Guide Lines

The *Occasional* Newsletter

of the

Winchester Area Tourist Guides Association

Issue of Summer 2020

Contents:

Item: 1	Title: **The Troubled Times of Simon de Montfort**
Date: 30 Apr 2020	Contributor: **Sue de Salis**

Introduction

I have always felt I should know more about Simon de Montfort, a character sometimes seen as the founder of modern Parliamentary democracy who lived through the fractious times that followed "bad" King John's unfortunate reign and the sealing of the Magna Carta. I also knew that the period had some relevance to Winchester, having read Don's chapter "*The Troublesome Reigns of John and Henry III*" in the Winchester volume of *Bloody British History*. So, a gift of Sophie Ambler's book, "*The Song of Simon de Montfort",* coupled with lockdown enforced time at home, resulted in the following few paragraphs which attempt to make some sense of his life and its significance!

Early Years

Simon was born in 1208 in France. (His family had both French and English titles but had been obliged to choose their main loyalty when King John lost the majority of the Norman/Plantagenet French possessions.) By 1229, Simon had decided to attach his allegiance to England and came across to claim the old family title of the Earldom of Leicester which had been co-opted by King John. John's son, Henry, who had been born in Winchester in 1207, was now King Henry III.

By the time Simon arrived, the First Baron's war, fought following King John's rejection of Magna Carta, had ended and Henry was ruling in accordance with the provisions of the Charter (though some of the provisions of the original version had been weakened). Further, Henry was not initially hostile to Simon and Simon married the King's sister and succeeded in regaining his Leicester title and some of its lands.

Causes of Discontent

But problems were brewing. Like his father, Henry lacked the funds for his ambitious foreign policies. He wanted to regain the lost French territories and was also tempted by the Pope to seek to extend English control into Italy-the Kingdom of Sicily was to be promised to one of Henry's sons. Simon was a natural leader and a successful military strategist having fought in the Crusades and on behalf of Henry in France. But Simon's support for Henry lessened due to arguments over money-Henry owed Simon in relation to his Earldom, his wife's dowry and his overseas duties. Henry also alienated many others by taking money in ways not prohibited by the Magna Carta: he took church property to fund his Italian campaign; and was excessive in his exercise of rights to claim financial penalties in connection with the system of justice.

These frustrations were increased by Henry's generosity towards his French brothers in law, William and Aymer de Valence. The King gave them rich livings and protected them against reprisals, no matter how badly they behaved. Aymer was only 22 when appointed Bishop of Winchester and wholly inappropriate for the role being illiterate, unable to speak English, completely secular in his behaviour and not having been ordained! To compound matters, when Aymer had a dispute with the Archbishop of Canterbury, he raided the Archbishop's property, stole cash and jewellery and kidnapped his servants. Amazingly, in all of this, Aymer was protected by Henry. (For more on Aymer, see Clare's article in *Guidelines, Jan 2018.)*

The tipping point came partly as a result of events completely beyond the control of all concerned. In 1257 a volcano in Lombok erupted creating dust clouds that obscured the sun and led to months of rain, poor harvests and ensuing disease and starvation for thousands of ordinary English people. Instead of helping his people, Henry continued to try to raise money for his Italian project, including by fining villages in breach of a rule requiring them to give details of anyone dying in their parish ("murdrum"), which was difficult to do when people were roaming the country desperate for food.

Revolt

Against this backdrop, it is easy to understand the unconstitutional action taken by Simon and his supporters (which included several Bishops) in 1258. They cornered Henry in Westminster and persuaded him to agree to the country being governed by a Council, partly appointed by Simon's group. This led to a Parliament which produced what came to be known as the Provisions of Oxford. Under this: the Council was formally appointed to rule in Henry's name; foreign nobles were to be prevented from having preferment; numerous provisions were introduced designed to protect the ordinary people from unjust application of the machinery of justice, including by extending the protections of the Magna Carta beyond the Barons and to their own sub-tenants; and it provided that parliaments should be held three times a year, starting on 3 February, 1 June and 6 October. Perhaps most importantly, the Provisions were addressed to "all people", unlike the Magna Carta which only addressed the 50 odd per cent of the population who were "free".

Unsurprisingly, the foreign brothers in law took flight at this point, taking refuge in Aymer's stronghold of Wolvesey Palace in Winchester. But they soon realised that they had little hope of resisting and left England. The Chapter of Winchester Cathedral then tried to appoint a new Bishop (for obvious reasons they had never wanted Aymer), but he persuaded the Pope to confirm his appointment and he was officially consecrated as Bishop in 1260. Sadly for Aymer, he died on his way back to England and is buried in France. His heart, however, was placed in a commemorative casket in the Presbytery at Winchester Cathedral.

Image of Aymer's the heart tomb. This is now to be found in the north east corner of the retrochoir. Note that the top stone went missing for centuries and was only rediscovered in 1912 when the new buttresses on the south side of the nave were being dug.

The next important point in the story also involved Winchester. Henry, unhappy with the Provisions of Oxford, had sought help from the Pope who agreed that they had been forced on Henry under duress and were therefore not binding. The Pope's verdict was read out at the Whitsun crown wearing ceremony at Winchester Castle on 12 June 1261. After this, many of Simon's group changed sides and he went back to France, unimpressed by the inconstancy of his allies.

Second Barons' War

The next couple of years saw more unrest, with some rebellions involving Wales and the Welsh marches. The marcher Lords asked Simon to return and he called for the reinstatement of the Provisions of Oxford, the legitimacy of which were then put to arbitration by the French King, Louis IX. Louis sided with Henry but by this time, both Henry and Simon were preparing for war. The two sides met at the Battle of Lewes in 1264. This was a triumph for Simon, winning against the odds thanks to intelligent strategy, and resulting in him being de facto ruler, with the King and his son Edward as his prisoners. Ripples of the conflict and Simon's victory spread across the country leading, in Winchester, to unrest among the citizens. This resulted, in June 1264, in the burning of the area around King's Gate which was subsequently known as "burned land" or Barn(d)elond (see Winchester Atlas/Studies II, Introduction and Gazetteer).

Unfortunately for Simon, his triumph was short-lived. He tried to restore order and stability by establishing a new Council and by calling a new and differently constituted Parliament, which met in early 1265. Unlike previous Parliaments, which had only consisted of knights with power to agree taxes, this Parliament included representatives of townspeople as well, and so was the first to speak for the whole country, and to address matters of governance, as well as taxation. But Simon's behaviour at this time did not reflect the high standards he generally set. He was arrogant with his supporters and exercised his power to the benefit of his family. He lost support and became more isolated. Henry's son, Edward was released and able to rally support for his father.

The final chapter also briefly involved Winchester. Simon was losing support and stuck in the South West needing reinforcements and money. His son, also called Simon, set off to aid him, but made a large detour to raid Winchester, probably to raise money. He managed to sneak into the City without a fight and then sacked the City to collect its wealth (ironically on the day after St Swithun's day). Much of this may have come from the Jewish community who had been regularly targeted by the de Montfort family, despite being under the protection of the King. A sizeable sum also came from the Bishop of Winchester appointed after Aymer's death: Bishop John de Gervase supported Simon's cause, probably because of the behaviour of Aymer and the King previously. Unfortunately for Simon, any help was not enough to save him. Deserted by his former supporters, he was pinned down at the Battle of Evesham where Edward's impressive military skills got the better of him. Simon had taken Henry to the battle in disguise, possibly hoping he would be killed in the fray, but Henry called out "I am Henry of Winchester, your King" and was rescued and taken to the care of Edward. Simon himself was cut down on the battlefield and died. Henry's reign then continued for several more years and he was, of course, succeeded by his son, Edward I.

Conclusion

So, a difficult time which must have been pretty miserable for the people of England as power moved back and forth between Crown and magnates. Henry was weak, capricious and easily swayed. Simon was brave, arrogant and far-sighted in his views on governance. Neither of them were successful rulers. In terms of legacy, Henry's greatest achievements were probably his buildings, including Winchester Great Hall. Simon's were his ideas as reflected in the Provisions of Oxford and the form of the Parliament of 1265. Whether we can view Simon as founding the modern system of Parliamentary democracy is, however, highly dubious since his objective was really just to curb the King's excesses as they were manifested at that time. As we know, it took several hundred more years, and many more battles before the balance of power was finally settled.

Item: 2	Title: **Favourite Tour Stop – Abbey Gardens**
Date: 12 May 2020	Contributor: **Judith Hoskins**

My favourite tour stop is in Abbey Gardens, but not the usual tour introduction we are so familiar with. Instead it's the stops I do in my Saxon or Saxon Queens tours. I actually do two stops in Abbey Gardens – at the start and the finish. As it was my suggestion to invite people to contribute their favourite stop I'm taking the liberty of making it two! After my initial introduction to Saxon life and Winchester I move to Abbey Passage to look at the exposed remains of the Nunnaminster. What follows are taken from the notes I've prepared for these stops and I read them multiple times in the week leading up to the tour.

<u>Abbey Passage</u>

"Nunnaminster"

Ealhswith founded the Nunnaminster shortly after Alfred's death in 899. Later re-buildings have damaged the foundation of Ealhswith's first Nunnaminster, but we can see there, marked in red tiles, the west end of the original church. It was of simple wooden construction on a shallow stone foundation. At this time the words "nun" and "Nunnaminster" were derived from the Latin "nonna" meaning old woman and were a place for single or widowed women to live a religious life. The addition of the word "minster" means there was a teaching and ministry aspect to the establishment. It was the tradition for widowed noble women to retire from court to a religious community.

We know the boundaries of the Nunnaminster because they were written into a book of Gospels, known as the Book of Nunnaminster, which is kept in the British Library. This book probably belonged to Ealhswith and was given to the Nunnaminster.

'The bounds of the estate which Ealhswith has in Winchester run up from the ford on the western side of the westernmost mill weir, then east to the old willow and then up along the eastern mill weir, then north up to Cheap Street [now the Broadway]; then there east along Cheap Street as far as the king's city hedge [the city walls], on to the old mill weir [the River Itchen] and there along the old mill weir until it strikes the Ivy-covered ash, then there south over the two fold ford to middle street, then there west again along the street and over the ford, so that it strikes again the western most mill weir'.

Arts and embroidery

When King Alfred revived monasteries in Wessex, he also encouraged the arts and invited scholars from Europe and gathered men of learning from throughout England. The result was a blossoming of manuscript illumination (the development of the Winchester School as a style of Anglo-Saxon art), embroidery, carving, enamelling and pottery making. The nuns of the Nunnaminster were renowned for their needlework and some of it survives! A maniple and stole of silk and gold has been dated to about 916. It was donated by King Aethelstan, Alfred & Ealhswith's grandson, to the shrine of St Cuthbert, then in Chester-le-Street, now in Durham Cathedral. A new permanent home of The Treasures of St Cuthbert, some of the most significant surviving Anglo-Saxon treasures in the UK, opened recently at Durham Cathedral in a new exhibition space called *Open Treasure*. The treasures were found in his tomb when it was opened in 1827, including fragments of his Anglo-Saxon wooden coffin, the embroidered vestments and the famous pectoral cross of St Cuthbert.

The level of skill and development of technique is considerable and would have been the culmination of a long development of embroidery work in Anglo-Saxon England, certainly throughout Alfred & Ealhswith's time. This specialist art form continued with England as the centre of excellence right up to the Black Death of 1348. It became known in the Middle Ages as *Opus Anglicanum*, literally "English work", and a few years ago there was an exhibition of this work at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. Why should such exquisite work from Winchester be given by King Aethelstan to St Cuthbert's shrine in the north east, in the former kingdom of Northumbria? When King Alfred was in the Somerset marshes planning his retaliation against the Danes in 878 he had a dream of St Cuthbert telling him all would be well. Since then the kings of Wessex revered St Cuthbert.

Despite the usual practice of the time of royal women retiring to a religious house, dying there and being buried there, it is believed Ealhswith was not buried here in 902. She was buried alongside Alfred in the newly consecrated New Minster. It was extremely unusual for the wives of kings to be buried alongside them. Kings often married more than once and how were they to select which wife got such treatment? Wives were usually buried at the nunnery where they had retired and died. Edward decided he wanted his parents together and he was also buried here in 924.

The final stop on my tour is back in Abbey Gardens. I usually pick a central spot on the grass. Here I tell the group about the Battle of Hastings. The whole of the Saxon tour is a struggle to "talk about what you can see", but as the events following the Battle of Hastings unfold, you will see why Abbey Gardens is relevant to this tale.

Abbey Gardens

King Harold

Earl Harold Godwinson was crowned King Harold in Westminster Abbey the day after King Edward's funeral there – the Abbey's first coronation and a significant lowering of status for Winchester Cathedral. He claimed to have been nominated by the dying king, Edward, later known as The Confessor. Queen Edith was also present at Edward's death and is recorded as saying Edward entrusted his kingdom to Harold and herself. An ambiguous statement that could mean she backed Harold as king or perhaps that she and Harold should be regents for the young Edgar the Aetheling, Edward's only distant male heir.

William and Tostig

Duke William of Normandy believed that he had been promised the throne of England by Edward, who of course had spent much of his life in Normandy and owed a lot to his Norman relatives who included William. William was Edward's first cousin once removed and Emma's great-nephew. So, William started preparations to overthrow Harold the usurper and invade England. But William wasn't King Harold's only problem. He had fallen out with one of his powerful brothers, Tostig, Earl of Northumbria. He joined forces with the king of Norway, Harald Hardrada ("hard ruler"), and planned to invade England and overthrow his brother. King Harold knew trouble was brewing throughout 1066 but communications in those days were slow, so he must have been very much in the dark about what was actually happening.

Legitimate King

But Harold did retain the loyalty of his sister, the widowed Queen Edith and the English nobility. Although Harold had no royal blood he was seen as the legitimate king in England. The tradition of the eldest son inheriting the crown from his father was a relatively new one – throughout most of the Saxon era the most suitable candidate was elected king by the Witan, though most of the candidates were usually close relatives of the late king. Given that Edward had no close male relatives and Edgar the Aetheling was still a boy, the adoption of Harold as king was not that unusual. I feel that criticism of Harold as a usurper is largely Norman spin. To me he is something of a hero because of the two amazing battles he fought in the autumn of 1066.

Battles of Fulford and Stamford Bridge

In September the Norwegian king, Harald Hardrada, and Tostig came up the Humber and the River Ouse and defeated the local defence just south of York at the ***Battle of Fulford on 20th September***. Harold immediately marched the 180+ miles north from London in four days! That's about 45 miles a day - they must have maintained the Roman road north between London and York – Ermine Street – very well to have achieved that. Stage coaches would take 4 days to do the same route 600 years later! The speed of Harold's march took the Norwegians by surprise and the two armies clashed a few miles east of York at the ***Battle of Stamford Bridge on 25th September***. King Harold's men won and his brother Tostig and Harald Hardrada were killed in the battle. The Norwegian losses were so severe that only 24 ships from the fleet of over 300 were needed to carry the survivors away. The Vikings never troubled England again.

Battle of Hastings

A few days later news then came that Duke William had landed at Pevensey in Sussex. Harold and his men had to march back down south and face the Norman invaders at the ***Battle of Hastings on 14th October***, 1066. It was a hard-fought battle with the Saxon shield wall (literally a barrier made up of soldiers' shields) holding off the Norman archers and cavalry. It was stalemate for several hours and then finally the battle turned in Duke William's favour and Harold was famously struck by an arrow. Anglo-Saxon England was over.

Edith in Winchester

William soon came to Winchester to present himself to Edith as King Edward's legitimate heir and request her loyalty. Edith wanted to keep her position as Dowager Queen, and no doubt mindful of the precarious position her mother-in-law Emma had found herself in during times of regime change, she submitted to William straight away. There was no resistance against the new Norman rulers in the capital of Winchester, which still housed the treasury and was the base of the Witan, or Saxon parliament. William the Conqueror was crowned king on Christmas Day 1066 in King Edward's Abbey at Westminster. Edith's was an important voice of the Old English nobility immediately after the Battle of Hastings and she would have played a part in determining how William was received.

Bayeux Tapestry

But that wasn't Edith's only role. The most famous record of the events of 1066 is the Bayeux Tapestry (which is actually an embroidery and not a tapestry which is a woven technique). It was embroidered only a few years after the events it portrays by Saxon embroiderers. It was commissioned possibly by Bishop Odo, the half-brother of William the Conqueror, or possibly by Queen Edith herself. It tells the story of the events of 1066 and could almost be called “the rise and fall of King Harold”. Certainly, the first part of the embroidery is from Harold's point of view, a man who has been branded a usurper by the Normans. The embroidery also shows the battlefield deaths of two of Edith's other brothers, Gyrth and Leofwine, at the Battle of Hastings (three of the Godwinson brothers died at Hastings).

Why should they have so much prominence in a work commissioned by a Norman? Whereas Edith would be keen to include her brother's side of the story as well as showing the eventual victory of the Normans.

And who were the embroiderers? There has been much debate about this over the years, but it is now widely accepted that the work was carried out by Saxon nuns in nunneries in the south of England, including the Nunnaminster here in Winchester. Edith spent her widowhood here and probably partly at the abbey in Wilton where she had grown up. Both communities of nuns would have been involved along with others that were within a day or two's ride of each other. The main narrative of the Tapestry was probably designed by one person, possibly influenced by manuscripts in Canterbury Cathedral library, who travelled between the teams of nuns in each nunnery to oversee the work. Edith was probably present, and knowing her love of embroidery from her time as queen and creating finery for her husband, she may well have been involved in the stitching. The style of the margins is more individual and probably designed by the nuns themselves.

From 2022 we are likely to be able to view the Bayeux Tapestry in the British Museum in London as it has been offered on loan by President Macron. In the meantime, you can view a replica stitched in the 1880s which is on display in Reading Museum or see the original in Bayeux.

1075 Death of Edith

Edith died in Winchester on 18th December 1075 – 9 years after the Conquest. She had been welcome at court and had a comfortable and quiet retirement. She was buried alongside her husband, Edward, in Westminster Abbey. William arranged her funeral there, a gesture which reinforced his continuity from the reign of King Edward but also confirmed the emerging custom of burying a queen, a wife, alongside her husband – something which was so new when Ealhswith was buried alongside King Alfred in the New Minster.

> I did this tour last summer for a group of Americans touring Anglo-Saxon sites in England. They were accompanied by their tutor who it turned out was a Saxon specialist and part way through writing a paper on Edith's involvement in the creation of the Bayeux Tapestry. He told me about his interest in Edith *after* I'd finished and thankfully he concurred with my version. Who stitched the Bayeux Tapestry is quite an academic hot potato!
>
> And why is Abbey Gardens and these two stops in it my favourites? Well, as you can see it gives me the opportunity to talk about some of my favourite things – Winchester (naturally!), Saxons, bringing women back into the historical narrative, embroidery and tying in Winchester's story with the north.

Item: 3	Title: **Favourite Tour Stop – Curle's Passage**
Date: 03 Jun 2020	Contributor: **Clare Dixon**

One of the pleasures I get from being a Winchester guide is knowing about things which other people walk straight past. But only a specialist tour gives you the chance to point most of them out; you just can't fit them in when condensing the whole story of Winchester into 90 minutes for a rota tour. And so it is that one of my favourite tour stops is one for which I seldom have the time!

On the morning tour, as you emerge through Curle's passage from the Inner Cathedral Close to the West Front, I am usually already looking at my watch and only occasionally pause to show people the pointing hands on the cathedral wall with their '*this way to walk'* and '*this way to pray'*. The story usually raises a laugh. But by then you have walked past a series of other inscriptions which hardly anyone – locals included – ever notices. Not to mention lots of other lovely little details. In an ideal world, I would pause in the passageway to admire them all.

For a start, on the left hand wall is this carving dated 1632 which reads:

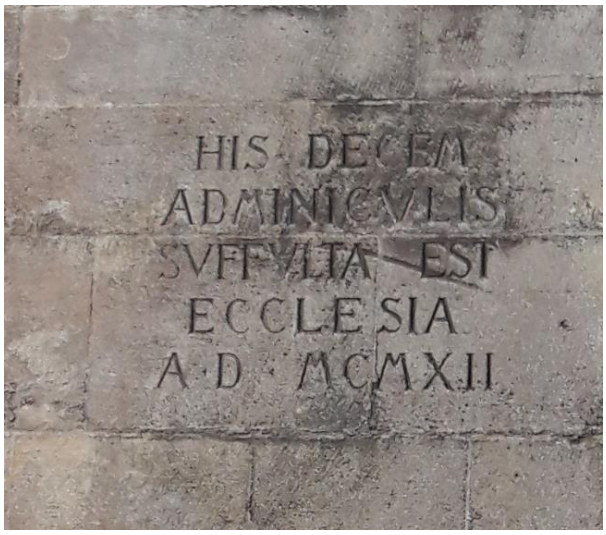
CESSIT COMMUNI
PROPRIUM JAM PERGITE
QUA FAS

or *'Private property has given way to public use. Go the way which is now opened up for you.'*

Underneath is a riddle:

ACR	S	ILL	CH
SA	IT	A	ORO
ERV	S	IST	F

Which can be read as: SACRA SIT ILLA CHORO, SERVA SIT ISTA FORO
Or *'Let that way be consecrated to the choir. Let this way be used for the market'*

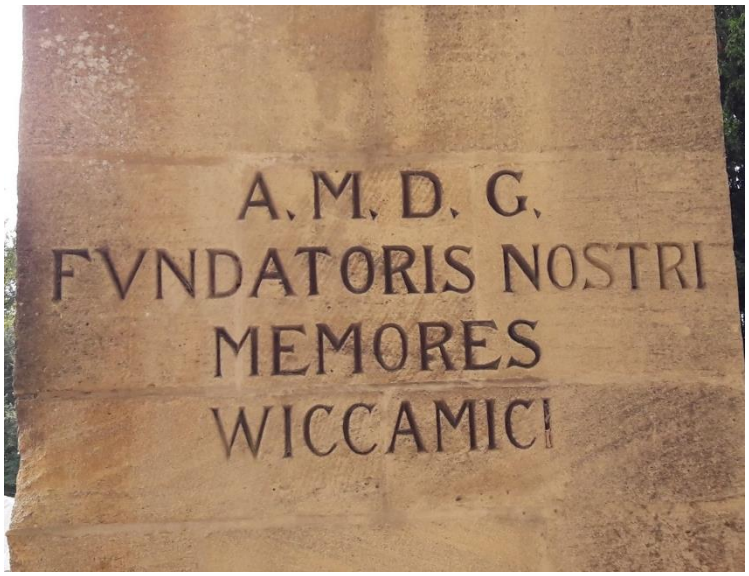


Look upwards and on the last buttress you will see this inscription, which I would roughly translate as: *'The church was propped up by these ten buttresses MCMXII (1912)'*

If I have intelligent teenagers on the tour, or even adults who have been keen to show off their knowledge, I sometimes get them to work out the date.

And then of course there are the buttresses themselves, which each have a dedication on the 'inside' i.e. facing the cathedral wall. Most are individuals e.g., John Keble, Thomas Ken, but how about:

AMDG I discover is an abbreviation for the Latin *'To the greater glory of God'* and the rest I think I would translate as '*In memory of our founders, Old Wykamists'*. Unless anyone can improve on my O-level Latin skills?



The other thing it would be nice to talk about here would be the various reminders of the old Cathedral monastery. Such as the mark of the cloisters on the Cathedral wall:

The cloisters were still there, we are told, at the time of the wedding of Mary Tudor and Philip of Spain, but were taken down soon after. Pevsner says in 1563.

And there are also the doorways in the cathedral wall which once led through to monastic buildings but were blocked in after the Dissolution when they were no longer needed.

A lovely detail to point out are the recycled stones which were used in the blocking up, for example:

We have a similar pattern of holes on a stone at St Cross, which we are told was used for playing a form of Nine Men's Morris with pebbles as counters. The St Cross stone is horizontal, which would certainly make the game easier! Perhaps this one originally was as well.

Once more, I know from St Cross that mazes are a common form of graffiti near windows, doors or chimneys as they confused the devil and prevented him from entering the building. Perhaps this maze was carved with the same idea.

That's enough I think. Probably just as well that I don't have time to indulge in this stop very often. I have been obstructing the passageway for too long!

Item: 4	Title: **Rosa Winchester Cathedral**
Date: 13 Jun 2020	Contributor: **Sally Peel**

I was visiting the Waitrose Farm Nursery and noticed this. I did not know such a rose existed and on doing some research I have discovered that it was developed by David Austin, the famous rose grower, in 1984. The above photos are my own and the description on the David Austin website states the following:

A white sport of 'Mary Rose', with the occasional touch of pink. It produces a mass of medium-sized, loose petalled, fragrant rosettes, and continues to bloom at regular intervals throughout the summer. It makes a well-shaped shrub with twiggy, bushy growth and nice foliage. Named after one of the finest cathedrals in Britain. David Austin, 1984.

Further information is that it is an English Shrub Rose with medium fragrance strength and flowers repeatedly. It is an old rose and the colour is white.

Also do click on the link below of two charming Irish ladies discussing how best to look after it.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ULWdFWKMRA

If I had my own garden, I would certainly put it in.

Item: 5	Title: **The Great Plague 1665**
Date: 06 Jun 2020	Contributor: **Karen Dagwell**

1665 is known as the year of the Great Plague which lasted through to 1666 and was the last major epidemic of bubonic plague to occur in England. Bubonic plague, caused by Yersinia pestis bacteria is usually transmitted through the bite of an infected rat flea and had been present in England since the Black Death of 1348. There had been other outbreaks during the 16th and 17th centuries but the Great Plague is by far the best documented thanks to the survival of official records, private letters and diaries.

Pepys first mentioned rumours of plague in London at the end of April 1665 and he noted that houses were shut up in Drury Lane on 7th June. The death toll increased rapidly during the summer months from tens, to hundreds to thousands eventually spreading to other towns across the country. By the end of the year more than 70,000 had died of the plague in London and ultimately London lost 15% of its population.

Having just read an article about the 1665 Great Plague in London written by Vanessa Harding in 'History' magazine I found that of particular interest was how similar our ancestors tried to protect themselves from the plague, as indeed we are doing today.

1. **Quarantine.** People who fell sick were ordered to be shut up in their homes with their families. The house would be marked with a red cross and the words "Lord Have Mercy Upon Us" written on the door. The house was then watched for 4 weeks, to ensure that no one entered or left thereby preventing the spread of the infection. Apparently, this was hard to enforce and people resisted it especially during the later weeks of the plague. Parish officials would provide food to the quarantined families.

2. **Filth and Dung.** People believed that plague happened due to unhealthy smells and vapours (miasma) which arose from dung and filth. Orders were put in place to keep the streets clean by removing the rubbish and placing dung heaps away from habitation. There was also a ban on keeping "Hogs, dogs or cats, or tame pigeons or conies (rabbit)" and wandering pigs were to be impounded and stray dogs killed. Of course, impounding and killing cats and dogs just made the situation worse as these were the very animals which helped to keep the rat population in check.

3. **Clothing.** It was felt that infections could be carried on clothing and clothes dealers were forbidden to buy or sell goods from infected houses. Any bedding and clothing found in an infected home were to be "well aired with fire, and such perfumes as are requisite", before being used again. It was widely believed that fire would purify the air and would help get rid of the plague. Also, fumigation torches were filled with sweet smelling herbs in order to disinfect the homes of the sick.

4. **Bury the Dead at Night.** Orders were in place regarding burial of the plague dead. This had to be done at night to avoid public gatherings and reduce the impact on morale. But by August 1665 the mortality rate was so high that the nights weren't long enough and burials had to take place in daylight. According to Pepys some were very well attended.

5. **Gatherings.** Any gatherings of people were restricted in order to stop healthy people mingling with the infected and getting ill themselves. Curfew was set at 9pm and grammar, dancing and fencing schools were closed. Also, severe punishments were in place to stop attendance at 'immoral or ungodly gatherings' such as "plays, bear-baiting, games and singing of ballads"

6. **Hospitals.** Beds at the city's pest-house (isolation hospital) outside Cripplegate were increased and more and more physicians and surgeons were appointed.

In 1665 the preventative measures would have had little impact on the spread of the plague as the mode of transmission of the disease was not known at the time. As the colder autumn and winter weather set in, the number of plague victims started to fall. According to a National Archives article, some scientists have suggested that the rat could have developed a greater resistance to the disease. If the rats didn't die then their fleas would not need to find human hosts and fewer people would be infected. People would also have developed a stronger immunity to the disease. Since 1665-1666 there has not been an outbreak of plague in Britain on this scale. Instead we now have to contend with Covid-19!

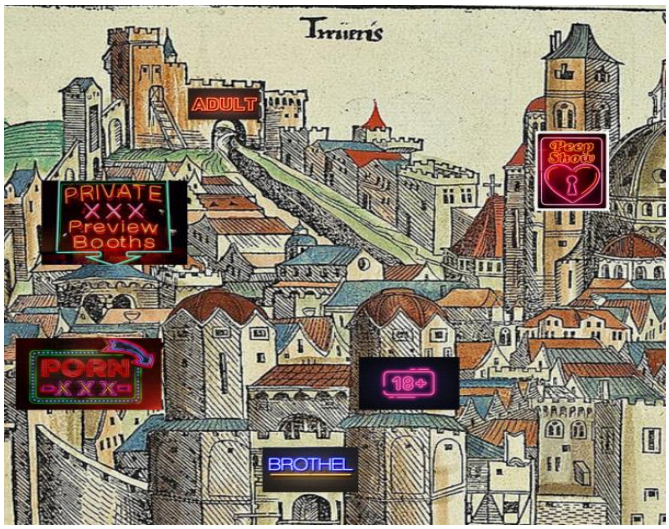
Item: 6	Title: **The Winchester Geese**
Date: 30 Jun 2020	Contributor: **Johanna Cruickshank**

Many of us will remember Tina explaining the term "Winchester Geese" during our Green Badge training course. I was reminded of this recently when a friend and her daughter were invited to sing at a place called the Crossbones Cemetery in the London Borough of Southwark.

The Crossbones Cemetery is where many of the Winchester Geese were laid to rest. As prostitutes they were denied the last rites of the church and buried in unconsecrated ground. Many died young, were destitute and suffered from diseases such as smallpox, rickets, malnutrition and tuberculosis as well as syphilis.

Southwark formed part of the vast lands and estates owned by the Cathedral of Winchester. Here Henri de Blois built a fine palace in the 1100s (a small section has survived) and a prison (known as the Clink). Southwark was a separate jurisdiction, and the Bishop permitted brothels here, unlike the rest of London.

These flourished and were highly profitable, paying rents and taxes into the Bishop's coffers. Potential customers who crossed the Thames on Southwark Bridge were greeted by bands of women loudly offering their services and competing for trade – sounding a bit like geese! Hence the term Winchester Geese. If customers caught venereal diseases this was referred to as being 'bitten by a Winchester goose' or having 'goose bumps' (syphilitic pustules).



Several accounts of this history cast Cardinal Henry Beaufort in a villain's role – one account claims he 'strutted around wearing his red Cardinal's hat' in a brothel known as the "Cardinal's Cap". Income from the brothels benefitted the Winchester Bishops, but the prostitutes were denied Christian burials. The painting below by Paul Delaroche shows Joan of Arc being interrogated by a suitably nasty looking Cardinal Beaufort.

Paul Delaroche 1824, Musée de Rouen

Crossbones was the final resting place for the street prostitutes, children and paupers in this rough part of Southwark where body snatchers visited regularly to find specimens for nearby Guy's Hospital. Used over several centuries, the cemetery closed in 1853 due to being as 'completely overcharged with dead': an estimated 15,000 burials.

The site has since been used for various purposes including fairgrounds and light industry. More recently in the 1990s London Underground built an electricity substation for the Jubilee Line extension on part of the site. Before work started, Museum of London archaeologists were given 6 weeks for a partial excavation of the site, removing 148 skeletons: an estimated 1% of the total. One of these was found to be a young woman aged 16-19 with advanced syphilis (see YouTube link below for 'Crossbones girl').

Today Crossbones is a garden of remembrance to those buried here. The iron gates are decorated with ribbons and messages, forming a shrine to the "outcast dead", and vigils are held on the 23rd of each month. It is looked after by the Friends of Crossbones. Winchester singer Frank Turner performed here, calling his song "an act of contrition". (video on Crossbones website, as well as current arrangements for visiting).

It is thanks to my friend Melanie Pappenheim that I made these fascinating discoveries. Melanie and her daughter Esme Lark gave a beautiful and haunting performance of a song called 'Thousand Year Dream' by Jocelyn Pook on June 15th: the evening of an important Southwark planning meeting for the future of Crossbones. Happily, a 30-year lease was granted to Bankside Open Spaces Trust for Crossbones to be protected and maintained as a public garden of remembrance.

Click on the link below to view a rendition of Melanie and Esme's haunting performance:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8v-CLmFSIog

Here are links to some of the websites used for this piece, in case you are interested in further exploration:

http://crossbones.org.uk/

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winchester_Palace

https://thetemplarknight.com/2012/09/09/the-winchester-geese-medieval-prostitution/

https://www.messynessychic.com/2013/12/10/the-forgotten-souls-of-londons-women-of-the-night/

https://cathedral.southwark.anglican.org/about-us/our-history/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9Bc4Zw8gos

https://www.museumofsexobjects.co.uk/museum/winchester-geese-plate

This site is tamer than it sounds! Here I found the dish shown at the top of this piece:

Maker: Nan the Potter, craftswoman of the Red 'X', after Thomas Toft
Winchester Geese dish, c.1660, decorated slipware, earthenware

Item: 7	Title: **The Domesday Chest**
Date: 13 Jun 2020	Contributor: **Sally Peel**

In February this year I went on a CPD organised by the Guild for a tour of the National Archives. The tour starts by looking at some of their most important objects they have of which one was the Domesday Chest built around 1500. It was not made specifically for it but was used to store it. This kept the Domesday Book for around 300 years. Prior to that it was originally kept with the royal treasury in Winchester. Then in the early 13th century, when it was not travelling around with the King, it was first housed in the palace at Westminster and then in the abbey.

Domesday chest, c1500, Reference: E 31/4
Made of wood, with an iron lining inside and out. It has 3 different sets of locks, which correspond to 3 different keys. Three separate officials used to hold the keys and their permission had to be granted before it could be opened.

As we know the Domesday Book was written by a scribe who, as stated on the National Archives website, probably worked at Winchester. There was a second scribe working closely with him who was possibly supervising him. Below is the link from the National Archives which gives the information all about the Domesday Book.

https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/domesday/discover-domesday/great-domesday.htm

The National Archives do regular tours and when places finally open up, it is well worth a visit.

Item: 8	Title: **Websites**
Date: 12 May 2020	Contributor: **Judith Hoskins**

Here are a few websites as they may be of interest and will help keep everyone entertained and informed for free.

www.britishpathe.com - put Winchester in the search box and one of the things you will find is a clip of Joe Kennedy unveiling the window in Winchester Cathedral in July 1938.

www.balh.org.uk - the website of the British Association for Local History - all back issues of the Local Historian are free to view during the pandemic. Type in smallpox inoculation into the search box and see what comes up!

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk - The National Archives (TNA) have waived their charges during the lockdown for document downloads (usually £3.50 each). Have a look for any wills of interest, such as Jane Austen's mother Cassandra from March 1827, and download for free.

www.futurelearn.com - a great website with really good, free online courses. FutureLearn is part of the Open University. Currently available are history courses on the railways, textile mills, genealogy, the early history of the Quakers and more. I've done several and they are very interesting, designed by universities from UK and abroad and often introduce websites and sources you would never have found yourself even if you are familiar with the subject.

Guide Lines Dates

- Autumn Issue
  - submit copy by 20 September 2020
  - publish 30 September 2020
- Winter Issue
  - submit copy by 20 December 2020
  - publish 31 December 2020
- Spring Issue
  - submit copy by 20 March 2021
  - publish 30 March 2021
- Summer Issue
  - submit copy by 20 June 2021
  - publish 30 June 2021

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