

# MAN FAMILY NEWSLETTER CHRISTMAS 2003

Final posting date approaches for those family members living furthest from the UK and so it is time to record some family events of the past year. As I mentioned last year some of the content of the newsletter is available on the website at [www.manfamily.org](http://www.manfamily.org) and whilst many people will have accessed this, many people who do not have Internet access will not have had the opportunity to do so and therefore this more traditional method is the only way for us to communicate. I hope it is of value.

I have been somewhat out of the loop this year having been a bit tied up with my business and quite a bit of vacationing. Most of this year's work has been done by Ed & David who have concentrated on expanding the research of the relationships of the MAN ancestors with some of the other families who married in to the Mans.

In the last newsletter we mentioned about Edward Man marrying Georgiana Desborough in 1806 and that we had traced that Desborough family back to about 1560. In the course of that search Ed found relatives in Oregon and California. They sent him a Desborough pedigree which agreed with what we had found when we had begun to look in to the Desborough family history in 2002 in Huntingdon. This took the family back to about 1560. Of great interest was the fact that "Edward Man" (son of James) appeared on their chart. This contact has produced a lot of information on the Desboroughs, the Mans, the Harrises and the Kirknesses.

The inter-relationships between these families produce a number of interesting stories, not least the whole web of marriages among all of the families including branches of the Man family through from (from the Henry Man branch) the marriages of Edward Garnet Man to Katherine Matthews and Katherine's sister Elizabeth to Webber Desborough Harris (we shall read more of Elizabeth later). Meanwhile from the other (James Man) branch of the Man family, his son Edward married Georgiana Desborough and Edward Desborough Man (son of Edward) married Louisa Mary Harris (sister of Webber Desborough Harris).

Confused? We certainly were so when David, Ed & I met in York, Pennsylvania, at the celebration held to mark Ed's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, we decided to try and chart all of these relationships, for ease of reference, and a copy of that chart appears on page five. It is an expansion of a chart I produced in 1999 before we had the increased level of knowledge of our forbears. The names of those printed in red reflect those who married their first cousins, which, contrary to what some people believe, is a perfectly legal thing to do. It can be seen that Georgiana Desborough's sister, Louisa Ayton, married John Webber Harris. Ed has found a number of generals amongst the Harrises – all serving in India it seems and he comments that he is surprised there were any able-bodied men left in England, given the numbers serving abroad in the then British Empire or serving at war.

Henry Jnr., oldest sibling of Louisa and Georgiana, married twice. With his first wife he had eight children. One of those children, Ann, married her first cousin, James Lawrence Man. His second wife was his first cousin, Mary Desborough, and with her he had twelve children. Henry was the first secretary of the Atlas Assurance Insurance Co. of London.

One of Henry and Mary's children was Louisa A'hmuty. I can't find out the origin of this unusual name though in looking for its origin I have seen it cropping up quite a few times in Ireland. If any recipient of the newsletter can help with this, I know Ed would be delighted to hear from you. She married a Wallis Nash and had seven children, four of whom died over a short period in Down, Kent, and as a result the Nashes moved to Oregon, USA. Some of their descendants are the people Ed is in contact with, notably Betty Nash Carlson and Joan Nourani.

Ed hasn't as yet found the exact origin of John Harris, but does know a lot about his descendants. John married a Mary Webber from Devon and there is a pedigree for that family plus another family that married into the Webbers known as Incledons. A number of old families also appear - Northcote, Lovett, (from Buckinghamshire) Neville (Edward was beheaded at the Tower of London in 1538). More recently Ed received another package from Joan Nourani, one of the Desborough descendants in California mentioned above. It contained copies of some sheets from a book called "The Plantagenet Roll of Blood Royal, The Isabel of Essex Volume." (Being all the descendants of Edward III.) It shows lines of descent coming down through the Incledons, then the Webbers, then the Harrises and on page 630 it shows that Mary Louisa Harris m. Edward Desborough Mann. Even the best of sources still managed to get the spelling of the name wrong! Interesting, tantalising and something more to follow up on and record over the coming months!

You will recall in my attempt above to describe some of the family relationships I referred to the marriage of Elizabeth Matthews to Webber Desborough Harris. I have transcribed below a record by Elizabeth Webber Harris giving an account of her serving with her husband in India. It is a remarkable story, well known to the Henry Man branch of the family but less well known by the James Man members: -

### **HOW I WON THE VICTORIA CROSS**

In the year 1869, an awful wave of cholera swept India from Calcutta to Peshawar, the 104th Bengal Fusiliers (now called "The Munsters") commanded by Col. Webber D. Harris was stationed at Peshawar, and in August of that year it became so violent that one wing of the Regiment commanded by Col. Campbell Clark was ordered out into camp in the district. I, (Mrs. Webber Harris) at Murree, but hearing this, hurried back to Peshawar at the end of August. For about 10 days the cholera seemed less virulent though in one week we lost 13 little children and a few women suddenly it burst out again, and on, I think (for I cannot quite remember the exact date) the 10th September, the Headquarters were ordered into camp. We were to march at 3a.m. next morning. I was to await my husband with the regiment, outside the Artillery Hospital; my ayee was with me, and I had to wait nearly an hour. We were not allowed to march along the grand trunk road for fear of leaving a trail of infection.

The Quarter Master had marked out a camp about 7 miles off, but the sun was high when we got there. I dismounted and went into my tent, when I saw a soldier fall to the ground. I called my servants; we picked him up and sent for the Doctor. Unhappily we had only one with us, so he was sometime coming. The poor man was in a collapse from cholera, and quite unconscious. While waiting, I got some mustard, tore my handkerchief in half and put on 2 mustard plasters, and the Doctor arriving, he was sent off to hospital, and am thankful to say he eventually recovered.

That night we lost twenty-seven men, who had to be buried on this ground. Next morning, about 3 am we marched to another spot. The men were all very much dispirited and as the Colonel and I were walking in the lines at dusk, he suggested we might have a sing-song, offering prizes to the man who sang the best song. It was hurriedly arranged, and a committee of sergeants formed to adjudge the prizes. At 9 pm. we all assembled. The men formed a ring, into the centre of which the man stepped who was to sing. A chair was brought for me as I was to present the prizes. It all went merrily, but the night was so intensely hot that soon after eleven, we adjourned. When I came to the last prize, (they were all in money) the poor man who should have received it was not there; he died of cholera.

Next morning we marched again, and so went on till we got to the foot of a hill called Cherat, where the other wing, which happily had only had one fatal case since leaving Peshawar, joined us. There we remained till the Doctor considered we were not infectious, but alas, we had lost a third of the men who marched from Peshawar with us, and on the day we left for Cherat, our dear young Assistant Surgeon, "Mansell" by name, was seized and for some hours we feared we should lose him. Happily he recovered then, but to succumb to a relapse a week afterwards. We remained at Cherat till the 9th December, when we marched back to Peshawar, arriving there on the 12th.

Everybody made much of me, because, I think, I had not seen another woman's face for three months! and then I heard that the officers of the regiment had sent home for a gold Victoria Cross for me. When it arrived, it proved to be an exact replica of a V.C. in gold, with this inscription on the back -

"Presented to Mrs. Webber Harris by the officers of the 104th Bengal Fusiliers, for her indomitable pluck, during the cholera epidemic of 1869."

It is a most beautiful ornament, and will always be my most cherished possession. General Sir Samuel Brown, himself a V.C. and who was commanding the Station, asked to be allowed to come to an informal meeting at our own house, when he presented it to me, at the request of the Officers, in a very pretty speech, in which he said his only regret was that they had not had "For Pluck" put on the ribbon in diamonds. Since then Lord Roberts has most kindly congratulated me on winning such a distinction.



*Two photographs of Mrs. Elizabeth Webber Harris as a young woman and of more advanced years.*

## FAMILY NEWS AND EVENTS

Congratulations to Helen Man, daughter of William and Amanda who married David Robert Edwin Hardcastle at St John the Baptist Church, Tidebrook, Sussex. We all join in wishing you both a very happy married life together.

Also to William and Amanda themselves who celebrated 25 years of marriage on 29<sup>th</sup> July with a party in the sunshine, combined with their twins, Colin and Diana who were 21 on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

More congratulations, following those of last year, to Damon Benjamin Man; grandson of John William and Joyce, and his partner Laura-Lee Emma Halsey is on the birth of their second child, a son, Logan born in Derby on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2003.

Congratulations also to Andrew & Rachel Foakes on the birth of their daughter Anna Margaret on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2003.

We were delighted to hear news from Matthew Taylor, who contacted David through the Website, of Timothy and Lady Helen Taylor, who had a daughter earlier this year on Sunday March 2, 2003; her name is Eloise and she is sister to Columbus and Cassius.

Many congratulations to Nicholas and Maria Man who celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary on 30<sup>th</sup> September with a quiet family celebration.

We all send hearty congratulations to my cousin Ed who has contributed such a huge amount of his time to this research and who became an Octogenarian on 21<sup>st</sup> July when many of the family joined with him to celebrate the event in York, Pennsylvania, United States of America. That celebration was a great event and it was the privilege of David, Ann & me to attend.

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May I take this opportunity of wishing a very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year to everyone.

*Steve Man.*

Steve Man - December 2003.

## The Families of Matthews Holworthy Desborough Harris Kirkness & Man

