

Goostrey Snippets

.... Anniversary Edition

Goldstraw & Goostrey Genealogy

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Volume 2, Issue 1

French Guests and Stone Masons!

In the last newsletter I had occasion to dismiss the theories that the Goostreys, and therefore the Goldstraws, were descended from Vikings or Normans. I find myself continually bombarded with correspondence on the origins of the name and one which has cropped up most recently, apart from the usual mis-informed and erroneous theory that any name containing the word “gold” is of Jewish origin, is that the surname Goostrey is of French origin and came to the area of Leek in Staffordshire by way of French prisoners who were housed on their honour in that area of the town which became known as Petite France. The theory is that these foreign warriors were so besotted with the maidens of Leek that when hostilities ceased they failed to return to their home lands, married their paramours, and in time the name of Goostrey evolved into that of Goldstraw.

Facts muddled with fiction.

It is right to say that the name, through a dialectal transmogrification, changed over time from Goostrey to Goldstraw; this can be proved by genealogical certificates. It is also right to say that French prisoners were homed in Petite France in Leek and I have no doubt that they were regally entertained by one or two of the comely lasses of the town causing more than one Frenchman to have second thoughts about returning home. However, there is

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Anniversary Edition

When I last produced a newsletter, in January 2007, I apologised for its late appearance; hmm, well I have been rather busy.

I was prompted to produce this one because it is now a decade since I first launched the web site of Goldstraw & Goostrey Genealogy so I felt that it was something of an anniversary worth noting.

I make no apologies for repeating my plea that this new Newsletter is not intended just to be my soap box so if you have anything you would like to be included please feel free to send it to me by email.

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French Guests and Stone Masons! Continued.

absolutely no evidence that any French serviceman finding himself held prisoner in Leek ever bore the name Goostrey, no evidence that anyone in France ever bore the name Goostrey and no evidence of the word Goostrey in the entire French language. Not only does the theory seem to ignore these facts entirely but those who put it forward seem to be also ignorant of the fact that the village of Goostrey, which has existed since pre-Doomsday times, is but a few short miles across the border in Cheshire. More importantly, those who put this theory forward are also totally ignoring all the baptisms, marriages and deaths recording the name of Goostrey in Parish Registers long before any French prisoner had the good fortune to meet the young ladies of Leek!

Enough of the French, what about those stone masons?

One wonders where some theories, like those mentioned above which are easily disproved, come from but I have a theory of my own; it is firmly based upon a number of know facts and yet it is unlikely that it will ever be proved. I put it to you for your consideration:

We know that the surname of Goostrey is a place name surname; that is to say that those who bore the name took it from their location. For this reason many different families probably took the name and they are not all of a blood relation; there is no progenitor. Before the Norman Conquest of Britain, people did not have hereditary surnames: they were known just by a personal name or nickname.

Our history lessons tell us that when communities were small each person was identifiable by a single name, but as the population increased, it gradually became necessary to identify people further - leading to names such as Peter the Fletcher, John the Butcher, Henry from Stafford, Rosemary of the Hill, Philip son of Roger. It was after 1066, when the Norman barons introduced surnames into England, that the practice gradually spread. Initially, the identifying names were changed or dropped at will, but eventually they began to stick and to get passed on. So trades, nicknames, places of origin, and fathers' names became fixed surnames - names such as Fletcher and Smith, Redhead and Swift, Green and Pickering, Wilkins and Johnson. By 1400 most English families, and those from Lowland Scotland, had adopted the use of hereditary surnames.

My theory is this: The Chronicles of Dieulacres Abbey, built for the Earls of Chester, state that it was decided to relocate the abbey to the Leek area to be remote from the attacks of the Welsh along the Dee and closer to their lands in East Cheshire. It was completed in the year 1214. It is surprising how many of our Goostrey ancestors were stone masons; they remained so until quite recently owning quarries in Wetley Rocks and it is known that the Goostreys built churches in the area around Leek as recently as the 18th century. I believe that those charged with building the abbey brought their labour with them from their lands in Cheshire. I believe that it is entirely feasible that a group of experienced stone masons from the village of Goostrey in Cheshire came to Leek and spent a great many months, if not years, building an abbey for their overlord. Such a project would have necessitated them taking up what became permanent residence in Leek and they were known as (for example) "Peter from Goostrey" and "Solomon from Goostrey" etc, in short, they were "the Goostreys", the founders of a surname whose origins, though indicating a Cheshire base,



The Armorial Bearings of the Abbey of Dieulacres.

Stone Masons Continued.

came to be entirely and exclusively located in and around Leek in Staffordshire.

Just ask yourself why a surname with a clear Cheshire origin came to be almost exclusively found, in the earliest of written records, in and around the area of Leek in North Staffordshire. Ask yourself why so many of those bearing the name of Goostrey and its dialectal transformation Goldstraw recorded in those earliest of records continued, generation after generation, to carry on the trade of stone mason right up until the Industrial Revolution. I put it to you that these people who first bore our name came to Leek to build an abbey and, perhaps like our disproved theory of the French soldiers, liked the ladies so much they stayed.

[They could of course have brought their families with them but having written about the disproved French theory, I quite liked the romantic bits about the comely Leekensian wenches!]



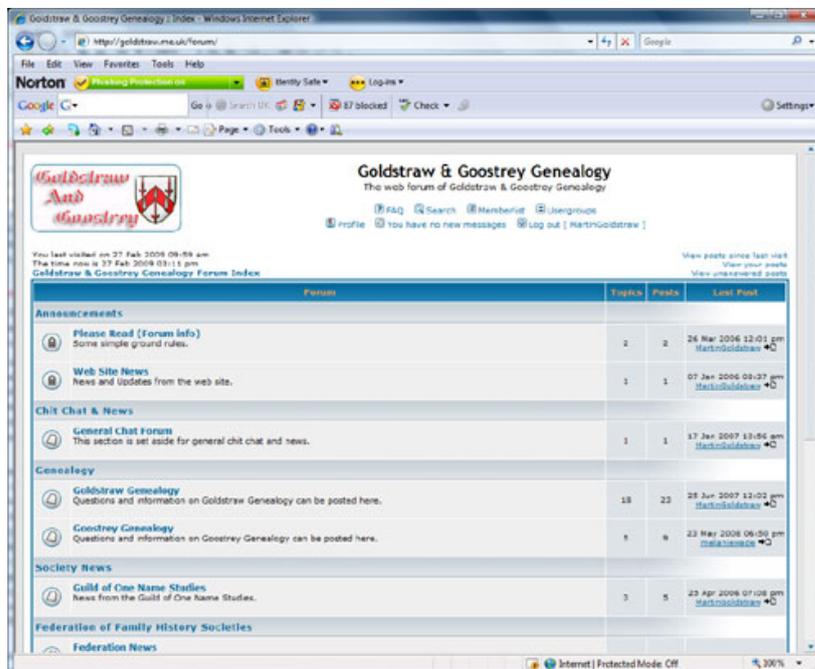
A Leekensian Comely Wench!

Well, that's my theory. It's got to be better than the French one
Hasn't it?

Discussion Forum

If you would like to discuss the theory further, or anything else of interest to those wishing to research the surnames of Goldstraw and Goostrey, why not sign up to our discussion forum?

<http://goldstraw.org.uk/forum>



A Watching Brief

Recently sold by auction; a beautiful antique English W.W Goldstraw pocket watch almost one hundred and eleven years old. This watch is 40mm in diameter and has a 9k Solid Gold fancy open face case.

Described as having a beautiful case with hand engraved fancy floral details. The watch has an un-initialled floral frame on the back of the case. The case is fully hallmarked for Birmingham with .375 and a date letter X which the seller believed to be the date stamp for 1897 on the inside case lid. //Continued on page 4//



A Watching Brief continued.

The stem of the watch is also gold stamped. The case is described as an English fusee style due to the way it opens.

The movement is a very high grade gold gilded right angle lever movement which looks like a chronometer finish due to the heavy duty regulator etc. but it is not a chronometer. The movement is engraved W.W. Goldstraw - Leek and Hanley.

The seller mistakenly thought that Goldstraw was the maker and Leek & Hanley was the retailer of this watch from new. W. W. Goldstraw was in fact a master watch maker and his business was operated in both Leek & Hanley. The serial number on the movement is 93135. The dial on the watch is a stunning solid gold dial with a hand engraved floral centre, the dial is in near mint condition.

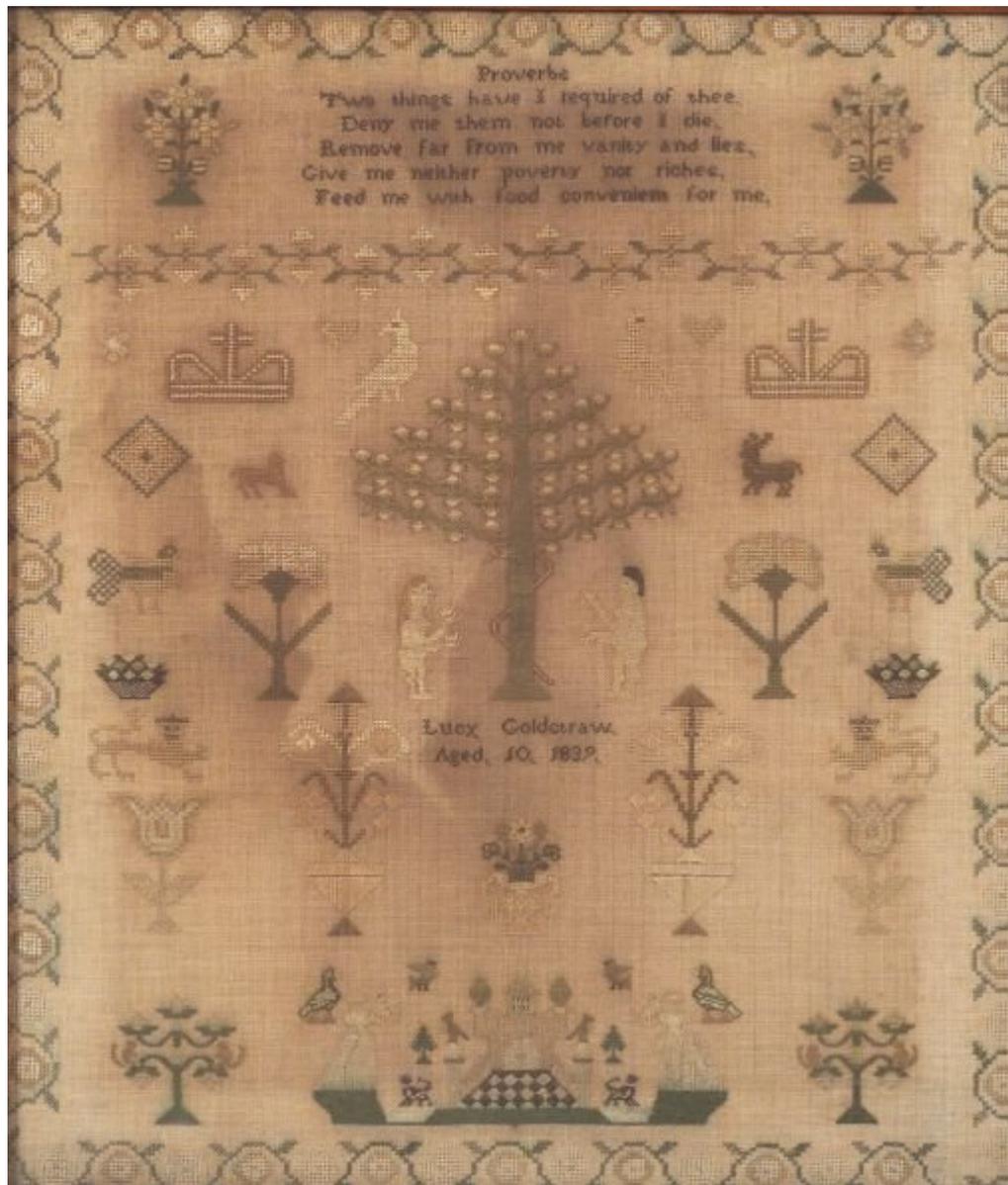
The watch is stem wound and the hands are button set. The watch was described as currently running and sets very well— Overall Condition: Excellent.

There was a Goldstraw jewellers shop in Leek (latterly owned by Northern Jewellers but still trading as Goldstraw's) right up until quite recently . Alas it is no more.



The W. W. Goldstraw shop in Leek early 20th century.

A Lucy Goldstraw Needlework Sampler 1839.



Needlework Adam and Eve Sampler

"Lucy Goldstraw aged 10 1839," probably England, the sampler worked in silk threads on a linen ground with a flowering vine border surrounding a verse of "Proverbs" over a central depiction of Adam and Eve flanking the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil with encircling serpent, over her signature stitches, surrounded by numerous motifs including flowers, birds, crowns, rampant lions, baskets of fruit, potted plants, a building, trees, and other animals, (toning, fading), 20 x 17 in., in a moulded curly maple frame.

Provenance: Ex collection of Robert Roche.

**Goldstraw & Goostrey
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● Ab Initio Goostrey

The purpose of Goldstraw & Goostrey Genealogy is to inform and guide all those who have an interest in the name Goldstraw, bringing them together as a common resource. Those who have already begun to research ancestry bearing the name surname Goldstraw will, eventually, come across a time when the name merges and blends with the surname Goostrey (Goostry, Goostree or some other variation in spelling) and it is for this reason that the surname Goostrey is included.

This Newsletter is part of the Goldstraw & Goostrey Genealogy website: <http://goldstraw.org.uk>

Situations Vacant

Newsletter Correspondent (s)

Wanted - suitable contributors to a regular Newsletter for Goldstraw & Goostrey Genealogy. Remuneration pitiful (nothing) but rewards otherwise plentiful (honest). Candidates should be prepared to forward anything at all they think is relevant or of interest to the readers of Goldstraw & Goostrey Genealogy.

Researching into your family history is infectious, you catch it from your ancestors.

Best wishes,

Martin Goldstraw