

# **The Escutcheon,**

## **Journal of the Cambridge University Heraldic & Genealogical Society**

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Michaelmas Term 1998

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### **A message from the President**

Since the last issue of The Escutcheon the business of the Society has continued encouragingly. This is in no small part due to the tireless organisational skills of the Secretary, Rohan Stewart-MacDonald, to whom we all owe our thanks.

At the first meeting of the Michaelmas Term, many new faces joined us to hear, firstly, Robin Millerchip's basic introduction to Heraldry (accompanied by colour slides of the many coats of arms to be seen in and around Cambridge) and, secondly, Eve Logan who, in spite of a very heavy cold, discussed some of the really practical ways of beginning a personal study of genealogy.

The genealogical theme was continued in the second meeting of the term when Derek Palgrave gave an illustrated overview of his own investigations into the origins and subsequent ramifications of families bearing the surnames, Palgrave and Pgrave.

I very much hope that it will be possible to see many of you at the Society's St Nicholas Feast, at Clare College on Saturday, 5th December, 1998, which promises to be as diverting as ever.

*Thomas Thurman (President)*

# SETTLEMENT IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

## Gerald Feakes

We often look upon settlement, in the context of Poor Law Administration, as a concept and practice that belongs to past centuries. However, the system was not abolished until 1948 and, even though its use may have been uncommon in the twentieth century, it was not unknown as the following extract from The Hunts Post of November 1936 shows:-

### GOING "HOME" AFTER 40 YEARS

#### Aged Woman Removed to Huntingdon

*A woman who has been in the Peterborough Public Assistance Institution since 1896 has been removed to Huntingdon, her place of settlement.*

The report stated that the woman, who was not named, was admitted to the Thorpe Road Institution on 16th October, 1896, after being certified under a section of the Lunacy Act, and had been there ever since. Settlement had been accepted by the Huntingdonshire County Council on 13th September, 1934.

The Huntingdonshire authorities rejected the offer from Peterborough that the woman should remain at Peterborough with the cost being borne by Huntingdonshire and made an order for her to be admitted to their own Institution. A member of the Peterborough Guardians Committee said "It has taken the Guardians and this Council a long time to find out that she belongs to Hunts."

*Note: Settlement was the principle that everyone had a home parish or, as it was called, a place of settlement. If a person or a family needed assistance from the Poor Law Guardians when not in their home parish they could be examined by magistrates to establish their place of settlement and be required to move back to it. Many records of such examinations can be found in Record Offices.*

## ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF WOMEN

In general, it has been the custom for a woman to bear her paternal arms on a lozenge. On her marriage, her arms have been impaled on a shield with those of her husband. If she happened to be an heraldic heiress (i.e. she had no brothers) her arms were not impaled, but placed on his shield as an escutcheon of pretence.

According to a recent ruling by the English Kings of Arms, a married woman now has the option of displaying her paternal arms alone on a shield or banner, differenced by a small escutcheon (of a contrasting tincture), placed in a suitable position such as the canton or centre chief point or elsewhere depending on the extant design. She also has the option of displaying her husband's arms alone on a shield or banner differenced by a small lozenge (of a contrasting tincture), placed in a suitable position such as the canton or centre chief point or elsewhere depending on the extant design.

The following illustrations of the Palgrave arms show the above options in practice.



*Husband*



*Wife*



*Married Daughter*

An unmarried daughter continues to display her paternal arms on a lozenge but the Kings of Arms appear to have recognised the very real design difficulties associated with a such a shape, so they confirm the option to use an oval or other more convenient shape provided it cannot be confused with an escutcheon. Incidentally the lozenge or its equivalent may be used by a widow to display her late husband's arms with the miniature lozenge of difference in a contrasting tincture. A divorced woman is expected to revert to displaying her father's arms on a lozenge or its equivalent with or without a mascle, the conventional difference indicating divorce.

It follows that the daughter of an armiger, married to an armigerous husband, now has the opportunity to use a shield to display her husband's arms differenced with a lozenge or, alternatively, her father's arms differenced with an escutcheon. These new options have very much enhanced the scope, application and appeal of heraldry in keeping with modern circumstances and are therefore most welcome.

# Society Outing to the Public Record Office

\_\_\_\_\_R Stewart-MacDonald\_\_\_\_\_

The first of this year's three outings was to the Public Record Office at Kew on Saturday, 7th November, 1998. Although the yearcard advertised visits to both the Family Records Centre in Islington and the PRO at Kew, it was subsequently realised that it was not feasible to visit both places on the same day.

The PRO, the national archive of England, Wales and the United Kingdom holds records created or acquired by central government and the central courts of law from the 11th century to the present day. Although the Office was established in 1838 exclusively for lawyers and scholars, it is now open to the general public. The modern premises contain 96 miles of shelving holding a staggering diversity of documents, from the Domesday book to the instrument of abdication signed by King Edward VIII. The Office also holds Guy Fawkes' confessions, Captain Bligh's account of the mutiny on HMS Bounty and William Shakespeare's will. It is generally possible to view any document that is over 30 years old. The PRO remains an especially important repository of military archives.

The pleasant and spacious modern premises, which were completed only a few years ago provide a conducive environment for research and are well equipped with amenities. The building contains a licensed self-service restaurant, and a shop selling a wide range of family, military and general history books. The Office is open on weekdays and Saturdays for most of the year.

The number of Society members able to attend was small, but those who did come greatly enjoyed the visit. The main event of the day was the guided tour in the afternoon, which lasted for approximately one-and-three-quarter hours. This was conducted by Mr James Guthrie of the PRO whose eloquence and friendliness made for a stimulating overview of the establishment. Mr Guthrie gave informative answers to most of the questions concerning the history of the Office and its facilities, so enthusiastically put to him by Society members.

A pleasant consequence of the visit was our acquisition of readers' tickets. These are valid for three years, enabling entry into the PRO just to visit or to carry out research. To be eligible for such a ticket, one is required to fill in a simple form giving personal details and an indication of the topic one intends to research. Copies of the form are freely available in the entrance hall and when completed should be submitted together with some personal identification such as a banker's card or driving licence. The procedure was very straightforward thanks to the helpful cooperation of the PRO staff.

Any member of the Society who was unable to join us on 7th November but who is interested in finding out more about the contents of the PRO and its extensive facilities is welcome to contact me for a copy of the introductory leaflet. First Steps in the Public Record Office.

Society members are reminded that the Lent Term outing will be on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 1999, when we shall be visiting Lida Cardozo-Kindersley's Heraldic Workshop. Please give this your support.

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## Forthcoming Conferences and Other Events

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| 8-11 April 1999     | <b>Weekend Conference - Hampshire FHS</b><br>incorporating FFHS AGM & Council Meeting<br>Sparsholt College. Winchester<br>Conference Theme - 'Cabbages and Kings'<br>(Details of costs & accommodation: Mm J Renton, 27, Lodge Road,<br>Locks Heath^ants. S031 6QY)  |
| 1-2 May, 1999       | <b>Seventh Annual Family History Fair</b><br>hosted by the Society of Genealogists<br>Royal Horticultural Society Hall & Conference Centre<br>Greycoat Street^Westminster, London SW1<br>(Further information from the Society of Genealogists,<br>14, Charterhouse Buildings. Goswell Road. London. EC1M 7BA) |
| 6-18 June, 1999     | <b>Guild of One-Name Studies Annual Conference</b><br><br>(For further information write to Box G,<br>14, Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Road^London. EC1M 7BA)   |
| 3-5 September, 1999 | <b>Weekend Conference - NW Kent FHS</b><br>incorporating FFHS Council Meeting<br>Greenwich University, AveryHil<br>Conference Theme: "Time and Tide"   |
| 26-30 April, 2000   | <b>9th British Family History Conference</b><br>hosted by Wiltshire FHS<br>University of Bath<br>incorporating FFHS AGM & Council Meeting  |

## Book Reviews

Basic Facts About Using Wills After 1858 and First Avenue House; Audrey Collins, The Federation of Family History Societies, Birmingham, 1998. 16pp, A5, paperback. ISBN 1 86006 090 0. £1-50.

This is a new addition to the Federation's Basic Series of explanatory booklets under the general editorship of Pauline Litton. It has been written by Audrey Collins, author of the very successful Basic Facts about using the Family Records Centre, with a view to introducing readers to the new office of the Principal Registry of the Family Division, situated at First Avenue House, 42-49, High Holborn, London WC1V 6NP, following the closure of the facilities at Somerset House.

The new premises, which formerly housed the HMSO Bookshop, are open from Monday to Friday between 10-00 a.m. and 4-30 p.m. They are easy to reach by public transport as evidenced by the map and notes which follow the Introduction in the booklet. There is a light and spacious search room with plenty of seating where one may consult the indexes and read copies of wills. Indexes to the most recent wills are on microfiche which may be seen at one of the eight microfiche viewers provided for the purpose.

The author not only describes the function and layout of the building but also sketches in the background to the probate records from 1858 onwards. She emphasises the importance of wills as genealogical sources by virtue of the many references to relatives by name in connection with specific bequests. Not everyone left a will so next of kin often needed to apply for a grant of Letters of Administration and these are also listed in the indexes. There is no charge to search through the indexes, normally referred to as Calendars, but to gain access to a copy of a will or a grant requires the payment of a small fee.

Copies of the Calendars, often on microfilm or microfiche, are widely available at other locations but the only fully complete set from 1858 to date is held at First Avenue House. However it is usually possible to glean sufficient information to arrange to visit the appropriate District Probate Registry or to make a postal application which has to be directed to The Postal Searches and Copies Department at the Probate Registry, Duncombe Place, York, YO1 2EA.

Audrey Collins has compiled another excellent booklet in which she has presented the essential information in an attractive and convenient format. She has given us all the practical details we need to arrange our visits, carry out our searches and gain access to copies of wills or grants. I believe that this is a definite candidate for every genealogist's personal library.

*Dereka Palgrave*

**Basic Facts about Tracing Your Catholic Ancestry in England;** *Michael Gandy*  
The Federation of Family History Societies, Birmingham, 1998. 16pp, A5.  
paperback. ISBN 1 86006 084 6, £1-50.

Michael Gandy is a prolific author not only because he enjoys writing but also because so many of us enjoy reading what he has written. His enthusiasm for his subject invariably rubs off on to the reader and, once again, this latest booklet is no exception.

The first few pages are devoted to a summary of the events which occurred as a result of Henry VIII's break from the religious authority of Rome in 1534. The population at large did not become Anglicans overnight - in fact there were many years of transition during which the liturgy was revised and new religious practices introduced. Those who insisted on holding on to the "old religion" were persecuted by execution, imprisonment, confiscation of property or regular fines, in spite of these risks many families remained Catholic but their numbers gradually declined so that by the eighteenth century they represented only 1 of the population.

From then on a series of Relief Acts permitted Catholic worship and also the building of new chapels. By the mid-nineteenth century, coinciding with the process of migration, from the English countryside and from Ireland, into the large industrial towns which was in full swing, more and more people were embraced by a revitalised Catholicism. Consequently there is a real chance that many of us will have Catholic connections and that, by the time we trace our ancestry back to the sixteenth century, this will apply to virtually all of us.

The author makes the point that a significant proportion of the relevant archival material has been transcribed and published so this very much facilitates research in this field. However there is much unpublished material in archive repositories such as the Public Record Office at Kew, the House of Lords Record Office and in local county and district record offices. For instance much can be gleaned from the Quarter Sessions Records which include, among other items, specific lists of papists.

The booklet concludes with a most convenient guide to a classified bibliography alerting us to a range of further reading including several books and articles by Michael Gandy himself. A great deal has been published by the Catholic Record Society but there is a considerable volume of findings from other organisations such as the Catholic FHS and also individuals. There are references to mission registers, wills and estates, monumental inscriptions, martyrs and prisoners, the Civil War and a host of other topics which we may need to embrace.

There are now over a dozen such booklets in the Federation's Basic Series and this one is a shining example of the way it is possible to encapsulate the rudiments of an important topic in a mere 16 pages.

*Derek A Palgrave*

## Information Exchange

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In previous issues of *The Escutcheon* we have published details of the genealogical research being undertaken by members of CUHAGS. This is a practice which has been adopted by most genealogical societies and by certain other publishers in this field. We very much hope that our readers will contribute lists of the surnames they have so far discovered in their ancestry indicating where and when those surnames were recorded.

In time, when comprehensive lists have been accumulated, it will become possible for each reader to see if anyone else is researching the same surnames in the same places over the same period of time. The way then opens up for members to share their findings with one another and discover how they may be related.

## Federation of Family History Societies' Publications

Books published by the Federation, such as those reviewed on pages 6 and 7 of this issue of *The Escutcheon*, may be purchased from the Society. Please contact the Editor for details of prices and postage.

## Editor's Postscript

I would like to offer a warm welcome new readers of *The Escutcheon*. It is your magazine to which I hope you will contribute news items, articles about genealogy and heraldry, book reviews, queries and comments. Hopefully it will continue to reflect the activities of the Society and the many interests of its members.

Please note that the Society is a member of the Federation of Family History Societies which represents the interests of over 200 local and national societies mainly, but not exclusively, in the English-speaking world. Most of these societies concentrate on genealogy and family history, but there are several which feature heraldry, surname studies, archive management and conservation, etc. The Federation publishes a regular journal which contains reports from member societies, abstracts of articles published by them, international news and reviews, specialist reports and a range of other details. The Society's Library holds copies of this Journal together with a comprehensive collection of reference books.

*Derek A Palgrave*

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