

SHOBROOKE/THORVERTON DESCENDANTS

In the January issue were pictures of John Coplestone, son of John and Sarah (Bond) with his wife Elizabeth Frances (Aldridge). Also received from Vera Page were a number of certificates for her family, including the two shown below; one of the baptism of Elizabeth Frances in 1831, showing that her parents Robert and Mary Ann lived in Glass House Yard in Aldersgate, the other of the birth of Vera's father, Frederick William at 28 Albion Street, Islington. Albion Street seems to have disappeared, but Glasshouse Yard still exists in the City.

The other certificates were of the marriage of John and Elizabeth in Islington, 1853; birth of Florence Alice Ladd 1887, Waterloo Sub-District; marriage of Fredk. William to Florence Alice in 1905 at Lambeth; birth of John Page in Kilburn in 1919; birth of Vera Margaret Coplestone, St. George, Hanover Square 1920; marriage of John Page and Vera Margaret at Kidderminster in 1945; death of Frederick William in Rickmansworth in 1962 and death of Florence Alice, Rickmansworth in 1962, four months after her husband. Will this encourage other family members to send photocopies of their certificates for the collection? I do hope so!

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BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of St BOTOLPH, ALDERSGATE, in the
Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and *Thirty One*

When Boro.	Baptized.	Christian Name.	Parents' Name		Abode.	Quality, Trade, or Profession.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
			Christian.	Surname.			
<i>Mar</i> <i>1.</i> <i>1831.</i>	<i>Mary</i> <i>15</i> <i>ho.</i> <i>031.</i>	<i>Elizabeth</i> <i>Frances</i> <i>D. of</i>	<i>Robert</i> <i>Mary</i> <i>Ann</i>	<i>Aldridge</i>	<i>Glass</i> <i>House</i> <i>Yard.</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>W. Tolly</i>

Form No. 4.

CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH.

(Friendly Societies Act, 1875; 36 and 39 Vict., cap. 60.—Friendly Societies Amendment Act, 1876; 39 and 40 Vict., cap. 32.)

Superintendent Registrar's District of ISLINGTONRegistrar's Sub-District of Islington West in the County of Middlesex

No.	When and where born.	Name (if any)	Sex.	Name and Surname of Father.	Name and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Rank or Profession of Father.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.	Registeral Name, if added after Registration of Birth.
<i>453</i>	<i>First</i> <i>June</i> <i>1868</i> <i>28</i> <i>Albion</i> <i>Street</i>	<i>Frederick</i> <i>William</i>	<i>Boy</i>	<i>John</i> <i>Coplestone</i>	<i>Elizabeth</i> <i>Frances</i> <i>formerly</i> <i>Aldridge</i>	<i>Draper</i> <i>formerly</i> <i>Assistant</i>	<i>R. F. Coplestone</i> <i>Mother</i> <i>28 Albion</i> <i>Street</i> <i>Islington</i>	<i>Thirteenth</i> <i>July</i> <i>1868</i>	<i>John</i> <i>Watts</i> <i>Registrar</i>	

Those of you who watched the 'Timewatch' programme (and those who didn't) will be interested in the result of my investigation at the Public Record Office. The item which was quoted was under PRO ref. E101/413/2/2 (fo.51V) and I am indebted to Margaret Windham Heffernan, Producer of the programme at the BBC, for sending me this reference. My thanks also to the helpful ladies at the PRO who assisted in finding the particular Account Book and in suggesting the possibility of a clerical error!

The entry reads: "Item received of my lorde steward by the hands of Bartholomew Seyntleger for the ward of Copleston due at Michaelmas last passed. £100." This did not make sense to me until it was pointed out that 'ward' should be 'wardship' - then it all fell into place. When Ralph Copleston of Copleston died in 1491 his son, John, was according to the Inquisition Post Mortem "16 years and more", so was a minor. Therefore Bartholomew St. Leger had the wardship of John, which meant that he had a nice fat fee and £100 went to the King, Henry VII. Later Bartholomew's daughter and heir, Margaret, married John and doubtless more money passed hands. Wardships and marriages were lucrative from landed gentry like the Coplestons.

Margaret died without having had children and John then married Katherine, daughter of Ralph Bridges, by whom he had a large family. Their eldest son, of course, was the murderous Christopher (see 'The Legend of the Copleston Oak' on p. 167) who gave away chunks of land to his mistress, Amy Pollard, by whom he was - according to his son John - 'besotted'.

 * THE THIRD COP(P)LESTON(E) FAMILY GATHERING - SIDMOUTH 23rd - 26th May *

Reg has made a block booking at The Torbay Hotel, Sidmouth and has paid a deposit. Will all of you attending please send him a cheque for £10 per person made out to 'R. Copleston' to cover your deposits as soon as you receive this Newsletter. The prices range from £19.61 to £20.14 for dinner, bed and breakfast, both including VAT; £6.50 for children. Most rooms have private bathrooms or showers, some with toilet. Gratuities are left to the discretion of guests.

Please also send an s.a.e. to Reg who will send a copy of the itinerary as soon as it is completed. Places which will be visited include the Bishop's Tower at Offwell, where Mrs. Harvey has kindly said we will be welcome; an opportunity here to see parts of the Village for which we did not have time on our last visit!

The pretty Village of Otterton where two 19th century policemen were born into a twig of the Instow branch, will be included. Members of this family also lived in East Budleigh nearby and in Woodbury. We shall hope to find some gravestones and perhaps see the very houses in which they lived.

The weekend may also include a drive to Nash in Marshwood, Dorset, where lived the descendants of Nicholas Copleston of 'Shepton Gorges', 2nd son of Ralph Copleston of Copleston shown in the Upton Pyne Visitation. Nearby is Lamberts Castle, once home of a John Copleston not yet 'slotted in' - but don't expect a grand castle! A lot of Coplestons lived in Marshwood about whom we know little as yet. A number of the Nash Coplestons were buried at Whitchurch Canonorum, to the south of Nash.

Cheques and s.a.e.'s. please to: Mr. R. Copleston
 176 Benfleet Road
 Hadleigh
 BENFLEET
 Essex
 SS7 1QQ
 Tel: (0702 553836)

Apart from his article herein, Willis sent copies of many of the discoveries made by himself and Joan in their searches, including those shown on p.168. There are obituaries and more pictures including one of Willie and some Census readings - well done, you two!

Kathy, wife of Roy in Andover, sent the news that Mark James Copleston, 7 lbs 15 ozs, arrived January 25th - a brother for the cute Jemma whose picture was on the cover of Vol.2 No.9, Jan 1985.

Belatedly I announce the arrival of Anna Coplestone on 25.6.1985, sister to James and Simon, daughter of Hugh and Mary and granddaughter of John and Elizabeth in Seaford. Anna has been added to the pedigree at the College of Herald's.

Agnes of Charleston SC, who visited in November, sent copies of pictures she took when Reg and I went with her to Westminster Abbey and of my meeting with her and friends Elizabeth and Jean (from both of whom I have heard - what lovely ladies they all are; they have all invited me to stay with them!). There is also a picture of me, which I may tuck into the bottom right hand corner of the back page of the July issue. Agnes' son Peter is reproducing the Arms of Thomas Copleston of Bowden from the picture she took in the Henry VII Chapel at Westminster and I look forward to seeing this.

David, having discovered a Copleston village in Wyoming, Ontario, wrote enquiring the origin and received a letter from Lambton County Library, Ont., with extract: "The name given to the post office operating in the village of Marthaville, there being another post office bearing the name Marthaville in Canada. To avoid confusion, the postal dept gave the name Copleston. The property on which Marthaville now stands was owned by Richard Smith, who surveyed it into village lots. He was an Englishman and a builder by trade and when a name was asked for the post office he suggested Copple-stone, which, reduced to Copleston, was accepted." How very odd that it was changed to the original family name - it is usually the other way around! Who was this Richard Smith -?--?

THE COPLESTON/PENTECOST CONNECTION

Six years ago the well-known cattle breeder, Eric Lancelot Copleston Pentecost, died in Nottinghamshire, since when I have tried to discover why he was so named. Noel Harrower of Nottingham put a piece in that County's FHS journal for me and I thought after five years that it would never bring results, but last year a member of the Society, Ann Fewkes of Nottingham, contacted me to say that she had a connection with the Pentecost family and I met her and her Father up there last November. More recently she 'phoned me with the exciting news that she was sending the actual entries of baptism of my gt-grandfather Josiah and his sister, Sarah which she had found on LDS film N.2496 - once more we are obliged to our Mormon friends for gathering so much information!

Josiah the Son of William Copleston, St.Peter's Parish and of Harriet his wife, who was the daughter of Thomas and Sarah Sharpe, was born 2nd of February and baptised 12th of May 1830 by me, James Heaton

Fanny Maria the Daughter of James Pentecost, St.P.Par. and of Francis his wife who was the Daughter of Thomas and Sarah Sharpe, was born 4th of March and baptized 12 May 1830 by me, James Heaton

Thomas son of James Pentecost, Book-keeper and Frances his wife, formerly Sharpe, of the Par. of St.P. in Nott'm was born the 27th day of July 1831 and baptized Dec^r 30th in the same year by me, Wm.H.Clarkson

Sarah daughter of William Copleston (Printer and of Harriet his wife formerly Sharpe) of the Par. of St.P. Nott'm was born on the 5th day of July 1831 and baptized Dec^r 30th in the same year by me, Wm.H.Clarkson

So there we have it: Wm.C and James P. married Sharpe sisters and all three families were staunch Methodists in Nottingham. Anne discovered that James, a later Pentecost, married Nellie Fewkes (Helena, who was step-sister of Anne's Father) and had a son, Eric. We therefore have a relationship, but I am daunted by the prospect of working out the degree! Anne's 96-year-old Father showed me a book of prose and poems by Eric L.C.P. - a man of varied talents. My grateful thanks to Anne for all her help.

A BIDEFORD RECEIVER

Mrs. Sylvia Guthridge, Editor of the Devon FHS Journal, 'Family Historian', gave a talk which was reported in the January issue, called 'Let's Go Shopping'. It covers the subject from 1100 to Victorian times and must have involved a great deal of research - I found it fascinating. Particularly so since an entry from the Sherborne Mercury of Tuesday, 1st April 1740 is quoted as follows:

"Bideford: to be sold in sundry lots, on the conditions of Sale then and there to be mentioned. By order Hon Commissioner of H.M. Customs. To be sold publickly to the highest bidder, at the King's Warehouse Bideford, on Tuesday the 8th of this instant, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, free of all duties and other charges. About 5,490 lbs of found Bulk Tobacco (parts thereof seized in the house of THOMAS COPPLESTONE (sic), a shopkeeper in the said town) to be put up at 5d a pound. 1,380 lbs of ordinary ditto somewhat damaged, to be put up at 4d a pound. 11 galls and 3 quarts of foreign Rum, to be put up at 5/- a gallon." (Yes, read it and weep!)

Typically Thomas Copleston is wrongly spelled, but we know him to be son of Coriolanus Copleston the Bideford mercer who was an Independent whose house was registered for Dissenting religious worship in 1703. He was also therefore brother of John, who had been Pastor of The Great Meeting House in Bideford from 1718-1729 and their mother was Mary, daughter of John Bartlett who had also been Pastor there. Whatever must the family thought of him - or were some of them customers, I wonder?!

I must now try to see Quarter Sessions and find out what punishment was meted to Thomas. Thomas, his son, was named a Trustee of dwelling houses and gardens in Meddon Street, Bideford in 1749, for the use of The Great Meeting House, so the stain did not fall upon him. We learn from the stories of Dr. Syn that smugglers were not unpopular with local people and perhaps the citizens of Bideford were in the main happy to 'turn a blind eye'.

It makes me wonder whether George, another brother, brought anything other than cod into Bideford on the 'Sarah', for he sailed between Newfoundland, Portugal, Spain and Bideford, engaged in the Newfoundland Trade.

THE DISSENTERS OF WREXHAM

Willis Copleston

When invited by Muriel to write about the Wrexham family of Coplestons I decided I had to find some more about them, other than actual names and dates. It very soon became obvious that their interests and activities were so numerous that I decided to divide the story into two parts; their church activities and their business and commercial life.

When Thomas and Olive Honey, my gt-grandparents, came to Wrexham about 1859 with some of their family, there is little evidence as to their religious persuasion ** until we come to Benjamin their sixth son and my grandfather. Benjamin married twice, first to Harriet Roberts who gave him 5 children and secondly to Mary Ann Bott who had 8 children. Benjamin must have inherited some of the dissident beliefs from his gt-gfr Rev Coriolanus, for very soon there is mention of him in this connexion. They were Baptists and in the c19th a New Reformed Church called The Church of Christ arose within the Baptist Church with the object of promoting "primitive Christianity" and a few members of the Wrexham Baptists separated themselves to form the first congregation.

In 1858 the Roman Catholic Church in King St., Wrexham, was adapted for use as the C of C and among the members who gave "long and valued service" was Mr. Benjamin Copleston. The next we hear of him is in 1876 when as a painter and decorator he was concerned with the building of the new Baptist Church in Chester St., Wrexham and associated with him was a builder, Benjamin Owen, who married Catherine, our Benjamin's sister. This new Church replaced the original "The Old Meeting" which had stood since 1762. Fifty years later in 1926 the Jubilee celebrations of the building of the new Church in 1876 provided the occasion for reminiscences by old members who were actually there in 1876, including the Minister at the time, Rev. S. D. Thomas, who provides a graphic account of the troubles at the time. He says "The building arose through a series of battles sometimes fiercely fought". He accounts a long and interesting story; first the cross over the door was condemned as 'rank popery' and the architect had to make

an ornament in flowers to replace it. Then the front stones and the beams were condemned by the deacons and Benjamin Owen had to replace them. The last battle was fought in the opening week. On the Wednesday before the opening an inspection found everything very beautiful, the woodwork shone with varnish and the walls French grey, until a fiery Scotsman started to feel the woodwork; he cried "Copleston, this won't do, it must come off"! Much argument, but finally the varnish was stripped and two new coats applied.

The Rev Thomas then goes on "This led to serious consequences, for after I had preached on the Saturday night, many of the congregation were unable to rise from their seats! Mrs. Smith's new jacket was spoilt and Mrs. Bayley's cape and many others. Finally it was agreed that it was a good job and would stand for 50 years without repair." That was 110 years ago and the Church is still there, but I don't know how much repair has been made since. Later the Baptists of Chester St. thought it their duty to provide for the spiritual needs of the growing population and a Mission Church was built in Bradley Road, Wrexham, in 1899.

This was used by visiting Gospel Missions such as the Pilgrim Preachers, but remained under the joint ministry of the mother Church in Chester Street. Here we have Thomas, Benjamin's 3rd son of his 1st marriage, being recorded as "providing much of the pioneering work" and his devotion is remembered by the unveiling of a marble tablet in Bradley Rd. Church in 1938, 2 years after his death.

Until recently I had assumed that they were members of the Church of Christ, but looking through the List of Members of Chester St. Baptist there are entries which say that in 1902 "Benjamin Copleston and his wife Mary Ann and Wm. and his wife Sarah and Thomas" were admitted from King St. C of C, so I don't quite know what happened there at that time. Also in the same list were "William C. transferred to Eltham Park Baptist Church"++ "Henry Elliot C. son of Wm. left for West Ealing and Sydney C. son of Wm. transferred to Rhydfelin Baptist Church as Minister on 28.5.1928. The only entry under Interments is that of Jessie Maud G. aged 10 mths at the Dissenters' Burial Ground. I must say I felt a bit sad reading that;

how on earth could a child of 10 mths dissent about anything? Maybe I'm a bit sentimental or don't understand! In another announcement new Trustees were appointed to the Dissenters Burial Ground including "Wm. Copleston now of Porthcawl" and "Henry Elliot C., Revenue Clerk of London". Henry E., Benjamin's eldest son of his 1st marriage, does not seem to have played a very active part in the Church, but when he died on 22.1.1938 the funeral took place at the C of C and the service was conducted by C of C Pastor Roberts.

As you see, most of the story revolves around Benjamin and in the Wrexham Advertiser of 10.2.1917 was "Congratulations to a respected townsman, Mr. B. Copleston, who attained the ripe age of 78 on Thursday. Despite his advanced years, Mr. Copleston is enjoying the best of health." It does indicate how much he was respected. Congrats on 70th or 80th seems normal, but 78th! I must see if they recognised his 77th or 79th.

Continuing with the only one of Benjamin's sons I haven't mentioned, Percy, my father, he was born in 1879 and became a grocer's asst and when the firm he worked for opened a branch in Flint he was sent there as manager in 1901 and bought his own business in 1911. I suppose he was a Baptist, but here he met a lady, Lily Knighton, my mother. The Knightons were a large family and the old man, Robert Willis Knighton, was a colliery manager, a staunch Liberal and Methodist, so Percy had little chance - he became a Methodist! They were married in the Methodist Church as were his three children who were also christened there, a fact which would have been approved by those early dissenters and Pastor John and his son Rev. Coriolanus if they had been looking in! Percy continued his church work as Circuit Steward, Sunday School Super and local preacher in the Methodist Circuit.

So to conclude; that leaves me, here on my own; sadly I lost May 5 years ago, but very happy with my two lovely daughters, 6 grandchildren and 2 gt-gr'children and a pedigree to Adam, cl320 and going through 20 generations to my gt-grandson, also Adam, aged 4.

++ Thomas and Olive's 1st son, Thomas Augustine, had gone

to Wrexham in 1855, after marrying and having two children in Maidstone. He married immediately after completing his apprenticeship, Emily Mason of Maidstone. Most of the descendants of the sons of Rev. Coriolanus had been Methodists - certainly in Maidstone where a number were buried in the Methodist burial ground (now a lawn with all headstones removed). The William in Willis' article was registered at the GRO as 'Willie' and was known as such in the family - did the Baptists think it a nickname?! Frederick Sidney is the Rev. Sydney referred to and is still working hard in the Swansea area, although long retired (son of Willie). Bill Copleston in Leytonstone has Thomas Augustine's Family Bible, inscribed: "This Bible presented to him by J.V. Hall, Manager, on the completion of his Apprenticeship this day and as a testimony of his most exemplary conduct, affording to his employers complete satisfaction and sincere pleasure. Signed: J.V.Hall & Son, Maidstone, October 14, 1850."

FOR THE FINAL ISSUE IN JULY - may I have some short articles from you about your families? Let this issue be a real family one in which as many as possible take part; there must be some incidents, amusing, sad, preposterous, which you have heard or experienced. Willis will be contributing the rest of his family saga, but I want more! Someone, of course, can take his or her turn at writing up the Family Gathering - I shall be asking for a volunteer at Sidmouth and David and Ruth and Derek have had their turn.

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I left the Guild of One-Name Studies in December. Except for a couple of notable exceptions I don't find the enthusiastic two-way exchange of information which is experienced with members of Family History Societies all over the country. I don't feel I can give anything to the Guild, neither do I gain anything. A shame, but I call 'em the way I sees 'em.

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I have joined Hampshire Genealogical Society to help sort out the Coplestones in that County. Their 'Family Historian' is an excellent and informative journal to which I look forward every quarter.