

# CHESHIRE ANCESTOR



The Journal of the  
Family History Society of Cheshire



## In this edition:

*May Day Revels in Over Peover* ❖ *National Service*

**Graves, Memorials & Cemeteries: Resources for Family History**

*FHSC Computer Club and Online Focus Groups*

*A Few Forgotten Women* ❖ *Malpas News and more...*

**Volume 53    June 2023    Issue No. 4**

ISSN 1460-0277

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# CHESHIRE ANCESTOR

Registered Charity: 515168

Society website: [www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk)

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Cheshire Ancestor is published in March, June, September and December.

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*Our society was founded in 1969—one of the first family history societies*

## ITEMS FOR THE CHESHIRE ANCESTOR

FINAL copy dates are the 10th day of January, April, July or October.

*The earlier material is submitted, the more help it is to the editor.*

Publication is at the discretion of the editor and is subject to space being available; unused items may be carried over to a later issue. Authors retain copyright of their own articles after publication but if an article is reprinted please state that it was previously published in the CHESHIRE ANCESTOR.

Articles are accepted by email (in Microsoft Word, Open Office Writer, or plain text format, using any font type or size), or by post as a manuscript.

Suggested length 300-2000 words. Please write all surnames in CAPITALS.

**If you have typed your article on a computer, please consider the Editor's workload and submit it by email to avoid the article having to be re-typed.**

Illustrations must be **your own, copyright-free images and NOT copies of images or photos found online or in a book**, unless you have written permission from the copyright holder, a copy of which must be included.

Please **email** images (two or three max.) as separate files in JPG or TIFF format, scanned at minimum 300dpi (higher resolution is required for small photos to allow for enlargement). Please **do not post images printed on normal paper** as they will not reproduce well; and **never post original photos**.

Please include your name, membership number (if a member), and postal or email address. **Please state if you DO want** either or both of your postal or email addresses to be published, otherwise they will be omitted, to comply with GDPR regulations - which means potential 'cousins' cannot contact you.

### ADVERTISING RATES

Advertisements are accepted for publication at the following rates per issue, with a discount when the same copy is run in four consecutive issues:

Full page: £47 per issue; £170 for 4 issues

Half-page: £25 per issue; £90 for 4 issues

Quarter-page: £14 per issue; £50 for 4 issues

Please send a cheque payable to *FHS of Cheshire* to the Treasurer, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope if a receipt is required. Advertising copy to be emailed to the Editor, preferably as a PDF file (addresses inside cover).

*Final copy dates for advertisements are TWO MONTHS prior to publication date, i.e. 1st January for the March issue, and so on.*

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## Editor's Page

by Rosie Rowley



I have received very few articles during the last few months so if you can, please write something about your ancestors, or interesting things you have come across during your research, and send them in. Guidelines for articles are on the opposite page.

A new service for members, called *Cheshire Research Buddies*, started in May. It takes the form of a monthly Zoom online helpdesk meeting and each month will have a different theme. To complement the meetings, the CHESHIRE ANCESTOR will focus on a forthcoming topic, with relevant photos and information. The focus this time is Malpas, which is the topic for the Research Buddies meeting on 24th June. For more information, see the article on page 7.

Subscriptions for many members are due in June so if you don't pay by standing order, please see the centre pages for the renewal form and help the membership team by renewing promptly.

In this issue we have an article by Hazel Halse about May Day celebrations in Over Peover, with some lovely photos of children dressed up for the processions and maypole dancing. Dave Williams has some suggestions for finding married daughters, and Margaret Roberts also writes about researching female ancestors in her article about the *A Few Forgotten Women* project, which seeks to preserve the memory of some of those whose stories might otherwise be lost.

If you're not interested in computers, perhaps you ignore the NTS section of the journal. However, I urge you to take a look, as the articles are often not about the technicalities of computers, instead being about useful websites, DNA, or new data on Ancestry, etc. Do also read the article on page 9 which explains the scope of the various FHSC Computer Club meetings; again, it's not all about the inner workings of computers and you don't need to be a 'boffin' to take part!

## Chairman's Jottings

Unfortunately both Alan and his wife have been in hospital suffering from pneumonia so Alan has been unable to put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard!) for this issue. We wish them both well and hope that they will be fully recovered by the time this issue is published.

## Society News and Notices

### Updating your Membership Details

Quite a few members have ticked in their profile that they don't want the society to contact them, and for some we don't have an email address. It may be that this is still the case, but you are missing out on our newsletters telling you about forthcoming meetings and other useful information. We keep introducing new initiatives and don't want any of our members to miss out. To change your membership details, login to our website [www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk) and click on *My Profile*. If you need any help, please email Gay Oliver at [web.admin@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:web.admin@fhsc.org.uk).

### For the Society's Latest News

Keep up-to-date between journals by reading the society's email newsletters, or follow the FHSC on Facebook or Twitter. Provided that you have given us your correct email address and permission to contact you, you should receive society news by email. You can subscribe to emails from any group; go to the group's page on the FHSC website and click on *Add ... to My Groups*. Check which email newsletters you are subscribed to by clicking on *Newsletters*, then *My Newsletter Subscriptions*. Contact details for all groups are inside the back cover.

### Society Diary Dates

Below is a list of events and meetings planned at the time of going to press; for full details of seminars and group meetings, please see the Group News pages

towards the end of this issue. Please check the FHSC website for later additions, changes and cancellations.

Date	Description	Subject
7-Jun	Runcorn Group	TBA
12-Jun	Northwich Group	Eyam, The Plague Village
13-Jun	Crewe Group	F2F: The Cheshire Roll of Honour
14-Jun	Sale Group	Southern Cemetery
19-Jun	Alsager Group	Memories and Mementos of the 1953 Coronation
20-Jun	Congleton Group	F2F: TBA
20-Jun	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	ZOOM(2.30): Websites Less Used by Family Historians
20-Jun	Nantwich Group	F2F: Using Quarter Sessions Admin Records
20-Jun	Wallasey Group	The Golden Age of the Picture Postcard
21-Jun	FHSC Zoom Seminar	ZOOM: Photogenealogy - An Introduction
22-Jun	Tameside Group	Crime City: Manchester's Victorian Underworld
24-Jun	Research Buddies	ZOOM: Malpas
26-Jun	Bebington Group	Establishment of the Workhouse at Clatterbridge
27-Jun	Macclesfield Group	UK GDL and UK MFH Websites
29-Jun	Chester Group	Wills, Probate and Death Duty Registers
5-Jul	Runcorn Group	TBA
10-Jul	Northwich Group	Visit to Mobberley Research Centre
11-Jul	Crewe Group	F2F: The History of the Co-op in Crewe & District
12-Jul	Sale Group	(TBC) Visit to Mobberley Research Centre
17-Jul	Alsager Group	Group Visit
18-Jul	Nantwich Group	F2F: TBA
18-Jul	Nantwich Group	F2F: Nantwich Parochial Library, St Mary's Church
18-Jul	Wallasey Group	AGM and Social Evening
19-Jul	FHSC Zoom Seminar	ZOOM: An A-Z of Family History Resources
24-Jul	Bebington Group	History of the Development of Oxtou
27-Jul	Chester Group	AGM and Talk: My Genealogical Journey
27-Jul	Tameside Group	F2F: Workshop - Bring Your Brick Walls

29-Jul	Research Buddies	ZOOM: Wybunbury (Nantwich)
3-Aug	Runcorn Group	TBA
9-Aug	Sale Group	AGM and Members' Talks
10-Aug	Crewe Group	Members' Day at the Crewe FHU
14-Aug	Northwich Group	Marbury Hall
15-Aug	Nantwich Group	F2F: TBA
15-Aug	Wallasey Group	Development of Liverpool as a World Port
16-Aug	FHSC Zoom Seminar	ZOOM: Vale Royal Rebellion & Other Lost Cheshire History
21-Aug	Bebington Group	Mayer Park
22-Aug	Macclesfield Group	Workshop Evening
22-Aug	Nantwich Group	F2F: Role of a Voluntary Scientific Advisor in the Cold War
26-Aug	Research Buddies	ZOOM: Over/Wharton (Winsford)
2-Sep	Exec Committee	ZOOM: Committee Meeting
11-Sep	Northwich Group	Down Forget-Me-Not Lane
12-Sep	Crewe Group	F2F: AGM and Workshop
13-Sep	Sale Group	The Ins and Outs of Civil Registration
18-Sep	Alsager Group	AGM and Talk
19-Sep	Congleton Group	F2F: TBA
19-Sep	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	ZOOM(2.30): TBA
19-Sep	Wallasey Group	Industrial Wallasey
20-Sep	FHSC Zoom Seminar	ZOOM: Mediaeval Building Myths
25-Sep	Bebington Group	The Life of Lady Lever
26-Sep	Macclesfield Group	AGM and Talk: My Favourite Ancestor
28-Sep	Chester Group	The Poor Law and Workhouses in Cheshire
28-Sep	Tameside Group	Hybrid F2F/ZOOM: AGM and Talk TBC
30-Sep	Research Buddies	ZOOM: Sale
26-Oct	Tameside Group	Two Mesolithic Sites in Tameside
28-Oct	AGM	ZOOM: Society AGM
27-Jan	Exec Committee	ZOOM: Committee Meeting



## Volunteer News

### Society Vacancies

The society is seeking new volunteers for the following posts:

#### **Wanted: Honorary Editor**

Rosie Rowley has now served as editor for seven years and wishes to stand down. You do not need to live in Cheshire to carry out this role as everything is done by email or by post. **For information, please contact the current postholder, Rosie Rowley (editor@fhsc.org.uk)**

#### **Wanted: Book/CD Sales Officer**

We are looking for a volunteer to manage our book and CD sales. David Smetham is fulfilling sales until we find a replacement volunteer.

**For information, please contact the current (temporary) postholder, David Smetham (book.sales@fhsc.org.uk)**

## Cheshire Research Buddies

*by Margaret Roberts  
Publicity Officer*

Ever wished you could have a Cheshire research buddy? Other FHSC members who perhaps know a little more about the area your ancestors hail from, who live in the town or parish, could point you in the right direction for records or even pop out to take a picture of a gravestone or a building? Even, perhaps, someone who turns out to be a long-lost relative? Cheshire is a large county, and we have many well-informed members who can offer help with on-the-ground local knowledge, understanding, and experience, which cannot be gained by reading and researching alone. It's also a great way for everyone of all ages and skill levels to participate.

This new FHSC initiative, which started in May, will offer just that – a chance for members to help each other and in the process become better family historians. Cheshire Research Buddies takes the form of a monthly Zoom helpdesk, with each month based on particular location, industry or surname interest. The idea is that members who are researching the topic of the month can come along to ask for help, share knowledge, offer assistance and generally support each other.

The meetings will take place on the last Saturday of the month at 2pm, except for October when it is usually our AGM. The first meeting, which took place in May, was very successful and focused on Sandbach. The dates and topics of the meetings will be shown with the Group information towards the end of each issue of the CHESHIRE ANCESTOR. The next few meetings will be:

- 24th June: Malpas
- 29th July: Wybunbury (Nantwich)
- 26th August: Over/Wharton (Winsford)
- 30th September: Sale

In order to make sure the places and topics that members want are covered, please email me on [publicity@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:publicity@fhsc.org.uk) with ideas for future meeting topics. I would also encourage you to email research questions in advance so that they can be shared with other attendees beforehand.

FHSC members will need to register to attend, in the same way that you do for the Seminar series. Pop along to the FHSC website, click on *Events* at the top of the page and scroll down until you find the *Cheshire Research Buddies* listing, click on the blue title, then click on *Join* followed by *Save*.

PLEASE only register if you plan to attend a meeting, as numbers will be limited. Registration for each meeting closes at 10am on the meeting day.

***Malpas News (1) from the Cheshire Observer, 28 June 1873***

MALPAS INFANT SCHOOL – The Marquis of Cholmondeley having kindly promised a site, subscriptions are now being raised to build a school, which is required by the Committee of Council on Education.

## FHSC Computer Club and Online Focus Groups

*by Members of the Mac Focus Group*

Do you do your family history on a computer? If so, do you use a PC or a Mac? Perhaps you use just an iPad or other tablet? Did you know that there is a Computer Group for FHSC members which meets by Zoom every month? Do you know how to join that group? Lots of questions - here are some answers:

One of the few benefits of Covid was that the FHSC decided to go “online” to maintain contact with its members. Suddenly, meetings which were previously only available to residents of Cheshire at their local group meeting, became available to all members worldwide. As a result, attendance at the Computer Club and many of the regional groups has expanded rapidly. Now, some two to three years later, FHSC meetings have settled down to a happy combination of *Face-to-Face*, *Online*, and *Hybrid* meetings.

During this evolution, various sub-groups of the Computer Club were created. They now meet regularly, but separately, discussing specific subjects at a more targeted level. One of these is the Mac user group. There are others which cover Windows users, DNA, Publishing your Family History, Family Tree Maker and Family Historian users (two separate groups) and Newspapers. The meetings of these focus groups are fairly small and personal, allowing participants to feel they are amongst friends. Although they might seem to be the Society’s “*best kept secret*”, we hope that members may be interested in trying some of them.

The main Computer Club meets online by Zoom every second Wednesday of the month at 19:30 UK time. It is a well-attended and well-organised group, with about forty regular attendees and has members from all over the world. It is certainly not a geeks group discussing the intricacies of higher level computer programming - but no doubt there is someone with the knowledge to do so if you ever need it! Quite the contrary, it is a friendly gathering for discussion about the general and day-to-day issues facing all computer users when researching their genealogy online. We discuss the merits, or otherwise, of

different apps and websites and tips on how to get the best out of them. If anyone is having a particular problem with their hardware, software or simply just accessing the right research sites then this group is usually able to help. No question is considered too “daft”, and it has been rewarding to have learned so much from each other over the last couple of years.

About two-thirds of regular Computer Club members use PCs and Microsoft software for their research; therefore about a third of us use Macs and Apple software. While Computer Club is generic and relates to all computer users, the Mac User subgroup concentrates on issues facing Mac users. These are often the very same ones facing Windows users, but they may need resolving in different ways. The Mac User subgroup meets online by Zoom on the third Monday of the month at 14:00 UK time. At a recent meeting we spent about an hour discussing: tips when buying new hardware; which peripherals are best to expand the number and type of USB slots available on your Mac; portable speakers, and Bluetooth connections. We also had a good session talking about the best ways to use the inbuilt dictation software which comes with every Mac. Some were familiar with it and for others it was something completely new.

If you would like to join us in the Mac user subgroup - or indeed any of the other focus groups or just the larger Computer Club - you would be very welcome. You are not expected to know anything about any topic under discussion, nor do you need to speak up; you can just be an observer. But if you do and your knowledge can help fellow members, then we would be delighted to hear your contribution, be it in the form of a question or an answer.

To join, you only need to be a current member of the FHSC. Go to the society’s website [www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk), log in to your account, go to *Groups* (third one along the list under the title *The Family History Society of Cheshire*), choose *A-M* and then choose *Computer Club*. *Computer Club Documents* will take you to a pdf file containing the subgroup list, meeting information and the name of each subgroup leader. Geoff Johnson is the group leader of the Computer Club.

We look forward to welcoming more members to the Computer Club or our mini focus groups and seeing you online at a Zoom meeting in the near future.

## Margaret's Media Musings - Out and About with the FHSC

by Margaret Roberts  
Publicity & Social Media Officer  
[publicity@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:publicity@fhsc.org.uk)



In the last edition I brought you news of the success of the collaborative bid for National Lottery Heritage Fund money between both Cheshire councils and Cheshire Records Office for the two new History Centres in Crewe and Chester. Well, more good news in that both applications have now received the relevant planning permissions and so the project is continuing to make progress. FHSC is looking forward to working with both councils on these exciting new projects.

You may have noticed some subtle changes to the website as Chair and Webmaster Alan Bennett continues with his hard work to ready the website for the new version. In February FHSC had a lovely mention on the FindMyPast twitter feed when our social media postings were recognised for being one of the best feeds for sharing family history related content. Crewe Town Council gave FHSC an excellent and comprehensive write up as part of their local media spotlight campaign and we were featured in the local Knutsford directory. Congratulations also to the FHSC members who were instrumental in the successful protests against the proposed closure of Wirral Library.

During March FHSC was represented at two family history fairs. The Wirral History and Heritage Fair which took place at Hulme Hall in Port Sunlight saw members of Wallasey and Bebington groups, led by Sheila Hamilton and Sheila Jones, kept very busy answering questions and helping visitors to the fair. Jean Laidlaw and I attended the Manchester and Lancashire Family History Fair in Manchester Central Library, where we too were fully occupied with a large number of queries and requests for help - we even had a photo taken with Councillor Donna Ludford, the Lord Mayor of Manchester. It's a big

undertaking to give up a Saturday, fetch and carry all the equipment, set up and attend a stall all day! Huge thanks to everyone who took part on behalf of FHSC.

The early part of 2023 saw most of our groups reverting to Zoom meetings for the winter months. Now that lighter evenings and better weather is here then 'summer' mode has been adopted, with many more face-to-face meetings taking place although there are, of course, still some Zoom events for our out of county members to enjoy. As always, FHSC has provided members with a vast selection of talks, quizzes, members evenings, and workshops. Subjects included: life on the canals, tips on using various genealogical websites, poor law and workhouses, a letter from Colditz, ethics in family history, postcards, Sir William Brown (the man who made Liverpool), researching non-conformists, Tatton Park Farm, breach of promise to marry, the plague doctor, 100 years of trains to Audlem, a zoom tour of the conservation areas of the Wirral, Celts, Romans, and Vikings in Irby, the story of the Primitive Methodists, JT Moore and the Whiston connection and the trial of Dr. Tomanzie. There are very few family history societies that offer their members so much choice!

Speaking of which, please read the information on my new initiative, Cheshire Research Buddies, in the *Society News and Notices* section on page 7. Launched last month, this series of virtual helpdesks aims to bring together members who are researching in a particular area with those who have local knowledge, experience and understanding so that we can all help and support each other.

The Seminar series continues to grow in popularity, with over one hundred members attending each month. In January we listened to Dr Penny Walters, just before she flew off to take part in RootsTech, talking about adoption and how best to search for your ancestors if you have gaps in your family tree due to adoption or fostering. Penny discussed the practical realities, as well as the excitement and pain of researching a new family, and looked at the invaluable information that can be revealed via DNA. The foray into DNA proved slightly serendipitous as in February we greeted Michelle Leonard, a DNA expert. Michelle's presentation was fast and furious but certainly needed to be with the vast amount of information she packed into an hour. Tips on not only how to

test, but who to test with, as well as how your results are presented across several different platforms. There was something for everyone, no matter what your level of experience with DNA. Michelle stayed behind for some time to answer questions and also provided a link to her excellent handout, which can be found at [bit.ly/3Gc1uSP](https://bit.ly/3Gc1uSP)

March saw the return to FHSC of the ever-popular Dr Nick Barratt with his talk *Tracing the History of your House*. As personable as always, Nick guided attendees through a myriad of websites, books, and other resources that would be helpful when researching the history of a building, be it a small cottage or a manor house. He offered a timeline to help with conducting and organising your research and answered the many questions posed by attendees at the end of his talk. He also provided a PDF copy of his presentation which can be downloaded from the members documents area of the website. For Dr Barratt fans, he will be returning to us in 2024.

FHSC activities are publicised via the website, in our new-look monthly newsletter, in **CHESHIRE ANCESTOR**, and on Facebook and Twitter.

Finally, please remember that as an FHSC member you can attend any of the Zoom talks or events hosted by any group, you do not have to restrict yourself to the group you are attached to. Regularly check the Events page of the Society website ([www.fhsc.org.uk/new-events](http://www.fhsc.org.uk/new-events)); if anything grabs your attention then contact the Group Leader for more information. If you need to register for the event, such as the Seminars or Cheshire Research Buddies, then please follow the relevant instructions.

***Malpas News (2) from the Cheshire Observer, 28 June 1873***

THE MARRIAGE OF Miss Brassey, the only and beloved daughter of Mr George Brassey, of Cuddington Hall, near Malpas (brother of the late eminent contractor) to Mr Maddocks, of Wem, took place at Malpas Church on Thursday, and drew a large concourse of spectators, the church being filled, and the approaches thereto being occupied by great numbers anxious for a sight of the bridal procession. The wedding party arrived in seven carriages...

## Surname Interests

Are you researching any of these names? If so, log in to the FHSC website and click on *Research* to contact the person or people who registered the name as one of their surname interests.

If you haven't already registered your surname interests on the FHSC website, why not do it today? You may make contact with someone who holds the key to your brick wall!

These names were added between 29 January and 30 April 2023:

BADCOCK, BADROCK, BARKER, BARLOW, BARTON, BELL, BERRY,  
BIRCHENOUGH, BOWDEN, BRADDOCK, BROOKFIELD, BURROWS

COOK/COOKE, DAVIDSON, DAVIES, DELVES, DUTTON

GALLIMORE, GROCOTT, GROUCOT, GROUCOTT, GROWCOT

HARRISON, HENSHALL, HOLLINGWORTH/HOLLINGSWORTH, HOLLOWAY

JOHNSON, JONES, KEENAN

MASSEY, MASSIE, MERRY, NIXON

OLDHAM, POOLE, POSTLES

RAVENSROFT, READ/READE, REES, ROGERS

SCHOFIELD, SOUTHERN, SUTTON

TAMBLING, TOMLINSON

WILBRAHAM, WILDE, WOOLLEY, WORSLEY

### *Malpas News (3) from the Chester Courant, 16 July 1873*

FUNERAL OF THE LATE REV. CHANCELLOR THURLOW - The remains of the late **Rev. Chancellor Thurlow** were interred in the family vault at Malpas Church on Wednesday last. The tradespeople of the town evinced their respect by closing their shops and drawing their blinds... Twelve members of the Malpas United Friendly Society followed the remains to the vault.



## **Members' FREE Research Lookup Service**

**Note that this is a free service for members only, and is subject to any changes to the Covid-19 regulations and time available to volunteers.**

We will search our research resources (see the list on the FHSC website) for specific information about one named person. For example: a search for a marriage, baptism or burial record or a search for a memorial inscription. We will also check other indexes that we hold. We will respond as quickly as possible but please remember that the Research Centre is staffed by volunteers who also have other duties.

**Please note** we cannot undertake in-depth family history research. Members wanting that sort of service should engage a professional genealogist.

**Requests can be submitted:**

- **Online at [www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk)**

Log in to the website, then navigate to

SHOP > PRODUCTS > SERVICES > RESEARCH SERVICE.

- **By post**

Please include your name, membership number, contact details and a correctly stamped, addressed envelope (at least C5 size). Send to:

*Family History Society of Cheshire Lookup Service, Mobberley Research Centre, Rajar Building, Town Lane, Mobberley, Cheshire, WA16 7ER.*

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## Research Centre News

*Information about our research centres can be found at the end of the journal.*

### **Mobberley Research Centre**

*by Joan Irving  
librarian@fhsc.org.uk*



Our Duty Volunteers are ready to welcome you to our Research Centre. Whether you are new to family history or have been researching for some time, they are ready to help you get started or give ideas for those brick walls you may have encountered. With access to Ancestry, Find My Past and The Genealogist and other useful websites there is an opportunity to delve into various aspects of research. The list of Cheshire newspapers now available on Find My Past gives a new incentive to check for reports involving our family members.

It is always worth looking at our library, where local books give an insight into the lives of our ancestors. The following book was a recent donation.

#### **An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting Houses in Cheshire – Ref: CH/GEN 187**

This book lists chapels and meeting houses in the old county of Cheshire. They are listed under the towns and villages or the nearest town or village. The information given varies; some have historical facts naming significant people, descriptions of the building, date founded and in some cases date closed. There are photos and building plans for some of the chapels. The denominations are included with information when the chapel changed from one denomination to another. Some of these chapels and meeting houses are still open whilst others have been demolished or sold on for residential or business use.

Although this book is worthy of delving into it is not a complete list of all chapels and meeting houses in Cheshire. I aim to collect information on all

known chapels and meeting houses, together with reference to surviving records held at Mobberley or elsewhere.

Chapels and meeting houses were the life-blood of many communities, especially in the 18th and 19th centuries, and most of our ancestors were regular attendees at a church, chapel or meeting house.

## Crewe Family History Unit

by Margaret Spate  
crewe@fhsc.org.uk

The FHU is open on Monday and Tuesday from 10am to 4pm; we recommend arriving no later than 3pm. The FHU will also be open on one Saturday morning per month: please check the date for each month on the website as I am only able to arrange the Saturday openings one month in advance.

We have recently welcomed new members to the society as well as longer-standing members who have not visited for a while.

The volunteers are working hard to keep up-to-date with projects and cataloguing of new acquisitions.

Two computers now have larger monitors which will help anyone with poor eyesight. If you are travelling some distance to visit us, please contact me in advance so that I can ensure that we have a computer for you to use.

### *Malpas News (4) from Adam's Weekly Courant, 9 March 1773*

On Thursday the eighteenth of February last was christened in Malpas Church, in this County, a Son of **Mr Joseph Clark**, Staymaker, and what is remarkable, he has been married twenty years to his present Wife, who had never any Sign of Pregnancy before. Several Ladies and Gentlemen attended the Infant to Church, and from thence to **Mr Clark's** House, where an elegant Entertainment was provided, and the Evening concluded with ringing of Bells, Bonfires, and other Demonstrations of Joy, on this happy Occasion.

*Ed.: The only 1773 Malpas baptism I can find for a son of Joseph Clark is Lawrence Clark, who was baptised on 2 January 1773, the son of Joseph and Sarah Clark.*

## Letters to the Editor

If you have any comments about any of the articles in the **CHESHIRE ANCESTOR**, or any aspect of the society, please share them – I'd love to hear from you! Just send an email to [editor@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:editor@fhsc.org.uk) or post a letter to the address inside the front cover, including your name and membership number, and tell me if you also want your email/postal address to be printed so other researchers can contact you.

### Guilty, or Not?

Whilst trawling through the Find My Past newspaper records I came across the following article in the *Liverpool Weekly Courier*, 9th April 1898, relating to a 2x great-uncle, John Aaron STOCKTON. It made me chuckle.

#### ACQUITTAL

*Jesse Hughes (41), Butcher, charged with stealing two fowls, the property of John Aaron Stockton at Burwardsley, was found not guilty, and his Honour discharged him with the caution, "Don't do it again," which evoked considerable laughter.*

**Joan Jeffrey**

**Membership no. 1655**

### Spurious Wedding Notice

I found this notice in the *Chester Chronicle*, 8th May 1858, when I was looking for a family marriage. I have no connection to the parties mentioned but would love to know the story behind it!

#### MARRIAGES

*The notice in our last of a wedding of Mr Brown, of Churton, to Miss Reece, of Hatton, was a spurious one. A handsome reward will be paid to anyone who will indicate the sender.*

**Midge Broadhurst**

**Membership no. 2218**

## Help Wanted

### Marple Orthopaedic Hospital

Information required on the Marple Orthopaedic Hospital, particularly from the early 1960s, but any information or memories would be welcome.

**Margaret Roberts**

**Social Media/Publicity Officer**

[publicity@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:publicity@fhsc.org.uk)

### Webb Railway Orphanage, Crewe

Following a recent article on the Railway Work, Life and Death project website about railway orphans, the author, Mike Esbester, would like to receive any information or memories of railway orphanages, and in particular the Webb Orphanage in Crewe. If one of your relatives or ancestors lived in a railway orphanage and you have any memories or information please contact Mike.

**Mike Esbester**

**University of Portsmouth**

**History, Milldam Building, Burnaby Road, Portsmouth, Hants, PO1 3AS**

[railwayworkeraccidents@gmail.com](mailto:railwayworkeraccidents@gmail.com)

[www.railwayaccidents.port.ac.uk](http://www.railwayaccidents.port.ac.uk)

[www.childrenshomes.org.uk/CreweWebb](http://www.childrenshomes.org.uk/CreweWebb)

#### *Malpas News (5) from the Cheshire Observer, 21 June 1873*

MALPAS FRIENDLY SOCIETY - The anniversary of the Malpas Rose Friendly Society was celebrated at Malpas on Wednesday. The weather, with the exception of a shower in the afternoon, was comparatively propitious, and large numbers of people flocked into the ancient little town – which is one of the most picturesque in Cheshire – to witness the festivities, for it is known that the anniversary of this highly popular club is observed as a red-letter day by the inhabitants of Malpas and the surrounding neighbourhood.

## Family History Events

**For news of family history events, see these online calendars**

<http://geneva.weald.org/doku.php>  
[www.familyhistoryfederation.com/events](http://www.familyhistoryfederation.com/events)  
[www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/genealogy/](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/genealogy/)  
<https://conferencekeeper.org/>

### **The Family History Show (York)**

10am - 4pm Saturday 24th June at York Knavesmire Racecourse

Expert Speakers - Exhibitors - Ask the Experts

Ample Free Parking - 1½ miles from York Railway Station

<https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com/york/>

### **The Family History Show (London)**

10am - 4pm Saturday 2nd September at Kempton Park Racecourse

Expert Speakers - Exhibitors - Ask the Experts

Adjacent to Kempton Park Railway Station - Ample Free Parking

<https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com/london/>

### **11th U3A Peak District Family History Conference**

Saturday 16th September at the Palace Hotel, Buxton, SK17 6AG

Four speakers - Exhibitors - Free Goody Bag - Free Prize Draw

*Chasing those Brickwalls!* - Mary Evans

*Death and Taxes* - Dave Annal

*Digging into the Parish Chest* - Jackie Depelle

*Why the Welsh left Wales* - Dr Penny Walters

Tickets £30 including refreshments and two-course finger buffet lunch

Parking at hotel for Blue Badge holders only - Adjacent to Buxton Station

**Booking Essential** at <https://forms.gle/mXnsgpBhQpmafU6>

Write NONE in answer to Home U3A question if not a U3A member

Please send questions to: [taylor.ian9@gmail.com](mailto:taylor.ian9@gmail.com)

## Cheshire History Day: Cheshire in the 1920s

Saturday 7th October at

The Grange Theatre, Bradburns Lane, Hartford, Cheshire CW8 1LU

[www.cheshirehistory.org.uk](http://www.cheshirehistory.org.uk)

## Apprenticeships, Friendly Societies, Guilds and Trade Unions Seminar

9.30 am - 4.45 pm Saturday 21st October

Outwood Memorial Hall, 1-2 Victoria Street, Wakefield WF1 2NE

Organised by the Guild of One-Name Studies - non-members welcome

**Booking Essential** at <https://one-name.org/seminar-events/>

## Family History Society of Cheshire AGM (Online)

Saturday 28th October

Full details will be published in the next issue of the CHESHIRE ANCESTOR

[www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk)

## Really Useful Family History Show (Online)

6pm - 10pm Friday 11th November and

10am - 6pm Saturday 12th November

[www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/](http://www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/)

### *Malpas News (6) from the Chester Chronicle, 23 August 1873*

WAKES WEEK – The town has been visited by relatives and friends from far and near. On Saturday last, the trains brought a large number of persons from Birkenhead, Chester, and other places. Many old and familiar faces were seen again in the town, who have gone to live elsewhere; and during the week the town has presented a holiday appearance, especially on Monday, when there were two club anniversaries and the annual soiree. The advantage to the town of the new railway on this occasion was very manifest, it having brought together a greater number of persons than for many a year.

*Ed.: Malpas station opened in October 1872; the station was near Hampton Heath, about 1½ miles from the town centre. The building is now used as offices.*

## Family History News

A selection of recent updates to websites, and other family history news. Remember, if you don't have a subscription to *Ancestry*, *Find My Past* or *The Genealogist*, our Research Centres have free access to these sites. You may also be able to access *Ancestry* or *Find My Past* through your public library - and look out for offers of free access on special occasions such as Remembrance Day. **Bear in mind that record collections on the Internet may be incomplete.**

### Ancestry

Go to <http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/cardcatalog.aspx> for a list of all record sets, and click on *Sort by > Date Updated* to find the latest additions.

Go to [www.ancestry.co.uk/cs/recent-collections](http://www.ancestry.co.uk/cs/recent-collections) for *Ancestry* news.

#### **UK and Ireland, Medical Registers, 1859-1943**

[www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62268/](http://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62268/)

The registers, published annually, were created by the General Council of Medical Education and Registration of the United Kingdom and served as directories for the medical profession. The collection includes images of the original registers.

#### **UK, Criminal Records, 1780-1871**

[www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/61805/](http://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/61805/)

This collection contains a wide variety of criminal records from the United Kingdom, including prison register, hulk register, and many more. Records in this collection are likely to include multiple images. Be sure to click the arrow to the right of the image to continue viewing the record.

#### **Forthcoming Parish Registers**

Cambridgeshire Archives recently announced that the scanning of all 3,506 of their parish registers is now complete and the registers will be available on *Ancestry* in the future.



## UK Military Records

Since 1st April 2023 the fee for applying for a deceased person's military records (for those who served after WWI) has been waived.

The website for information and to apply for military records is at [www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-service-records/apply-for-someone-elses-records](http://www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-service-records/apply-for-someone-elses-records)

The MoD is transferring records to the National Archives, Kew, for permanent preservation, a project that will take some six years; the details can be read here: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/news/mod-records-project/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/news/mod-records-project/) When you apply, it may well be that the records you require are already at Kew; if so, you will be informed by the MoD and they will advise you how to proceed.

Military records for those who ended their service shortly after the end of WWI are held at the National Archives and are available on websites such as Ancestry and FindMyPast. For more information about these records see [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/first-world-war/centenary-digitised-records/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/first-world-war/centenary-digitised-records/)

## Find My Past (FMP)

Go to <http://search.findmypast.co.uk/historical-records> to see a list of all record sets. Go to [www.findmypast.co.uk/blog/new](http://www.findmypast.co.uk/blog/new) for FindMyPast news.

### **Northern Ireland Wills & Administrations 1858-1965**

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/ireland-calendars-of-wills-and-administrations-1858-1965>

Indexes to the District Probate Registries of Armagh, Belfast and Londonderry; 261,256 record transcriptions for dates between 1921 and 1965.

### **Ireland, Inland Revenue Wills & Administrations 1828-1879**

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/ireland-inland-revenue-wills-and-administrations-1828-1879>

Indexes for all years (1828-1879), with surviving registers for 1828-1839 that contain extracts from the original documents. Many original documents were lost in 1922 when the Public Record Office of Ireland, Dublin, was destroyed.

## The Public Record Office of Ireland

In April 1922, anti-Treaty forces occupied the Dublin's Four Courts buildings, where the Public Record Office of Ireland was located. The occupying forces established their munitions factory and store in the Record Treasury building. On 30 June 1922, an explosion in an adjacent building started a fire which spread to the Record Treasury central archive storage, where the munitions were being manufactured. The fire destroyed so much of the building that only the outer wall remained standing. A few days later, staff of the Public Record Office of Ireland began the momentous task of retrieving the records from the rubble. Gathering documents found amongst the ruins, staff sorted and identified them. In just under a year they packed 25,000 sheets of paper and parchment into nearly 400 bundles. Everything that was retrieved from the wreckage was wrapped in brown paper, labelled and secured with string, preserved, and patiently waited to be dealt with.

It would be a century before staff of the National Archives began working on these records, indexes to some of which are now available on FindMyPast (see previous page). For information about the damage, and the documents which survived, see [www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/irish-records-burned.html](http://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/irish-records-burned.html)

## Rootsweb

Older members may remember the old Rootsweb email mailing lists - founded in 1996, Rootsweb mailing lists were used to communicate with other family historians in the days before social media. However, Rootsweb can no longer be maintained in its present form and will now be retired.

The migration of the old Rootsweb content, including the mailing lists, will start from 6th April. WorldConnect trees will be retired on 15 April 2023 and migrated to Ancestry as a new free-access collection later in the year. Hosted websites will remain on RootsWeb as static content.

For more information, see:

<https://support.rootsweb.com/s/article/Retiring-and-Migrating-Portions-of-RootsWeb>

## Selected Archives of the Week

by Margaret Roberts  
Publicity & Social Media Officer

FHSC social media feeds are always full of interesting blogs, unusual stories, useful websites and news of special offers. The various archives I highlight are not just based in the UK and many have proved very useful to members, if my inbox is anything to judge by. Here is this quarter's selection; to take full advantage and to keep abreast of the updates to the various genealogical websites, follow the Society on Twitter at @FHSoCheshire or Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CheshireFamilyHistory](http://www.facebook.com/CheshireFamilyHistory).

### **The National Library of Scotland [NLS], Maps section**

<https://maps.nls.uk/>

You may be wondering why I'm mentioning the NLS again – there has been an update to the site which is especially useful for those who access it via a mobile or a tablet. NLS has added a new full screen option to all the zoomable maps – just tap the *More* option on the bottom left of the screen to find it. The full screen option is also available for laptops and PCs via a *Full Screen* tab at the bottom. For more information, see <https://maps.nls.uk/view/help/#fullscreen>. The website has also recently added more than 2,000 Ordnance Survey Maps of Britain that were published in 1972 and are now out of copyright, as well as thousands of 1870-1950s maps of England, so it's well worth another visit.

### **The Greater Manchester Police Museum and Archives Alien Register Index**

<https://gmpmuseum.co.uk/research/resources/alien-register-index-search/>

The museum holds a collection of Alien Registers from Salford City Police which contain the names of foreigners living in Salford during the two World Wars. Though they may have relocated to the city much earlier, the Alien Registration Act 1914 forced all foreign nationals to register with their local police force. People who were deemed to be *enemy aliens* – so those from countries that the UK and Allies were at war with – could be deported or interned; for many others, restrictions were placed on their movements and everyday lives.

## **The Roman Roads of Britain**

<https://roadsofromanbritain.org/index.html>

This website, by the Roman Roads Research Association, provides a comprehensive online resource focusing on Roman roads in Britain. Covering all of Britain's Roman roads, the Gazetteer, when fully complete, will be the first survey of Britain's Roman roads since Ivan Margary's book of 1973.

## **Charles Booth's London**

<https://booth.lse.ac.uk/>

You can use this site to explore the famous Charles Booth poverty maps of London, and search, browse and download the original notebooks from the *Inquiry into Life and Labour in London* (1886-1903). You can also search for present-day locations, including streets and postcodes, and 19th-century parishes and landmarks.

## **Medievalists.Net**

[www.medievalists.net](http://www.medievalists.net)

The site aims to be the first place that people go to when they want to learn about the Middle Ages. Visitors can find news, articles, videos, and more about the medieval world and how that history is presented today.

## **Judyrecords**

[www.judyrecords.com](http://www.judyrecords.com)

Judyrecords is a free nationwide search engine that lets you instantly search hundreds of millions of United States court cases and lawsuits. Judyrecords claims to have over 100 times more cases than Google Scholar and 10 times more cases than PACER, the official case management system of the United States federal judiciary.

## **Memory Lane**

[www.memorylane.co.uk](http://www.memorylane.co.uk)

If you are stuck for something to do one evening, then a great rabbit hole to pop down is Memory Lane. The website contains thousands of photographs that are freely searchable. You can search for images by name or subject, or just browse the many different sections, including everything from animals to transport.

## Fatal Accident at Old Mill, Barnsley

by Jean Laidlaw  
Macclesfield Group Leader

The following newspaper report from the *Barnsley Chronicle* of Saturday 16 September 1882 relates the circumstances of the railway accident which killed my great-grandfather Charles BEEL.

*On Tuesday night a very sad accident occurred on the Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway at Old Mill, Barnsley, by which a guard named Charles Beel, 32 years of age, of Elsworth-terrace Doncaster, was killed. The deceased was using a pole to shunt some wagons when it slipped, and deceased was caught between the engine buffer and some laden coal wagons and severely crushed about the chest. He was taken into the home of a signalman named Shillito, which is close by, and died there an hour after the accident. Dr Scott, of Barnsley, was sent for and attended him up to the time of his death, but nothing could be done for him. The body was afterward conveyed to Doncaster to await the inquest, which was held at the Guildhall there on Wednesday evening, before the borough coroner. Dr Scott and other witnesses were examined, and a verdict of "Accidentally killed" was returned. Deceased, who has been seventeen years in the employ of the company, was a very steady man, and bore an excellent character. He leaves a widow and two young children.*

Charles BEEL was the son of Edward Shepherd BEEL and his wife Carolina née BATTY, born on 14 September 1848 at Barrow upon Humber, Lincolnshire. Edward Shepherd BEEL was an agricultural labourer until January 1854, when at the age of 30 he was employed by the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway as a horseman at the Goods depot at New Holland, Lincolnshire. On 12 June 1871 Edward was appointed a porter and Sunday watchman at Hull Goods Yard but was discharged for general incompetency on 4 May 1872.

His son Charles was described as a very steady man, and bore an excellent character, according to the article in the *Barnsley Chronicle*. He was first

appointed to the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire railway on 1 January 1867, aged 18, as a porter at Thorne, Yorkshire. His pay was 12 shillings per week (worth about £38 today, according to the National Archives Currency Converter [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter)). He married Roseanna MILLMAN on 12 Apr 1868 at Hatfield, Yorkshire and two sons were born in Doncaster: Walter, my grandfather, in 1869 and Frederick Thomas in 1871. Charles became a shunter in 1871 and in 1875 a goods guard. His wife Roseanna died in January 1875 and in July 1875 Charles married a widow, Dorcas SMITH née SANSOM.

When Charles died in 1882, my grandfather Walter was twelve years old and his brother Frederick Thomas was eleven. Walter began work on the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire railway as a timekeeper at Hexthorpe on 1 September 1884 when he was 14 years and 9 months old, and Frederick Thomas joined the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire railway in April 1886 aged 14 years 7 months, working as a point hand at Hexthorpe; his pay was 7s per week (worth about £29 today).

Both stayed in the employment of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire railway - after 1897 named the Great Central Railway Company - all their working lives. Walter ended his career as Chief Train Clerk at London Road Station (Piccadilly) Manchester and Frederick Thomas as Station Master at Dukinfield, Cheshire.

I have been trying to discover what happened to the two sons immediately after the death of their father. I cannot find any records of compensation paid after the accident, but recently, and unexpectedly, came across the will of their stepmother Dorcas, who died shortly after her husband Charles. The will clearly states that the boys were to be provided for financially until the age of twenty-one and then any residue equally divided between them. Some of the money came from an insurance policy Dorcas held, but was some of it compensation? Were the boys guaranteed jobs with the Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway as a form of compensation?

## May Day Revels in Over Peover

by Hazel Halse

Membership no. 307

I grew up in mid-Cheshire, where May Day Festivals still play a large part in rural life. The Knutsford Royal May Day celebration ('Royal' because the future Edward VII and Queen Alexandra visited in 1887) dates back to 1864 and continues to flourish, attracting huge crowds on the first Saturday in May each year. However, there will be a break from tradition for this year's twelve-year-old May Queen, Amelie MCGILL-ANGLIN, who will be crowned a week later on Saturday 13th May to avoid a clash with the Coronation. When I was a child, *going to the May Day* was one of the high points of the year. We'd stand by the road to watch the procession of decorated floats, dance troupes, costumed characters and brass bands (with Uncle Fred HUGHES playing the cornet) pass by, waiting with bated breath for the appearance of the May Queen, always conveyed in a horse-drawn carriage and accompanied by court ladies and maids-of-honour. Afterwards we'd go to watch the crowning and the dancing on Knutsford Heath, and then to the fair which was also on the Heath.

Until recently, however, I was only vaguely aware that the village in which I grew up, Over Peover, had its own May Day/Rose Festival from the beginning of the 20th Century until the outbreak of the Second World War. I say *vaguely aware* because my mother, Gladys HUGHES (née TICKLE), born in 1930 and now 92 years old, took part in the last few Peover festivals, and occasionally mentioned them in passing when I was a child. I also knew that there were a few Peover May Day photos in her old albums but had never investigated further until recently.

I have not so far been able to find a record of Peover's first May Day, but the *Runcorn Guardian* of 28th May 1904 states that *For the second time Over Peover has accorded to May a true and hearty welcome, and has crowned its May Queen after a pretty and simple fashion.* The May Queen in question was Miss Florrie DAVIES, *a fair-haired child of about twelve years old who looked exceedingly pretty*

*in a dress of white silk, trimmed with embroidery, with a train of crimson velvet lined with pink. There was a procession of tastefully-decorated lorries, costumed children dressed as characters such as Britannia, Baden-Powell, John Bull, Humpty-Dumpty, Little Lord Fauntleroy, Puss in Boots, a Zulu Chief and lots of Flower Girls, Pierrots, Fairies and Dancers. The procession started from the Vicarage shortly after 1pm and traversed the road through Park-Gate and Peover Heath, returning hence to Shepherd's Flat where the crowning ceremony took place. There was Maypole dancing and competitive sport, and after the revels tea was partaken. Everything was organised by a committee headed by the Vicar, Rev. F.A. HOLLAND.*



*Over Peover May Day, late 1920s. Arthur TICKLE standing, right*

Newspaper coverage of the Peover May Day in subsequent years varies, but I have managed to identify the May Queens through to the last celebration in 1939 with one, or possibly two exceptions. The list is an interesting indication of the changing tastes in names: Florrie, Louisa, Amy, Constance, Cissie,



Martha, Edith, Doris, Blanche, Angelina, Ada, Winifred, Doris, Mary, Emily, Margaret, Joyce, Mary, Dorothy, Hilda, Gladys, Nellie, Doris, Annie, Maureen, Margaret, Gwennyth, Mary, Elsie and Dorothy.

The festival appears to have gone from strength to strength in the years preceding the First World War. In 1910 the procession was *a little longer than usual, containing practically all the old characters and several new ones*. The *Advertiser* noted approvingly that *An improved feature was the increased number of decorated vehicles – all had their everyday roughness hidden under festoons of crinkled paper of all hues*. The 1913 festival was postponed at short notice *due to the lamented death of the Vicar* and I haven't yet been able to establish that it ever took place, although there was definitely a Queen-elect, Angelina STREET.

However, Angelina wasn't the chosen Queen in 1914. She and the 1912 Queen, Blanche STREET (no relation) were ladies-in-waiting when Ada GROVES was crowned by Herbert BUCKLEY. The record of the event in the *Advertiser* noted that *compared with previous festivals this year's marked a big advance in pageantry in the Peover district, and villagers and visitors were greatly impressed by the much-improved show*. The procession of children now comprised tableaux of characters from Alice in Wonderland, Robin Hood, The Pied Piper of Hamelin etc., but Britannia and John Bull were still represented and there were still lots of Maypole Dancers, Flower Girls and Fairies. In the evening there were sports and games, and dancing for the general public. At dusk, writes the reporter somewhat disapprovingly, *the dancers adjourned to the schoolroom and here a charge of 2s 6d a couple was attempted to be made. This was considered rather high and the majority declined to enter the schoolroom*. The price was then lowered to a shilling, although *many thought the admission price should not have exceeded sixpence*.

Peover's May Day Festival resumed in 1920 after the First World War, when Winifred HUGHES was crowned by Joseph STANIER. It is at this point that the names in the newspaper report start to become familiar. Nesta WILLIAMS, one of the train bearers, was a regular attender at St Lawrence Church when I was growing up in the 1960s and early 1970s, and she made and decorated our wedding cake in 1984. I was thrilled to read that in 1925, when thirteen-year-

old Joyce DRAKE was May Queen, the Crown Bearer was my mother's eldest half-brother George JOHNSON. The programme of dancing had become more ambitious with the years and now featured a *four plait* Maypole dance, infants' dance, sword dance, Morris Dance and something called *Gypsies Tent* - apparently it's a more complicated Maypole dance. In 1928, reported the *Advertiser*, there was a *programme of twelve dances, nine of which were given by the children*. The Women's Institute also took part in the dances and *danced as the procession was en route, with the Morris Dancers giving a similar performance*. By this time, Over Peover had its very own Morris troupe, led by George NEWTON and his brother Arthur NEWTON. The Morris troupe performed at various local events and garden parties as well as taking part in the May Festival.

In 1926 there was a change, with the May Queen becoming a Rose Queen and the celebrations being moved back from the end of May to the end of June, but by 1928 the festival had returned to May. Possibly the 1926 change was a one-off experiment because of the unreliability of the weather in May. In 1923 the *Advertiser* had reported that *rain fell continuously throughout the morning, drenching the countryside, while a keen wind assisted in making the conditions more miserable, with people congregating in winter attire, heavy boots, great coats, collars turned up; in fact, two overcoats were not too much to turn the edge of the wind*. The 1925 Festival had also been marred by rain towards the end of the procession. The weather in May continued to be problematic, with the 1928 procession *threatened with extinction* just as it was about to start, and in 1931 there was a permanent move to June, with Doris May BADDILEY being crowned Rose Queen in brilliant sunshine. The route of the procession was *through a countryside as rural as to be found in this county ... for the hedges and trees made a beautiful setting for the dark-haired girl who typified the month of the roses*. The change of date seems to have made some difference in terms of guaranteed sunshine, but there was always the odd 'rogue' year. In 1938 the weather was dreadful, with the youngsters bravely trudging along wet roads and through a heavy shower halfway round the procession route, after which *all haste was made to the cricket pavilion where the crowning ceremony was performed with all speed and the children taken to the friendly shelter of a hut for tea*. The Rose Queen's dress and stockings were completely spoiled by running colour.

All through the 1920s and 1930s Over Peover's May Day/Rose Festival continued, with twelve- or thirteen-year-old girls being chosen as Queen by their classmates. This had not, apparently, always been the case, as in the early years of the festival the Queen seems to have been chosen by the organising committee, or by the schoolteachers. A subtle attempt was made to influence the school voting on at least one occasion. My mother remembers being in class when a vote took place. There were two candidates. One girl's name was written on the blackboard in very large letters, with the other name written below in much smaller characters. Mum and her friends decided that the girl whose name was written in large letters must be the candidate preferred by the teachers and so they all voted for her!

Mum's half-brothers George, Arthur and Daniel JOHNSON took part in the festival for many years as Merry Men, Pierrots, Dancers and sundry other characters, with Uncle Dan being Standard Bearer in 1930 and Sceptre Bearer in 1931. Part of the pleasure in researching this project has been tracking them through the newspaper reports. Uncle Gilbert TICKLE, Mum's elder brother, was a Page in 1929, Dick Whittington in 1930, Knave of Hearts in 1931, a Clown in 1933, a Maypole Dancer in 1934 and 1935, and Standard Bearer in 1936, by which time he was thirteen years old. Other familiar names appear in the reports as the 1930s progressed – Mum's cousins Derek and Sheila TICKLE, my schoolfriend's mother Elsie EDWARDS (Rose Queen in 1938), Colin STALEY who was our neighbour when I was growing up and whose father Ted STAYLEY married my widowed Great Aunt Clara TICKLE (née CARTER). Dean JOHNSON, Pamela EDWARDS, Clifford GRIFFITHS, Teddy EDWARDS, Renee BASFORD, Barbara REID, Terry WALTON, Keith CARTER – all were schoolchildren with my mother in the decade before the outbreak of the Second World War and many became the parents of my own schoolmates. These names bring the Peover Festivals just within living memory.

It was a special pleasure to find my mum, Gladys, as 'Wales' in the Britannia tableau in 1936, when she would have been six years old. In 1938 and 1939 she was a Maypole Dancer. I have not been able to discover whether there was a Peover Festival in 1937 and it's possible that there wasn't one as the 1936 Rose Queen, Mary JOHNSON, was named as the 'outgoing' Rose Queen in 1938.

There's a possibility that the reason might have been an outbreak of diphtheria amongst the children. Mum says that she *didn't mind the Maypole Dancing*, although the dances were quite hard to learn and involved a great deal of unravelling of ribbons during practices, most of which took place on the Parish Field (then known as the School Playing Field) after school. The girls were all dressed in milkmaid-style dresses which made them look several months pregnant!



*Peover Rose Festival, 1939. Gladys TICKLE extreme left*

Peover's last Rose Queen was Dorothy DERBYSHIRE. There was rain, but it came too late to spoil the festivities. Dancing, as usual, followed the crowning, and the 67 children who had taken part in the procession were sitting down for tea when the first drops fell. The procession included the Peover Morris Dancers and the Alderley Edge Band. It was, wrote the *Advertiser*, *...an extremely happy day for the Rose Queen, charming and graceful and with a smile for everyone... and ... a thoroughly enjoyable day for the children.* It was June 1939, and just three months later the carefree innocence of these country rituals was shattered by the outbreak of World War Two.

## Graves, Memorials and Cemeteries – Resources for Family History

*by Hazel Rugman  
Alsager Acting Group Leader*

Recently Geoff Johnson of the computer group raised the case of someone's recent visit to a family grave that had a gravestone when it was last used in the middle of the 20th century but which couldn't be found. The stone had disappeared and a comment was made that surely gravestones are there permanently, forever. From my experience of burials this is certainly not so.

In medieval England, except for the very wealthy who could afford to be buried inside a church, the majority of bodies were wrapped in simple shrouds and buried in the parish church burial ground without coffins. After a few years the remains would be exhumed and placed in a charnel pit thus ensuring space for more burials. Memorialisation of the dead was often in the form of a family paying for masses to be said regularly to ensure a shorter time in purgatory for the deceased. Following the Reformation beliefs changed and increasingly coffins were used, graves marked and left undisturbed for many years.

However, the 19th century saw a huge increase in the populations of many towns and cities and huge pressure on churchyards, so that bodies were often unintentionally exhumed or even dismembered as new graves were dug in close proximity to each other. In some places there were complaints about the stench from burial grounds as graves were shallow and more easily robbed. In 1832 the government passed the first Burial Act enabling Exeter City Council to purchase land to be used as a public cemetery; several subsequent Burial Acts enabled private cemeteries to be built in other cities. Since then, many towns and cities have public cemeteries as well as church graveyards – the Magnificent Seven cemeteries in London were among the first.

These days it is possible that your family may have 'bought' a grave in a public cemetery without realising that this is often leasehold, usually for 99 years after the last burial. So, if the first burial took place in 1923 and the last in 1960

then technically the lease would expire in 2059. However, we have all been in cemeteries where there are many graves older than this and the remains of the dead are undisturbed.

Not all graves have memorial stones or plaques, although you may be aware that time has to be allowed for a grave to settle following a burial before a stone can be erected. Unfortunately, this settling can continue for many years after the placement of a memorial, sometimes rendering the gravestone unstable. In some graveyards it is the responsibility of the family whose grave it is to ensure that memorials remain safe. In recent years, because of unfortunate accidents with unstable stones, many owners of graveyards have had to employ a method called *topple testing* on a regular basis. Where possible, family members are contacted and notices placed on graveyards and in the local press that this will be taking place. However, unless people check for themselves and ensure a grave is safe, if stones fail the test, they will be laid flat and if broken may be removed. There is also the problem of weathering; some types of stone are more prone to this so that the memorials become indecipherable.

When a graveyard is nearly full the owners usually give public notice in the press so that local people are aware of the situation. Whilst a graveyard may have no new spaces the authorities will allow further family members to be buried in an existing plot if there is sufficient depth. This currently applies to the Badger Avenue cemetery in Crewe, with new grave plots being dug in the new cemetery in Minshull New Road. Normally, churches will hand their full graveyards over to the local authority, thus ensuring that the congregation is no longer responsible for maintenance, and parts may be left to go wild as a conservation measure. Many old cemeteries, particularly in cities, are now public parks; others have been built over so that traces of graves have disappeared.

In 1872 Crewe Council opened the Badger Avenue cemetery, although both St Michael's Copenhall and Crewe Christ Church still had space in their churchyards. In the 1890s Crewe Christ Church gave notice that they were running out of space and that burials there would be restricted to those who were associated with the church or for family members where there was space

in an existing grave. There were no more burials after about 1914. In the 1960s the graveyard was handed over to the Local Authority for maintenance and ownership was subsequently acquired by the then Crewe Town Council when they purchased land owned by the railway throughout the town centre a few years later. Although old photographs of the church show many gravestones, by then the graveyard was not in a good state, so the land was turned over to public open space, the memorials removed and broken up as hardcore for the paths. Fortunately, by that time someone had made a record of the memorial inscriptions and the transcripts can be found in the Society's Research Centres at Crewe and Mobberley.

In general, church or cemetery records for each burial give the name and age of the deceased, the plot number and dates of death and burial. They will rarely have details of the relationships of those interred, nor anything related to the life of the deceased such as is often found on memorial stones. Cemetery records, including some photographs of individual graves, can sometimes be found at Deceased Online which is a free to search website with the option to pay to see the digitised records. Parish records detailing burials are usually with either the church or the local record office and can often be found on commercial websites such as Ancestry and Find My Past. Memorial inscriptions may have been recorded by Family History and Local History Societies. Cremated remains are sometimes buried or scattered in local cemeteries, graveyards or even in churchyards that do not have a conventional graveyard and for these a record will have been kept.

However, finding a grave or a memorial inscription may involve some research as the deceased may not have been buried close to home nor, in the case of cremated remains, placed in an official cemetery.

## References

**Deceased Online** holds copies of burial/cremation records for municipal cemeteries in Cheshire East and Cheshire West [www.deceasedonline.com](http://www.deceasedonline.com)

**Memorial Inscriptions** for many of Cheshire's churchyards and cemeteries are available to purchase as digital downloads from the Society's website shop at [www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk). Prices start from 50p.

## North-East Cheshire/Leek HOLLANDs

by Joan Irving  
Mobberley Librarian

Have you any HOLLAND ancestors in the north-east Cheshire/Leek areas? Are any of the following HOLLANDs in your family tree? A family bible took this family straight back to 1749.

**George Holland 1868-1949** of Woodford, wife Isabella, children Hector, Henry, Doris, George, Anne, Frank, James, Arthur (Ted), Allan, Jessie and Norah.

**George Holland 1832-1925** of Rode Heath/Woodford, wife Ann, children John, Joseph, Harry Morton, Sarah Ann, George, Ann (Nancy), James Edward, Frederick, Eliza and William Goddard.

**John Holland 1784-1866** of Gawsworth/Rode Heath, wife Ann, children Mary, Thomas, Noah, Elizabeth, Ann, John, Thomas, James, Joseph Wellins and George.

**Jasper Holland 1749-1830** of Gawsworth, wife Elizabeth, children Mary, Anne, Jasper, Thomas, Ralph and John.

**Jasper Holland 1703-1774** of Rudyard?/Prestbury, wife Anna, children Elizabeth, John, Anne, Mary, Sarah and Jasper.

**John Holland 1663-1704** of Leek, wife Ann, children Anne and Jasper.

**Ralph Holland** of Leek, wife Elizabeth, children Rachel, John, Jasper and Ralph.

If you have any of the above family interests you may be interested in a book written by John G. HOLLAND called *A Numerous Family being the story of some members of the Holland family living in Cheshire and Staffordshire*. The book gives details of the family members with information and photos of the places they lived. It's a very interesting and easy to follow family story.

I have been given a few copies of this book to pass on, so please get in touch if these are your ancestors.



# The Family History Society of Cheshire

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We look forward to receiving your renewal subscription.

Membership Team (Angela Moore & Kevin Dean)

## Location of Groups



## National Service (Part 1)

*by Neville Ledsome*  
*Membership no. 6353*

Although the Second World war ended in 1945, significant demands continued to be placed on the armed services. A major commitment arose from the occupation of the belligerent countries, and notably for the United Kingdom, Germany and Austria. Fighting, in which we were involved to a greater or lesser degree, continued in Italy, where Italian and Yugoslav partisans contested control of Trieste; in Greece over the return of the monarchy; and in the Far East where a power vacuum existed in those territories which had been colonies of the French and Dutch. Added to this, we had particular responsibilities in India as it moved towards independence; in Palestine where we still held a League of Nations mandate for the administration of the territory; and in Egypt where our presence was the result of a pre-war treaty related to the Suez Canal.

These commitments placed a huge demand on military resources, but this was also against a background of a 1945 election promise from Clement Attlee to bring home and demobilise speedily five million men who had fought in the war and who remained scattered across the world. Call up under the 1939 legislation continued after the war until 1947. But this was not enough and in May 1947 the National Service Act became law. For the first time in British history in peace time, conscription into the armed services was introduced. With a few exceptions, all men from the age of 18 living in Great Britain were liable for National Service for 12 months. However, before men were due to be called up under the Act from 1 January 1948, and as a consequence of the escalation of the Cold War with the Soviet Union, the period of service was extended to 18 months with a reserve commitment of four years.

In 1948 I turned 18 and became liable for National Service. As I had been a member of the Junior Training Corps (previously the Officers Training Corps) at school in which I had reached the giddy rank of Sergeant, one might have

thought that I would opt to join the army in which to do my National Service. But I did not fancy the army and decided to apply for the Royal Air Force.

I was called to attend a medical in Liverpool during the summer of 1948 when I was assessed as Grade 2 (weight). I was only 104 lbs (7 stone 6 lbs) and well below the weight, and height, for my age. As a result, whilst I was medically fit in every other respect, I was automatically placed in Grade 2, and I now awaited my call up papers. These and my start-up date for the Board of Trade arrived at more or less the same time with the RAF date only a few days after I was due to join the Board of Trade.

Being somewhat naive it seemed to me stupid to travel down to London and work for the Board of Trade for only a few days before starting my National Service. I therefore put this to the Board of Trade suggesting that I should not join them until I had finished my RAF service. They advised strongly against this, indicating that it would be to my advantage to start with the Board of Trade, if only for a week before joining the RAF; and suggesting that I seek a deferment of my call up for a short period. Somewhat bemused, this is what I did. The Board of Trade's advice was, of course, absolutely right because it meant that I was credited with 18 months more service with them, starting in September 1948 rather than in June 1950 at the completion of my National Service. The defence of the realm did not suffer as a consequence of my delayed entry into the RAF. On 25 October 1948 I reported at Padgate, near Warrington to start my National Service.

I say National Service but in fact my call up was made under the war time arrangements. My terms of service were DPE (Duration of the Present Emergency) and I had a demobilisation number 148, which was I think the penultimate demob number. The other intriguing factor was that my papers were stamped POM. I later learned that this stood for Potential Officer Material.

In the reception centre at Padgate we only stayed long enough to be processed and kitted out. After three or four days the procedure was for recruits to be moved to one of four initial training units. These were at Padgate in another part of the station, West Kirby, Wilmslow (where the Women's Royal Air Force recruits were also trained), and Bridgnorth in Shropshire. Bridgnorth had the

reputation of being the most popular of the four and was also alleged to be the unit to which they sent those from Merseyside since it was furthest from Liverpool. Whether this was correct I know not, but it was to Bridgnorth that I was posted.

To be a sportsman or a musician was a considerable advantage to a National Serviceman. The sportsmen were siphoned off to join the unit's sports teams and the musicians were drafted into the station band. I must say I witnessed some very dubious claims by recruits who said they were on the books of professional football clubs. I recall one lad who said he was with Celtic - it couldn't possibly have been Glasgow Celtic! There was also someone who said he played cricket for Hampshire - poor Hampshire.

The eight weeks square bashing at Bridgnorth quickly settled into a routine of drill, weapon training, shooting, map reading, PT and games overseen by a raucous drill Corporal. The weekly intake at Bridgnorth was roughly one hundred divided into three flights. Competition between the flights was an essential element of every aspect of the training. What leisure time we had was spent in keeping our uniforms clean, tidying the hut in which we lived and making our beds to a rigidly prescribed pattern. The food was unmemorable and augmented by visits to the NAAFI which provided meals and materials such as books, newspapers, writing paper and ink, sweets and cigarettes. The NAAFI was also equipped with games facilities including snooker and table tennis.

Our pay was 28 shillings (£1.40) a fortnight. Most of it was spent at the NAAFI or the station cinema. The cinema was hugely popular because we were confined to camp except on Saturday afternoon and Sunday - and it was cheap. The programme changed four times a week: three films being shown for two nights and the fourth on a Sunday. Sunday cinema was something of a novelty. A large body of opinion strongly disapproved, and my parents would not have gone to the cinema on a Sunday. However, I did, there being very little else to occupy our time.

We were allowed out of camp at the weekends, but only within strictly defined limits. Bridgnorth had few attractions for us and the nearest large town was Wolverhampton. I recall going there at least once to see Wolves play football.

Servicemen were let in to the ground for 7 old pence (the equivalent of 3p), but we had to return to camp after the game because we had no money to do anything else.

The days passed, broken only by a 48-hour pass home half way through the eight weeks and, for me, a visit to Padgate. After I had been at Bridgnorth for a couple of weeks I was called and told to report to Padgate to be considered for possible officer training. The mystery of the letters POM on my papers was explained. I was philosophical about National Service: you had to do it; there was no point in moaning; so, you might just as well get on with it and enjoy it. But this approach did not extend to becoming an officer, particularly since as an officer you were likely to have to serve rather more than 18 months.

Nevertheless, I went off to Padgate for two days of tests and interviews. I have only one recollection of this episode and that was an interview before a panel of officers. I was asked what I thought was the role of officers. I replied, *to run the Air Force*. This seemed to go down well, but I was not selected for officer training. I was not sorry.

Towards the end of the eight-week period at Bridgnorth we started to focus on the "trade" to which we might be assigned. If you had skills which were transferable, such as a radio mechanic or a heavy goods vehicle driver, there was no problem, but for the remainder, and the majority, there was little choice. With only 18 months to serve, the RAF, rightly, was not going to spend too much time and money teaching National Servicemen a trade, which they would be practicing for the benefit of the Air Force for only a few months. In the event, the best recruits were trained as Clerks (General Duties), the next group, by educational attainment, became Equipment Assistants, while the remainder were designated Aircraft Hands, which meant they did all the other tasks around the RAF unit.

I was among those to be trained as a Clerk (GD). After eight weeks at Bridgnorth we passed out – our flight being judged to be the best of the three – and we were sent on seven days leave. I was instructed to report after my leave to RAF Wythall, a few miles south of Birmingham on the road to Worcester, which was one of the units where clerks were trained.



Wythall had been a barrage balloon station during the war and was quite small. It had a number of tall warehouse type buildings in which the balloons had been kept and which were now used as classrooms; although they were singularly unsuitable for that purpose. We were instructed in the RAF's administrative system and taught to type, using ancient BARLOCK typewriters. To pass out as a Clerk (GD) at the end of the course one of the requirements was to type at a rate of ten words a minute without mistakes. This represented a very modest level of ability. We were supposed to touch type, practising to music, but this tended to produce mistakes so I quickly decided that I could reach the standard required while looking at the keyboard and this is what I did.

About three weeks into what I think was an eight-week course, I was dashing out of the NAAFI one night to post a letter when I slipped on a wet surface and fell awkwardly on my ankle. It was very uncomfortable and I thought I had done some serious damage. When I reported sick the next morning, the Medical Officer packed me off in an ambulance to the RAF Hospital at Cosford, north of Wolverhampton. Here they diagnosed that I had fractured my ankle and put it in a heavy plaster cast from my toes to just below the knee. I remained in hospital for several days, then was issued with a rather smart black surgical boot and taken back to Wythall. I am not sure why they did that because, having got to Wythall, I was promptly dispatched on three weeks "plaster" leave. By then it was early evening, but I managed to get to Birmingham and catch a train to Birkenhead, where I was picked up by Uncle Tom in the early hours of the next morning.

I thoroughly enjoyed my plaster leave and became quite adept at walking in the plaster cast, which I took care not to damage. After three weeks I returned to Cosford where they decided the plaster, which was in good condition, should remain on for a further three weeks. They also decided that I could return to my unit and restart my training. If I had been wiser in the ways of the RAF and I had not taken such good care of the plaster cast, it would have had to be replaced and I would have been granted another three weeks plaster leave!

Back at Wythall I had to start the course again but with a different group. After three weeks I went back to Cosford to have the plaster removed. Everything was

in order. I was discharged and told to go back to my unit. Up to this point I had been carted around in ambulances. I had more pain now than I had at any time because after six weeks in plaster my lower leg had wasted - indeed I could put most of my hand between the plaster and my leg, and I was also sensitive to any stones or indentations in the ground on which I trod. Anyway, I made my way back to Wythall by public transport. I passed out from the course with a very high percentage, as did others with a similar background. *To be continued...*

## A Few Forgotten Women

*by Margaret Roberts*  
*Publicity Officer*

You may have seen on social media and elsewhere a mention of the *A Few Forgotten Women Project*, the creators of which are a group of friends, known collectively as *A Few Good Women*, who first got together during lockdown to provide encouragement and support for family history projects and research. This group includes FHSC members Ann Simcock, Helen Shields and me, Margaret Roberts.

*...and some there be, which have no memorial; who are perished,  
as they had never been...*

Even without meaning to, family historians often focus on the men on their family tree. It is usually the men who carry on the surname, the men who join the armed forces and who are more likely to leave wills, to vote or to rent property, thereby leaving a trail in the documentary record. Merely by virtue of her gender, a female can become overlooked. The *A Few Forgotten Women* project seeks to preserve the memory of just some of those whose stories might otherwise be lost.

Some woman are further on the margins than others, and this project focusses on those whose lives were touched by issues such as poverty, illegitimacy, criminality, disability, alcoholism, prostitution, abandonment or mental ill-health. Often, several of these conditions go hand in hand, impacting on the

lives of the women whose stories we seek to tell. Other women were less marginalised but lack descendants who can preserve their memory; they too find a place here. Our team's expertise lies in British records, so that is the focus of our stories. We plan to spread our geographical range across the British Isles as the project progresses.

As we researched our stories, we realised that, unless we took on the responsibility of recording them, the stories of many of the women we encountered during our research would be lost. *A Few Forgotten Women* was born. The aim of the project is to preserve the memory of some women who have, until now, been hiding in the shadows, forgotten by history, by publishing them on our website at <https://afewforgottenwomen.wixsite.com/affw>

The women that you will meet on these pages are those that we have discovered during our investigations into our own ancestry, as part of a one-name study, a one-place study, or when undertaking a wider project. Then there are the women who had no link to our own work but who cried out to us as we researched documents of the past. Some of the stories have been contributed by guests, while others are a result of our occasional collaborative research days called *A Few Forgotten Women Fridays*, to be found on our website at <https://afewforgottenwomen.wixsite.com/affw/general-6>. We hope that meeting our forgotten women will encourage you to tell the stories of your own female ancestors. If you would like to join us in one of our collaborative research projects, you can find out more about *A Few Forgotten Women Fridays* at the link above. I'm delighted that a number of FHSC members have joined us on our collaborative research days and, by all accounts, enjoyed the challenge immensely. We also held a series of zoom sessions with talks on some of the women we have researched for International Women's Day and there are plan in the pipeline for more research days, a YouTube channel and more!

We are sensitive to the ethical issues surrounding telling the stories of people of the past. There is a balance to be maintained between commemorating their lives and respecting personal privacy. Many of our women faced trauma and adversity; on balance, we believe they deserve their place in history. We aim to provide rounded portraits of real people in an empathetic and non-judgmental way. Where the women have descendants, we have tried to contact them to get

permission to tell their ancestors' stories. This has not always been possible. If we have told a story of your ancestors and you would rather we removed it, please do contact us via the website.

We make every effort to ensure that the information on our website is accurate. The research that we do and the conclusions that we draw are based on the sources available to us at the time. We are all experienced genealogists, but records can be open to alternative interpretations. The *A Few Forgotten Women* project and their volunteers, collectively or individually, cannot be held liable for any errors, inaccuracies or omissions that might be found, for any adverse circumstances that might arise, or losses that might occur as a result of the material that is found on the site.

You can hear us chatting about the project with Helen Tovey of Family Tree Magazine by following this link [www.family-tree.co.uk/news/a-few-forgotten-women-interview](http://www.family-tree.co.uk/news/a-few-forgotten-women-interview) and meet some of our no longer forgotten women by reading their stories at <https://afewforgottenwomen.wixsite.com/affw/stories>

NOTE: The nature of the *A Few Forgotten Women* website means that many of the stories we tell do not make easy reading. Please be aware that some of the biographies will contain material that some readers might find distressing.

### ***Malpas News (7) from the Cheshire Observer, 14 July 1923***

A meeting of the Malpas Rural District Council was held on Wednesday, the **Rev. E. Langley** presiding. A circular from the Unemployment Grants Committee was received as to works for relief of unemployment during the coming winter, stating that loans would be granted at five per cent interest. The Sanitary Inspector reported two scarlet fever cases, at Duckington and Chorlton. **Mr A Blake**, on behalf of the Malpas Branch of the National Farmers' Union, asked if it would be possible to purchase a motor fire engine, in place of the existing horse-drawn engine. It was stated that the present engine served the needs of Malpas parish, but was ineffective for distances outside, on account of the hilly nature of the country.... the matter was considered to be one for voluntary effort, and further consideration was deferred.

## Find the Lady

*by Dave Williams*

*Membership no. 7539*

When researching a common surname like WILLIAMS, you are faced with a particular problem in relation to daughters. You may well have identified them in their early life – birth, baptism, census, education etc. But who did they marry, how many possible Mary WILLIAMS marriages do you suppose there are in the years between successive censuses?

Two resources in particular have proved to be very helpful to me: Newspaper reports (mainly of funerals and obituaries, but sometimes also weddings, inquests, etc.) and the National Probate Calendar for England and Wales.

### **Newspaper Reports**

My paternal grandfather died near Wrexham on 28 December 1920 and was buried in early January 1921. As was often the case with smallish towns, the local newspaper reported the funeral in considerable detail. The family had been builders and would have been known (or at least known of) in the area, so there would have been quite a lot of interest locally. Apart from that, the newspaper needed articles to fill the pages – a situation with which I am sure the Hon Editor of the CHESHIRE ANCESTOR is familiar.

The newspaper report included the names of the mourners and providers of messages of sympathy and floral tributes. A total of 84 individuals were named. The list included a number of family groups. Researching some of these names enabled positive identification of some of the hard-to-find married daughters – and names of their husbands, children, and where they were living.

Newspaper reports of weddings can give useful confirmation of relationships (parents, best man, bridesmaids, etc), although they often use rather more column inches describing the clothes worn by the bride, bride's mother and bridesmaids, wedding presents received, and the couple's going-away outfits.

Reports of funerals and marriages sometimes give details of relatives unable to attend, and why. They may be overseas on business or in the military, or not fit to travel. Or, of course, the report may give details of when/where they died.

### **National Probate Calendar for England and Wales**

If probate was granted before 1967, the National Probate Calendar for England and Wales provides the names of executors/administrators, and if one of these was a married woman or widow, it usually also gives the name of her husband. The calendar is available online on both Ancestry and FindMyPast and includes details for probates from 1858 up to 1995, but after 1966, names of executors are not provided.

There are a few things to bear in mind. Probate may be granted in the year of death, but also could be granted one or more years later. The office where probate is recorded may be a considerable distance away from the deceased's home or place of death (in some cases it will be where an executor is living when they apply for probate). The calendar includes some people who died overseas if they left a will and probate took place in England and Wales - so this can include military casualties and émigrés who had family in the UK.

As well as helping to identify married daughters, the probate calendar can provide other very useful information. If the deceased died away from their usual home (on holiday or in hospital for example) it will provide the address of the place of death - the civil death record will be found in the Registration District where the person died, which may not be the district where they had resided! You will also often find the marital status and details of occupations of the deceased and/or executors - useful corroborative evidence of identification. Also, don't forget the important information that the named executors were alive on the date of probate, and they may not have been the beneficiaries of the estate.

So, you may find that the probate details are more useful than the will itself in terms of genealogical research!

**Ed.:** Information about Scottish Wills and Testaments can be found here: [www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/wills-and-testaments](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/wills-and-testaments)

# Squire Squared

by Gren Dix

Membership no. 4174

A few weeks ago, I came across the forename *Squire*. Then, like London buses, three came along at once. Two of them create an interesting problem.

James HAMER (1823-c1862) married Nancy PILLING (c1827-) and had a son, Squire, in 1860. Nancy was a widow in the 1871 census.

William HORROCKS (c1830-) married Elizabeth CANNON (c1825-1871) and had seven children including a son, Squire, born in 1869. His mother died in 1871.

In 1873 William, a widower, married Nancy, a widow, in the Bolton registration district. As a result, the 1881 census record was:

RG11/3832-122-9	Little Bolton				
William Horrocks	head	m	50	Dyer	
Nancy Horrocks	wife	m	50	-	
Squire Horrocks	son	u	12		
Squire Hamer	son	u	20		
Andrew Hamer	son	u	19		
Samuel Hamer	son	u	16		

I wonder how they referred to the two Squires?

## *Malpas News (8) from the Cheshire Observer, 14 July 1923*

MALPAS SUNDAY SCHOOLS' TRIP – On Tuesday the Parish Church Sunday School joined with the Congregational Church Sunday scholars in their annual excursion. At 7am they left Malpas in six large motor coaches, the party totalling over 200, and including the teachers and friends. A journey was made to Rhyl, via Mold and St Asaph, returning by the coast. The arrangements were well carried out, without mishap, reflecting every credit on **Mr A Hughes**, of Church-street, the superintendent of the Congregational Sunday School.

# Net That Serf

## The Computer Section

Compiled by Geoff Johnson

Email: nts@fhsc.org.uk Tel: 01829 760422

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### From the Desktop



We have a couple of articles here from a Computer Club regular. We'd talked at Club about scanning photos, and Bill has pulled his thoughts together for us. Have any readers got good alternative ideas?

My own piece concerns the advantages of not getting too 'Delete-key happy' when you receive regular *Geoff, you have hints waiting in Johnson Family Tree* emails. They might be valuable. Has anyone else had similar successes?

There seems to be a gradual increase in the amount of information concerning workhouse data. The *Workhouse Voices* piece certainly highlights the extent of detail that can be found. This link shows the few county archives that are now searchable on Ancestry:

[www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/catalog/?title=Workhouse&limitToCountry=1](http://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/catalog/?title=Workhouse&limitToCountry=1)

There are more Johnsons listed in the Bedford Workhouse than I'd realised. More work to do here!



# Photo Scanning

By Nantwich & Computer Club member Bill Pearson

If you are like me, you will have accumulated many boxes of old photos. It's nice to digitise your collection – then you can easily share them and/or add them to your trees and family histories.

There are several ways to do this. If you have the negatives, the best way is to scan the negatives, using a dedicated negative scanner. Some flatbed scanners can scan negatives. Many flatbed scanners will have a film scanner option specifically for scanning film, so make sure to select that if you have it. The best ones have a light source behind the negative. In recent years negative scanners have become much cheaper, but the better-quality ones do cost more.

Some say that you should scan the images as a Tag Image File Format, abbreviated TIFF or TIF. However, whilst these are better in quality than JPEG (short for Joint Photographic Experts Group) or JPG files, they will be much bigger files. If you are sharing them, not everyone has an image viewer for TIFF files. The higher the resolution that you scan your images, the better the quality will be – but the bigger the file size will also be. *[Ed: the main reason for choosing to save images in TIFF format is that a JPG file, being a compressed file format, will lose some of the detail each time it is edited and re-saved, while a TIFF file will not. If you never edit your image files after scanning then saving as a JPG with high quality/low compression is fine.]*

Many prefer to use their flatbed scanners to scan prints. This is quicker than scanning the negatives, but the quality will never be as good. Different scanning software can have a big effect on the quality of the results. Software like Autosplitter or Scanspeeder for Windows let you scan multiple pictures at once (as many as will fit on your scanner). The software can automatically crop the edges and straighten the images, so you can quickly scan lots of images. The free versions of these programmes probably have sufficient features for most people.

It is also very quick to use your mobile phone to take pictures of your prints. Using a dedicated app can make this job very easy, and may have features like

a perspective correction tool. I recently visited the White Bear in Whitchurch, as a Farmhouse Cheese Maker had told me they had some nice old photos of people making Farmhouse Cheshire Cheese. The pub was quite dark inside, and I feared that the lighting in the pub near the photos, and the reflecting glass over the photos, would not produce good results.

Having asked the landlord for permission to copy the pictures, I remembered that I had recently installed a free app called Google PhotoScan [www.google.com/intl/en\\_uk/photos/scan](http://www.google.com/intl/en_uk/photos/scan). This is available for both Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.android.apps.photos.scanner> and iOS <https://apps.apple.com/app/apple-store/id1165525994>.

When you take a photo using Google PhotoScan, you are instructed to scan the photo from four different points, to remove any reflections and glare. I was most impressed with the results, bearing in mind the conditions in the pub.



Copy of photo taken in the White Bear in Whitchurch

Another free app to consider is Microsoft Lens <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/office-lens-for-windows-577eco9d-8da2-4029-8bb7-12f8114f472a> which is also available for both iOS and Android users. This app automatically captures, crops and straightens - and you can upload the image to Microsoft OneDrive.

## How Ancestry is Helping with my Brick Walls

By Geoff Johnson

My Ancestry account is steadily compiling details of my family tree. That's not because I've specifically asked them to, but they just seem to enjoy doing it! To me, Ancestry provides a good search engine to find data. My tree is managed more comprehensively by a much more specialised genealogy software program called Family Historian. As Ancestry gains a little bit more information relating to their version of my tree, they seek to add records to it. I happily accept additions providing the offers are correct, which they often aren't! In the course of this process, they start to generate predictions about further possible family contacts.

In the main these just produce emails to me in the form of *Geoff, you have hints in Johnson Family Tree*. At times I find this is a bit of a pestilence, because they invariably observe to me that they found so-and-so in the 18XX census, asking if this is my ancestor? Invariably this is relating to ancestors I originally identified more than a decade ago! Alternatively, it can concern stuff related to somebody else's scruffy research; going entirely in the wrong direction.

One can spend an awful lot of time cross-checking to make sure that what they found is not something new, and it can be quite easy to just delete the message without verifying. However, some of the more recent Ancestry suggestions have caused me to apply an ever-greater caution!

A recently-received brick wall cracking email indicated that records have appeared for William JOHNSON, my 3x great-grandfather, in the workhouse at Bedford in the last few months of his life. Until now I had no idea that he'd been admitted to the workhouse. Nor was I aware of these records. But, more importantly, these records shatter the theories that I had about his date of birth.

Until now I've only been able to surmise the likely options, from indirectly written suggestions of his date of birth.

The 1841 Census (7th June) puts him at 65. Of course, the 1841 census rounded adult ages down to the nearest five years, so he could have been born between 1772 and 1776. The death certificate cites death on 31st May 1843 and says age 70 (i.e., born 1773), but the informant was not a family member. His burial on 3rd June 1843 records him dying at the age of 67 (i.e., born 1776). Until now, I had surmised that he could have been born around 1775 to 1776.

In these workhouse registers, I found several records relating to William's relatively brief admission, discharge and weekly costs, and the multiple sheets all contain the same recorded birth dates. These workhouse records have been a revelation to me! They give the birth years of William, his wife Charlotte, and their two youngest children. The years given for Charlotte and the children are spot on, and are verifiable by baptism records I hold. The year of birth for William is given as 1772, and that date is repeated throughout the registers for the six weeks they remained there.

Number in Relief List.	2. NAME.	3. When Born.	4. Parish to which belonging.	5. Calling.	6. If Adult, whether Single, married, widow, or widower; if child, whether orphan, deserted, or bastard.	7. If able-bodied.
2	Bond Samuel	1792	Manolden	Labourer	Married,	able
5	Catherine	1790				
11	Charles	1832				
	Middleton John	1842	Saint-Paul		Bastard	
2	Johnson William	1772	Wilden	The Best DOB Yet!		
2	Charlotte	1795		These DOB's are provably correct		
4	Joseph	1832				
5	Elizabeth	1835				
1	Richardson Ann	1817	Manbold		Single	
3	Joseph	1839			Bastard	
6	Mitford Elizabeth	1820	Juney		Single	

Sadly, health and status factors emerged here; William is, on admission, declared as *Aged* and he (and perhaps the others) are described as *Healthy but Filthy*; plus, of course, they've been admitted to the workhouse!

I feel there is every reason to believe this date, written by the workhouse administrators with all the family members included.

I now need to carry out extensive Bedfordshire research to establish the most likely baptisms in parishes radiating from Wilden in 1798 when I first found him. Not an easy job in a county bereft of online research data apart from FamilySearch, with a record office that is 150 miles away!

In a similar vein, a further *Geoff you have hints* email led me to the Admission and Discharge Records at the Royal Hospital Chelsea Regimental Registers of Pensioners records for a *John TOWNS*.

The name was familiar to me - my 3x great-grandmother Charlotte had married my 3x great-grandfather William JOHNSON as a widow. Her previous marriage had been to a John TOWNS, who had died very young, aged just 35.

7. If able-bodied.	8. If partially or wholly disabled, and cause of Disability.	9. If receiving any Relief from Clubs, Charitable Institutions, Government Pensions, or otherwise.	9. Cause of seeking Relief.	10 and 11. Observations on Condition at the time of Admission; Names of Relations liable under 43rd Elizabeth; and any other general Remarks.	1. Number in Pauper Description Book.	Of what Religious Persuasion.
<i>able</i>			<i>No work or Home</i>	<i>Clear &amp; Healthy</i>		<i>Dissenters</i>
			<i>aged</i>	<i>Healthy filthy</i> Healthy Filthy		<i>St<sup>th</sup> Church</i>
	<i>Partially</i>		<i>Bastardy</i>	<i>Clear &amp; Healthy</i>		<i>"</i>

The Ancestry link only had a blurred image of the record concerned, and it quickly became apparent that the record itself is with Fold3, to which I did not have access. I knew that a good friend of mine had a Fold3 subscription, and asked her to research further. An excellent result, because this verified that it was indeed my John TOWNS, born in Ravensden, Bedfordshire, and he had volunteered into the army in 1807. He went on to serve for a total of 13 years, 215 days. A summary of his service record at discharge in December 1818, as a private, is as follows:

*General conduct has been 'very good and brave'. He served in wars at the Peninsular, North American and at Waterloo, was wounded in the shoulder and arm at Badajoz, and in the right arm at Salamanca, and in the left shoulder at Waterloo (4.0th foot).*

I had already got good records showing that John TOWNS returned to Ravensden and married Charlotte in 1820. They had a son (also named John) born in 1821 at around the same time as John TOWNS died, aged around 34 to 35 years. I had always wondered why he had died so young, and the above information clarifies the likely reasons.

If he hadn't died, there's a good chance that I wouldn't be here now!

Checking hints from the various research websites can be laborious. Often the information presented by others is just plain wrong. It's easy to cop-out and just hit the delete key. I suggest that you apply caution before doing that. Checking can well be to your advantage!

## **Comments on Previous Issues**

### **Transcription Errors**

Rugby-based member Charlie Hockenhull observed:

Hi Geoff, I've just been reading Jim Livesey's *Census Transcription Errors* from the March 2023 edition of **CHESHIRE ANCESTOR**. I would agree that FMP is full of transcription errors, most of them very basic indeed.

*I'm less sure about the word "full" Charlie! However, I venture to add that errors will remain there unless we take steps to point them out. In my experience FMP are quicker than others at fixing errors that I've raised with them - GJ*

# Workhouse Voices

By Bill Pearson

In the spring of 2020, The National Archives Education Service released a themed collection of historical documents entitled: *Workhouse Voices: What did Paupers say about the Poor Law*:

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/workhouse-voices/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/workhouse-voices/)

The website *In Their Own Write* - <https://intheirownwriteblog.wordpress.com> - uses letters from paupers and other poor people as well as associated manuscript material to investigate the lives of the poor in the nineteenth century. They have transcribed letters from paupers, the wider poor and their advocates. You can search and read the transcripts. For some letters you can view photos of the original letters, and even listen to a recording of the transcript being read out.

For instance, *Fear of the Black Hole* is an anonymous letter (written on 29 March 1839) from a pauper covering the brutality of the master, and the inhumanity of the regime in Nantwich Workhouse:

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/workhouse-voices/fear-of-the-black-hole/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/workhouse-voices/fear-of-the-black-hole/)

Another letter, *Badly Used*, complains about how a pauper has been forced to work, when he is unable to, in Timperley Workhouse and that the diet there is not adequate:

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/workhouse-voices/badly-used](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/workhouse-voices/badly-used)

Recently The National Archives launched *The Victorian Poor*, an open database of letters from paupers, the wider poor, and their advocates written between 1834 to 1900. You can access over 3,500 letters here: [www.victorianpoor.org](http://www.victorianpoor.org)

There is an interactive map, which was intended for primary schools: [www.victorianpoor.org/pages/primary](http://www.victorianpoor.org/pages/primary) This is the one I would recommend that you start with. Zoom in on the map to your preferred location, and then click on the marks indicating where there are transcriptions. Sometimes there will be several different letters, at the same point. You can also search for your

ancestor's name, on the lefthand side, to see if it appears in correspondence in that area.

There is another interactive map which was intended for secondary schools: [www.victorianpoor.org/pages/secondary](http://www.victorianpoor.org/pages/secondary)

The interactive maps all interrogate the same data, but the output is shown slightly differently. The interactive map on the research page [www.victorianpoor.org/pages/research](http://www.victorianpoor.org/pages/research) is particularly good for applying filters when researching different topics.

### **Finding out more information**

You can find out more by using Discovery to search the National Archives and other sites: <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk> Discovery holds more than 32 million descriptions of records held by The National Archives and more than 2,500 other archives across the country. Over 9 million records are available for download. I prefer to use the Advanced Search page to conduct my searches: <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/advanced-search>

By looking at the reference number found on *The Victorian Poor* site, you can learn about where the record is, and if the original is one that you can download free of charge. You can search for an entire reference, e.g. *MH 12/1033*, or just use parts of the reference to expand your search. For instance, a search for just *MH 12* would find all *Local Government Board and predecessors: Correspondence with Poor Law Unions and Other Local Authorities* papers.

This means that you could do, for instance, an advanced search for *Nantwich* in *All of the Words*, with *MH 12* in the *Search for or within References*. You can then see all the resources available for Nantwich. You can also filter out the ones that are not available to download if you are unable to visit the National Archives in person. To download items, you must first register for a free account. You can order up to ten items per basket, and up to 100 items in a 30-day period.

The National Archives have also prepared useful research guides on subjects like **Poverty and the Poor Laws**: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/poverty-poor-laws](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/poverty-poor-laws)



**Workhouses:** [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/workhouse](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/workhouse)

**Workhouse Inmates and Staff:** [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/workhouse-inmate-or-member-of-staff](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/workhouse-inmate-or-member-of-staff)  
and other related areas.

## 1931 Census Demise – the Truth

By Geoff Johnson

I believe that most of us know that we will not be receiving Census data for 1931. The census records were held in a store at Hayes, Middlesex, and on the evening of Saturday 19th December 1942 the store was gutted by fire, the cause of which was never identified. Various theories had been put forward as to what actually happened with it, and, like many others, I'd always assumed that the fire was caused by some wartime incident.

However, in the Lost Cousins newsletter of 14th March 2022 and highlighted again on 6th January, Peter Calver reveals the realities he'd found in a document at the National Archives. It's part of a Crown Copyright letter to the head of the GRO, some nine pages long, which can be found in RG 20/109 and downloaded free of charge: <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C2698084>

It expresses sorrow at the destruction of census records at Hayes, suggesting that either criminal negligence or sabotage had occurred! Apparently, there were special fire hydrants and a guard of six fire watchers, supposedly protecting the site. As Peter Calver wonders, who were the six fire watchers? What happened on that last Saturday before Christmas in 1942? It's important to realise that the fire also destroyed the enumerator books for the 1921 Census, thereby restricting the information that we would wish to access for completeness of the census data. Peter Calver intends to research further!

## From the Inbox

### Cheshire and Staffordshire Wills on Findmypast

Mike Hodkinson of Runcorn advises:

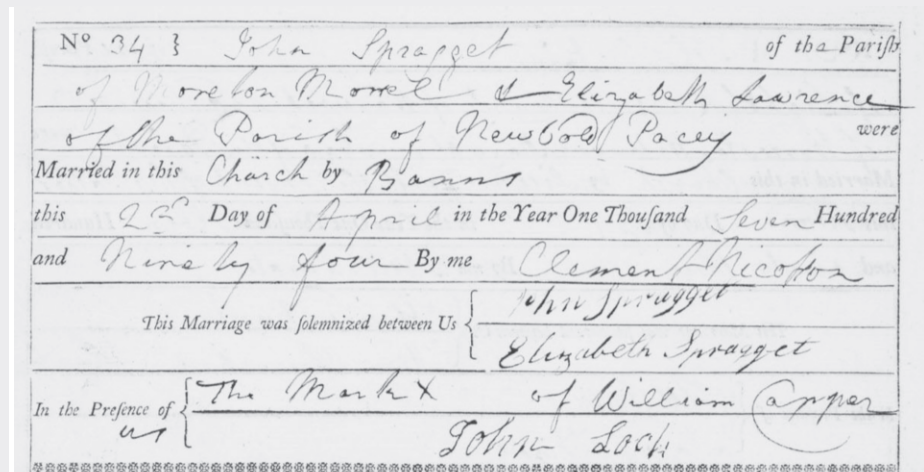
There are apparently 183,000 Cheshire and 151,000 Staffordshire will and probate documents in the Findmypast database. Although none of my known

ancestors was wealthy, I have found about 100 relevant records on Findmypast. Even if the only information gained from a probate record is the name of a widow, this is often useful as her burial record may be outside the parish she lived in during her childbearing life or the name is common. Wills can provide a wealth of information.

In such a large database, there are inevitably errors. Most of the Staffordshire records are duplicated and each has a double entry. The first entry is the transcription and the second is a thumbnail. One record gives a thumbnail list and should include the relevant name. The second gives a thumbnail of the original document for which there may be several pages.

I found that where there is only one record and the thumbnail is only a list, when I inspected the thumbnail of original document of an adjacent name on the list, my missing thumbnail of the original document was next to it. An administrative error but fairly common.

## Closing Snippet



Couldn't Wait to Sign Her New Name!

I need more input from members to make my job easier, and I don't believe that none of you have a question about a technical problem, or better understanding of specific topics. So, let's have more submissions please – GJ

## Group News

**For changes and up-to-date news check the website  
[www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk)**

**Note:** most future group meetings will now take place as actual meetings in person, unless specifically stated to be online Zoom meetings.

Please be aware that circumstances may change; if in doubt, please check the FHSC website before travelling to a meeting, especially if the weather is bad.

Members may participate in the meetings of any group.

To receive email news of future group meetings, log in to the FHSC website, go to the group's page and click on the button *Add ... to My Groups*.

You can receive emails from as many groups as you wish.

If you need to find out more or get help with Zoom meetings, please contact your group leader. If you are not affiliated to a group, please contact David Smetham by email: [congleton@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:congleton@fhsc.org.uk)

## Location of Groups



## **FHSC Seminars**

*by Margaret Spate, Jean Laidlaw and Margaret Roberts*

These talks, presented via Zoom and open to all members, take place on the 3rd Wednesday evening of each month. The waiting room will open at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. A newsletter will be sent out on the first day of each month with details of the talk. You can then register for that month's talk only - you cannot block book all the talks.

To register, simply sign into the FHSC website, navigate to Events and scroll down until you find that month's talk. Click on the title, then click on the Join button, followed by Save. You will receive an automated email confirming your registration. Zoom links and meeting protocols will be sent out in another newsletter two days before the talk.

These Zoom talks have the option of closed captions (subtitles) if required – click on CC at the bottom of the screen to enable this function. Please note that the question-and-answer session at the end of each talk is by the Zoom Chat facility; if you are not sure how this works please email [seminar@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:seminar@fhsc.org.uk) and we will be happy to help you.

*Future meetings: (All Zoom meetings)*

**21st June 2023**

***Photogenealogy: An Introduction - Ann Larkham***

Do you have old family photos? Are they organised and are they safe? Do you wish you could enjoy and share them? To help you address the issues raised by these questions, Ann Larkham will introduce you to photogenealogy – what it is and why you should do it. During this talk the organisation and care of both digital and physical photos will be outlined along with ideas for enhancing and sharing your family photos. The talk will conclude with tips for creating a treasured and valuable photo legacy. Ann Larkham's career started in television, moved on to science communication and now is rooted in the emerging field of photogenealogy. Throughout this time, Ann has researched her family history and been a lifelong learner, achieving a BSc (Hons) and MPhil degrees in Ecology, and a PGCert in Genealogy from the University of Strathclyde. Several of Ann's articles have been published in *Family Tree*

*Magazine*, including a recent six-part series about photogenealogy. Ann plans to offer photogenealogy services and to write a photogenealogy book with the aim of helping others find the joy in their family history photos. For more information, please visit [www.photogenealogy.co.uk](http://www.photogenealogy.co.uk)

### **19th July**

#### ***An A-Z of Family History: Some Less Well-known Resources – Dr Janet Few***

Janet is the current President of the Family History Federation and Chair of Devon FHS. She is an experienced and qualified family, social and community historian who lectures regularly on these subjects throughout the UK and overseas. Janet has spoken at many national and international genealogical events and is also a popular author; she makes a welcome return to FHSC. When tracing a family tree, the temptation is to use the more well-known sources; those which are available online via the major data providers. In this presentation, the author of the classic handbook *Family Historian's Enquire Within* introduces a variety of less well-known sources that can be used to enhance and extend a pedigree or provide a valuable context for the lives the family. The original records, databases and online records discussed will range from Absent Voters' Lists and Asylum Records, through Farm Surveys and Hearth Tax Records, to Valuation Office Records and ideas for inspiring young people to take an interest in genealogy. The aim is to make the audience aware of sources covering the seventeenth to twentieth centuries and point to ways of discovering more. There should be something new for everyone.

### **16th August**

#### ***The Vale Royal Rebellion and Other Lost Cheshire Histories – Eli Lewis-Lycett***

Eli Lewis-Lycett is the founder of *The Local Mythstorian*, a multimedia project dedicated to revealing the extraordinary local histories of Cheshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire found online at <https://thelocalmythstorian.com>. Through brand new research and original content, he casts a new light on the curious histories and offers a unique insight into the incredible heritage of East Cheshire and the Staffordshire Moorlands. Eli's passion is centred on delving beneath the headlines of local history and folklore to search for untold stories, hidden meanings and real historical origins. His first book, a collection of essays from the first phase of the project, was released in Summer 2022: *Mythstoric*

*Origins - Exploring the Extraordinary Local Histories Behind the Legends and Folklore of East Cheshire, Peak District Derbyshire and the Staffordshire Moorlands* is a deep-dive into the roots of many popular local tales and curiosities, suggesting theories and possible answers to questions such as the origins of the Headless Horseman of the Staffordshire Moorlands, the historical context behind the 'Wizards' of Alderley Edge and the events which led to the downing of the stone circle at Arbor Low in Derbyshire. Eli also writes for *Haunted Magazine* and *Cheshire Life*. This talk will be based around his forthcoming book and podcast series based in Cheshire and will contain some very interesting and unusual stories from deepest darkest Cheshire!

## **20th September**

### ***Mediaeval Building Myths - Dr James Wright***

Hailing from Staffordshire, James has been involved in the world of archaeology for over twenty years. He began his career working for Trent & Peak Archaeology prior to retraining as a conservation stonemason under the master mason Mark Stafford. Between 2004 and 2010, James combined both disciplines as Archaeological and Historic Buildings Assistant at Nottinghamshire County Council, where he ran the Castles of Nottinghamshire project. He then moved on to work as a buildings archaeologist and historic stone specialist for the Museum of London Archaeology until the autumn of 2016. James has also worked in several areas of the heritage sector with experience as a field archaeologist, conservation stonemason, community archaeologist, historic stone specialist, archival researcher, historic graffiti specialist and buildings archaeologist. James has also worked and appeared on *Time Team*, *The Great British Dig*, *Unearthed* on the Discovery Science channel, *Mystic Britain* on Smithsonian Channel and *Hidden behind the Staircase* on BBC Radio 4, as well as a host of podcasts. This talk is a general introduction to some of the most common misconceptions surrounding historic buildings. Historic buildings specialists often meet folk who are eager to talk about their properties and their enthusiasm is genuinely infectious. We can learn so much of value about a society by what it builds. However, romanticised and elaborated stories often grow up around certain mysterious features in mediaeval buildings. For example, stories of secret passages, arrow-sharpening grooves in parish

churches, and yarns that spiral staircases in castles turn one way to advantage right-handed swordsmen. The legends are outlined, the origins of the myths are explained and the underlying truth behind each story is revealed. Hopefully the talk will help to give a broader and deeper understanding of mediaeval buildings that will bring us just that little bit closer to their former occupants.

## **NEW - Cheshire Research Buddies Online Meetings**

*by Margaret Roberts*

### *Future meetings:*

24th Jun *Malpas*

29th Jul *Wybunbury (Nantwich)*

26th Aug *Over/Wharton (Winsford)*

30th Sep *Sale*

Our very own online helpdesk, which takes place via Zoom at 2pm on the last Saturday of the month (except October), is the ideal opportunity for members with research queries, photograph requests or 'brick wall' questions to meet virtually with other members who have local knowledge of a particular area to swap information and generally help and support each other. In order to make sure the places and topics that members want are covered, please email me on [publicity@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:publicity@fhsc.org.uk) with suggestions for future meeting topics.

If you are familiar with any of the above areas - perhaps you have done some research there, or even live nearby - then please register to join the meeting and see if you can help another member.

If you have any questions relating to any of the above areas, please register to join the meeting and email your research questions in advance so that they can be shared with other attendees beforehand.

FHSC members will need to register to attend, in the same way that you do for the Seminar series. Pop along to the FHSC website, click on *Events* at the top of the page and scroll down until you find the *Cheshire Research Buddies* listing. Click on the blue title, then click on *Join* followed by *Save*.

PLEASE only register if you plan to attend the meeting, as numbers will be limited. Registration for each meeting closes at 10am on the meeting day.

## **Alsager Group**

*by John Higgins*

### **Future meetings:**

- 19th Jun    ***Memories and Mementos of the 1953 Coronation***  
Members will be invited to share photographs, mementos and memories of that historic day in an informal way.
- 17th Jul    ***Group Visit***  
Details to be confirmed.
- August     ***NO MEETING***
- 18th Sep    ***AGM and Talk***  
The title of the accompanying talk is to be confirmed.

### **Please note change of venue.**

Meetings are held at 7.30pm on the 3rd Monday of the month (except August and December) at **Alsager Library**, Sandbach Road North, Alsager, ST7 2QH. Admission is £1 for members and £2 for visitors. Refreshments are available after the talk, when there is an opportunity to discuss family history with other members. There is a large car park (free) behind the library. Visitors are most welcome.

## **Bebington Group**

*by Bob Wright*

### **Future meetings:**

- 26th Jun    ***The Establishment of the Workhouse at Clatterbridge***  
– *Chris Thompson*
- 24th Jul    ***History of the Development of Oxton*** – *Bob Knowles*
- 21st Aug    ***Mayer Park*** – *Dennis Boyd*
- 25th Sep    ***The Life of Lady Lever*** – *Gavin Hunter*

### **Please note change of venue.**

Meetings are usually held at 7.30pm on the 4th Monday of the month (excluding Bank Holidays) at St Barnabas Village Centre, Church Square, Bromborough, Wirral CH62 6AH. Admission is £2 including refreshments.



## **Chester Group**

*by Helen Elliott*

### **Future meetings:**

29th Jun *Wills , Probate and Death Duty Registers – Joy Thomas*

27th Jul *AGM and My Genealogical Journey – Tony Bostock*

August *NO MEETING*

28th Sep *The Poor Law and Workhouses in Cheshire – Mike Royden*

Meetings are usually held on the last Thursday of the month in the Pavilion, Wealstone Lane, Upton by Chester, Chester CH2 1HD. Members and visitors are very welcome and there is car parking space. Doors open at 7pm and the meeting starts at 7.30pm. There is a small charge at the door – £2 for members and £3 for visitors – which includes refreshments.

## **Computer Group – The Society’s Computer Club**

*by Geoff Johnson*

### **All meetings are online using Zoom.**

Members who have requested emails from the Computer Group will receive notification of all meetings. Meetings and topics are seldom pre-arranged. Our preferred practice is to discuss new websites, members’ own current problems, or generally educating members on getting the best from their computers. We are here to help and learn! The subject of each meeting is usually announced the week before, by email or on the Club’s *Events* page on the FHSC website. Meetings start at 7.30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, and are open to all FHSC members. Contact [computerclub@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:computerclub@fhsc.org.uk) for online access details.

## **Congleton Group**

*by David Smetham*

Updates and reminders about meetings are emailed to subscribers on our newsletter list. To be kept up to date with future meetings please sign up to the newsletters of the Congleton group on the Family History Society of Cheshire website or check the group pages on the website [www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk)

### **Future meetings:**

20th Jun *Face-to-face meeting, topic TBA*

July            **NO MEETING**  
August        **Group Visit TBA**  
19th Sep      **Face-to-face meeting, AGM and topic TBA**

Meetings are usually held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Congleton Library. Doors open at 7.15pm and meetings start at 7.30pm. Entry is through the lower door facing the bus station.

### **Crewe Group** *by Margaret Spate*

Crewe and Nantwich Groups have decided that we will continue with our programme of meetings which will be in one of three formats.

- **Zoom** – an online meeting open to all members, joining link requested by an email to [crewe@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:crewe@fhsc.org.uk) – please add **Zoom** with the **date of the meeting** to the subject line of your email.
- **Hybrid** – available via Zoom or by attending our usual venue. Those participating online should request the Zoom link as above.
- **F2F** – a face-to-face meeting held at our usual venue, at the time given. Admission charges apply for both members of FHSC and visitors.

**CR/NA** = joint meeting for both Crewe and Nantwich groups

#### **Future meetings:**

13th Jun      **F2F at Crewe: *The Cheshire Roll of Honour – Stephen Benson***  
Stephen will introduce his website, *The Cheshire Roll of Honour*, remembering all from Cheshire who have served in the armed forces from 1899 to the present day. [www.cheshireroll.co.uk](http://www.cheshireroll.co.uk).

20th Jun      **at 2.30pm ZOOM (Joint CR/NA):**  
***Websites less used by Family Historians – Margaret Roberts***  
While we are all familiar with the usual genealogical websites such as Ancestry, Find My Past, FamilySearch and the FreeBMD projects, there is also a raft of internet sites that, although not intended for family historians, contain a lot of information that can be used to add context and colour to your research.  
Join us as Margaret takes us through some websites that you may never have thought about or even heard of.

11th Jul ***F2F at Crewe: The History of the Co-op in Crewe and District***  
- *Stuart McKay*

10th Aug ***10.30am-3.30pm Members' Day at the Crewe FHU***  
For those not familiar with our research rooms, this will be a chance to explore and try our facilities, with help from our volunteers. Further details will be announced later by newsletter and on the FHSC website. An appointment system will be operated if necessary.

12th Sep ***F2F at Crewe: AGM and Workshop Session***  
We welcome suggestions for topics and will try to accommodate them.

19th Sep ***at 2.30pm ZOOM (Joint CR/NA): Topic TBA***

F2F meetings are usually held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at Jubilee House, St Paul's St, Crewe CW1 2QA. Doors open at 7.15 for a 7.30 start. Admission £2 for members, £3 for non-members, including refreshments. Suggested parking at the adjacent Victoria Centre Car Park, CW1 2PT where there is free parking after 6.00pm. Please check the Crewe pages on the FHSC website for further information on meetings.

### ***Crewe Family History Unit***

Please see pages 79 - 80 and elsewhere in this issue for details of the Society's research centres.

### **London/Middlesex Group**

***by David Smetham (FHSC Treasurer)***

The joint London branch of the Lancashire Family History & Heraldry Society and the Cumbria Family History Society has invited members of societies belonging to the North West Group of Family History Societies to participate in their talks. This includes Family History Society of Cheshire members.

For more information, please email David Smetham at [info@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:info@fhsc.org.uk).

### **Macclesfield Group**

***by Jean Laidlaw***

***Future meetings:***

27th Jun *UK GDL and UK MFH Websites – Ian Hartas*

Ian will introduce his websites which are invaluable to all family historians: *UKGDL – UK Genealogical Directories and Lists* and *UKMFH – UK Military Family History*

July *To be arranged – A group visit to Tabley House*

Please could you let me know as soon as possible if you are interested.

22nd Aug *Workshop Evening*

Looking at some of the newer resources available to us online, such as the 1939 register and the 1921 census.

26th Sep *A short AGM followed by ‘My Favourite Ancestor’*

Meetings are usually held on the 4th Tuesday of the month at The Salvation Army Hall, Roe Street, Macclesfield, SK11 6UT. Doors open at 7.15pm and meetings start at 7.30pm. Entry is through the main door facing the Churchill Way car park, and we meet in the ground floor room. Admission is £2 for members and £3 for visitors, including refreshments; members are also eligible to take part in a draw for a small gift.

For the latest news, please see the Macclesfield pages on the FHSC website. To be kept up to date with future meetings please sign up to Macclesfield group newsletters on the FHSC website [www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk) – go to the Macclesfield page of the website [www.fhsc.org.uk/about-the-group-macclesfield-2](http://www.fhsc.org.uk/about-the-group-macclesfield-2) and click on *Add Macclesfield to My Groups*; or send a request to [macclesfield@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:macclesfield@fhsc.org.uk).

### **Nantwich Group** *by Sheila Mitchell*

Crewe and Nantwich Groups have decided that we will continue with our programme of meetings but they will be undertaken in one of three formats.

- **Zoom** – an online meeting open to all members, joining link requested by an email to [crewe@fhsc.org.uk](mailto:crewe@fhsc.org.uk) – please add **Zoom** with the **date of the meeting** to the subject line of your email
- **Hybrid** – available via Zoom or by attending our usual venue. Those participating online should request the Zoom link as above.
- **F2F** – a face-to-face meeting held at our usual venue and time.

Admission charges apply for both members of FHSC and visitors.

CR/NA = joint meeting for both Crewe and Nantwich groups

**For full details of Zoom meetings please see the Crewe Group entry.**

If you wish to join one of the Zoom meetings, please register as stated above.

**Future meetings:**

20th Jun at 2.30pm ZOOM (Joint CR/NA):

*Websites less used by Family Historians - Margaret Roberts*

20th Jun F2F: *Using Quarter Sessions Admin Records - Claire Moores*

18th Jul F2F: *The Nantwich Parochial Library, St Mary's Church: Origins and Travels of the Library - Helen Cooke*

22nd Aug F2F: *Role of a Voluntary Scientific Advisor (Emergency Planning) during the Cold War following WW2 - Brian Roe*

Including what the 'Secret Bunker' at Hack Green was used for.

19th Sep at 2.30pm ZOOM (Joint CR/NA):

*Topic TBA*

**Please note change of venue.**

We have a new venue this summer for our face-to-face meetings - the Nantwich Parish Rooms (ground floor), opposite St Mary's Church in the centre of Nantwich. Meetings are usually held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Doors open at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start and admission is £2 for members and £3 for non-members. There is car parking nearby that may be free after 6pm, please check. We really want our face-to-face meetings to go well, so please support us. We look forward to seeing you this summer.

***Nantwich Family History Workshops***

Workshops are held once a month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm on Mondays in the Local Studies and Family History Room on the first floor of Nantwich Library. A lift is available. Please come along if you need help to start your family history, have hit a brick wall, or need any advice. The library holds records including local newspapers, parish registers and many local history reference books, as well as free access to FindMyPast and Ancestry.

The next three workshops will be held on 26th June, 24th July and 18th September.

## **Northwich Group**

*by Dave Thomas*

Meetings are now held face-to-face in the church hall unless otherwise stated.

### ***Future meetings:***

12th Jun *Eyam, The Plague Village – Chris Green*

10th Jul *Visit to Mobberley Research Centre*

14th Aug *Marbury Hall – Clive Brookes*

11th Sep *Down Forget-Me-Not Lane – Brian Hallworth*

Meetings are usually held on the 2nd Monday of the month at Hartford Methodist Church Hall, Beach Road, Hartford, Northwich CW8 3AB. Doors open at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. Admission is £1, and non-members are most welcome. Car park available.

## **Runcorn Group**

*by Peter Johnson*

### ***Future meetings:***

7th Jun *TBA*

5th Jul *TBA*

3rd Aug *TBA*

We meet on the first Wednesday of each month (except January) starting at 7.00pm at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Clifton Road West, Runcorn WA7 4TE. Visitors will be most welcome.

## **Sale Group**

*by Marion Hall*

### ***Future meetings:***

14th Jun *Southern Cemetery – Emma Fox*

Emma is a Blue Badge guide and will tell us some of the history of the cemetery.

12th Jul *10am–4pm Proposed Visit to Mobberley Research Centre*

Mobberley is usually closed on a Wednesday but will open especially for us. If you are interested in joining us please phone Marion on 0161 973 7791. There will be NO evening meeting.

9th Aug *AGM followed by Members' Talks*

13th Sep *The Ins and Outs of Civil Registration – Sylvia Dillon*

Meetings are held at 7.30pm, for the talk at 7.45pm, on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at Trinity Methodist Church, Trinity Road, Sale M33 3ED. Visitors are always welcome. Admission is £2 for members and £2.50 for non-members.

## **Tameside Group**

*by Gay Oliver*

### *Future meetings:*

22nd Jun *Crime City: Manchester's Victorian Underworld – Joseph O'Neill*

27th Jul *Face to Face Workshop – Bring your Brick Walls*

August *NO MEETING*

28th Sep *AGM and TBC*

Hybrid Zoom and Face to Face meeting in the Centre on a topic to be decided in advance by our members.

26th Oct *Two Mesolithic sites in Tameside – Tameside Archaeology Service*

Tameside Archaeology Service will talk about two Mesolithic sites at Iron Tongue Hill and a farm near Mottram. The farm will have a new dig this summer; I'm looking forward to seeing what they find.

We are also trying to arrange a Family History Open day at Tameside Local Studies Library during September for Heritage Month.

Check our group page on the FHSC website for up-to-date information.

Meetings are usually held at 1.00pm on the 4th Thursday of the month at the 4C Community Centre in the grounds of Christ Church on Taunton Road in Ashton-under-Lyne. [www.4cashton.org.uk/find\\_us](http://www.4cashton.org.uk/find_us)

## **Wallasey Group**

*by Dave Beck*

### *Future meetings:*

20th Jun *The Golden Age of the Picture Postcard – Linda Clarke*

This was the decade before the First World War. Before the era of the telephone and with frequent postal deliveries, postcards

became a universal form of communication—some just simple messages, some greetings from holidays or for birthdays and Christmas, some funny, some sad, some mysterious. Postcards were the social media of the day, and they can tell us so much! Linda Clarke is a retired librarian who worked most recently at Cheshire Archives & Local Studies.

18th Jul *AGM, followed by Social Evening*

15th Aug *Development of Liverpool as a World Port linked to North Wales*  
– *Mike Blackburn*

Studies the North Wales ports and trade with Liverpool, the most important port in the world up to 1900.

19th Sep *Industrial Wallasey – Rob Jones*

Begins with agrarian industries such as farming and milling, then heavier industries such as quarries, brick fields and storage. Apparently Wallasey, and to some extent Birkenhead, were depositaries for nasty things Liverpool preferred not to have on their side of the river! Finally, manufacturing industries in more recent times.

**Please note change of venue.** Summer face-to-face meetings are held from April to September at 7.30pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Wallasey Central Library, Earlston Road, CH45 5DX. The entrance is via the small car park to the right of the main building.

From October to March our meetings will take place online using Zoom.

### **Help Desks**

We hold a helpdesk every Friday from 10am to 1pm at the Wallasey Central Reference Library, Earlston Road, Wallasey CH45 5DX. Step-free access to the library is available via a ramp and internal lift. At these helpdesks we are able to give individual help with family history research. All members and non-members are welcome.



## The Society's Family History Research Centres

Manned by experienced volunteers, visitors can obtain help and advice on family and local history research. Do you have your own microfiche but no reader? Bring them to us and view them using our fiche readers!



**CREWE FAMILY HISTORY UNIT - OPEN  
PLEASE PHONE OR CHECK WEBSITE  
FOR CHANGES**

**2nd Floor, Municipal Building,  
Earle Street, Crewe, CW1 2BJ  
Tel 01270 685699**

The Municipal Building is situated near the market and opposite Memorial Square and the old library. Crewe Register Office is in the same building. All visitors must sign in and out at reception. You will be directed to the second floor; a lift is available.

FREE access to *FindMyPast*, *British Newspaper Archive* and *The Genealogist*

Local parish registers on film - extensive library of books

Crewe and District and South East Cheshire local history archives

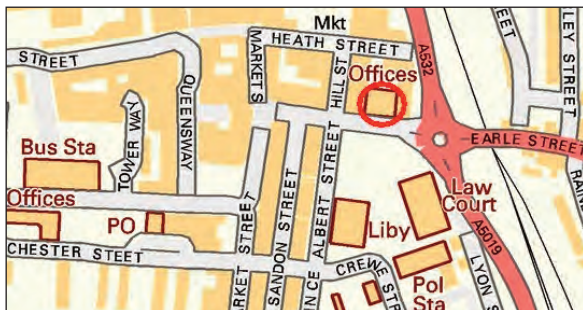
See the Crewe FHU Library Holdings lists on the FHSC website

**Usual opening hours: 10am-4pm Monday and Tuesday**

**plus one Saturday morning each month (TBC)**

For Saturday dates (TBC), and changes to usual opening hours, please see this issue's *Research Centre News* or the FHSC website [www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk).

Non-members visiting for the first time will be offered (for a small donation) time with a volunteer to explain the facilities available and advice on family history research. Membership of the Society is encouraged for further visits.



**MOBBERLEY FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH CENTRE - OPEN**  
**PLEASE PHONE OR CHECK WEBSITE FOR CHANGES**



**Rajar Building, Town Lane,  
Mobberley, WA16 7ER**

**Tel: 01565 872210**

The Rajar Building is situated on the corner of Town Lane (A5085) and Ilford Way. The entrance is at the front of the building on Town Lane, and the Research Centre is on the first floor (access by stairs - no lift).

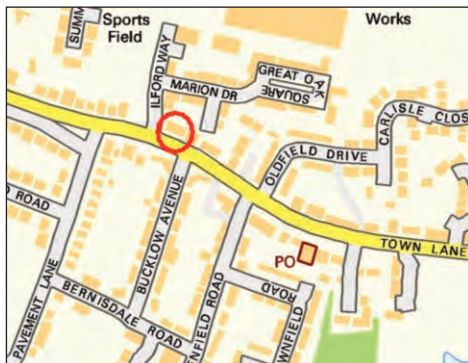
- FREE help and advice from our experienced duty volunteers
- FREE access to *FindMyPast (World)*, *Ancestry* and *The Genealogist*
- Local parish registers on film (some of which are not available online)
- Extensive library of books on all topics, covering many areas of the UK  
(See the Mobberley Library Holdings lists on the FHSC website)
- Searchable digital archive of family history magazine back-issues and data
- Nominal charge for printing and photocopying
- Fiche/film and A2 scanning available – please enquire.

**Usual opening hours: 10am-4pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday  
and 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month.**

**Closed on bank holidays and over the Christmas-New Year period.**

For changes to usual opening hours, please check this issue's *Research Centre News* or the FHSC website. **Please ring to check we are open before travelling if the weather is bad; volunteers may be unable to get there.**

Daily admission charge (per person)  
£3 for members, £5 for non-members  
(refundable on joining the Society on day of visit), including FREE tea or coffee. Non-members please phone in advance. Suggested on-street parking on Ilford Way or Marion Drive. Bus stop (Bucklow Ave) nearby for the D&G Bus no. 88. See [www.dgbus.co.uk](http://www.dgbus.co.uk).



## GROUP CONTACTS

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### **NOTE:**

GL: Group Leader  
GC: Group Contact

# The Family History Society of Cheshire

[www.fhsc.org.uk](http://www.fhsc.org.uk)

## Malpas



Malpas is a small market town and civil parish in Cheshire. It lies near the borders with Shropshire and Wales, and had a population of 906 in the 1801 census, rising to 1,673 in the 2011 census. Malpas is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as belonging to **Robert FitzHugh**, Baron of Malpas. In 1281 Malpas was granted a charter for a weekly market and annual fair. The earthworks of Malpas Castle can still be seen near St. Oswald's Church.

Publications by **David Hayns** about the history of Malpas can be downloaded free of charge from the heritage section of the Malpas Online website at [www.malpascheshire.org/historic-archive/history-of-malpas.html](http://www.malpascheshire.org/historic-archive/history-of-malpas.html).

Parish registers dating from 1561 and other documents are held by Cheshire Archives under reference P21. Images of the registers can be found on FindMyPast. A printed transcription of the registers for 1561-1812 and images of the churchwardens accounts for 1692-1850 are available on Familysearch.

More information about Malpas can be found on the Genuki website at [www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/CHS/Malpas](http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/CHS/Malpas). Craig Thornber has photos of Malpas on his website at [www.thornber.net/cheshire/htmlfiles/malpas.html](http://www.thornber.net/cheshire/htmlfiles/malpas.html).