

TUNBRIDGE WELLS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Member of the Federation of Family History Societies
and the Kent Group of Family History Societies



Church Road and Mount Pleasant produce by H Camburn. See page 11

JOURNAL

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Tunbridge Wells Family History Society

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Important

Membership records are held on computer. If you do not wish your name and address to be kept in this way, please notify the membership secretary.

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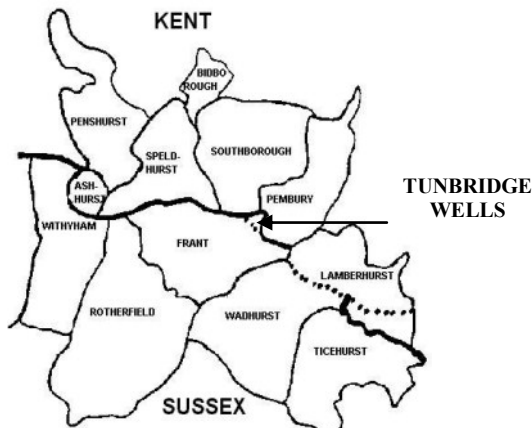
Individual £8.00; *Family* £10.00; *Overseas* £10.00

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Aims of the Society

To promote genealogical studies and family history research, particularly in the Tunbridge Wells area; to make available the results of any research; and to promote the preservation of records.

Parishes covered



2011 Programme

- 25 October Kent in the 19th Century
Bob Ogley
- 22 November Annual General Meeting

2012 Programme

- 24 January My Ancestor was in the Police Force
Ken Divall
- 8 February Licence to Marry, an in-depth look at Marriage Licences
Mrs Meryl Catty
- 27 March Funny Funerals, Weird Wills and Eccentric Epitaphs.
Cyril W Baldwin
- 24 April Online Resources for Professions and Occupations
Peter Christian
- 22 May Surviving in Soho in the 1850s
Roger McKenna
- 26 June Researching Publican and Brewer Ancestors
Simon Fowler
- 24 July Death by Gentry 1805–The story of a young girl aged 16
who was seduced by the master of the house
Judith Kinnison Bourke
- 28 August Industry in Southwark, Bermondsey and Rotherhithe
Stephen Humphrey
- 25 September TBA
- 23 October The Acid Bath Murders
David Briffett
- 27 November Annual General Meeting

The Society meets monthly on the **fourth Tuesday** (except December)
at **The Village Hall, Station Road, Groombridge.**

Meetings start at **8pm.**

Refreshments, bookstall and
help desk available from **7.30pm.**

**If this journal cannot be delivered, please return it to:
Reg Butler, Glencairn, Whitehill Road,
Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 1JA**

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Copy deadline for Journal Number 52, Spring, 2012
will be **7 January 2012**

Editorial

ONCE AGAIN SUMMER has passed almost unnoticed, with the longer evenings drawing in and last, but not least, the AGM approaches along with it the opening of the annual hunt season. Although the main officers are willing to continue they will retire at some stage and will have to be replaced. With this in mind there are vacancies on committee and from here it is normal for successors to be found and it would be heartening for everyone if the committee came up to full strength.

We have not been buried under a deluge of Schoolday Memories but I thank the members who have so far contributed. Any who are considering supplying theirs, there is still just time as the closing date is 1 November.

I will not dwell unduly on the 20th Anniversary evening as there is a letter published elsewhere which really says it all! We were extremely fortunate to have as guest speaker the President of the FFHS, Dr Nick Barratt, who kept us royally entertained and enthralled for upwards of an hour without a single reference to notes. It was also pleasing to have been able to welcome four members of NWK FHS who drove down to support our celebrations.

I would like here to acknowledge the help and assistance given me over the past two years or so by Paul Marsh who has pored over my offerings and proofread the Journal before it is sent to the printer. He has saved me several red faces, thank you Paul.

Rather early I know, but I'll take this chance now to wish all members a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

East Sussex Record Office

It was satisfying to learn that our contribution of copies of the *Journal* to libraries and institutions are of some significance. The following is from a message sent by the Archivist at East Sussex Record Office:

“I am always interested to read your society’s *Journal*, but in this issue I was particularly taken with the recollections of Stanley Randall.

“I should like to encourage Andrew Randall to deposit the recollections here at the County Record Office, or perhaps to allow us to make a copy of them – they deserve a wider currency, and our holdings for the Bayham Abbey Estate and its families are not good.”

TNA User Advisory Group (UAG)

This new group has been set up to provide an opportunity for users of The National Archives to get involved in the organisation’s planning and decision-making processes at an earlier stage and more strategic level than ever before. Attendance is by invitation following an opportunity to express an interest.

The following sections of the user community are being represented:

- on site personal interest researchers
- independent (paid) researchers
- academic researchers
- researchers based primarily in the Map and Large Document reading room
- researchers interested in the diversity/inclusion/access agenda

county/external archives
genealogical/family history societies

Initially, a member of staff will take part as a delegate for those users who primarily, or exclusively, use TNA's online services. However, over the coming year, TNA will be exploring other ways of representing online users.

I was there on behalf of FFHS to represent the genealogical/family history community together with Else Churchill of the Society of Genealogists.

Meetings will be held at The National Archives in Kew four times a year. Dates of forthcoming meetings are on Tuesdays:

6 September 2011

6 December 2011

6 March 2012

The draft terms of reference can be seen at

nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/tna-user-forum-terms-of-reference.pdf.

The agenda for this first meeting was drawn up by TNA but in future members of the group can have input to the agenda. As an example, a request was made that the next meeting should include discussion on the need to improve catalogues. Minutes will be published on the TNA website.

As a rule members of the group will be free to report on the topics discussed but there will be occasions when our involvement at an early stage will mean that information will be provided to us on a confidential basis.

The Business Plan for the next four years can be seen at

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/the-national-archives-business-plan

A most interesting topic related to the 4.6 million records of the Home Guard held by the MoD. They are in 5,270 boxes with approximately 873 records per box. TNA's normal practice is to accept only a small sample when such a large collection is available to them. However, they are contemplating a digitisation project to enable them to accept the whole collection in digital form together with a small sample of the original documents. With this in mind, TNA is embarking on a pilot project using the records for County Durham (approximately 2% of the collection). One key to the success of the project will be the choice of data to be searchable

At the meeting it was suggested that Occupation would be very useful. It is intended that a separate meeting will be arranged so that members of the group can be shown a small sample of the data that is held in the collection, so that an informed judgement can be made about what should be searchable. Obviously, it will be impossible to include everything and so a compromise must be found.

I felt that this first meeting had all the signs of the group being what is needed to address some of the concerns that have been aired at the monthly user forums but, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. So we shall have to wait to see to what extent the group's advice is taken on board.

This information was supplied by Roger Lewry, FFHS Archives Liaison

UK Rail Workers' Archive Online

Railway Employment Records from 1833 to 1963 are available online for the first time following a digitisation project by The National Archives and family history website, Ancestry.co.uk. The collection documents the history of the British rail service through the lives of its employees, containing records dating back to the invention of the locomotive in the early 19th century. These newly digitised files cover a limited selection of records from a limited selection of series as not all railway companies have been included. You can find a complete list of the available records on Ancestry.co.uk.

Medals Reunited Project

A list of medals has been put together from WW1 and the Boer War along with the names and service numbers of the soldiers they were awarded to. The idea is that subscribers can use the site to check the list for medals that belonged to their family members. Once they find a medal of interest to them, UltraViolet Genealogy, a professional research service, track it down and offer a purchasing service for subscribers. There is an annual subscription some of which will go to supporting Help for Heroes as will regular donations from any proceeds received from this project. If you wish to check this site go to <http://www.uvgenealogy.co.uk/29701.html>.

I don't know what it is about my name but I did have look and there were no Huggetts in sight, or should that be on site? My father had WW1 medals, as did three uncles, one of whom had two Boer War medals, so I am not sure how they gather their information. If they rely on people to tell them, what are their rates of pay?

Post Office Employment Records

Ancestry have digitised the Post Office Appointment Books covering the period 1737–1969.

Essex Record Office Subscription Service

Essex Record Office launched Essex Ancestors on 30 August. This new service will offer unlimited pay-to-browse access to Essex parish registers and many wills, giving customers fuller and wider access to their holdings from the comfort of their homes. Parish register coverage will extend from at least 1538 to 1837 with the period 1837 to the present partly included at go-live date or planned imminently. Marriages within the last 50 years will be excluded, in compliance with government guidelines, however.

National Archives Lose Priceless Documents

According to a story in the *Daily Telegraph* 1600 folders of documents have been reported missing at the National Archives in the past six years, including regimental diaries, medal records, letters from Winston Churchill, and papers from the courts of Henry VII, Queen Elizabeth I, and King Charles I.

Not all have been lost for ever, some have simply been misfiled, but so far less than half of them have been found despite “a continual programme to search for lost items.”

Burial Records Online

With over 18 million entries, from over 9000 parishes, the largest collection of UK burial records is the National Burial Index v3, a DVD ROM compilation of transcriptions carried out by volunteers from local family history societies. It covers most of England & Wales as well as the Isle of Man, although coverage of some areas (notably London) is quite sparse.

About two-thirds of those entries are online at findmypast, where you'll also find Boyd's London Burials, a collection of nearly a quarter of a million records, and the City of London Burial Index, with over half a million entries which help fill the gap in the NBI.

By the mid-19th century onwards most London churchyards were full, so after that date most burials took place in the suburbs, such as Brookwood Cemetery in Woking, at one time the largest cemetery in the world (with its own train service), and the City of London Cemetery in Manor Park. Tracking down where your ancestors were buried is much more difficult after 1850. The London Metropolitan Archives burials at Ancestry are five times as numerous for the period 1813–1853 than for the period 1880–1920, despite a massive increase in population.

Other major collections of burials at Ancestry include West Yorkshire, Liverpool, and Dorset.

Earlier findmypast newsletters mentioned some of the local authorities that have online indexes of burials. One not mentioned previously is Eastleigh Borough Council; this link came from a reader who also tells that West Ham Cemetery records are due online in the next few months.

Irish Indexes

These Irish indexes were put on line at Ancestry on Tuesday 20 September

Ireland, Civil Registration Deaths Index, 1864–1958

Ireland, Civil Registration Marriages Index, 1845–1958

Ireland, Civil Registration Births Index, 1864–1958

Ireland, Births and Baptisms, 1620–1911

Ireland, Catholic Parish Baptisms, 1742–1881

Ireland, Catholic Parish Marriages and Banns, 1742–1884

Merchant Navy Records

findmypast.co.uk has just released 1 million Merchant Navy seamen's records. Dating from 1918 to 1941, these records cover an era in nautical history when ocean travel was at its peak.

The Merchant Navy covered all cargo and passenger ships and their crew, so if your ancestor 'went to sea' and you've previously not found them in Royal Navy records, this may be where they are. The records, which are now available online, contain rarely seen photos of the mariners along with descriptions including hair and eye colour, height and distinguishing marks.

The National Archives have useful guides on their website to help with your research into merchant seamen and you can read more in "My Ancestor was a Merchant Seaman" which is available in paperback from their bookshop.

Revised hours for London Metropolitan Archives

From **Monday 14 November 2011** there will be changes to weekday openings at LMA.

LMA will **close on Fridays**, but there will be an extra late night opening on Wednesdays (as well as Tuesdays and Thursdays) until 7.30 pm. For Saturday openings please check their website:

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma

The new opening times are:-

Monday 9:30am - 4:45pm

Wednesday 9:30am - 7:30pm

Friday **CLOSED**

Tuesday 9:30am - 7:30pm

Thursday 9:30am - 7:30pm

National Archives Embrace Sector Role

From 3 October the responsibility for archives across England transfers to The National Archives from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). This move to single leadership of the archive sector marks a significant step towards building a more resilient and unified archive network.

The next six months will see phased implementation of the leadership responsibilities to enable The National Archives to engage with archives on how it intends to fulfil its new remit.

Over the transition period, The National Archives will adapt MLA's established approach to complement its existing archival expertise. The National Archives will work with partners to develop and transform the sector's sustainability and impact in the future, by, for example, collaborative working, leveraging funding and new business model development.

Strengthened strategic partnerships across the cultural sector, combined with archive development expertise will ensure The National Archives is well-placed to support archives in meeting the needs of a 21st-century audience. It will offer advice and guidance plus tools and resources to help achieve results in the best interests of archives and their users.

Supporting the approach, a new web page

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archive-leadership

with dedicated information and guidance for the archive sector also launched on 3 October. This will evolve to meet the needs of the sector and reflect new ways of working. Follow them @UkNatArchives.

Letters

Dear Veronica

My sister, Penny Trott, and I would like to express our thanks and appreciation to you and other committee members for going to so much trouble to arrange such an enjoyable evening last night. The talk was both



The Chairman introducing the speaker, Dr Nick Barratt, at the Anniversary Dinner

interesting and eye-opening, the food was delicious and it was lovely to have the opportunity of talking to fellow members and sharing our triumphs and disasters in chasing down our family trees! It was good to see Carole and Roger again – the last time Penny met them was bumping into them at a small rural museum in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales a couple of years ago!

Everyone involved deserves a great big pat on the back for arranging such a successful occasion. Here's to the next decade of archive hunting.

With best wishes

Sally Dale, Member 151

*

Dear Colin

I read with great interest the article on the *HMS Captain* that appeared in the Summer 2011 edition of the Journal. I have had a lifetime interest in all things nautical so this article quickly caught my attention and brought back memories of my family's experiences with ships. My great-great grandfather was a shipwright and worked in Stepney or Limehouse, London at one of the dockyards in the 1830s. In 1922 my grandfather and his family came to live in Canada by sailing on the *Minnedosa* from Liverpool to Quebec. My dad went to England during WWII on a ship I can no longer remember the name of and returned to Canada after the war in December 1945 on the *Ile de France*. He was followed by his wife along with 300 other war brides on the *Mauritania*

which had sailed from Liverpool and arrived at Halifax in January 1946. During 1949 my mum's parents came for a visit on the steamship *Franconia* which is the same vessel that Winston Churchill used as his headquarters for the Yelta conference. In April 1955 my mother took me to visit her family in Lancashire, who lived on a farm near Heysham. My dad drove us to Montreal and we boarded the steamship *Empress of Scotland* arriving at Liverpool 4 April. In 1969, on the 100th anniversary of the clipper ship *Cutty Sark*, I began construction of a wooden model of the ship that took me two years to complete (I still have it). It was over 12 feet long and made from plans my mum's brother sent me from England as well as photos and literature I sent for from Greenwich where the ship is still used today as a museum. This was the first of several ship models I built over the years. In 1975 I took a vacation out to Nova Scotia and sailed on Canada's famous *Bluenose Schooner*. Although a replica of the original ship it was a great experience. On the way home I went on a sightseeing tour through the islands on the St. Lawrence River on a paddle steamer called the *Thousand Islander*. In the late 1980s the *Bluenose Schooner* came to Thunder Bay as part of the Tall Ships' Great Lakes Tour and my dad and I went on board to have a good look around and took several photos. In 2010 the replica of the *Bounty* came to Thunder Bay and docked at the Marina. I was one of thousands who turned out to take pictures of the ship and take a tour on it. If seeing ships and being on them isn't enough I have spent over 10 years researching the history of steamships in Canada and have compiled over 50 binders of information, postcards and photographs and when I pass away I intend to donate my work and my ship models to the local museum. Ships and the history of shipping has been one of my passions in life so I look forward to seeing more articles in the Journal on this theme.

Ed Gilbert, Member 735

Recollections on the Forming of TWFHS

*Member No 12, Karen Tayler, 56 Yew Tree Road, Southborough,
Tonbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 0BN*

ARE YOU FASCINATED by your Ancestors? Have you wondered how to start your Family Tree?

This was the start of a newspaper cutting from the Focus newspaper dated October 8 1991. When Roy mentioned at the meeting on Tuesday 22 March 2011 that the Society was twenty years old this year I remembered that I was

Are you fascinated by
your Ancestors?
Have you wondered
how to start your
Family Tree?
Contact
Tunbridge Wells Family
History Society
0892 - 516586
Ring Kevin after 5pm
First Meeting 18th Oct.

Advert from the Focus, 8 October 1991

living in Horsham at the time and my Mum saw the advertisement in the newspaper and cut it out for me. When I picked up my diary for 1991, the newspaper cutting was inside.

Brian and I were thinking of moving back to Tunbridge Wells and had been back to look at a couple of houses in Farmcombe Road in September and October 1991 so we came over after work for the first meeting in St Barnabas' Church Hall and were among the twenty or so founder members who joined the Society that evening. We only came to a few Friday meetings to start with as it took us another eighteen months to sell our house but I can remember meeting at Pembury Road and then at Barden Road, Speldhurst for a few years but we outgrew all the halls and always needed a larger location. We met at Rusthall Elms for a few years until we moved to the current hall at Groombridge where we held our tenth anniversary. I have a photo of the cake on that occasion.

In 1991 we were eagerly awaiting the release of the 1891 census which was made available in 1992 on microfiche for the first time as well as microfilm. Technology has moved on a lot in twenty years since then with the 1901 census being released online and the 1911 online census having colour images.

My 1993 diary contains a TWFHS Membership Card for 1994. Brian was the TWFHS editor for a while and we have both helped on the Help Desk and been on the 'panel' at some of the Question and Answer meetings.

I hope the society will still be flourishing in another ten or twenty years and wonder how we will be accessing the census and other records then?



The Society's 10th Anniversary cake

The Grabers of Tunbridge Wells

*Member 735, Edward James Gilbert, 1044 Deepwood Drive,
Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7J 1H7, Canada*

BY THE 1880s Tunbridge and Tunbridge Wells, together with Watford, were the centres of the national printing industry and became recognised for their expertise in this field. Firms like the Lewis Hepworth Company became well known in the printing/publishing business not only in Tunbridge Wells but throughout Britain. In the years leading up to WW1 there was also an explosion in photography and the production of postcards and in the number of companies serving the printing and photography industry. One of these service companies was Graber Printing & Ruling Machines Syndicated Limited of Tunbridge Wells, started up, owned and operated by Ellis **Graber**.

Ellis Graber was born in Poland in 1868 and came to Tunbridge wells about 1890 becoming well known internationally as an inventor and manufacturer of a wide range of printing machines. Soon after his arrival he met and subsequently married Alice who was born 1867 in Tunbridge Wells. Ellis began his business from premises at 47 Quarry Road and gradually built up his business from humble beginnings into a large operation. The couple's first child, Ellis Alexander Graber was born in January 1895 at Tunbridge Wells and he was followed by the birth of a second son Dyson H Graber in 1898, also at Tunbridge Wells. There is no record of Ellis having any other children. By 1901 the family was residing at 33 Chandos Road and in the census for that year Ellis' occupation was given as machinist and printer. Ellis was still operating his business at 47 Quarry Road in 1903 but by 1913 had moved to larger premises at 16 Newton Road. In Kelly's 1913 directory Ellis advertised himself as a bookbinder. At the same address in 1922 he is listed as a photographic printing machine maker and was still operating his business from this location up to 1938 when it appears Ellis retired from business at the age of 70.



A 1922 advertisement for Ellis Graber, Tunbridge Wells

Patent records indicate that Ellis was the holder of 15 patents. His first patent was for "Improvements in and relating to ruling machines" in 1894. This patent like the ones for 1895, 1896, 1897 and 1901 were all for the same type

of invention and were taken out jointly by Ellis Graber and Lewis **Hepworth**. Hepworth acquired the new improved machinery from Ellis for use in his printing business. Graber's remaining patents were taken out in 1902, 1910, 1913, 1915, 1922 and 1923 and were for machines for use in the "drying or treating of photographic prints and films"; "automatic developing, rinsing, fixing, toning, washing apparatus for photographic purposes"; "combined photographic and letter-press printing apparatus" and another patent pertaining to ruling machines.

During his working career Ellis showed off his machine inventions at the British Industries Fair. The first Fair was held in 1915 and every year afterwards for periods of two weeks up until 1939 when the fair was suspended until after WW2. The fair resumed in 1947 and continued afterwards from its large complex of buildings at Birmingham, until 1956. It is known that Ellis exhibited one of his inventions at the 1922 fair and in 1925 four of his machines and it is likely that he started exhibiting as early as 1915. He advertised in 1922 that he was a "Machinery Specialist for the production of high-class photography supplied to the British, American and Italian Governments" and by 1925 he was selling his machines to companies throughout Europe, North America, Australia, South Africa, Asia and beyond. In Tunbridge Wells he sold his machines to the well-known (at least amongst postcard collectors) postcard photographer/publisher Harold Hawtrey **Camburn** and the Photochrom Co. Limited. Postcard publishing companies around the world acquired his machines and more locally. Judges Limited of Sussex, in 1905 or 1906, purchased the first of several machines from Graber which greatly speeded up the production of postcards. Judges' purchase of an exposing machine when the company moved to larger premises at 42 White Rock allowed the company to produce larger production runs of cards to a consistent format and quality. In 1910 Judges moved again to larger premises and bought more of Graber's machinery. In about 1906, when Harold



A Graber machine which exhibited at the 1925 British Industries Fair

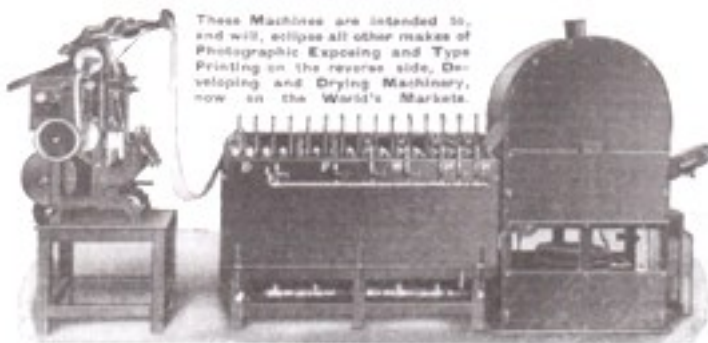
Ellis Graber's NEW PATENT "Eclipse" Drying Machine.

SHOWN ATTACHED to the GRABER "ACME" EXPOSING, TYPE PRINTING and CUTTING MACHINE, and the GRABER NEW "IDEAL" DEVELOPING MACHINE,

For the PRODUCTION OF BROMIDE and GAS-LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHS,

ALL IN ONE CONTINUOUS OPERATION.

Net Weight of "Acme," "Ideal," and "Eclipse" is about 15-net. Floor space for the complete plant is approximately 13'x17' by 10' in. Power: The whole three machines are driven by 1-h.p. motor.



These Machines are intended to, and will, eclipse all other makes of Photographic Exposing and Type Printing on the reverse side, Developing and Drying Machinery, now on the World's Markets.

The construction of the "Graber" Machinery is so accurate in the action that it is not dependent upon the ability or skill of the operator. The paper is taken from a roll and works automatically till it reaches the finished photographic dried picture at the end of the machine, and is re-rolled, or can be cut.

"ACME" EXPOSING MACHINE. NEW "IDEAL" DEVELOPING MACHINE. NEW "ECLIPSE" DRYING MACHINE.
 The "ACME" PRINTING MACHINE (Patented) Exposes from Negatives and Type prints on the reverse side of the print.
 The "IDEAL" DEVELOPING MACHINE (Patented) Develops, Fixes, Washes, Hardens, and Washes a second time.
 The "ECLIPSE" NEW DRYING MACHINE (Patented) finally dries the work after washing and automatically re-rolls.

Another of Graber's machine which exhibited at the 1925 British Industries Fair

Camburn set up business for himself at 21 Grove Hill Road, he installed one of the Rotary Photographic Postcard Printing machines manufactured by Graber. In subsequent years Camburn bought additional machines and after WW2 the Graber machines continued in use and his nephew can remember how the cards came off in a long strip which had to be cut into single cards. Ellis Graber was proud of his inventions and repeat orders from customers proved how satisfied they were with his machines and he established an excellent reputation in the industry for producing the best equipment that his



Tunbridge Wells War Memorial, 11 February 1923 produced on a Graber machine by Harold Camburn

customers demanded to improve and expand their own businesses.

On 3 December 1912, at the age of 17 Ellis's son Ellis Alexander Graber enlisted in the army (regimental number 729) and was assigned to The Queen's (Royal West Kent Regiment) in the Kent Cyclist Corp with the rank of private. He was mobilized

on 5 August 1914. The 6th(cyclist)Bn The Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) had been designated as The Kent Cyclist Battalion in 1910. In 1913 the Kent Cyclist Battalion (E Company) had their Drill Hall in Victoria Road, Tunbridge Wells. The Advertiser of 11 September 1914 gives the following "Graber, E. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Graber, 38 Newton Road Tunbridge Wells, ('E' Co., Kent Cyclist Battalion)." The Advertiser of 30 March 1917 reported "It will be remembered that earlier in the war Pte. Ellis Graber, the elder son, who was in the gun section of the Kent Cyclists, had to have a leg (left) amputated as the result of an accident". As a result of his injury Ellis was discharged from the army on 31 March 1916 and returned home to live for a while with his parents now residing at 8 Beulah Road.

After the war Ellis Alexander Graber decided not to be part of his father's business and instead became the proprietor of the Norfolk Motor Garage at 16 Church Road advertising in the local directories "cars for hire". His father's invention in 1915 of "Improvements in or relating to Motor Garages" related to his son's business and although described in great detail was essentially a low platform on small castors that a person laid on to get under automobiles and move around on. In Canada we refer to this device generally as a "car dolly". Ellis's garage is advertised at the same address in 1926 and may have continued for several years afterwards. On 18 May 1936 the secretary of the Civil Service contacted the army for their input "as to the character of Ellis Graber who is a candidate for a situation in the Civil Service" and presumably Ellis began working for them soon after. Ellis passed away 1 October 1947 at 9 Garden Road, Tunbridge Wells and was buried in the Tunbridge Wells Cemetery on 8 October 1947. His obituary in the Courier of 10 October 1947 gives the following additional information: "Ellis Alexander dearly beloved husband and father passed away suddenly; aged 52 years Fit O Lord; to dwell with Thee."

Dyson H Graber unfortunately had a short life. He had been an old King Charles' School boy and, before joining up for military service, he was a senior clerk to the local branch of the Union Assurance Company. When only 18 he signed up for three years of military duty with the British Army in 1916 having enlisted at Maidstone, Kent. He was a private (official number G/12942) with The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment) and was assigned to the 2nd Battalion and sent to fight in France. He was killed in action in the Western European theatre of war on 14 March 1917 when Bucquoy was taken by the 7th Division in March. Bucquoy was partly lost to the Germans in April 1918 but after a prolonged and gallant defence by three divisions of the army it was cleared the following August. Initially his recovered body was buried with others from his regiment in a little fenced-in cemetery by the roadside where

Dyson fell, with the spot marked by a large wooden cross. This spot subsequently became the Queen's Cemetery, Bucquoy. Dyson's obituary was published, along with his photograph, in the Advertiser dated 30 March 1917 and reads in part

"The deceased soldier, who was only 19 years of age, joined the Army last October and went to the Front just before Christmas. Soon after his arrival he was taken ill, and was in hospital for some time and so far as can be gathered, he was in about his first engagement when he was killed." 2nd Lieut. J C How said "He was a good soldier, and I only wish he might have been spared, as he was one of my most promising men." Rev. Basil Churchwood went on to offer his condolences and a friend of Dyson's remarked that "He was one of the choicest spirits I have known, most sensitive to his duty to God and most conscientious to the high calling of Christian discipleship. His thoughtfulness for the well-being of others always transcended any thought for himself, and his amiable disposition was ever a tonic to all who knew him."



Bucquoy cemetery

The Bucquoy cemetery was begun in March 1917, when 23 men of the 2nd Queen's were buried in what is now Plot II, Row A. Military records show that private Dyson was one of these 23 men. Sadly these men were only the first of many hundreds to follow. Now there are over 700 1914-1918 war casualties commemorated in this cemetery. Of these, over 200 are unidentified and special memorials record the names of six soldiers from the United Kingdom, buried in the Miraumont German Cemetery, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire. The Bucquoy cemetery located just south of the village of Bucquoy covers an area of 2,619 square metres. Dyson's parents received the notice of their son's death while they were living at 8 Beulah Road, Tunbridge Wells.

Dyson Graber's sacrifice to the war effort is memorialised by a grey headstone at the Bucquoy cemetery. At the top of his headstone appears the insignia of his regiment and below it the name D H Graber, rank, date of death; name of regiment. At the bottom 1/3 of the headstone is the Star of David denoting his Jewish heritage. His name is also recorded in the Book of Remembrance at the Queen's Regimental War Memorial at the Holy Trinity Church in Guilford. This memorial was dedicated 4 June 1921. Dyson's name also appears on one of the bronze plaques forming part of the Tunbridge Wells War Memorial which was unveiled at a large ceremony on 11 February 1923.

Dyson's parents were among a large crowd who tearfully attended the ceremony to pay a final tribute to their loved ones who fell in the Great War. It is indeed ironic that Harold Camburn would commemorate the ceremony by producing two new postcard views of the war memorial using the very same machines he purchased from Ellis Graber.

Alice Graber passed away January 1938 in Tunbridge Wells and was buried in the Tunbridge Wells Cemetery on 13 January. She was followed by the passing of her 77-year-old husband Ellis at the same place early in 1947. The machine catalogues and related items pertaining to Ellis Graber's business have become collectable items and no doubt his inventions can be seen in some museums throughout the world.

Frank Reginald Gilbert: Through the Lens

*Member 735, Ed Gilbert, 1044 Deepwood Drive, Thunder Bay,
Ontario, P7J 1H7, Canada*

MY INTEREST IN photography, old postcards and photographs was something I inherited from my grandfather Frances Reginald **Gilbert**, who most referred to as either Frank or Reg. We spent many hours together when I was a boy listening to the stories he told about his early life in Tunbridge Wells and his experiences with photography.

Frances was born in Tunbridge Wells on 6 September 1882 at 8A Camden Road. His parents were Robert and Eliza and he had three sisters Violet, Millicent and Florence and two brothers Robert and Edgar. In 1891 the family was living at 5 Grove Hill Cottage and in 1901 at 9 Little Mount Sion Road. Although his siblings may have had an interest in photography, Frances was the only one who made it both his hobby and a source of income. The popularity of photography rapidly expanded in the 19th century as new developments in the field made photography both more accessible and more affordable for the masses but of course in no way compares to the digital age we are now in where "everyone" has a camera and uses it "all the time". My grandfather's first camera was a used one he acquired about 1900 from a photographic supply store in Tunbridge Wells. Although used, it was of a newer type of the times being a hand-held camera rather than the large bulky kind using glass plates and requiring a tripod to mount it on. He took instructions on how to use the camera to good effect and according to my

grandfather he would walk about Tunbridge Wells photographing many local scenes all the while perfecting his technique and gaining experience in its use.

When Frances was 14 he finished with school and like his brother Robert before him he entered into a 7-year apprenticeship with the Lewis Hepworth Company on Vale Road and embarked upon a career as a printer. To supplement his income and make use of his interest in photography my grandfather at the age of 18 took examples of his photographs to the newspaper office to see if they had any interest in buying them or perhaps hiring him to take photographs for them in his spare time. His initiative paid off as the Kent & Sussex Courier hired him to take photographs for them and it was on a freelance basis

that my grandfather submitted photos to the newspaper. I don't recall what amount he was paid for his work but being a young man I am sure he appreciated the extra income. Granddad was sent out on "assignment" by the paper to take pictures of specific things and he also submitted photos he had taken of his own choice that he thought the newspaper might be interested in. The newspaper did not take all his photos, however, so my grandfather built up quite a portfolio of his work.

The *Kent & Sussex Courier* was founded by Matthew **Edwardes** in 1872 and began printing out of humble premises on Grove Hill Road. After a few years circulation expanded, exceeding its rival *The Gazette* and in 1892 it took over the *Gazette*. The newspaper was owned by the Courier Printing and Publishing Company Limited which in 1913 was located at 10 Grove Hill Road with the newspaper itself being printed from its premises at 19 Grove Hill Road. The company further expanded operations into West Kent and East Sussex in the following years. In 1902 Mr **Edwardes** passed away and his widow, Susannah, took over and ran the business until her death in 1926 but the paper continued in production afterwards. An advertisement in



Winter scene in Broadwater Forest taken in the early 1900s. The author's only photo of local views taken by his grandfather



Frank and Nellie in 1912

Kelly's 1903 Directory for *The Kent & Sussex Courier* states "A guaranteed larger circulation than all the other local papers combined".

Sometime in the early 1900s my grandfather became a member of the Tunbridge Wells Amateur Photographic Association. The Association, housed at 14 Calverley Park Gardens, was set up in 1887 and later was renamed the Tunbridge Wells Photographic Society. It was through being a member of the Association that my grandfather gained more knowledge about photography. The Association was established by Ralph and Henry **Robinson** along with the patron Sir David **Salomons**.

The first president of the Association was Francis Gray **Smart** (1844–1912). **Smart** was a physician by profession, a member of various societies and is well known in Tunbridge Wells for his association with the Tunbridge Wells Homoeopathic Hospital in Church Road. He is also known in photographic circles for an album of photographs he took during his summer tour of Scotland in 1889.

On 4 January 1913 Frank married Nellie **Mace** at Christ's Church, Tunbridge Wells and resided at 9 Grecian Road. On 31 January 1916 my father Douglas Edward **Gilbert** was born at 7 St James' Park and when my dad's sister Mabel was born on 16 January 1921, the family was living at 9 Clifton Road. Unfortunately Frank's wife Nellie died at home on 28 January 1921 as a result of childbirth complications and this event changed the entire course of the family's life. My grandfather understandably no longer had either the time for, or an interest in, photography and the last known photograph he took in England was of his daughter Mabel in 1921. Out of necessity my grandfather entered into a marriage of convenience so his two young children could be cared for while he worked as a printer. He married Kate Emily **Hargrove** (*nee* **Burbridge**) who had four children of her own from her first marriage and



Left: *Douglas Edward Gilbert, aged 5 taken on 31 January 1921 in Tunbridge Wells*



Right: *Mabel Joan Gilbert, also taken in Tunbridge Wells in 1921*

since Kate had a brother in Canada who told her about how great Canada was, the whole family emigrated there, leaving Liverpool on the steamship *Minnedosa* on 23 May 1922, and taking up residence in Toronto, Ontario. My grandfather told me that he sold his photographic equipment before leaving England but brought with him at least some of the photographs he had taken in Tunbridge Wells.

While living in Canada my grandfather did not renew his interest in still photography, except for a few family pictures he took in the early 1930s that I have in an album. While changing residences in Richmond Hill, about 25 miles north of Toronto, some vandals took a trunk containing most of the remaining Tunbridge Wells photographs and dumped them down the outhouse hole, ruining the contents. The few survivors of my grandfather's early photography are sadly all that remain of what I imagine must have been an impressive collection. However, with the growing popularity of home movies in the 1950s, my grandfather decided to buy a movie camera, a projector and screen and several rolls of film and, over a period of about eight years, made a number of films all of which I have in a metal box he left me when he passed away on 2 June 1975 in Richmond Hill. I often look at his films showing scenic views of the Toronto area and there is one film in particular of his that I enjoy watching. This is of my parents and me in 1957 that I have transferred onto a computer disc to make viewing much easier. It is a wonderful film and one I cherish, especially now that both my parents have passed away. Seeing them with their little boy running and laughing together is for me the best gift my grandfather could have given me and to me is the highlight of his photographic endeavours. I hope one day I will discover through further research from sources in England more examples of my grandfather's photographs.

Major Cazalet and the Shipbourne Fête

*Members 55, Christopher & Jenny Jeffery, 13 Fairmile Road,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 3LP*

WHEN JENNY WAS at school in Shipbourne, every year Major Cazalet the Queen Mother's racehorse trainer and local landowner, used to hold a fete for the people of the village on the green at Shipbourne. Every year at least one famous person used to open the fête, these included John Wayne, Cary Grant, Robert Mitchum, Richard Hearn (Mr Pastry who lived locally at Platt), Gregory Peck, Arthur Askey, Audrey Hepburn to name but a few.

Also every Christmas the pupils who were leaving Shipbourne Primary School that year had to read a passage in St Giles Church at the Christmas service. Whilst Jenny was reading her passage Major Cazalet walked in accompanied by the Queen Mother. Jenny stopped her passage and went back to her seat. When everyone was leaving the church the Queen Mother shook everybody's hand and when Jenny was leaving she apologised for putting her off her reading.

The Queen Mother was regularly met by Jenny when she used to walk through the grounds of Major Cazalet's Fairlawne Estate as Major Cazalet allowed everyone access so long as no damage was done to his estate.

Also at Christmas, Father Christmas would come to the Primary School with his dog collar visible so everyone knew that Father Christmas at that time was the Reverend Maples-Earle the vicar of St Giles, Shipbourne.

The Doodlebug and I

*Member 56, John Harris, 12 The Paddock, Pembury,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4NR*

ON 28 JULY 1944 a group of us boys had just passed the High Brooms Girls' School in Great Brooms Road when we heard the sound of a Doodlebug (V1) approaching. We stopped and listened intently to the throbbing sound of its Pulse Motor.

To our horror it suddenly stopped, we knew that in a matter of seconds it would plunge to the ground. The boys I was with promptly dived down into

the gutter. I stayed standing and they all said “Get down” to which I replied, “I don’t want to get my clothes dirty.”

With that the Doodlebug fell into the allotments opposite Nursery Road failed to explode and still standing up I got showered with dirt. So much for not getting dirty, I think Hitler had it in for me.

With that we were all rushed into St Matthew’s Boys’ School and sent down to the shelters under the playground and given Horlicks tablets, I don’t know whether they were for shock or energy, at any rate I still like Horlicks.

After what seemed an eternity my older sister came and took me home.

This Doodlebug was the first one to be recovered in one piece so the Military came and took it away for examination.

A second episode was a missile of sorts ploughed into the side of The High Brooms claypit.

I was living in Welbeck Avenue which backed onto the claypit, so naturally all the local lads descended into the claypit to collect souvenirs. We all had collections shrapnel and cannon shell cases which we had to be careful of as they were sometimes very hot

Our Headmaster was concerned that most of his pupils were missing and came looking for us, seeing me scabbling about in the sides of the pit, he shouted out, “Harris why are you not at school.” Here is where my education came to my help, “Because it’s too dangerous sir.” “Then go home,” was the swift reply.

St Mark’s School 1947–1953

*Member 510, Brian Hales, 1 Kilworth Avenue, Shenfield,
Brentwood, Essex, CM15 8PS*

I STARTED MY Primary School days at St Mark’s School in Frant Road when I was five years old in 1947. At that time my parents and I lived in Benhall Mill Cottages. This is a semi-detached cottage by the railway line on **Mardens’** Farm. Apart from a short initial period when I can recall going to school in a seat on the back of my mother’s bicycle, I walked to school and back on my own. This involved going up to the road and crossing the railway bridge, passing the golf course, the Isolation Hospital and the Cemetery. I always had a fear of going past the Isolation Hospital as it was said that “once

you go in there you do not come out". I then crossed Forest Road and walked down Birling Road passing The Bull Public House and Bullards Stores, as it was then called, to the school.

What did I find there? Miss **Acton** was the Headmistress and she lived with her parents in the schoolhouse which was part of the school near to the road. The teachers there that I can recall were: Miss **Nye**, Miss **Pitts**, Mrs **Young**, Mrs **Sayers**, Mr **Bradley**, and Mr **Kirkby**. For our dinners we all walked round the road to St Mark's Hall. I can still now remember, while we were eating, there was an announcement that King George VI had died. Also, one of the girls in my class, Susan Long, was run over by a Smith's Crisps' lorry by the bus stop on the other side of the road. She survived quite alright, with perhaps a leg in plaster, and is in the class photograph shown standing on the extreme right. Before all this, in 1950, we moved to Frant village and, of course, I continued at St Mark's School. Each day I caught the bus to school, the fare being 1d (one old penny) each way. I moved through the classes until my final year at the school in 1953. Not only was it my final summer at the school but it was also the Coronation on 2 June 1953. At St Mark's we celebrated the Coronation with a pageant on St Mark's Playing Fields. Among other events there was a performance of part of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. As I recall it was the 'Artisans' presenting their little piece to the court and court followers. I was in the performance as Lysander and in the photograph of the play cast, see below, I am second from right in the back row. I think I can still recall after over 50 years the rest of the cast members in the



photograph. Back row: Peter **Fisher**, John **Fuggle**, Michael **Barnett**, myself, Julian **Burt**. Sitting: Ann **Packham**, John **Fowle**, Helen **Wallis**, Jane **Young**. Front Row: Ivan **Kirwin**, Michael **Street**, Royston **Todman** and Gordon **Weller**.

The other photograph which I have already made reference to is of Class 1 in 1953. I have already mentioned Susan Long but I must make reference to the



fact that four of the girls in the photograph are children of teachers. Two are daughters of teachers at St Mark's School and are Ann **Sayers** (second left seated) and Jane **Young** (fifth left standing). The other two girls are daughters of Masters at Skinners' which I attended from September 1953. They are Virginia **Timmis** (eighth from left standing) daughter of "Pansy" Timmis the Art Master and Elaine **Clarke** (fourth from left standing) the daughter of "Greasy" Clarke, the Geography Master and also my House Master. The vast majority of that year went to Skinners' or The County School. I remember one going to The Judd School, Michael Barnett, standing next to me at second from left in back row. I recall hearing that he finished at Judd School as Head Boy.

There was another girl who was in my class but is not in the photograph. She was probably a year older, as I, along with some other children had two years in Class 1. This girl was Jane **Bradley** who was the daughter of the curator of the Tunbridge Wells museum. Mrs Bradley was the Curator when the museum was on Mount Ephraim. I can remember going into the museum

when I was at Primary School, answering the quiz questions and taking a small prize, a small piece of Roman pottery from a box of items. Mrs Bradley was also involved in the changeover to the new museum and library as part of the Civic Centre which must have opened around 1952–53. Again I used the children’s library when it was in Dudley Road. Mrs Bradley continued to be curator for years when it was in the new building which I used to visit. I particularly enjoyed going to see the large collection of Tunbridge Ware. I had already been made aware that my Great-Grandfather had married Jane Mary **Burrows** of the Tunbridge Ware connection, in 1879, but that’s another story!

Schoolday Memories: Good in Parts

Member 278, Roy Thompson, College Drive, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 3PN

IN *AS YOU LIKE IT* William Shakespeare captured perfectly my feelings most mornings as I took the five minute walk from home to Skinners’ School. In the play he catalogues the seven stages of a man’s life and I clearly fell into stage two:

*And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school.*

I joined Skinners’ School in the Autumn term of 1951 along with about 90 other pupils. We were divided into 3 classes and our particular class was assigned a form room at the very top of the main building which could only be reached by ascending 63 stairs. Our form master was also the school’s art teacher, a friendly and very pleasant man who did his best to settle us as quickly and painlessly as possible into the life of the school.

We were required to attend the school for 5½ days each week (including Saturday morning). One afternoon was spent on school sports (rugby and cross country in the winter and cricket during the summer term). Another afternoon was allocated for Scouting activities or, for older pupils, Combined Cadet Force (CCF) training.

Apart from the addition of several huts perched on the banks around the sports field at the rear of the school and on the quadrangle, the buildings appeared not to have changed much since the school was opened in 1887. ‘Victorian’ is probably the best word to describe the austere classrooms and uncomfortable school furniture. Very little had been done to modernise the school, perhaps because in the late 1930s there were plans to build a new

Skinner's Company school in Southborough on land between Yew Tree Road and Powdermill Lane, owned by the school and used as a sports field. The start of World War 2 meant the plans for a new building were abandoned.

During my first weeks at Skinner's I found a few things I liked and many that I detested. For example, the school toilets were rarely cleaned, were unlit and therefore extremely dark in the winter and the awful smell they produced could be detected 15 yards away. There was a lot of bullying at the school with some older pupils making the life of juniors pretty miserable. Huge importance was placed on pupils' sporting abilities and those with natural sporting skills appeared to be treated more favourably than others. Little thought was given to the welfare of pupils and lessons often seemed ill-prepared. The main concern of most teachers appeared to be to cram as much information into us as possible, regardless of whether we could understand or absorb the material being taught. Corporal punishment and detention were the main measures used regularly to maintain discipline.

I expect that by the time he or she reaches this paragraph the reader will have formed the view that I was pretty unhappy at Skinner's School. That view is correct overall but of course there were some lessons that I enjoyed. For example, one teacher nicknamed 'Foxy' taught history in a way that made the subject interesting and stimulating. He was always very enthusiastic and his style encouraged pupils to become eager to learn what happened next. Many years later when I visited parts of the world where historic events occurred, such as the Heights of Abraham near Quebec, the scene of the fight between the French and British in which James Wolfe was killed, I remembered vividly a lot of what I had been taught by 'Foxy' about the battle. I don't know whether he ever visited Quebec but when I was on the battlefield I stood there reflecting how brilliantly he had taught his subject and how much he would have enjoyed seeing the site.

To be fair to the school, whether I enjoyed a subject or not, quite a lot of knowledge about many other subjects including mathematics, geography and science remained in my memory some 50 years later. It could easily be argued that the Skinner's teaching system of the 1950s worked and pupils were educated to a good standard. For me being educated at the school was mainly an unpleasant process, like taking a daily dose of disagreeable medicine which should 'do you good' in the longer term. Undoubtedly I benefited from my time there but my schooldays were certainly not the happiest time of my life.

Let me finish on a lighter note. As one became older and more senior at the school the teachers became less frightening and various ways of undermining them or making their life difficult were developed by some of the more

adventurous pupils. My own opportunity of causing a problem for a teacher nicknamed 'Happy' (who could have been a role model for Victor Meldrew as he frequently complained about everything, especially his pupils) arose when a Christmas carol service was held at King Charles Church in Tunbridge Wells. All pupils at the school, other than Roman Catholics, were required to attend and we walked in the usual crocodile column in two-by-two formation from the school to the church. For some reason I was one of the two pupils at the front of our column.

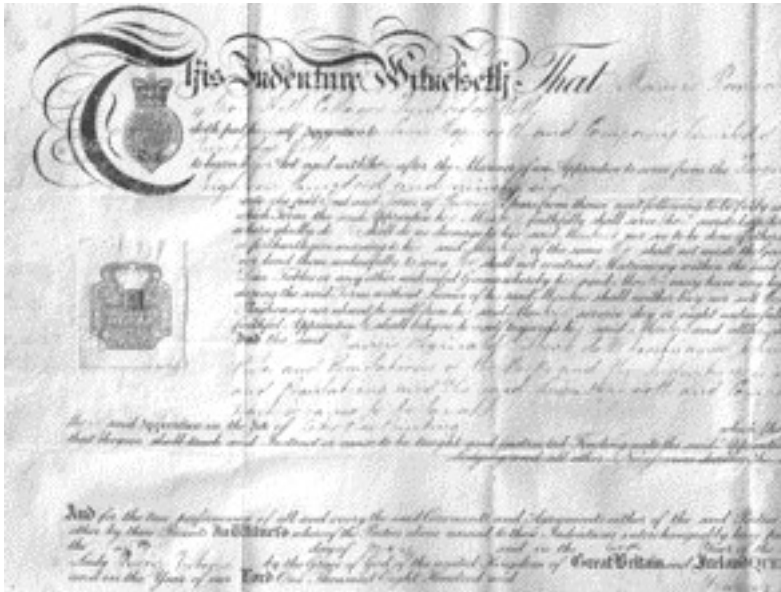
Our class was one of the last to reach the church and it was almost full when we arrived. 'Happy' had been given the task of organising the event and was standing in one of the aisles looked quite stressed. No empty pews were available near where we entered the church but there were two unoccupied rows at the very front which I found out later had been reserved for the Mayor, Headmaster and other dignitaries. I promptly led our class to these pews and we sat down. About ten seconds later 'Happy' appeared alongside me. "What are you doing here?" he hissed. "Waiting for the concert to start" I helpfully replied. His face then turned from red to puce. "Thompson" he almost shouted, "are you the biggest fool on earth? These seats are reserved for important people." "I have held that title for some time, sir," I said "and I thought we were important." He became almost incoherent with rage and I feared that something dreadful would occur. Fortunately just at that moment the Mayor and his entourage arrived and 'Happy' dashed off to welcome them. The pupils in our class moved to an out-of-the-way part of the church and the crisis was over. I kept well away from 'Happy' until after the Christmas holidays. Oddly enough he never referred to the incident when I met him in lessons during the following term.



Francis Reginald Gilbert: A Career in Print

Member 735, Edward James Gilbert, 1044 Deepwood Drive, Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7J 1H7, Canada

MY GRANDFATHER FRANCIS had a long and fascinating career as a printer in both England and Canada. He was born 6 September 1882 in Tunbridge Wells and was the middle son of Robert and Eliza. His older



brother Robert Herbert born 1880 in Hastings, Sussex would be the first of the two brothers to embark upon a career as printers. Robert completed his schooling at the age of 13 and began a 7-year apprenticeship with the Lewis Hepworth Company and in 1896 Francis followed him into that profession with the same employer.

To begin his apprenticeship an official “Indenture” was written up on parchment paper with a red paper seal and was signed by Francis and his father and bears the signatures of both Lewis Hepworth and his younger brother Arthur. The Indenture was between Francis Reginald Gilbert of 4 Grove Hill Cottages and Lewis Hepworth and Company Limited of the Vale Road works and is dated 20 March 1896. The agreement entered into reads

“During which term of seven years the said apprentice his masters faithfully shall save their secrets keep their lawful commands everywhere gladly do them and shall do no damage to his said masters nor see to be done of others but to his power shall tell or forthwith give warning to his said masters of the same and shall not waste the goods of his said masters nor lend them unlawfully to any. He shall not contract matrimony within the said term nor play at cards or dice tables or any other unlawful games whereby his said masters may have any loss with their own goods or others during the said term without licence of his said masters shall neither buy nor sell nor shall haunt taverns or playhouses nor absent himself from his said masters service day or night unlawfully. But in all things as a faithful apprentice he shall behave himself towards his said masters and all this

during the said term and the said Francis Reginald Gilbert doth hereby agree to bind himself by the rules and regulations and the said Lewis Hepworth and Company Limited shall teach or cause to be taught their said apprentice in the art of letter press printing.”

So with this solemn oath pledged, my grandfather started his career as a printer learning the various aspects of the printing trade.

Following a very elaborate ceremony Francis became, some time in 1896, a member of one of the local Courts of the Ancient Order of Foresters and upon acceptance was given a red sash and a medal to wear during the Orders’ meetings. The Tunbridge Wells District Branch was located at 7 Camden Road in what was known as the Friendly Societies Hall. There were Friendly Societies operating under various names throughout England at this time and were established to provide employment, sickness and funeral insurance for



workers. Hepworth’s and most other companies at that time did not provide the type of benefits to their employees that we now all expect and so it was up to the individual to look out for his own welfare by joining a Friendly Society. Like all insurance plans the individual made regular contributions to the Society’s fund and drew upon it when the necessity arose, after the application for assistance was approved. The medal, or jewel as it was officially called, is a Past Chief Ranger’s (PCR) jewel denoted by these initials that are on the front of it. As a Chief Ranger my grandfather was elected to serve for a period of six or twelve months by his fellow members of the Court to be their chairman. He had

the task of chairing regular Court meetings and presiding at social events. For his troubles he was, on the completion of his term of office, presented with the PCR jewel as a mark of respect for his services. The sash, or neck collar as it is more correctly referred to, also bears the PCR initials denoting his position in the Court. It, like the jewel, was awarded to an outgoing Chief Ranger at the same time as the jewel.

It was also around 1896 that my grandfather became a member of the Vale Rangers football team but left before it turned professional in 1903 as the Tunbridge Wells Rangers of which Lewis Hepworth was the team president.

Lewis Hepworth had initially set up the Vale Rangers for the benefit of his employees and played “friendlies” on the Lower Cricket Ground. With accidents being common while working with machinery and my grandfather playing lawn bowling and cricket as well, its a good thing he had insurance coverage through the Ancient Order of Foresters!



The Nevill Street premises

The Hepworth company began its Tunbridge Wells printing operations in 1878 through the acquisition of the firm Stidolph & Bellamy located in Nevill Street who were printers and stationers. Stidolph & Bellamy started business in Tunbridge Wells in the 1860s and are found in the directories of 1867–1874 with premises at 8, 10, 12 and 14 Nevill Street. The principals of the firm were Thomas Stidolph and John Bellamy. Thomas was born 1824 and baptised 12 May in Tunbridge Wells to Thomas (born 1788 Tunbridge Wells) and Sarah (born 1784 at Little Birch, Essex). Thomas (the elder) was himself a printer and later a schoolmaster and is credited with having printed, in 1838, the first map of Tunbridge Wells when in 1835 it officially became a town following the Tunbridge Wells Improvement Act which defined the town boundaries and allowed itself government. Melville’s 1858 directory notes the firm of Thomas Stidolph, printer and bookbinder, with premises on Nevill street and from the 1851 census it is seen that Thomas age 63 and his sons Thomas age 27 and John age 23 were all printers working in the family business. The other half of the business partnership was John Bellamy, born 24 November 1830 at Southwell, Nottinghamshire to Robert Bellamy (1806–1882) and Charlotte Bellamy *née* Thornton (1805–1887). John was still living in Southwell in the 1850s, working in the printing trade, but is recorded as living in Tunbridge Wells in 1861, occupation, printer’s compositor, and it was around this time that the Stidolph-Bellamy partnership was formed. In 1864 John married Mary and produced a number of children but Thomas Stidolph remained a bachelor. In 1871 their business partnership had expanded operations and in that year both men were master printers employing 4 men at their Nevill Street premises. On 28 May 1874 Thomas Stidolph, age 50, died in Sussex. The probate records “The will of Thomas Stidolph late of Nevill Street Tunbridge Wells in the county of Sussex; Printer.” He left his estate to his

spinster sister Eliza Marie Stidolph of Woodbridge. From 1874 to 1878 John Bellamy continued with the business on his own until finally selling off the business to Lewis Hepworth.

Lewis Hepworth was born March 1852 at Saddleworth, Yorkshire to John and Mary Hepworth and was one of 9 children in the family. He continued to live in Saddleworth until 1871 when he is recorded as living as a boarder in Coventry, Warwickshire at 38 Moat Street with the occupation of printer compositor. The 1881 census records for 12 Nevill Street record Lewis Hepworth, printer and stationer; his wife Ellen Tealor née Wade, born 1856 Truro Cornwall, his brother Arthur J Hepworth born 1866 at Saddleworth, occupation apprentice to printer; Frank J. Wilson age 16 also an apprentice to printer, his daughter Mary and a servant. By 1901 Lewis and Ellen had 9 children.

From 1878 to 1890 Lewis Hepworth & Company Limited continued to operate and expand its business from their premises on Nevill Street. Lewis was highly intelligent, artistic and imaginative. Being dedicated to his craft, he helped to publicise types and borders which were characteristic of American and German work. At his own works he used nothing but the most



Lewis Hepworth's premises in Vale Road as they once were

impressive types and superior inks, winning prizes at exhibitions for colour and design. As the business expanded, Lewis designed and built a new larger printing works in 1891 at 10 Vale Road on the site of an old riding school and by this time Lewis's younger brother, Arthur, had taken an active role in operating the business. Also working for the company in 1891 were two teenage printers' assistants, Samuel D Fryton and his brother Percival W Fryton and printers' assistant, and Frank J Wilson, who was still with the firm having been with it since 1881.

At the new works, with his staff of forty, the company produced some of the best lithographic art and colour printing in the country at that time. In addition to commercial printing, the company had a book binding department and also sold its own design of manufacturing stationery through the shop in the front of their building. Lewis's photo scrapbooks of towns manufactured to his own designs were in constant demand from various merchants in London and elsewhere, as were the Christmas, Wedding and other cards, as well as the railway timetables and hop-picking cards which were sold through the shop. When asked if it was taxing on his health taking on so many commitments Lewis replied: "Oh yes, but it is not the first battle I have been through and after all a man is not much good if he cannot face a difficulty."

On 23 July 1891 Lewis faced one of the difficulties he referred to when his new building became the scene of a great fire that swept through the premises causing his employees and others to escape in a panic. The Tunbridge Wells Journal gave the following detailed account of the event.

"At an early hour on Tuesday morning the printing offices of messrs Hepworth and Co. in Vale road was burnt to the ground. The fire broke out about four o'clock and continued with great fierceness till close upon eight o'clock. The building comprised an extensive block used by messrs Hepworth, who carry on a large business in all branches. The place was well stocked with new machinery, new type, and other appurtenances. Unfortunately, when the two fire brigades were in attendance no adequate supply of water could be gained, and as a consequence the whole of the premises were well alight in a short period. The entire stock in the building was destroyed, and the roof collapsed at about seven o'clock. . . . The efforts of the firemen were beyond all praise. A large building used for storage purposes was only saved by the pluck of the firemen, who stuck to their post through fierce fire and smoke of the deepest character. The loss to messrs Hepworth is considerable, everything being totally destroyed, The buildings, etc, are insured to the Commercial Office, of which Messrs Roper and Carter, auctioneers, are the agents. How the fire originated is a mystery. The place was all safe on Monday evening at about ten o'clock, when the foreman left. The loss is estimated at close upon 10,000 pounds."

Hepworth had the premises rebuilt and during construction the company

returned to their former Nevill Road premises as temporary quarters for their business, salvaging what they could from the ashes.

Lewis and Arthur proved to be a very happy partnership. Arthur had none of his brother's imaginative flair but possessed those solid qualities of day-to-day application which Lewis lacked. Arthur concentrated on expanding the commercial printing side of the business and this gave Lewis the opportunity to give more of his time to the many other interests which included stoolball, botany, astronomy and, in particular, music. With all these attributes he was certainly one of the great Victorian all-rounders.

By the time my grandfather joined Hepworth's in 1896 the business was going strong once again. My grandfather told me that although working conditions were typical of the times, the workplace would be engulfed with the smell of ink and the racket created by the printing machines. He said he would always come home from work with ink on his hands and clothes and smelling like he had taken a bath in ink. Getting the ink out would have been a challenge for his mother and later his wife on laundry day. There was no hearing protection provided to employees at that time and so it's no wonder that for most of the time I knew my grandfather he had to wear a hearing aid to compensate for the hearing loss caused by all the noise in the plant.

Lewis Hepworth is also noted for his activities as an inventor. He, along with joint applicant Ellis Graber, held six patents for "Improvements in and relating to Ruling Machines". The patents were taken out in 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1901 and 1902 and are for machines essential to the printing trade. Ellis Graber was born in Poland in 1868 and was an inventor and manufacturer of various types of machines used in the photographic processing and printing industry and operated his business under the name of Graber Printing & Ruling Machines Syndicated Limited from his premises in Quarry Road, Tunbridge Wells.

In 1901 the Lewis Hepworth Company continued to be a family affair with Lewis and Arthur still active in all aspects of running the business. Lewis's 20-year-old daughter Mary was a printer's clerk and his 19-year-old niece Clara J Lowe was working with the firm as an apprentice and the company continued to expand its business and the number of employees by taking on new people as apprentices. However, in 1907 Lewis Hepworth died at the early age of 55 and was buried on 14 December 1907 in Tunbridge Wells Cemetery. His brother Arthur continued to run the business and in 1920 Arthur was joined by his son Lyn who was probably only in his 20s at the time.

My grandfather, by this time, had married Nellie Mace in 1913 and by 1921 had produced two children, my father Douglas (1916–2009) and his sister

Mabel (born 1921 and still living in 2011). When Nellie died in 1921 he married Kate Emily Hargrove and in 1922 he resigned from the Lewis Hepworth Company and moved to Canada, settling in Toronto, Ontario.

In 1924 Lewis Hepworth's wife Ellen passed away and was buried 19 November 1924 also in Tunbridge Wells Cemetery. She was followed by the death of Arthur Franklin Hepworth in March 1935 who was buried in Tunbridge Wells Cemetery on 21 March 1935 with his estate left to his wife Sarah Jane Hepworth. With the death of his father, Lynn Hepworth took over the running of the printing business until his son Martin took over the reigns. Martin ran the business until its ultimate demise in 1968 when offset-litho replaced letterpress as the method of producing commercial printing. Martin was a history graduate from Oxford and his main love was amateur dramatics. His stage connection was inherited from his father who was also heavily into amateur dramatics but on the musical side being a leading light in the Operatic Society whereas Martin was more stage oriented and was involved in the Pantiles' Players who performed Shakespeare plays and the likes on summer evenings on The Pantiles. The Stidolph/Bellamy/Hepworth printing operations had spanned over 135 years of Tunbridge Wells history.

Upon arriving in Canada my grandfather gained employment as a printer with the large printing firm Hugh C MacLean Publications. The architects of the Canadian business press were John Bayne MacLean and his brother Hugh Cameron MacLean. In 1877 John left his post on the Toronto Mail to found the Grocer Publishing Company and produced a trade publication called the Canadian Grocer & General Storekeeper, a specialized publication filled with commercial news about the food industry. In 1888 his brother Hugh joined the company as a partner and by 1890 the company was publishing four business journals and had set up its own typesetting and composition operations. Among their publications were the Dry Goods Review and the Hardware & Metal both begun in 1888. In 1891 the J B MacLean Publishing Co Ltd was incorporated. By 1893 Hugh ran the Toronto business and John worked in New York as the business expanded and was later renamed the MacLean Publishing Company. In 1899 Hugh left the company and in 1908 he bought a small publishing company consisting of three business publications. This was the beginning of the Hugh C MacLean Publications Ltd which eventually, after the MacLean Hunter Company, became Canada's second largest business magazine publisher. Like his brother's business Hugh's company became part of the Southam publishing empire.

In 1903 Horace Taimage Hunter joined MacLean Publishing and in 1933 John MacLean was replaced by Horace Hunter as company president. In 1945 the

company changed its name to the MacLean Hunter Publishing Company which evolved into a leading publisher of Canadian consumer magazines and business publications. In 1960 the company was sold to the Southam Publishing Company Ltd and the company became known as the Southam-MacLean Publications Ltd. The acquisition was spearheaded by St Clair Balfour, president of Southam. The company produced business and professional trade magazines, continued to expand and in the next four years Southam purchased up to 20 business publications. In 1965 the company moved its head office from Montreal to Toronto. The company changed its name in 1978 to Southam Inc and continued with its expansion, especially into the production of newspapers, and extended its business operations into the United States through acquisitions of other companies. In 1994 it was sold to Rogers Communications Inc and in 2011 sold to Glacier Media Inc of Toronto.

The history of the Southam company spans over a century and largely parallels the development of the newspaper industry in Canada. The company was founded by William Southam in 1871 when he bought a share in a failing newspaper in Hamilton, Ontario for the sum of \$4,000 with his business partner William Corey. The company was incorporated in 1871 as Southam Ltd and over the course of time rapidly expanded its operations mainly through the acquisition of other companies of similar size.

Between 1922 and the mid-1930s my grandfather used to travel back and forth to work on the streetcar and since he lived not far from his place of work his travelling time was kept to a reasonable limit but when he moved to Richmond Hill it was a 25 mile trip each way to work by the radial arm car (streetcar/tram) and it made a long day for him as it took him over 2 hours to get to work and the same time returning home. He was gone in the morning before my dad awoke and it was often dark, especially in the winter, before he got home. While my grandfather worked at the printing plant his wife Kate and his children took care of running the family market garden business where they sold fruit, vegetables, flowers, eggs and chickens.

While working at the printing plant my grandfather got his left hand partly crushed in the machinery and although he could still use the hand it was quite crippled and arthritis set in and made it painful. Fortunately he was right handed so it did not interfere too much with his life, although he often complained about it. Sometime in 1935 he was promoted from the position of printer to printer's foreman and found the work to be less demanding physically. In 1947 at the age of 65 he was asked by the company to retire which was their standard retirement age. My grandfather however was told that he would not be entitled to a company pension and since he had few



Frank, centre, at his retirement party in 1952

savings and little other sources of income he managed to convince the company to let him stay until he was 70. And so in 1952 my grandfather ended his 56-year career in the printing trade and became a man of leisure pursuing his hobbies of photography, lawn bowling and 5 pin alley bowling and he and I spent many wonderful times together fishing, bowling and just listening to all the fascinating stories he would tell me about his eventful life. On 2 January 1975 he passed away at the York Region Hospital in Richmond Hill after falling and breaking his hip. He was laid to rest in the Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church Cemetery sharing the same grave as his wife who had died in 1945.

I wish to thank Colin Huggett, editor of the TWFHS Journal for his input as well as Jo Palmer of the Tunbridge Wells Library and Chris Jones of the Tunbridge Wells Civic Society for their contributions and to everyone else who helped with my research.

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Afterthoughts

Giving Paul a rest from his proofreading duties and doing it myself, owing to a panic to produce the Journal, I came across one or two ‘memory joggers’ within the articles which at the time seemed worth mentioning. It also gave me something to put on a page and for which we would still have had to pay for even if empty.

The first thing to catch my eye was that in my days at Skinner’s we had a more robust nickname for one master than that given in two memoirs. Had the younger boys become more refined I ask myself?

Another nickname of a Skinners’ teacher which may not ring a bell with the “youngsters”, for he may have left to go to Sidcup Grammar by their time, was Rubberneck Pascoe so named as when angry his neck would visibly extend above his collar. Ruled by fear, knowledge of algebra, scant. “Dixie” Dean taught Latin but no control so you didn’t learn much, I came third in the form one year with 5% in the exam. The other teacher I remember well was a young history master who died of polio a few years after I left the school in 1951.

John Harris mentions going to St Matthew’s Boys’ School in High Brooms. I also went there but only recall it as High Brooms Boys’ School. This is the name also by which it was referred to in an article in a recent edition of the *Courier*. He names the girls’ school as High Brooms Girls’ School though.

Another part of John’s story also evoked memories. I was also clambering about the “clay hole”, as named by us urchins in those days of where they dug the raw material for the High Brooms Brick Works, the morning after the assumed doodle bug exploded. As I hauled myself over the top by the exit into Great Brooms Road, I was first confronted by a pair of shiny black boots which grew into a pair of dark blue trousers and finally into a fully fledged constable. He politely enquired as to “. . . where did I think I was going with all that.” Quick as a flash I said “nowhere”. “You’re right, lad,” he said, “put it down there and clear off.” But it wasn’t me who sent Mr Bryson after John!