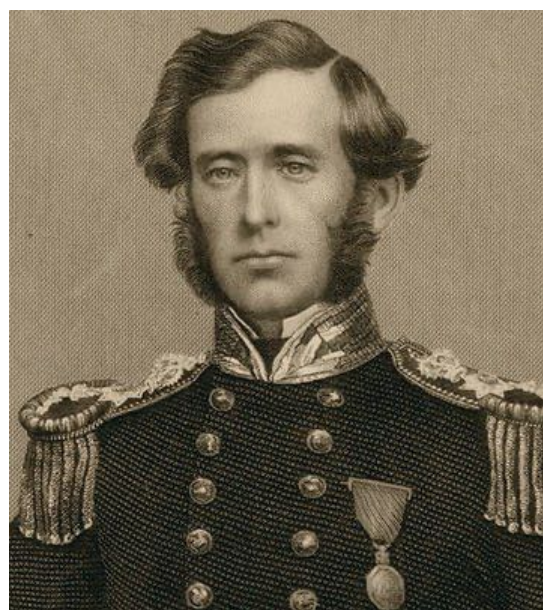
On 2 April, McClintock set out for King William Island and divided his company into two teams. Lieutenant Hobson would lead one party to explore the north coast and he the other along the southern shore. On 20 April McClintock encountered another group of Inuit and they described two ships near King William's Island. One of the ships had sunk in deep water, while the other was broken upon the ice with one body aboard. They described the European survivors making for the "large river" with boats in autumn that year, many falling on the way. Following their directions a skeleton was located on 24 May, confirmed as a crewman by the remaining garments. He appeared to have died where he fell on the journey.

The party led by Lt. Hobson located the first written communication recovered from Franklin's Expedition at Victory Point, inside a message cairn. A standard form was left in the cairn on 28 May 1847 and had the same message printed in six languages that said: *Whoever finds this paper is requested to forward it to the Secretary of the Admiralty, London, with a note of the time and place at which it was found: or, if more convenient, to deliver it for that purpose to the British Consul at the nearest Port*. It had "All well" written on it.

It had a later addition written around the margins on 25 April 1848 confirming that Erebus and Terror had been abandoned in the ice. Franklin had died on 11 June 1847 and the remaining 105 officers and crew under the command of Captains Crozier and Fitzjames would be starting the following day overland for Back's Fish River. The intention being to follow the river to the Hudson Bay territory. However, inexperienced at overland travel, unable to live off the land and short of supplies (the Erebus and Terror had only been provisioned up to July 1848) they had died during this march southwards.

This documentary evidence, combined with the bodies and debris that had been found, left no doubt as to the fate of Franklin and his men. On 9 August 1859 McClintock set sail for England, returning with the news that the members of the Franklin expedition had all perished. He described his experiences in *"The voyage of the "Fox" in the Arctic Seas: a narrative of the fate of Sir John Franklin and his companions"* (London, 1859).

He was knighted in 1860 and led the British North Atlantic Telegraph Expedition; sailing in HMS Bulldog to make a line of soundings by way of Scotland, the Faroes, Iceland, southern Greenland and Labrador, in preparation for the laying of a second telegraph cable between Europe and North America. The Fox, commanded by Allen Young who had already accompanied McClintock on the search for Franklin as sailing master, also took part. Although McClintock reported in favour of executing the plan, it never came to fruition.



Right: Leopold McClintock around 1860

He served as commodore at Jamaica in 1865–8. In 1868-1871 he was naval ADC to Queen Victoria and was promoted to rear-admiral in October 1871. He was Admiral Superintendent of Portsmouth dockyard from April 1872–May 1877 and in August 1877 he was promoted to vice-admiral, and in November 1879 was appointed commander-in-chief of the North American and West Indies station. He was elected an elder brother of Trinity House and promoted to admiral in 1884, retiring in July of that year. In 1891 he was created KCB.

He married Annette Elizabeth Delap of Monasterboice House, Co. Louth in 1870 and they had three sons and two daughters.



*Above left: A signed photo of Admiral Sir Leopold, probably taken on his promotion or retirement.
Above right: A family photo – his third son, my Grandpa Bob, is on the right at the back*

Sir Leopold died in London in November 1907 and a memorial plaque was later unveiled in Westminster Abbey and another at his birthplace in Dundalk. McClintock Channel, Leopold McClintock Cape, and Mount McClintock were some of the places named in his honour.

His Arctic career was of much wider significance than the search for Franklin. He developed totally new methods of sledge travelling and later served as an inspiration for explorers such as Shackleton, Scott, and Amundsen. He experimented with photographic equipment during his expeditions and also collected a vast number of zoological and fossil specimens. It also probably led to his subsequent advancement in life as I think that being a polar explorer in the 19th century was viewed much as being an astronaut in the 20th century was.

The Northwest Passage was finally navigated in a small boat by Roald Amundsen in 1905.

Underwater archaeological expeditions, undertaken by Parks Canada, found HMS Erebus in 2014 and HMS Terror in 2016 and their investigations of the wrecks continue.

For more information see - <https://parks.canada.ca/lhn-nhs/nu/epaveswrecks/culture/histoire-history/navires-vessels>.

THE FIRST CUCKOO

By Janet Balchin

We were recently given some books, photographs and documents belonging to Susan [Sue] Stephens, a former History Society member, who has now moved to a nursing home. She lived at High Broom Cottage in Moon Hall Road and was the niece of Margaret Evershed, the second wife of John Evershed. High Broom Cottage was, at one time, the gardener's cottage to High Broom, which was the home of John Evershed and his first wife, Mary, from 1923. After Mary's death, in 1949, John married Margaret. He died in 1956 and Margaret continued to live there until 1980.

John Evershed was an astronomer and was the former director of Kodaikanal observatory in India. He was the subject of an article in this Journal in 2020, by Geoff Harry (Issue Number 2).

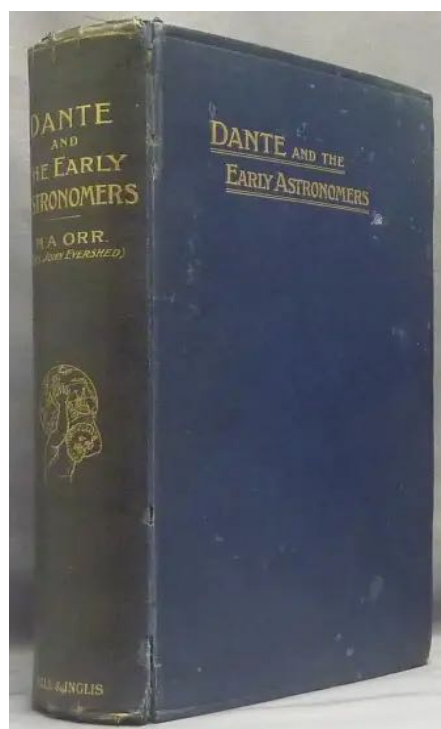
His wife Mary was also an astronomer, and helped him in his work. Her contribution to astronomy, particularly the history of astronomy, was substantial, but like many women in the past she was somewhat overlooked and was one of the 'Inspiring Women of Ewhurst' in my recent talk for the History Society.

Mary Evershed was born Mary Orr in 1867. She was tutored at home and in her early twenties travelled in Italy where she developed a life-long fascination with Dante. Between 1890 and 1895 she moved to Australia where she became interested in astronomy and on her return to England, she joined the British Astronomical Association (Women were not allowed to join the more prestigious Royal Astronomical Society). She started a study of variable stars and observed several solar eclipses.

In 1906 she married John Evershed and went with him to India, where they worked on sunspot prominences. They also travelled widely to observe eclipses. She published several books, including *Dante and the Early Astronomers* in 1913.



Above: Mary and John at Kodaikanal.

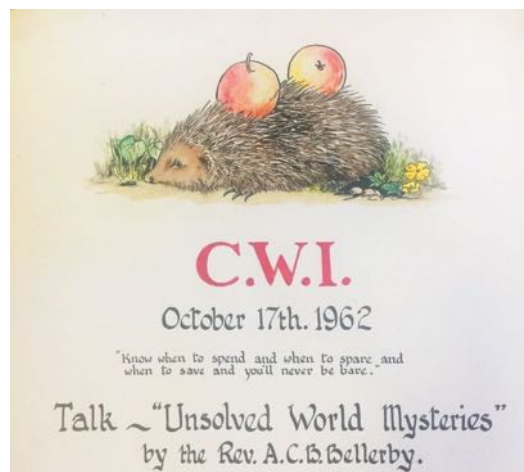


Right: Mary's book Dante and the early astronomers.

In 1923, the Eversheds retired and returned to England and bought High Broom, a house on Pitch Hill. They constructed an observatory in their garden and continued their research and also travelled abroad to observe eclipses. In 1930, Mary founded the Historical Section of the British Astronomical Association, to further research into the history of astronomy, which she directed until 1944. She died in 1949 and is buried in Ewhurst churchyard.

After Mary's death John married Margret Randall in 1950. Margaret had been born in Cranleigh in 1904 and was a talented artist. After her move to Ewhurst she continued to be a member of Cranleigh Women's Institute and hand drew their posters every month from the mid 1920s though to 1987. Each poster featured a watercolour illustration. Luckily most of them have survived, and the collection is now in the care of the Surrey History Centre.

Right: one of Margaret's posters for Cranleigh WI.



And what of the first cuckoo? One of the items passed on to us was a garden diary. It was in the form of a printed volume, with a page for every day of the year to record interesting notes and observations. In actual fact it is more of a nature diary than a garden diary, with many entries devoted to the arrival of migratory birds, butterflies and moths. Mary started it in 1924 and after her death, it was continued by Margaret, and finally by Sue into the 2000s, thus covering a period of around 90 years.



Dates of Cuckoo at Highbroom

1924	April 14	1943	Apr 15	65° 60°
25	" 10			
26	" 9			
27	" 17			
28	" 11			
29	" 14			
30	" 13			
31	" 12			
32	" 15			
33	" 12			
34	" 16			
35	" 16			
36	" 20			temp 40° only
37	" 19			temp 43°-50°
38	" 12			very cold 40°
39	" 17			Apr 17 at Women's Cottage
40	" 17			cold temp 15° hot temp 72°
41	" 19			temp 50, 53 midday
42	" 22			

Above left: the diary. Right: Mary's notes on the first cuckoo from 1924 - 1943.

Mary diligently recorded the arrival of the first cuckoo between 1924 and 1943. The earliest date was 9 April in 1926 and the latest 22 April in 1942. She also noted the temperature. 15 April 1934 records *"Temp 70° [21 °C] still no cuckoo"*, but the following day *"cuckoo at last"*. The arrival and departure of swallows, swifts and martins are also mentioned, and on 15 March 1939, *"starlings in their millions dropped down to roost at 5.58. Cloudy"*. On 30 May 1930 there is a note of a *"flycatcher nesting under the window"* and on 9 May 1937 *"little great tit re-appeared on my bed this morning - the third year of her visits to my bedroom and dining room"*. On 22 March 2012 Sue recorded that a *"kite flew over High Broom"*. By the 20th Century, red kites, once common, were down to just a few pairs. Successful re-introductions in the Chilterns in the 1990s contributed to their spread, but 2012 would have been quite an early date for one in this area.

A great many butterflies and moths are recorded. Margaret spotted the first brimstone in the garden as early as 9 February in 1961. On 8 March 1929 Mary wrote that the *"hibernating tortoiseshell left us after 4 - 5 months on the bedroom wall"*, and on 25 October 1938 a migrating Clouded Yellow was spotted *"very tired, but went west after a drink"*. Butterflies were still around in December as on 15 December 1936 Mary noted *"Sunny day after severe gale. Temp 45° [7 °C] Peacock butterfly settling on the path near the steps"*.

Occasionally things are recorded by their proper Latin names such as the *"Colias Edusas"* (clouded yellow butterfly) recorded on 20 August 1943; but at other times the old folk names used, such as *"Fern Owl"* (nightjar) noted on 14 June 1948 and references in spring to Lent lilies for wild daffodils.

The first snowdrops, daffodils and bluebells were all looked forward to. On 4 February 1966 Margaret wrote *"First and very precious early daffodil almost opened but was eaten by a rabbit"*.

Apart from a passing reference to D Day, national events are not mentioned, although there was a reference to the 'Big Freeze' of 1963, on 6 March Margaret recorded *"First really warm day since October, some snow still lying about. First Brimstone flying about the garden"*. There are also two sad personal notes - 17 November 1956 *"Dear John RIP"*, on the death of her husband John, and on 13 February 1980 *"Farewell to High Broom, tomorrow it passes to other hands."*

The diary has now been passed to the Surrey History Centre.

RECENT REPAIR WORK IN EWHURST CHURCHYARD

By Martin Lockwood, with additional notes by Janet Balchin

With the Quinquennial inspection by the diocesan architect scheduled for Thursday 21 March, I instigated the repair of some of the graves in the churchyard and commissioned a heritage qualified master craftsman Jamie Barnet to restore four of the raised brick tombstones, near the path to the Wilson Room. The work was done in September 2023 and much of it involved the hand cutting and shaping of old bricks to match and replace some of the specially shaped bricks as none are now available, a skill not often found these days. We understand that Jamie is related to the original builders of these tombs, so are very grateful that he has the skill to carry out this work and the results speak for themselves.

There are still a few more graves needing attention, but more of this later.



Above left: the badly deteriorating brickwork before restoration.

Above: Jamie Barnet

Left: Jamie has also repaired the brick drainage gullies.



The graves on the south side of the church are some of the oldest in the churchyard and date from the 18th century. Many of them are for the old and important Ryde and Worsfold families. The inscriptions are too worn to be read now, but with the help of a survey

made in 1888, by Alfred Ridley Bax for Surrey Archaeological Society, we were able to identify some of them.

The most westerly of the graves was for John Ryde. The inscription is now completely illegible, but it was already badly worn by 1888 and Bax was only able to record part of it. The first three lines of the inscription are missing, but the main part reads - "JOHN RYDE of Holb.... / in the Parish of O.ley / Yeoman who departed / this Life July the1774 / AgedYears". This is possibly of Holbrook Farm, Weare Street, Ockley, but I could not find a John Ryde in the burial register for this date.

Right: John Ryde's grave



The other three graves (a pair of tombs close to the path and a third one closer to the hedge) are for John Worsfold, John & Ann Evershed, and Mary Stantiall. Two are very close together and the third one is smaller, more like a child's tomb. All are badly weathered and it is not possible to distinguish which one is which, but it seems likely that the pair are for John Evershed & his wife Ann, and his sister, Mary Stantiall. This would make the small one for John Worsfold, but why it is so small is strange.



The inscription for John Worsfold's grave is "Here Lyeth the Body of / John Worsfold of / Leith Hill in the Parish / of O... in this County / Yeoman who departed / this life the 23rd day / of April 1733 / in the 54th Year of his Age." The Burial register describes him as being 'of Lyefield'. A John Worsfold of Ockley left a will, proved 12 June 1733, leaving his messuage called Lawrences alias Lyfield (100 acres) in his own occupation to his nephew George Worsfold of Losely, Ewhurst.

Left: The very small grave, possibly John Worsfold's?

Below right: The pair of graves for John Evershed and his wife Ann, and his sister Mary Stantiall

The grave for John and Ann Evershed carries the inscription "In Memory of / JOHN the son of EDWARD / And R..... / Yeoman of this Parish / who Died Apr. 6 176... / Also of ANN his Wife, Daughter / of WILL and MARY / who died April.... / Aged".

This gives us much more to work on. John Evershed was buried on 14 April 1764. His wife Ann predeceased him and had been buried on 13 April 1743. He was the son of Edward and Ruth Evershed, and was born on 11 March 1694 and baptised at Ewhurst on 18 April 1694. His father had bought 'Garlands and Wingoods' in 1689 [although this 'Garlands' would not have been the present house, and the name may possibly refer to Hoyle Cottage.]. The land attached to Garlands included 'Wingoods',



which is now Deblins Green and Old Farm, and later passed to Mary Stantiall - see below. Edward had married Ruth Heather in 1692. In his will, proved 16 May 1711, Edward was described as a Yeoman of Ewhurst. As well as Garlands and Wingoods, he also left a messuage called Burstocks Croft [now Broadstone Cottage]. John was also described as a Yeoman on his tomb inscription but, in his will, proved 1 May 1764, he was described as a 'Gentleman', owning estates in Ewhurst, Dorking and Wootton. A yeoman was prosperous farmer and would have had some standing in the local community, but was not as high ranking as a gentleman.

Mary Stantiall, née Evershed, was John's older sister and had been baptised at Ewhurst on 16 May 1710. She married John Stantiall in Stoke, Guildford, in 1729, and they had a son, John. She was buried in Ewhurst on 16 December 1780. She owned 'Wingoods', in the 1760s. The property had passed to her via her brother, John Evershed, their father having purchased it in 1689.

The inscription on her grave is "In Memory of / MARY STANTT(?)ALL / Who died December 11 1780 / Aged 71⁴ years"

NEW INFORMATION BOARD ABOUT WINTERFOLD SECRET AGENTS DURING WWII

Members may remember that in March 2022 we had a talk by Paul McCue on '*Special Operations Executive at Winterfold in WWII*'. Paul told us about Winterfold House near Cranleigh, which was used during the war for the initial training of SOE [Special Operations Executive] agents. From 1941 it served as the Preliminary School for the Belgian and Netherlands Sections, instructing trainee secret agents who would be sent to Nazi-occupied Belgium and Holland to arm and train resistance organisations and to undertake sabotage in preparation for the invasion of Europe. Then, from 1943, a wider range of nationalities, known to have included British, French, Polish, Canadian, American trainees, and a sole Dane passed through.

Paul is very active with the charity 'SECRET WW2, The Secret WW2 Learning Network'. They have recently erected an information board to tell the story of the brave men and women who volunteered for SOE, and passed through Winterfold. In October we were invited to the official unveiling of the board, which took place in Cranleigh Arts Centre, and the board has now been placed in the carpark at the top of Horseblock Hollow by the path to Justice's Seat.

Do go and see it!



There is also a free special exhibition at Guildford Museum - *Secret Guildford: Locations and secret agents of the Special Operations Executive in World War Two*, which runs until 13 April. As well as Winterfold, the locations include Wanborough Manor, to the north of the Hogs Back.

For more details see - <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/whatsonatguildfordmuseum>