

CHESHIRE ANCESTOR



The Journal of the
Family History Society of Cheshire



In this edition:

A Puzzling Family ❖ Stamp Duty & Parish "Paupers"

Fatal Ice Accident at Knutsford ❖ 1921 Census Tips

Parish Register Notes ❖ Wills, Maps, & Family History

More Revels in Over Peover ❖ Knutsford News and more...

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CHESHIRE ANCESTOR

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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 will make my usual plea for more articles. I have a few short articles but need some longer ones of 1000 to 2000 words for the next issue – that's about one or two A4 pages of text. My husband has suggested that, with the rise of artificial intelligence and article writers such as ChatGPT, I should be able to get a robot to write articles for me! Does anyone with the technical know-how want to try it out and write about their experience, as well as giving me the article it produces?

This issue I have reviewed a book about sharing your family history online. Coincidentally, I have also received an article about a website (*weare.xyz*) for sharing your family history online. You can read the book review on page 18 and the article on page 37.

Those who live in England may find many local history-related events in their area during September as the annual Heritage Open Days festival of history and culture takes place from 8th to 17th of the month. For more information and to read about the Crewe group's participation see page 22.

An interesting article on page 47 concerns additional notes found in parish registers. Vicars often annotated their registers with dramatic or important events, such as an earthquake or eclipse, the death of a monarch and so on. Of course, you will usually only see these if you are able to view the actual register pages, rather than transcriptions. If you have come across anything like this while researching your ancestors, do write and tell me what you found.

Don't forget the society's AGM will take place by Zoom on Saturday 28th October. If you are unable to use Zoom at home, you can participate using Zoom at the Mobberley Research Centre – please contact David Smetham (Treasurer) as soon as possible to make the necessary arrangements.

Chairman's Jottings

*by Alan Bennett
Chairman and Webmaster*



Hello everyone,

You should have received a special newsletter by now, either by email or mail, to tell you about our ongoing review of the operational model for FHSC.

You will have seen details of the issues we believe we face and the focus groups we have set up to tackle the initial problems. Members have been asked to volunteer to assist in these focus groups, provided that they can commit to continuing work on the strategy, including the implementation of the agreed way forward.

Some of the focus groups will need to deliver their strategy sooner than others; this is because their output will shape some of the later groups. The highest priority focus group is that to clarify what we need to do to conform to our charitable status. We will also be working in parallel on the working model for FHSC collaboration with the Cheshire Archives in their new centres in Crewe and Chester.

Another high priority focus group will be to solicit input from you on what services you think the FHSC should provide. If you haven't responded to the survey yet, then please do try to find time to assist us.

The slowest focus group will probably be that related to the website as this critical resource needs to align with the strategy dictated by the other focus groups. In the meantime, I will be working on updating the software used by the website to the latest supported versions.

There will be an update on the strategy progress at the AGM. Please try your best to attend the AGM to join in the discussions on this important topic.

Society News and Notices

Membership Renewals

Kevin Dean

Membership Renewals

Until a few years ago the membership period of all members ended on 30 June; now the membership renewal date is every year on the date of joining. Although we have many new members, over 80% of members still renew their membership during June and July. With so much activity, this is a good time to notice problems and, even better, to do something about them.

Several members complained that they were unable to use PayPal to make a payment because the PayPal website insisted that they create a PayPal account, which they didn't want. The FAQ section of the FHSC website now has an entry explaining *How to Pay via Paypal without a PayPal account*. If you have avoided paying online because of an aversion to PayPal, this explanatory note may help you to overcome it. It has already proved useful to some overseas members.

Standing orders and direct payments to the society's bank have the option of including a reference which our bank includes in the statement we download to process the renewals. It would be very helpful if all renewal payments included the membership number in the reference field. Nothing else is necessary, just the number, as your bank account name usually provides the surname. The membership number is particularly important where more than one member has the same surname.

If any problems do arise with payments - the most frequent being members paying too often - it is useful to have a telephone number or email address to make a quick contact to resolve the issue. Many member profiles have neither of these contact details, and I would encourage members to make them available. Rest assured that the FHSC volunteers will not contact members unnecessarily. You may change all your contact details through the website or by sending an email to renewals@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.

Note: meetings are in one of three formats - online using Zoom (Z), face-to-face at a local venue (F), or hybrid, using both face-to-face and Zoom (H). If no format is stated the default is (F) - if unsure please check with the group.

Date	Group	Subject
18-Jan	Society Seminar	Z: Walls Come Tumbling Down
2-Sep	Exec Committee	Z: Committee Meeting
5-Sep	Crewe Group	F: AGM and Workshop
6-Sep	Runcorn Group	F: Workshop/Research Night
11-Sep	Northwich Group	F: Down Forget-Me-Not Lane
13-Sep	Sale Group	The Ins and Outs of Civil Registration
18-Sep	Alsager Group	AGM and Talk
19-Sep	Congleton Group	F: AGM and Workshop on Non-UK Family History
19-Sep	Wallasey Group	Industrial Wallasey
20-Sep	Society Seminar	Z: Mediaeval Building Myths

25-Sep	Bebington Group	The Life of Lady Lever
26-Sep	Macclesfield Group	F: AGM and Talk: My Favourite Ancestor
28-Sep	Chester Group	The Poor Law and Workhouses in Cheshire
28-Sep	Tameside Group	H: AGM and Talk TBC
30-Sep	Research Buddies	Z: Sale
4-Oct	Runcorn Group	F: TBA
9-Oct	Northwich Group	F: Slater's Chronicles: Lives and Religion in Cheshire and Elsewhere
10-Oct	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	Z: What's in a Name
11-Oct	Sale Group	Those Everlasting Bills
16-Oct	Alsager Group	TBA
17-Oct	Congleton Group	F: TBA
18-Oct	Society Seminar	Z: History of Witchcraft
19-Oct	Wallasey Group	Z: It's Not What You Research it's the Way You Research It
23-Oct	Bebington Group	TBA
24-Oct	Macclesfield Group	F: A History of Local Place Names, their Origins and Meanings
26-Oct	Chester Group	The Foundling Hospital in Chester
26-Oct	Tameside Group	F: Two Mesolithic Sites in Tameside
28-Oct	Society AGM	Z: Talk on The History of the Workhouse followed by Society AGM
8-Nov	Runcorn Group	TBA
8-Nov	Sale Group	Sale Blitz
13-Nov	Northwich Group	Eyam - The Plague Village
15-Nov	Society Seminar	Z: The Foundling Hospital at Chester
20-Nov	Alsager Group	TBA
21-Nov	Congleton Group	F: TBA

21-Nov	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	Z: The Rat Catchers
21-Nov	Wallasey Group	Z: The Many Maritime Memorials of Merseyside
23-Nov	Tameside Group	F: Social meeting
25-Nov	Research Buddies	Z: Knutsford
27-Nov	Bebington Group	TBA
28-Nov	Macclesfield Group	Cheshire's Historic Houses
30-Nov	Chester Group	A Seasonal Miscellany
11-Dec	Bebington Group	Christmas Quiz Details TBA
11-Dec	Northwich Group	F: Our World Famous Hotpot Supper and Quiz
12-Dec	Alsager Group	F: Christmas Lunch TBA
12-Dec	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	H: Christmas Get-together followed by Zoom talk: Grave Concerns - More than a Resting Place
13-Dec	Sale Group	Christmas Open Forum
20-Dec	Society Seminar	Z: Maternity Narratives & Your Family History
30-Dec	Research Buddies	Z: Middlewich
27-Jan	Exec Committee	Z: Committee Meeting

Knutsford News (1) - from the Chester Courant, 6 August 1873

KNUTSFORD ATHLETIC FESTIVAL - On Saturday this festival took place on the Racecourse, Knutsford. The following were the results:-

100 yards flat race for youths under 16, **H Milner**. One mile flat race (district), **W Lomas**. Putting the shot, 24lb, **F Power**. Gymnastic proficiency, **G W Renshaw**. 220 yards flat race (open), **W F Blaxter**. Throwing the hammer, 16lb, **F Merriman**. Quarter mile flat race for youths under 16, **J Pigott**. 100 yards flat race (open), **W F Blaxter**. Running wide jump, **W Bowden**. 100 yards flat race (district), **A E Ward**. Pole leaping, **J Bracegirdle**. Half mile flat race (open), **C Bryan**. Running high jump, **J Hargreaves**. Quarter mile flat race (district), **A E Ward**. Wrestling, **G R Hunter**. Half mile hurdle race, **W Lomas**. Fencing, **J Unsworth**. Quarter mile flat race (open), **J M'Lean**. One mile flat race (open), **J E Kenworthy**.

Notice of the 54th Annual General Meeting of the Family History Society of Cheshire

Following the success (and increased attendances) of the AGMs held via Zoom in 2021 and 2022, the 54th AGM of FHSC will take place using Zoom on **Saturday 28th October 2023 at 3.00pm**. The business meeting will be preceded by a talk by **Peter Higginbottom** on **The History of the Workhouse**, to which he will give a Cheshire slant. The talk will begin at **2.00pm with login from 1.45pm**. Members with a valid email address will be sent an AGM Newsletter to coincide with the publication of this Notice in **CHESHIRE ANCESTOR** and on the website. This will contain registration details for both the talk and the AGM. Members only wishing to attend the AGM should not start the login process until **2.55pm**.

Members who wish to attend the AGM and talk but who do not have internet access, or do not wish to use Zoom, are invited to the Mobberley Research Centre where David Smetham will host a meeting linked into the AGM Zoom. Members who wish to attend this event should contact David in advance at treasurer@fhsc.org.uk or by phone (01625 426173).

Peter Higginbottom, creator of the websites *The Workhouse* (www.workhouses.org.uk), *Children's Homes* (www.childrenshomes.org.uk) and *The Prison* (www.theprison.org.uk), first became interested in workhouses while researching his family history. *The Workhouse* website now has over 2800 web pages, 6000 photos and illustrations and 1800 maps and plans, covering workhouses throughout the British Isles. He has also written many books and articles, as well as contributing to radio and television programmes such as Radio 4's *Making History* and *Tracing Your Roots* and BBC TV's *Heir Hunters* and *Who Do You Think You Are?*

To ensure that the meeting runs smoothly:

The Secretary's Report, the annual accounts and the Treasurer's Report will be available on the website two weeks prior to the meeting. These reports will be published a future issue of **CHESHIRE ANCESTOR**. The agenda, and the minutes of the 2022 AGM will also be available on the website.

It would be helpful if members who have questions about the reports or the

accounts submit them to the secretary at secretary@fhsc.org.uk prior to the meeting so that they can be passed to the relevant officers for a response. The 2023 agenda is printed below.

AGM AGENDA

The formal business of the Annual General Meeting will be preceded by a talk.

1.45pm: Login for the AGM opens.

2.00pm: Talk by Peter Higginbottom – *The History of the Workhouse*.

2.55pm: Login for members only intending to attend the formal meeting opens.

3.00pm: Annual General Meeting begins.

Agenda for the 54th FHSC AGM commencing at 3.00pm

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the Minutes of the 2022 AGM
3. Chairman's Remarks
4. Hon. Treasurer's Report and Accounts
5. Hon. Secretary's Annual Report
6. Elections

The Treasurer's five-year term of office has been completed. Nominations for the role are sought and should be lodged with the Secretary at secretary@fhsc.org.uk before the meeting.

7. Appointment of Independent Examiner
8. Proposals

Under its Constitution the Family History of Cheshire invites proposals from its members. The Constitution states that the membership present at the AGM has the opportunity:

"To decide by simple majority upon any resolution which may be duly submitted to the meeting for consideration. No resolution, other than those relating to the adoption of reports and accounts, shall be moved at the Annual General Meeting unless a notice in writing, signed by the members who proposes to move it and stating its terms has been received by the Hon Secretary at least forty-two days before the date appointed for the holding of such Annual General Meeting.

The Chairman of the meeting shall, at his or her discretion, and with the consent of the majority of the members present and voting, have the power to admit resolutions of which notice has not been given, if such resolution shall not involve any alterations of the Constitution. Such resolution shall be decided upon by a simple majority of members present and voting.”

9. Any other business relevant to the AGM.

Society Vacancies

For more information about any of these posts, please contact the Treasurer, David Smetham (contact details inside the front cover), quoting the job title.

Society Treasurer

The Treasurer’s five-year term of office comes to an end at the AGM in October. Nominations for the role are sought and should be lodged with the Secretary at secretary@fhsc.org.uk before the AGM.

Exchange Journals Officer

We are looking for a volunteer to manage our exchange journals activity. We currently exchange digital family history journals by email with thirty-five other societies and these are made available in the members area of our website. We would like to increase the number of societies with which we exchange journals. The officer will ensure that the CHESHIRE ANCESTOR is sent to participating societies, and journals received are sent to our website officer.

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.

Research Assistants for CRO History Centres at Crewe and Chester

We have some exciting opportunities to work with the Cheshire County Record Office in their planned new facilities in Crewe and Chester. Work is proceeding and FHSC is proud to offer services to these new centres, assisting researchers in their quest for family history knowledge. In order to be able to provide these services we need to recruit a number of volunteers. Training will be given.

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

*by Margaret Roberts
Publicity & Social Media Officer
publicity@fhsc.org.uk*



The planning for the two new Cheshire Archives History Centres continues, although there is no news to bring you this quarter as it's all the nitty gritty of choosing builders and finalising the plans. Here at FHSC we are keeping up to date with what is happening; keep your eyes on the news section of the website or our social media feeds, where I will post the latest developments as they are announced.

Most groups have been taking advantage of the lighter evenings and holding more face-to-face meetings, with some interesting talks and the opportunity to join in with workshops and research days. We don't forget our out of county/country members either - there are a number of Zoom talks and online workshops which those who live outside Cheshire, or indeed who find travel difficult, can participate in. As is always the case, FHSC has offered a feast of educational, entertaining, and engaging events. Topics include: the story of the Primitive Methodists, Trade Directories, Liverpool's overhead railway, ethics in family history, the poor law, the Egerton family of Tatton Park, researching your Scottish ancestors, the fallen of Cheshire, picture postcards, Photogenealogy, using quarter sessions records, the 1952 coronation, genealogical online directories, and workshops relating to Sandbach and Malpas. It's such an array of subjects - much more than is offered by many other family history societies - and involves a lot of hard work by committee members and group leaders. If you can offer your help to the society in any way, then please don't hesitate to let us know.

The Cheshire Research Buddies scheme is proving popular, with members Zooming into the sessions to ask for help, share knowledge, and serendipitously chat to old friends, school mates and neighbours; it's been a

lovely way to connect people. Please come along and join a session that involves an area that you are searching in or have knowledge of. The list of sessions until the end of the year can be found in the Events and in the Groups sections.

The Seminar series continues to attract a good deal of interest both within and outside of FHSC. In April we welcomed Gill Blanchard, who gave an excellent talk on Trade Directories and Gazetteers – who knew there was so much to be gleaned from these publications? Dave Annal returned to our Zoom screens in May, with how to trace your Scottish ancestors. Dave’s talk was full of hints and tips for researching ‘north of the border’. As usual, he was very generous with his time in the Q&A sessions and provided an excellent handout crammed with links to the websites included in the talk. A new name to FHSC, Ann Larkham, joined us in June to explain all about Photogenealogy, and what an instructive hour or so we spent, listening to the best ways to organise your family photographs, both digital and physical, as well as ideas on filing systems, documentation, and sharing with others. If you didn’t learn something from the evening, I would be extremely surprised. We look forward to Ann joining us again in early 2024 to share ideas, tips and thoughts on scanning your images.

Who Do You Think You Are returned to our television screens in June and, as in previous years, I collate a list of useful online resources related to each episode. This year, however, rather than just post the list on the news section of the website and social media I’ve sent the information out as a newsletter, which I hope members have found useful.

Speaking of social media, please drop by and have a look at the society’s Facebook page (www.facebook.com/CheshireFamilyHistory) or follow us on Twitter (@FHSofCheshire). I post regular items such as occupation of the day and my Friday Roundup, which keeps members up to date with the latest new data on the various genealogical website on a weekly basis, as well as lists of free events and online resources. Remember as well to download the monthly newsletter as there is a lot of information in my musing section that members who don’t use social media may find interesting. Information on FHSC activities are publicised via the CHESHIRE ANCESTOR, the FHSC website, our new-look monthly newsletter, 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); if anything grabs your attention then contact the Group Leader for more information, or if you need to register for the event, such as the Seminars or Cheshire Research Buddies, then please follow the relevant instructions.

Surname Interests

Are you researching any of these names? If so, log in to the FHSC website, click on *Research* and search for the name using the search box on the right to contact the person 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 1 May and 31 July 2023:

BESWICK, BOWDEN/BODEN, BRACEGIRDLE, BRADSHAW

CALVERT, CAMBELL, CHESWIS/CHESWISS/CHESWISSE, CLARK/CLARKE, CROWDER

DARLEY

FITTON, FORD, GIBSON

HENSHALL, HINDLEY, HUGHES

KEY

METCALF/METCALFE, MILLINGTON

ORRETT

ROBERTS

SHIERS/SHIRES, SWINDELLS

VIGNAUX/VIGNEAUX

WARREN

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**

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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(see page 2 for full details)*

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*



The heat of June made researching indoors rather unpleasant. Thankfully, the weather cooled and life once again became comfortable.

Peter Davenport and I have continued to produce digital forms of Cheshire MIs, though progress has been rather slow due to health issues. Wilmslow St Bartholomew's MIs should be available now from the shop. This has been a difficult project because it is a huge graveyard and our digital copy had lots of incomplete pages. A paper copy was donated, and missing pages had to be scanned, cleaned up and inserted. Hopefully it will prove valuable to members seeking Wilmslow ancestors.

A book about the Duke of Bridgewater's Canals is also available from the shop. The Bridgewater Canal is a 39-mile canal connecting Runcorn, Manchester and Leigh. Constructed over 250 years ago by Francis Egerton, the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater, it is considered to be the first truly man-made canal in Britain - it did not follow the path of an existing river. The book, written between 1766 and 1769, covers the building of the canal from the Acts of Parliament authorising its construction to the final result. There are observations made at points along the canal and objections to its extension. The book includes a detailed map of the canal, along with plans for the extension from Liverpool to Leeds and Liverpool to Hull and Kidderminster. An interesting read.

I hope the coming of Autumn will encourage you to visit Mobberley to discover more about your ancestors; we would love to see you.

Crewe Family History Unit (FHU)

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 pm. 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.

As part of Heritage Open Days (8th-17th September) we will be open to all for visits on Monday 11th, Tuesday 12th and Thursday 14th of September, at the usual opening times of 10am - 4pm. Representatives from the Society will attend the fair at Crewe Heritage Centre on Saturday 9th September to hand out information about the society and its research facilities; please come and introduce yourselves to us. For more details, see the Family History Events section later in this issue.

In recent months members have been exploring the British Newspaper Archive with much success.

Please email crewe@fhsc.org.uk if you wish to make arrangements for a visit during our usual opening hours.

Wanted: Your Old Family History Disks

Peter Davenport (Electronic Projects Officer) has a floppy disk drive for reading old 3½ inch floppy disks. If any members have any old floppy disks with family history data or books on them which they no longer need, Peter can copy the data from them and place it onto the computer drive at Mobberley, so the information could help another member. The data can be for anywhere in the world, not just Cheshire.

The same applies to any family history CDs or DVDs.

Any such unwanted disks may be placed in Joan Irving's (the librarian's) box at Mobberley for Peter to collect.

Book Review

Newly published items on Genealogical or Cheshire subjects in print or digital formats are welcomed for review. Please send to the editor (contact details inside front cover). After review, printed books are given to a society library. Information correct at the time of going to press.

Sharing your Family History Online

by Chris Paton

Reviewed by Rosie Rowley



The author begins by telling the story of his own initial family history research and how he contacted relatives who added to the family story that *grandfather... must have been Belgian*, revealing reasons why one might want to share ones family history online. This is followed by an introduction to family history research and some advice about privacy, data protection and copyright.

Further chapters cover a wide range of topics relating to connection and collaboration, including family history societies, social media, websites, blogs, DNA, and preserving family stories. For each, there is a short explanation of what each website, program, etc is, how it works and what it can do. With such a broad scope, the author only touches briefly on some aspects and also can only include the most popular examples of the hundreds of resources that are available. Do not be misled by the title - whilst the book is primarily about sharing information online, there are also sections on research, computer programs for recording your research, and even advice on how to write up your family stories and self-publish a book.

This is a very useful book, filled with encouragement and suggestions for ways of organising your research and taking it out of the filing cabinet.

Pen & Sword, 2021. Paperback, 144 pages, £12.99, ISBN 9781526780294
www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/Sharing-Your-Family-History-Online-Paperback/p/18718

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 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.

WW2 Childhood Memories and National Service

I have very much enjoyed reading Neville Ledsome's memories in the last two issues of CHESHIRE ANCESTOR. I think his family may have been neighbours of my OWEN family who lived at 19 Harding Avenue. My grandparents were Ted and Annie OWEN, whose children were Bertha, Samuel, Charles, James, Sylvia (my mother) and Ivy. Many of the family worked at Lever Brothers, and also went to live in Port Sunlight when they married. I remember my grandparents' garden with the Anderson shelter in the vegetable plot, next to the hen coop, and on the other side of the garden were the fruit bushes: blackcurrants (which I hated picking), gooseberries and rhubarb.

I remember Granny Annie's cooking well – she made lovely egg custard, rice pudding, blackcurrant tarts, and rhubarb crumble to die for. I also remember her overcooking the vegetables so much you could sieve the cabbage through your teeth! Sunday tea was always at Granny's, and she made a huge sherry trifle which I thought was awful, so she made me a little egg custard. I was always a little wary of Granny Annie as she could be quite temperamental, but I adored my Grandad Ted – we'd go outside (for a bit of peace from Granny), sit on a bench next to the coal bunker and Grandad would have sparrows eating from his hand.

Thanks for an excellent journal, and thanks to Neville for provoking some memories.

Helen Roberts

Membership no. 10405

National Service

I read Neville Ledsome's article in the June 2023 CHESHIRE ANCESTOR with interest. I also served in the RAF, two years later (August 1950-52). My memory is that pay was not quite so frugal, at 4 shillings per day, so £1. 8s per week, although pay parades were every fortnight. As well as food and other items listed by Neville, one also had to buy one's own Blanco, boot polish and Brasso.

My intake went in as 18 month men, but in the middle of square bashing (West Kirby in my case) it went up to two years because of the Korean War. Some consolation was that for the extra six months, one was paid regular's pay, which was quite a good pay rise.

Donald Massey

Membership no. 1810

Honeymoon Hotel Booking

I have a delightful letter which was written to my uncle, who was trying to book his honeymoon at the Traquair Private Hotel, Eastbourne. Having originally being offered a twin bedded room he obviously requested a double bed.

8th March 1952.

Dear Mr Thompson,

You would receive a letter from Mrs Priestnall of Lushington Road, offering you accommodation. I passed your letter on to her as I cannot offer a double-bed room. She runs a very similar business to mine and I know you will be very comfortable there. I suspect you are on a honeymoon trip???? And I only have a lot of old ladies here who might realise your secret and make you feel uncomfortable. Old ladies can always ferret out a secret. They are dears and always love a romance. In a small place like this you would not be able to escape their well-meaning solicitations.

Wishing you every happiness, I am

Yours sincerely, J.O.Beunink, Proprietress

Olivia Fondyga

Membership no. 9969

Family History Events

For news of family history events, see these online calendars

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

Cheshire History Day: Cheshire in the 1920s

9.30am – 4.30pm on Saturday 7th October at

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

www.cheshirehistory.org.uk

Free parking across the road – 15 mins walk from Greenbank station

Pre-booking essential, tickets £15

Book online at thegrangetheatre.com/boxoffice (no booking fee)

By phone on 01606 539040 (£2 booking fee) or by post (see leaflet/website)

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)

3.00pm on Saturday 28th October

The AGM will be preceded by a talk at 2.00pm, with login from 1.45pm:

The History of the Workhouse, by Peter Higginbotham

Members only attending the AGM should start the login process at 2.55pm

www.fhsc.org.uk

Heritage Open Days – FHSC participation

8th – 17th September www.heritageopendays.org.uk

See website for events at locations near you – there are a few online events

The Heritage Open Days website page boasts that *Heritage Open Days is England's largest community-led festival of history and culture, involving thousands of local volunteers and organisations. Every year in September it brings people together to celebrate their heritage, community and history. Stories are told, traditions explored, and histories brought to life. It's your chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences – and it's all FREE.*

The Crewe Family History Unit is taking part in the event again this year and will be open from 10am until 4pm as usual on Monday 11th and Tuesday 12th, and also on Thursday 14th, when we will be introducing visitors to the FHSC and the wealth of resources on family history, house history and local history held at the Family History Unit.

On Saturday 9th September, volunteers from the FHU will be attending the Crewe Heritage Fair which will take place at Crewe Heritage Centre. The day will include lots of family-friendly activities, an opportunity to see working models of Crewe-built locomotives, and exhibits such as one of the oldest surviving Bentleys in the world. The Forging History exhibition, which celebrates the 180th anniversary of the Grand Junction Railway Engineering Works moving from Edge Hill (in Liverpool) to Crewe, will also be showcased.

Volunteers from FHSC will also be taking part in events on Monday 11th and Thursday 14th at the Crewe Engineering and Design University Technical College – see the Crewe Town Council website for up-to-date details: www.crewetowncouncil.gov.uk/whats-on-events/heritage-open-days

Really Useful Family History Show (Online)

6pm – 10pm Friday 11th November and

10am – 6pm Saturday 12th November

See the advert on the next page for a code for discounted tickets

www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/



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Saturday 18th November 10am-6pm GMT

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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 for *Ancestry* news.

UK and Allied Countries, World War II Air Combat Reports, 1939-1945

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62605/

UK & Ireland, Medical Directories, 1845-1942

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/61053/

Ancestry also has records for nurses, midwives, dentists, physiotherapists.

Northern Ireland, Valuation Revision Books, 1864-1933

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62658/

Scotland, Postal Directories, 1825-1910

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62491/

UK, Royal Hospital Chelsea Returns of Payment of Pensions, 1842-1883

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62604/

UK Military Records - Update

Since 1st April 2023 the fee for applying for a deceased person's military records (for those serving after WWI) has been waived. However, although it is now free to apply for the records, it seems that some applicants have been charged fees of up to £24.35 by the National Archives for copying the 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 for FindMyPast news.

Greater Manchester Rate Books 1790s to 1940s

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/greater-manchester-rate-books>

Lancashire, Oldham Inquisitions (Inquests) 1905-1917

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/lancashire-oldham-inquisitions-1905-1917>

Britain & Ireland, Naturalisations 1603-1700

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/britain-and-ireland-naturalisations-1603-1700>

An index to *Letters of Denization and Acts of Naturalization...* by William A Shaw.

Challenges and Duels (pre-1855)

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/challenges-and-duels>

An index to *Notes on duels and duelling...* by Lorenzo Sabine.

England & Wales GRO Online Digital Images

It is now possible to view online digital images for historic, digitised civil registration records held by GRO at a cost of just £2.50 per record. The digital images are displayed in JPEG format, and can be viewed, printed, or downloaded. These images can be obtained for:

- Birth entries from 1837 up to 100 years ago (currently up to 1922)
- Death entries from 1837 to 1887

The digital images should be ordered online in the usual way, but choose the *Digital Image* option. The image produced will be an exact copy of the GRO register entry but the headings may not line up correctly with the entry columns. This is because the sizes of these columns varied over the years, and the GRO is only able to produce the images at such a low cost as a result of the process being completely automated. If you have any questions, see the GRO FAQ page at www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/faq.asp

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.

Netherlands OpenArchives

www.openarch.nl

Search the genealogical data of Dutch and Belgian archives and societies. This site also has links to other websites such as passengers lists, as well as some sites that are subscription-based.

WieWasWie

www.wiewaswie.nl

WieWasWie is a free database collected from many archives in the Netherlands. Includes baptism, birth, marriage, death, and burial records.

Delpher

www.delpher.nl

Historical Dutch newspapers, books, and magazines.

Harrow School Archives

www.harrowschool.org.uk/learning-2/academic/support-and-resources/the-archive

Provides listings of both physical and digital holdings of the school.

Virtual Treasury

<https://virtualtreasury.ie/>

A new collaboration and work in progress to try to reconstruct some of the sources lost during the fire in the Irish Public Records Office in 1922.

Library and Archives Canada

<https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng>

Canada Archives

Barnardo's Children

www.barnardos.org.uk/former-barnardos-children

The official website of Barnardo's, founded by Thomas John Barnardo in London in 1867.

Hidden lives Revealed – A Virtual Archive 1881-1981

<http://hiddenlives.org.uk/>

The place for anyone with an interest in British social history. Includes information on children's homes, unique archive material about poor and disadvantaged children cared for by *The Waifs and Strays' Society*, and a lot more.

Fatal Ice Accident at Knutsford

by Rosie Rowley
Journal Editor

From the *Cheshire Observer*, 8 February 1873:

THREE YOUNG MEN DROWNED - On Sunday afternoon, whilst three youths were sliding on a pit at Knutsford, the ice gave way and they were precipitated into the water and drowned. When the accident occurred they had just got to the end of the slide which was not more than a yard and a half from the water when it broke. The names of the deceased are Edward KELLY, on King-street, Knutsford; Thomas FOWLES, of King-street; and Edward DOUGHERTY, of Queen-street, Knutsford. Their ages varied from 15 to 16 years. Fowles and Kelly were labourers, and Dougherty was a joiners' apprentice. Dougherty was never seen after he first went down. Fowles held himself up with his hands until Kelly got hold of him, when they both sank. Some youths who were present attempted to get the poor fellows out with a rail, but it broke. Half an hour after the accident the bodies were recovered.

From the Runcorn Examiner, 22 February 1873:

BURIAL FEES AT KNUTSFORD

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXAMINER

A short time since, two of the lads, who were drowned here through the ice giving way, were buried in the churchyard of the Parish Church, and for the information of your readers I give you the items of the bill which each of the poor boys parents have had to pay for their interment:

<i>To Vicar and Clerk</i>	<i>1s. od.</i>
<i>To Registration</i>	<i>1s. od.</i>
<i>To Breaking ground</i>	<i>1s. od.</i>
<i>To Church fees</i>	<i>3s. 3d.</i>
<i>To Making grave</i>	<i>5s. od.</i>
<i>To Tolling bell</i>	<i>2s. od.</i>
<i>To Bier</i>	<i>0s. 6d.</i>
<i>To Sexton</i>	<i><u>1s. od.</u></i>
	<i>14s. 9d.</i>

This is not all, for in addition to these charges there was a fee of one guinea for each grave paid to the Rev. H. Barnacle, the vicar; so that for the burial of each of the poor lads £1. 15s. 9d. had to be paid. I wish to know from some of your readers whether all the fees are legal? Who has the power to charge the registration fee, and what is the meaning of "Church fees?" All I can say is, that such charges are very likely to make people go in for disestablishment.

I am, yours truly,

D.K.

To put these figures into perspective, in 1873 an agricultural labourer earned around 13s. 4d. per week, so the total burial fees of £1 15s. 9d. was almost three weeks' wages - and that did not include the cost of the coffin, etc.

History of wages: <https://historyofwages.blogspot.com/2011/02/agricultural-labourers-wages-1850-1914.html>

More Revels in Over Peover

by *Brian Lea*

Membership no. 10305

leabandc@gmail.com

Thank you, Hazel Halse, for your very interesting article on Over Peover in the last issue of *CHESHIRE ANCESTOR*. It brought to mind many childhood memories.

Some of the familiar names from the 1930s mentioned in the article were names that I, too, recognise from growing up in the neighbourhood. But just as interesting was the description of the pre-war Over Peover festivals, more of which I was able to see in a fascinating YouTube clip which showed the Over Peover Rose Queen festivities from 1938 (in black and white) and 1939 (in colour) filmed by Jack WAINWRIGHT, a local estate agent. He lived in a large house called Sunnycroft in Peover Heath. The shots he filmed were fascinating and included a tug o' war competition, swing boats, maypole dancing, and even a men's pig race! See www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6uBPaNx1mk



Picture 1: Over Peover, 1952

I could, however, find no trace in the newspaper archives available on the internet showing whether these festivals continued after the war. Frustratingly, the *Guardian* titles released on Find My Past have yet to include the *Knutsford Guardian* and I found no mention in the 1950s *Wilmslow and Alderley Advertiser*.

I certainly remember various Over Peover church fêtes from the 1950s and have a few intriguing photos from my family album of a village parade in 1952 which certainly echoes the spirit of the pre-war Rose Day processions.



Picture 2: Over Peover, 1952. The author, Brian Lea, centre holding flags.

This article is accompanied by three photos taken by my father. The dancers in the first picture are photographed close to the row of social housing on Parkgate Avenue, opposite the *Park Gate Inn*. My vague memory is that the parade started from there. I am dressed as a “Little Prince” (so the original caption says) in photo 2, although I have only a very faint memory of taking part, being just five years old at the time. The marching band in photo 3 looks impressive – and a blow-up of the wording on the drum says *Openshaw Silver Prize Band*. Someone presumably went to the trouble (and expense?) of bringing them all the way over from that part of Manchester.



Picture 3: Over Peover, 1952.

Over Peover School is clearly shown in the second photograph. It's now been extended, but in 1952 the building was little changed from when it had opened in the early part of the century. In the early 1950s the main building housed two classrooms separated by a folding partition. The Infants' class was at the north end and the Juniors' class at the south end. There was a parish field opposite the school, but no playing field attached to the school. School playtimes were spent on the playground, with us occasionally being allowed onto the grassy area with a few trees, north of the school building, where school photographs were taken. On wintery days we tried to shelter in the roofed but open-sided building next to the playground – with the stern proviso not to climb onto the pile of coke which fed the heating boiler.

Miss Elizabeth INGRAM was the long-serving head at this time, assisted by Miss POPE. It's hard to believe now, but in 1952 the marriage bar for women teachers had only been lifted eight years previously. About sixty children attended at this time, split into the two classes. In those days, pre-cooked school dinners arrived by van from Knutsford, in large metal containers, and were served to us from tables set up in the corridor. We ate while sitting at our

desks in the classroom. I remember the plates were coloured blue and pink, with all the boys trying to avoid being given a pink plate!

In common with other schools, reading was taught using a particular scheme or series of books. At Over Peover it was a phonetic-based scheme dating from the 1920s called Beacon Readers which featured in its initial stages a bucolic character called Old Lob. To improve our initial writing skills, we used large thick black pencils called Black Beauty. They were kept, if memory serves me correctly, in rectangular red Oxo cube tins. The hope was, when they were distributed each morning, that you'd avoid ones that were too badly chewed at the non-writing end.

Many of the children on roll in the early fifties were from Over Peover with a few, like myself, from Snelson. One of my classmates lived as far away as Chelford and I believe the WILLETTs attended from Beech Farm at Marthall. Local families represented in the school included children from the BASKERVILLE, CLARKSON, GROVES, IRLAM and SCHOFIELD households. Almost without exception, the children I knew either walked or cycled to school. It was about a mile's walk from Mill Lane. And always, it seems, looking back, we dawdled at a very leisurely pace with plenty of time to chat and explore anything that took our fancy. One particular winter I remember us walking through snowdrifts almost as tall as we were (the "through" bit attractively compulsory for young children). I can't remember how late we arrived at school that morning, but we'd definitely be rather cold and wet! There was far less traffic on the roads in those days and we were in little danger from fast moving vehicles along what's now known as Chelford Lane.

One spot I remember vividly was the verge and hedgerow almost opposite the driveway to the CLARKSON's farm (Merrydale Farm). Huge thistles would grow there and when the seed heads had ripened all the goldfinches which were feasting on them would lift off together, interspersed with flashes of yellow and red as they rose into the air when we walked past.

Like Hazel, I remember Nesta WILLIAMS very well as she lived in Ivy Cottage on the corner of Mill Lane and Common Lane in Snelson, a short distance from my own house. Her mother Elizabeth WILLIAMS had moved there from

Wembley after her husband William had died in France in the last year of WWI. Nesta's childhood was spent in the family home with her two older brothers, William and George. I remember Nesta as a nurse and midwife. Part of her working life was spent at the hospital in Knutsford which later became Cranford Lodge Hospital on Bexton Road.

However, as a child I knew her brother William (Bill) better, as in married life he lived two doors up from me on Mill Lane with his wife Edna (who was always known as Bunny). Their daughter was a childhood friend and in 1949 or 1950 Bunny and Mary, my mother, took us as toddlers to spend a week's holiday at a boarding house in Colwyn Bay. From the holiday snaps taken at the time, it was a warm and sunny week with lots of time spent playing on the beach. A few years after this, Bill and his family moved about half a mile down the road to Boundary Cottage, which my uncle, James WEBB had built, and sold to them when he moved to Staffordshire. In 1969, when my father couldn't take time off to accompany me for my driving test, Bill stepped in and went with me to the test centre at Macclesfield. Happy memories – especially as I passed!

Knutsford News (2) - from the Northwich Guardian, 7 June 1873

RE-OPENING OF ST CROSS CHURCH, KNUTSFORD

On Whit-Sunday two sermons were preached in the above church in aid of the fund for altering, repairing, and decorating the church by the **Rev L W Riley**, M.A., Vicar, and the **Rev J Ray**, M.A., Rector of Ashton-on-Mersey... The church has been most elaborately and tastefully decorated by **Messrs. Sutherland**, of Manchester, at considerable cost, the whole of which has been generously defrayed by the kind liberality of **J Carlton**, Esq., of Norbury Booths. The repairs and alterations have been such as to afford 16 new stall pews, and materially add to the comfort and convenience of the congregation... The church was built about 20 years ago by **Peter Legh**, Esq., of Norbury Booths, an exceedingly good old gentleman, but whose ideas of architecture, to say the least of them, was unique. The sacred edifice occupies a commanding position on the hill, to the left as we enter Knutsford by rail from Manchester. Its outside aspect is decidedly not very attractive.

Harry Pollitt (1865–1945) Manager at Gorton Tank

by Steve Horsfield

Membership no. 8780

A recent mention of William THORNELEY, works manager at Gorton Tank, in CHESHIRE ANCESTOR (page 48 Volume 53 No 2 – December 2022) reminded me that my father's uncle Tom HORSFIELD (1885 -1956) worked at 'The Tank' as a riveter all his life. My father's great-uncle Robert DOBB (1872–1958) worked across the tracks at Beyer Peacock. There was an aerial walkway connecting the two sites - known locally as *the monkey bridge*. I cannot resist mentioning in passing that in Bob DOBB'S household he was the only one recorded as working in the 1921 census. His two young sons and his brother all showed recent engineering employer details in the census but were also listed as out of work. Times must have been hard in Gorton a decade before the 1930s.

My mother's father, Harry Vernon STORRS (1882–1964), crossed the county boundary from Cheshire to work at Beyer Peacock. I remember her regular correspondence with Beyer Peacock, presumably intended to assure them of her father's continued existence with a view to maintaining the flow of his Beyer Peacock pension, which was sent on by him to her as a ten shilling postal order. Ten shillings would buy school dinners for two children for the week in the 1950s.

While exploring my descent from coal miners in Little Hulton, I discovered another connection to Gorton Tank. I have thirty DNA matches on Ancestry attributable to a descent from Abraham WALKER (1759–1836) and Ann YATES (1758–1844). Six of their children reached maturity and went on to raise families. Those thirty matches are people showing a descent from Ann and Abraham, or sharing DNA with me and others who descend from them. I also have other DNA matches with people from Little Hulton which I cannot link to Ann and Abraham. Ann YATES was still living in Little Hulton in 1841 with a daughter and son, while two of her daughters were living close by.

Ann and Abraham's son Abraham WALKER (1794-1845) married Ellen GREENHALCH (1791-1875) at Prestwich in May 1815. They were my 3x great-grandparents. I suspect GREENHALCH is simply a misspelling of the more familiar GREENHALGH and it would fit very neatly with other shared DNA matches if Mary GREENHALGH (1783-1846) - also resident in Little Hulton in 1841 - and Ellen were sisters, but that is a story for another day. The 1861 census shows Ellen living in Wyre Street, Mossley with a granddaughter, a twenty-two-year-old milliner named Esther CROMPTON. By then, Esther's mother, Ellen's daughter, had been dead for thirteen years. In December 1861 Esther married a local grocer's son and railway clerk called William POLLITT. By 1869 he was Accountant to the Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway and by 1886 he was running it as the General Manager. He was knighted in 1899.

It was when I discovered that they had a son named Henry, born on Boxing Day 1865, that I began to get a sense of déjà-vu. I already knew that there were two notable Harry POLLITTs in Manchester, one the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Great Britain, the other a Locomotive Engineer. I had no idea I was related to one of them. It turned out that Harry POLLITT the locomotive engineer and my grandmother Ellen WALKER STUART (1888 - 1953) were second cousins, though I very much doubt if either knew of the existence of the other. Incidentally, the other, more famous and younger Harry POLLITT (1890-1960) from Droylsden, Secretary of the Communist Party, was apprenticed at Gorton Tank.

It is perhaps not surprising that with a father running the Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway, Harry (Henry to his parents) had something of a meteoric rise to prominence in railway engineering. In 1893 at the age of 27 he was made works manager at Gorton, followed a year later by a promotion to Locomotive Engineer. It was at this point that William THORNELEY (above) was appointed to the position of works manager at Gorton Tank in addition to maintaining his existing responsibilities as chief draughtsman, which meant he was still the person actually designing the locomotives. In 1894 Harry was recommended by several eminent engineers for membership of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers - though it has been noted that all the witnesses had working relationships with his father's company.

In 1900 Harry resigned his post and as far as anyone has been able to ascertain he never worked again. He retired at the age of thirty-four and spent the next forty-five years swanning around the world with his similarly wealthy wife, Mabel Amanda ALVES (1877-1944). The two were married on 6 November 1901, the year after Harry's retirement, the engagement having been announced in January 1901. The Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway changed its name to Great Central Railway in 1897 and it was under that company name that the London Extension was opened in 1899, with Marylebone Station as the London terminus. The 1901 census shows both Harry and Mabel in residence at the Great Central Hotel, Marylebone - across the road from Marylebone Station. Mabel was listed with her parents and brother. Her father, John ALVES, was a civil engineer, born *Atlantic Ocean*, according to the census; her mother Sarah was Scottish, and Mabel and her brother Duncan had been born in New Zealand.

Harry's occupation in the 1901 census was given as civil engineer and his marriage record shows him to be an engineer, but these are the last records to describe him as an engineer. Mabel's 1901 census record shows no occupation; presumably she transcended that kind of thing. In later life Harry used the title Major, and in Mabel's will he is described as a retired army major. He had retired and was entitled to be called Major in the light of his status in the volunteer reserve; his father and older brother had similarly been Colonels.

Harry's early departure from office and disappearance from engineering were the stimulus for the booklet about him, *Harry Pollitt GCR Locomotive Engineer*, self-published by Geoffrey Hughes and David Jackson in 1995. This has been my principal source of information about him beyond that readily available on Ancestry. The authors approached the subject as railway historians and it is understandable that there are a couple of minor errors with regard to the personal details. They are a year early with his date of birth, though not always consistent with that in the subsequent calculation of his age. Their December 1864 date is unfortunately the one in circulation among railway history aficionados. I have uploaded a copy of his birth registration record to Ancestry and successfully edited Wikipedia in order to correct that. They also appear to have been unaware of the existence of an older sister, Jane, born in 1863, or the recording of his name as Henry at birth and at least up to the age of fifteen.

We Are... a Website for Sharing

by Simon Davies

Membership no. 10786

“Frankly my dear I don’t give a damn”... as Rhett Butler says in response to wife Scarlett’s “*Where shall I go? What shall I do?*”

In reality, she may have said “*where shall it go, what shall I do to ensure my life’s family history work is passed on to future generations?*”, having just presented Rhett with a long and epic tome detailing her father’s Irish Catholic origins and her mother’s French ancestry from the Robillard family in Savannah, Georgia. What she needed was the online family archive platform www.weare.xyz - but more of that later.

It is an uncomfortable truth that relatives rarely share our fascination with ancestral roots. But we deeply want our discoveries and insights to at least be readily available to future generations, in full knowledge that there will be others like us.

By accident, my father uncovered his great-grandfather’s Shropshire farm ledger and handed it to me. Unknown to anyone then living, Thomas POOLE (1835-1905) had written down fifty years of diary extracts halfway through the book. He prefaced them with the paragraph below, with the spine tingling 123-year-old sentence *As some descendant in years to come may look them over & think about Old Farmers.*

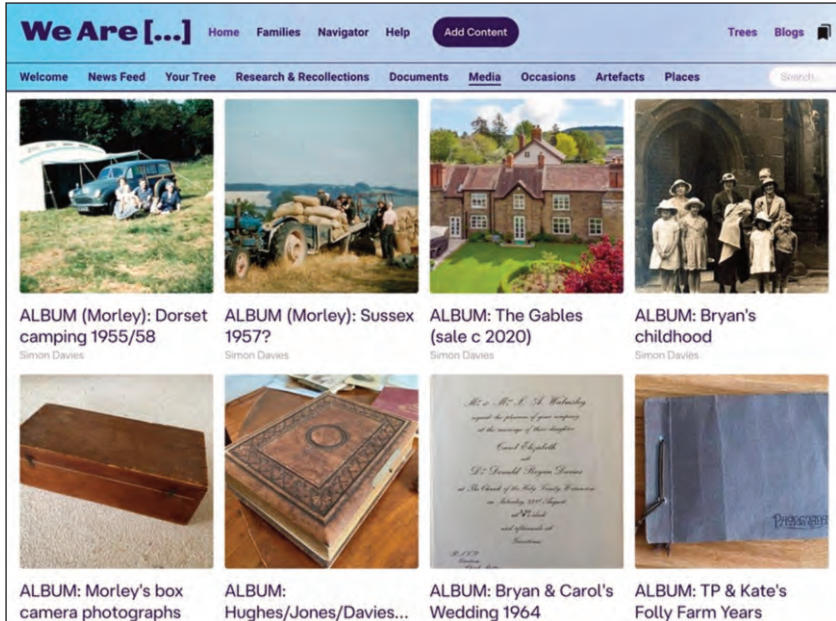
On Feb 3rd 1900 being kept in the house under the Doctor, with influenza, I have copied out in this Book some of the events that concerned me & my friends in a quick Farmers Life also the year and dates of them. As some descendant in years to come may look them over & think about Old Farmers. - Thomas POOLE, Aston on Clun.

By some miracle, his record survived to reconnect with a future generation, but it could just as easily have been thrown into a skip. I have now digitised and transcribed it within my family’s own online archive and intend it to be widely

accessible for more *descendants in years to come* – see it at bit.ly/3JSgAyP

We Are [establishing our family's archive]

I am a technology entrepreneur/inventor, and an obsessed 'drag-my-children-round-cemeteries' genealogist. With some longstanding friends and colleagues we have designed and developed *WeAre.xyz*, a visually delicious and enticing online family archive platform.



It recognises the uncomfortable truth I mentioned earlier and maximises the chances of your research and family histories surviving and thriving, as well as being more engaging today.

Our basic philosophy is that we should create a living archive for our family which is not just one person's family history website for their research alone; it is a shared place that becomes part of the family. In summary, a living family archive is:

- not an intimidating tome or one person's completed genealogy website destined to gather dust or lapse with their web-hosting account.
- a place in which you in particular will be active for many years to come, and a place which is ready to welcome those who take an interest at any

point in the future.

- a living platform, sending out periodic updates, keeping relatives aware, establishing itself as part of the family, and offering anyone interested the opportunity to dive in when they are ready
- a smart platform, reminding us to onboard each member of the next generation when they are old enough.

It is super simple to set up; your GEDCOM will create sections and wonderful trees for every family surname and individual. You can then contribute your stories, research notes, photos, videos, documents, artefacts... Your family will appreciate the occasional item that will interest and may even inspire some, but be of no interest to others. But that's okay, you have established an archive at the heart of your family, that will become a part of your family.

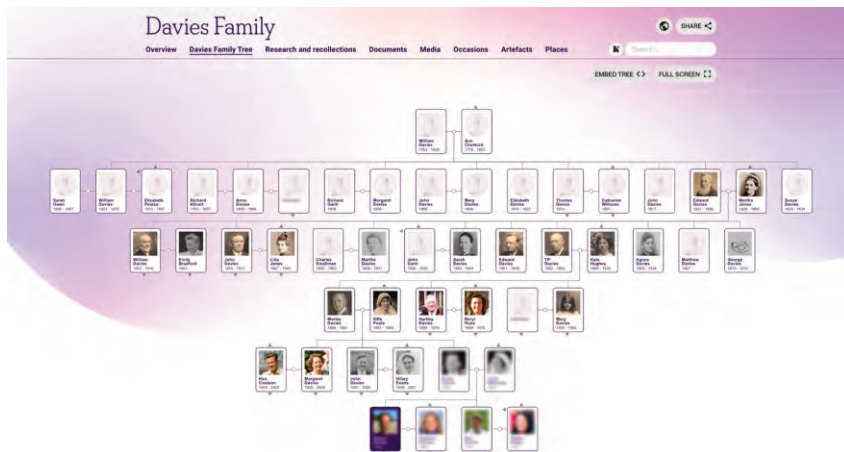


Image: each family surname section automatically generates a tree which shows how the logged-in user is related (as opposed to always being centred on you).

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or just fancy a chat - I love hearing about other people's ancestral adventures.

Find out more at www.weare.xyz

Ed.: This article has been published as an example of the many websites that can be used to share your family history online, e.g. TribalPages, eFamily and so on. Find more on Cyndi's List at www.cyndislist.com/social-networking/online-family-trees/ and www.cyndislist.com/genealogy-website/online-family-trees/

1921 Census Tips

by Dave Williams

Membership no. 7539

An article in Net that Serf (CHESHIRE ANCESTOR March 2023) highlighted the many transcription errors in this census on FindMyPast. I have to concur with this. The number of error corrections I have submitted up to now runs well into double figures, and all have been accepted. I would agree that there seem to be rather more errors in the 1921 census transcriptions than in those for 1911 or 1939. Most of the errors are fairly obvious and indicate that cross-checking the transcriptions has been inadequate. The only positive aspect is that FindMyPast do respond to error reports and update the records fairly quickly.

One of the useful search facilities on FindMyPast is the option to search a particular census by address. If you cannot find your ancestor on a particular census, try searching the address that you found on a previous or following census. When entering the search details just enter the first part of the address, e.g. *Laburnum* and not *Laburnum Avenue*, as some addresses may appear differently in different years as, for example, *Church Lane*, *Church Road*, *Church Terrace*, or *Church Row*. Also, you might find some addresses listed by the main nearby town or Registration District, rather than by the specific village or parish. Also remember that some people lived on the same street for many years, but not always in the same house. They may have needed to upsize or downsize their accommodation according to family circumstances. Sometimes a newly-married couple will occupy the former address of one of the couple's parents. This address search facility has worked for me in finding people on the 1921 census, when the family surname had been wrongly transcribed.

Although the 1921 census does provide more recent information than was available in 1911, I have to say that it is the 1911 census that provides rather more help for genealogical research, particularly in recording the number of years a couple were married, how many children they had, and how many of these had died before the census date. Of course, this is not a problem of transcription –

it's about what information was requested on the census forms. For someone just beginning to research their family, the census of 1911 is a better place to start than that of 1921!

One of the striking things (pun intended) on 1921 census records is how many people were out of work. This was a period of industrial unrest and indeed the 1921 census itself was delayed by strikes – it was taken on 19th June 1921 and not on 24th April as printed on the forms (it's important to remember this when you are looking at a person's age expressed on the census record in years and months). I found a number of households where all the menfolk were out of work and the only source of income for a family might to be from a daughter working as a shop assistant – quite a responsibility for her! The mining and engineering industries seemed to be particularly badly hit, with some miners “locked out” of collieries. It's true that the census only provides a snapshot of one day in 1921, but in that year a total of 85 million lost working days were reported and things got steadily worse until the General Strike of 1926.

In the years around the 1921 census the UK was affected by war (WWI), a pandemic (“Spanish” Flu), high national debt, inflation, and strikes, all followed by a general strike and an economic slump... Of course, all that was a century ago. Things are very different today. Aren't they?

Knutsford News (3) - from the Northwich Guardian, 7 June 1873

WHIT-MONDAY AT KNUTSFORD – The Knutsfordians get up every year, with great spirit, more fêtes than any town of similar size in the United Kingdom, but keep only one exclusively for themselves. That being on Whit-Monday is almost always favoured with fine weather, and that of this week has proved no exception to such rule.... All the world knows that Whit-Monday is the great annual festival of the benefit societies of Knutsford, and this time-honoured custom was carried out with great success on the present occasion. A flag was displayed from the tower of the Parish Church, and though shops were open it was evident that work generally was suspended for the day. The various clubs met in the morning at their respective lodge-rooms, from whence they marched to Tatton park gates. Here a general procession was formed, and thence they proceeded to the Parish Church for Divine service.

A Puzzling Family

by Gren Dix

Membership no. 4074

Although this document refers to a specific person, the problems encountered, and the solutions to some of them, may give others ideas on how to break down some of their brick walls.

I was searching for the ancestors of Thomas B SALSBURY (b 1857). I got back to the following 1871 census record for Chaddesley Corbett, near Evesham.

Ref. RG10/3031/30-7, Hill Pool, Chaddesley Corbett, Worcestershire

William Skinner	Head	Mar	31	Shepherd	Elmley Lovett?	b.1841
Ann Skinner	Wife	Mar	38	-	Croptorne, Worc	b.1833
Betsey Skinner	Daur	Unm	21		Elmley Lovett?	b.1851
William H Skinner	Son		2		Kidderminster	b.1869
Thomas B Salsbury	Stepson		14	Ag lab	Liverpool	b.1857

Look at it for a few moments. At this stage I couldn't find the birth of Thomas nor the recent marriage of Ann SALSBURY, nor a marriage of William SKINNER.

I know that our ancestors had strange habits, but to father a child at the age of ten is not usual. Could William's age be wrong?

William Skinner	Head	Mar	31	Shepherd	Elmley Lovett?	b.1841
Ann	Wife	Mar	38	-	Croptorne, Worc	b.1833
Betsey	Daur	Unm	21		Elmley Lovett?	b.1851
William H	Son		2		Kidderminster	b.1869
Thomas B Salsbury	Stepson		14	Ag lab	Liverpool	b.1857

On examining an image of the 1871 census record, William's age does look a bit like 31 but could have been 51. The latter would make sense of the age of Betsey.

The next action was to look for Thomas in 1861 in the hope of finding his father. To my surprise this showed that William and Ann were married at this date and Thomas, age 4, was with them. Furthermore, in 1861 William was aged 39. Thus the 1871 census had a mis-transcription. This highlights the advice of all genealogists, namely always look at the source, or a reliable copy.

As stated above I had assumed that in 1861 Ann had only recently married. Looking again for the marriage, I found that they had married in 1860, she as Ann SALSBURY and not any of the alternative spellings (later offspring used three different spellings).

I had an insight as to the birth of Thomas B SALSBURY. My home town is Southport and BMD indexes have it, at different times, under Ormskirk, Southport or Sefton North. Similarly, Liverpool has BMDs under other headings. The most probable would be West Derby. A quick search found him born in 1857 (as indicated in the census) in West Derby.

The entry was for Thomas Burgess SALISBURY (note the 'i'). This matches as Thomas gave 12 of his 13 children the middle name Burgess.

I then looked for him on the GRO site. This had no mother's name. This can mean one of two things, either he is illegitimate or the GRO haven't got round to adding the mother's maiden name to the index.

I then looked in the 1851 census for an Ann born in Crothorne in about 1833. I found one with the surname SALSBURY. At this point I think that Ann was unmarried when Thomas was born. It still leaves the mystery of why she went from rural Worcestershire to Liverpool to give birth. From another side of my family where there is a surname used as a middle name, I surmise that the father of Thomas B was named BURGESS.

Finally, out of curiosity I looked for William SKINNER in 1851 and for his marriage (before 1846, the birth of his eldest listed son). Eventually I found his marriage but as Wm not William. I also found the actual eldest son John Burrows SKINNER born 1844.

Granny Potts

by Marion Hall

Membership no. 9303

I grew up hearing stories about Granny Potts but I was only 18 months old when she died so have no memory of her. Recently, in the quest to fill in details of descendants on my family tree, I determined to do some research on this lady.

Granny Potts started life as Hannah FLETCHER who was born on 20th January 1846, the eighth child and third daughter of John FLETCHER and Ann FRITH of Peak Forest, Derbyshire. The name FLETCHER is very, very common in the Peak District and means arrow maker.

Hannah's mother died in the fourth quarter of 1847, before Hannah was two years old and, presumably, she was then brought up by her older siblings; her elder sister, also called Ann, would then have been nearly eleven years old. The 1851 census has the family living at Forest Dam, Peak Forest and John was a wheelwright. Hannah was then just five years old.

Aged fifteen, on the 1861 census she was a servant to Mary FOX at Park Brewery, Market Street, Chapel-en-le-Frith and by the 1871 census Hannah was married to William FLETCHER, a lead miner from Chapel-en-le-Frith. They had a baby daughter Sarah Elizabeth - born in 1866 - and were living with Hannah's father John on a farm at Dam Dale, an area in the Peak Forest near to Tideswell.

In 1881 Hannah, husband William, and seven of their eight children, (Sarah E born 1866, Martha Ann born 1872, James Edward born 1873, William Henry born 1875, Mary born 1877, John born 1878 and Robert Winterbottom born 1880) were living at Dam Dale with her mother-in-law Sarah FLETCHER. Another son - Simon, born 1871 - had died in infancy. Sarah was a widow and farmer of twenty-four acres, with whom by all accounts Hannah did not get on well. On the 1881 census William is listed as "*infirm*". He died on 5th July 1881, aged only forty-one years. His death certificate states cause of death as "*softening of the brain 2 years*". Was this as a result of lead poisoning? Since

Hannah did not get on with her mother-in-law, after William died she moved with her children to New Inn Cottage next to the New Inn, Chapel-en-le-Frith, and supported the family as a seamstress. On 22nd August 1884 Hannah had another daughter, Charlotte, my grandmother, by George POTTS who was a widower. She was born in Chapel-en-le-Frith but her father came from Rainow near Macclesfield.

Charlotte's birth certificate names her as Charlotte POTTS, her father is not named, and her surname is FLETCHER, her mother's surname. Hannah subsequently married George on 18th April 1887, when their daughter was three years old. George was eighteen years older than Hannah and his occupation was a labourer and farmer. After the marriage in Chapel-en-le-Frith, Charlotte became known as Charlotte FLETCHER POTTS, the names now changed around. Hannah and George went on to have two more children: George born in 1887 in Chapel-en-le-Frith and Charles in 1889 in Poynton, Cheshire. I haven't yet found the reason for the move from Chapel-en-le-Frith to Poynton.

On the 1891 census the new family was living at Pinfold Cottage, Lower Park, Poynton and also living there were William Henry aged 16, Mary aged 14 and Robert Winterbottom aged 10, all FLETCHERS by Hannah's first marriage. George POTTS senior died in 1898 at the age of 71.

On the 1901 census Hannah, now a widow for second time and listed as a farmer, was still living at Lower Park, Poynton with her 3 POTTS children but also living there was James Edward FLETCHER aged 27, her fifth FLETCHER child, his wife Fanny and daughter Sarah aged 2 months.

The 1911 census shows Hannah aged 65, acting as housekeeper at 23 Printing Office Street, Doncaster, Yorkshire with her two POTTS sons who were bricklayers and were building houses in the area.

Hannah died on 12th December 1943 aged 97 at the home of her son Charles at Bolshaw Road, Cheadle. She had shared her latter years living with either her son Charles, his wife Beatrice and four children or her daughter Charlotte, son-in-law Thomas Alfred HULME, granddaughter Mary, Mary's husband Fred RICHARDSON and her great grandson Gordon at the shoe shop in the centre of

Poynton village. She is with Charlotte and family on the 1939 register.

Many of Hannah's eleven children married and had families, and by my reckoning there were at least sixteen grandchildren, many living in the Cheshire area. According to family legend, she dispensed herbal remedies of one sort or another to family, friends and villagers, and also acted as the local midwife. She was always well respected. My older brother Geoff particularly remembers Granny's homemade treacle toffee; she would have been in her nineties when making that.

I would have liked to have known her. She was a strong character who was constantly surrounded by people and her family; she wouldn't have lived to be nearly ninety-eight without some outstanding attributes.

Knutsford News (4) - from the Runcorn Examiner 13 September 1873

OPENING OF THE KNUTSFORD COLLEGE - Considerable interest has been excited by the announcement that the new college at Knutsford, which has been talked of for some time, is now in actual course of erection, and that the inaugural ceremonies will take place on 24th inst. The movement seems to have gained the support of many of the principal men in the district, where the want of a high-class school on the model of Winchester, Harrow, and similar public schools, has long been recognised. We understand that the college will be "in strict conformity with the teaching and practices of the Church of England." The college is designed for 500 resident pupils; and a beautiful collegiate chapel is attached, which will accommodate a much larger number. The cost of the whole design will be about £80,000.

From the Manchester Victorian Architects website: St Paul's College was to have been constructed on a site of 43 acres on Chelford Road, about two miles from Knutsford. The new buildings were intended to be a college for the northern counties, providing education on a scale rivalling that at Eton and Harrow. With much publicity, the foundation stone was laid on 24 September 1873 by Lord de Tabley. Building works commenced, but the scheme was abandoned, presumably for want of funds. (<https://manchestervictorianarchitects.org.uk/>)

Parish Register Notes

by Paul Reeve

Membership no. 9710

Nothing to do with my Cheshire ancestors - I have a lot from Norfolk as well! Whilst researching some of my REEVE ancestors who came from Norfolk, I discovered some interesting entries in the records for Great Melton (just south west of Norwich). They are in the front of the register for Baptisms, Marriages and Burials 1725-1812 (Norfolk Archives reference PD 479/2) and were copied from "the old register" by one of the vicars. The previous register, covering 1538 to 1725, does not have this list in it, but does have a number of pages of text about the civil war years which, unfortunately, is rather difficult to read.

Some observations transcribed from the Old Register and incidentally elsewhere.

The succession of Kings from Henry 8th inclusively with some remarks of things worth notice in some reigns.

Henry 8th	22 April 1509	28 January 1545/6
Edward 6th	28 January 1545/6	6 July 1553
Mary	6 July 1553	17 November 1558
Elizabeth	17 November 1558	24 March 1602/3
James 1	24 March 1602/3	27 March 1625/6
Charles 1	27 March 1625/6	30 January 1648/9 (beheaded)

The Kingdom turned into a Commonwealth 7 February 1647/8

*The Government of this Commonwealth lodged in the hands of a Protector
16 December 1653*

Oliver Cromwell, who made himself protector, died 3 September 1658

Richard Cromwell (his son) succeeded him.

*The Government changed again into a Commonwealth by the soldiers
7 May 1659*

<i>The Parliament cast out by the soldiers</i>	13 October 1659
<i>The same Parliament restored again</i>	26 December 1659
<i>The Members excluded in 1648 put in again by Generall (sic) Monke</i>	
<i>21 February 1659/60</i>	
<i>The Long Parliament dissolved by their own act</i>	16 March 1659/60
<i>Another Parliament called to begin at Westminster</i>	25 April 1660

The King (Charles 2) voted in 1st May 1660, proclaimed at London 8th May and came to London with infinite joy and triumph 29th May 1660 (his birthday)

There were once two churches in Great Melton; they were merged into one parish in 1723 – nothing new there, then!

The image can be found by browsing the Norfolk Parish Registers in Find my Past or Ancestry. When I first came across these records, I was able to view them on Familysearch by clicking on a link on the dustydocs website (www.dustydocs.com), but that option no longer seems to work.

Another interesting find, also in Norfolk, was in a register for Foulsham, near Aylsham (north of Norwich), on the first page. The register is entitled *Accounts 1728-1777* but also includes births, marriages and burials from 1746, which is how I found it. It has Norfolk Archive reference PD674/15.

A receipt for a “Hooping” Cough, communicated by a person of distinction.

Oil of Mace – ½ ounce; about an inch and a half of old tallow candle; Saffrom, a pennyworth; best French Brandy, a quarter of a pint

Let them just simmer over the fire in a new Earthen Pipkin. Cut a piece of brown paper in the shape of a heart; spread this ointment on the paper and apply it to the stomach, the sharpened end of the paper uppermost. Anoint the stomach night and morning with this ointment, still keeping the paper on.

I’m not sure that anyone would like to follow that today – and what a waste of brandy! There’s also a recipe for Damson Wine and for *Shrub* - the latter involves a gallon of brandy! *Shrub* is also known as *drinking vinegar* and doesn’t always have alcohol in it.

Wills, Maps, and Family History

by John Ravenscroft
Membership no. 3892

I like wills! On the hunt for more details of our ancestors I have found that wills, when they exist, can give an interesting view of the life and times of the family. Of course, there can be some frustrations when all the will amounts to is *I leave everything to my wife!* Not even her name; most annoying. However, there can be gold in some wills.

My favourite is the will of my 4x great-grandfather, John RAVENSCROFT. I came across it probably twenty years ago when visiting the old Cheshire Records Office and was able to buy a photocopy. I had already researched his family and knew his wife's name (Sandonia, Sandona, Sidonia, Sidona, depending on which document I read, née ALLMAN) and all the names and baptisms of their eleven children. The family lived in Davenham parish in a number of locations over time, including Leftwich.

The will begins in the form common at the time and my quotations follow the will's punctuation:

This is the Last Will and Testament of me John Ravenscroft of Leftwich in the County of Chester Yeoman being of sound mind memory and understanding.

He then directs his executors to pay off any funeral and other expenses and bequeaths all his *Real and Personal Estate* to his wife, Sidonia, for the *term of her natural life*. John's executors, whom he names at the end of the document as his wife and sons John and Thomas, are instructed to sell off all his household goods and furniture *at public auction* to pay off any debts. The will continues:

...on the death of my said wife I give desire and bequeath to my son John Ravenscroft All that my Messuage or Dwellinghouse Garden and premises situate in Leftwich in which I now reside.

To my son Thomas All those my two Dwellinghouses Gardens and Premises adjoining my said Dwellinghouse in Leftwich aforesaid, late in the holding of John BURROWS and Thomas DEAN;

To my son George All those my two Dwellinghouses...adjoining the two last mentioned Dwellinghouse in Leftwich in the holding of William PHILLIPS and William HODGKINSON;

To my daughter Mary DRINKWATER All those my two Dwellinghouse situate in Moulton marked 1 and 2 in the holding of Thomas Ravenscroft and Samuel FOWLS;

To my daughter Ann HYCOCK All those my Dwellinghouse situate in Moulton aforesaid marked 5 and 6, in the holding of John VERNON and Joseph OLIVER for and during the term of her natural life and immediately after her decease the same to be sold and the money arising from such sale to be equally divided between and among her children their heirs and assigns and the same not to be under the control of her present husband or any future husband

Phew! What had Ann's husband done to deserve such opprobrium? The will continues:

To my daughter Ellen Ann WHITLOW All those my two Dwellinghouses in Moulton marked 3 and 4 in the holding of herself and my Grandson John

and to my daughter Elizabeth All those my two Dwellinghouse in Moulton marked 9 and 10 in the holding of James EDGERLEY and William MADDOCK for and during the term of her natural life and after her decease the same to be sold and the money arising therefrom to be equally divided between and among her children their heirs and assigns and the same not to be under the control of her present or any future husband

Another wayward daughter or son in law? I do know that Elizabeth had a child out of wedlock – hmmm. The will continues:

To hold to them (save and except the said Ann HYCOCK and my daughter Elizabeth) their Heirs and assigns for ever.

The will then goes on to order the sale of two more cottages in Moulton (marked 7 and 8 and in the occupation of John BURROWS and Richard SHAKERLEY). The

sale of these cottages was to be shared between his daughters: £30 each to Mary, Ann, Ellen, £20 to Elizabeth and £10 to granddaughter Sidonia.

Anything left over after those bequests was to be shared equally between his grandchildren.

Now all that paints a picture of someone who was quite wealthy but where did that wealth come from? In the parish registers for Davenham are the baptisms of all his children and in all but the last, Elizabeth, he states his occupation as a labourer; not the sort of occupation associated with a will such as his. On Elizabeth's record he is shown as a Salt Boiler. During those twenty years at the beginning of the 19th century, when the children were baptised, the salt industry was booming in the Northwich area, and it would have given occupation to many labourers.

How does this sit with such a property owner? Well, the 1841 census has him down, mysteriously as a *Brick M* - a brick manufacturer, perhaps? Or just a brick maker? From the 1841 census into the 1850s 'old' John is shown as qualifying to vote due to his owning 'freehold houses and land'. He also appears on Elizabeth's marriage certificate this time as a grocer and, when he died, he was shown as a provisions dealer!

He is buried with *Sandonia*, note the spelling, under a large, horizontal slab in the tiny burial ground of what was the small, Independent Chapel in Moulton. It simply reads:

*IN MEMORY OF John Ravenscroft of Leftwich who died Jan 5th 1856 aged 76 Years.
Also Sandonia Wife of the above who died July 22nd 1857 aged 80 Years*

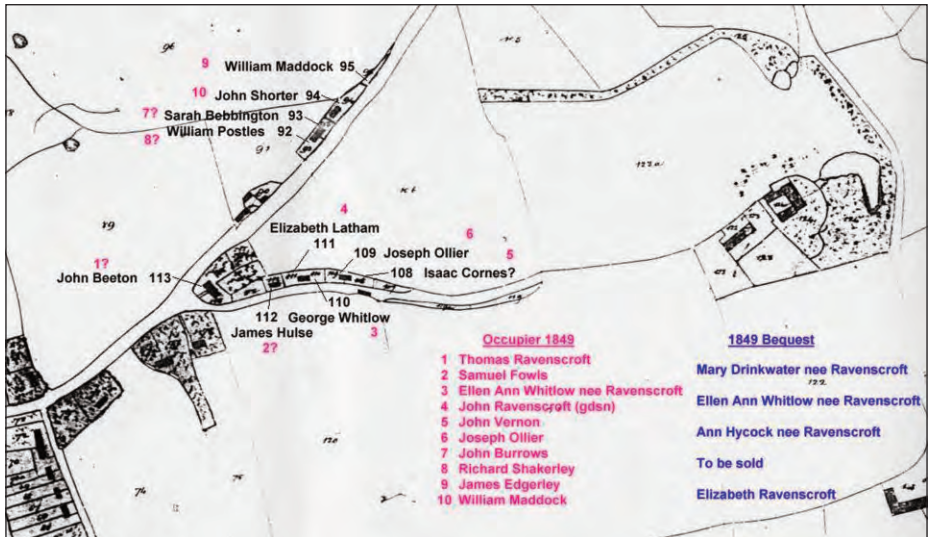
His son, my 3x great-grandfather, is buried with his wife and two of his children on the opposite side of the graveyard. It is noted that he was *Superintendent of this Sunday School for 20 years.*

To complete the picture, I discovered the Tithe Maps of the 1840s showed quite clearly the properties mentioned in the will and, thanks to the Tithe Apportionments, was able to identify which properties had been left to which legatees.

Sources:

Cheshire wills are held at Cheshire Archives and Local Studies but are also available on Find My Past.

The Tithe Maps and Apportionments are also held at Cheshire Archives. Their website has a good presentation of them, with a side-by-side view comparing them with modern maps. They also indicate the owners and occupiers of the various plots. Well worth a look at <https://maps.cheshireeast.gov.uk/tithemaps/> Parish Registers and Census Returns are all on Find My Past.



Moulton Tithe Map, 1840, Reference EDT 284/2, annotated by the author.

Reproduced with the kind permission of Cheshire Archives and Local Studies.

Knutsford News (5) - from the Runcorn Examiner, 23 August 1873

REARING SUPPER AT KNUTSFORD

On Thursday afternoon the men who have been engaged in the alterations to the Workhouse has what is termed a “rearing” supper, at the house of Mrs McGill, the Angel Hotel. About 100 persons sat down to dinner. Owing to the liberality of the architect and the contractors, the affair was a decided success, and an enjoyable evening was spent.

Ed.: Has anyone ever heard of a “rearing” supper before? I assume it was to celebrate the completion of some building work, but I wonder how it got its name?

Stamp Duty and Parish “Paupers”

by Rosie Rowley
Journal Editor

Most people are familiar with stamp duty being a tax payable in the UK when buying property. Stamp duty was first introduced in England on 28 June 1694, during the reign of William III and Mary II, as *An act for granting to their Majesties several duties upon vellum, parchment and paper, for four years, towards carrying on the war against France*. Originally, it required a physical stamp to be attached to or impressed upon the document in question. During the 18th and early 19th centuries, stamp duties were extended to cover newspapers, pamphlets, lottery tickets, apprentices' indentures, advertisements, playing cards, dice, hats, gloves, patent medicines, perfumes, insurance policies, gold and silver plate, hair powder and armorial bearings.

The attempted enforcement of the Stamp Act 1765 in the British colonies in America led to the outcry of *no taxation without representation*, contributing to the outbreak of the American War of Independence. Ironically, the Stamp Duties Act 1783 was passed in order to raise money to pay for the American War of Independence! Under this Act, all baptism, marriage and burial entries in each parish register were subject to a tax of 3d. Church ministers were empowered to collect the duty, and were allowed to keep 10% of this fee as compensation for their trouble. Refusal to pay carried a fine of £5. This was a deeply unpopular tax, and many clergymen were sympathetic to the plight of their parishioners; as paupers were exempt from the tax, family historians often find that the number of poor people in a parish increased during these years, until the act was repealed in 1794. Such entries in a parish register are annotated with the letter *P.* or the word *Pauper*. If a family could not claim exemption, some simply didn't baptise their children, causing a later increase in adult baptisms.

Source - Wikipedia:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stamp_duty_in_the_United_Kingdom

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stamp_Duties_Act_1783

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



This is one of those rare editions where I haven't needed to write a piece myself – I've received loads of good input from several members. It's much appreciated – please keep it up! Well, here's a right mixture for you, with articles on looking forward to seeing where our hobby might be going, plus methods of seeking historical events via DNA and the 1921 Census. All followed by stuff about program/software considerations, better downloaded images, and lots more.

The Future for Family History?

By Margaret Roberts - FHSC Publicity Officer

The future of family history is likely to be shaped by advancements in technology, changes in societal trends, and evolving approaches to record-keeping and storytelling. Here are a few possible trends and developments that could impact the future of family history.

Digital Preservation and Record Keeping: With the increasing digitisation of records and the availability of online platforms, the preservation and accessibility of family history information will likely continue to improve.

Family photos, documents, and other artifacts can be stored in the cloud for instance, meaning they are less vulnerable to physical damage or loss. Such records would additionally be more accessible to others, so they'd be easier for people to explore and share their family histories.

DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy: The popularity of DNA testing for genealogical purposes has soared in recent years. This trend is expected to continue; with advancements in DNA technology providing even more detailed and accurate results. Genetic genealogy can help individuals discover and better understand their ancestral origins, connect with distant relatives, and uncover previously unknown branches of their family tree.

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning: As artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning algorithms become more sophisticated, they can play a significant role in family history research. AI-powered tools may be able to analyse and cross-reference vast amounts of historical data, such as census records and newspapers, to help individuals trace their family roots more efficiently. These technologies could also assist in automating the process of building family trees and identifying potential research leads.

Social Media and Storytelling: Social media platforms and online communities have already transformed the way people connect and share information in new and interactive ways. In the future, these platforms may play an even greater role in documenting and preserving family history. Families or groups can create dedicated family history pages, share stories and photos, and link with relatives around the world, fostering a sense of belonging and facilitating connections across the generations. It must be remembered that while technology plays a crucial role, the essence of family history lies in storytelling and passing down oral traditions. Future generations may emphasize the importance of recording and preserving the personal stories, memories, and experiences of their elders. This can be done through audio and video recordings, interactive digital platforms, or immersive virtual reality experiences. Additionally, digital storytelling tools may emerge that help individuals document and present their family narratives in hitherto unknown and compelling ways.

Privacy and Ethical Considerations: The increasing availability of personal data and genetic information raises important ethical and privacy concerns. The future of family history will probably involve discussions and regulations surrounding data protection, consent, and the responsible use of sensitive information. Striking a balance between preserving privacy and enabling access to historical records will be an ongoing challenge in the future.

Cultural and Global Perspectives: As societies and family structures become more diverse and interconnected, the prospect for family history research will more than likely embrace a broader range of cultural perspectives. In the future, family history may encompass a broader definition of family, including non-traditional family units, adoptive families, blended families, and chosen families. The exploration of these diverse family histories will be an important aspect of genealogical research as people discover and celebrate their heritage from multiple angles, and start incorporating different family traditions, customs, and migration histories into their narratives.

Overall, the future of family history will almost certainly be a blend of traditional practices and innovative approaches driven by technology which will enhance research, connectivity, and preservation, further shaping how individuals explore and preserve their family heritage. However, it's important to remember that family history is ultimately about connecting with our roots, strengthening our family connections, and understanding our place in the larger human story, while weaving a comprehensive narrative of our shared past. Regardless of technological advancements, these fundamental aspects of family history will continue to be cherished and valued.

Confirming that my Hodgson Research is correct using Ancestry DNA Thrulines

By Runcorn member Mike Hodgkinson

When I told my mother that my future wife's surname was HODGSON, she told me that her maternal grandmother was also called HODGSON. I wondered whether we could have a distant common ancestor, as they both came from north-east England.

Research on my HODGSON line hit a brick wall when I reached William HODGSON who was baptised in Tynemouth, Northumberland in 1819. Fortunately, there was more information on the record of his older sister which said that her father came from Fatfield. I found an area called Fatfield on the River Wear in Washington, County Durham. The closest match I could find was Thomas, son of Richard HODGSON, baptised in Washington in 1774, but there were no other children of Richard HODGSON baptised in this period.

I found a marriage of Richard Reed HODGSON and Elizabeth MIDDLETON in nearby Chester-le-Street in 1770. Their children Hannah and William were baptised in Newburn, Northumberland in 1771 and 1780 respectively. There was room for Thomas between them, but I regarded this as only a possibility, as the father was simply Richard HODGSON and the location was different.

I subsequently found that Elizabeth died in 1787; Richard married Ann STAFFORD the following year and had four more children, namely, Ann, Edward, Ralph, and Hannah. I entered all this information into my Ancestry family tree, more in hope than expectation.

Richard Reed Hodgson (1748-1837)	<i>1st wife</i> Elizabeth Middleton (1748-1787) Married at Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham in 1770 Buried at Newburn, Northumberland	<i>Children</i> Hannah (1771-) Thomas (1774 -1849) William (1780-1860) Baptised at Newburn, Northumberland except Thomas who was baptised at Washington, Co Durham	My ancestor 5 DNA matches
	<i>2nd wife</i> Ann Stafford (1750-) Married at Newburn in 1788	<i>Children</i> Ann (1788-) Edward (1791-1824) Ralph (1793-) Hannah (1796-) All baptised at Newburn	1 DNA match 2 DNA matches

A few years later, I took the Ancestry DNA test and many matches appeared, but only a few were helpful. Gradually the number of DNA common ancestors

shown on matches and ThruLines increased. These need to be checked, as the computer program sometimes links more than two trees and is not infallible. It is essential to include every known sibling on your tree and, if possible, their spouses and children.

I now have eight people who have DNA matches with me for Richard Reed HODGSON. Five matches are with descendants of William who was born to Elizabeth, his first wife, and three are with descendants of Ann and Edward, who were born to his second wife, Anne.

I have hundreds of DNA matches with other people, many of whom have no family trees, but my wife is not on the list and any link cannot be found using current techniques. However, it is amazing that we can verify research into ancestors who lived over three hundred years ago and had children who were born in different counties.

Finding Missing Records in the 1921 Census

By Nantwich & Computer Club's Bill Pearson

Have you ever struggled to find someone in the 1921 Census? It's particularly frustrating if you are using the pay-as-you-go method, as it's often helpful to look at neighbouring records – and doing that could rack up quite a bill!

For instance, if you are looking for the *Nag's Head*, in Nantwich, you will currently (before I corrected Find My Past's transcription errors) need to search for the *Nass Head*! Calavan and Carayan both appear on Beam Street in Nantwich (I suspect both are caravans). With a project as large as the 1921 Transcription, it's not surprising that some names, addresses and other information will have been incorrectly transcribed.

Other reasons for not finding people are:

- They were not where you thought they would be.
- The information given on the form may differ from other censuses.
- The road or street that you are looking for may have changed its name.
- The numbering on that road or street may have changed.

Genealogists will be familiar with different techniques for finding people, including searching by address and looking for neighbours that appeared on other censuses.

With address searches, it always pays to start by keeping your search broad, and then filter down. Only put the street name into the search – not numbers or road types such as *street*, *alley*, *lane*. You will see these on subsequent pages.

You can search by address on Find My Past here: www.findmypast.co.uk/search-address It's usually best to tick *spelling variants*, as this will include any streets that may have been mis-transcribed (i.e. Blears Avenue spelt *Bleers Avenue*).

It's interesting to see how the enumerators carried out the census. In a village with only one road, they would usually go up one side of the street and then return on the other side. However, in larger villages and towns the enumerator will have done it in a far more complicated way – ask your postie how they do their round!

As previously discussed in NTS, when searching the 1921 census it pays to use the *Advanced Search*: <https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/1921-census-of-england-and-wales>

Imagine that you want to find William MASON, who lived at 35 Beam Street, in Nantwich. Searching for a person called MASON, at 35 Beam Street in Nantwich would not find him. This is because 35 Beam Street is listed as the Shakespeare Inn, instead of number 35 on the 1921 census. If you knew that his neighbour was Thomas BARNETT, who lived at 33 Beam Street, you could search for Thomas BARNETT and then easily find William MASON next door. However, if you knew that his neighbour was Robert MOULTON, who lived at 37 Beam Street, you would have a bit more of a struggle.

It's helpful to understand the reference number codes. Archive series RG15 tells you it is the 1921 census. For Beam Street, in Nantwich, 449 is the Registration District. The Schedule Number for Thomas BARNETT, who lived at 33 Beam Street, is 47, and the Schedule Number for William MASON, who lived at 35 Beam Street, is 48. You might assume that the Schedule Number for Robert MOULTON at 37 Beam Street would be 49. However, the Schedule Number for

Robert MOULTON is actually 67! This is because the enumerator, after leaving 35 Beam Street, visited eight addresses in Dog Lane and ten addresses in Thomas Row before visiting 37 Beam Street.

It's also helpful to know that sometimes there could be more than one Schedule Number for an address. So, for example, if you were looking for Edward HODGKINSON at 7 Beam Street (the Manor House) and found John TURNBELL at 7 Beam Street, it doesn't mean that Edward wasn't there. Edward is at Schedule Number 26 and John is at Schedule Number 27. This means that the Manor House in Nantwich had two households there in 1921.

By searching for both schedule numbers and streets, you get a better idea of how the enumerators carried out their work.

Adobe Acrobat Reader

Acrobat Reader has now advanced significantly beyond its earlier releases. It continues to be free, but you can now utilise the following added facilities from this free download: <https://get.adobe.com/uk/reader/>

You can now:

Comment, add sticky notes and highlight text. **Fill & Sign**, complete forms or send them to others for signature. **Edit the PDF**, text, or images: fix a typo or crop an image. **Export PDF** by converting it to Microsoft Word, or Excel. **Create PDFs** from Microsoft Office and other files. The one thing it can't do is rotate a page and let you Save it!

I use the Pro version to create electronic versions of the CHESHIRE ANCESTOR. I've always recommended that the best way to read PDFs is by using Acrobat.

Geoff Gibson from Sussex commented:

Following last week's Computer Club meeting and my query about rotating pages in Acrobat, I have looked at this again and found out how to rotate pages within Acrobat Reader. When I load Acrobat, it comes up with what I think they call a Tool Bar which has lots of icons for various functions. Many of these are available for the Reader version of Acrobat, but not all of them. One of those that is unavailable is the function for Rotate. However, if all that is required is

to rotate just the image on the screen this can be accomplished by clicking on View on the Menu Bar (I think that's what it's called, it's the one at the top of the screen). This then produces a drop-down menu which includes rotate clockwise or counterclockwise, and these work in the Reader version of Acrobat.

Edge browser and Acrobat

Following those same discussions at Computer Club, I was whingeing that as a Microsoft Edge browser user I was annoyed that Edge always opened downloaded PDF files within the browser – presenting it as a webpage.

Alfreton member **Julie Swift** also suffered, went away and sussed out how to stop it! First, she downloaded Adobe Acrobat reader and set it as the default for PDFs, so now PDF files will open in this rather than Edge – but every time she clicked on a pdf link in a website, it still opened in Edge. A bit of searching via Mr Google supplied the answer!

Open Edge & click on the 3 little dots at the top right-hand side, then click *Settings – Cookies & Site permissions*.

In the *All permissions* section, scroll down to pdf documents, double click, then select *Always download pdf files*. Edge will now ask you whether you want to Open or Save a PDF when you click the link, instead of just opening it.

Well done Julie – works a treat for me! - GJ

The Genealogist Census Images

In April, The Genealogist announced the release of higher resolution and better quality census images. I have always maintained that they are the best website for hard to read images – it's my go-to website for the 1841 census.

Our CHESHIRE ANCESTOR Editor, Rosie Rowley, spotted this release and passed me the following piece:

Hello Geoff, I just wanted to report on my brief comparison of census records between the various websites. A few weeks ago, I subscribed to The Genealogist (using a special offer), because they had some records I wanted to use which weren't available on Ancestry or Find My Past.

This evening, I was checking a census record on Ancestry and it was almost completely illegible. I then remembered The Genealogist had boasted that they had greatly improved their census images to make them much easier to read, so I thought I'd put them to the test. I searched for the same census page on The Genealogist and I am really impressed – the image is perfectly clear and easy to read. To complete the test, I found the same census page on Find My Past. This was much better than Ancestry, but not as clear and sharp as The Genealogist. So, on a sample of one census page I'd say that The Genealogist wins! Looking at the file sizes after downloading the images, I can see that the file for The Genealogist is twice the size of the other two, so no doubt that helps with the legibility.

I realise that a sample of one census page is not very scientific, so please don't assume that every census page on Ancestry will be illegible, or every census page on The Genealogist will be perfectly clear!

Road, Street, &c., and No. or Name of House	HOUSES		Name and Surname of each Person
	In- habited	Unin- habited (U.), or Building (B.)	
<i>Lace Street</i>			<i>Thomas Spridgen</i>
			<i>James Do</i>
			<i>James Do</i>
			<i>Robert Do</i>

A sample from the 1861 census for Werrington, Northamptonshire, on Ancestry

Road, Street, &c., and No. or Name of House	HOUSES		Name and Surname of each Person
	In- habited	Unin- habited (U.), or Building (B.)	
<i>Lace Street</i>			<i>Thomas Spridgen</i>
			<i>James Do</i>
			<i>James Do</i>
			<i>Robert Do</i>

The same sample from The Genealogist

RootsMagic 9 Released

I've got absolutely no experience of this program, but input from some members indicates that it is a bit of a 'Marmite' jobby. For information about Rootsmagic 9, see their blog at <http://blog.rootsmagic.com/?p=3635>

Lytham St. Annes member **Ted Lake** observed: *I downloaded RootsMagic 9 today. The download was quick and simple. I have not had a chance to explore and see any improvements/or changes. The main thing that concerns me is the ability to burn DVDs. I could do this easily with RootsMagic 5, but it proved well-nigh impossible with RootsMagic 8. I did receive a program to achieve this, but never downloaded it.*

South Wales member **Peter Smith** said: *I use RootsMagic 9 and one of the things I like about the latest version (which the SOG review did not mention) is its 'Association' feature. That allows me to link people in the tree even if they are not directly related. I use that feature to link partial trees I am researching to break down brick walls, where someone appears to be related but I have not found any evidence.*

Member **Mark Draper** of Norbury Common observes: *Lipstick on a pig? It strikes me as a rather cynical attempt to add in a couple of incremental new features and call it a new version, so RM can stop supporting the notoriously buggy RM8 just 15 months after launch. If you want further updates, you pay...*

Rosie Rowley our Editor says: *I thought this might be useful to anyone who has an Ancestry tree and would like to get a backup, as exporting an Ancestry tree as a GEDCOM file does not include the media (images of the records such as census, baptisms, etc). If your Ancestry subscription lapses, you can still access and update your tree, but you will no longer be able to view the associated media records.*

I have just discovered that the free version of RootsMagic, RootsMagic Essentials (www.rootsmagic.com/try/), allows you to download your Ancestry family tree and all associated media, so you can keep on your computer a copy of the Ancestry records you have used to create your tree, and refer to them whenever you like. Note that to do this, you must download your tree before your Ancestry subscription lapses.

I haven't used RootsMagic other than to download an Ancestry tree as a test, so I can't say how easy or otherwise it is to use as a family history program, but the first family history program I owned (way back in the 1990s) was Family Origins, the

predecessor of RootsMagic, and I was very happy with it. Note, however, that the Essentials version is the same program as the full, paid-for version, but with many facilities disabled, so it might be a bit annoying to use when half the menu options result in a pop-up telling you to buy the full version if you want to do that!

From the Inbox

We Are [...] is “an online facility, built to showcase lives and capture memories, to share with relatives and invite them to fill in the gaps. It is truly ‘our’ website; each family member who logs in becomes the central person of the site.” You can try it with a 30-day free trial; paying £4.99 per month will enable you to manage five trees shared amongst ten family users. See the article **We Are...** on page 37.

Blocked from using cheaper printer cartridges?

Wirral member Malcolm Upton asked, *how can HP block me from using a cheaper printer cartridge?* He made the point some months ago about the importance of reading the very small print when buying a new printer. This relates to a Guardian article (still available at time of writing). Googling *How to unblock HP from stopping use of my OEM laser cartridge?* also offered plenty of reading!

www.theguardian.com/money/2023/may/10/how-can-hp-block-me-from-using-a-cheaper-printer-cartridge

I’m guessing that the affected printers have some online connection facility, probably involving a Wi-Fi connection to networked PC’s. My Canon and HP printers seem happy enough, but they are connected using a good old USB cable! Personally, I’d advise you not to use Wi-Fi to connect your printers. You can’t beat a nice piece of wire!

Fan Charts on FamilySearch

A recent introduction that produces a good quality fan chart, using your family tree on the FamilySearch website. It clearly shows you where you are missing chunks of your research!

www.familysearch.org/en/blog/genealogy-fan-chart

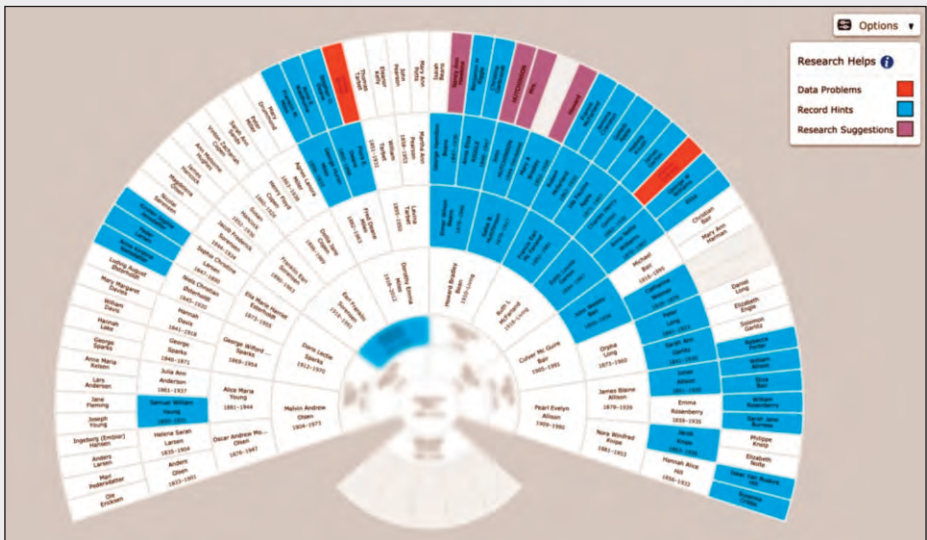
For each person in the tree, the fan chart shows the name, plus birth and death dates. The boxes can be coloured to highlight different aspects of your ancestry. The basic view just shows the different family lines. Other options are:

Birth Country: If you have ancestors from several different countries, you may find the Birth Country fan chart helpful; in this chart, a different colour is used for each different birth country.

Sources: To aid your research, the Sources view uses different shades of one colour depending on how many sources are attached to each person – darker shades indicate more sources. So you can see clearly which ancestors need more work if they are shown with a paler colour.

Stories/Photos: These views use darker colours for people with more stories or photos attached.

FamilySearch Research Helps: Shown below, this chart uses different colours to indicate Data Problems, Record Hints, or Research Suggestions.

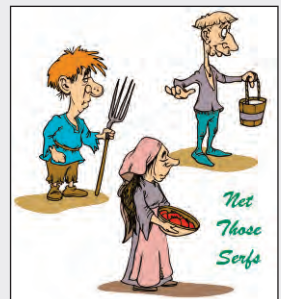


Closing Snippet:

Genealogy – when a step backwards is real progress!

Thanks to all contributors.

I really rely on your input to keep this forum active, so keep the stuff coming please – GJ



Group News

**For changes and up-to-date news check the website
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

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.

PLEASE NOTE: WE DO NOT RECORD SEMINAR 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 send out in another newsletter a few days before the talk.

These Zoom talks have the option of computer-generated 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 us on seminar@fhsc.org.uk and we will be happy to help you.

Future meetings: (All Zoom meetings)

20th September

Mediaeval Building Myths by Dr James Wright

Hailing from Staffordshire, James has been involved in the world of archaeology for over twenty years. He has experience as a field archaeologist, conservation stonemason, community archaeologist, historic stone specialist, archival researcher, historic graffiti specialist and buildings archaeologist. James has worked and appeared on *Time Team*, *The Great British Dig*, *Unearthed* (Discovery Science channel), *Mystic Britain* (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.

18th October (3rd Dorothy Flude Memorial Lecture)

History of Witchcraft by Dr Wanda Wyporska

Information will be published in the monthly newsletter, nearer the time.

15th November

Suffer Little Children: The Foundling Hospital at Chester

by Dr Anthony Annakin-Smith

Dr Anthony Annakin-Smith is a writer and popular speaker, noted for his meticulous research into little-known aspects of the history of West Cheshire. He has interests in the area's maritime, industrial and social history in the eighteenth century as well as in the evolution of the Cheshire landscape. Based on the speaker's original research, this talk tells the little-known and moving story of the eighteenth-century hospital at Chester which cared for unwanted children from London and elsewhere. It looks at the origins of these foundlings, how they were looked after at Chester's Blue Coat building and in the surrounding area, and what happened to them when the institution closed. A fascinating and poignant presentation.

20th December

Keeping Mum: Maternity Narratives and Your Family History by Dr Sophie Kay

How well do you really know your female forebears? The women in our family trees can sometimes elude us if they make fewer appearances in the historical record. However, if we pay attention to the reproductive history of those female ancestors, it can offer the key to understanding the wider family unit.

In this session, we'll explore some key record sets that we can use to understand the reproductive lives of our female ancestors. We'll address the sensitive subjects of pregnancy loss and stillbirth, see how these were recorded over time,

and explore how parents responded to such losses in the past.

You'll also learn how to use maternity timelines in your research – a fantastic method for examining the lives of the women in your family tree. We'll see how maternity timelines can transform your understanding of family groups, lead you to new record sets, overcome brick walls, and – perhaps most importantly of all – restore the stories of the women who forged your family.

18th January 2024

Walls Come Tumbling Down by Dave Annal

Brick walls are an inescapable component of every family historian's world. If you think about it, every line you've ever researched starts (or ends, depending on which way you look at it) with an individual whose parentage is unknown. But isn't that what makes family history research so fascinating? It's the challenge of discovery; the detective work; the intellectual process of exercising our enquiring minds. In this talk, Dave will take a practical, hands-on approach to solving brick walls, using worked examples.

Cheshire Research Buddies Online Meetings

by Margaret Roberts

Future meetings (all on Zoom):

30th Sep *Sale*
28th Oct *No Meeting - FHSC AGM on this day*
25th Nov *Knutsford*
30th Dec *Middlewich*

Our very own online helpdesk, which takes place via Zoom at 2pm on the last Saturday of the month (except October). This 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 with suggestions for future meeting topics.

If you are familiar with any of the above areas – perhaps you have done some research there, or live nearby – then please register for the meeting and see if

you can help another member. If you have a question relating to any of the above areas, please register for 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:

18th Sep ***AGM and Talk***

The title of the accompanying talk is to be confirmed.

16th Oct ***TBA***

20th Nov ***TBA***

12th Dec ***Christmas lunch***

To be arranged.

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

NOTE: We decided to see how we got on at our new venue before making the decision about whether to switch to Zoom during the winter months. We will make that decision after our July meeting, which is after this issue of the **ANCESTOR** goes to press. Bebington Group members will be advised by email and information can also be found on the FHSC website.

Future meetings:

- 25th Sep *The Life of Lady Lever* by Gavin Hunter
23rd Oct *TBA (either Zoom or Face-to-Face)*
27th Nov *TBA (either Zoom or Face-to-Face)*
11th Dec *Christmas Quiz (either Zoom or Face-to-Face)*

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

Chester Group
by *Helen Elliott*

Future meetings:

- 28th Sep *The Poor Law and Workhouses in Cheshire* by Mike Royden
26th Oct *Suffer Little Children - The Foundling Hospital in Chester*
by Anthony Annakin-Smith
30th Nov *A Seasonal Miscellany*
December *NO MEETING*

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 flexible; we discuss new websites, members’ own current problems, or generally chat about getting the best from your computer. 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 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 FHSC website, or check the Congleton group page on the FHSC website.

Future meetings:

- 19th Sep *Face-to-face meeting, AGM followed by
Workshop on Exploring Non-UK Family History*
- 17th Oct *Face-to-face meeting, topic TBA*
- 21st Nov *Face-to-face meeting, topic TBA*
- December *No Meeting*

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 – 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:

- 5th Sep *F2F at Crewe: AGM and Workshop Session*
We welcome suggestions for topics.
- 10th Oct *at 7.30pm ZOOM (Joint CR/NA): What's in a Name by Denise Bates*

Alongside traditional forenames that have been used for many generations, birth, marriage, and death records reveal that there have always been some parents who have selected unusual names. Denise became interested in these names after discovering several examples whilst researching her family tree. This inspired her to conduct extensive research into the topic, enabling her to identify naming patterns. Denise then linked this into wider social history, considering what the use of certain names might reveal about individual parents, the times or the community where they lived.

21st Nov **at 7.30pm ZOOM (Joint CR/NA): *The Rat Catchers* by David Cufley.**
This talk is on the 19th century profession of Ratcatchers and uses parts of Manchester, Kent and Middlesex as sources. However, as the trade and methods of a ratcatcher were generic, this will relate to us here in Cheshire perfectly. David will describe how the ratcatchers plied their trade and earned their money, including sporting events involving rats that took place in pubs.

12th Dec **Hybrid Event (Joint CR/NA):**
***F2F Christmas Get-together at The Wishing Well, Jubilee House, St. Paul's St, Crewe CW1 2PT, followed by a Zoom talk: Grave Concerns - More than a Resting Place* by Jackie Depelle**
The social aspect of this meeting will start at 6pm, where you are welcome to join us for some Christmas fare, share research discoveries and maybe take part in some Family History activities! This will be followed at 7.30pm by the talk on Zoom, which will be broadcast into the room via our large screen. Burial records, gravestones and memorial inscriptions are all key elements of family and local history. Perhaps laying an ancestor to rest closes down the family line but there is much associated information to uncover and research.

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.

Macclesfield Group

by Jean Laidlaw

Future meetings:

- 26th Sep ***A short AGM followed by My Favourite Ancestor***
Come and tell us about your favourite ancestor.
- 24th Oct ***What's in a Name? A History of Local Place Names, their Origins and Meanings by John Wallace.***
- 28th Nov ***Cheshire's Historic Houses by Tony Bostock***
Cheshire was once known as *the seed pot of gentility*. A look at some of the historic gentry houses and their treasures.
- December ***No Meeting***

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 – go to the Macclesfield page of the website 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.

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 – please add **Zoom** with the **date of the meeting** to the subject line of your email
- **Hybrid** – available via Zoom or by attending the Crewe venue. Those participating online should request the Zoom link as above.
- **F2F** – a face-to-face meeting. Please note that Nantwich will not be holding any F2F meetings at their own venue until early next year.

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:

10th Oct **at 7.30pm ZOOM (Joint CR/NA): *What's in a Name* by Denise Bates**

21st Nov **at 7.30pm ZOOM (Joint CR/NA): *The Rat Catchers* by David Cufley**

12th Dec ***Hybrid Event (Joint CR/NA):***

F2F Christmas Get-together at 6pm at The Wishing Well, Jubilee House, St. Paul's St, Crewe CW1 2PT, followed at 7.30pm by a Zoom talk: *Grave Concerns – More than a Resting Place* by Jackie Depelle

Nantwich Family History Workshops

As some of you are aware, there may be changes to the current arrangements for our workshop at Nantwich Library. Cheshire East are in a consultation period, gathering opinions on their plan to reduce the opening hours of their libraries, including Nantwich. They are proposing to close Nantwich Library all day Friday, and on Monday afternoons.

If this goes ahead then we will have to change our workshop arrangements as these currently take place once a month on a Monday afternoon. As I am not

sure what will happen, I cannot give any firm dates for future workshops, but I hope we can hold one in September. As soon as I know what is happening then I will let everyone know by newsletter or by information on the website.

Workshops usually take place once a month in the Local Studies and Family History Room on the first floor of Nantwich Library. A lift is available. We try to help anyone with family history queries. The library has access to local newspapers and local parish registers as well as reference books and directories about the local area. There is free access to websites such as Findmypast and Ancestry. Thanks to those who have attended our workshops this year.

Northwich Group

by Dave Thomas

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

Future meetings:

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

9th Oct ***Slater's Chronicles: Lives and Religion in Cheshire and Elsewhere
by Audrey Wood***

Slater's Chronicles was published in 1891. The author and speaker are related, being first cousins five times removed.

13th Nov ***Eyam - The Plague Village by Chris Green***

The story of the decision to quarantine the whole village to contain the plague.

11th Dec ***Our World Famous Hotpot Supper and Quiz***

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:

6th Sep ***Workshop/Research Night***

4th Oct ***TBA***

8th Nov ***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:

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

11th Oct ***Those Everlasting Bills*** by *Alan Hulme*

An illustrated talk about interesting old bills and receipts.

8th Nov ***Sale Blitz*** by *George Cogswell*

An illustrated talk about the bombing of Sale in 1940-41.

13th Dec ***Christmas Open Forum***

Members and friends are invited to tell us about interesting gifts they have received in the past.

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

Tameside Group

by Gay Oliver

Future meetings:

28th Sep ***AGM followed by a talk***

Talk on a topic chosen by our members, either dating photographs or breaking down brick walls.

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

Tameside Archaeology Service will talk about two Mesolithic sites at Iron Tongue Hill and Grange Farm.

23rd Nov ***Social Meeting***

Details to be decided - perhaps an afternoon tea in the cafe, or something savoury. Plus one of Adrian's devilish quizzes.

We are also back in Tameside Local studies and Archives Library on the first and

third Tuesdays each month helping anyone who is stuck with their research or for those who want to get started.

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

Wallasey Group

by *Dave Beck*

Future meetings:

19th Sep ***Industrial Wallasey by Rob Jones***

Begins with agrarian industries such as farming and milling, then heavier industries such as quarries, brick fields and storage. 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.

17th Oct ***(Zoom) It's Not What You Research it's the Way You Research It by Margaret Roberts***

Hints and tips on using online newspapers.

21st Nov ***(Zoom) The Many Maritime Memorials of Merseyside by David Hearn***

Given the maritime history of Merseyside it is not surprising that there are a lot of maritime memorials. More surprising is when they were unveiled, how they were funded, and a glaring omission. Includes some well-known memorials and some that are less well-known.

December ***No Meeting***

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

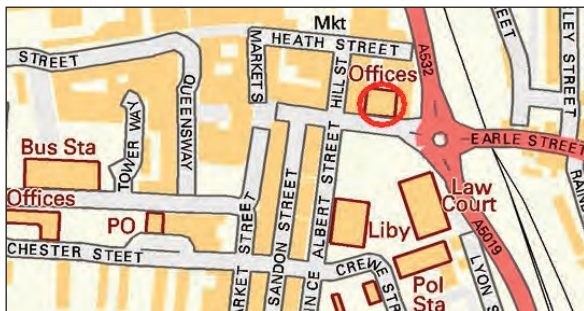
See the Crewe FHU Library Holdings lists on the FHSC website

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.

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

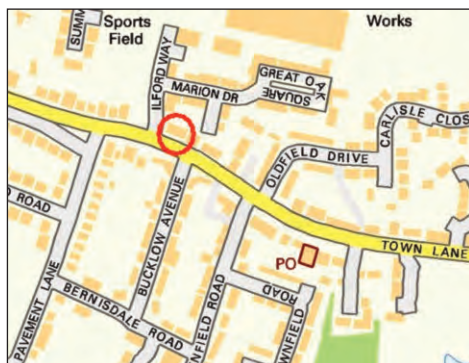
Fiche/film and A2 scanning available – please enquire.

**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.



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NOTE:

GL: Group Leader
GC: Group Contact

The Family History Society of Cheshire

www.fhsc.org.uk

Knutsford



Knutsford is a small town lying 14 miles southwest of Manchester, with a population in 2011 of 13,191. It was recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as *Cunetesford*. The Sessions House (above) was built in 1815 and once included Knutsford Gaol, which was demolished in 1934 and occupied the present site of Booth's supermarket and a car park. The Sessions House building is now a hotel, so you can dine in the courtroom where your ancestor was once on trial.

Knutsford was the model for Elizabeth Gaskell's novel *Cranford*. She lived in the town for some time, on what is now known as Gaskell Avenue, and is buried in the Unitarian Chapel graveyard. Knutsford has a May Day custom of *sanding the streets* – decorating the streets in patterns using coloured sands.

Parish registers dating from 1581, and other documents, are held by Cheshire Archives. Images of the registers can be found on FindMyPast. The FHSC website shop sells MIs for Knutsford churches and Knutsford Cemetery.

More information about Knutsford can be found on the Genuki website at www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/CHS/Knutsford. Craig Thornber has photos of Knutsford at www.thornber.net/cheshire/htmlfiles/knutsford.html.