

GREETINGS

Firstly may I wish each of you a happy and peaceful new year.

REVIEW OF THE LAST ISSUE

Time for another report on progress to date including some comments on the previous issue.

I found after sending out the last letter that there was a fairly basic mistake on sheet 10 of the charts that accompanied the letter. William Frank Folker was not the son of William Folker as I had shown. He was, in fact, the son of Edward Walter and Alice Grace Folker who came from another branch of the family.

I have now established detailed charts on three separate branches of the Folker family but between which I have not yet found any direct connection. These account for all names that appear in the registers for this century.

There are some names from the early part of the last century which I have been able to place into family groups but not link together. There are also some individuals which I have not even been able to place into family groups. Completing this is quite a painstaking business so I will keep 'pecking away' at it rather than put in a sustained effort. I normally start by obtaining birth or marriage certificates which give information on parents and location. This can be supported by Wills if they exist. Town directories also can help in proving the location of where a person lived and what their occupation was.

PROGRESS

I have spent much of my time since the last letter in researching the Folker line to which I am related. I have been able to add much detail to the information which I already had and have now produced individual biographies back to my great, great, great grandfather. I have information for a further two generations beyond this and hope soon to extend this even more.

It is really amazing how much information is available in libraries and county archives. It is possible to build up quite a clear picture of an ancestor even though some of it may be tempered with a bit of imagination.

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I visited Brighton recently to search for information on Samuel Shepherd Folker who lived there between 1821 and 1830. He was a carver and gilder and also published some engravings from a set titled 'Beauties of Brighton'. I have copies of one of the set but hoped to find out about the remainder. I found references to these in a book which listed the entire set. I also spoke to the owner of a shop in Brighton that deals in prints but she said that she had never seen a copy.

I found Samuel's name in the Brighton Directory for 1823 and he was described as Carver and Gilder to His Majesty. I was also lucky enough to find a photograph of his shop taken about 50 years after he had left.

Whilst in Brighton, I found the house where his son (my great, great grandfather, Alfred Hanley Folker) had lived. The house is a conservation area so it has changed very little. It is only the cars parked around the buildings that remind you that we are in the twentieth century

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I and my family spent a week of our summer holiday last year in Docking in Norfolk. This area seems to have been the source of the Folker family so I hoped to find some evidence. In fact, one member of the family was christened Docking as his middle name. I had previously found some information from birth certificates which had indicated the family had lived in that area.

It seems that Robert Folker kept shop in Snettisham until his death in 1906. Whilst in Snettisham, I found a book giving a comprehensive history of the village but his name did not appear in that book.

Another day, I visited the churchyard at Burnham Market to look for the grave of Richard Folker whose Will I had obtained from the Probate Office. He died in 1865. I eventually found the top of a broken gravestone with the name John Folker engraved on it and he had died in 1858. On searching harder, I found another broken piece of stone which matched the first part. When I cleaned it up it proved to be that of Richard Folker and he was the brother of John. John was a tailor and Richard was described as a gentleman.

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As a result of correspondence with another member of the Folker family, I have learned that his father was in the same regiment (The Yorks and Lincs) as my grandfather and his brothers. This is a strange co-incidence as they come from separate branches of the Folker family and would not have been known to each other. It is even more strange in that they all came from the area West of London which is nowhere near Yorkshire or Lancashire. It is possible that the regiment had been recruiting in their area. Of these Folkers, two died in active service.

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Another trip this year has been to Guildford to follow up on my great great grandfather and his son and sister all who lived there. The two men were auctioneers and worked actively in the livestock and produce markets. Between them they became involved in many other activities other than auctioneering. These included keeping an Inn, serving on the town council, founding the rowing club and working to support the fire brigade.

Although I now have a good picture of the members of the family who lived in Guildford, there is much more detail available to be gleaned from the Local Studies Library and I look forward to further visits.

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During a visit to a member of the Folker family, I was told of a gramophone record from about 1930 on which was a song sung by someone with the name Folker. I believe this to have been Arthur Folker who was a professional singer who started out as a tenor and later became a baritone. It would be really exciting to find a copy of this record and I always have a look when the opportunity arises.

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Stoke on Trent is a town where a branch of the Folker family lived during the latter part of the last century. I have been able to find a good amount of detail on William Henry Folker and his son, Herbert Henry Folker, both of whom were surgeons in Stoke. Stoke on Trent is the centre for pottery and china and Herbert Henry married into a family of potters. I have also found information on later members of the family who worked in the pottery trade based in Stoke. This includes mgrandfather and his father, both of whom represented the Crown Derby pottery in their London showrooms.

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Other places that I have visited in search of ancestors include Maidstone, Chelmsford, Birmingham, Windsor and Reading. Not all of these have yielded information, but luckily, most have.

WORK IN HAND

I have changed tack yet again (one method of avoiding boredom with a particular subject). I am currently following my own direct line of ancestry which, being the name Smith, is as difficult as may be imagined. However, I have found that the family lived in one place for several generations and this eases the burden a little. I have had considerable success from searching the census records.

I shall continue with this aspect of my researches for the time being but shall add to the Folker work as the opportunity arises

CORRESPONDENCE

I have continued in correspondence with several members of the Folker families and recently commenced correspondence with another.

I have also had the great pleasure of meeting most of those people with whom I have corresponded. I hope to continue the visits as the opportunity arises in order to maintain contact with the family

CHARTS

With this newsletter, I have included a set of charts for my branch of the Folker family which I hope will interest you.

As I have said before, I have not been able yet to make any connection with these charts and those which accompanied the previous edition of the Folker Phyles.

TO MAKE CONTACT

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