

The
Stockden Family History

1741 to 1997

By
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Wilfred George STOCKDEN in 1987

DEDICATION

This publication is dedicated to the memory
of my father-in-law

Wilfred George STOCKDEN (1899-1994)

whose stories of his boyhood holidays spent
with his aunt and uncle at Olveston, in the
early 1900's, inspired me to research my
wife's family name.

LINKS to PDF_files

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Family Trees
The Stockden Sons & their Families in :
The United Kingdom
Australia, South Africa, Canada and New Zealand
Stockden Daughters listed under their married names
in the United Kingdom, Australia and South Africa

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The Parish Records

A: Parish Births
B. Parish Deaths
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The Public Records from St Catherine's House

A: St Caths Births
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A. Australian Births
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Note on Format:

I have tried to maintain a style containing the following method: Abbreviations : eg Qld= Queensland ; Vic = Victoria ; W A = Western Australia; y.o.b. = year of birth ; f.n.u. = first name unknown ; l.n.u. = last name unknown ; where appropriate 'b' for 'born / baptised' and 'd' for 'died'. For dates within parenthesis I like to use 'dd-mmm-yyyy' eg '21 Mar 1854' . For easier reference, I have identified individuals by inserting their birth-year after their forenames because many years ago, when a single forename was given, so many children were given the same name.

INTRODUCTION

I first took up genealogy as a serious hobby in 1993 after my wife Avril Ann (née Stockden) and I had retired from the Civil Service. However, the idea of tracing Avril's family tree was kindled some years before that when her widower father Wilfred George (1899) used to visit us in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire and recount stories about his other holidays spent in Gloucestershire when he was a young lad.

Wilfred was born and resided all his life in Barry, South Wales, but he told us that his father Thomas George (1867) was born in Olveston, Gloucestershire and it was in that village that he (Wilfred) and his younger brother Harry (1900) sometimes spent part of their school summer holidays with their father's sister Alice and her husband, Harry Hendy. During his visits to us in Cheltenham, Avril and I occasionally took Wilfred on an afternoon drive to Olveston and the surrounding villages, where many of his ancestors had lived their lives. I made up my mind on one such occasion that since the name 'Stockden' was an unusual one and because local Gloucestershire records would be conveniently accessible to me, I would undertake to research the 'Stockden Family Tree' when I retired. Little did I know at that time, the size and scale of the task I was planning to take on!

My first step was to speak to the immediate surviving members of my wife's family. Unfortunately, they knew very little of their origins or how many other Stockden family members might still be alive. Wilfred and his sister Bessie remembered cousins Alec and Hardy, Eva and Violet in their younger days. However, all contact with uncles, aunts and cousins had ceased many years ago.

My next step was to contact all the Stockdens that I could find in the national telephone directories with a view to seeking their help in fitting together the family 'jigsaw'. The response was very encouraging and my thanks go to all those members of the Stockden Clan who contributed to my research. To show my appreciation to those who contributed, I kept them up to date with my findings by producing a series of Stockden Clan Newsletters pending the completion of this hard-copy version of the family's history.

The next stage involved an extensive search of parish and public records. The information gleaned from this exercise added considerably to my local and national knowledge of the Stockdens, but there were still a lot of gaps in the overall picture. The next logical step therefore was to look abroad for those who might have emigrated.

I had stored all the information collected to date on my computer database. I also possessed a modem (a gadget for sending written information on the computer over the telephone line). Consequently, I joined a Bulletin Broadcast Service (BBS) which allows amateur genealogists all over the world to communicate and help each other out in the search for information on their family trees. I started by sending a message to all Australians on the network and the response and generosity of those who replied was overwhelming. In particular I am greatly indebted to Rob Nelson of Perth, Western Australia and Peter Dunn of Queensland whose research on my behalf in those two states has enabled me to identify all the Australian descendants of Mary (1827) Stockden, her brother Robert (1824) and their cousins John (1832) and Wyatt (1840), all of whom emigrated to Australia from Gloucestershire in the mid-1800's. In no time at all, I had so many new Stockden branches to add to my database that I ran out of computer space! This gave me an excellent excuse to purchase a new and more efficient computer, a faster modem and new software. This resulted in a new learning curve and time spent transferring data from one computer to another, thus delaying my progress towards the final preparation of this publication.

As time progressed news of my need for information on the Stockden name spread far and wide and additional information came pouring in from a variety of sources. For example, I received a letter from a Mrs Margaret Peebles of Auckland, New Zealand, who is also a keen genealogist. Her grandmother Mary (1872), née Stockden, emigrated to New Zealand in 1922, taking with her, her youngest son, Claude Newton who is Margaret's father. Avril and I have since met Margaret and her husband Graeme and we have had a useful exchange of information.

I have also received correspondence from Robert Stockden who lives in Canada and Jack Stockden who lives in South Africa. In the latter case, a letter arrived 'out of the blue' from Jack telling me that his nephew had recently emigrated from Durban to Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia, where he noted the name of Wyatt (1945) Stockden in the local telephone directory. He rang Wyatt to ask if he was related to his Uncle Jack Stockden in South Africa. Wyatt replied that he did not know but he suggested that Jack write to Bruce Rayner in England who was researching the Stockden name. The information that Jack has since given me cleared up the mystery of what had happened to Herbert John (1878) Stockden (Jack's father) who had emigrated to South Africa from Olveston in 1901.

In the autumn of 1995, Avril and I had a holiday in Australia and New Zealand. During our stay with our friend Rob Nelson in Perth, Western Australia, he kindly arranged for us to meet up with some of the Stockden descendants. Namely, Elsie Mary (1911) Bonadeo, Kathy (1928) Baker, Merle Dawson, Kevin (1937) and his wife Cynthia, Ian (1944), and Eileen Agnes (1917) Campbell. Whilst in Brisbane, Queensland, our friend Peter Dunn, drove us north to Gympie, where we met Emma, widow of William Whall (1905) Stockden and we found 'Stockden Road' on the South Side of Gympie presumably named after Wyatt Wall (1840) Stockden whose home was at the end of this road on ground that he bought near Eel Creek. Unfortunately, we did not have time to visit George Williams (1912) Stockden, who lived at Kilkivan, but we telephoned him and Maureen, wife of Robert (1931) Stockden later that evening. We also spoke to Robert Stephen (1956) Stockden, son of Robert and Maureen. We were very pleased to meet the aforementioned Stockdens who added significantly to the personal histories of members of the Australian branches of the family and produced some very interesting old photographs for us to see.

After four years of extensive research I am now in a position to print the full family history of all those Stockdens alive today living in England, Wales, Australia, Canada and South Africa. I have also included in the family tree the descendants of the females born to the name where these are known. The most significant feature of my research is that all the Stockdens alive today, born to the name, are descendants of Richard Stockden and his wife Mary (née Dixon) who were married at Westerleigh parish church in Gloucestershire in 1741. Unfortunately, I have been unable to find any records which show Richard's origins.

My research, however, has produced evidence that the Stockden name goes back to at least 1450 AD. In Leicestershire, in the village of Burrough-on-the-Hill, the parish church contains stone effigies of Sir William De Stockden and his wife Lady Margaret De Stockden (née Skeffington). The family tree in which their names appear is that of the 'Lords of Burrough-on-the-Hill' and the majority of the holders of this title were named Stockton, a name which on this tree goes back to 1200 AD. The reason for a sudden change to Stockden is a mystery which has yet to be resolved.

The Mormon Church of Salt Lake City, has compiled (and is continuing to compile) the International Genealogical Index (I G I) of the parish records of Great

Britain. I have examined the records available to date, which show entries of Stockden births and marriages all over England as far back as the 15th Century and in Wales from the 19th Century. I can only conclude from my research that all the Stockden lines, with the exception of the Richard and Mary descendants, have died out over the course of time. I plan to continue to research the name as and when the opportunity arises and, if feasible, I will produce a further publication on my findings.

Finally, for those readers with an interest in computers, my work on this subject has been done in the Serif Desk Top Publishing software from a database of Brothers Keeper. Hopefully, when you read this a copy of the Stockden Family Tree (and maybe photographs) will be on the Internet.

I hope that you will find reading this publication as interesting as I have done in researching and producing it. I will continue to update my database as and when information on new Stockden arrivals comes to my attention. This of course means that I will have to rely on Family members to supply me with this information and I thank you all in anticipation.

Bruce L Rayner 1997

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