

Vol.13. No.4. Winter 1999

#### OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Honorary Life President Mrs. Kim Cook,

Cherry Trees,

Ingleden Park Road,

Tenterden,

Kent TN30 6NS

Honorary Life Vice-President The Rev. David E. Witheridge

2425 Irving Avenue South, Minneapolis,

Minn. 55405 USA

Chairman Mr. Graham Browne,

5, Greenhill Avenue, Luton

Beds. LU2 7DN

Secretary/Membership Secretary

Mr. John Witheridge, 4 Lavant Road, Stone Cross, Nr. Eastbourne

East Sussex BN24 5EZ

For all communication with the Guild of One Name Studies

(To be sent new applications and all renewals of Society membership, complete with subscriptions)

Treasurer and Research Co-ordinator Mr. Richard Witheridge,

2, Apsley Road, Newbridge, Bath

Somerset BA1 3LP

Assistant Treasurer and Mrs. Maureen Witheridge,

Committee Member Address as above

Editor Mrs. Joyce Browne

5 Greenhill Avenue, Luton

Beds. LU2 7DN

(To be sent all items for publication in the Witheridge Times - family news, articles etc.,

and all requests for copies of the certificates held by the Society)

Publisher, Distributor and Mr. Philip Witheridge,

Committee Member The Paddocks, Gretton Fields,

Nr. Winchcombe, Cheltenham,

Glos. GL54 5HJ

Continued on back cover



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## EDITORIAL

## THE LAST IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY!

I had promised myself that I would not mention that overworked word 'Millennium', but when I realised that this would be the last editorial of the century I permitted myself to look back over what we know of our families through the years.

We know that time is not a triumphal march from barbarism to civilisation, but a series of advances and retreats, moves from poverty to prosperity and back again, and so it has been with our families.

A thousand years ago, after the Norman invasion, the Saxons and Celts in these islands were dispossessed of any land they owned (although some of the Celts did manage to retreat into Wales and kept some independence). Their very names were Frenchified, but become recognisable to us again as we read of William de Wytherigg paying taxes in Thorveton (mid Devon) in 1332, and Robert de Whiteruge of Brendon (near the Devon/Somerset border) also prosperous enough to pay his share, but did they escape the terrible scourge of the bubonic plague, called 'The Black Death' which ravaged the country in 1348/9 and killed a third of the population?

Two centuries later, in 1524, Witheridge names are again to be found on tax rolls for North and South Devon. A Barnstaple family became prominent and wealthy through their adventurous exploits and trade with the New World, but in 1580, four of them died of the plague, and their bodies were burned. Nevertheless, their mariner sons went on to make distinguished careers as Captains in the Commonwealth Navy, only to be persecuted as the winds of fortune changed, and they had unpopular religious beliefs.

The Berrynarbor/CombeMartin family had its ups and downs of fortune - at one time prosperous, and then finding that its sons had to seek a living as miners, only to see their livelihoods diminishing as mines in Britain closed down.

Our more adventurous families, among them the Bradworthy and Tavistock families, sailed away to other lands, providing us today with the happy contacts we have with America, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

What of those who remained? We can trace some of them, particularly some South Devon families, who, from being described as 'Yeoman' and 'Gent' in

the seventeenth century, appear to have lost their land and farms in the eighteenth. From a mass of sailors, husbandmen and artisans (with a few felons among them) in the twentieth century a new breed of Witheridges has emerged - diverse, independent and above all - interesting!

When I was elected Editor in 1991 I did not envisage still being in post in the year 2000, indeed, I did not really think much about the future at all, but now we ought to look forward. The magazine cannot survive without interaction from members. If we are to carry on we need contributions - articles, family stories, research results, anything which will show that this generation of the family is still alive, looking forward to the future, but aware of its past.

My very best wishes for the future to you all -

I send Christmas Greetings and wishes for their health and happiness to all our friends and members of the Witheridge Society. This year Joyce and I give a

special thought to all those for whom 1999 has been a fateful year, and whose circumstances have altered. We hope that the next year will see happier times.

As the old century dies we would like more people to experience an awakening interest in the history of their forebears and join with us in the search for truth and knowledge.

I give my thanks to all those who have worked so hard for the Society, and hope that we shall meet at Tiverton in May 2000. My New Year wish is for a record gathering of members from near and far.

In the last weeks of the old century I send the traditional greeting:

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!"

Chairman

## **FAMILY NEWS**

We have received reports of one of our members, Annette Witheridge, being imprisoned in the world's only chain gang for women, shackled and chained by the ankle to four other women, doing hard labour on the desert roads of Phoenix. Arizona.

Before you begin sending the food parcels, and organising petitions for her release, let me tell you that it was all in a day's work for journalist Annette.

Writing in the 'Daily Mirror' Annette describes her one day of hell with the gang, which operates from the Maricopa County Jail. She was the guest of the sheriff, but apart from the knowledge that she was not condemned to spend more time with the gang, or in the awful jail, Annette had no other comforts to keep her going.

After a dawn start, dressed in the same garb as the other women (a kind of jogging suit in black and white stripes, with a dirty baseball cap stamped with "Chain Gang" on the front), at 7.0 a.m., Annette stumbled out of the bus which had taken them to the desert. The sun was already blazing and unbearable.

Each prisoner carried a water bottle, and had to apply a sunscreen, which melted as the temperature reached 109F.

Annette's gang was set to clear the weeds and cacti from a patch of ground which was going to be used for an Independence Day party.

With every bone and muscle aching Annette soldiered on, and managed to hear the stories of some of the prisoners, which she recounts in her article.

Once unchained, Annette went to interview the man who initiated and ran the chain gang project - and a chilling story that makes!

One thing worries me - what will she get up to next?



Our President, Kim Cook, and her husband Roy, have had an anxious time whilst trying to find a new home. They have now succeeded, and their new address is:-

Mr. and Mrs. R. Cook, Cherry Trees, Ingleden Park Road, TENTERDEN, Kent. TN30 6NS

Telephone 01580 762144

We send them our good wishes and hopes for their happiness in their new surroundings.

News comes from Velma Metcalfe in New Zealand, with comments that her garden is full of late spring flowers, and they have switched to daylight saving time - just as we are sliding into short days and long nights.

Velma is making a recovery from an operation she underwent last June, but her efforts to get more exercise have been hampered by a twisted ankle! Nevertheless she has continued to make contact with and help enquirers interested in family history - two of whom have Witheridge connections - we may hear more later.

Rodney and Velma had a sad time in September, when Rodney's father died, peacefully, after needing care for a long time. We send our sympathy to those who mourn

#### FAMILY NEWS continued

We have had sad news from John Witheridge of the death of our member Mrs. Albertina (Betty) Rossiter who died on the 29<sup>th</sup> August, 1999.

John writes: "Betty passed on in the firm hope of entering a better world. She will be missed by many, many people - those who knew her in her profession as a caring, loving, warm hearted person - those who knew her at Church, with her cheery and willing nature, and her ability to inspire the congregation with her playing and singing, and those, her family, who lose a mother and a friend.

Betty had much to offer - a talented writer, an Organist, and a loving friend.

In the few years that Betty and I corresponded, some times with ten to fifteen letters a year, she never had a cross word to say about her family or her ancestors. She was immensely proud of her children and grandchildren, and she cared dearly for her ancestors, those whom she could remember and also those of whom she had no recollection.

I remember reading one letter from her when she found that her namesake ALBERTINA WITHERIDGE of Bristol had been buried in a pauper's grave. Finding that all headstone/markers in the cemetery had been removed, she badgered the head groundsman into locating the approximate area where the grave would have been. Then Betty and Jill (Betty's daughter), dug a small hole and planted some primulas and uttered a prayer to make up for the indignity which Albertina had suffered from her children, and which caused her to end up in a pauper's grave. Reading this letter caused me to shed a few tears as I could feel Betty's sorrow. Her written and spoken word always came straight from the heart.

Betty was a great researcher and a willing gatherer of information and I shall miss her. I can only say "God Bless Her and all her family, to whom our heartfelt sympathy and love go out at this time". We remember Jill, her daughter, and her brothers and sister, and the grandchildren as they mourn their loss.



We are pleased that Jill Rossiter, Betty's daughter, is to continue her mother's membership. We have met Jill at Witheridge gatherings, and we look forward to seeing her again - hopefully in the year 2000!

Jill's contact address is:-

Ms. Jill Rossiter, Spring View, 35, Strvd Hywel Haris Ystrad Maenech, Hengoed CF82 7DN

Wales

Telephone: 01443 813807



# SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE YEAR 2000 ARE DUE ON THE 1ST JANUARY!

They should be sent to the Membership Secretary: -

Mr. John Witheridge, 4 Lavant Road, Stone Cross, Nr. Eastbourne East Sussex BN24 5EZ

Subscriptions are:-

Overseas Membership £12.00 UK Family Membership £10.00 £ 5.00 UK Individual Membership £ 7.00 Economy Membership (Students, unemployed)

Overseas members may pay for three years' membership in one payment

Please note that this is a temporary address (possibly for six months) for John. Any correspondence which was sent to his old address at Clayton, Staffordshire, will be forwarded on.

#### UNRAVELLING A GLISTORY

by Joyce Browne

You don't know what a 'glistory' is? That is not surprising as I have only just invented the word. It came to me as I was attempting to untangle the history of Emma Witheridge who married Alfred George Hine, at Loddiswell, on the 25<sup>th</sup> May, 1899.

A 'glistory' is a glitch in the family history - a mystery which comes to light when attempting to solve another mystery.

In this case the mystery was that Emma, at her marriage, said that her father was 'William Witheridge, deceased' - see Witheridge Times, Autumn, 1998. Assuming that she was attached to the South Milton family, I thought that she might be the child of William Henry Witheridge, born 1841, and his wife Sarah, but in the Witheridge Times, Autumn 1997, we had published a list of baptisms in the parish of Woodleigh, and there was Sarah, daughter of John Witheridge and Sarah Steer, baptised on the 15<sup>th</sup> December, 1868, and a birth certificate confirmed her parentage.

The next mystery appeared when we could not find a marriage for John and Sarah at Woodleigh, or any of the nearby parishes. Kim Cook, who in the past had done extensive research into the South Milton families could not find a marriage, but did know that a 'Steer' family had connections with that family. A Sarah Ann Witheridge had married a John Benjamin Steer, and had thus become a 'Sarah Steer' Could they be the same person? No - the dates didn't fit!

As long shot I obtained the marriage certificate of a John Wetheridge (GRO reference December quarter Plymouth 5b 475) and the long shot hit the target.

John 'Wetheridge' married Sarah Steer on the 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1868, at the Register Officer Plymouth. He was a bachelor, aged 26, and she a spinster of 19 years. His father was <u>William Witheridge</u> and hers John Steer. Both gave Plymouth addresses.

How revealing this certificate was! Their daughter, Sarah Jane Witheridge, was born on the 16<sup>th</sup> November, 1868, at Kingsbridge, and baptised at Woodleigh on the 13<sup>th</sup> December, 1868. It would appear that John, and Sarah eight months pregnant, had fled to the anonymity of populous Plymouth to be married, and settled in Woodleigh after the birth. They must have had a hectic couple of months!

Where did they come from in the first place? On the 1881 Census Sarah's birthplace is given as Loddiswell (although I have reason to question this), and Woodleigh is the next parish. John does not appear on the Census of 1881 as he died in 1880, either just before or just after their last child was born.

When I looked for John on the 1851 Census I had a surprise. The only John with the right year of birth was born in Halwell, and living with his father William Witheridge, and his mother Susan Brimmicombe.

Those readers who saw the Witheridge Times, Winter 1993, may recall that it contained a family tree of what we called the 'Totnes and Newton Abbot family'. It showed John as the third child of William and Susan, and until now, we had not managed to find any more about him - we had just 'lost' him.

What we did not know in 1993, when the tree was constructed, was that William Witheridge was the son of John Witheridge's bigamous marriage to Jane Emmet, for which John was convicted and sent to jail in 1809.

Readers will know that for years we have been investigating John and his families and irregularities, and now we have further knowledge because his great grand daughter, Emma, made the statement at her marriage that her father was 'William - deceased'.

Why did she do that? We must remember that she was only two years old when her father died, so she probably had no memory of him. Her <u>grandfather</u> was William, living close to Woodleigh until he died in 1890. Isn't it likely that he was the man she named?

This research has advanced our knowledge and enabled us to publish a revised section of the Totnes and Newton Abbot tree.

I mentioned two 'glistories' - the second concerned William Henry Witheridge, the son of Andrew Witheridge and Sarah Lake - see Witheridge Times, Winter 1997, the South Milton and Thurleston family tree sheet 4.

The South Milton parish registers record the baptism on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 1862, of John William, son of William Henry Witheridge and Ann, and after a gap of eight years a baptism on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 1870, of Sarah Kate Witheridge, daughter of William Henry and Sarah Ann Witheridge. We thought that possibly William Henry had married twice, and this was what we recorded on the tree shown in the magazine of Winter 1997.



## CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE

## GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

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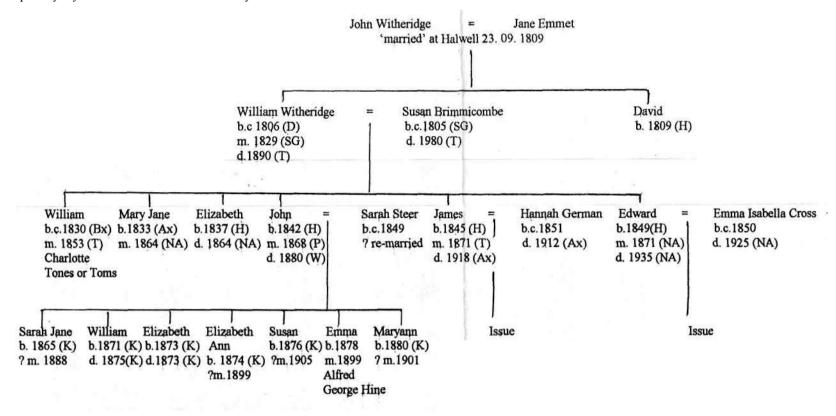
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# SECTION OF THE TOTNES, NEWTON ABBOT, WOODLEIGH FAMILY TREE

Compiled by Joyce Browne from data available July 1999



= Axbridge (Ax)

Kingsbridge (K)

(T) = Totnes

(Bx) = Brixton

Newton Abbot (NA) == Plymouth

(W) = Woodleigh

= Dittisham (H) = Halwell

(SG) =

Stoke Gabriel

Note:- Totnes includes the Halwell district

and Kingsbridge includes Woodleigh

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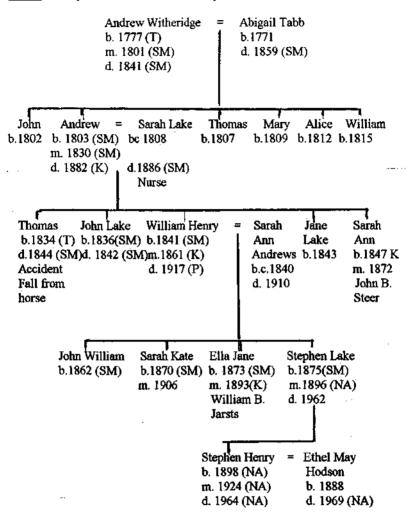
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# SECTION OF THE SOUTH MILTON AND THURLESTON FAMILY

**TREE** - compiled from data available July 1999



(SM) = South Milton

(K) = Kingsbridge Registration District

(NA) = Newton Abbott

(P) = Plymouth

While our minds were concentrated on the South Milton area, I decided to try to establish the identity of the 'Ann', mother of John Witheridge, and the 'Sarah Ann' mother of Sarah Kate, Ella Jane and Stephen Lake.

Again I succeeded, but again I had a surprise. The birth certificates show that Sarah Ann Andrews was the mother of all four children and it would seem that William Henry married only once.

It does appear that in South Milton Sarah Ann was known as 'Ann', but the later registrations were more formal and used her full name.

'Andrews' is another name to add to the clan - perhaps someone can tell us more?

It seems rather odd that there is a gap of eight years between John William and Sarah Kate as the two succeeding children were born at two year intervals. Maybe there are more children for us to find, but meanwhile we print a revised section of the South Milton and Thurleston family tree.

There you are - several glistories solved for the price of one!



#### FINDERS SEEKERS

Here are some more snippets of information that have come our way via Sheila Jewell, who 'looks out' for us as she does her searches:-

#### Dartmouth-Townstall

Burial  $14^{\text{th}}$  March 1858 Elizabeth Ann Witheridge aged??? - given as 13yrs or ?13 months

There is a PRO record of death in the March quarter, 1858, of an Elizabeth Ann Wetheridge - Registration district Totnes Ref. 5b 141

Burial 7th April, 1858 Mary Jane Witheridge aged 3 years

I cannot find a PRO death record in 1858 for a Mary Jane Witheridge. It is possible that these children belonged to the family of William Witheridge and Susan Brimmicombe - perhaps someone can tell us?

## Harberton

# Census 1891 Folio 22

Eliza Horswill Head Widow age 51 Monthly Nurse born South Milton

John Witheridge brother 61 Stone cracker born South Milton

/ believe that these were the children of John Witheridge and Mary Luckham. On the Census for 1881, John was shown as unmarried, living in a household in Cornwall, and Eliza was shown as a widow, head of household, with several children living with her.

### <u>Dartmouth - Townstall</u>

#### Census 1861 Silver Street

William Wetheridge	Head	Marr. 36	Sawyer	born Brixham
Charlotte Wetheridge	Wife	24		born Dartmouth
William Toms	Wife's Fath	er Wid. 71		born Plymouth

William was the son of William Witheridge and Susan Brimmicombe. We had previously thought that his wife's name was Tones - now we are certain that it was 'Toms'.

## Denbury (near Newton Abbot)

#### **Baptism**

1<sup>st</sup> May, 1873 William Edward, son of Edward and Emma Witheridge, née Cross, Gardener

Edward was another son of William and Susan Brimmicombe.



# THE CHRISTMAS QUIZ

# Compiled by Kim Cook

Let us exercise our minds as well as our teeth this Christinas, and have a go at this!

# <u>Literature</u> -= 2 marks for each question = 10 marks

1.	Which famous author, with Witheridge connections, wrote of a visit to his ancestral home, and won a Nobel prize for literature? Name author and the place he visited Author
2.	A character who could have been a member of our Society, but was in fiction a member of a very different organisation, has the last words a book by a famous crime writer. Name the author and the book.  AuthorBook.
3.	Name the character involved and what he was renowned for Character
4.	Who wrote a poem, the title of which suggests a musical instrument belonging to a famous Devonshire seafarer? Name the poet and title Poet
5.	Another author, with possible Witheridge connections, invented a new Christian name for his eponymous heroine. Name the author and the heroine.  Author
All dre	ssed up and everywhere to go (Place Names) 10 marks
1.	With one foot in Somerset and the other in Shropshire I find a matching pair for my footwear.
2.	I find a knitted garment in Wales.
3.	When Middlesex Street becomes a lane I find an undergarment
4.	In the city of the ram I find my headgear

5.	that isn't a kilt!
6.	In an historic part of Sussex I find I am wearing an American vest!
7.	Again in Sussex, a village pretending to be something bigger provides another knitted garment.
8.	In my travels, I have a choice of motor vehicles, one from Norfolk
9.	And one of a different colour from Cleveland
10.	Or dark, non-motorised transport from Devon
Around 1	$\frac{\text{Devon}}{+10}$ Where in Devon can you find these? -10 marks for place names
1.	A mediaeval weapon
2.	A place that belongs to nobody.
3.	A Cathedral official (three times over!)
4.	A Victorian novel.
5.	A virtue that is the anchor of Christianity
6.	Gallic ale
7.	A Royal prince.
8.	An American cemetery
9.	A sooty canine
10.	Shampoo for ewes

# Sheep 10 marks

Where in Kent would the keeper of the sheep find water? 1. 2. Which Australian breed is famous for the quality of its wool? What is a sheepshank? 3. 4. What is its purpose? What, in Australian mining slang, is a shepherd? 5 6 If canine applies to dogs, and feline to cats, what applies to sheep? 7. What are the correct traditional culinary accompaniments to (a)lamb 8 (b)mutton 9. What is the word for a castrated ram?

# Answers on page 22

10.



What is the artistic connection between Winnie the Pooh and sheep?

## ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ

(If you scored 45 marks or more, you are very good - let us know about it!)

#### Literature

- JOHN GALSWORTHY (Nobel Laureate in 1932) visited
   WEMBURY
- 2. DOROTHY L. SAYERS, The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club.
- 3. WETHERIDGE, renowned for grumbling. 'He was the club grumbler, distinguished even in that fellowship of the dyspeptic and peremptory always threatening to complain to the committee, harassing the secretary and constituting a perennial thorn in the side of his fellow members.'
- 4. SIR HENRY (JOHN) NEWBOLT (1862-1938) Drake's Drum
- 5 R.D. BLACKMORE (1825-1900) Lorna Doone

#### All Dressed Up

- 1. WELLINGTONS
- 2. CARDIGAN
- 3. PETTICOAT
- 4. DERBY
- 5. SLACKS
- 6. SINGLET-ON
- 7. JUMPER'S TOWN
- 8. BLACK CAR
- 9. REDCAR
- 10. BLACKHORSE

## Where In Devon

- 1 BOW near CREDITON
- 2. NOMANSLAND near WITHERIDGE
- 3. DEAN (one village between COMBE MARTIN and PARRACOMBE, one between PARRACOMBE and LYNMOUTH and one near BUCKFASTLEIGH.
- 4 WESTWARD HO! Near NORTHAM

## Where in Devon

- HOPE west of SALCOMBE, not far from THURLESTONE and SOUTH MILTON.
- 6. FRENCHBEER, on DARTMOOR, west of CHAGFORD
- CHARLES, between STOODLEIGH and HIGH BRAY, north of SOUTH MOLTON.
- 8. ARLINGTON, between BARNSTAPLE and PARRACOMBE
- BLACK DOG between CREDITON and WITHERIDGE
- 10. SHEEPWASH north west of HATHERLEIGH

# Sheep

- 1. SHEPHERDSWELL, between DOVER and CANTERBURY
- 2 MERINO
- A KNOT
- 4. IT IS USED TO SHORTEN A ROPE TEMPORARILY
- 5. A MINE OWNER WHO DOESN'T MINE, OR DOES ONLY ENOUGH WORK TO KEEP HIS LEGAL ENTITLEMENT.
- 6. OVINE
- REDCURRANT JELLY WITH LAMB
- 8. MINT SAUCE WITH MUTTON (Note:- Mint Sauce should not be used with lamb, as the flavour of mint is considered to be too strong for the more subtle flavour of lamb)
- 9. WETHER
- 10. The illustrator of Winnie the Pooh was E.H. SHEPPARD

TOTAL SCORE
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(My score on this was abysmal, but I certainly learned a lot as I typed the answers - and I am ashamed to own that I have been committing a gastronomic sin for years as I gaily eat mint sauce with lamb! Ed.)

# MORE E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Membership No. 5.

Miss Annette Witheridge, New York, New York

e-mail: Awitheridg@aol.com

Membership No. 42

Rev. David Witheridge, Minnneapolis, MN

e-mail: dwitheridg(a)aol.com

Membership No. 108

Mr. John James, Burnaby, British Columbia Canada

e-mail: jpjames@,bc.svmpatico.ca

Membership No. 148

Mrs. Brenda Dwyne, Hamilton Ontario

e-mail: dwyne@pop.ghbbs.com

Membership No. 157

Mrs. Sharon Brydges, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada

e-mail: ted.brvdges@.sk.svmpatico.ca



## MARIA AGAIN!

by Joyce Browne

You may have thought that, whilst awaiting the result of further investigation by Kathy Witheridge ( see Witheridge Times, Winter 1998) we had heard the last of the name SANDOVER - Maria Tall Sandover Witheridge in particular, for the time being. But no! The name has come up again, with a connection we had not suspected.

Our friend Sheila Jewell, has found a link between the SANDOVERS and the WALKE and the HEAD families from whom Sheila is descended.

As you will see from the family tree sent to us by Sheila, Maria's aunts, Kitty and Susanna, both married men from the WALKE family, and her great uncle, William SANDOVER, married Lucy WALKE, who was descended from the HEAD family, on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, 1819 at Plymouth St. Andrew's.

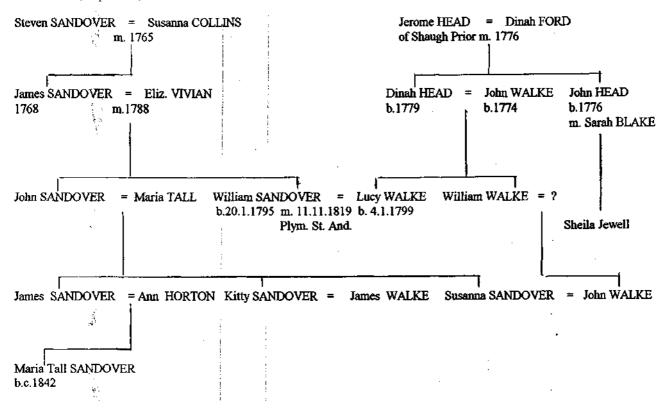
Lucy WALKE was the grand daughter of Jerome HEAD, and her uncle was John HEAD from whom Sheila herself is descended.

Sheila says that her family was close to the Walke family even up to her day.

Perhaps this will give Kathy Witheridge, who investigated the story of Maria Tall Sandover Witheridge and Andrew Wotton Sandover, the father of Maria's child, Elsie May, some more names with which to make connections in her efforts to finalise this story.

# OUTLINE TREE OF THE SANDOVER AND WALKE FAMILIES

Sheila Jewell, September, 1999



#### OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY - continued from front cover

Representative Australia Mrs. Dorothy Witheridge,

95, Vimiera Road, Eastwood,

NSW. Australia 2122

Representative Canada Mrs. K. M. Witheridge

and North America 343, Bright Street, Samia Ontario

Canada N7T 465

Representative New Zealand Mrs. Velma Metcalfe,

49, Chester Road, Tawa, Wellington, New Zealand

## Committee Members:-

Miss Annette Witheridge Mr. Mark Witheridge 28A, 300 East 40<sup>th</sup> Street, 163 Weoley Avenue,

New York NY10016 Selly Oak,

USA Birmingham, Warw. B29 6PV

Mrs. Joyce Stephens Mr. Jason Cook 95, Phelipps Road 2 Rusthall Close, Corfe Mullen Addiscombe, Wimborne Croydon

Dorset BH21 3NL Surrey CR0 7YH

(Responsibility for liaison on Youth

Projects)

# PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE SOCIETY SHOULD BE PAID TO THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

#### USEFUL ADDRESSES

Devon Record Office The Devon Family History Society

Castle Street, Membership Secretary, Exeter, Devon EX4 3PQ Tel. 01392 53509 Miss Valerie Bluett,

64, Old Laira Road, Plymouth, Devon PL3 6BL Tel: 01752 662985

The Devon Family History Society, Publication Sales: Mrs. Joan Bennett, 334, St. Peter's Road, Manaton, Plymouth, Devon. PL5 3DR