

The Goddard Association of Europe

NEWSLETTER

No. 61 – FEBRUARY 2002

MISS ELEANOR GODDARD

Tragedienne

One Goddard about whom little appears to be known, although she topped theatre bills for several years, is Eleanor Goddard, the actress and tragedienne. Born around 1826, she gives her parents on her marriage in 1863 to be the “Rev Henry Baynton and Hester Goddard (née Parsons)”, though surprisingly no such couple have yet been traced. Her speciality was performing big dramatic roles from Shakespeare and works from the standard repertoire of the day, including the famous male role of Hamlet. The idea of a woman reciting, or acting, the male parts in plays seems odd to us today, but there was a tradition of female Hamlets going back to Mrs Sarah Siddons (1755-1831) – who excelled at it.

In 1846 a Mr John Caple, originally from Herefordshire, took over the management of some of the theatres on the Lincolnshire circuit which were being given up by William Robertson, father of playwright Thomas William Robertson (1829-1871) and his actress sister Margaret, (known as Madge Kendal, 1848-1935). It appears that Caple was already leasing a theatre at Buxton, but was not able to pay the debts incurred. At this time theatrical circuits, chains of theatres under the control of a single lessee, were breaking up under pressure of competition brought about by the coming of the railways. Small local chains no longer made sense when touring companies could cover large distances easily and quickly.

It seems that John Caple was trying to build up a business in this chaotic situation. Eleanor Goddard, perhaps his wife already although she kept her maiden name as a stage name, was the leading lady in his company. Besides his Lincoln ad-

dress, John Caple maintained one in Great Russell Street, London, probably to make sure that he did not miss out on any theatrical news or ventures, for London has always been the centre of English theatre.

Caple's Lincolnshire company were themselves able to take advantage of the improved mobility of the railways. In 1847/8 they played a Christmas season at Whitehaven in Cumberland. The next year Caple, with Eleanor as leading lady, moved to Hull bringing a full company with them. In August 1850 the death of the manager of the Yorkshire Theatrical Circuit meant that the management was available and hotly contested by potential new managers. The trustees of the circuit, which by that time consisted of only three towns – Hull, Leeds and York – awarded Caple the management. He seems to have shifted his base to Leeds, perhaps because of a cholera epidemic in Hull.

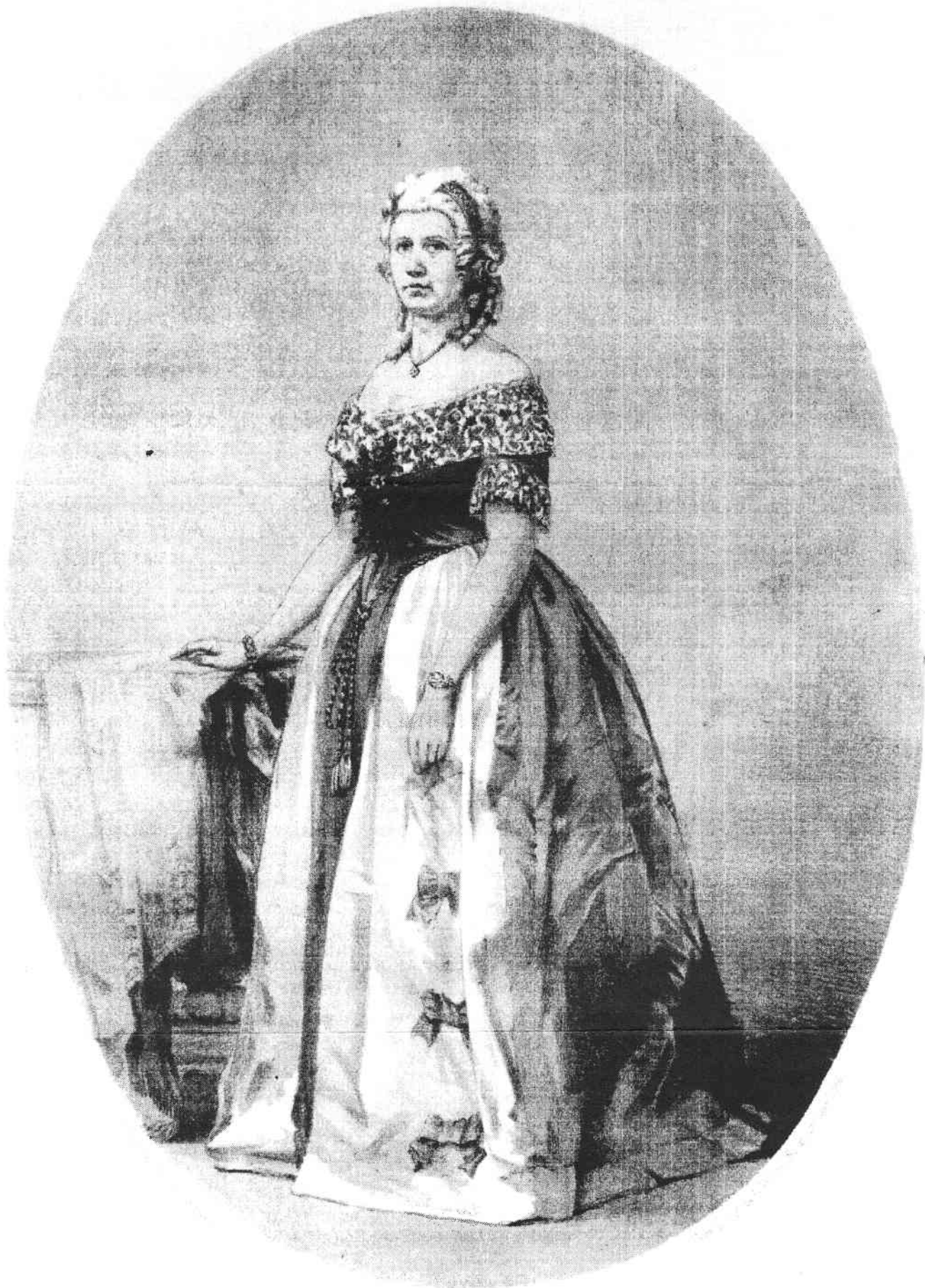
Two engravings exist from this period in Leeds, perhaps done to

promote their new management. Reproduced by lithograph and daguerreotype from the original by G. Villiers of Leeds, they show Eleanor appearing as Adrienne Lecouvreur in *The Reigning Favourite* by John Oxenford, and the other of her with Caple as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth with her receiving a dagger from his hands. Copies of these engravings later made their way into the Harvard University Theatre Collection.

During this period a great opportunity arose for Eleanor. In 1851 there was a vacancy at the Sadler's Wells Theatre in London when Samuel Phelps the actor (1804-1878), a well known and successful producer of Shakespearean plays, had dismissed Isabella Glyn (1823-1889), his leading lady. Eleanor took her chance for countrywide fame and went to London, where she and Fanny Vining took over Isabella's parts. Unfortunately they were found to be too young and inexperienced to carry them off and the public began to stay away. Mrs Siddons had had the same experience early in her career and it was a setback, but not a disaster. Eleanor went back to Yorkshire.

Caple's management of the York Circuit came at a time when the nature of provincial theatres was changing markedly. Instead of permanent resident companies, “stock companies”, presenting seasons of plays from the usual repertoire of classic and contemporary plays, the theatres were dominated by fashionable visiting stars and opera companies, supported by rapidly changing companies of local actors. To quote York Theatre historian, Sybil Rosenfeld, “worthless farces, vaudevilles, extravaganzas and spectacular melodramas of little interest held the stage”.

The period of his management in Yorkshire was not a great success, with an over-reliance on novelties and a weakening of local support.



MISS GODDARD
Adrienne Lecouvreur

Eleanor Goddard as Adrienne Lecouvreur, by kind permission of Harvard University Theatre Collection.

His seasons were erratic, with the three theatres being dark for extended periods and the entertainments, when they were presented, being of questionable quality. The *Yorkshireman* described the York theatre as "one of the most contemptibly managed concerns outside London".

At one point it seemed as if the Circuit might fall apart altogether, as the trustees gave up the leases of the three theatres. Caple continued as manager under the new lessee, and the support for the theatre seems to have picked up a bit, with money spent on improving facilities; but in 1854 he gave up the management and announced that he and Miss Goddard would be departing for a tour of Australia and America.

The theatres of the goldfields were booming with miners rich in nuggets and hungry for entertainment. The Caples made first for the wealthy goldfields of Victoria. The tour got off to a bad start, however, as the town of Melbourne, where they opened, was full of news of riots on the goldfields. The Eureka Stockade rebellion occurred in the middle of their season, and theatrical business dried up. The pair put off their visit to the goldfields inland, sailing instead for Hobart and then Sydney for brief seasons before taking off for California.

Audiences in San Francisco were initially disappointed with Miss Goddard's performances. There are indications that she suffered from nerves in new situations; her husband's lack of acting talent was also a disadvantage. However, Californian audiences soon warmed to her, and Caple and Eleanor left San Francisco with several successful seasons behind them. They re-entered Australia in 1856, the shipping lists naming them as "Mr and Mrs Caple" aged 36 and 30.

Their second Australian visit was more extended and more successful than their first. The troubles in the goldfields were over, and business was booming in the new theatres which had been erected by those who had made money in the mines. They played seasons in Melbourne, as well as touring inland, where a sophisticated audience of miners, many of them familiar with the best theatrical talent of Europe and America, made them welcome. Eleanor Goddard was remembered in after years as "the finest actress in heavy tragedy seen in Australia".

In the gold mining town of Ballarat, Victoria, they performed at the Montezuma Theatre, named in honour of the tempestuous Lola Montez, courtesan and dancer, who had performed in town some months earlier. Eleanor included in her repertoire *Hamlet*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, and *Lady Macbeth in Macbeth*. In 1857 they were in Melbourne again and in August, with G.V. Brooke, the Caples performed *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Winter's Tale* and *Henry VIII*.

1858 found them back again in England, making a return visit to Hull. They then took the Dundee Theatre

Royal for a season where Eleanor had full houses to see her in the great Shakespearean roles, while theatre audiences elsewhere were dwindling.

John Caple died at his home in Bloomsbury Square, London, on 22 June 1860 according to a York theatrical journal (no death certificate has been found). Eleanor continued to make regular visits to Dundee and other Scottish theatres. Before long she acquired a new manager and a new husband – Robert Anderson (stage name Bob Douglas), whom she married in Perth on 8 September 1863. Her later life and her origins await further research.

Article by Peter Freund, Publicist and Historian of the Theatre Royal, Ballarat, and Julie of Newbury. The article has been prepared with the invaluable assistance of Libraries and Archives in the UK, Australia and America, and of Mr Peter Burgess of Hull.

OBITUARY

The Association offers its sympathy to Mrs Houlgrave of the Isle of Man, whose husband Eric died last August. Eric was a descendant of Hartley Goddard of Accrington who featured in the February 2001 Newsletter.

HMS AFFRAY

In the last Newsletter I gave details of the fiftieth anniversary of the loss of the submarine HMS Affray and the battle that former Association member John Goddard had had to get the truth recognised. It was almost as if, having succeeded, he felt his mission was accomplished, as he died soon afterwards aged 72. I am grateful to Albert of Chapel-en-le-Frith for sending me details from the September issue of *Navy News*. John had served in the Royal Navy from 1945 to 1969 first as a rating and then as a commissioned officer from 1960. The last survivor of the ten seamen left behind on the *Affray's* fatal voyage in 1951, he worked latterly as a technical author. He was a founder and the secretary of the Exmouth Old Boys Association, and a founder member, president and former secretary of the Southampton branch of the Submariners Association.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to those new members who have joined the Association since the last Newsletter:

Mr P.J. Goddard, 63 Woodhouse Lane, Brighouse, West Yorkshire, HD6 3TH.

Mrs E.K. Leach, 39 Irvine Drive, Farnborough, Hampshire. GU14 9HF.

NEW MEMBERS FAMILIES

The information below is given to enable existing members to get in touch with new members who appear to belong to the same branch.

Mr Peter James Goddard is Albert of Chapel-en-le-Frith's nephew, son of his brother Bill.

Mrs Elizabeth K. Leach is descended from a Suffolk branch.

BLIND ACTOR

I am grateful to Margaret Martin of Portslade for sending me a sheaf of 'Goddard' cuttings from her local paper *The Argus*. Amongst them are several relating to John Wilson Goddard who, at the start of 2001, began writing a monthly column for the paper under the title 'Heard World' since he is blind. His column gives a fascinating insight to the world of the blind. But another article entitled 'Blind Date' is about John himself.

John, now of Hove, was born in 1950, the son of a market stall holder in Castleford, Yorkshire. Registered blind from birth, he was able to distinguish shapes and colours until his mid teens when what little sight he had completely faded. He was educated at a primary school for blind children in Sheffield where he had a very happy time. But for his secondary education he was sent to the Royal College for the Blind at Worcester, where he was far less happy. Run on the lines of an English public school, the working-class lad from Yorkshire found it difficult to fit in; he also had to cope with losing the remainder of his sight. But he left with two A Levels and qualified as a teacher.

John found teaching very like playing the part of an actor, but such was the prejudice against blind people that he found it almost impossible to get a post. His love of acting led him to join amateur drama groups in London and to gain a performer's licenciate in speech and drama at the Royal Academy of Music. His first professional job was with the Graeae Theatre company for disabled actors, with which he toured in 1986. He went on to win a part in the television series *The Bill* and small parts on radio. But in 1995 he was so fed up with the lack of parts for blind actors that he founded his own theatre company, Vital Experience. In the same year he also commissioned the play *Oedipus Needs Help*, which was performed at the Pavilion Theatre in Brighton and in London. John turned to writing in a bid to expose some of the myths about blind people.

John met his future wife Lynne on a drama course; although he could not see her, he was immediately attracted by the clarity of her voice. She has a physical disability and walks with a distinctive gait and with a stick. They were married in 1987.

ARTIST FRANK

Congratulations to Frank of Llanelli, who has again achieved artistic success. Thanks to Margaret of Worsley for sending me two cuttings. In one Frank, described as 'our renowned local artist', won a cup and medal for his sculpture "Hunger" in the South Wales Art Society Exhibition at the Turner House Gallery, National Museum of Wales, Penarth. In the other he submitted two paintings to the Tenby Arts Festival competition, had both selected for exhibition and won third prize overall.

CAN YOU HELP?

Edna Humphreys of 8 Brockley Avenue, Wallasey, Wirral, CH45 2NU, who is seeking the origins of George Goddard, son of John who was a mariner; he was born in E. Stonehouse about 1835, married widow Mary Ann Hackett in Liverpool in 1874, and was still alive in 1892. This notice has been given to me by a friend who takes the *Devon Family History* magazine.

Bob Holotnak of 718 - Edmonton Trail N.E., Calgary, Alberta T2E 3J4, Canada, who is looking for relatives of Geoffrey Goddard, born on 25 October 1921 in Redcar, Guisborough, Yorkshire, England, RAF Service No. 158895, who was one of the seven crew members of the Lancaster bomber ND811 which crashed on 4 August 1944 over France. He is making a film of the event and wishes to obtain more information on Geoffrey's life.

Signora Gambassi, an Italian lady who lives near Empoli, who would like to know if any of the following prison camp escapees are still around: Corporal Q.H. Goddard, and Privates Frank W. Hyan, Harold Blakesey, Dennis Barlow, George O.C. Adams, Frank Bowen and Ernest Pye. If so, the local council of the area may like to invite them to Italy to greet again th people who helped them. Contact Philip Gourd on 01626 770278.

WARWICK GODDARDS

I am grateful to Brian J. Goddard of 6 Beaufort Avenue, Royal Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 7TA for writing the following at the instigation of Julie of Newbury: "My great great grandfather was William Goddard who was born in Warwick in 1800. On 10 July 1836 at St Mary's Church, Warwick, he married Elizabeth Davis, a widow born in Snitterfield, Warwick, in 1803. They had two children, Henry my great grandfather born in 1837 and Ann born in 1842.

Henry, who was an ironmonger's porter, married Emma Byerley at St Nicholas Church, Warwick, on 25 April 1859. They lived at 10 Coten End, Warwick, and had four children: William born in 1863, Alfred in 1865, my grandfather Walter in 1867 and Annie in 1871. All of these children were born in Warwick. Emma died in 1885 and Henry remarried at St Mary's, Leamington Priors in 1888; his new wife was Lucy Ellard who, as Lucy Byerley, was Emma's elder sister.

Walter married Annie Elizabeth Bird at Alderminster Parish Church on 13 September 1892. Both were in service to the Lucy family at Charlecote House, near Stratford-upon-Avon, Walter as a footman and Annie as a laundry maid. They had six children: Vera Annie born in 1893, Florence in 1894, Madge in 1896, Joyce in 1899, Henry Walter in 1902, and my father Alfred Edward in 1905."

Brian very much hopes that he may find a link with one of our members who may recognise this family tree.

THE 1891 CENSUS OF LONDON

The most recent tool acquired for the Research Library of the Goddard Association is a set of the CDs of the digitised images of the pages of the 1891 census for the London area. The areas covered include Paddington, Kensington, Fulham, Chelsea, St George Hanover Square, Westminster, Marylebone, Hampstead, Pancras, Islington, Hackney, St Giles, Strand, Holborn, London City, Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, St George in the East, Stepney, Mile End, Old Town, Poplar, St Saviour, Southwark, Lambeth, Wandsworth, Camberwell, Greenwich, Lewisham and Woolwich. There are 38 CDs in the set which covers about 200,000 images of census pages in the 'Adobe Acrobat' format. Each CD has a street index which links to the appropriate Registration District, and the page for that street can be quickly displayed. Clicking on the appropriate page number from this index displays the image of the original census page. Unlike the 1881 census, which is on a similar number of CDs and which we also have in the Library, these records are in the original hand-written script and therefore difficult to read. To compound the problem it has no index for the names of the people; the only search is by street names. This means that unless you know the name of the street that the person you are trying to find lived in and, if it is a long road, the approximate house position relating to adjacent roads, then there is little chance of finding the record. House numbering was at this time very haphazard to say the least and the form varied from street to street. Some quite large villages did not get house numbers until the late 1930s, while in the older towns many streets have been renumbered several times in their history. This also makes it difficult to identify those houses or families that do not appear in the census returns. I know of at least one Goddard family, from baptism, marriage or death records, who lived in the same house in London but who eluded at least three censuses – is this a record? From using the 1881 census information for research during the last two to three years it has become obvious that many families are missing; my guess would be about 15%. I have been particularly interested in those Goddards of the High Peak area of Derbyshire who lived in remote farms when that farm or hamlet does not exist on the census documents; but I am assured researchers of other areas have similar problems.

If you have any questions that may be answered using either of these census returns, please ask Julie or myself in writing or by e-mail. The minimum information we would require is first name and surname, approximate date of birth and, if possible, county for the 1881 census. For the 1891 census we would additionally require the name of the London street to have any

chance of giving a useful answer.

The suppliers of the 1891 census are 'S & N Genealogy Supplies', who started this major project of providing all UK census data on CD with this issue of the 1891 census of London, and will progress more each year. They have stated that they hope to cover all census years from 1841 to 1891 but will probably exclude the 1881. The CDs will provide book marked images (Adobe Acrobat) of the fiche which can be selected by area or via street indexes. These sets of CDs or DVDs will contain book marked images of microfiche and will be released shortly. If you would be interested in these CDs you can place an advance order saving about 25% on each set. With about 200,000 page images the 1891 census of London is a major resource and saves thousands of pounds over buying the fiche and has the advantage of ease of use at £49.95 for the 38 boxed CD set.

The 1901 census is due for release soon; this will be available to all via the internet from the PRO at Kew on their website. However, it is stated that there will be a charge for this service over and above the normal web access or phone costs for anything more than just the index, and that it is only cost effective for those people who have done their homework and worked out their areas of search carefully beforehand. These charges will be "reasonable" – their words, not mine!

Brian of Newbury

TELETEXT

As usual, Albert of Chapel-en-le-Frith has kindly sent five items which he has spotted on Teletext. The first four are from the Service Pals section: "Still seeking ex equip. sect. personnel of RAF Bletchly and RAF Quicksands 90 group 1950-51. Remember Ac's Macheen, Toal, Benson, Niel, Goddard and others. Tel. T.S. Cox on 01234 542844." "Seeking Spr. A. Goddard 235 Field Pk. Coy. R.E. 1944-47. L.K.A. E. Yardly, Birmingham. Cpl. D. Ferguson would love to hear from you. Tel. 0191 416 6360." "Seeking chaps who were at West Kirby in Cpl. Jones's billet Oct/Nov 1950 Dobson, Goddard & 12 others. Found Francis & Humphreys. Please ring 01989 562991." And: "HMS Ganges – did you join 1960? Seeking Goddard and 30 others. Any information tel. Mike Shepherd on 07813 915007 (1900-2100hrs)." And from the Lost Touch section: "John Goddard born Norwich c.1785. Have no trace of first marriage, second to Ellen Joblin Barnes in 1842. Children – John, Ellen, William & Robert. Can find mother & children on 1881 census but John Goddard died 1856. I would like to know where in Norwich John snr was born. Please contact Joy Mitchell, 44 Hawes Rd, Bromley, BR1 3JR. Tel. 020 8460 7946. Email. Joymitchell@yahoo.com".

ROBERT GODDARD

Well, Christmas has come and one of my presents as usual was Robert Goddard's latest thriller *Dying to Tell*. Once again he has not disappointed and keeps you on the edge of your seat – or far too wide awake in bed in the small hours in my case – until you reach the last page. The plot takes place around the globe: England, Germany, Japan, the USA, and back to England again. But I won't say any more....read it for yourself!

ADAM ANT

Stuart Goddard, aka Adam Ant, has been much in the news of late and I am grateful for all those of you who have sent me cuttings. To what extent he is suffering from some form of mental problem is open to debate, but there is no doubting the impact he had in the early 1980s when he became the first great pop star of the video age and scored several 'top ten' hits, including three at number one. He is due in April to be part of a Here and Now review tour with other stars from the period; at present he is determined that the show will go on.

MARRIAGE

Jennifer Walker has kindly sent an account of the marriage on 14 July 2001 at St John the Baptist Church, Pewsey, of Darren Rodney Goddard and Lucy Jane Haigh. Rodney, who is the younger son of Mr and Mrs R. Goddard of Broadfields, Pewsey, works in marketing in Newbury, while Lucy is a staff nurse in Salisbury. David Goddard was best man and Rosie Goddard was one of the bridesmaids. The reception was in a marquee in Wootton Rivers and the honeymoon was spent in Paris. Does any member claim Darren as a relative?

CHRISTMAS TRAGEDY

Several of you sent me the cutting concerning the terrible tragedy in so-called "Christmas Street", actually John Street, Thurnscoe, near Rotherham in South Yorkshire. The street is named because the custom has grown up of decorating the houses in bright lights and raising money for local charities from the many visitors who drive from miles around to see the sight. Just before Christmas the house belonging to Andrew Goddard aged 38 and his 30 year-old wife Mandy caught fire and two of their three children, Alex 6 and Jade 5 died; Nathan 4 was badly injured.

TRADE TOKEN

I am grateful to Rachel of Leicester for telling me that her brother in Glasgow has recently acquired a trade token, issued by his namesake John Goddard of Tiverton, valued at a farthing and dated 1658. Coinage was in short supply in the Commonwealth period and trade tokens were in circulation. Rachel and John wonder if any reader can identify the trade of this particular John Goddard or tell them anything else about him.

CHAMPION SWIMMER AGAIN

Anne Hockaday has kindly sent me a cutting from the *Daily Express* of 3 December 2001, which records the fact that Britain's European Junior champion, James Goddard (featured in Newsletters 55 and 60) won the 400m individual medley in a World Cup meet in Shanghai. The 18 year-old from Stockport Metro took the gold medal in a personal best time of 4mins 16.88secs. He surged into the lead after trailing fourth in the butterfly leg, and afterwards said he believed he could go even faster and that the victory was a boost to his confidence.

BOWLS CHAMPION

I am grateful to our Australian co-ordinator, Ian of Balcatta, for sending news of another Goddard sporting champion, this time in bowls. At the end of January 42-year-old John Goddard of the Osborne Park club became Western Australia's singles champion, beating his opponents 21-14 in the quarter-final, 25-10 in the semi-final and 25-17 in the final. And on the strength of it he has been chosen to represent his state in the inter-state championships in Adelaide in March, having been on the verges of the side for the last three years. He began playing bowls fifteen years ago when living in Merriden, before moving to Perth in 1995, and last September won the Mt Lawley consistency singles title. Does any Australian member claim him as a relative?

YOUNG MUSICIANS

Margaret Martin of Portslade has kindly sent me a cutting from *The Argus* of March 2001 extolling the success of sisters Rosie and Lucy Goddard who, with Daniel Hopgood making up the string trio, won the regional under-16 National Schools Chamber ensemble competition and thus went on to the finals. They are pupils at Brighton College. The competition attracted more than three hundred entries from across the country.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Margaret of Worsley sent me an article announcing the appointment of Stephen Goddard as Director of Communications for the Diocese of Manchester in August 2000 (see Newsletter 56). Now she has kindly sent another announcing his resignation at the end of March to resume his career as a freelance writer and PR consultant. A regular contributor to national BBC religious affairs programmes, he also founded and co-edits the 'ship-of-fools.com' website which currently attracts 800,000 hits a month. What began as an irreverent look at modern spirituality has proved so successful in attracting disaffected Christians that the Church of England will consider using it as a model. Stephen, who is married to Alison and has two children, Samuel 18 and Sarah 11, thinks it represents a marvellous opportunity for attracting more Christians over the next decades.

BUDDING GEOLOGIST AGAIN

When I opened the April 2001 newsletter and saw an article entitled 'Budding Geologist', I thought this would be right up my street, being an absolute geology fan. My interest turned to surprise when I realised that it was actually about me, the result of my informing Margaret of Worsley about my activities. I am not sure that the OU Geological Society is the largest in the world, but it does break a few records for the number of active amateur members and the varied programme, and as the *Independent* article referred to trips all over the world, I thought there may be some interest in just one such adventure. However, be warned, not all geological trips are quite as exciting as this one was.

The Open University Geological Society entrusted me with the organisation of a new branch in Continental Western Europe, to bring together all those students outside UK, who were 'attached' to some branch to which they had almost no personal connections. After months of collecting names and addresses, we finally managed our inaugural meeting in Basel in November 2000, and at this time it was agreed that we would try to arrange a spectacular first official trip on our patch, and with the size of my area (all Europe except UK and Ireland) we were somewhat spoilt for choice. However, with my love of volcanoes and a wish to see Etna, plus the backing of my group, the choice was soon made – a week on Sicily, exploring the volcano and its impact on the islanders. The adventures of that week would fill a whole book, but I will concentrate on one trip, the day we set off to visit the craters.

We had already made one attempt earlier in the week to reach the summit, but adverse weather conditions forced us to turn back. The Scirocco, blowing over from N. Africa, was so strong that we were constantly covered by clouds of volcanic dust, which, although fine, is very abrasive and painful on the skin, and made us look like chimney sweeps after a few minutes. Our second attempt was much more successful. We started in perfect weather, cool but sunny and, more important, no wind.

The first part of the journey was by minibus, up the winding road leading to Piano Provenzana, the starting point for jeep trips to the summit area. On arriving, we were surprised not to find the hundreds of tourists who can generally be found at the station, but the chill in the air was not so inviting. It seems that only geologists brave all weathers, and believe me, a slight chill is much more pleasant than torrential rain or strong wind. We climbed aboard the jeep, which would take us to around 2900 m, just 400 m below the summit. This drive up the mountain is spectacular in itself. The road winds through lava fields and around cinder cones, the whole mountainside being practically void of any vegetation, as it takes some 300 years for new growth to take hold

after an eruption. At 2000m the first snow fields came in sight, more black than white from the ever-present dust, and we would have to traverse some of this snow to reach our objective, the summit area with its four craters and the active lava flow we had been observing at a distance every evening since our arrival.

The jeep reached the end of the road and we all got out and started to unpack our mountain gear; fleeces, gloves and woolly hats, hard hats too for later, and walking poles, always a bonus on such uneven ground. Soon we were off, climbing steadily towards the smoking craters above us. I was handicapped with an ankle injury needing a splint, and after climbing for some time it became apparent that I would not be able to make it to the craters. After a discussion it was decided that I would stay where I was, below Bocca Nuova, and wait for the return of half of the group. The rest were going to stay until nightfall, to see the glowing lava flow. Despite my disappointment, it was a magical experience. I was completely alone on the side of the mountain and not a sound could be heard. Just above me were the craters, below me the Mediterranean. The view was incredible, and as I settled down behind a large lava rock to await the others, the Earth trembled, barely perceptible, but enough to send a quiver through my body. And again, a sign that the mountain was alive and that magma was moving somewhere within. I felt a little apprehensive, and quickly peered at the smoking fumaroles behind me, to see if anything had changed, but everything seemed to be quiet and I settled back again to enjoy the view.

After an hour or so the returning group members appeared over a rim, and soon we were making our way downslope towards the waiting jeep. The rest would join us later at our base camp, after an 8 km hike, arriving around 2.00 am with exciting tales of their adventure. Although the climb had been impossible for me, that day on the mountain was an unforgettable experience.

For those of you who would like some more information, feel free to visit our website: <http://users.skynet.be/ougseurope/> where you will find lots of photos and more details on the trip. Our plans for the future include the French Jura mountains, Santorini and possibly Greenland, and if you would like to contact us, or maybe join us on one of our adventures, just send an e-mail to <geology.group@bluewin.ch> Everyone is welcome!

Annette of Switzerland

P.S. New course books have arrived, and I look forward to another interesting year with the Open University, but this time knowing that I have already reached my first target. With my passes in the latest exams, I got my Diploma in Earth Sciences. Now I am on the way to an Honours degree in Natural Sciences with Earth Sciences.

AGM

This year's AGM will again be held at The Fleet Inn, Twyning, just north of Tewkesbury, contrary to the original intention. The date will be Saturday 18 May 2002. Full details in the next Newsletter.

WESTLECOT MANOR

Described as 'a hidden gem in the heart of Swindon' and tucked down an unobtrusive lane in Old Town, Westlecot Manor came on the market last autumn for £650,000. It has a rich history connected to the Wiltshire Goddard family going back into the reign of Henry VIII. Lacock Abbey was one of the larger monasteries dissolved by that monarch, owning a good deal of land in the Swindon area, including the west side of Swindon Hill then known as Wicklescote Manor. The Goddards of Aldbourne bought it in 1541, adding the other side of the Hill, known as Hye Swindon, a few years later.

In 1589 Thomas Goddard and his new bride, Anne Gifford, were given Swindon Hill as a wedding present and went to live at Wicklescote Manor. They changed the name to Westlecot and Thomas had his initials and the date carved into the stone wall of the house; they are still there to this day. It is from him that the Goddards of Swindon are descended. At much the same time his elder brother John had acquired another former Laycock property, Clyffe Pypard Manor on the Wootton Bassett side of Swindon, and it is from him that the Clyffe Pypard Goddards are descended. The younger brother, Richard, remained at the original Goddard Aldbourne manor house of Upper Upham.

Westlecot Manor remained the family seat until another Richard Goddard moved into the better-known mansion on the other side of the Hill, where the Lawns are today. But the property stayed with the family until the 1980s. Downstairs there is a grand entrance hall, lounge, dining room and kitchen; on the first floor seven bedrooms and five bathrooms; and on the top floor a four-bedroom flat with a living room and kitchen. Most of the original leaded windows are still in place, and towering oak fireplaces dominate the downstairs rooms. Most of the wooden fixtures – the staircase, panelling and beams – are also still the originals.

CHRIST CHURCH, SWINDON

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the new church in Swindon, the Friends of Christ Church have sponsored a small commemorative book. Written by Brian Bridgeman and Teresa Squires, *The Old Lady On The Hill* is priced at £9.50 including postage (£7.95 if you collect it) and can be obtained from The Parish Office, 36 Cricklade Street, Old Town, Swindon, Wiltshire; cheques should be made payable to 'The Friends of Christ Church'. The Goddard family, of course, features quite largely in the book.

ANOTHER LIBRARIAN

The Library Association *Record* of May last year noted that Bernard Michael Goddard had taken early retirement from Somerset County Library at the end of March after more than thirty years in Taunton. Bernard was one of the original 'CLW' students in Aberystwyth in 1965. He worked in the Borough Library in Taunton, and then with Somerset County, eventually achieving a long-held aim to see a new library built for the county town, and to be involved with its provision. I am grateful to Margaret Martin of Portslade for this information.

FRANK THE FIGHTING FARMER

Association member Patricia Lee of Slade Green, Kent, is interested in a possible connection with Frank the Fighting Farmer (Newsletter 60), and has conscripted Peter of Toronto to help with the research. He has had some success so far and hopes to be able to produce a follow-up article in time for the next Newsletter.

FRED GODDARD AGAIN

Remember Fred Goddard of Haywards Heath, who wrote *Battlefields of Life* and featured in Newsletters 55, 57 & 59? Well, he has been in the news again twice recently. I am indebted to Margaret Martin of Portslade for sending me the relevant cuttings from *The Argus*. The first, from 7 December 2001, tells of the presentation to Fred of a Bright FM Lifetime Achievement Award at a ceremony in Burgess Hill. The second, some days later on 18 December, mentions his 85th birthday treat from his wife Jean of a flight in a light aircraft. Having taken flying lessons at Biggin Hill in 1970, he was able to take the controls for some of the time.

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