

# My thoughts on the Bernau Index

G M Bedingfield

If you have been lucky enough to trace ancestors who owned or leased land, back into the 18th century or earlier, it could well be worth your while to look at the Bernau Index.

## The Index

Mr C A Bernau compiled a card index, of about 4 million slips, to material in the Public Record Office (PRO) in Chancery Lane, London. The main categories are Chancery and Exchequer Court Depositions and Proceedings, which were indexed at the time the case went to court, by the plaintiff's name only. Mr Bernau and his team indexed the names of the defendants and those who gave evidence, (the deponents) sometimes by just the surname. The index is now on microfilm and is available at the Society of Genealogists.

When I looked at the index for my maiden name of Thunder, which is and has always been a rare name, I was amazed to find twenty references. Ten references were to Chancery Proceedings, six were to deponents, two were to items in Poll Books and the remaining two were for the Court of Requests. The items covered a period from 1514 to 1765, plus Poll Book entries for 1820 and one Early Chancery Proceeding which was undated but could be as early as 4 Henry VI (1425/6). The cases are not just those involving the upper classes, for my ancestors were certainly never of the gentry, although they did describe themselves in the 17th century as yeomen.

## Examples of entries in the Index

A number of the references I found to Chancery Proceedings are in the form:

<i>Thunder</i>	<i>Defendant</i>	<i>1666</i>
<i>Tye</i>	<i>Plaintiff</i>	
<i>Chan Pro</i>	<i>REYNARDSON</i>	

This, unfortunately, is not sufficient to give the accession number required to order the document at the Public Record Office. The PRO issues a leaflet: *Chancery Proceedings (Equity suits)* - which is of some help with sorting the Bernau index references into accession numbers and I have always found the assistants in the search rooms very willing to give further aid. In the above example, "Reynardson" translates to C9 and the appropriate index can be searched for the plaintiff's name, where the remainder of the reference is found. The full reference for this particular case is C9/423/132 - clearly not obvious from this entry in Bernau's index.

Another type of reference from the index is:

<i>Thunder</i>	<i>L26/20</i>
<i>236</i>	
<i>Defendant Chan Pro: Chas I</i>	

and this translates to C2/CHAS1/L26/20 which bears much more resemblance to Bernau's index than the previous one.

The next example is of a reference to a deponent (witness) which translates to C24/1740. "Town" depositions were taken from witnesses in London and "Country" depositions were those taken from witnesses in the rest of the country.

*Thunder Thos 1765*

*Town Depositions Bundle No 1740*

*Initial letter of suit: B*

My first visit to the Long and Round Rooms of Chancery Lane, where I would see the documents referred to in the Bernau Index, was rather daunting, as there are large bookcases, some of them from floor to ceiling, against the walls, containing hundreds of volumes of indexes and calendars. The problem is that so many systems of indexing or calendaring were used at different times, over a period of 900 or more years, by many different people, that it takes a long time to understand them all. My infrequent day trips meant that I had usually forgotten half or more of what I had learnt on my previous visit and, as time was always severely limited, on many occasions I relied almost entirely on the assistants in the search rooms to sort out the accession numbers for me.

I have now looked at fourteen of the references and since I had already seen the Poll Book entries elsewhere, I have only another four to pursue. I also found, in the indexes to the plaintiffs' names, another three cases involving a Thunder, all of which I have looked at. Bernau did not put in his index those names already in indexes at the PRO.

Once I decided that a document was sufficiently interesting, I arranged to have it copied. This can be expensive, as some of the documents are very large, and some consist, as well, of several pages, but those, however, would have taken me more than one trip to transcribe. By having a copy made I can study it more carefully at my own pace, although there is usually a considerable wait for it to be sent by post.

I have wondered occasionally whether I would have been better off employing an agent, as the cost of travel and meals would have paid someone familiar with the system for many hours' work. Against that, I have had much pleasure and some excitement in the handling and reading of the original documents.

## Theory and practice

Inevitably not all of the documents I have looked at refer to my relatives. The deponent references were the most disappointing, as generally all that I found of interest was the person's name, residence and age.

The Chancery Proceedings produced a variety of cases. In theory each case should have a Bill of Complaint, a writ ordering the defendant to appear, an Answer to the complaint, a Replication by the complainant and a Rejoinder by the defendant, each of which can be written in a different hand. There could also be other documents, but I have never found any. In practice, sometimes there was only the Bill of Complaint or the Answer. Occasionally there were a number of defendants and so a corresponding number of Answers. In only one case did I find a Bill of Complaint, an Answer, a Replication and a Rejoinder.

Some of the pages had pieces missing, some had parts too faint to read, some had been damaged by damp and neglect and some had all these defects, as one would expect from their age. In one case there appeared to be only half the original sheet and I was unable to find any mention of the name Thunder.

I began with the latest documents to give me practice in transcribing, as the writing generally, but not always, became more difficult to read in the older documents. There is quite a long piece of standard legal jargon at the beginning and end of each document and learning that general format can help with deciphering the handwriting.

Here are brief synopses of the more interesting cases I found under Chancery Proceedings:

**Edward Thunder**  
of East Hoathly, Sussex.

In a document (ref: C11/378/12) indexed as 1723 but otherwise, as far as I could see, undated, a cousin of my 5 x great-grandfather one

Edward Thunder, was being sued over a loan of £100, taken out in 1691, the security being his property in East Hoathly, Sussex. In 1707 Edward paid the outstanding interest on the loan, and the original debt was taken over by a Nicholas Wood, with the agreement that Edward would pay the interest and the original £100 within a year or forfeit the property.

Eight years later, neither the interest nor the £100 had been paid, and Nicholas demanded his money or possession of the property. Edward refused to pay up and said he could not give possession because he had no title to the property, nor any right to have mortgaged it in 1691, because he had previously, "Made several secret conveyances and encumbered the said premises." Nicholas was therefore forced to take Edward to the Court of Chancery, "Where relief against secret and fraudulent conveyance is to be obtained." He asked the court to issue a writ to order Edward to appear.

Frustratingly, there is no surviving answer from Edward nor any further documents. Is this case, perhaps, the reason why Edward's eldest son, who would normally have inherited his father's lands, took his wife and five children to live in Birchington, Kent?

#### Nicholas Thunder of Guestling, Sussex.

I found two separate cases relating to the estate of this Nicholas Thunder. One was a Bill of Complaint dated 1666 (ref: C9/423/132) in which one of Nicholas's daughters sued her brothers, the executors, for her share of their father's estate; and the other, dated 1665 (ref: C9/131/11), was the answer by the same brothers to a suit brought by another sister, also wanting her share. The two documents together give a large amount of information about three generations of this family.

It appeared that although Nicholas had made a will in 1653 and shortly afterwards died, his will had not been proved because two of his sons, named as executors, were, "distracted and hindered therein," by one of their sisters. Further, although one of the sisters said her father's estate was worth, "£800 and upwards," the brothers said it was only worth £400 and their father had debts when he died of over £125. The £400 also included more than £140 owed to their father, and all these debtors had proved insolvent so only a small part of the money was recovered. The brothers had paid out £162 8s 0d to their sisters and were still indebted to others mentioned in the will, and there was nothing left. They said that they had done the best they could in difficult circumstances.

Interestingly, from my point of view, my 7 x great-grandfather Edward, and one of his brothers, Thomas, were mentioned in Nicholas's will as his, "loveing friends".

The two families were, in a later generation, joined by a marriage.

#### Thomas Thunder of Chiddingly, Sussex.

This is the Thomas mentioned above, and he seems to have been one of my more obstreperous relatives, with a sharp eye to business. He appeared in two cases, one involved the leasing of some land and the other, earlier case, was about a very acrimonious family argument. In the case brought in 1647, (ref: C2/CHAS1/T19/32), Thomas said that he took a lease for 14 years on a property in Chiddingly that had been surrendered in 1644. He further said that the rent he was to pay was £40 per year, £7 less than previously, because, "the pressures and calamities of the times not affording such productions as formerly quiet times did do," (this was during the Civil War). He said he then spent £100 or more on improving the property.

The owners stated, however, that they had only agreed to Thomas having it at £40 for one year and not fourteen, consequently they had leased the property to an Edmund Caverly from Michaelmas 1645. The owners further said that Thomas could not possibly have spent £100 on the property because it was in such a poor state with the "mansion" house roof rotting, the ground floor being used as a pigsty and the land overploughed and, "made hartelesse".

The case was complicated by the large number of defendants, the loss of an indenture by one of the owners whose property, "hath been plundered or despoiled in these distracted times," and the fact that this same person had been imprisoned and so had put his affairs into

the hands of an agent, who made the agreement with Thomas. There was also considerable disagreement over who had caused the "great waste and spoil" on the property - Thomas Thunder or Edmund Caverly.

After reading all the defendants' answers, I think Thomas was at fault and had taken advantage of the difficult national situation to force an agreement at £40 per year, assuming that possession was nine-tenths of the law and the owners would not be bothered or able to find another tenant!

The second case (ref: C2/CHAS1/T5/54) in which Thomas had a part, was a family row about £100 which had been placed in the safe-keeping of his father by his sister, when she remarried after the death of her first husband. The money was to safeguard the future of her children, John and Joane Brakpole. The case gives a lot of information about the family as well as some insight into the way they lived in Chiddingly, near Hailsham in Sussex. The argument was about how the money was used and whether and who had agreed what. Thomas had carried out a great deal of his father's business and, "Came to know every particular writing and note which was in his fathers custody," but would not produce them to settle the argument, despite being asked to, "in all friendly manner".

On one occasion Thomas had ridden to London and back in order to engage counsel in a case involving possession of a copyhold property that should have been surrendered to his nephew. That case cost a lot of money, "£100 at the least," and it was claimed that Thomas's father, who had since died, had paid it so the money should be reimbursed to his estate.

There was a great deal more argument over various smaller sums of money, but Joane and William, Thomas's mother and brother and executors of Thomas's father's estate, had got to the point where they felt that the only way they could get to the truth of the matter was to go to court.

#### The case in the Court of Requests

The references in the Bernau index to this case are:

*Thunder Thomas 1486-1546 Thunder Alice*  
*Court of requests Vol 1 p80 Court of requests Vol 1 p 80*

For a long time I ignored these entries, which would seem to be referring to the same case, as there was no county or parish given, and it was well before any of my proven ancestors had lived. However, a correspondent who had been looking at manorial documents in the British Library for me, managed to take my family tree back to a Thomas Thunder of Chiddingly who was mentioned in a Manorial Court Roll in 1516. She saw these references in the index and, on looking at the original documents, told me that I was sure to want a copy of them.

This case, brought in 1514, is the most fascinating of all the cases that I have found from the Bernau index. It was a complaint against my 11 x great-grandfather, Thomas Thunder, brought by his stepmother Alice who described herself as "a poor and aged woman". Alice claimed that Thomas had cheated her out of her inheritance from his father William: a room of her own in her late husband's "mansion". "Fire and flett without any gainsaying," and 13s 4d (approx 66p) per year. She also claimed that her stepson had beaten her, "With his own hands!"

Thomas, of course, denied it all, but it was clear that there had been some enormous animosity between them, for he called her, "troubelous and full of vexation," and accused her of chasing his cattle so that some were impounded and others lost, to his great financial detriment. Friends had tried to get them to reach an agreement, but that ended up in more acrimony, as Alice said that they were all in a conspiracy against her!

Judgements were not filed with the other documents in the case, so once again I am left wondering what happened - did Alice get her room back all those years ago?

Even where documents did not involve my relatives I still found interesting information throwing light on the way of life, attitudes and values of a particular period. I hope that those readers who use the Bernau Index will find as much of value as I have done. Several years ago I used to say, "I never find anything interesting about my family," but I hadn't looked in the right places.

# USING BERNAU'S INDEX

Guy Lawton

An article in the September 1990 issue of *Family Tree Magazine* discussed the use of Bernau's Index. I hope that as a result more family historians are now referring to it as an invaluable means of access to a much neglected source of genealogical facts and family information: legal proceedings recorded in the public records. I use the term legal proceedings to cover records of the legal processes in the Courts of Chancery, Exchequer, Requests and Star Chamber held in the Public Record Office (PRO) in Chancery Lane.

I have made use of these sources for nearly 20 years and, while it is true that the higher up the social scale your ancestors were the more likely you are to come across them as litigants in these records, those persons of humbler standing may nevertheless feature as deponents if they were in a position to testify to facts regarded as useful by the litigants in the case. As a source, these legal proceedings are unlikely to be as fruitful to most searchers as are wills and administrations. Nevertheless, since Bernau's Index provides a ready finding aid to some of the records, legal proceedings in the PRO should not be ignored. Indeed, if your 16th, 17th or 18th century ancestor was at least of yeoman status, I regard the source as important and it should be high on your list of ancillary sources for ancestors who were merchants or husbandmen.

Consulting Bernau's Index is simply a matter of viewing a microfilm of it at the Society of Genealogists' premises or at a Family History Centre of The Church of Latter-day Saints. Be warned however, that the index is not fully sorted: Christian names can appear in haphazard order and even surname spellings are not always in strict alphabetical order, although they will be very close to their correct position. Variant surname spellings are not grouped together and must be searched for separately.

Having extracted the index entries for your chosen surname, translating the references found to modern PRO document references (call numbers) is not always obvious, so this article attempts to guide you through such difficulties as it presents.

PRO call numbers consist of two parts: the "class code" (generally some letters followed by a number) and the "piece number" (often wholly numeric, but may contain regnal years or law terms) [PRO General Information leaflet number 25 contains fuller details of document references]. For the sake of brevity, in this article I shall refer to a "class" of PRO documents when referring to the whole collection of documents grouped together under the same class code. Rather more loosely, I shall refer to Class C 2/CHAS I when meaning those documents within Class C 2 proper whose piece numbers start with CHAS I. I shall similarly refer to Class C 2/JAS I. I hope the gain in clarity justifies the abuse of correct form!

## Proceedings in the Court of Chancery

Before I go any further I must point out that the *Family Tree* article referred to earlier was in advertently misleading when it stated that, "Mr Bernau and his team indexed the names of the defendants and those who gave evidence," and later, "Bernau did not put in his index those names already in indexes in the PRO." The first statement is true as far as it goes, but in its implication that plaintiffs were *not* indexed, it is incorrect. If the second quoted statement refers to the printed calendars in the PRO, it too is incorrect.

The PRO *Records Information* leaflet number 30 should certainly be carefully studied before consulting Chancery Proceedings and gives the information in Table 1, below, regarding the coverage of Bernau's Index. Another useful, although now dated, introduction to Chancery Proceedings is *Chancery and other Legal Proceedings* by R E F Garrett, published by Pinhorns in 1968. This is based on a two part article *Chancery and Other Proceedings* which appeared in the *Genealogists' Magazine*, volume 15, numbers 3 and 4, June and December 1965.

Table 1

- C 2 (Chancery Proceedings: Series I): period 1603-1625, suits A-K only; 1625-1649, defendants' surnames only
- C 3 (Chancery Proceedings: Series II)
- C 5 (Bridges)
- C 9 (Reynardson): defendants' surnames only
- C 11 (Various Six Clerks, Series I, 1714-1758): all names mentioned in litigation, including depositions filed among bills and answers
- C 12 (Various Six Clerks, Series II, 1758-1800): depositions only. Six Clerks Whittington-Sewell and Purcas-Winter only
- C 21 (Country Depositions Eliz I - Chas I): all deponents
- C 22 (Country Depositions 1649-1714): approximately 8% of all deponents
- C 24 (Town Depositions): all deponents to about 1800 only.

As can be seen, the leaflet states that in Class C 9, defendants' surnames only are indexed whereas in Class C 11, all names mentioned in the litigation, not merely those names in the calendar, are included in Bernau's Index. This variation in coverage between the different classes must be borne in mind when using the index and in conducting your research.

On the other hand, the leaflet is silent on the index coverage of Classes C 3 and C 5 and is slightly ambiguous about the coverage of Class C 12. The PRO has confirmed that it intended to say that for Class C 12, Bernau's Index covers only the names of the deponents in the 2 Six Clerks' categories known as "Whittington & Sewell" and "Purcas & Winter".

Furthermore, the following classes of Chancery Proceedings are not referred to at all in the leaflet: C 1 (Early Chancery Proceedings ie before 1558) and C 6, C 7, C 8 and C 10 (Chancery Proceedings before 1714 for Clerks Collins, Hamilton, Mitford and Whittington respectively). The latter classes, C 6 *et seq*, are indeed not covered by Bernau's Index, but my own use of the index has produced a few references to Class C 1.

Between them, the C 1 references I found covered the first 5 volumes of the Calendar of Early Chancery Proceedings, some of the references being to plaintiffs and some to defendants. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that at least all the names in these 5 volumes of the calendar are included in Bernau's Index. Since the sixth volume of this calendar was not published until 1922, by which time I believe Bernau's compilations had ceased, it seems equally probable that volumes later than number 5 are *not* included in the index.

Classes C 3 and C 5 appear from my own researches to have the same coverage in Bernau's Index as Class C 1 discussed earlier: all names appearing in the printed calendars. In these two classes however, since all the relevant calendar volumes had been published by 1917, the complete Class Calendars are included.

Before suggesting how Bernau's Index should be used and explaining how to convert the indirect index references to PRO call numbers, it is helpful to describe briefly the calendars themselves. They fall into two distinct categories for genealogical purposes: the informative and the terse. The terse calendars list cases by a minimalist statement of the style "Smith versus Jones". If there was more than one litigant on a side, the name of the plaintiff --

defendant, as the case may be, may be followed by "etc". In the few cases where it applies, the additional information "by guardian" in the case of juveniles, or "knt", "bart" and so on for title holders will follow the litigant's name. Thus, if your ancestor Brown was linked with either plaintiff Smith or defendant Jones in the preceding example, the terse calendar is not going to tell you. In consequence, where Bernau's Index was prepared from such a calendar, it will not include your ancestor, despite the fact that he may well have been as involved in the dispute as the persons actually named.

Some of these "terse" calendars add the year the cause was entered. This is a small help in selecting cases to be examined when time precludes following up all references found. Some also contain an indication of the papers filed under the given bundle and piece numbers. An entry such as "brrr" indicates that the documents filed together consist of the original bill (the "b") and three responses (the "r"s). These responses may be answers from several defendants named in the bill, or further replies from the various parties (rejoinders and rebuttals, etc). The technical distinction is irrelevant to our needs and anyway cannot be inferred from the calendar entries. It is worth noting here that the bill and answer(s) are frequently separately filed in the PRO archives.

The "informative" calendars quite often give fuller lists of names where multiple litigants are involved (although still on occasion falling back on such catch-all phrases as "and others") and include the county or counties involved in the cause as well as some indication of the subject under dispute.

This may be no more than the bald statement "Money", but you should not assume that such a case will be unlikely to contain much

genealogical material. On the contrary, disputes over payments allegedly due under agreements concerning property, may recite the successive family owners or tenants of an estate, however small that maybe, in order to establish the title of the current litigant. Names and actual dates of death of the father and grandfather of a litigant may be mentioned and even such comments as, "and he is long since dead," are genealogically useful.

The stated subject may be more helpful than this of course. It may say something like, "Barchester; estate of Anthony Trollope." If in such a testamentary case, the surnames of both plaintiff(s) and defendant(s) were also Trollope, the genealogical potential of the dispute would obviously be high.

Bernau's Index is likely to give you a plethora of references. For example, even the rare surname Rochfort produced 14 references for me, while my own surname of Lawton gave me 412 entries. Some of these Lawton references were duplicates, of course, arising from family disputes, but there were still over 300 distinct references to pursue. Even if all references are eventually going to be examined, some way of selecting likely family references to examine first is desirable. If all references are not going to be examined, some selection criteria are essential.

Narrowing down by place and/or time are obvious possibilities. Here the "informative" calendars are a help and generally speaking the calendar references that Bernau's Index provides should be consulted to facilitate your selection process.

*To be continued next month*

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# USING BERNAU'S INDEX

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## Part II

In Classes C 2/CHAS I, C 21 and C 24, there is a way of prioritising your choice among their references without referring to the calendar. This is provided by the letter that appears in Bernau's Index and is discussed shortly in connection with the conversion of the index references for these classes into PRO call numbers.

Something like half of the references you will obtain from Bernau's Index are either already PRO call numbers or can be turned into one by inspection. The earlier article in *Family Tree Magazine* [September 1990] gave an example of a Bernau's Index reference that can be so converted: "Defendant. Chan Pro Chas I. L26/20". Knowing that "Defendant Chan Pro Chas I" in the index relates to the Class C 2/CHAS I, a reference such as the "L26/20" quoted translates directly to the PRO call number C 2/CHAS I/L26/20. Although not present in the example above, Bernau's Index generally also gives the volume number and page reference for this source, but the calendar concerned is of the most terse category and is of little help in narrowing down your search. Unless you wish to know the names of the litigants, I do not recommend referring to this particular calendar.

I stated earlier that Bernau usually gives a volume number when quoting this source. Where he does not and you wish to refer to the calendar, you can identify the volume from the plaintiff letter that starts the reference that Bernau's Index quotes, using Table 2 below.

Table 2

Plaintiff letter	British Record Society Index Library volume
A - D	2
E - L	5
M - R	6
S - Z	14

The letter that starts the piece number provided by Bernau is in fact the initial letter of the plaintiff's name in the calendar. Where this letter is the same as that of the stated defendant in the index, it is possible that the case is a family dispute and, as such, more likely to contain genealogical information. This is not infallible of course. In my own researches, R26/11 noted down during an abstraction of Randalls from the index was indeed a Randall versus Randall case, but R26/30 turned out to be Rollt versus Randall! Nevertheless, this letter provides the criterion mentioned earlier for prioritising your selection of references

within this class for early examination. It is particularly helpful here, given the absence of guidance from the "terse" calendar volumes.

Another category of case in Bernau's Index that directly gives the PRO piece number is the so-called Country Depositions, Eliz I to Chas I, Class C 21. Bernau refers to these as "Chancery Deponents", sometimes adding "Eliz - Chas I". Usually he also adds "Group" followed by a number in the range 1 to 8 inclusive. This number relates to a grouping of counties used by the Genealogical Co-operative Search Club, but for these Chancery Deponents in Bernau's Index this item of information is generally superfluous, since the index itself will give the deponent's place of residence besides his age, occupation and the year of deposition. It is therefore very easy to identify an individual of genealogical interest to you.

Bernau quotes a reference similar to the C 2/CHAS I one described above: a letter (as in that class, being the initial letter of the plaintiff's name in the case to which the deposition relates), followed by two numbers separated by an oblique stroke. An example is "Nicholas Luke of Sherford, Devon, yeoman aged 50, 1633, Gp 7, M18/8". The PRO call number is therefore C 21/M18/8, which is a straightforward conversion of the information contained in Bernau's Index. As in Class C 2/CHAS I, the letter that starts the piece number for Class C 21 may be used to prioritise selection of depositions for examination. However, there is probably sufficient information elsewhere in the index reference not to require this additional selection criterion.

Bernau also lists Chancery Depositions, 1649 - 1714, Class C 22. These he invariably describes as "Chan Deps before 1714" and the index shows the name of the cause, a year or reign and two numbers separated by an oblique stroke. For example "Cowne v Luke, Chas II, 36/24". The PRO call number is C 22/36/24, again obtained by direct inspection of the Bernau's Index entry.

Bernau's Index lists the remaining class of depositions, known as "Town Depositions" (Class C 24) in less detail than the early Country Depositions of Class C 21. The deponent's occupation and age are omitted, but "Year", "Bundle Number" and "Initial Letter of Suit" are given. To convert this information into the PRO call number, the "Initial Letter" is *not* required (thus it differs in this respect from the Country Depositions). This initial letter is that of one of the litigants in the case, not

necessarily the plaintiff. As previously described, this letter may be used to try to narrow down the possibilities to a litigant of possibly the same name as the deponent.

An example of a Town Deposition from Bernau's Index is "1571. Bundle No 96, Suit C". This translates to the PRO call number C 24/96. Although a Town Deposition, ie taken in London, the deponent in this example, John Lawton, is described in the deposition as "John Lawton of Lawton [Church Lawton in south-east Cheshire], gentleman, aged 54". He was then lord of the manor of Church Lawton. This illustrates the fact that the Town Depositions cannot be ignored simply because your ancestral family of 400 years ago was apparently firmly located hundreds of miles away from London! The cause concerned was John Ottwell v Robert Cocke, so the suit letter in the index here relates to the defendant.

References to the Chancery Proceedings themselves are of two distinct types in Bernau's Index. The easy ones to translate are those to Classes C 11 and C 12, since they quote directly the PRO piece number. All that is needed to complete the PRO call number is to precede the quoted reference with C 11 when Bernau describes it as "Chan(cery) Proc 1714/58" or by C 12 when he describes it as "Chan(cery) Proc 1758/1800". Indeed, sometimes the index refers to the latter Class simply as "C 12" without description, so it directly gives the whole call number. In these two classes, Bernau also gives the date of the cause. Examples of Bernau's Index entries for these two classes are "Ann Life deceased, 1736, Chan Proc 1714/58, 1781/14" that translates to PRO call number C 11/1781/14, and "Thomas Brettell, 1778, C 12 938/109", is obviously C 12/938/109.

The remaining sources require reference to the printed calendars on the open shelves in the Long Room at Chancery Lane. Table 3, which follows, gives the translation of the "Volume" reference included in the volume and page information given as such in Bernau's Index. Reference to the stated page of the appropriate calendar will reveal the PRO piece number, as well as other information that may help in selecting causes for examination. An example of how to obtain the PRO call number from the information in the calendar is given at the front of each volume.

One example taken from Bernau's Index will suffice to illustrate the approach for all the classes listed in Table 3: "Elizabeth Smallwood, widow, 1657, Chan Pro Bridges, Vol 4 p 162." The quoted description is an obvious variant of the Class C 5 description given in Table 3, so the index reference to volume 4 is really to Lists and Indexes, volume XLV. Page 162 of that calendar discloses that Elizabeth Smallwood featured in the cause "Elizabeth Smallwood widow and others versus Christopher Smallwood, Anne his wife and others", dated 1657. The dispute was concerned with Coventry in Warwickshire. The documents are filed in Bundle 556,

Table 3

PRO Class	Details in Bernau		Calendar referred to Name	Volume	Category
	Description	Vol			
C 1	Early Chancery Proceedings	1	Lists and Indexes	XII	Informative
		2		XVI	
		3		XX	
		4		XXIX	
		5		XXXVIII	
C 2 /CHAS I	Chancery Proceedings Chas I (sometimes preceded by "Defendant")	1	British Record Society Index Library	2	Terse
		2		5	
		3		6	
		4		14	
C 3	Chancery Proceedings Series II (sometimes preceded by "Defendant")	1	Lists and Indexes	VII	Informative
		2		XXIV	
		3		XXX	
C 5	Chancery Proceedings: Bridges	1	Lists and Indexes	XXXIX	Informative
		2		XLII	
		3		XLIV	
		4		XLV	
C 9	Chancery Proceedings: Reynardson	-	Public Record Office	Plaintiffs A-K	Terse
		-		Plaintiffs L-Z	

Number 32. The piece number is therefore 556/32 and the full PRO call number is C 5/556/32.

For the sake of completeness, I should have included in Table 3, Class C 2/JAS I, which PRO *Records Information* leaflet 30 states is included in Bernau's Index so far as suits A-K are concerned. This restricted range is because only this first half of the alphabet has been covered in the published calendars (Lists and Indexes, volume XLVII. It so happens that only a minority of the names I have researched in Bernau's Index have been in this part of the alphabet, but I have not come across a reference there to this class. Perhaps I do not have a representative sample from the index, but

given that the relevant Lists and Indexes volume was not published until 1922, I consider it questionable to say that this class is included in Bernau's Index.

If any reader of the magazine has obtained a C 2/JAS I reference from Bernau's Index, it would be helpful to future searchers if they wrote to Family Tree magazine and explained the format of the entry Bernau used. In connection with the coverage of Chancery Proceedings in the index it is worth pointing out that Coldham, in a useful short article in the *Genealogists' Magazine* gives the same information as the PRO leaflet. He may, of course, have been quoting from the PRO leaflet, originally published earlier than his talk of 1978,

which is the basis of his article, or both may draw on an earlier source. This may have been the leaflet produced by the publishers Pinhorns, which is referred to in an article particularly useful for intending users of Bernau's Index, also published in the *Genealogists' Magazine*, Volume 19, number 10, June 1979: *Genealogical Resources in Chancery Records*, Peter Wilson Coldham. There is a small correction to this article in *Genealogists' Magazine*, Volume 18 number 5, March 1976.

*Final part next month*

## Family heirloom

Mrs Penny Sault of 7604 Cunliffe Road, Vernon, British Columbia, Canada, V1B 1T3 sends this photo of an unusual heirloom which she knows little about, although it was handed down through her mother's family. It was painted directly onto the back of the curved glass, the artist somehow achieving the exquisite detail on the front. Penny can just decipher the initials "A D E ?" but not the date.

The frame is imprinted with "The Crystoleum Co, 500 Oxford St W" and a sticker reads, "Pauline & Co, Swiss Depot, Boyces Avenue, Clifton." There are two backing cards: one for the Election of Westbury Guardians, requesting support for Independent Candidate Charles Henry Mayo, and the other an invitation from Mr George De-Lisle Bush, Master of the Ancient Society of St Stephen's Ringers, to a dinner at the Montague Hotel Kingsdo(r)n. Can anyone tell Penny anything about this style of painting or its approximate date, or even identify the little girl?

