

Dear Family,

No. 11 shows that this is the sixth year of News Sheets - doesn't seem possible! With a few years of the Newsletters before that, we have been in touch for quite a while. A few people who have not sent the required stamped addressed envelopes plus stamp covering expenses will be receiving this issue - may their consciences smite them!

Since the June issue I have among other activities spent a few days in Exeter in order to have some full days in the Record Office and Westcountry Studies Library and this time was quite productive. I have long wished to extract our entries from the volumes of Tingey's 'Devon Deeds' in the RO and was able to gather most of them. One in particular is of interest - that of the Bargain and Sale by Amias Copleston of Warleigh in 1620 to Richard Reynell of Crediwogger (wherever that was) of all the messuages and tenements in and around Colebrooke and Crediton 'except the barton and demesnes of Copleston'. Copleston of course went later to the Yonges. There is a schedule attached giving all the properties and purchasers and the names of all the tenants, which I must list and send to Devon FHS since members may be searching for ancestors among them. There are many other sales by Thomas of Yealmpton (Bowden), Christopher the notorious, Anthony of Upton Pyne and a few sales to Coplestons, all of which help to give background to our family history.

Mr. Horswell has sent me photocopies of pictures of Ada Julia Copplestone (whose father still remains a mystery) taken in Totnes; in one she is a very old lady and the other two are taken outside the house at No. 12 Warlands and are family groups on what was obviously Q.V's. Jubilee year, for the house is decorated and flags in the hands of the children. It makes the search for her origins all the more intriguing.

Just as frustrating is the search for more details on the two Copperstone soldiers I found at Kew who are obviously of Neville's family, but the only clue is that they were born in Malta; I can find no mention of their parents. I must admit, however, that a busy social life did not produce a great deal of work during the summer months and October was almost entirely lost while I coughed my way through an early bout of bronchitis. Fit and well now, I hope to make progress during the winter.

A fellow member of Devon FHS in Yorkshire for whom I did a wee bit of search sent me very kindly a draft Will of Mary Ann Copplestone, widow of Brighthouse, who died in 1873. She names her sons as Henry Burgess, Edward Watson and William Pitt and her daughter Mary Louisa. The names are familiar and I have tried to progress them in the past, but am still only at the guessing stage. I believe Mary Ann to have been the widow of a William Jacob Copplestone who married in Halifax in 1849 and died in Kensington in 1858. William Pitt married in Kensington in 1875, Henry Burgess in Bradford 1890 and Mary Louisa in Halifax in 1876, so the Kensington link is there. The name of William Jacob leans to the Cornwall family, but I can't fit him in. Obviously Mary Ann's maiden name was either Burgess, Pitt or Watson!

Not really family news, but I must share with you my delight after a 'phone call from Robert Jago in Liskeard in August to say that he had a place at Liverpool University. You are all familiar with his name - I've had so much help from him over the years and hope that the additional degree I'm sure he'll achieve will lead to his becoming an archivist, a post he would fill most ably.

Of course, the gathering of information almost always leads to further mysteries. One of the Devon Deeds is as follows: 4 October 1536. Conveyance by Laurence Prous to Richard Chudley and Richard Pollarde all his messuages, lands etc. in Combmartyn and Barnestabyll except the horage rents and services of John Copleston of Combmartyn and Philip Whither. Who on earth was the John Copleston living in Combe Martin in 1536? I haven't a clue.

For Capt. Tom Copplestone in Oromocto, New Brunswick, I've been able to provide copies of the birth certificates kindly obtained by Elsie Forrest from Edinburgh a few years back of his grandfather Robert Young Copplestone and Robert's brother Augustus. This family goes to George Copplestone, maltster born Salcombe Regis; George's son Alfred was father of Robert and Augustus. Richard Copplestone and Jane (Pile) were the parents of George and there they are 'stuck', but undoubtedly belong in the 'B' pedigree. Larry Coppleston in Mississauga discovered and wrote to Tom, so another has been gathered into the fold. Larry's travels to Australia and various points this year were, he tells me, 'very worth while' and he spoke with Judy, wife of Peter Coppleston now living in Pimby, near Sydney. Peter is son of David and Ettie and lived in Canada for some time. David has not been well and we all, I'm sure, wish him better. Larry has asked for past itineraries of our gatherings, hoping to 'do' the family-connected parts of Devon. I shall hope to meet up with him when he does.

Coincidences continue: First coz Ron and spouse Anne in Surrey had new neighbours this year and when introduced to this Matanle family they asked whether their name was 'anything to do with Copplestone in Devon?'. Of course R and A told them of the connection and of my searches into the family. Seems they actually lived in Copplestone and Grandfather still lives in Crediton! Theirs is a Huguenot name and I did some work on their tree, finding a few more details and extra generation. The elder Mr. Matanle was gardener at Copplestone House, having been born in Coleford nearby and was also many years Verger at Holy Cross, Crediton. Strangely, Gerry and Twizzie Kitchen's son Jeremy is now Verger there, so they know Mr. Matanle well. Small world.

I had long meant to find the connection with the Megges family which shows in the Copleston of Copleston Visitation and knew that the daughter of John Copleston of Exeter was Agnes, from the Inquisitions Post Mortem, but on my visit to Exeter I copied the IPM of Thomas Magges, Esquire (both spellings are used) dated 1543. Seems Thomas was granted the manor of Thyrling in Uswell, Cams and also held the manor of Jaketes, Wysbych (!) and various other pieces of land. It quotes part of the Will of Nicholas West, bishop of Ely, 1534, which states that he bequeaths certain plate to 'suster Megges' to be left by her to her children and 'to Agnes wife of Thomas Megges, certain plate'. To Thomas he left 'my hanging of the hystory of David, All such dettes as he shall owe me at the houre of my deth Except the rent of my Fermys of Wysbyche Barton' etc. He gave the wardship of his ward, Symonde Stern to 'my sister Isabell Megges' and one of his Exors was 'Thomas Megges, comptroller'. Agnes was one of the witnesses of the Will. Since the Bishop's name was West, perhaps the Megges were actually in-laws. One wonders why the marriage of two people so geographically far apart came about - must have been money involved - and John of Eggesford went even farther to marry Dorothy Beeston.

Some intriguing questions arise from these I'sPM, for instance that of William Reigny, clerk, who died 1521. He mentions his cousin John Bury and John Harewod 'with provision lest they be troubled by Charles Copleston and Anne his wife'. This is Eggesford again; Anne was daughter and heir of Richard Reigny of Eggesford, who brought that property to Charles, son of Henry Copleston of Bicton, when she married. What was that all about, I wonder?

It only remains for me to wish all family a happy Christmas and the best of things in the New Year. My grandsons are getting excited of course and I look forward to spending Christmas Day with them and a return visit next day. Mark (6) has one front- and one eye-tooth missing, but it hasn't affected his appetite and the lithp is charming! Michael is now in Pentonville! They haven't yet sold their house and the journey to Lewes was a strain, so he transferred and seems to enjoy working with the Probation Officers there.

Take care,

Your Coz,
Muriel