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ISSUE NUMBER 28

Sevenoaks Newsletter

THE NORTH WEST KENT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY, SEVENOAKS, KENT
www.nwkhfs.org.uk



NEXT BRANCH MEETING

14TH MAY AT SEVENOAKS
The History of Oldbury Hill
DAVID WILLIAMS

OTHER BRANCH MEETINGS

BROMLEY

18th April - The Real Downton Abbey: What Domestic Service
in a Big House Was Really Like

IAN PORTER

DARTFORD

2ND May - The Historic Dockyard, Chatham

SCOTT BELCHER

Welcome to NWKFHS Sevenoaks Branch. In addition to the talks, we have a number of interesting tables for you to browse. These include a bookstall, old magazines and journals, exchange journals and a reference book library. Plus don't forget to take a look at our notice board.

The books from our library may be borrowed at no charge and the magazines are a snip at 20 pence each. You might just find the publication or book you are looking for.

Do visit our computer help desk where Karina will make every effort to assist with your family history brick wall.

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at Sevenoaks Community Centre, Otford Road Sevenoaks, TN14 5DN. Doors open at 7.15pm, meeting starts at 8pm. There is free car parking - and refreshments are available.

We welcome visitors and new members, and we aspire to offer all the helpful advice that you might need, we hope you enjoy your visit.

Guests we appreciate a £1.00 donation to the society's funds.

THIS EVENING'S TALK - "Kentish Valour" by Glen Jones

Glen is formerly of the Coldstream Guards and a member of the Orders and Medals Research Society of Kent; he is sure to have an interesting story of us this evening.

NEWS ITEM

British Library Photography - Researchers at the British Library are now allowed to use their own cameras to copy a wide range of the material for personal reference. Self-service photography was initially allowed in the following reading rooms: Boston Spa Reading Room, Humanities - Floor 1 & 2, Newsroom, Science - Floor 2 & 3 and Social Sciences. Permission to photograph has recently been extended to following reading rooms too: Asian & African Studies, Business & IP Centre, Manuscripts, Maps and Rare Books & Music. The British Library houses over 150 million items and not all of them are suitable to be photographed. However, over 95% of the items that were consulted in 2014 would qualify. The new arrangements will save readers the hard work and errors involved in taking notes on the spot. You may use compact cameras, tablets and mobile phones to photograph material and any copies made must not be used for commercial purposes. Copyright, data protection and privacy laws must always be complied with. Before using your device to take photographs, it is best to view the Self-service Photography Video - visit <http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/inrooms/std/copy/selfsvcopy/selfservcopy.html> for details.

EVENTS

18th April - 100 years ago-Canadian Expeditionary Force in England - The Shorncliffe Trust - Folkestone West Railway Station, Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone, Kent CT20 3PA

This event will commemorate the arrival of Canadian forces to Shorncliffe and surrounding camps, a mix of music, speeches, readings and so on to mark the occasion and tell the stories of these men who left their homes and families thousands of miles away to defend Europe. At 1100 the event will move to St Georges Church Hall where Diana Beaupre will present a 50 minute presentation "Enroute to Flanders Fields: the Canadians at Shorncliffe". There will also be a display of artefacts and items showing life in the district for the soldiers. Every year the schoolchildren of Kent place flowers on the graves of over 300 Canadian men, who never returned home. The commemoration on the 18th will be an opportunity to tell the world why this is so, and the story behind so many men who risked all to fight for freedom.

Ticket required visit following link: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/100-years-ago-canadian-expeditionary-force-in-england-tickets-16285786225?ref=enivtefor001&invite=NzcyMzE1Ni9zZWVhZXRhcnRhcndrZmhZLm9yZy51ay8w&utm_source=eb_email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=inviteformalv2&ref=enivtefor001&utm_term=attend - **This is a free event from 1000 - 1300**

25th April - Tracing Merchant Navy Ancestors - SOG, 14 Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Rd. EC1M 7BA

Discover your merchant navy ancestors at the Caird Library, National Maritime Museum. Learn how to access information on Masters and Mates certificates, crew lists, Greenwich Hospital Records, Lloyd's registers as well as maps and charts. Also included is information on the subjects that support the museums remit; Sea, Stars and Sky. They will cover how to register, ordering tips and a look at a variety of records available to the family history researcher interested in anything maritime.

A half-day course with Penny Allen and Tracey Weller from 1030 - 1300 - Cost £ 20.00

Also this day at SOG: Family History for Beginners - Parish Registers

Part 2 of this course (can be taken independently from part 1) you will learn how to search for records of marriage, baptism and burial in parish registers. The tutor will introduce both online and offline sources and methods. (Part 1 is 11th April.)

A half-day course with Louise Taylor from 1400 - 1700 - Cost £ 20.00

Contact by phone 020 7553 3290 or email events@sog.org.uk or book a place on line at www.sog.org.uk

19th April - Crossness Pumping Station Steaming Days - The Old Works, Abbey Wood, SE2 9AQ

A reminder - NWKFHS will also attend this Family History and Steaming event (see last month's newsletter for full details)

25th April - 37th AGM & Family History Day - Sevenoaks Community Centre, Otford Rd, Sevenoaks, TN14 5DN

A reminder - please see notice board for full details and programme.

9th May - How to Trace Your Family History - The IHGS, 79-82 Northgate, Canterbury, CT1 1BA

This course is aimed at those people just starting out within this fascinating subject. Some of the topics under discussion will include family records, birth, marriage and death certificates, censuses and compiling pedigrees. A thorough grounding in the basic sources will enable students to make an excellent start in tracing their own family history. The price is £40.00 or £35.00 for IHGS Members and correspondence course students, buffet lunch included. Call 01227 768664 or book in line www.ihgs.ac.uk



Mary Queen of Scots

Mary was born 8th December 1542 in Linlithgow Palace, the only child of James V of Scotland and his French wife, Mary of Guise. When she was six days old her father died and she became

queen. Her great uncle Henry VIII made a bid for control, however, her mother ended up acting as regent in her stead.

At just five years of age Mary was betrothed to Henry VIII's son, Edward. But her Catholic guardians were opposed to the match and took the young Mary to Stirling Castle, breaking the agreement. Henry ordered a series of savage, yet unsuccessful raids into Scotland known as 'The Rough Wooing'. (December 1543 – March 1551).

Conscious of the benefits of an alliance with France, the Scots betrothed the young queen to Francis, the four-year-old heir to the French crown, and sent Mary to be raised at the court of Henry II. In April 1558, the young couple were duly married and Francis became king in 1559, briefly uniting the French and Scottish crowns. However, Francis died from an ear infection the following year. A widow at just 18, Mary returned to Scotland where she faced many challenges. As a Catholic in a country that was officially Protestant, she was regarded with suspicion by some of her subjects. Mary accepted the Protestant-led government and initially ruled with moderation.

In 1565, Mary married her cousin the Earl of Darnley. Within a few months of the marriage, Lord Darnley's true nature became apparent. Mary was pregnant with their child but Darnley spent his nights carousing with disreputable friends in Edinburgh's taverns and brothels.

Mary turned to her close circle of friends for comfort. Among them was a small Italian courtier named David Rizzio. Rizzio was Mary's private secretary. He was also an accomplished musician and singer. Rizzio sang and played cards with the Queen and the Four Marys in the evening in her chambers.

Darnley proved to be spoilt, obnoxious and violent. He grew jealous of the attention that Mary paid to Rizzio and, encouraged by a group of Protestant nobles, came to believe that his wife and Rizzio were having an affair. Darnley and the nobles plotted in secret to murder Rizzio.

On 9 March 1566 Mary, Rizzio and a small group of friends were enjoying a late supper in the small room by the Queen's bedchamber. Darnley suddenly appeared, speaking to Mary as a group of armed nobles made their way to the Queen's chambers. Darnley's accomplices included Lord Ruthven who was suffering from a fever and close to death. He was pale and clammy, and wore a suit of armour beneath a cloak. Ruthven burst into the room, saying, 'It would please Your Majesty to let yonder man Davie come forth of your presence.'

Mary immediately realised that David's life was in danger and confronted the plotters - 'Leave our presence under pain of treason.' When Ruthven told Darnley to seize his wife a fight broke out. Rizzio hid behind the Queen's dress as her friends and servants struggled with Ruthven.

The other plotters appeared and tried to stab Rizzio. Mary was six-months pregnant and believed that the men planned to kill her too. As Mary was roughly pushed aside and held by Darnley, a loaded gun was aimed at her pregnant belly to stop her from intervening.

David Rizzio was dragged screaming from the supper room and viciously murdered in the stairway outside the Queen's chambers. He was stabbed over 50 times before his body was dumped down the stairs. Darnley refused to stab Rizzio but his dagger was left in the body to show his complicity. In the days that followed, Mary skilfully managed to turn her husband away from the plotters. Under cover of darkness Mary and Darnley rode from Holyroodhouse, Edinburgh to the safety of Dunbar Castle. She would never forgive her husband's treachery.

After the birth their son, James in June 1566, Darnley and Mary's relationship continued to deteriorate. In February 1567, there was an explosion at the house where Darnley was staying just outside of Edinburgh. His body was found outside, giving rise to speculation that he had escaped the blast but had then been murdered.

Mary's involvement is unclear and by waiting a mere three months before marrying the 4th Earl of Bothwell, James Hepburn, the chief suspect in Darnley's murder, Mary turned the Scottish nobility against her. Bothwell was exiled and Mary forced to abdicate in July 1567. She was imprisoned in Lochleven Castle, Kinross-shire and her infant son James was made king.

Having escaped from Lochleven in 1568, only for her army to be defeated at the Battle of Langside near Glasgow, Mary fled to England to seek refuge from her cousin, Elizabeth I. Mary had hoped Queen Elizabeth would support her cause but her arrival in England put her cousin in a difficult position. The Catholic Mary also had a strong claim to the English throne so Elizabeth had her imprisoned and kept under surveillance.

Over the next 19 years, Mary became the focus of numerous Catholic plots to assassinate Elizabeth and put her on the English throne. As Mary was not directly involved in these plots Elizabeth was reluctant to act against her.

Then in 1586, Mary corresponded with Anthony Babington who was plotting to depose Elizabeth; this was to be her downfall. The letters were intercepted by Elizabeth's spymaster Francis Walsingham. This was the evidence he needed to convince Elizabeth that, while she lived, Mary would always be a danger. Mary was tried for treason and condemned to death in October 1586. Elizabeth prevaricated over signing the death warrant, but eventually did and Mary was executed at Fotheringhay Castle, on 8 February 1587 at the age of 44.

Mary's son James went on to succeed Elizabeth in 1603. In 1612 he had his mother's body exhumed from Peterborough Cathedral and placed in the vault of King Henry VII's Chapel in Westminster Abbey.

Sources: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/people/mary_queen_of_scots/
<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/scotlandshistory/renaissancereformation/davidrizzio/05.04.2015>

ON THIS DAY

APRIL 9TH is the 99TH day of the year in the Gregorian calendar; 266 days remain until the end of the year.

1413 Henry V is crowned King of England

1483 Edward V (aged 12) succeeds his father Edward IV as king of England. He was never crowned, and disappeared, presumed murdered, after incarceration in the Tower of London with his younger brother Richard (the "Princes in the Tower")

1626 Francis Bacon dies, English jurist and politician, Attorney General for England and Wales (b. 1561)

1782 American War of Independence: Battle of the Saintes begins

1867 Alaska Purchase: Passing by a single vote, the United States Senate ratifies a treaty with Russia for the purchase of Alaska

1957 The Suez Canal in Egypt is cleared and opens to shipping

1967 The first Boeing 737 (a 100 series) makes its maiden flight

1991 Georgia declares independence from the Soviet Union

2002 Funeral of Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother at Westminster Abbey UK. More than a million people line the streets

2003 Invasion of Iraq, Baghdad falls to American forces; Iraqis turn on symbols of their former leader Saddam Hussein, pulling down a grand statue of him and tearing it to pieces

2005 Charles, Prince of Wales marries Camilla Parker Bowles in a civil ceremony at Windsor's Guildhall

A family tree can wither if nobody tends its roots

The Sevenoaks Committee

Branch Chair - Barbara Attwaters

Committee Members

Christina Barnett, Debbie Hill, Karina Jackson Norma Holmden,
Robert Barnett, Bernie Wilkins, Barbara Stead