



Wolf passant, az.

*Dear Family,*

The blue wolf crest is shown again to wish you all a happy Christmas and a good New Year - despite legends to the contrary, the wolf is a family man and takes care of his wife and children, as most of our ancestors have done and is a good emblem for the Cop(p)leston(e)s.

Since the last Newsletter most of the interesting happenings have been discovered by others than myself and I am most grateful to all concerned. Our good friend Robert Jago, while on visits to Winchester to gather his Jagos has noted a goodly number of Coplestones in Hampshire in censuses and parish registers. This has added to my Hampshire tree, but I've still not fitted them into the main stream. Robert's greatest find was reference to Maria Coplestone who, in a register of patients, shows as being admitted in July 1872, caulker's wife of 61 Harley Street, Landport, Portsea. Notes on her progress that in 1873 she was a female pauper patient aged 30 'suicidal and dangerous to others. Insanity is indicated, refuses food and has to be watched day and night and kept under restraint.' In February 1874 she is in fair bodily health and her mental condition remains in much the same state, but in April she is 'removed home recovered'. However, in April 1877 she is in Hampshire having been admitted from Dorset Asylum, still dangerous to others, dirty in her habits, breaks and destroys everything, beats her children without provocation - threatens to kill her relations. This continues until October 1879 when she is discharged to Portsmouth Asylum. Poor Maria - and poor family! In my 1871 census records I found her with husband John, sons Benjamin 9, Charles 6, Ada 2 and Louisa 1 month. The 1881 census shows only John, Benjamin and Charles, all caulkers at 54 Upper Church Path in Portsmouth. The girls may have been with relatives and obviously Maria was still in care, for she died in Portsea in the March quarter of 1882 according to my GRO death index, aged 38. I give all this detail because it is indicative of the amazing amount of information which can be found on even the humblest of individuals.

Another friend whom those of you who were at our first family gathering will remember well is Sue Read of the Crediton Country Courier and she recently sent me a cutting from Westcountry Homes in which Coplestone Cottage, between Bridford and Dunsford is pictured for sale at an asking price of £239,000 - any takers? What fun it would be to have family gatherings there! It is a very large 'cottage' and is Grade II listed with gardens and grounds of about 5.7 acres. I would give my eye teeth for this, although I have not yet found the Coplestone connection. I shall certainly have another try at this, but the answer is in Exeter and I know not when next I shall be there.

Our cousin Rosemary Dowie found a most interesting bill advertising land to be sold by auction at the New Inn, Bideford on Tuesday 7th September, 1880 of freehold estates with farm houses and buildings in the Parish of Milton Damerel. The bill is headed 'In the High Court of Justice, Chancery Division, Copleston v Copleston.' Of course I hid me to the PRO at Chancery Lane to examine the Chancery Proceeding, knowing that my branch were not involved since they had held no land in Devon for many years prior to 1880. It therefore had to be the Offwell family, since we two branches are the only ones still using the original name spelling. It was indeed his family. 'Between Anne Elizabeth Copleston, widow Plaintiff Edward Arthur Copleston (since deceased) and Mary his wife and the said Mary Copleston Widow the legal personal representative of the said Edward Arthur Copleston and Southcote Michael Stephen Townsend made parties to the Order dated the 29th May 1880 Defendants.' It refers to Indentures and the Will of Reginald Edward Copleston and ends 'It is ordered that the said hereditaments be sold with the approbation of the Judge and the money to arise by such sale be paid into Court to the credit of the Cause Copleston v Copleston 1878 to an account to be entitled 'Proceeds of Sale of Real Estate' subject to further order.' Reginald Edward was the fourth son of John Gaius C. and Harriet Townsend and he married Anne Elizabeth Sharpe. Their first son was Reginald Stephen who became Bishop of Colombo and later Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India.

Which brings me to another intriguing piece of news. A new magazine called 'Family Researcher' published its first issue in June and contains a picture in the 'Photographic Record'. These pictures are available to direct relatives where lineage can be proved and I shall suggest to Hermione that she do so, since this one is captioned 'Reginald Copleston Bishop of Colomb (deaf) age 29. Photo taken April 26th 1875.' (I wonder where they think 'Colomb' is?!) - and was he deaf? Who supplied this picture? Having only recently had my attention drawn to it, I've not yet taken any action. Reginald became Bishop of Colombo at the age of 30 years and two days in 1875.

I had a surprise telephone call the other day from a lady in Australia who descends from Henry Coplestone and Mary Ann (Jarman). Henry was son of Azael and Bathsheba (Palmer) and his son Henry of Shute Farm, Shobrooke went to Tasmania. I look forward to receiving the details of the family now in Australia and will report in the next Newsletter.

Strangely, I have been in correspondence with Jackie Davis of Hornchurch who is connected to the same family. and has given me an extra daughter of William and Ann (Bond). She is Lucretia Amelia Long Coplestone born Clerkenwell in 1820 - how did I miss her, I wonder? Lucretia married Charles Davis and they had a son, Charles Coplestone Davis in 1852. More on this anon - things are still coming together!

What an enjoyable time I had in Luton in July as guest of David and Ruth - and how kind of June Ward to take us to the lovely Church and to see the gravestones of David's connection. Afterwards to afternoon tea with June and husband Bob at their home. It was a memorable weekend.

A super visit, too, with Reg and Olive at Birchington and visits to National Heritage sites. Then, in August, a weekend with Betty Copleston in Rochester which included a visit to the very fine Museum and a party with her neighbours and friends. I so enjoy being with family members and this is one of the greatest joys of having taken up the family history trail. Letters, too, are so welcome and I really must improve my rate of correspondence, which has suffered some negligence over past months for various reasons.

I shall be spending Christmas with Michael and family in Seaford and, as always, enjoying the company of the grandsons. Michael joins me this week at the Canadian Veterans Christmas lunch - can the older ones among you believe how the years have gone? I hope you all enjoy the festive season and keep free of viruses - my only 1st coz Ron Copleston keeps well and busy, but wife Anne has caught the dreaded lergy - get well soon! Hopefully in the next Newsletter I shall give you results of some of my own searching, this one having been provided mainly by the work of others!

*John Copleston*