

Major ARTHUR ALEXANDER GREENWOOD
Ph.D., F.C.I.S. F.R.S.A.



20 JUL 1997

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25 July '97

Dear Mr. Blank - I was interested to read in the
S.S. that you owned Chippinghurst Manor which
belonged to my ancestors John and Mary
Greenwood in the 18th Cent. John was a lawyer,
like you, and he lived between 1712 and 1784. He
purchased the Chibues estate in 1771 and his
initials J.G. were carved on the stonework at the
main door. The private chapel was converted into
a squash court by a McDougall (of self-raising
flour). When I last visited Chippinghurst in
1958 Lt.-Col. and Mrs. E. C. Bowes showed
me the deeds of the manor which proved
my relationship with my genealogist friend
George Greenwood. We stayed at Cuddesdon
Theological College as guests of the Principal
(Knapp-Fisher). Later I used to correspond
with John Ambler who was married to H.R.H.
Princess Marguerite of Sweden. What has happened
to them?

The story of Chibnes is in Chapter 12
of my book "The Greenwood Tree in Three Continents,
or a fertile family of five centuries 1487-1987"
now out of print, but copies are in the
British Library, Bodleian, Soc. of Genealogists
Library, etc. (412 7000) (412 7676 Humanities
+ Social Sciences)

My c.v. is in Debrett's "People of Today"
from which I found your address.

I do hope that you enjoy your
estate and that you now own the
tin deed box with all the valuable
historical records. We have a common
interest in cricket. I played for the Army
and my father was locum to J.W.G. Grace
at Ashley Down, nr. Bristol from 1897 to
1899.

With best wishes -

Yours sincerely -

Alex Greenwood

THE GREAT UNIVERSAL STORES P.L.C.

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1 September 1997

Our ref MVB2456.SEP

Major A Alexander Greenwood PHD FCIS FRSA
RR1 Box 40 Madrona Drive
Nanoose Bay
BC Canada
VOR 2RO

Dear Major Greenwood

Thank you very much indeed for your letter of 25 July. I was extremely interested in all that you had to say about Chippinghurst and your connections with it. Thank you very much for taking the trouble to write. Incidentally, I am retiring as Chairman of Charterhouse at the end of October and the above is my new, ore permanent business address.

I was particularly interested in your comments that the private chapel that was converted into a squash by McDougall, because I had always thought that the squash court had been built in the 1930's when the additionally wing was put on the house, and simply made to look as though it had been a chapel. I was also very interest in your ancestor's links with the house and I shall certainly find a moment in the next few weeks to go to read Chapter 12 of your book.

We get enormous pleasure out of the estate, and have done quite a lot of work to the services within the house. The exterior however is very much as it was. We have however done some work to the gardens, and over the last few years planted nearly 6,000 trees. I am looking out a recent photograph of the house and will send it to you.

I never met John Ambler. He sold the house to James Gulliver (who died recently) and we bought from Gulliver. John Ambler lives, I believe, not very far away. I understand his marriage to Princess Marguerite has been dissolved. I will however be getting in touch with John Ambler because I have never seen, nor been aware of the deed box to which you refer with all the historical records in it. I will speak to Mr Ambler to see if he has those records or whether he passed them on to Gulliver. Gulliver died recently so I would be interested to speak to his executors at a fairly early stage.

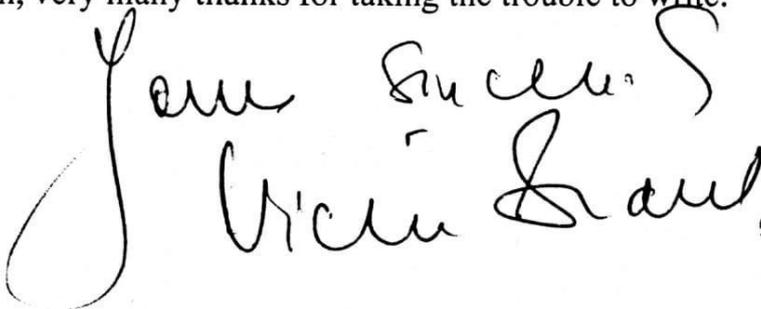
1 September 1997

The cricket pitch at Chippinghurst has seen some fascinating days. It was my own personal dream and ambition to have my own cricket pitch and since we first played on the pitch about nine years ago, it has seen some of the current great cricketers take part in games. Most of the usage for the cricket pitch has been for charity games of one kind or another, and the best known game is one which Sir David Frost and I arrange each year to raise money for gynaecological and obstetrical research. As well as raising a lot of money, we have had the pleasure of seeing on the pitch, Gary Sobers, Colin Cowdrey, Imran Khan, Mike Atherton and Michael Brearley, Dennis Lilley, Ian Chappell, Bobby Simpson, Mike Proctor, Sunil Gavaskar, David Gower, Michael Holding, Clive Lloyd, Martin Crowe, Shane Warne, John Edrich, Derek Underwood and many many others. My own cricket never reached your standards, but as an enthusiast you can imagine how exciting it is to be able to rub shoulders with some of these great names.

I was very interested in your comments about W G Grace and thought that you might be interested in the new biography of W G Grace which was published just a few days ago. I am enclosing a copy of Robert Low's book with my compliments in the hope that you enjoy it.

I will let you have a photograph and I will let you know what I discover about the deeds with my discussion with James Ambler. If, in the meantime, there is any other information about the house or its background that you have, I would so much appreciate receiving it. It is a pity that you are not closer otherwise perhaps we could together combine to put together a history of the estate.

Again, very many thanks for taking the trouble to write.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M V Blank'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping underline.

M V Blank

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10 Sept. '97

15 SEP 1997

Jean P. Blank.

How very kind of you to send me
the new W.G. book. I am fascinated and
cannot put it down!

I hope to send with this :-

- 1.) My latest update of our family which appears
in Burke's L.G. (1985 Edn.) for your Chibnes archives.
See page 18 (1/2 way down!)
- 2.) Photostat of relative papers of Chibnes
(Chippinghurst) interest to save you a visit to
the British Library. Also a photostat of one of
my W.G. letters.
- 3.) A recent article on Lords of the Manor
which I wrote for the Oxon. Family History
Society magazine.

I do hope that you manage

to locate the Chippinghurst deeds shown to me by Colonel Goves. It would be very sad if they got into the wrong hands and ended up as lampshades. If you do manage to locate them and put them back where they belong at Chibnes I would be pleased to pay for them to be photographed. They are quite unique, and valuable now.

When John Ambler wrote to me last he had restored some of the Dutch elm disease and planted several hundred new trees, but your boss is superb. Well done!

Before the war, as a boy, I used to play cricket on Sir Neville Henderson's private ground at Ranceby in Lincolnshire & also on Sir Archibald Weigall's at Woodhall Spa. In those days boys matches were very popular and private grounds too. A very different England today; but I do congratulate you on your cricket efforts. Again many thanks and a photo of the Tamos would be most acceptable. Sincerely, Alex Greenwood

Major. ARTHUR ALEXANDER GREENWOOD,
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28 May '98

Dear Mr. Bank -

Perhaps you will be interested in the
enclosed article about our discovery of your
manor house.

In your letter to me of 1st Sept. last
you promised to send me a photo of the house
which I would very much appreciate -

Sincerely

Alex Greenwood

We must have something
clear around?

With a Little Help From The Bishop

During my days in the peacetime Army I devoted my spare time upon research of my ancestors. I was seldom stationed in England, but when I was, I made the maximum use of the library at the Society of Genealogists. It was there that I met George Greenwood, who was a buyer for Lewis's' stores part of Lord Wootton's empire. George was an enthusiastic genealogist and a founder member and first honorary secretary of AGRA.

He was searching Greenwoods in Haddenham and I was searching Greenwoods in Wallingford. He was a tiny man of about 5'2", and had been a conscientious objector. I was 6'2" and a Regular Army Officer of the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment. However we immediately 'hit it off' and became firm friends.

I now relate one of the forays made by George and myself into former Greenwood territory. It was in August 1958 that I met the Bishop of Lincoln, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Kenneth Riches, at a Regimental cocktail party. We discovered that we had both been to Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, but not at the same time. I then told the Bishop of my interest in genealogy and the problems that George and I were trying to solve to connect John Greenwood of Chibues with Charles Greenwood of Wallingford in the early 18th century. The Bishop said that he had been Principal of Cuddesdon Theological College and as Chibues was now named Chippinghurst and was close to Cuddesdon we should try and stay at the college and research the area from there. He also said that he would write to the then Principal, the Rev. E.G. Knapp-Fisher (later to become the Bishop of Pretoria) and suggest this course of action. We soon had an invitation from Knapp-Fisher, which we gratefully accepted for a long weekend in the middle of October.

On arrival at Cuddesdon we were given the suite on the top floor of the main college building. The same suite used by the Archbishop of Canterbury when he went to Cuddesdon to seek God's guidance at the time of abdication of King Edward VIII. We had our meals at the high table in hall and Knapp-Fisher was most helpful and hospitable. He even arranged with Dr. W.O. Hassall of the Bodleian Library that we should collect the Cuddesdon Registers to examine.

Our first visit was to Chippinghurst Manor, which had been purchased, together with Chibues estates, by John Greenwood in 1771. The Manor was now the home of Lt. Col. and Mrs E.C. Bowes. We noticed the initials J.G. carved into the stonework at the main door. We also noticed the private chapel in the grounds but converted into a squash court by a McDougall of self-raising flour fame!

Mrs Bowes received us in the drawing room, which had a most beautiful painted ceiling with carved gilt angels in the four corners. During tea a maid brought in a large tin box and out of that box Mrs Bowes extracted 19 Greenwood family deeds. Amongst them was a parchment indenture dated 30th Jan. 1740. It measured

52 ins by 24 ins and at the base it bore the signatures and seals of Thomas Greenwood (1678-1745), my 4 x great grandfather, and his eldest son Thomas (1709-1770). The writing on the indenture (agreement) is both clear and legible and is in English, for Latin had been abolished on legal documents just nine years earlier. The contents clearly outline the estates owned by Thomas Greenwood, father of John of Chibues, who had inherited Easington Manor, Oxon from his Uncle Thomas Franklin in 1719. A year previously he had been appointed Chief Constable of the three hundreds of Aylesbury. The indenture also disclosed that £600 had been borrowed in September 1726 from the Rev. Francis Coston, Vicar of Haddenham, who was father in law to Thomas' youngest brother Charles, a cheesemonger in Newgate Street, London. Interest on the loan was fixed at 4% to be paid half yearly. If Coston should die then the interest was to go to Mary Greenwood, Charles' wife and Coston's daughter. Other details outlined the lands to be left to Thomas, Charles and John the three eldest sons of Thomas.

We were both delighted with our find, which immediately linked on to Haddenham, Wallingford and Easington branches of our family. I was allowed to borrow the parchment indenture to be photographed and now the framed copy hangs in my study at Nanoose Bay in British Columbia. It has also appeared on television to support a family history lecture that I gave on CHEK television in Canada.

George and I returned to our rooms at Cuddesdon as proven cousins, and elated with our discoveries, we made detailed notes together late into the night. The next day we visited the Mansion House at Thame with a fine old mulberry tree in the garden. This house had belonged to Dr. George Wakeman, father of Jane Greenwood (1827-1880) of Easington Manor. We also visited the church of St. Mary and Thame Grammar School. Then on to Wallingford to see The Croft in Castle Street whose garden boasts another fine old mulberry tree. My 4 x great grandfather, another Charles purchased this house, from the corporation of Wallingford in 1765 and it remained in the family for 132 years. In the late afternoon we went on to Easington Manor and met Mrs A.M. Nixey the then owner. We also had tea with the tenants of the Lower House (the dower house) nearby, they were an Oxford professor and his wife, whose names, sadly I do not recall.

So ended a most eventful and fruitful genealogical weekend and one that I shall always remember with pleasure.

~~Chibues~~
Chibues

Chibues
Chibues
Chippinghurst

