



*Dear Family,*

Firstly I give you Christmas and New Year greetings and hope that all goes well with you. For me it has been an unproductive year because I have not been able to do my usual amount of sallying forth to places of search, nor do I seem to have all the needed energy! Fortunately I still receive information from surfing members and fellow family historians.

Last week Michael came up from Seaford to spend a few days with me and I took him to Rochester one day, where Betty Copleston welcomed us and showed him that there is a lot more to Rochester than the Cathedral and the Castle. He thoroughly enjoyed the tour - and the lunch at The Coopers! Betty did the same kind service for my friend Marlene who visited me from Penetanguishene in October.

I received the sad news in July of the death of Elsie Forrest of Muirend, Glasgow. Elsie was proud of her family connection and received the Newsletter from commencement. She translated our motto 'Studio Falente Laborem' for us as 'Zeal makes a pleasure of toil' and obtained Scottish birth certificates for me when she visited Edinburgh.

A lovely letter recently arrived from Norma Copleston in Mississauga, telling me of 'what happens around here when the great do-it-yourself-fixer, Larry is no longer at the helm'. Larry is certainly missed in many ways and recently it seems that structural faults and general breakdowns piled up a little, but Norma cheerfully takes things in her stride. I've also heard from son Lorne in Calgary and I owe them both replies!

I've spoken with David and Ruth and Olive and Reg on the 'phone and everyone is very patient with me. Also had a call from Rosemary Dowie who was wondering why I haven't been forthcoming recently. Her Mother, Enid, is now 94, widow of Maurice Ballenger Copleston, who descended from Thomas, younger brother of my gt-gt-grandfather William.

Neville Copperstone is sending various pieces of information garnered from the Internet, including the name of a lady in Rainham, Essex, who searches Copplestone. I wrote and offered help, but have heard nothing from her - perhaps she doesn't believe that I've proved us back to the 14th! Neville is in touch with close cousins in the US but still doesn't know if he is Copperstone, Coverstone or Kupferstein. I hope he has a breakthrough. If anyone knows anything about the Copperstones who were in Malta, do get in touch.

I have at least started to get my records in some sort of order and am amazed at the amount of information which has been found in print and from documents about our family. If only I could link up the branches which are 'stuck'. All PRO records are now moved to Kew, which makes it even more difficult, for that is my longest journey and one I don't do very often. I would like to see some young and enthusiastic Cop(p)leston(e)s on the trail - can we try our younger generation? Perhaps they would be interested to find out what their ancestors were doing 600 years ago, for instance:

26 Nov 1397 Westminster. Commission to John Hill and John Copleston re manors in custody of the abbess of Canoleghe (Canonsleigh) on death of John de Welyngton kt., his son Ralph dying a minor and John his brother and heir of Ralph, an idiot, also dying a minor. Manors in Dorset. John Wroth granted wardship and to deliver to William and Isabel Beaumont. and -

5 Dec 1397 Westminster. Commission of oyer and terminer to John Copleston and others on complaint by the warden and canons of the collegiate church of Ottery St. Mary, Lords of the Manor of Ottery St. Mary county Devon that bondsmen and bondage tenants of that manor have long withdrawn the customs and services due for their holdings and refused to do them, leaguely together by oath to resist the said warden and his ministers. For 1 mark paid in the hanaper.

This was John son of Adam de Copleston and he was Escheator in Devon at this time. One gets an idea of life at the time and witnesses typical rebelliousness among the population! These items were found in the Patent Rolls, Richard II.

Also in 1397 a note appears in Bishop Stafford's Register (Exeter) saying: 'Rob. Copleston 6 per eundem in Ecclesia B.M. majori 22 December 1397'. So we had a priest named Robert at the same time as John above was Escheator. Who was he? He doesn't show in the Visitations. There was a William C., Rector of Stowford about this time, also unknown. Adam must have had more sons than we have discovered.

What some of you may not know is that Elizabeth, dau of John C. the Escheator, married John Raleigh and was gt-gt-grandmother of the ill-fated Walter.

I have had no response from Mrs. Pennington or anyone else connected with St. Andrew's, Colebrooke, regarding the incorrect illumination in the Copleston Chantry, despite my sending proof and enclosing s.a.e. This is most disappointing, since the St. Vedast theory is as unlikely as Arthur and his Round Table. A polite reminder did not elicit reply, either and I am considering another approach, since the facts should be made available.

I am faced with the task of re-typing the A and B pedigrees because there is no more room for additions and corrections. This will take some time and I should be glad to have all additional information which is relevant. I shall also type up all the odd twigs which have not yet been connected, to attach to the pedigrees. Hopefully someone, some time, will link them up. The Wiltshire Georges in the 1500's and the Ashburton family in the 1400's and 1500's, not to mention Gabriel the cutler in Southampton in the 1600's and the later Hampshire family.

Not much mail has been received, which points out only too well that not much has been sent! I will try to be a better correspondent - my New Year resolution. I am feeling brighter than I have of late and am sure I shall improve with practice. I have only been to the Society of Genealogists once this year, but don't suppose I have missed much, since I read what additions they have to the library in the Magazine. I should, however, justify my subscription by going more often. The Census and births, marriages and deaths have been moved to a new location and I should make a visit there, too. Everything seems to have happened while I've been inactive.

I see that I am near the end of the page, so I will take my leave. Oh, another move, of course is that of the British Library. My ticket runs out in 1999, so I must make use of that, too. I wonder if my face has been missed at these various repositories?! I wish you all well and hope that I shall earn some correspondence!

*Your Boz, Muriel*