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This is the newsletter for the One-Name Study of the surname COLLOFF. It will be published twice a year, Summer and Early each Winter and used to keep the other interested Colloff relations up to date with the latest research, whether completed by me, or by one of the other Cousins. John Colloff, June 2001.

Comment

Well time has fled by, and I am pushing to get this out on time again, despite two major events. A new granddaughter for Annette, and then my camcorder turning up its toes and dying just as I wanted to grab the Pier Head shots from the video I made!

Then when I started to put things together I found that I had so much to put in that I had to omit the page or two that I promised correcting my many mistakes. Please do keep the corrections to my mistakes coming in. I really do try not to make any, but they seem to creep in.

As I said last time, the information is yours, the mistakes, mine.

I also welcome your contributions, sharing some aspect of family history perhaps that is commonplace to you, but of interest to us all. For example, it was only when I was examining a photo of my paternal grandmother, Rose, that her pose reminded me that she had a glide in her right eye. It was never discussed or even mentioned, but the photo reminded me, as it was strictly a left profile.

J.C.

CONVENTIONS

There will be no publishing of personal details, dates, addresses, etc. of living people without their express permission. If you want to see the details of you and yours on the trees, you will have to write to me giving me express permission to do exactly that. You might like to include your comments on this enterprise as well. ☺

Should you choose to send me a photo or two to include I will take that as permission to publish unless you expressly forbid it. Contributions in the form of letters, articles and/or photos by any of you would be a very welcome addition for me to include in forthcoming issues.

CONTENTS

Oak Cottage and map	Cover
Comment, distribution & Conventions	Page 1.
Colloffs that died in the World Wars	Pages 2 to 8.
Why I follow the Kohlhoff trail	Pages 9
American Colloffs & Immigrants	Page 10
Ellis Island Name Change	Pages 11 & 12
William Colloff's Children	Pages 13 to 15
Internet Research	Page 16
The Last Word	Page 16.

Success of COLLOFF COUSINS

I encourage you to photocopy any of CC and send it on to anyone that you think might be interested. For computer owners I can provide a copy in colour in Adobe <*.pdf> format so that you can print off your own copies. I still hope to have my web page www.colloff.org.uk up and running soon. On it I hope to have coloured downloadable issues of COLLOFF COUSINS in Adobe Acrobat format <*.pdf>.

If possible the pages containing living family information will only be accessible with a password freely sent to all family members, mainly to avoid Data Protection Act registration.

DISTRIBUTION. I have split up the list of 21 copies to the three (and-a-half?) branches as follows.

Benjamin (c.1760 - 1834). Kenneth Edward Colloff, Rainham. Roy William Colloff, Alderholt. Mildred, wife of Reginald Percival Colloff, Dagenham.

Thomas (c.1790 - 1839+). Matthew via John & Mary Colloff, Tonbridge.

Joseph (c.1814 - 1876). Hilary Colloff, Seattle, USA. Charlotte Hinde, West Sussex.

Audrey Palin, Phyllis Colloff, Christine & John Wilson, Brian & Pauline Colloff, and Lyn & Garry James, Birmingham. Derek Colloff, Worcester. Audine & Jamie Watson, Langley, British Columbia. Trevor Rogers, Shotton. Edith Colloff, Swansea. Sidney Colloff, Alcester, Helen Williamson, Witney.

Kohlhoff Elizabeth Kohlhoff in Kelso, Australia, Katy Kohlhoff, Germany.

Other, The British Library. Guild of One-Name Studies, file.




COLLOFFs that fell in World Wars ONE and TWO.

These records, and the details of the site visit, are results of the Commonwealth War Graves' Commission putting their records on the World Wide Web. They are the body entrusted with maintaining the records and the upkeep of the graves and memorials of the servicemen and women that died serving their country in actions associated with World War One (1914 - 1918) and World War Two (1939 - 1945/6). I reproduce the records as I found them, and then where possible I add comments and extra information.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission			
Debt of Honour Register			
Here are the results of your enquiry. There are 5 records which match your search criteria.			
Select a name to see more details			
Name	Rank	Regiment	Date of Death
Colloff, B J A	Serjeant	Reconnaissance Corps	24th Jul 1943
Colloff, F J	Gunner	Royal Garrison Artillery	19th Mar 1919
Colloff, J A	Chief Cook	Naval Auxiliary Personnel (M.N.)	5th Nov 1940
Colloff, S	Rifelman	King's Royal Rifle Corps	4th Dec 1917
Colloff, S	Lance Corporal	Royal Warwickshire Regiment	22nd Aug 1917

Because of the date of the second death I cautiously worded my introductory paragraph at the start of this section. The further details suggest why this Colloff died after the recognised end of WWI, but is included in the records.


COLLOFFs that fell in World Wars ONE and TWO

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission	
 In Memory of F J Colloff Gunner 75859 Royal Garrison Artillery who died on Wednesday, 19th March 1919.	
Commemorative Information	
Cemetery:	KHARTOUM WAR CEMETERY, Sudan
Grave Reference/ Panel Number:	1. B. 17.
Location:	<p>Khartoum War Cemetery, adjoining Khartoum New Christian Cemetery, lies on the south-eastern side of Khartoum, the capital of the Sudan. Standing at the centre of the western boundary of the cemetery is the Khartoum Memorial, which commemorates nearly 600 soldiers of the East African campaign of 1940-1941 who died in the Sudan, or in the advance into Eritrea and Northern Ethiopia, and who have no known grave.</p>

I found the following entry especially poignant, as the first Royal Marine Commando action that my father was involved in was the assault landing in Sicily.

It was his interest the family name that fired mine, and like most of the Colloffs of his generation only knew of his own brothers and sisters.


It is ironic that a few weeks after he landed in Sicily, a sergeant Colloff, of whom he was totally unaware, died in the same area during the follow-up action.


The Commonwealth War Graves Commission	
 In Memory of Ben John Albert Colloff Serjeant 6915733 5th Regt., Reconnaissance Corps who died on Saturday, 24th July 1943. Age 25.	
Additional Information:	Son of Ben and Annie Colloff, of Walthamstow, Essex.
Commemorative Information	
Cemetery:	CATANIA WAR CEMETERY, SICILY, Italy
Grave Reference/ Panel Number:	I. A. 26.
Location:	<p>Catania War Cemetery is 7 kilometres south-west of Catania. From Catania Airport follow the tangenziale (main road) towards the A19 (in the direction of Palermo). Before reaching the A19 the cemetery is signposted. The cemetery is permanently open and may be visited anytime.</p>

in

COLLOFFs that fell in World Wars ONE and TWO


Both of the First World War casualties fell within months of each other, in Belgium, and are buried in the same cemetery.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission								
<p>In Memory of</p> <p>Sidney Colloff</p> <p>Rifleman A/2939 7th Bn., King's Royal Rifle Corps who died on Tuesday, 4th December 1917.</p> <p>Commemorative Information</p> <table><tr><td>Memorial:</td><td>TYNE COT MEMORIAL, Zonnebeke, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium</td></tr><tr><td>Grave Reference/ Panel Number:</td><td>Panel 115 to 119 and 162A and 163A</td></tr><tr><td>Location:</td><td>The Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing forms the north-eastern boundary of Tyne Cot Cemetery, which is located 9 kilometres north east of Ieper town centre, on the Tynecotstraat, a road leading from the Zonnebeekseweg (N332).</td></tr></table>			Memorial:	TYNE COT MEMORIAL, Zonnebeke, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium	Grave Reference/ Panel Number:	Panel 115 to 119 and 162A and 163A	Location:	The Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing forms the north-eastern boundary of Tyne Cot Cemetery, which is located 9 kilometres north east of Ieper town centre, on the Tynecotstraat, a road leading from the Zonnebeekseweg (N332).
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Location:	The Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing forms the north-eastern boundary of Tyne Cot Cemetery, which is located 9 kilometres north east of Ieper town centre, on the Tynecotstraat, a road leading from the Zonnebeekseweg (N332).							

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission									
<p>In Memory of</p> <p>Sidney Colloff</p> <p>Lance Corporal 200605 1st/5th Bn., Royal Warwickshire Regiment who died on Wednesday, 22nd August 1917. Age 25.</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <table><tr><td>Son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Colloff, of 3, Seymour Place, Rosalie St., Brookfields, Birmingham.</td></tr></table> <p>Commemorative Information</p> <table><tr><td>Memorial:</td><td>TYNE COT MEMORIAL, Zonnebeke, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium</td></tr><tr><td>Grave Reference/ Panel Number:</td><td>Panel 23 to 29 and 163A</td></tr><tr><td>Location:</td><td>The Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing forms the north-eastern boundary of Tyne Cot Cemetery, which is located 9 kilometres north east of Ieper town centre, on the Tynecotstraat, a road leading from the Zonnebeekseweg (N332).</td></tr></table>			Son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Colloff, of 3, Seymour Place, Rosalie St., Brookfields, Birmingham.	Memorial:	TYNE COT MEMORIAL, Zonnebeke, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium	Grave Reference/ Panel Number:	Panel 23 to 29 and 163A	Location:	The Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing forms the north-eastern boundary of Tyne Cot Cemetery, which is located 9 kilometres north east of Ieper town centre, on the Tynecotstraat, a road leading from the Zonnebeekseweg (N332).
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COLLOFFs that fell in World Wars ONE and TWO

The fifth entry is among the known heroes of the war.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission	
	
<p>In Memory of</p> <p>John Alfred Colloff</p> <p>Chief Cook 42505 H.M.S. Jervis Bay, Naval Auxiliary Personnel (M.N.) who died on Tuesday, 5th November 1940. Age 36.</p>	
<p>Commemorative Information</p>	
Memorial:	LIVERPOOL NAVAL MEMORIAL, Lancashire, United Kingdom
Grave Reference/ Panel Number:	Panel 14, Column 1.
Location:	The Memorial is situated on the Mersey River Front at the Pier Head, Liverpool, close to and behind the Liver Buildings and the end of James Street. From the end of the M62 motorway follow the signs for the City Centre and Maritime Museum.
Location:	The Memorial is situated on the Mersey River Front at the Pier Head, Liverpool, close to and behind the Liver Buildings and the end of James Street. From the end of the M62 motorway follow the signs for the City Centre and Maritime Museum. The Liverpool Memorial consists of a circular column, faced in Portland stone, on a raised semi-circular platform; on its summit is a device of reflecting lenses, suggestive of a beacon. The platform is approached from the promenade by a flight of steps and is surrounded by a wall. At the head of the steps, at each end of the wall, there is a globe; one side being a celestial globe ornamented with the signs of the Zodiac, and the other side being a terrestrial globe showing the countries and seas of the world. Set in recesses in the wall are the bronze panels that bear the names of over 1300 casualties. At the base of the column, facing the steps and the promenade, beneath the Naval badge of the Naval Crown, wreath, and foul anchor, is carved the inscription: THESE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE MERCHANT NAVY DIED WHILE SERVING WITH THE ROYAL NAVY AND HAVE NO GRAVE BUT THE SEA. 1939 - 1945.
Historical Information:	It was impossible during the war for the Navy to man all the auxiliary ships that served with it. Accordingly early in the war a manning depot was established at Liverpool for dealing with those men of the Merchant Navy who agreed to serve with the Royal Navy under the terms of what was known as a T.124 agreement, and became subject to Naval discipline while generally retaining their Merchant Navy rates of pay and other conditions. They served in various types of auxiliary vessels, at first mainly in armed merchant cruisers, but also in armed boarding vessels, cable ships, rescue tugs, and others on special service. The maximum number of T.124 officers and men exceeded 13,000. Among ships a large proportion of whose complement belonged to this service, the "Rawalpindi" and the "Jervis Bay" won unique renown from the circumstances of their end; but men from over 120 ships are commemorated on the memorial which it was decided to erect at Liverpool. The great majority of Merchant Navy men, who did not serve with the Navy, but with merchant ships, are commemorated on the Merchant Navy Memorial, on Tower Hill, London. This memorial was unveiled by the Admiral of the Fleet, The Viscount Cunningham of Hyndhope, K.T., G.C.B., O.M., D.S.O., on the 12th November 1952.

The men aboard the British warship Jervis Bay had no illusions about
The deadly risks of steaming straight into the fire of a German pocket
battleship bent on blowing them out of the water.

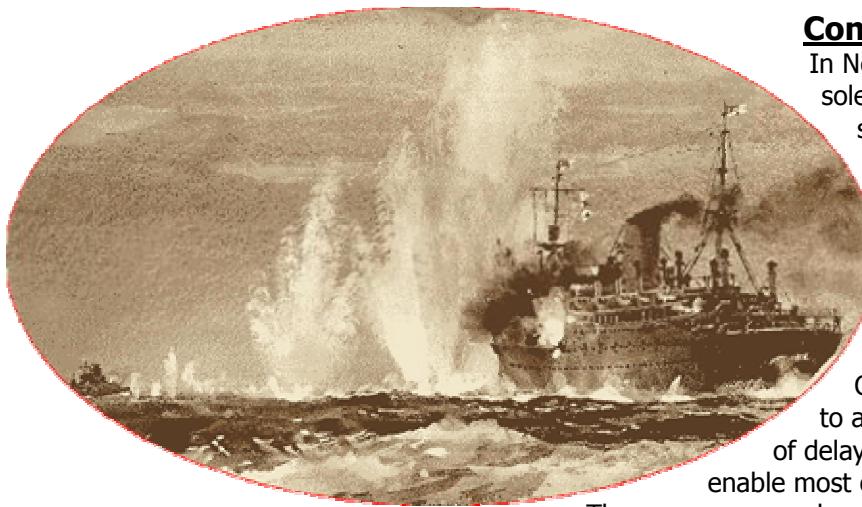
"Our captain knew just what we
were going to get, but it didn't
matter.",
one crew member later recalled...

COLLOFFs that fell in World Wars ONE and TWO

The Story of a gallant Armed Merchant Cruiser

In both world wars the Royal Navy was short of cruisers and attempted to make up the deficiency by attaching a few guns and White Ensigns to selected liners. The resulting ships were classified as armed merchant cruisers and used mainly as escorts. They were vulnerable ships, being high-sided, unarmoured, and not highly compartmented. Without the hull being divided into several watertight compartments to aid buoyancy in the event of damage, they could easily be sunk. In the Second World War the former Aberdeen & Commonwealth liner Jervis Bay, was destined to become the most celebrated of these unsatisfactory war-ships.

The Jervis Bay, built originally as a passenger ship to carry emigrants to Australia, was taken over by the Admiralty in August 1939. Seven 6-inch guns, dating from the turn of the century, were distributed around her decks. She was repainted grey and allocated a crew of 255 men (mainly reservists), and the White Ensign was hoisted. Her role was that of ocean escort for Atlantic convoys. In the First World War the Germans had frequently employed armed liners for raiding work, and they did the same in the Second World War. Against such ships the Jervis Bay had a good chance of success, but she was no match for armoured ships.



Convoy HX84

In November 1940 the Jervis Bay was the sole escort for Convoy HX84 of thirty-seven freighters moving from Halifax to Britain. Earlier, the German "pocket battleship" Admiral Scheer had slipped quietly into the Atlantic. She located the Jervis Bay's convoy and decided to attack immediately, as it was late afternoon and it would be difficult to find targets in the dark.

Captain Fegen of the Jervis Bay decided to advance to meet the raider, in the hope of delaying the Germans long enough to enable most of the convoy to escape.

The convoy was ordered to scatter and the Jervis Bay, dropping smoke floats as she went, endeavoured to bring the Admiral Scheer within the range of her guns.

In this latter aim she never succeeded. Although her guns fired often, every shot fell short of the enemy. A seaman who watched the outmatched merchantman throw everything but its boiler plates at the Admiral Scheer said it was like a bulldog attacking a bear. Meanwhile 11-inch shells from the raider began to hit. The crew had little protection from blast or from splinters, and casualties were heavy. The bridge was soon hit, and with it the Jervis Bay's gunnery control centre. Captain Fegen lost an arm and soon afterwards was killed by another shell. Most of the officers were killed. Nevertheless, this one-sided battle lasted for twenty-four minutes. At the end of that period the Jervis Bay was ablaze and her guns out of action, and the order was given to abandon ship. A Swedish freighter picked up only sixty-five men, but the sacrifice had not been in vain, for the Admiral Scheer only succeeded in destroying only five of the freighters in the short time before nightfall.

Captain Edward Fegen was awarded the Victoria Cross on the 22nd November 1940 and the medal was presented to his sister, Miss M.C. Fegen by His Majesty King George VI at the investiture on the 12th June 1941, at Buckingham Palace.

Ken had been looking for this Memorial to his Uncle

Soon after I had downloaded this information, Ken and Maureen visited us, and I showed the web pages to Ken. He found the information here very interesting as this was his uncle and the family had been looking for a mention of him, and the heroic action in which he took part, on Naval memorials but mainly in South coast towns.

COLLOFFs that fell in World Wars ONE and TWO

The Memorial at Liverpool Pier Head

The next day we visited the memorial where I took the following record photos, and gave Ken a video of the event to show back at Rainham. I apologise for the lettering that appears on the pictures, but when I came to grab these stills from the camcorder tape, my camcorder failed and I had to use a borrowed but different machine on which I did not dare alter the viewfinder settings.

Ken and Maureen explore the Pier Head memorial.



Ken searches for, and finds, that elusive name amongst the list of Jervis Bay casualties.



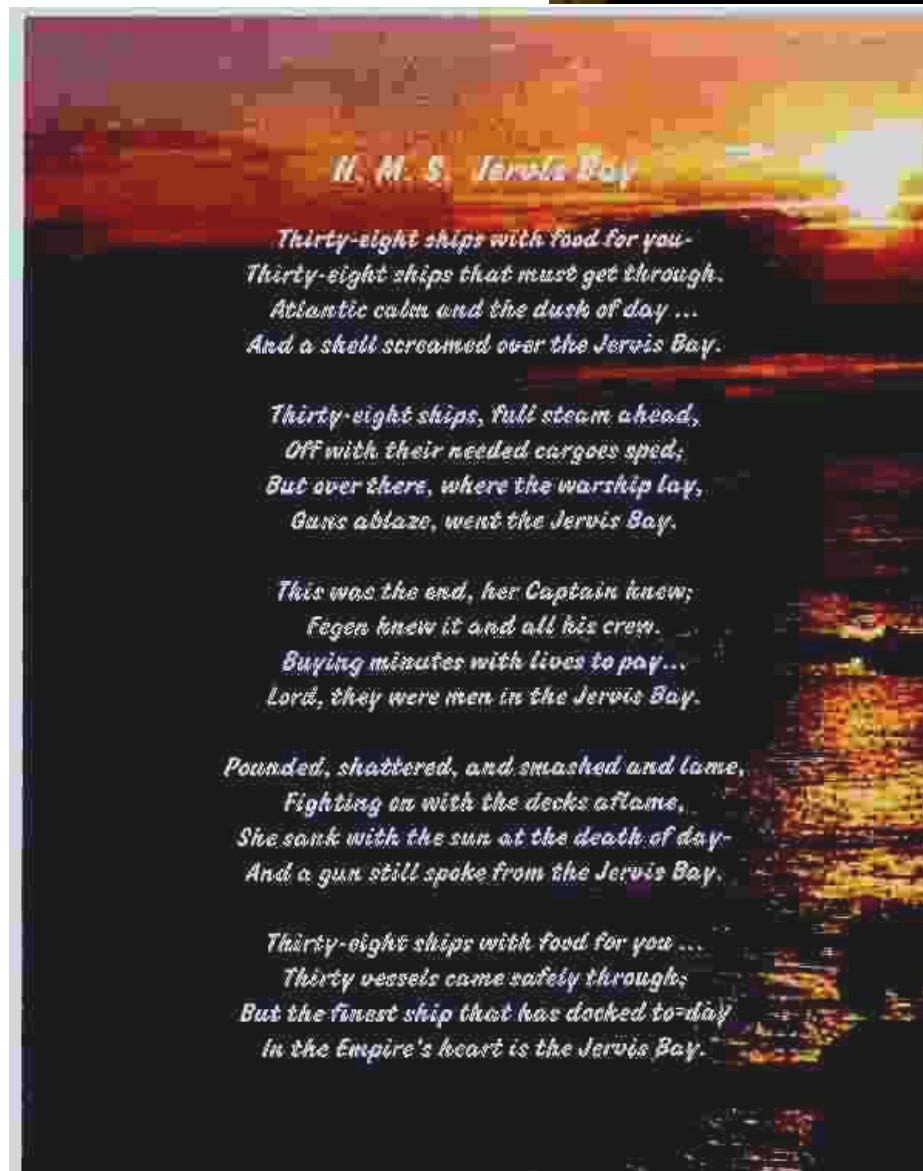
I had been so near

For the previous six or eight months I had been visiting Liverpool on Saturday outings with my granddaughter, Elizabeth, to go round the Albert Dock and eleven other museums in Liverpool. Not as stuffy as it seems, as she saw many live shows and exhibits including Punch and Judy, live snakes that we handled, type set printing as my father knew it, and a mock Customs Officers' 'Rummage', as the search for contraband is known. For this I had found a convenient car park at the Liverpool Pier Head. Imagine my amazement when I found that in all this time I had been parking only 50 yards from this memorial on which I would never have thought to look for a Colloff!

COLLOFFs that fell in World Wars ONE and TWO

Ken and Maureen at the satisfactory ending to our Liverpool visit.

From my One-Name study I have been surprised to find how many Colloffs there are, and from responses to this newsletter, I am still being amazed at how they have been all around, and yet how infrequently paths have crossed and meetings resulted.



Why I am pursuing the Kohlhoff Trail

In the last issue I showed the time line at the bottom of this page, under the heading; ***Colloffs Alive and Recorded, 1750 to 1830***, and asked for any comments. Having received none I will use the diagram to explain why I am mainly pursuing the source of the Colloff name as Kohlhoff instead of the Coltlove uncovered by Roy's research.

Knowing how much time and money Roy has put into his researches that produced the theory, along with copies of the supporting certificates, I feel that I should place as full an explanation as I can put together in this 'public' record.. I welcome any other views on the matter, especially criticism as I find that as a genealogist I tend to be like parents and their children over ideas and theories, not wanting to hear anything bad about them .

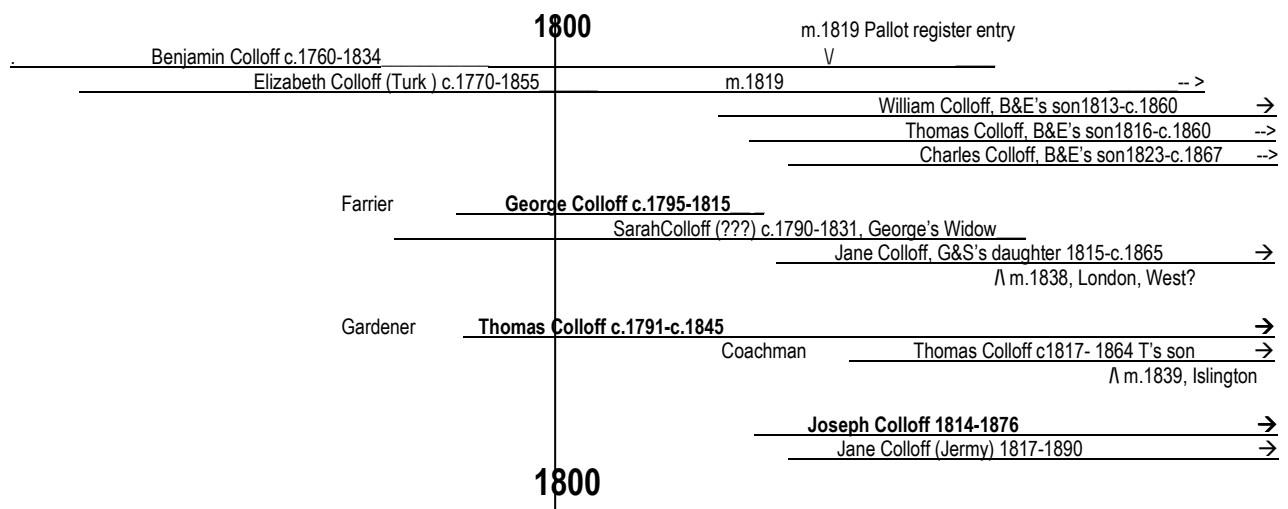
Of course I keep an open mind, and have searched the available records for further traces of the Coltloves, and like a good One-Namer search any new lists that appear for Coltlove as well as both Colloff and Kohlhoff, and all their known spelling variants. So far I have not found any further Coltloves from which Benjamin could have been descended.

However, to support the theory that a man born Benjamin Coltlove, decided to change his name at the end of the 18th century to Colloff, I need some sort of explanation about the behaviour and attitudes of all the other Colloffs, or rather former Coltloves, that were around at the time. It was for this reason that I constructed my simplistic tree to see how many other people must have supported Benjamin's whim, and sufficiently to follow it to the end of their lives and pass it on to all succeeding generations. This is the nub of my tendency to reject this theory. I find it difficult to accept that all the other Colloffs, of whom there is no trace as Coltloves, agreed with this change without a qualm.

The only other fact that I am able to add at this time is that the Coltlove line appears to have died out at the same time, but I am unable to draw any inference from this at all.

Please help with your comments and suggestions, as Roy and I are at a dead end here, but I would be happy to explore any line of research that any of you care to suggest.

Colloffs Alive and Recorded, 1750 to 1830



More about American Colloffs

During one of my web searches I came across the web page of Pamela Colloff, an American Journalist whose work I have been seeing recorded on the Internet for some time. As there was a contact E-mail address I sent her an E-mail. The following is her reply.

John--

What a wonderful surprise! Thanks so much for e-mailing me. I travel quite a lot, because I'm a journalist, and everywhere I go, I look up "Colloff" in the phone book. The only Colloffs I've found are those I'm related to:

My mother Margery, brother David, and late father Roger (in New York City), my grandparents Isadore and Shirley Colloff, and their children Bernie and Tamara, (in New Jersey), and my grandfather's relatives (in California).

Here is our story, though I hope it doesn't come as a disappointment.

"Colloff" was the name assigned to my paternal family at Ellis Island. Our real last name --and I'm spelling this phonetically--is "Zarocovich". My family is Jewish, and came from Eastern Europe--namely western Russia and Poland. So unless you are Jewish, which I'm assuming you're not, I doubt we're related by blood.

That said, I've always been very interested in finding out more about the Colloff name--not only because it is my name, but because it is a very

unusual name, and there must be a story behind why my family has it.

Perhaps one of your Colloff relatives was standing in front of one of my relatives at Ellis Island, and lent us the name? I'd really like to find out exactly what happened.

Yesterday, the New York Times published an article explaining that Ellis Island now has a web site in which one can look up relatives' arrival dates there. The old ship ledgers have been scanned and posted onto the Internet! In the next few weeks, I'm planning on looking our name up there. I promise to tell you what I find.

Also, my father's sister--Tamara Colloff--is now living in England. She is living in West Sussex; I will find out exactly where she is, and send you her e-mail address.

Any information about your family would be greatly appreciated. I would love to know where the family is based, what sort of work you all do, and so forth. Many thanks for writing! I'll let you know what I find out on the Ellis Island web site.

Best wishes,

Pamela Colloff

Of course I was thrilled to receive this, although it did confirm most of the snippets that I had picked up off the Internet, over the years. However I hope that Pamela can find time during her busy Journalists' life to continue a little with our information exchange.

Immigrants to America --The Ellis Island Web Site.

As mentioned by Pamela, this has aroused a great deal of interest especially amongst genealogists, and it has been very difficult to get into the site.

However I have managed one visit from which I found no entries under the name Colloff.

I did find 38 Kohlhoffs. Of those I give below arrivals before 1900.

Name of Passenger	Residence	Arrived	Age on Arrival
3. Anna Kohlhoff		1893	8
4. Anna Kohlhoff		1895	17
7. Christine Kohlhoff		1893	1
10. Emil Kohlhoff	Oldenburg	1898	20
16. Gretchen Kohlhoff		1896	18
18. Hedwig Kohlhoff		1893	5
26. Johanne Kohlhoff		1894	18
32. Marthe Kohlhoff	1894	17	
34. Niro Kohlhoff		1893	9
36. Richard Kohlhoff		1893	7
37. Theodor Kohlhoff		1893	3

Unfortunately the records show nothing from before 1870, when the Augustus that I found must have arrived, in order to be in South Dakota by 1870, and possibly married in Wisconsin in 1874 (see page 16).

Immigrants to America --Changing Names at Ellis Island.

More interestingly though is the following article, which directly addresses what Pamela has been told, as it appears to be an often repeated story.

The following article is from Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter and is copyright 2001 by Richard W. Eastman. It is re-published here with the permission of the author.

The Myth of Ellis Island Name Changes. I was involved with a series of e-mail exchanges this week with a reader of this newsletter. He claimed that his ancestor had her name changed at Ellis Island. I pointed out that such a change was unlikely, despite all the claims we hear of such name changes. The ensuing e-mail exchange got me thinking that perhaps others have the same misconceptions that "the family name was changed at Ellis Island." I decided to amplify a bit on the subject in this newsletter.

Immigrants' surnames were changed thousands of times, but professional researchers have found that name changes were rare at Ellis Island (or at Castle Island, which was the New York port of entry prior to Ellis Island's opening). The myth of name changes usually revolves around the concept that the immigrant was unable to communicate properly with the English-speaking officials at Ellis Island. However, this ignores the fact that Ellis Island employed hundreds of translators who could speak, read, and write the immigrants' native tongues. It also ignores all the documentation that an immigrant needed to have in order to be admitted into the U.S.

In order to be admitted into the United States as an immigrant in the late nineteenth century or later, one had to have paperwork. Each immigrant had to have proof of identity. This would be a piece of paperwork filled out in "the old country" by a clerk who knew the language, and the paperwork would be filled out in the local language, not in English (unless the "old country" was an English-speaking country). The spelling of names on these documents generally conformed to local spellings within the immigrant's place of origin. Even if the person travelling was illiterate and did not know how to spell his or her own name, the clerks filling out the paperwork knew the spelling of that name in the local language or could sound it out properly according to the conventions of

the language used. Also, in many countries one had to obtain an exit visa in order to leave. Again, exit visas had to be filled out by local clerks who knew the language, and exit visas were written in the local language.

A ship's passenger list had to be prepared by the captain of the ship or his representatives before the ship left the old country. This list was created from the traveller's documents. These documents were created when the immigrant purchased his or her ticket. It is unlikely that anyone at the local steamship office was unable to communicate with this man. Even when the clerk selling the ticket did not speak the language of the would-be emigrant, someone had to be called in to interpret. Also, required exit visas and other paperwork had to be examined by ticket agents before a ticket would be sold. The name was most likely recorded with a high degree of accuracy at that time.

Next, the ship's captain or designated representative would examine each passenger's paperwork. The ship's officials might not know the immigrant's language, but they had to inspect the exit visa and the proof of identity. They knew that immigrants would not be accepted into Ellis Island without proper documentation and, if the paperwork wasn't there, the passengers would be sent back home at the shipping company's expense! You can believe that the ship's owners went to great

lengths to insure the accuracy of the paperwork, including names, places of birth and travel plans. It is believed that many more people were turned away at the point of embarkation than were ever turned away at Ellis Island. In other words, most of those without proper documentation never got on board the ship.

When the ship arrived at Ellis Island, the captain or his representative would disembark first with the passenger list. The Ellis Island officials would then bring in interpreters to handle the interrogations. These interpreters were usually earlier immigrants themselves or the children of immigrants, and they all knew how to speak, read and write the language of the immigrants.

The usual immigrant processing time was one to three days. During this time, each immigrant was questioned about his/her identity, and all the required documentation was examined in detail. Keep in mind that this was not a quick two or three-minute conversation such as we have today at international airports. In the days of steamships, the Ellis Island officials had the luxury of time. They could make leisurely examinations.

The questioning at Ellis Island would be done in the immigrant's native tongue. While the immigrant often was illiterate, the interpreter doing the questioning always could read and write the language involved. Ellis Island employed interpreters for Yiddish,

Russian, Lithuanian and all of the European languages. The immigration center in San Francisco did the same for all the Chinese dialects as well as Japanese, Korean, and many more Oriental languages. Other immigration centers in Boston, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Galveston and elsewhere followed similar procedures.

Anyone who did not have proper paperwork (in the native language) showing the correct name and place of birth was sent back. Many thousands were sent back for identification reasons or for medical reasons or because they did not have sponsors in the U.S. Most of the people who came through Ellis Island did so with correct paperwork showing the correct or at least plausible spellings of their real names in their original language.

There were a very few exceptions, however. Occasionally war

refugees were admitted without much documentation. This was especially true in 1945 and 1946. A few others succeeded in falsifying documents in order to gain admittance when they could not be admitted under their true identities. Occasionally a child was admitted under the surname of a stepfather when the name of the natural father would have been more appropriate. Nobody can document the number of exceptions, but most professional researchers believe that the number of exceptions was very small.

Once settled into their new homes, however, anything could happen. Millions of immigrants had their names changed voluntarily or by clerks or by schoolteachers who couldn't pronounce or spell children's names. Some immigrants changed their names in order to obtain employment. Many immigrants found it easier to assimilate into American culture if

they had American-sounding names, so they gladly went along with whatever their neighbors or schoolteachers called them.

However, the records at Ellis Island remained in the original language.

For more information about the myth that "the family name was changed at Ellis Island," look at the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization's Web page at: <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/aboutins/history/articles/NameEssay.html>.

For information from a genealogist's viewpoint, look at: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~rwguide/lesson8.htm> and at <http://jewishwebindex.com/language1.htm> (about a third of the way down the page).

Changing Names at Ellis Island

My Comments and own experiences

I have reproduced the above article in full because I find that the explanation is exactly what I would have expected to happen, and echoes many of the problems currently being experienced at airports and borders today, with respect to both legal and illegal immigrants. The same constraints apply to the carriers, which nowadays can mean your holiday company.

On packaged deal holidays I have jokingly asked the travel reps what they are looking for as they scrutinised our passports. In return I have received exactly the same explanations, about the company having to fly people without the correct documentation back, at their own expense. They have all been able to quote cases where the papers of the returned bogus holiday-makers have not been accepted back in the UK, and they have been flown backwards and forwards whilst the immigration officials at both ends have sorted out whence to return them. The costs of the flights and hotel accommodation involved go as a black mark on the record of the rep that did not look closely enough at the documentation in the first place.

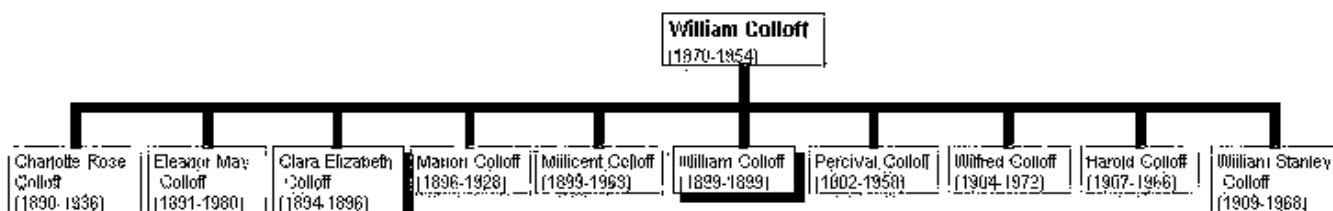
I have sent a copy to Pamela, and hope that she will accept the information in the constructive spirit in which it is sent. I not think that she will be able to add anything to what she has already said.

I do think that it must be true that there is no relationship. As far as I know all today's European Kohlhoffs are not Jewish, and certainly the Pomeranian branch researched by Elizabeth Kohlhoff, were Lutherans. Then, it must be accepted that the many of immigrants to the US only undertook that expensive, dangerous and traumatic one-way journey, as a means of escape. Escape, in many cases, from religious and racial persecution, again as is still going on in the world today. The rigmarole of documentation examinations described in the foregoing article, may have needed some expensive forging or bending of the truth, that, once accepted, was carefully adhered to with what ever cover story was needed to keep their entry into the US secure.

The Children of William Colloff, my grandfather.

After issue 3, which featured some of the photos that had been sent to me from other branches of the family, I decided to inflict some of my own branch on you. Maybe that will bring in more old photos for the next issue. ☺

For these photos I have to thank my cousins, Audrey Palin and Christine Wilson, for arranging the family dinner that lead to Audrey's niece, Helen, sending me these and other, photos, of William Colloff's children. After receiving a copy of **CC** issue 3 from her aunt, Helen sent me the photos that inspired this article, and for which I am extremely grateful and have now added to my family archive.



As you will see from the mini tree, my paternal grandparents, William (1879 - 1954) and Charlotte (1870 - 1944), had ten children, of which eight survived childhood; a better than average survival rate for those times. It took the conversations with my cousins to realise that the family had categorised them as the four girls that were followed by the four boys. A middle girl and the first boy, both died in infancy. It seems that towards the end of the first World War, a series of studio photographs were taken, followed by more a few years later as the boys were growing up and money became less tight.

William Colloff's Girls.

Here you see; my own favourite, Millicent (1899 - 1963), Eleanor May (1891 -1980), Charlotte Rose (1890 -1936), and Marion (1896 - 1928).

I think that this was taken in 1918, maybe to celebrate the end of the war when they were aged 28, 27, 24 and 19. I have stretched the computer's graphics to the limit, but been unable to detect whether there is a wedding ring on Millie's hand that would give a better date.



I think that at least two of these girls were very pretty. Unfortunately I only met and knew two of them, May and Millie, the other two having died before this was possible. So until I started working at my family history I was only aware of my two remaining paternal aunts.



Millie



May

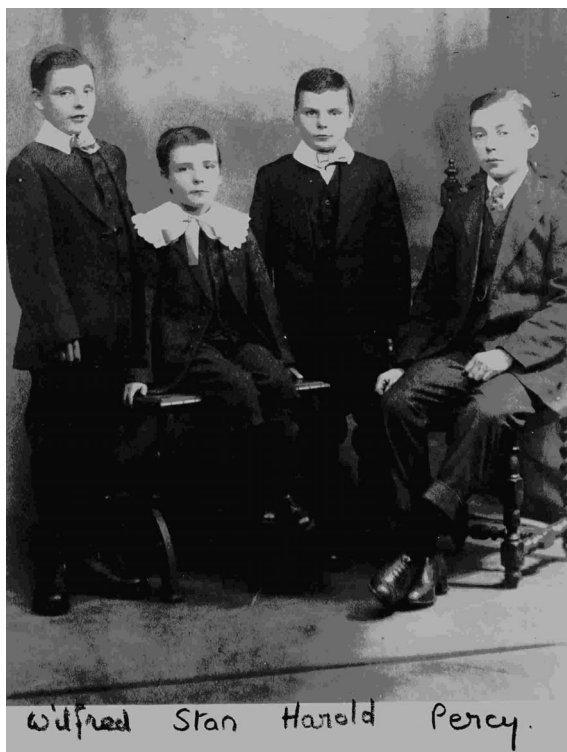


Charle



Marion

William Colloff's Children, His Boys

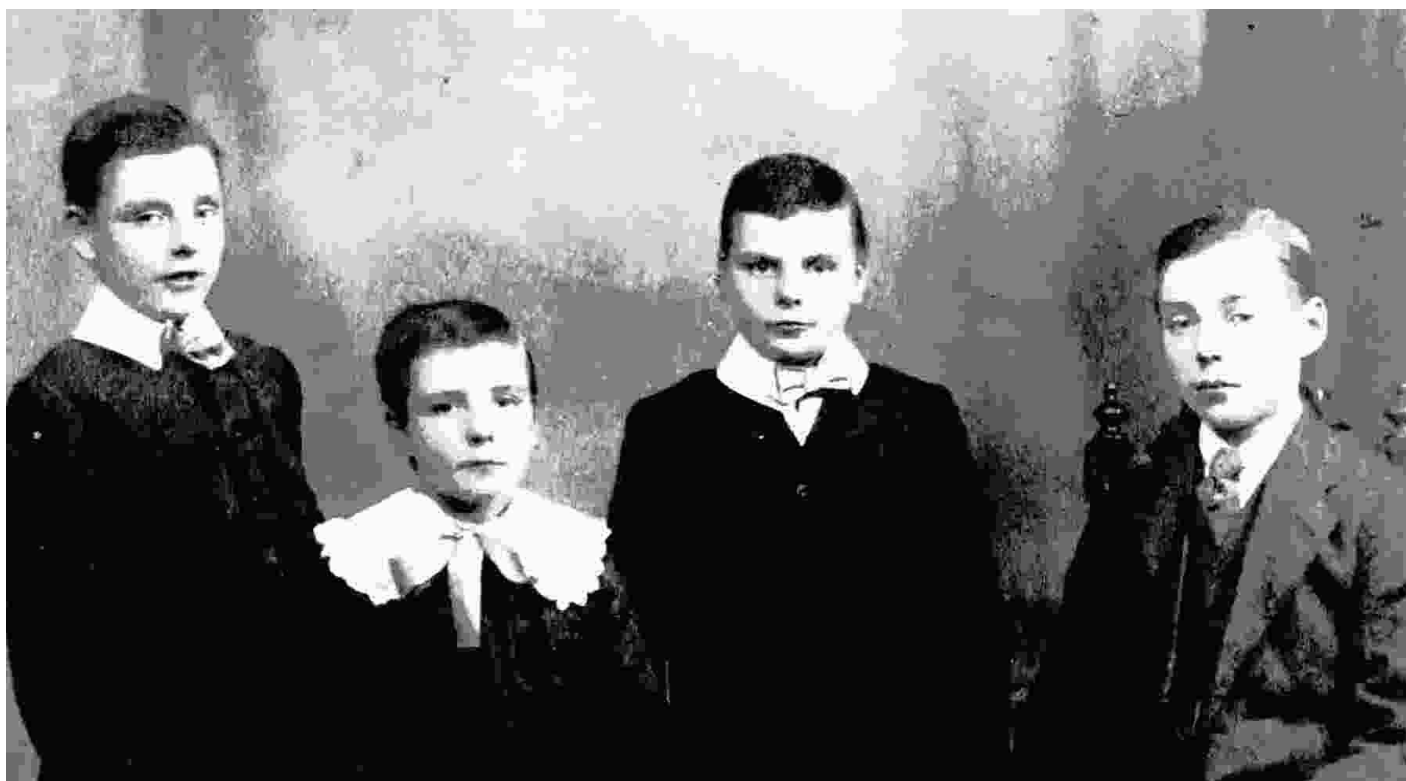


Here you see; Percival (1902 -1958), Wilfred (1904 - 1972), my father Harold (1907 -1966), and William Stanley (1901 - 1968).

I am not clever enough with my computer graphics to get all of the details into one print so I have shown the group twice. On the left the locating shot with the original hand written names. On this I love the baby of the family perched on a low table to make the group more even. Lower down are just the heads and shoulders, where the features can be more clearly seen. If I am right about these pictures being taken in 1918 we see Wilfred 14, Stan 9, Harold 11, and Percy 16. If anybody can add anything to my deductions, all comments are welcome.

There is one item of social interest in the full list of names, at the start of this paragraph. Only the last, had two given names, my Uncle Stan was christened William Stanley. I have to thank his widow, Phyllis, for the following explanation.

Granddad Bill Colloff wanted his tenth child, and fifth son, to be a William. Grandma, remembering the fate of her first male baby, William (1899 - 1899) only agreed, provided he was always known as Stanley; a further significant comment on the mortality rates of the time.



Amongst my father's papers, I found after his death, the certificate for the small insurance policy that Grandma had taken out for the first five years of his life. This obviously left a lasting impression on him, because as each of my brother and I became 18, he took out flexible life insurance policies for us. He pointed out that once we were earning full time, (an event we both postponed at his expense for over four years), we were to be responsible for the premiums. In my case, I converted mine several times, ultimately using it as an endowment policy with profits, to finance various house purchases.

William Colloff's Boys(continued)



HAROLD COLLOFF. Here I have included a later, almost unrecognisable shot of my father taken at that teenage pubescent changeling stage, to which I can add a few more comments. I guess that this would be about the time that he left school and started work at the age of 14.

First I doubt if he ever had his boots as highly polished again until he joined the Royal Marines in World War II, when he had to polish the underside of the instep of his boots to meet their very high standards. Then I note the fit, or lack of it of his jacket, which, I suspect, had been handed down and was worn by Percy and Wilf before him. From this I judge that he had just had a jump in his growth so that the jacket hangs loosely on his body, but his arms have outgrown the shortened sleeves. Bear in mind that this photograph was a special event and he will have worn his very best clothes!

Or I could be wrong and this jacket was a perk from one of his Saturday jobs. Of those he told me about, his first 'job' was taking his father's hot dinner to him as he worked in the brick fields, every lunch time. The plated hot meal was covered by another plate, and tied up in a cloth, so that it could be carried by the knots, and he had to run all the way there and back to have his own meal and be back at school. This I have never seen in reality although I have seen it in old silent movies.

Then, on Saturdays, he worked as a lather boy at the local barbers. Here he mixed and applied the hot water and soap to make a lather on the waiting man's face, ready to be shaved in his turn, by the barber with his cut-throat razor. This I have seen when I went for a hair cut when on holiday in Italy,

years' ago, and saw that half the men were there for their morning shave, and got lathered by the 'boy' as their turn came. I believe that barbers shaving the local men in this way still goes on in rural areas of at least Italy and France, where it is a luxurious relaxation and social event. Annette tells me that it is now being threatened by new EEC regulations as being unhygienic and a health hazard unless a lather of aerosol foam and disposable safety razors are used.

From being a lather boy he then went to a local tailor to make all the Saturday deliveries for him. Perhaps the ill-fitting jacket was an unpaid-for job from the tailor and had the attraction of not having been worn by his two older brothers before.

I welcome any other memories, occupations and habits from those early days of the 20th. Century.

Charlotte Rose

Unfortunately I seem to have lost the photo that I was going to include of my granddad, complete in his bowler hat, but this is of my grandmother, from an earlier snap.



Colloffs on the Internet, The Raw Material of Research.

I think that the following interchange on a public genealogical message board is self explanatory;

Message #13 Thursday, January 11, 2001 KOHLHOFF

Subject: August Fredrick & Bertha

Posted by: Harold

Message: Brother and sister immigrated to US 1870's from Greifenberg Kreis area of Pommerania. Bertha married Eduard Benz of same village in Door Co. Wisc. June 12, 1874.

Message: I am trying to contact descendants of August Kohlhoff who registered as August Colloff in Brown County, South Dakota, 1870 to 1880.

I believe our surnames are linked and I want to trace back to Pomerania, if possible. John Colloff 6/4/01

Replies: [August Colloff/Kohlhoff - John Colloff](#) 6/4/01

Message #25 Friday, June 01, 2001

Greetings,

It is quite possible that there is a family connection. The August Kohlhoff (sp?) I was referring to was August Fredrick Kohlhoff of Greifenberg Kreis, Pommerania. His sister, Bertha, married Eduard August Benz of the same village, however, the marriage took place in Door County Wisc. in 1874. The Kohlhoff and Benz families moved to Lincoln County Mn. Ca. 1890 and homesteaded. The Kohlhoff family is known to me to have five boys and three girls. The names known to me are Paul, Rueben, Emil, Arthur, Annie, and Bertha. It was widely held that all of these moved to the Chico Calif area in the early twentieth century.

Harold Warner

Subject: Kohlhoff

Posted by: [Harold](#) June 03, 2001

Message: Hi,

The more I think about it, one of August's nieces homesteaded in the Summit area and another in the Cass Lake region of Mn. I think both Paul and Rueben went west, so did Annie and Bertha. As a point of interest, if you know, August's parents names were Fredrick and Friedrica according to my great-grandmother's death certificate.

Harold

I have yet to follow this up, although this does not appear to be a permanent name change that affected the English Colloffs. J.C.

The Last Word

If you remember, at the end of the last issue I said; if you are thinking "What a load of rubbish! I can do better than that." Please do! Your efforts will be more than welcome.

Well those words came home to roost at the annual conference and AG.M. of the Guild of One Name Studies held at Easthampstead Park, last April. As librarian I take along the collection of current One Names Study newsletters and put them on display for members to examine and hopefully get ideas and inspiration. Whilst I was tending to my wares, a gentleman of very distinguished military bearing found one of the issues of my Colloff Cousins and declared in an equally loud, distinguished and military voice; "I looked at this and thought, I can do as good as that!" I had been chatting to him earlier in the day and had failed to recognise him until then as he was now in the 'scarlet' of his full dress 'uniform' of a Chelsea Pensioner. In deference to his years I forbore from pointing out that this was exactly what I had written in the Guild Journal, and accepted the implied criticism of my humble efforts.

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colloff@one-name.org