



*Dear Family,*

It does not seem possible that six months have gone by since the last Newsletter - where did they go?! During that time I have at last seen something of Northumbria and the Scottish Lowlands and paid what is probably my last visit to Canada. Staying in Penetanguishene on Georgian Bay with old friends I happened to be there to see the re-enactment of Lieut-Governor Simcoe's visit in 1793 from Toronto, then York, with canoe loads of native North Americans ('Indians') and traders, which was a very interesting experience, particularly since I had my picture taken with some of the former and also with a number of very large 'Lobsterbacks' who escorted Simcoe. I saw Ste. Marie Among the Hurons and the Huron Village and was taken up into Muskoka. Some wild country still up there which looks very inviting to a city dweller with country leanings.

The shield above, the Copleston Arms, was made with a stamp given me by 1st Coz Ron and wife, Anne. Since I have this sheet reduced from A3 to A4 it will show half size; but your envelopes will bear the full size. I am thrilled with it and think the makers did an excellent job. Don't know why we didn't think of this sooner. If any of you are interested, contact your nearest rubber stamp manufacturer, taking your envelope to show what you need.

There has been some sad news arriving. Bill Copleston, husband of Rose, who was the first Copleston with whom I was in touch when beginning my searches into the family, has died. Formerly of the Dagenham area, they moved not long ago to Banbury and were enjoying their new abode. Our sympathies to Rose and family. The wife of our newer member, Len Copplestone of Stafford, has also passed away and condolences to him and his family are also sent. Several people have sent me clippings of the passing of Frank Copplestone and of the Memorial Service held for him in London. Of Fowey, he was much liked by his many friends and colleagues. He was deputy Chairman of Westcountry TV and formerly manager of Southern Television. I last heard from him in 1984 when he had then had three operations, but was cheerful and optimistic. His father, also Frank, was a Methodist minister, born in Fowey.

It seems that all the counties of England are now covered by the 1881 Census Index and I have copies of Middx., Kent, Devon, Cornwall, Hampshire and Lancashire, all provided by Robert Jago before I had the chance to get them for myself! His kindness over the years has been great. This Index is useful in that in most counties all details are given except the actual street address and since we are provided with the piece and folio numbers the full readings can be found very quickly at the Census Room. In Lancashire I find William 'Copelstone', a farrier aged 50 lodging with a Bridget Corbett in Castleton, also his children Mary A., 8 and Margaret A., 5. No wife shows, but she must have been away from home because William is given as married, not widowed. The children were born in Liverpool and William in Ireland, so I know that he is one of the sons of Joseph the Coast Guard who fell, jumped, or was pushed from the cliff at Old Head Station in County Mayo. I had wondered what happened to the children and this helps to put meat on the bones. Also in this Index are Edwin and Louisa Copleston of my branch, the lithographer. I knew he had been in Nottingham and married there, but didn't know he had travelled north. They were living in Tooteth Park. I should not finish this piece without expressing gratitude not only to all the people who did the indexing, but to the Latter Day Saints who produced the fiches. Their International Genealogical Index and all the other records they have gathered have been of enormous help to family historians and can be found in most record offices, many libraries and in their own Mormon Libraries around the country. I have visited their Hyde Park Chapel in Kensington many times and they are unfailing in their help and kindness. Our pedigrees are deposited with them in Salt Lake City.

My thanks to those of you who sent extracts from your local telephone directories. Some I recognise, others not - I should do more contacting and hereby make New Year resolution. Having put people in touch is a source of pleasure. Joyce Copplestone writes that while in Chester she visited David and Ruth and she also sees Myra Copleston in Wales. What a shame that no-one wants to take on the organisation of a Gathering! I am too frail now to perform this difficult task, but would certainly attend.

I still go back from time to time to try and sort out some of the bits of isolated information gathered over the years. For instance, in Bishop Edmund Stafford's Register we see 'Rob Copleston 6 Per eundem, in Ecclesia B.M. majori 22 December 1397'. One of our undiscovered Reverends? Also William Copleston Rector of Stowford. To Milton Damarel 1415. d. soon.' I have no idea who this William can be - why don't I find him anywhere else? The Faculty Office Records for Sept 30, 1549 have 'Francis Coppilston alias Brige. Dispensation to take holy orders and hold a benefice despite defect of age, he having previously obtained a dispensation for this by the pretended authority of the Bishop of Rome. £4.' How very intriguing! A Copleston alias Bridge I've not found, nor a Reverend Francis. There were three Clerks in Holy Orders at Washbourne (held by the Coplestons): Walter in 1513, presented by Thomas Copleston. Thomas (after Walter's resignation) and George Copleston in 1540 presented by John Copleston. We have Walters, Thomases and Georges, but I can't find any who fit at the time. Do we have among us anyone who knows an historian who might give me some pointers to further sources? I wonder, too, what happened to things like the 'long silver gilt cup standing on 3 lions, with a cover enamelled on the knob which had been bequeathed to Thomas Barton, Canon of Exeter (died 1415) by Alexander Merle, hoping that he would stand by his Executors and protect them in every way in his power.' Canon Thomas Barton bequeathed this cup to John Copleston, jr. (Adam's grandson). I wonder if any of these bequests are still around, probably sold and sold again until the owners know not whence they originated?

I hope that you all have a good Christmas and that it is a good New Year for you, too. I'll be in Seaford with Michael and family and hope to be spending New Year with Twizzie in Crediton. I first met Twiz (Mary Kitchen) when starting on my searches and visiting Colebrooke Parish - such a wonderful lot of people I have met in this fascinating pursuit; cozens by the dozens, fellow family searchers and folk in the villages I've visited. Those of you at the first gathering will remember Sue Read of the Crediton Country Courier who took the picture of us all at St. Andrew's, Colebrooke - I shall hope to see her while in Kirton. A number of ministers have been very helpful also. Some of you will remember Rev. Bill Bulley at Chagford who showed us around the Church. There have been several academics who have assisted me too, at King's College, Cambridge and Oriel, Oxford. Everyone contacted has found time to give help and/or advice which, added to the enjoyment of chasing the family history, has made my retirement occupation very pleasurable.

I look forward to hearing from you.

*Your Coz, Muriel.*