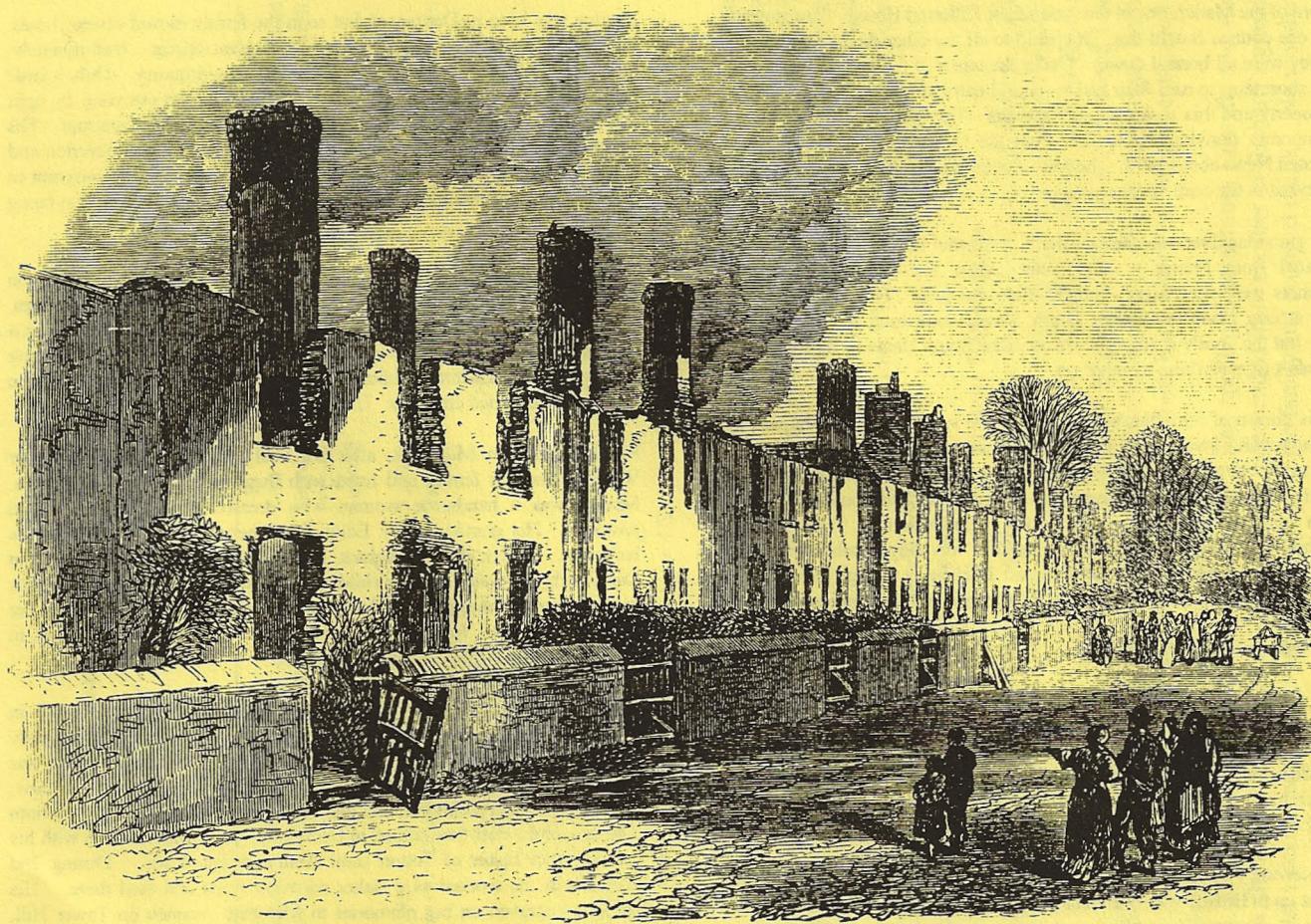


The Luc(k)raft Newsletter

October 1996

Edition 2

Fire in Broadclyst - John Lucraft pays for the re-building



BUINS OF BROADCLYST, A VILLAGE NEAR EXETER, AFTER THE FIRE.

This print is from a contemporary newspaper in London, showing the great fire in Broadclyst, (full story on page 2)

Welcome to the second edition of the Newsletter. Thank you to the 50 or so people who responded out of the first circulation of about 100. 1 in 2 is an excellent response rate. You 50 are the ones getting the second edition. Thank you also to those of you who sent unsolicited donations to help in the production - it was most welcome. I'm sorry it's a little later in the year than I intended, but work has intruded into my other interests this summer.

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The Broadclyst Cooper

The Lucraft spelling emerges out of the villages east of Exeter, Farringdon, Woodbury, and Broadclyst. Quite a few of these lines still exist in the families round the world today. One of these lines descends from John Newton Lucraft, whose great, great grandson, John Nicholas, who's a College Lecturer in Cirencester, found his elderly mother, Edith Mallett, was a mine of information. These notes are taken from her recollections, with thanks.

John Newton Lucraft

John Newton Lucraft, born 1822, was the village cooper in Broadclyst, and financially comfortable. He married Elizabeth, (or Ann) Martin, on 30th January 1850, in Broadclyst. John was a first cousin of my forebear, Benjamin Lucraft; both John and Benjamin's fathers were sons of William Lucraft of Woodbury, and his wife, Esther Newton. Esther Newton's grave is the oldest monument in this part of the family, in Broadclyst churchyard, where she was buried in 1831.

John owned a row of cottages in the village, but the leasehold belonged to the Lord of the Manor, one of the Aclands of Killerton House. One stormy night, one cottage caught fire. It spread to all the other thatched cottages and they were all burned down. Under the terms of the lease, which had only a short term to run, John had to rebuild them all, before handing back the property and this took his life's savings. The picture on page 1 is a contemporary drawing of the fire, from the probably from the London Illustrated News about 1870. The row of cottages still stands, opposite the churchyard in the centre of the village.

Their granddaughter, Eveline Mallett, said the family had originally emigrated from France - into Exeter, when the French Protestants Huguenots were persecuted - around 1685 onwards. This is a common theory among Lucrafts for their origin, owing something to the unusual name; but the family is strongly rooted in the South Hams in Devon, even if we can't fit everything together yet.

Little is known of John Newton's wife but she survived him. She was a short lady with a sweet smile who wore a white lace cap. She was fond of her grandchildren - especially Eveline who passed on these snippets. The old lady had once been a dressmaker to the Acland ladies and kept their muslin patterns exactly to each lady's measurements. Of course everything was made exquisitely by hand - very tiny stitches and she taught Eveline to be a good needlewoman. Eveline, at the age of 6, had to show her buttonhole as an example to the top girls in the village school.

John Newton Lucraft's Children

Susie, the eldest daughter of John Newton Lucraft, born 1851, was very pretty and dainty, twice married and twice widowed with no children of her own, but very fond of her wider family. Mary, the youngest daughter, born 1861, married William Bradford, a schoolmaster in Oxfordshire and had 3 children. One of these, Grace, a very clever woman, owned her own Girls' Exclusive Boarding School - Eden Hall in the Lake District.

John Newton's second daughter, Annie Martin Lucraft, was born and brought up in Broadclyst. She went to Teacher Training College in Exeter, and at 21, became Headmistress of her own school. Most of her career she was Head of St Thomas' Church of England School in Exeter. She always loved her family and kept in touch with her nieces and nephews and children, working tirelessly for the local church. When her niece Eveline was often ill, as a child, and she was sent to Broadclyst to recuperate, Anne was her mentor. When her great niece met her about 1926, she found Anne a delightful witty person, and great fun.

The only surviving son of John Newton Lucraft was John Martin Lucraft, born 1856 in Broadclyst. He had 3 sisters, Anne, Susie and Mary, called Tit. He was a handsome man, full of charm. At about 15 years of age, his father paid £100 for him to be apprenticed to a Grocer, Mr Merryweather, in the City of London. There he learned his trade well, blending teas, weighing and stacking sugar and molasses, cutting bacon, cheeses - cleaning sticky cake fruit from the sacks - caring for coffee, and all the many skilled jobs performed by the practising grocer. He slept under the counter in the shop, but this may have only been on occasions. It would appear that there was no son left to carry on as the village cooper.

At the age of 21, his father bought John Martin his first grocer's business, probably at Dartmouth, though he also lived at Kingsbridge for a while. In Dartmouth in 1878, he married Martha Harris, a seaman's daughter, at Kingswear Wesleyan Chapel, on 17th November. The family story goes that Martha, as a girl of 15 had been seduced by the village organist, and Martha was sent to her older cousins, Jack and Urith Harris in Dartmouth, who brought up the baby, Maud. The dates don't quite match up, so the story may not be quite right in its meagre detail. Later Maud came to live with the family, as an orphan cousin and kept in touch all her long life.

When John Martin and Martha were first married, they went to visit his parents at Broadclyst, and of course both were dressed very smartly. As they stood chatting outside the church after Sunday Service, Lady Acland approached, stopped and slowly looked at Martha from head to toe, and then said, very biting, "I presume you are young John Lucraft's, the Cooper's son's wife. You are dressed above your station". No wonder that incident was never forgotten by the family. And John and Martha's daughter, Eveline, was **dared not** to curtsey like the village children when the gentry passed.

Eveline was born in Dartmouth but soon the family moved several times. John Martin was good business man with great charm. Unfortunately, after building up a good business, he would start drinking. Only a little drink would make him lose his wits. He used to treat everyone on sight and raid the shop till to pay for it. Before long he became bankrupt. His father rescued him several times. At one time they went to Tiverton and his last business was in Northam, Southampton, which went bankrupt in 1905, which accounts for their first granddaughter, Edith (Nicholas) being born there.

John Martin then worked on the liners in and out of Southampton but soon settled in New Zealand for several years. His wife refused to follow him. His granddaughter, Edith, remembers seeing him for the first time, as a child, towards the end of the First World War - a jaunty, gay man, wearing a white suit and a white Homburg hat and settled down with his wife - he was now a reformed character. He died about 1924.

Martha settled in Millbrook, after her husband left, with her daughter Winifred and her family and lived with them until she died in 1930's. Martha was a handsome woman who dressed well and loved good jewellery. Her granddaughter, Edith, found her awesome, but did not see her often. Their eldest daughter, Eveline Susie, was born in 1890 in Dartmouth; she was a delicate child and was often sent to her grandparents in Broadclyst to recuperate, for long periods. There she met and loved her Bradford cousins. In 1905 Eveline married William Edwin Mallett in Northam, Southampton and had 2 children.

John Martin and Martha's son, William Lucraft, was born in 1882 in Totnes. At 17 he joined the army and was sent out to Boer War. Luckily peace was declared before he went into action. Most of his youth was spent in Southampton and he trained as a baker. He married a widow, Beattie - who had 2 children and they had, we think, 4 sons, one of whom died as a child after they settled in Caerphilly. Jack was in touch with his cousin, Alan Baker of Totton until Alan's recent death. During 2nd World War, he worked as a Baker on troop ships and died there. His name is engraved on big memorial to Merchant Seamen on Tower Hill, London, together with the name of one of his sons, Harold, who died in action in 1943. Beattie now dead, but their grand-daughter, Louise Beatrice Lucraft, married in 1977 and lives in Western Australia.

Death on the Titanic

John Martin and Martha's younger daughter Winifred, born 1887, was a pretty, sympathetic, woman. She married very young and her husband Fred Simmonds went down on the Titanic in 1912 leaving her with Ted as a baby. She later married Robert Baker, and had a second family of three boys and one girl with him. I think her great grandson has been named after Benjamin Lucraft.

There are many other people on this particular tree, though generally only one or two details about each are known. Anyone interested in this tree, has only to write and ask for a copy of the complete tree. Especially if further data is offered !

Richard the Carpet Weaver

Richard Luckraft = Ellen Hoskisson

Born 1810
Carpet Weaver
Died 1850

Born 1808 Longridge
Married 1831 Preston
Died 1884

Robert Luckraft	=	Mary Gaffney	Christiana Luckraft	Christiana Luckraft	Susannah Luckraft	Richard Luckraft	=	Elizabeth Halliwell	Alice Luckraft	John Fergus O'Connor Luckraft	Elizabeth Luckraft	= ?	Margaret Luckraft	Edmund Luckraft	Ellen Luckraft	=	John Hobin
b 1831 Longridge		b 1831	b 1833	b 1835	b c 1835 Manchester	b 1837 Kidderminster		b 1844	b 1840 Leeds	b 1842 Ashton	b 1844 Manchester		b 1846 Blackburn	b 1848 Manchester	b 1850 Preston		m 1872
d 1898		m 1859	d 1882	d 1834		d 1870		m 1866	d 1911	d 1841		d 1906					
Descent to Jack Sanderson of Glossop				Descent to Anthony Richard Luckraft of Croyden Francis of Oxford Brian of Halifax Arthur and Louise of New Bedford, Mass. USA				Descent to Richard				Descent to Barry Frankland of Preston					

Richard at the head of this tree is proving a most elusive man to track down, despite the efforts of hunters at the corners of England. He was born about 1807-1810; the dates vary as he seems to have given different dates at different ages of his life. He died in 1850, before the 1851 Census which might give us a clue to his origins.

Travelling and Settling

We know that he was married in Preston St John on 14th June 1831, to Ellen Hoskisson, and their first child had just been born, on 26th April, in Longridge. We don't know where the two girls called Christiana were born, but the next child, Susannah was born in Manchester in 1835, and then Richard in Kidderminster in 1837, before returning north for the rest of the family.

Where did he come from ?

There are some tantalising clues. Jack Sanderson has a family Bible with the births and deaths of 38 members of his family, from 1808 to 1954, and this confirms some of these dates. Christiana is an unusual name, and the only other Christiana Luckraft known was living in Birmingham in 1838 when she got married. Christiana and Richard are two of only a handful of Luckrafts who lived in the Midlands through those decades. She said her father's name was Edmund Luckraft, another unusual Luckraft name. Richard called two of

his daughters Christiana, and one son Edmund. Could Christiana and Richard be siblings ? There is no obvious Richard born in Devon, whence I'm sure he came, and none the son of any Edmund. There is a family in the Blackawton area, whose tree is very rambling, descending from a Richard Luckraft who, I believe, married a Mary Edmund in 1744, and from them the names Richard and Edmund appear in their descendants through three generations. The name Robert, another unusual name for the time, also figures in this village family.

Present Descendants

The tree shows four lines of descent. Jack Sanderson has recently shared his work with Barry Frankland in Preston, who has done an enormous amount of detailed searching in Preston. Francis and Pat in Oxford have sent information, and Mike in Chelmsford sent a photo of a grave in Preston. Arthur and Louise, in New Bedford, keep me up to date with all the developments in the American branch, which descends from Richard's grandson, William, born 1869 Preston, and emigrated with Julia Ann Thompson of Preston.

The spelling is sometimes Lucraft, and sometimes Luckraft, because the part of the family descended from another of Richard's grandchildren, Thomas, says Thomas broke away from the family and dropped the 'k'. No wonder tracking forebears is difficult.

Smithies Family History

One evening Gwen and I were eating dinner in Sheffield with our friends Peter and Gwen Smithies, and they asked about the photograph on our wall which is a copy of the painting in London showing the London School Board of 1870. My ancestor Benjamin Lucraft was standing next to his friend and radical colleague Thomas Bywater Smithies, who was the editor of the Newspaper called the "Workman's Friend".

The co-incidence struck us forcibly that these were two unusual names; wouldn't it be a coincidence if we were now friends in the 1980's and our relatives had been friends in the 1880's in London. Over the following years I've been working on the Smithies Family Tree, with a little liaison with Peter. What he doesn't know is that this Christmas he's going to get the results in three large files of records, photos and story, showing the descent of his family from the rural weaving villages of Elland in West Yorkshire, to himself in Sheffield.

This work is not related to the Lucraft studies, and we've traced Thomas Bywater Smithies to the region, but not the family, and so there's no connection. But it's given me enormous satisfaction, and what a pleasure it has been to research records in the area one in which one lives, rather than deepest Devon.

Early American Settlers

Tom Locraft in Maryland, descended from a William Lucraft born 1802, (another son, we think of William and Esther Newton in Broadclyst), has continued with his fascinating work on the early American settlers. He's now found a Thomas Lecroft and a Richard Locraft, in an emigrants' book coming from Bristol, England in 1658. His analysis of the US Census data shows a Benjamin, aged about 30, with a son Benjamin aged about 5 in 1790 in Carteret County, North Carolina. As yet we don't know who these people are or where they came from.

The Manchester Luckrafts

Norman Luckraft, of Rochdale, writes with wonderful details of his family in Lancashire. Actually they are descended from the Lincoln soldier referred to in the next column, and his letter fills in many of the gaps on that side of the family. Terry Luckraft, another Lincoln descendant, works in Windsor Great Park, and has a cottage on the estate.

Admiral Alfred Luckraft

I've had a tantalising suggestion that there might be an extant portrait of Admiral Alfred Luckraft, who fought at the Battle of Trafalgar as a young man. Keep hoping !

Christmas

Best wishes to you all for Christmas and 1997.

The Luckrafts of Aveton Gifford

I've drawn together my data on the Luckrafts who settled in the village of Aveton Gifford near Bigbury in South Hams, into one file, ready for deposition. A William Lucraft emerges out of the 17th century registers, from Churchstow, with his wife, Margaret, of Churchstow, and they settled in Aveton Gifford in the 1670's. Soon after that we can trace a family whose line descends to the present day, with farmers in Aveton Gifford, Joseph Flashman, watchmaker in Modbury in 1857, millers, carpenters, ironmongers, smiths, clerics and nannies. One went to Halifax to be the nanny to the Crossley family, and gave the Crossley children all her precious belongings in her will. One will states; "Also I give unto my brother-in-law William Lucraft my best black coat, black silk waistcoat and cordery breeches and my three hats, and all the remainder of my clothes I give to his son William, the said William the elder, in consideration of him and his son having my clothes as aforesaid, to pay immediately on their delivery unto my sister Sarah Torring the sum of three pounds and three shillings of lawful money of Great Britain."

The Sage of the Potomac

James William Locraft II of Silver Spring, Maryland, has sent me a cutting about his great great grandfather, William J Locraft, known as "Uncle Billy" by his friends. It is the front page of "The Plate Printer", the newspaper of the Printers' Union in America, and leads with the obituary of "Uncle Billy" the Sage of the Potomac, after his death in 1907. Born in 1846 in Brooklyn, he was apprenticed at 16 to a printers, and when he had served his time moved to the Continental Bank Note Company in Washington, from where he was appointed a plate printer at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

He was in good health, and went fishing at his favourite spot at Great Falls. Later that day he felt unwell, and the doctor diagnosed ptomaine poisoning, and he died in the morning. He was buried next to his wife, in Mount Olivet. She had died 12 years earlier. They left three sons and one daughter : William H., Charles F., James B., and Mrs Mary A. Raeburn.

Indian Mutiny Medal

Bert Luckraft, in Leeds, descended from William Luckraft of Lincoln, who was a Sergeant Major in the Indian Mutiny, writes to say that the Mutiny Medal has come down through the family to him. It is inscribed: Wm Luckraft, 1st Bombay Eurn. Fusrs. Can anyone translate that for me please? Does anyone feel like researching this man's army records at the Public Record Office in Kew ?

Thank you

Thank you to George and Hilda Luckrafts, early sources for my work 15 years ago, who put Joan Corbishley onto my track. And thank you to everyone who keeps writing.