

Abbey Genealogy Enthusiasts

Date - Wednesday 19th August 2009

Next Meeting - 16th September 2009

Issue 33

www.walthamabbeygenealogy.co.uk



Notice Board

➤ A Sad Goodbye To Ted

On a sad note I regret to inform you all we lost Ted Ayres this month. A dear friend and devoted member of our group. He will be sadly missed by us all.

➤ Cassini Maps

Trace your family history and explore the past. Cassini Publishing, in partnership with The National Archives, has made available on-line digital versions of the original Registration District maps from the 1871 census. This set of maps is the only known collection of this type in the world.

www.cassinimaps.co.uk

➤ Overseas marriage records Go Online

The overseas marriage records of more than 38,000 people have been added to the online service at BMD Registers.

www.bmdregisters.co.uk

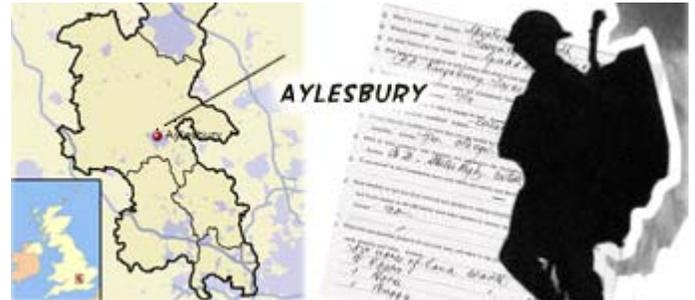
➤ Research at the National Archives

The national archives at Kew can be very overwhelming when you visit and it's so hard to know what records they do or don't hold there. Below is a link to the catalogue index from their website. This may help you get a better idea of the sort of records you can look up and find at the National Archives.

(Just copy and paste the below web address into your web browser bar at the top of the page.)

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/researchguidesindex.asp

Beyond Parish Registers & Censuses 2



What I find so absorbing about research is not knowing what you will find. This time I am looking at my Sherriff line from Buckinghamshire.

My first knowledge of them came from the **marriage certificate** between Great Grandfather Arthur Leopold Alexander and Edith Emily Sherriff in 1890. This gave me her father's name and from information in the censuses, I found out that her father Henry had been born in Aylesbury. Fortunately this county has been well served by the **IGI** and allowed me to put together quite a large family tree. (Regardless of all this information, I made a note that at some later date I would have to go to Aylesbury and check all the details for myself, plus go through the burial registers which did not form part of the IGI).

Henry's **birth certificate** showed that he was born on 27 September 1844, the third of twelve children. Henry's life seemed to have been unremarkable, working as a cook in southeast London, but it was his father Charles that caught my attention. Charles died in 1868, but the 1861 census stated that he was aged 64 and under the heading of profession it stated 'Out Pensioner Chelsea'. I now had to find him in the 1851 census, to see if there was more information. In those days it meant a trip up to the Family Records Centre and scanning through the microfilms. Sure enough, I found him and under profession it stated 'Pensioner 14th Foot'.

I used the **Internet** to discover more about the 14th Foot. It turned out that it was the 14th Regiment of Foot which had had an interesting history. Now I had to work out how to find more information about Charles' military career. Again I was lucky, via a **surname mailing list** on the Internet, I discovered a 3rd cousin who was also researching the Sherriff family.



Although based up in Newcastle, she had already been to the Public Records Office, (now The National Archives - TNA) and had prepared a thesis for her college diploma. She sent me some details and before visiting **TNA**, I used their online **Catalogue** and carried out a search for Charles Sherriff. It produced one relevant match, which confirmed that he had indeed served in this Regiment, but more importantly, it gave me the document reference. During my visit to TNA, I found the relevant microfilm and printed out in excess of 20 pages.

The documents included a physical description, not only at the time he enlisted, but also when he was discharged. It confirmed that he joined up on 4 April 1814, although as he was under age, his first year did not count towards his pension. He served as a Private until 31 October 1832, and then having left the Regiment, he enlisted the next day in the Royal Newfoundland Volunteers until finally being discharged on 30 June 1838. He was granted a pension of one shilling and five pence halfpenny per week.

The records show that during his career, in addition to spending almost six years in Newfoundland, Charles served just over seven years in the East Indies (India) including taking part in the siege of Bharatpur in 1826, and that as part of the 3rd Battalion, he had also fought at Waterloo.

After further research, I have discovered where Charles had been at Waterloo. He almost didn't make it though, firstly the 3rd Battalion was about to be disbanded in 1815, but was reformed when Napoleon escaped from the Isle of Elba. Secondly, having arrived in Antwerp, with 14 officers and 300 men under the age of twenty, it was considered unfit for Foreign Service. At Brussels, the reviewing general ordered them to return to Antwerp. However, the Duke of Wellington became involved, inspected the parade and reversed the decision, thus allowing 'The Peasants' as they were known to take part at the battle of Hougoumont.

From the TNA **online document** ordering service, I was able to download the list of all who took part and were awarded the Waterloo Medal which included Charles' name. Charles was finally discharged medically unfit, suffering from his time in the damp conditions in Newfoundland. He was now aged 41 and he wasted little time once he was back in Aylesbury. On Christmas Day 1839 Charles married 21-year old Sarah Bonnick – otherwise I wouldn't be here today to tell his story.

The Sherriff's are an interesting family, as Charles' father, a brother and a nephew all took it in turns to be successive Governors of the County Gaol in Aylesbury between 1788 and 1879. But that is another story. Now one last loose end needs to be tied up. Where is Charles' Waterloo Medal? As they retail at over £1200 it is unlikely that I will be able to add it to my family mementos!

Article By David Humphries

Records of Interest

James has copies of:

- **Wandsworth Workhouse Admissions 1890 – 1896**
- **North Surrey Anerley School Register of Children. 1867 – 1885 & 1885- 1904**

Scrap Book Your Family History



Computers are excellent for storing all your family history research and ideal for storing photos. However when you go to show your research to your family and friends its nice to be able to show them something in paper with photographs and things for all the family to relate to, especially if some people have no computer or are unable to use one. So why not try being creative and put a scrapbook together!

If you want to contribute to the newsletter or share your research please feel free to contact myself
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Email: Cheryl@familypast.co.uk