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*This letter enclosed the
many-paged family
tree.*

18th February 02

Dear Cousin Kath,

Doesn't that title make the distance seem a lot smaller? I note from my reference book that we are actually second cousins, but a straight cousin I think is quite acceptable, isn't it?

I was really chuffed when I arrived home to find your letter and enclosures - not to mention the lovely stamps on the envelope. [I've collected stamps since I was 8 years old and never stopped, much to the amusement of my sons! That's what being the only child of older parents does for one.]

Well, since I wrote to you I had some certificates come from the FRO and as it happens, I have now got the right Albert Ludlam, son of Charles and Sophia. I haven't been able to find any records for a marriage to Susan Hands, so that was probably just family scuttle buck. What I did find was that Susan's mother was the sister of Mary Walker, our grandfathers' mother! I've tidied up the family tree and am enclosing my full revised version - so don't collapse under the weight of the paperwork - I've used old fashioned type writing paper to lessen the thickness. A dining room table is quite useful to lay it all out.

I was pleased to hear that others are interested in following the family tree, and please do tell Greg to e-mail me on smh@mcrane.co.uk. I e-mail Mrs Perry in New Zealand, she has Leicester Ludlams in her family tree at around 1820, so there might just be a connection there. My work takes me up and down the UK, so I haven't had too much time recently to do more research, but the Leicester Family History Society has a smashing library, which is open on a Saturday. It is currently being refurbished but will reopen in March and I'll be back. The library near where I work in the Black Country, has bought the 1901 census on micro-fiche, so I am going to book an hour or so on a couple of Friday evenings after work to search for other relatives.

I read Aunty Florrie's letter with a weird feeling. For my O level history (a few years ago now!) I did the late Victorian to 1945 period, and for part of it studied Coventry at War reading accounts from civilians about the blitz. In Coventry, bomb sites, covered

with purple willow-herb, were quite common as I was growing up - after all I was 5 or 6 years old when meat & sweets came off the ration - and can remember taking my Nan's ration books down to the butcher & grocers while I did the shopping (she had rheumatoid arthritis and could hardly walk). Florrie's letter brought back all those stories - my Nan (the one above) was cooking my Granddad's meal when the sirens went. She thought the meal only needed a little longer and then she could go down to the Anderson shelter in the back garden. In the meanwhile she sheltered under the stairs (these went up between the front and back rooms, and the space underneath was often used as a coal cellar). A land mine went off and blew the back wall of the house out, but Nan was safe. Not so the next-door neighbours as the land mine had landed on their shelter and all had been killed. Had Nan been in her shelter she would have definitely been injured if not killed. After that raid, it was the big blitz of 1940, my Mum when she wasn't fire watching, went to Kenilworth and stayed with an auntie every night. After she married my Dad, Harold, they rented a house and Mum used to take cover under the stairs rather than in a garden shelter.

It seems funny to think that only a year later Violet was killed and it was my father who dug her, the mother and the baby she was delivering, out of the ruins. Violet was buried in the Civilian Mass War Grave, which is in the London Road Cemetary. All persons who were civilians but nurses, midwives and other professional people had a tree planted in their memory, either in the Cemetery or in the huge War Memorial Park. Violet has a copper beech tree - now grown huge - immediately next to the gates of the Mass War Grave. My grandparents' grave, which also remembers Doris (the one who died of measles aged 2 & a half), is a short walk away from the Mass Grave. I go up regularly when I go to the other cemetery in Coventry, (to my parents' grave). Great grandmother Moore is also buried in that cemetery but in the very old part, which is somewhat spooky on a wet day! I have been told the authorities will give me a reference point for her grave for £10 or so! Great Grandfather William Moore (the watchmaker) is buried in the grounds of Holy Trinity church, which is in the centre of Coventry.

Owing to archaeological work on the site of the first Coventry Cathedral, St. Mary's, the one that had its monastery disbanded courtesy of King Henry VIII, the graveyard is no longer accessible. However the work on St. Mary's is fascinating and I was privileged to get a walk round the excavated site with one of the "diggers". I am told by the family that I am very much a Ludlam in looks but with quite a bit of grandmother Florence Moore in me. Unfortunately she died some 5 years before I was born but I did know my granddad Ludlam.

Florrie and Rosemary were evacuated to Stretton on Dunsmore, a lovely "chocolate box" village a few miles from Marton. My cousin Christine was born there.

I have been to Marton several times and walked around the graveyard, the village has shrunk considerably but the medieval bridge is still there but only in use as a footbridge now. They had to build a new one for the traffic as marton is on the main

Coventry to Banbury road.. Unfortunately many of the gravestones have been lifted and placed around the perimeter to aid cutting the grass. However once the weather improves, I'll go again and look for Walkers and Wilkins. The church is one of those who share a vicar, so the building is usually locked. Anyway the church our grandfathers knew, burnt down and wasn't rebuilt till very late 19th Century. The church at Stretton on Dunsmore (where one of the Moore's wives came from by the way) is a really lovely building, and since the village is a real commuter paradise - prices of property very high - money is spend on looking after it and the graveyard. If you would like photos of places such as Marton and Stretton, please let me know and I'll e-mail them to Greg (once he sends me his e-address).

Cousin Dorothy Swain neé Ludlam, although 20 years older than me, has always been quite close and is very interested in my research. She keeps remembering extra little bits of info which lead me onto the next bit. It's a shame that my parents didn't tell me more but then Dad didn't seem to have any relationships with aunts & uncles, only his sister Florrie and brother Alf (Dorothy's father). In fact he preferred Mum not to have too much to do with cousin Rosemary for reasons I never found out about.

Well, its now late at night and I think Ron, my husband, would quite like to go to sleep, so I had better finish.

Please do write again when you've had a chance to look at my tree with your comments, and encourage Greg to contact me electronically - its much quicker!

Regards to all,

Sue Hope