

Dear Family,

A busy six months since the last News-sheet and how fast it went! I've had some family visits, but unfortunately had to cancel a couple because train travel, unless I can take walks up and down the train from time to time, does not agree with the arthritis. Ergo, Inter-City journeys are easier and I had a most enjoyable long weekend with David and Ruth in Chester. Ruth took me to Chester Record Office where I saw the original Bishops Acts Book in which shows the ordination of Rev. Coriolanus Copleston and looked through some of the Bunbury registers for Beestons. They took me to Beeston Castle and on to Bunbury Church, dedicated to St. Boniface, where Sir George Beeston is entombed - a magnificent edifice. He was father of the Dorothy who married our John Copleston of Eggesford.

An earlier visit to Reg and Olive in Birchington was much enjoyed, too. Also a weekend in Rochester with Betty, who introduced me to Restoration House, which was so interesting that I did some research on the history. Had a day in Worthing with Marjorie C. and am going down for a further day this month. Father Freddie Copleston has been to lunch at Michael's office and we have lunched with him at Mount Street. Correspondence has been carried on with various family members - the 'old faithfuls'. More pictures were received from Vera Caulford in Utah, but in some cases we don't know if those pictured are Coplestons or Attwoods - if only people had written details on the backs!

I've just had a few days in Crediton with the Kitchens and when Twizzie asked where I'd like to go I chose the back of beyond - West Worlington, which the late Leonard C. maintained could provide answers to old mysteries. A wee place on a steep and narrow lane with about five cottages on each side and a tiny, fascinating church.

A day spent in Westcountry Studies Library was, as always, productive. I found more helpful Inquisitions Post Mortem of other families which connect and took extracts from the Calendar of Exeter Castle MSS, including one concerning the mysterious family at Ashburton. Dated 15 June 3 Eliz (1561): Bargain and sale by Adam Colpstone of the borough of Aysshberton, cordyner, to Robert Hayman of Newton Abbot, yeman, of all his Myseg (messuages), londe etc. in Aysshburton; And a tenement and garden and three closes of land there, whereof the tenement and garden is in the este part of the way from the midst of the borough towards Hydbury, in the south part of the londs etc. of Thomas Emmett, in the west part of Cadde Lane and in the north part of the londs etc. of Harry Coke alias Williams: And one close between the londe of the church of Aysshberton in the north, the way to Alston on the este and the Procession Way in the west and south: The Second in the north west side of the Procession Way and in the south part of Alston Way: The Third in the north west side of the londe of Seintcler, esq. and in the este part of the londe of John Eliott and in the south part of Alston Way. Enrolment 10 September.

So at least we know that Adam was a cordwainer - but from whom do these generations of Ashburton family descend? Another discovery of interest is in 1643: "Whereas we were informed that the Siege of Plymouth was raised and by good relations, yet it proves not so and Prince Maurice who was reported to be dead is yet alive and his Forces at a place called Stow, quartered there for more conveniency of the siege, the Prince himselfe lying at one Master Kemp's house and sometimes Master Copplestanes at Tamton ..." This is rather peculiar, because all of the sons of Amias Copleston had died and Gertrude the heiress of Warleigh had married John Bampfylde long before the date of this document. Perhaps one of the Coplestons had another house at Tamerton Foliot of which we know nothing.

Going back, as I periodically do, to the Three hydes at Nymet, I wondered if Exeter Domesday would show any of the places named in the Charter. Hane is mentioned as being 'a manor which Bergered held on the day on which king Edward was alive and dead and it rendered geld for three hides'. Whether this is the Hane near Copplestone or the one at Newton St. Cyres is not known, since there are no geographical hints in Domesday. There are a number of Nymet/Nymeton places mentioned and one 'Schipebroc', but none of the other places named in the Charter, so I am no forarder!

Obtaining a copy of the IPM of Nicholas Stucle, 1488, I saw that Thomas Dourish and John More were seised of the manor of Estwolryngton and Westwolryngton and gave the same to Hugh Stucle and Katharine his wife and their heirs with remainders to the heirs of Katherine to the heirs of Thomas Affeton and to the right heirs of Hugh Stucle. You will remember that John C. son of Adam married Catherine, divorced wife of John de Affeton. Affeton was a village quite near West Worlington and although there is a signpost, there is no longer a village. This same IPM states that John Denys and Richard Pree were seised of the manors of Affeton and Mewshawe and conveyed them by charter to Nicholas Stucle and Anne his wife and the heirs of Nicholas in 1484. The Stucle (Stuckley), Denys and Affeton names all connect with the Cops, but finding the necessary deeds and documents to sort them all out is proving difficult. All I find are hints! It was interesting to note in the IPM of John de Dynham in 1457-8 that he was seised of Southbroke, Offwell and held it from several men, including John Copleston. This might help, when there's time for study, to solve the beginnings of the Offwell family. George Copleston esq. sat on the Inquisition of a later John Dynham in 1553 - possibly our George of Lee in Morwenstow.

Marjorie Copleston in Worthing is having poor health and I'm sure you will join me in wishing improvement. Maureen, wife of John C. in Belvedere, has sent a cutting about the 50th anniversary of Dick and Joyce Copleston of Birchington (see A.11) - congratulations! My first coz Ron and wife Anne celebrated their Ruby in August; Ron retires in January, so can join Anne and me in our periodic meets in the Big City. Neville Copperstone of Henbury, Bristol, has had a very busy year with little time for search, but is happy that I found a couple of Copperstone sailors born in Malta in the 1850's, which should help towards getting him 'into the family'. We should also discover which generation changed the name from Copplestone - they may be of the Portsmouth family.

Mike Copleston of The Old Rectory, Plymtree, opened the St. Andrew, Colebrooke, Church Pete in June and his picture, along with Joan and the children, was in the Crediton Country Courier. It would be nice to hear from them! A removed cousin of Mike's has been in touch with Father Freddie; she is daughter of Leslie Copleston who descended from Benjamin and Mary Ann (Bott) Copleston of Wrexham.

I expect, like me, you are all busy with Christmas preparations and all the 'goings on' of the Season. I do hope you all have a good Christmas and New Year. My grandsons are becoming excited and if I hear much more about turtles I think I shall go mad! They do, thankfully, have other interests and both spend much time drawing - an inheritance from my branch of the Cops?

I'm pleased to tell you that I have at last almost completed the gathering of all births, marriages and deaths from the GRO; it is hard physical work, with four volumes for each year in all three happenings and dragging them on and off the shelves is not really for septuagenarians!

Do keep in touch and if you meet any of the non-contributing family, jog their memories, please. With postage and stationery at present cost, they still won't hear unless they send stamp and s.a.e.

All good wishes,

*Your cousin, Muriel*