

CHESHIRE ANCESTOR



The Journal of the
Family History Society of Cheshire



In this edition:

A Question of Identity: Thompson or Osborne?
The Hutchinson Family's Court Cases: Maria's Case
Wearing Silver Buckles ❖ *Breaking Down a Brick Wall*
The Parson's Nose ❖ *Tarporley News* and more...

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Front cover photo: Done Room, High Street, Tarporley, Cheshire

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Tarporley Done Room from St Helen's churchyard. The building dates from 1636 and is Grade II listed. A tablet is inscribed *This School, erected in 1636 / by Dame Dorothy Done and / endowed by Mrs Jane Done in 1662 / was thoroughly repaired by the / Trustees under the Will of / John Arden Esq deceased in the / Year 1830.*



CHESHIRE ANCESTOR

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

Editor's Page

by Rosie Rowley



I'm sorry to say that I didn't receive many articles during the last three months so here's a request to please send in more!

I would just like to emphasise that the Net That Serf (NTS) section sometimes includes articles which are not particularly computer-related. In this issue are articles about using the 1911 census to help you find children who were born and died between censuses; reasons why you may not be able to find a death certificate; breaking down a 1700s brick wall; and a longer article with information and links for workhouse research which can be downloaded from the FHSC website. These items are in NTS because they were sent to Geoff Johnson, the NTS editor, and not to me. If you think that something you have written might be of general interest, rather than just for NTS readers, please send it to me so it can go into the main part of the ANCESTOR. I have included them on the main ANCESTOR contents page so that members who do not always read the NTS section won't miss these very useful and interesting articles.

The focus for this issue is Tarporley, which, along with Kelsall and Delamere, is the topic for the Cheshire Research Buddies meeting due to take place via Zoom at 2pm on Saturday 25th May. I found the 1873 newspaper report of a bigamy case (on page 41) particularly touching, the judge clearly having a great deal of sympathy for the woman who had been abandoned by her first husband.

Before the mid-19th century the only way of obtaining a full divorce which allowed re-marriage was by a Private Act of Parliament. Between 1700 and 1857 there were 314 such Acts, most of them initiated by husbands. Of course, this option was only available to the wealthy. The Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 moved divorce cases to a newly established civil court, the Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes; but hearings were in London and it was still an expensive option. Adultery was the sole ground for divorce, and wives had to prove other circumstances such as cruelty or desertion, as well as her husband's adultery, in order to obtain a divorce. Hence the woman in the newspaper report could not have obtained a divorce from her first husband even if she could afford it, as he had not committed adultery.

View from the Chair

by Margaret Roberts



I would like to thank everyone for the support and kind messages I have received since being elected as Chair. There is a significant amount of work ahead, and while it may seem challenging, I am eager to dive in and tackle it head-on. Members will find a full report on the 2023 AGM on page 13.

The programme of events provided by our local groups, the Seminar series, and the Cheshire Research Buddies meetings offer a range of topics. As Chair I take great pride in the extensive coverage of FHSC events, whether conducted in-person or via Zoom. The themes covered by the groups have included: *Slater's Chronicles*, *A Murder in Altrincham*, *Quarter Sessions*, *Goldsmith and Antiquarian Joseph Mayer*, *The Sale Blitz*, *Eyam the Plague Village*, *Ethics in Family History*, *Ratcatchers* and *Maritime Memorials of Merseyside*. These talks were supplemented by research evenings and sessions on using historical newspapers, finding alternative resources, researching surnames, and quizzes. The amount of work in bringing these events to you is enormous and huge thanks must go to group leaders.

The Cheshire Research Buddies meetings are great fun; the last few sessions concentrated on Sale, Knutsford and Middlewich. There are always local experts on hand to help with research so please come along and join a session that involves an area that you are interested in or have knowledge of. The list of the next few meetings can be found in the Events section.

The Seminar series covered a diverse range of topics such as *The Foundling Hospital at Chester*, a break-out room session on getting the most of out your research, and *Maternity Narratives* with Dr Sophie Kay, a synopsis of which can be found on page 28.

I am delighted to see the way the Focus Groups have been addressing the issues facing the Society and I am looking forward to receiving their full reports and recommendations in due course. My thanks to all members of the various groups for their hard work and diligence. These groups have been looking at the committee structure, the charitable status of FHSC, the local groups set-up, FHSC research centres and collaboration with Cheshire Archives and Local

Studies (CALs) regarding the new history centres in the county, the FHSC website, and analysing the recent survey. I have included a few lines about the work being carried out by each of the Focus Groups below.

The Committee Structure Focus Group has been concentrating on proposals relating to the clarification of roles within the Society, particularly the responsibilities of the Trustees, and the streamlining of decision-making structures. These proposals include the establishment of an elected Board of Trustees and a Management Committee to replace the current Executive Committee, but this would require changes to the existing Constitution.

The Research Centre/CALs group has been dedicated to exploring opportunities regarding collaboration with CALs at the upcoming archive centres in Crewe - already underway - and at Chester, along with various options for the future of the Mobberley Research Centre.

The focus group dedicated to examining the charitable status of FHSC has been deliberating on the Society's goals in this context. Simultaneously, the Local Groups focus group has conducted a survey among Group Leaders to establish key objectives. The focus group responsible for reviewing the website, which has undergone significant changes, is scheduled to meet once the survey results have been reported, incorporating ideas and suggestions from members.

With the survey in mind - and thank you to everyone who completed this - a wide range of responses have been received which were, on the whole, very positive about the efforts of the Society and its volunteers. Not surprisingly, there were several suggestions about areas of possible improvement, structurally and operationally. These will feed into the other focus group discussions to enhance the overall quality of the Society. The statistics collected by the survey may well be of interest to members and I have provided some key analyses below.

The length of membership duration shows that 28% of respondents have been members for between eleven and twenty years, 27% for more than twenty years, and 6% have joined us in the last year. Of those members who responded, 47% are members of other Family History Societies and 36% stated that they are members of other historical societies such as local history groups, U3A, One Name or One Place Studies. The question on how members record their research indicated that 34% use proprietary software such as Family Tree Maker and 29% use Ancestry or FindMyPast online trees, while 14% choose to save their work on their own computer system and 23% record their family history on paper.

When it came to our research centres and groups, 260 respondents have, over

Society News and Notices

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 (now known as X). Provided that you have given us your correct email address and permission to contact you, you should receive society news by email. Log in to the FHSC website to choose which emails you wish to receive.

Society Diary Dates

Below is a list of events and meetings planned at the time of going to press; for full details, or for changes to seminars and group meetings, please see the FHSC website or contact your local group (contact details inside back cover).

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
6-Mar	Runcorn Group	F: Workshop
11-Mar	Northwich Group	<i>Captain Benjamin: The Landlord of the Pub in the 'Failed Elopement'</i> by David Shaw
13-Mar	Sale Group	<i>Early Resources for the Family Historian</i> by Tony Bostock
18-Mar	Alsager Group	F: <i>Alsager Places</i> by Isobel Watson
19-Mar	Congleton Group	TBA
19-Mar	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	Z: <i>Sex, Sin and Probate: Church Court Records</i> by Colin Chapman
19-Mar	Wallasey Group	Z: <i>Saughall Massie, 1000 Years of a Wirral Hamlet</i> by Gillian Bolt
20-Mar	Society Seminar	Z: <i>Researching European Ancestors</i> by Julie Goucher
25-Mar	Bebington Group	<i>China Farm Story</i> by John Corfe
26-Mar	Macclesfield Grp	<i>Finding the Fifty Names Missing from Park Green War Memorial</i> by Harry Carlisle
28-Mar	Chester Group	<i>Estate and Manorial Records</i> by Gill Campbell
28-Mar	Tameside Group	<i>Maps and How they can Help</i> by Adrian Brown

30-Mar	Research Buddies	Z: <i>Wilmslow</i>
April	Tameside Group	TBC: Discovery Day in Tameside Local Studies Library
3-Apr	Runcorn Group	F: Workshop
8-Apr	Northwich Group	TBA
9-Apr	Crewe Group	F at Crewe: <i>From Farmland to Flight and Fight - the Story of Broughton Airfield</i> by Angela Jenkinson
10-Apr	Sale Group	<i>Those Eternal Bills</i> by Alan Hulme
15-Apr	Alsager Group	<i>Primitive Methodism</i> by Elizabeth Morris
16-Apr	Congleton Group	TBA
16-Apr	Wallasey Group	<i>Hobby or Obsession? Discover your Family History</i> by Heather Butler
17-Apr	Society Seminar	Z: <i>Apprentice Records</i> by Richard Holt
22-Apr	Bebington Group	<i>Merseyside and the Battle of Britain</i> by Gerry Williams
23-Apr	Macclesfield Grp	<i>Cheshire's Historic Houses</i> by Tony Bostock
25-Apr	Chester Group	<i>The Servants of Erddig</i> by Jill Burton
25-Apr	Tameside Group	<i>Two Years in a Siberian Gulag</i> by Frank Pleszak
27-Apr	Research Buddies	Z: <i>Tameside</i>
1-May	Runcorn Group	TBA
8-May	Sale Group	<i>A Walk Around Willow Grove Cemetery</i> by Sheila Robins
13-May	Northwich Group	TBA
15-May	Society Seminar	Z: <i>Using the Map Collections at the National Library of Scotland</i> by Chris Fleet
20-May	Alsager Group	<i>The Sandbach Caledonian Society</i> by Olivia Smedley
20-May	Bebington Group	<i>Wirral Pals</i> by Peter Threfall
21-May	Congleton Group	TBA
21-May	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	F at Crewe: <i>1914-18: Home Front during WWI</i> by Edward Hilditch
21-May	Wallasey Group	<i>Crossing the Mersey</i> by Gavin Hunter

23-May	Tameside Group	TBA: group members probably talking about the history of and dating old photographs
25-May	Research Buddies	Z: <i>Tarporley/Kelsall/Delamere</i>
28-May	Macclesfield Grp	<i>Tales from St Paul's Churchyard</i> by Dave Williams
30-May	Chester Group	<i>The History of Chester Station</i> by John Whittingham
5-Jun	Runcorn Group	TBA
10-Jun	Northwich Group	TBA
11-Jun	Crewe Group	F at Crewe: <i>The Striking Schoolchildren of Haslington</i> by Margaret Roberts
12-Jun	Sale Group	Open forum <i>discussing family name or location name variations</i>
17-Jun	Alsager Group	<i>Members' Memories</i>
18-Jun	Wallasey Group	<i>Watch the Birdie: Photographic Studios in Cheshire and Wirral in the mid-1800s</i> by Linda Clarke
19-Jun	Society Seminar	Z: <i>Tracing your Welsh Ancestry</i> by Gill Thomas
24-Jun	Bebington Group	<i>Fort Perch Rock</i> by Derek Arnold
25-Jun	Macclesfield Grp	<i>The Granelli Family in Macclesfield</i>
27-Jun	Chester Group	Open Meeting - <i>Family History Discoveries</i>
27-Jun	Tameside Group	Visit: to Woodhead Railway Industrial Heritage Museum at Guide Bridge Railway Station
29-Jun	Research Buddies	Z: <i>Bebington</i>

Tarporley News (2)

from the Chester Chronicle, 10 March 1923

MR AND MRS SAMUEL SHEEN, Alpraham Green, Tarporley, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding on Wednesday, February 28th. Married at Bunbury in 1863, they have 59 descendants living, 8 children, 34 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. Mr Sheen worked for the Duke of Westminster's grandfather at the Home Farm, when the late Duke was at Calveley Hall. He has been a farm labourer all his life, and attributes his longevity to hard work. He is now 84 and Mrs Sheen 83. They are both well and hearty except that Mr Sheen is deaf, but he can still walk to Tarporley and back, a distance of eight miles, and only gave up work two years ago. He still enjoys a smoke. Mr Sheen was born at Peckforton, and Mrs Sheen at Beeston. They have lived at Alpraham 59 years.

Group News and Information



For the latest news from the Society's groups, please see the FHSC website or contact the Group. You can receive emails from any group; log in to the FHSC website to choose which emails you wish to receive. Contact details for all groups are inside the back cover.

FHSC Seminars

By Margaret Spate, Jean Laidlaw and Margaret Roberts

These Zoom talks take place at 7.30pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. An email is sent out on the first day of each month with details of the talk and how to register.

PLEASE NOTE - we do not record Seminar talks for later viewing.

Cheshire Research Buddies

By Margaret Roberts

Our online helpdesk 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 to talk to other members with local knowledge. Please check the topic each month and join us

if you have local knowledge or a query.

Register for Seminars and Buddies meetings on the FHSC website. Log in, click on *Events* on the left-hand menu, find the event you want, then click the *Register [Individual]* button at the bottom left of the event details.

Alsager Group

By Hazel Rugman

January and February meetings are held online via Zoom. Other meetings are usually held at 7.30pm on the 3rd Monday of the month (except August and December) at Alsager Library, Sandbach Road North, ST7 2QH. Admission is £1 for members and £2 for visitors, including refreshments. A large car park is available at the rear.

Bebington Group

By Bob Wright

Winter meetings are held online via Zoom. Summer meetings are usually held at 7.30pm on the 4th Monday of the month (excluding Bank Holidays) at St Barnabas Village Institute, Church Square, Bromborough, CH62 6AH. Admission is £2 including refreshments.

Chester Group

By Helen Elliott

Meetings are usually held on the last Thursday of the month in the Pavilion, Wealstone Lane, Upton by Chester, Chester CH2 1HD. Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. Admission is £2 for members and £3 for visitors, including refreshments. On site car parking is available.

Computer Club

Meetings are held online via Zoom at 7.30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, and are open to all members. The subject of each meeting is usually announced the week before, by email or on the Club's Events page on the FHSC website. The club also has some sub-groups which meet via Zoom:
Family History Recording & Publishing: 2.30pm, last Monday of the month
DNA: 7.30pm, 4th Monday
Family Historian: 7.30pm, 3rd Thursday
Family Tree Maker: quarterly, 7.30pm, 4th Wednesday
Mac & Reunion: 2pm, 3rd Monday
Online Newspapers: 2.30pm, 1st Friday
For information or to join, please email computerclub@fhsc.org.uk.

Congleton Group

By David Smetham

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

Crewe Group

By Margaret Spate

Crewe and Nantwich Groups will continue with our programme of meetings in one of three formats - Zoom, Face to Face (F2F), or Hybrid (a F2F meeting which can also be accessed via Zoom for those unable to attend in person).

ZOOM Crewe/Nantwich Joint Meetings open at 7.15pm and start at 7.30pm. Please register each month for the Zoom meetings - send an email to crewe@fhsc.org.uk in good time before the meeting. Please do not leave it to the last minute before you register.

Crewe 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 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. Admission is £2 for members and £3 for visitors, including refreshments. Nearby parking (free after 6pm) at the adjacent Victoria Centre Car Park, Crewe CW1 2PT.

Crewe Family History Unit

Please see the FHSC website or elsewhere in this issue for information about the Society's research facilities.

Macclesfield Group

By Dennis Whyte

Meetings are usually held 7.30pm–9.00pm on the 4th Tuesday of the month at The Salvation Army Church, Roe Street, Macclesfield, SK11 6UT, opposite Churchill Way car park in the centre of Macclesfield. Admission is £2 for members and £3 for visitors. We usually replace the July meeting with a visit to a church, archive or other location of interest, and there is no meeting in December.

Nantwich Group

By Sheila Mitchell

Crewe and Nantwich Groups will continue with our programme of joint meetings – please see the Crewe section for details. Nantwich Group's F2F meetings are usually held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Nantwich Parish Rooms (ground floor), opposite St Mary's Church in the centre of Nantwich. Doors open at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. Admission is £2 for members and £3 for visitors. Parking is available nearby.

Nantwich Group Helpdesk

We meet once a month on Monday afternoons on the first floor of Nantwich Library. A lift is available. Anyone who has a query, has hit a brick wall or wants to start their family tree is most welcome.

The library holds local records such as parish registers, newspapers, and reference books, plus free access to

FindMyPast and Ancestry.

Helpdesk meetings will be held on 25th March, 29th April, 20th May and 24th June.

Northwich Group

By Dave Thomas

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 visitors are most welcome. Car parking available.

Runcorn Group

By John Barlow

Meetings are usually held on the 1st Wednesday of the month (except January), starting at 7pm, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Clifton Road West, Runcorn WA7 4TE.

Visitors are most welcome.

Sale Group

By Marion Hall

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

Tameside Group

By Gay Oliver

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

Tameside Group Helpdesks

We hold a helpdesk on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at Tameside Local Studies and Archives Library to help anyone who is stuck or who wants to start their family history research.

Wallasey Group

By Dave Beck

In summer, face-to-face meetings are held from April to September at 7.30pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Wallasey Central Library,

Earlston Road, CH45 5DX. Enter via the small car park to the right of the main building.

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

Wallasey Group Helpdesks

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 Help Desks we are able to give individual help with family history research. All members and non-members are welcome.

Society Vacancies

The society is seeking volunteers for the following posts:

Social Media/Publicity Officer(s)

As Margaret Roberts is now the society Chair we are looking for one or two volunteers to take over the Social Media and Publicity roles she previously held. Margaret is continuing to carry out these roles until replacements can be found. **For information or an informal chat, please contact Margaret Roberts (chair@fhsc.org.uk)**

Book/CD Sales Officer

A volunteer is needed to manage our book and CD sales. David Smetham is fulfilling sales until we find a replacement volunteer.

For information, please contact David Smetham (book.sales@fhsc.org.uk)

Society Treasurer

The Treasurer's five-year term of office came to an end at the AGM in October 2023 and although David Smetham has agreed to continue in the post for one more year we do need a replacement to take over the position this October.

For information, please contact the current postholder, David Smetham (treasurer@fhsc.org.uk)

2023 AGM Reports

*by Sheila Jones
Honorary Secretary*

The following reports were presented at the 54th Annual General Meeting of the Family History Society of Cheshire, held online on Saturday 28th October 2023 via Zoom. Full reports and minutes are available on the FHSC website at www.fhsc.org.uk/agm-documents/agm-2023.html.

Treasurer's Report by *David Smetham*

Our books have been prepared by Heywood Shepherd.

Our financial year 2022-23 was a time of recovery following the pandemic. Our on-line delivery of benefits to members continued. Financial commitments, including delivery of 4 issues of *The Ancestor* and rental for our use of the Rajar Building in Mobberley, continued. Groups received their allocations to deliver online and face-to-face talks. Our investments summary at end June 2023:

£30,655.40 invested for 2 years at 4.15%, 5 December 2022 Hampshire Trust (matures 5 December 2024).

£52,277.64 re-invested for 2 years at 4.2%, 10 June 2023 Hampshire Trust (matures 10 June 2025).

Our balance in our Santander accounts at 30 June 2023:

Current account £4,182.90

Business Savings £20,644.39

The consolidated accounts (Income and Expenditure) for the year ending 30 June 2023 show a deficit for the year of £10,562. Last year we had a deficit of £3009.

Cash in the bank and invested for the Society and Groups consolidated accounts at the end of June 2023 was £158,732. The balance in our Paypal account at end of June 2023 was £3826.98, this was mainly the balance of advance membership subscriptions for the year 2023-24. Sales income from our online shop via Paypal for the year ending 30 June was £1119.75 (last year £966.16). Publication sales via Genfair generated an income of £118.21 (last year £241.67), promotion of these sales is low key with no new titles added. Total sales of books and CDs was £176.

The 13 groups are financially viable, total funds held by Groups is £47,758 compared to £45,954 at the end of June 2022. The Group Allocation for 2022-

2023 was £500 to each group, with the exception of the Computer Group, no allocation.

The remainder of this report applies only to the 'central' funds.

Income for the year is £30,417 compared to £30,445 in 2022, gift aid in the year 21-22 and 22-23 was not claimed pending a review of operations. Income from Mobberley has been recovering. Subscription income is similar to 2021-22, well done everyone. Expenditure is £39,836 compared to £36,073 last year. This increase is general but noticeably increases in printing and postage costs for Ancestor, Membership expenses (Seminars) and investment in the Website. Expenditure also includes writing down the value of our book stock in the book and CD shop, £1175, similar to £1200 in 2021-22.

A change in membership fee is not appropriate at this time, however, the option should remain open for discussion next year.

The independently examined accounts are available by request to the Treasurer, they have been deposited online and can be accessed on our website.

I would like to thank our accountants Heywood Shepherd for their work on behalf of the Society. I would also like to thank our Group Treasurers for their work in delivering the Group accounts.

Secretary's Report by *Sheila Jones*

In accordance with the changes to the Society's Constitution approved at the 2021 Annual General Meeting, the Executive Committee has continued to meet online as this is more convenient for a committee that draws its members from all parts of the historic County of Cheshire. The Committee has held three meetings. The Group Leaders' meetings, which deal with matters pertinent to Group activities, have also met online. The Future Strategies Group met on one occasion, following which a number of Focus Groups were established (see below).

Mobberley and Crewe Research Centres have fully re-opened; visitor numbers are closer now to pre-pandemic levels. The Society is grateful to the volunteers who help run these Research Centres, helping both members and visitors.

Whilst, sadly, this year saw the closure of the Bramhall Group because of a lack of volunteers to run it, the remaining thirteen local Groups continue to run meetings. Following on from developments during the pandemic, some Groups have chosen to offer some of their meetings through Zoom or as hybrid meetings which has allowed out of area members opportunities to engage with Groups in areas of the county of interest to them or to attend virtually talks of particular interest to them. Where face-to-face meetings have been run, Groups have

reported that these have been welcomed by those who missed the social interaction with fellow members during the pandemic, although the numbers attending have unfortunately decreased a little and some Groups have had to change venues for various reasons. The Computer Group has continued to run all of its activities online, covering a wide variety of topics both through the main Group and through a number of sub-groups.

Of particular note has been the acclaim for the Society's Seminar Series. This has attracted some eminent speakers from the national scene as well as Cheshire-based speakers who have been impressed by their organisation and attendances, which frequently are close to 100 members. They are particularly valued by members who are out of county or even overseas and unable to attend the local Group meetings face-to-face. Credit must be given to Margaret Roberts, Margaret Spate and Jean Laidlaw for their hard work in setting up and running these seminars. In addition, this year has seen the set up of a new series of Cheshire Research Buddies sessions, aimed at bringing together online members with an interest in a particular area of the County, regardless of where they themselves are based. This fosters the sharing of knowledge about the area and offers of assistance as well as encouraging more interaction between members and, it is hoped, a better sense of 'belonging' for those who are not local.

We are pleased with the very positive feedback which is received in relation to the publication of the Cheshire Ancestor. Rosie Rowley continues to do an outstanding job in producing this to such a high standard and we are delighted that Rob Marshall has recently volunteered to help as her Editorial Assistant. Rosie is always on the lookout for contributions to the Ancestor particularly for longer articles and Geoff Johnson equally welcomes contributions for the Net that Serf section. Geoff's additional work to produce and distribute the digital version of the publication is also much valued, together with Angela Moore's distribution of printed copies.

The Society's Facebook page and Twitter feed now both have more than 1,000 followers, with a wider appeal than just to members of the Society given the informative and interesting postings to both shared by Margaret Roberts. Both Margaret and Gay Oliver also keep members informed with the monthly newsletter, whose link is sent to all members who have provided the Society with a valid email address; members who receive this but do not currently download it are encouraged to do so to keep up to date with everything on offer to them, including details of the monthly seminar series and forthcoming Local Group meetings.

The range of downloads for sale in the online shop continues to expand.

Digitisation is done by Peter Davenport with David Smetham and Joan Irving carrying out the necessary checks before products go on sale.

The Society has had a virtual presence at the various online Family History Shows and events that have taken place this year as well as a face-to-face presence at others. This is another source of publicity for the Society and provides an opportunity to recruit new members. David Smetham continues to represent the Society at North West Group and Margaret Roberts continues as a trustee of the Family History Federation.

Membership numbers (1322) have remained similar to those of last year, which is pleasing after a previous decline and the Society thanks Kevin Dean and Angela Moore for their endeavours to help members join or renew as easily as possible. In order to ensure that the Society continues to meet the needs of all its members, whether local or further afield as well as be attractive to potential new members, a major strategic review has been launched this year, operating through a number of different Focus Groups (Charitable Status, Committee Structure, Local Groups, Research Centres/CALS, Services and Website). A call went out to all members of the Society inviting volunteers to join these Groups and 33 individuals came forward, of whom 22 are not current members of the Society's Executive Committee. Whilst the deliberations of these Groups is still at an early stage, it is hoped that their work will enable the Society to update and better stream its offerings and to engage more meaningfully with all members going forward. The work will also help clarify what key roles the Society needs to ensure are covered by volunteers to support its governance and operations; the Society appreciates the work undertaken currently by its Group Leaders, Research Centre volunteers and its Executive Committee members and would encourage anyone else who feels that they may be able to offer support of whatever variety to make contact.

Finally, as I complete my first year in the role of Secretary of FHSC, I would like to thank my fellow Executive Committee members for bearing with me during what has been something of a steep learning curve – but, nevertheless, a very enjoyable and worthwhile one. My particular thanks go to Alan Bennett, David Smetham, Margaret Roberts and Gay Oliver for their patient support and advice!

Brief Report of AGM Proceedings by Sheila Jones, Honorary Secretary.

The Annual General Meeting was preceded by a talk from Peter Higginbottom on *The History of the Workhouse*. This well-researched talk, with plenty of Cheshire examples, covered the history of the Poor Law, entry and discharge procedures, classification and segregation, work, medical facilities and related records.

The Annual General Meeting

Election of Officers

- *Margaret Roberts*, nominated by Geoff Johnson and Angela Moore, was elected as Chair.
- *Sheila Jones*, nominated by Kevin Dean and Margaret Roberts, was re-elected as Honorary Secretary.
- *David Smetham*, Honorary Treasurer, had expressed his willingness to continue in post for a further twelve months if there was no nomination for the role of Honorary Treasurer. No nominations having been received, David Smetham was elected Honorary Treasurer for a further year.

Following her election as Chair, Margaret Roberts thanked Alan Bennett for his previous leadership of the Society. She noted the ongoing work to review the operations of the Society through a number of Focus Groups. The Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary presented their reports.

The motion to retain Messrs. Heywood Shepherd as Independent Examiners for 2023-2024 was carried.

A proposal that a summary of the minutes of any meeting of the Executive Committee (referred and of the Trustees be made available to the general membership of the Society within one month of any such meeting taking place was carried.

Any Other Business

Structure of the Society: Whilst it was noted that the structure of the Society was specified in its Constitution, a number of members suggested that the Website Focus Group, when it was in a position to meet, should consider making details of the governance of the Society easier to find on the website.

Publicity and Social Media Officer: it was noted that there would be a vacancy for this post given the appointment of Margaret Roberts as Chair, although she indicated that she would cover the role in the interim.

Focus Group recommendations: it was confirmed that recommendations from the Focus Groups would be considered by the Executive Committee (and reported in the summary of minutes as noted above). It was not proposed that these recommendations would be presented to members for comment except where they resulted in proposals for changes to the Constitution.

Members' FREE Research Lookup Service

Note that this is a free service for members only, and is subject to the time available to volunteers.

We will search our research resources (held at the Mobberley Research Centre) 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.

Lists of the resources held at Mobberley can be found on the FHSC website at *Research Centres > Mobberley Research Centre > Mobberley Holdings*

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**
Sorry, this option is not available at present while the website is being updated.
- **By post**
Please include your name, membership number, contact details and a correctly stamped, addressed envelope (at least C5 size - 162mm x 229mm).
Send to:
Family History Society of Cheshire Lookup Service, Mobberley Research Centre, Rajar Building, Town Lane, Mobberley, Cheshire, WA16 7ER.

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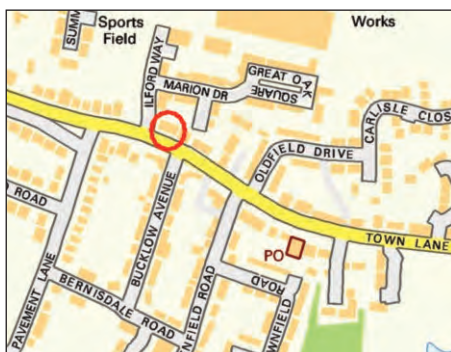
Research Centre News

Manned by experienced volunteers, visitors can obtain help and advice on family and local history research. Please see the FHSC website for holdings and up-to-date news about changes to opening hours, etc. If in doubt, please phone before visiting to ensure the centre is open and a computer/film reader is available.

MOBBERLEY FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH CENTRE

Rajar Building, Town Lane, Mobberley, WA16 7ER

Tel: 01565 872210



The Rajar Building is on the corner of Town Lane (A5085) and Ilford Way. The entrance is at the front on Town Lane, and the Research Centre is on the first floor (stairs only, sorry, no lift). Parking is on nearby streets. There is a bus stop nearby (Bucklow Avenue) for D&G Bus No. 88. See www.dgbus.co.uk

FREE access to *FindMyPast*, *Ancestry* and *The Genealogist*
Extensive library of books and films/fiche for many areas, not just Cheshire
Searchable computer archives * Small charge for printing/copying
Fiche/film scanning available

*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.
Please ring to check we are open before travelling if the weather is bad.**

Daily admission charge £3 for members, £5 for non-members (refundable on joining the Society on day of visit), including FREE tea or coffee.

Non-members should please phone in advance to book a place.

Mobberley Research Centre News

by Joan Irving
librarian@fhsc.org.uk



Once again our Duty Volunteers are ready to help with your research - or you can just come along to use our many resources. We are open as usual 10am-4pm on every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month, except for bank holiday closure periods (check on the website for details). An excellent baker's shop across the road sells sandwiches, pies and cakes.

Recently, Adlington Hall, a beautiful old country house near Macclesfield, was put up for sale at £30 million. Grade 1 listed, the Great Hall dates back to 1480-1505 with the East Wing added in 1581. The LEGH family had owned it for centuries and it had been a Royalist Garrison during the English Civil War. The estate of 1.97 hectares includes the Hall, gardens, six tenant farms and twenty-eight residential properties including ten period mews houses, the Gate Lodge, Kennel Cottage and the Hunting Lodge, a popular wedding venue. The estate includes stone quarries at Styperson and Breck, and coal was extracted from several pits and shafts around the estate. The coal seam was not as deep as that at nearby Poynton, so the pits were soon exhausted. Colliers worked at Engine Pit, Star Pit, Stage Pit, Bye Pit and many others over the years.



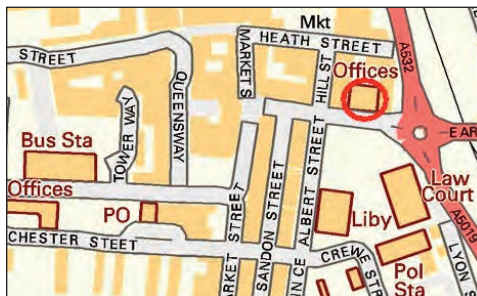
*Adlington Hall cc-by-sa/2.0 © Colin Park
geograph.org.uk/p/6461149*

We have Adlington Hall Archive Listings at Mobberley and they include some details of leases, deeds, mortgages, tithes, estate records, estate vouchers, estate surveys and Manor Court Suit Rolls. The names of tenants, farm workers, colliers and quarrymen are also listed. Paper copies of the archive DLA 1-DLA 51 can be found at CH/P 818 with other listings on the library laptop. Copyright restrictions mean these listings are only available at Mobberley. If you have ancestors who lived or worked in the Adlington area, these archives are certainly worth a look.

I visited the Hall several times pre-Covid to look at the archives whilst they were being catalogued. We must hope they will still be available for researchers to access when the sale of the Hall goes through.

CREWE FAMILY HISTORY UNIT

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



The Municipal Building is situated near the market, opposite Memorial Square and the old library. Crewe Register Office is in the same building. All visitors must sign in and out at reception. A lift is available to take you to the 2nd floor.

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 (see website for date)

We recommend arriving no later than 3pm. For Saturday dates and changes to usual opening hours, please see the FHSC website.

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.

Crewe Family History Unit News

by Margaret Spate
crewe@fhsc.org.uk

New acquisitions are being catalogued as volunteers continue to work on indexes and scanning of local images.

The first stage of *Buried in Crewe* - a transcription of Crewe Cemetery records - is now complete, due to transcribers and checkers continuing to work on this remotely during the pandemic. An event is being planned to bring all of these transcribers together so that we can formally show our thanks for their work over

the last six years. Buried in Crewe will eventually be available to view at our research centres.

During 2023, many new records have been added to *The Genealogist* website, including Lloyd George 1910 Domesday Survey records, criminal records, and occupational records. Both research centres provide access to the Diamond Edition of *The Genealogist*; this is an additional resource that is not available in most public libraries.

Thanks for the support and visits; there is still scope for more visitors to come along and explore the resources that we have.

Surname Interests

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

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

These names were added between 29 October 2023 and 30 January 2024:

BAILEY, BALDWIN, BENNETT, BLOOR, BOWYER, BRADSHAW, BRUNSKILL,
BUTLER/BUTTLE

CHARLESWORTH, CHESWORTH, CLEWS/CLOWES, CRITCHLEY, CRITCHLOW

DARBYSHIRE/DERBYSHIRE, DAVENPORT, DOWNS

EATON, EDWARDS, GALLEY

HARESCOUGH, HAVENHAND, HOLDCROFT, HOLLAND,
HOLLINGWORTH/HOLLINGSWORTH, HOLT, HOOD, HOUGHTON

JACKSON, JONES, LAMOND/LAMMOND, LAMONT, LOMAS

MORRIS, NADIN

PENNINGTON, PRITCHARD

SALMON, SHAW, SIMS, SKELHORN/SKELHORNE, STANLEY

TASKER, TAYLOR, UNDERWOOD

WEIGH, WOODWARD

Letter 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.

CHESHIRE ANCESTOR, December 2023

Having read this edition the other evening, may I say that it gave particular pleasure this time. There were several particularly well written articles and lots of interesting items.

Particularly amused by Peter Lee on *William Warrington* (pp. 28-29, 42-44) – online trees are such good guides, but far too often contain rubbish. Obviously they are an easy way for people to record their research, but public trees are automatically published with sometimes no regard for veracity and for the strangers that read them and think that anything printed must be right!

Who Else is Named in That Will struck a personal chord. My principal Cheshire interest is the Holland family of Mobberley and Knutsford. I knew that William Holland from Manchester bought John Strettle's house at Mobberley in 1650, later known as Dam Head (see bottom of page 31). And we are not far from the Severn Valley Railway (see page 35).

So, thank you.

Richard Renold.

Tarporley News (3)

from the Chester Chronicle, 31 May 1873

TO PARISH CLERKS AND OTHERS. TEN SHILLINGS REWARD.

Wanted a Copy of the Certificate of Marriage of SAMUEL WALLEY, late of Spurstow or Tarporley, with ESTHER NEWTON, of Tarporley. Believed to have been married at Chester between the years 1818 and 1830. Information to be given to Mr WH CHURTON, Solicitor, Chester.

Book Review

by Joan Irving

My Ancestors and their Relatives, privately published by American researcher Edwin Upton, was recently donated by the author to Mobberley Research Centre.

Edwin UPTON's family lived in Macclesfield and Prestbury from the sixteenth century until the late nineteenth century, when in April 1892 Joseph UPTON emigrated to the USA, settling in Paterson, New Jersey. He was followed by his wife Margaret and their two sons, who left for the USA in November that year.

Macclesfield was famous for its silk industry and many of the UPTON family were employed as weavers, winders and overlookers. However, after a free trade agreement with France in 1860, there was a slump in the industry. Silk workers began to emigrate to Paterson, New Jersey as John RYLE and James MAYER had set up silk mills in 1846 in the town of Paterson and they had family links with Macclesfield. By 1865 they were attracting silk workers from Macclesfield and beyond, and by 1890 an estimated 3,000 people had moved to America, with Paterson becoming the leading silk manufacturing town in that country - in fact, it became known as a miniature Macclesfield. The Macclesfield Silk Workers Union had been offering their members some free passage to Paterson. Joseph UPTON arrived in the heyday of the Paterson Silk Industry.

A large portion of the book is the story of the American UPTONs and their families but there is reference to the earlier family members in Macclesfield. However, it is not a clear picture of the UPTON family in Macclesfield. Joseph UPTON's father Edwin was the illegitimate son of Mary Poyser UPTON (1806-1888). Mary had married Samuel Turner UPTON, son of Richard and Mary, in 1836 but he had died in 1837 aged 27. Edwin was born in 1844 so potentially a dead end on his father's side. However, DNA tests prove a link to the earlier UPTONs. It's possible Edwin was fathered by John UPTON, also a son of Richard and Mary UPTON, but this has not been proved. However there are definite DNA links to Lawrence UPTON (1690-1774). Probably as more relatives take a DNA test it will become more obvious who fathered Edwin UPTON in 1844.

My Ancestors and their Relatives is an interesting family history, easy to read, with a lot of good photos and illustrations. There is plenty of background information of their life in America and many family memories to enhance the story of the UPTON family.

Family History Events

For news of family history events, see these online calendars

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

East Anglia Family History Federation Really Useful Family History Show - Live!

Saturday 20th April 2024

Burgess Hall, Westwood Road, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, PE27 6WU
In-Person Event - Free Entry & Onsite Parking - Speakers - Exhibitors
www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/2024-live

Secrets of the National Archives: The Index of Suffragettes Arrested (Zoom)

2pm Friday 15th March 2024

Free of charge, donations welcome

Booking essential at www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/secrets-of-the-national-archives-the-index-of-suffragettes-arrested-tickets-602461046207

East Midlands Family History Federation Really Useful Family History Show - Live!

Saturday 15th June 2024

University of Nottingham, Kings Meadow Campus, Lenton Lane, NG7 2NR
In-Person Event - Free Entry & Onsite Parking - Speakers - Exhibitors
<https://nottsfhs.org/east-midlands-fhf-really-useful-family-history-show/>
www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/2024-live

The Family History Show

Sat 22nd June 2024

Knavesmire Centre, York Racecourse, YO23 1EX
Ask the Experts - Talks - Exhibitors - Archives
Tickets available at TheFamilyHistoryShow.com

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.

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.

Derbyshire Non-Conformist Births & Baptisms

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/derbyshire-births-and-baptisms>

Covering the period from 1760 to 1966, 13,932 Derbyshire baptism records from non-conformist churches have been added as transcriptions.

Manchester Electoral Registers

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/greater-manchester-electoral-registers-1820-1940>

Covering the period from 1820 to 1940, this exclusive set contains 25,066,154 electoral register records from the city of Manchester and includes both transcriptions and images. While women did not have the right to vote in parliamentary elections until 1918, many were permitted to participate in local government elections because they were landowners. The Representation of the People Act granted the right to vote in all elections to all women over the age of 30 who met the minimum property requirements, and abolished almost all property requirements for men. It wasn't until 1928 that universal suffrage was awarded to all individuals aged 21 and older.

British Army Service Records, South Wales Borderers

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/british-army-service-records>

Covering the 1890s and the year 1915, 698 new transcriptions from the South Wales Borderers line infantry regiment have been added. The information contained within these service records varies depending on the document type, from pensioners' discharges to medical records; the document type is listed on each transcript.

Wirral Archives: Temporary Closure

Wirral Archives will be closed to the public from 19 February until 5 April 2024 inclusive. This temporary closure is to facilitate the relocation of other council teams from the Cheshire Lines Building and to ensure visitors are kept safe while the move is underway. Check the website for the latest news:

www.wirral.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/wirral-archives-service

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, Post Office Pension and Gratuity Records, 1860-1970

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62452/

This collection contains pension records from the Royal Mail service in the United Kingdom between 1860 and 1970. All civil servants began receiving pensions in 1810, including postal workers. Pensions were granted to civil servants who served for ten years or more upon reaching retirement age or needing to retire for medical reasons. Gratuities were benefits paid prior to retirement. If a person died while working for Royal Mail, a gratuity was paid to their next of kin. Marriage gratuities were paid to women employed by the civil service who were forced to retire upon marriage, a practice that wouldn't be abolished until 1946 for the Home Civil Service and 1973 for the Foreign Civil Service. The Post Office Act 1969 saw the Post Office become a public corporation, and its staff were no longer considered civil servants.

UK, Officers' Birth Certificates, Wills and Personal Papers, 1755-1908

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62614/

This collection contains documents used to legally prove the pension claims of deceased or disabled officers in the British Military between 1755 and 1908. Documents may include wills, pension records, records of birth, baptism, marriage, and death. After a British army officer's death, family members could petition the War Office for his pension claim. Usually, the officer's widow made the petition; claims could also be made on behalf of the officer's children.

Ireland, Wills and Admons, 1515-1858

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62773/

This is an index housed by the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. The original documents referred to in this index may or may not exist.

Talk Review: Keeping Mum - Maternity Narratives and Your Family History

by Margaret Roberts, Chair

In December Dr Sophie Kay made a welcome return to the Seminar series, this time to talk to us about maternity narratives and the reproductive stories of our female ancestors.

Keeping Mum drew our attention to the challenges of researching and understanding the maternal identities of our female ancestors, particularly in relation to pregnancy losses such as miscarriages and stillbirths. Sophie emphasized the importance of considering the many unspoken stories of loss, not reflected in official records, by encouraging us to go beyond the concrete evident provided by live births as recorded in parish records, birth certificates, and census returns. The historical silence on pregnancy loss perpetuates the isolation and silencing of women: therefore, we need to explore the gaps between live births by 'holding a space or gap' in our family history narrative for our ancestors' potential losses and struggles.

While we need to be mindful not to compromise the integrity of our research by adopting unproven speculation as fact, on the other hand there is a value in acknowledging that uncertainties and unknowns exist, even if we can't prove them. Holding a gap shows compassion and avoids reducing women to their outward identities by offering a reductive, more empathic understanding of their lives and of womanhood.

Sophie delved into the historical experiences of pregnancy loss, noting that emotions following such events varied, including grief, frustration, resignation, relief, and joy. Parental bereavement due to miscarriage or stillbirth may well have been more prevalent in times gone by, but this doesn't mean that parents were any less anguished or that the children were quickly forgotten.

Official documents only reveal part of the story; to understand the inner emotional realities, we need to look for more personal sources such as diaries, letters, and newspaper announcements. The definition and historical aspects of stillbirth are vague and difficult to estimate, especially before formal registration systems were introduced. Surviving examples from personal writing tend to be skewed towards the middle classes, where miscarriages were frequently couched

in other terms including *indisposed*, *unwell*, or *sick* – terms which make it difficult to differentiate from other medical issues.

Creating a birth or fertility timeline is a practical method for visualising and highlighting the gaps that may suggest a miscarriage or stillbirth. Critical appraisal of birth data can help us to explore a woman's childbearing years, by using a timeline where the numbers along the axis represent the age of the woman when her children were born, rather than the year of birth, highlighting what Sophie referred to as *fertility gaps*. Such a fertility timeline directs attention on the 15 to 45 age range, that of *peak fertility*, with births falling well outside these ages requiring closer analysis. For earlier time periods, before easily available and widespread contraception, large families were commonplace, and we may expect to see children spaced around 1–2 years apart.

The example of a fertility timeline that Sophie presented was of Mary ALDERSLEY who had seven recorded live births. However, her timeline highlighted a six-year gap between her two main clusters of births, and a four-year gap before a birth well outside her child-bearing years. The regular pattern of births suggest that the couple had little trouble conceiving, but what could be the cause of the large gaps? Several reasons were suggested, including: a live birth followed by a death between census years, miscarriage, stillbirths, or sexual abstinence for many reasons. No matter what the reason, once the possible explanations for birth gaps are identified they need investigating.

While the census is an excellent resource, you cannot rely solely on that information to understand a family. Census data needs to be triangulated using a range of other resources to support and verify facts, as well as reveal evidence beyond its reach. Potential fertility gaps can be followed up using by civil registration records of births and deaths and parish baptism and burial records, which will show exact birth dates. It's also worth exploring memorial plaques and monuments, mentions of stillborn burials in church registers, family bible notes, newspaper entries and, as previously mentioned, personal journals and letters.

Sophie concluded by emphasising the importance of acknowledging and confronting uncertainties, being prepared for a lack of conclusive evidence to verify or refute your assumptions and holding space for the unknown in your genealogical narrative. A more nuanced and compassionate approach to understanding maternal identities and recognising that experiences extend well beyond the visible records, offer us a chance to take a seat alongside our female forebears and regard them with compassion.

Further Reading

Ed.: Please see also the article on page 59 of this issue.

Felicity Jenz, *Miscarriage and Coping in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Private Notes from Distant Places* *Gender & History* (2020)

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/1468-0424.12478>

Lynne Vallone, *Fertility, Childhood, and Death in the Victorian Family* (Review). *Victorian Literature & Culture* (2000). www.jstor.org/stable/25058500

Robert Woods, *Late-Fetal Mortality: Historical Perspectives on Continuing Problems of Estimation and Interpretation*. *Population* (2008)

www.jstor.org/stable/27736123

London Pulse Project. *Infant and Child Mortality* (2016).

<https://londonpulse.org/2016/05/02/infantandchildmortality/>

Jennifer Evans & Sara Reid, 'Before Midnight She Had Miscarried': Women, Men, and Miscarriage in Early Modern England. *Journal of Family History* (2014). PDF download from <https://tinyurl.com/k36ja8f>

Lucy Allen-Goss, *Women's Reproductive Dysfunctions: Miscarriage, Abortion, Stillbirth and Infertility in Medieval England*.

<https://readingmedievalbooks.wordpress.com/womens-reproductive-dysfunctions-miscarriage-abortion-stillbirth-and-infertility-in-medieval-england/>

Margaret Sanger, *Motherhood in Bondage* (1928). Available on the Internet Archive at https://archive.org/details/isbn_9781881780243

E. A. Wrigley, *Explaining the Rise in Marital Fertility in England in the 'Long' Eighteenth Century* (1981). www.jstor.org/stable/2598944

Tarporley News (4)

from the Cheshire Observer, 29 March 1873

THE REV CANON KINGSLEY – Universal regret has been caused in Chester by the receipt of the intelligence that the Rev Charles Kingsley has accepted the late Canon Nepean's stall at Westminster, and that his connection with the Chapter of Chester Cathedral, as one of its four Residentiary Canons will... be severed in a few days. Canon Kingsley was the originator of the Chester Natural Science Society... It is well-known that he has written several valuable works.... Canon Kingsley is the representative of an ancient family of Cheshire – the Kingsleys of Kingsley, adjoining Delamere Forest. He was born on the borders of Dartmoor, Devon, June 12, 1819.

Ed.: Kingsley is famous for having written several books including Westward Ho! (1855) and The Water Babies (1863), which illustrates his concern for social reform.

George Allen Hodgkinson in WWI

by Mike Hodgkinson
Runcorn Group

An email from FHSC reminded me that all of FindMyPast, apart from the 1921 census, was accessible free during the Remembrance weekend. Within ten minutes of reading the email, I found the attached article which gives information about my grandfather George Allen HODGKINSON in WWI. Until I read this article in the *Leek Times*, dated 1 May 1915, all I knew was that he had been wounded.

LEEK SOLDIER WOUNDED FIGHTING IN TRENCHES ONLY FIVE YARDS FROM THE GERMANS

Mrs. Hodgkinson, of 67, Grosvenor Street, Leek has received an intimation from the Field Hospital Chaplain, that her son, Private George Allen Hodgkinson had been wounded whilst fighting in the trenches, on April 17th.

Private Hodgkinson, who is 21 years of age, joined the 2nd Battalion East Surrey Regiment, along with his brother, Private Gilbert Hodgkinson, who has also been wounded, on 7th of September, 1914 and left Leek on the following day. On February 23rd, they were drafted from Kitchener's Army into the Regulars owing to their dexterity with the rifle, and went to France. George Allen had been in several fierce bayonet charges, and in the trenches on one occasion was only five yards from the Germans. The following is the letter which Mrs Hodgkinson received from the Army Chaplain of the field hospital:-

Dear Mrs Hodgkinson.- Your son Allen asks me as Chaplain to write to tell you that he is in hospital, having been wounded by bullets. The wounds, are however, not very serious and he is going on well and will be sent down today or tomorrow to a base hospital. He will let you hear from there as soon as possible and tell you where to write to. He is being well looked after and is cheerful. He sends his love to you all. There is no need to be anxious. I am yours truly, M BUCHANON.

On Monday morning Mrs Hodgkinson had a card from her son George Allen in which he said he hoped to be in England soon. On Wednesday a letter was received from Private Gilbert Hodgkinson which shows that he has evidently been in some heavy fighting. He says: "Just a few lines to say that we have both been wounded: Allen on Tuesday night and myself on Tuesday afternoon and we shall soon be alright again.

We have been in the trenches 7 days and were shelled very heavily most of the time. The Germans used poisonous gases and on Sunday afternoon they charged and broke through. We captured about forty of them and finished the rest off. I got mine just at the close of battle. I have been in several towns since and am in -- -- now. I am leaving shortly. Yours Gilbert.”

During his convalescence, George Allen HODGKINSON met his future wife and named his only son Gilbert.

The 1921 Census - Filling in the WWI Gaps

by Alistair Macleod

In 2014 I researched as many as I could of the men with links to Mobberley who served in the Great War using the sources available and known to me at that time. These included the census records up to 1911, Births and Marriages in the Parish records, Military Service and Medal records that had survived (and were available online) and information from descendants of families still in the village.

We didn't just have the war memorial with its thirty-nine inscribed names, we also had the Order of Service from 1921 when the memorial was unveiled. It listed two hundred and eighteen names of those who served and survived. Eventually there were still eighteen that I just couldn't identify. A booklet was funded by the Parish Council and delivered to every household in Mobberley.

Subsequently I discovered several of my missing men in the Absent Voters Lists – I hadn't accessed these records and was pointed to them by my fellow volunteer Bill. It was an interesting insight into how many individuals barely touched the village but happened to be there when whatever process was undertaken to recognise all those who served for inclusion in the Order of Service. I occasionally had another look online but resigned myself to waiting for the release of the 1921 census to try and fill in the blanks and to flesh out the stories of those I thought I'd identified.

In the process of searching (using, for example, the military records with any reference to Mobberley) I discovered a further twelve men who died – for instance the son of the school headmaster who had moved away and is remembered in Louth, Lincolnshire, and forty-one men who served and

survived, including of course George LEIGH-MALLORY and Trafford LEIGH-MALLORY whose family had moved to Birkenhead in 1909.

Come the release of the 1921 census on Find My Past, I realised that I was not easily going to find the answer to many of my questions, at least not cheaply. I sat back and waited for the day when I could view each page of the Mobberley census at the Family History Research Centre in the village as I had done with those up to 1911. The wait was rather frustrating, so when a three-month Premium package became available, I decided to bite the bullet and purchase it for myself. I did fill in some blanks, but more importantly confirmed or corrected assumptions I had already made.

I still have one or two who I feel I will never identify for certain. Arthur COLCLOUGH doesn't appear anywhere with a link to Mobberley and yet was confirmed as a Mobberley man at home, injured, recorded in the *Knutsford Guardian* of 24th September 1915 (available on film at the local library). The closest I can get is a groom, born in Dresden (Stoke). One or two such as William DAVIES aren't even in the 1921 census but picked up later. In this case he was working at the Rajar Photographic Works in 1939 and I suspect others arrived in Mobberley to do the same. Herbert STORER is recorded in Kelly's Directory as a painter-decorator in Mobberley but not picked up in any census here. Leonard KENT is a horseman at Coppock House Farm in 1921 with no known birthplace. Joseph BUCKLEY was a platelayer on the railway born in Northwich and likely to have been working or lodging in Mobberley at the point the list was put together, but not recorded in 1911 or 1921. John ALLAN was boarding in Pepper Street, Mobberley in 1921 having been boarding in Stretford in 1911. James HUNT from the Wirral returned to the Police Force and married in Ashley in 1919, settling in Mobberley by 1921 before retiring to Altrincham.

All of these men's circumstances illustrate how difficult it was to trace those without family links when their lives barely touched Mobberley.

I added to the file the records of the ten men who died in World War Two by which time society and the village had changed considerably. The landed estates were not what they were, the Rajar Photographic Works was a significant employer. No attempt appears to have been made to record the names of those who served.

From an original seventy-eight pages, the file is now one hundred and thirty-four pages. I am considering what to do about printing it as I don't expect the Parish Council to fund another run of over a thousand copies.

Wearing Silver Buckles

by Ian Pidgeon

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First published in the *North Cheshire Family Historian*, Volume 32 No. 4, Nov 2005.

“The original PIDGEON came from the South wearing Silver Buckles”

Auntie Florrie was our family spinster. Born in Hazel Grove in 1881, she was the fifth of six children of John PIDGEON and Susannah FOWDEN FLETCHER. Their eldest boy, John, had died when only six months old, and their eldest daughter, Susannah, died of tuberculosis when she was only 23. This left uncle Walter, my grandfather Thomas, Auntie Florrie (Florence Alice) and Uncle Joe. Sadly, both Thomas and Joe committed suicide (in 1931 and 1918 respectively) and only Uncle Walter and Auntie Florrie survived to meet me. I remember Uncle Walter living in Lever Street, Hazel Grove, but he and his wife had both died by the time I was eight years old. Auntie Florrie, however, never married and lived to the grand old age of 86, by which time I was half-way through my twenties.

It was shortly before her death in 1968 that Auntie Florrie told me about the original PIDGEON. She didn't seem to know where *the South* was, nor have any idea about when he came or who he was. She did tell me about her own family, her parents and siblings (but not about the suicides) and it was this chat with her in front of her fireplace at 55 Mount Pleasant, Hazel Grove, which sparked my interest in the family history. But before I got much further, I landed a new job which meant living in Antwerp, Belgium, so the family research could only be done on the infrequent trips home.

I discovered that the Stockport Register Office was on Wellington Road South, somewhere near the old Super Cinema - both of which have since disappeared. I went there, with very little idea of what to request. When I arrived, I was surprised to find a solicitor's office, but was welcomed in and taken through to a back room full of filing cabinets. These, I was told (whether by Eric THORNLEY, Solicitor and Superintendent Registrar or Leonard WHITWORTH, the Deputy Superintendent Registrar I am not sure, though possibly the latter) were the indexes, and after a brief guide he left me to browse through them - wonderful! I found several PIDGEON birth and marriage references, but of course only the index information. To get the details one had to buy the certificates.

After about an hour Mr WHITWORTH returned and inquired after my progress. I told him I was doing quite well, and showed him one or two references. He unlocked a door into another back room. This, he told me, was where they kept the original certificates but that the public was not allowed to pass through the door or see any of the certificates; then he asked me for my first reference.

After extracting a book from one of the cabinets of the inner sanctum he brought it to the door and read out: *Ah yes. Thomas Fletcher PIDGEON [my grandfather] born the eleventh of September 1878, his father was John PIDGEON, and his mother Susannah FOWDEN PIDGEON, formerly FLETCHER.* He then asked, *next one?* In this way, he continued to read out all of my fifteen references, slowly enough for me to write everything down. This was the real start to my family tree.

Over the next thirty years or so I compiled a family tree which spread over ten pages of small print, over 200 descendants of Henry PIDGEON and Ann BASKETFIELD, who married in Stockport in 1792. But where did Henry come from? In 1818 he died at the age of 63, so would have been born about 1755. I could find no reference to any PIDGEONS in Stockport before 1792, so perhaps he was the one who came from *the South*. I had learnt that this could be either Devon or Shropshire, both counties having many PIDGEON families. I researched the Shropshire PIDGEONS but found no likely candidates. I was introduced to Basil PIDGEON of Bideford, Devon who had compiled many PIDGEON family trees of Devon, but he had no Henrys born about the right time without a subsequent marriage or death still in Devon. On the other hand, I had discovered baptisms of Henry PIDGEON in London and Hatfield, Hertfordshire, in 1756. This was my Brick Wall. Even if I found a likely candidate, how was I to prove that he moved to Stockport?

Then, one day last year, Basil emailed me to say he had just listened to a programme on BBC radio which had been produced by a John PIDGEON, did I know of this PIDGEON? I didn't, but remembered that my brother, who was then employed by the BBC in Manchester, had once mentioned that there was another PIDGEON in London. On the BBC internet site I discovered that John was Head of Light Entertainment and it gave his email address. A quick message brought the reply that he was a little busy at the moment, but had passed on my message to his father Joe; he thought they originated from Stockport. I scanned the family tree, but could find no Joseph of about the right generation, so I had to wait.

A few days later Joe telephoned. He was Frederick Joseph - on my tree he was Frederick J PIDGEON, born 1916 in Kidderminster, but I had guessed wrongly about his children so John was not shown. He had a box of old documents

somewhere in his house and he thought there was information in it which said where the PIDGEONS came from. Unfortunately, in two days' time he was off to Argentina for three months. He was widowed in 1992, but had since married an Argentinean lady who owned a farm there and he now spent half his time in Argentina and only half in England. When he returned from Argentina, he would try to find the box.

Patience: if ever I needed it, it was now! Eventually Joe returned and I visited him at his home. He had found the tin box which was full of old 19th century letters and documents. "*I think the best thing I can do with all this is to lend it to you,*" he said to me after we had sat down. Patience rewarded!

We found *The Document* - an agreement dated 1857 between two of Henry's sons (Joe's and my great-great-grandfathers), his daughter, and a grandson whose father had died, to share equally between them anything any of them might inherit *respecting certain properties of their late father Henry PIDGEON, skinner and tanner late of Stockport or belonging to their late Grandfather John PIDGEON, master skinner late of Cullompton Devonshire.*

So, there it was, the Brick Wall had crumbled and now, visible behind it, were the PIDGEONS of Cullompton. Basil in Bideford already had their family tree - ten pages with another 230 people descended from John PIDGEON and Joan BOWER, who married in Cullompton in 1748. Henry was the seventh of their nine children (an older Henry had died just before his fourth birthday) and had been born on Christmas Day 1758, about three years later than we had thought. However, John PIDGEON was not a master skinner, but the first in a line of five John PIDGEONS, all corn millers of Cullompton.

There were once three mills in Cullompton and the PIDGEONS at various times worked at two of them, both of which still stand as private residences. A visit to Cullompton was most interesting; in addition to the mills, there were at least two tanneries, where Henry had probably learnt his skills before going north to Stockport.

And now, what of John PIDGEON? Joan BOWER was baptised in nearby Silverton in 1728. But after scouring the Cullompton parish records in the Devon Records Office at Exeter it looks as though John may not have been born there. I had broken through into a wonderfully interesting room, but on the far side of it stood yet another Brick Wall!

A Question of Identity: Thompson or Osborne?

by Carole Robinson
Membership no. 4932

Finding my great-grandfather Thomas in 1871, living in a back-to-back in the New Cross area of Manchester with his siblings Elizabeth, James and William and their widowed mother Jane THOMPSON, was easily done just by working back through the censuses. Mother and the three eldest were apparently born in Ireland, and the youngest was born in Manchester. My great-grandfather's life was fairly well documented: he had started as a tobacco spinner and continued working for the PATTREIUX family, who in 1925 introduced Senior Service cigarettes. However, the rest of the THOMPSON family proved to be more elusive.

In 1881 at the age of sixteen William, the youngest brother, was living with my great-grandfather and his family. After some searching, I eventually found an 1891 census entry with a William THOMPSON, 26 and born in Manchester. He was listed as a brother-in-law of Richard Henry STUBBS whose wife was called Elizabeth - as was William's sister. Promising, but on checking the marriage record of the STUBBS I found Elizabeth's maiden name to have been OSBORNE (and no record of an earlier marriage). I had no success in finding birth records for William and ended up with a birth certificate that I had been sure would be his, having eliminated all the other William THOMPSONS, but of course it wasn't.

At this point I received a message from New Zealand. A member of the OSBORNE family thought he might have a link to this family having seen my minimal THOMPSON tree on Ancestry. His great grandfather had emigrated to New Zealand and married there. His name was James THOMPSON OSBORNE, the same age as my James THOMPSON and believed to have come from Manchester. My contact also informed me that the family had letters from James' sister Elizabeth STUBBS and a photo of him with a niece, her daughter, on a visit back to Manchester. Letters also confirmed that William THOMPSON, living at that time with Elizabeth, was their brother. On his marriage James THOMPSON OSBORNE had declared his father was James OSBORNE.

I had another look at the marriage record of Richard Henry and Elizabeth STUBBS, and she too named James OSBORNE as her father. A link to the THOMPSONS, something I had missed before, was that one of her witnesses was Ann SAVAGE, who would marry my great-grandfather soon afterwards.

When Thomas THOMPSON and Ann SAVAGE married, Thomas named his father as James THOMPSON, and so did William THOMPSON when he eventually married.

Tracing the OSBORNES back to Ireland, the New Zealanders had found the marriage in 1849 of James OSBORNE and Jane THOMPSON. There is an 1853 Griffiths Valuation of Ireland record of James OSBORNE living in a cottage owned by Jane's father Robert and in 1855 he appeared as a witness for his brother in an Irish court claim. As yet, we have no further confirmed record of the family until the 1871 census.

Jane returned to live in Ireland, dying in 1912 at the age of 93. When a young boy, my uncle was taken by his grandparents Thomas and Ann on their annual holiday to Ireland to see Jane.

The link between the New Zealand OSBORNES and the Manchester THOMPSONS has since been confirmed by our DNA results.

For some reason, Thomas and William, the oldest and youngest siblings used their mother's surname and on marriage records called their father James THOMPSON, whereas the middle siblings Elizabeth and James used their father's surname and named him as James OSBORNE on their marriage records. Luckily, James had kept both names which provided the clue that the two OSBORNES and the two THOMPSONS were siblings. The division seems to indicate some kind of family rift. Could it have been simply a relationship breakdown or was it a reflection of the difficult religious and political stresses of Irish life in the 19th century? I'm hoping that one day we will hear from someone in the family, perhaps a descendant of Elizabeth, who has heard a tale that explains the siblings' divergent choice of surname.

Tarporley News (5)

from the Chester Courant & Advertiser 24 September 1873

We are happy to find that a small Church at Cotebrook, which is in the Township of Eaton, in the Parish of Tarporley, is about to be erected from designs by that eminent ecclesiastical architect, Mr Street. Such an edifice has long been needed in this rural district, and a sum of £774 has already been promised towards its completion. We are anxious to assist the very laudable efforts of the lady who is the principal promoter of this much-needed Church, and who is most desirous that the sum requisite to defray the cost of its erection, namely, one thousand pounds, should be contributed before the taking out of contracts... Contributions in aid of this object... may be paid to Miss Egerton, 28B Albermarle Street, Piccadilly, London.

Ed.: the church was built, and opened in 1875.

The Cowburns of Booths Hall, Knutsford

by William M. Hartley
Membership no. 7720



If you travel in East Cheshire from Chelford to Knutsford, at a roundabout on the outskirts of that town you will see a sign pointing right to Booths Hall.

This Palladian mansion, now the heart of an office complex, was the home of Arthur William COWBURN from

November 1920 until 1953. Mr COWBURN had purchased the hall at the auction of the PENNINGTON-LEGH estate held on 17 September 1917 for £12,000 plus a further £850 for the timber in the mansion grounds. Included in this Lot 24 were the 16 acres of a mere, 102 acres of farmland, an entrance lodge on the Chelford Road and several other cottages.

The hall had been built by Peter LEGH (died 1804) and enlarged by his grandson, also Peter (1794 – 1857), in 1845. It was he who was responsible for the large portico which dominates the appearance of the house. There were no direct heirs and the house had a somewhat chequered existence until put up for sale, along with the rest of the PENNINGTON-LEGH estate, which comprised over 1032 acres including eight farms.

Apart from a drawing room measuring 55 feet by 22 feet, a good sized dining room, a smoke room, billiard room, library and domestic offices, the hall had sixteen bedrooms – five for servants – and six bathrooms. This was therefore sufficient space for Mr and Mrs COWBURN and their four children, the youngest of whom was aged five when the family moved in. Mr COWBURN was making his money by manufacturing sulphuric acid at his plant in the Trafford Park industrial estate, Manchester, through his company W H COWBURN & COWPAR LIMITED (WHC&C Ltd).

My recent publication *Acids & Assets – the Cowburns and their Chemical Domain* tells the story of the rise of the COWBURN family from lowly beginnings in Ancoats, Manchester, their move to Prestwich in North Manchester before the move to Timperley, South Manchester, and ultimately to Booths Hall.

Owning an estate is not always the idyll that one might imagine. Mr COWBURN battled with the Knutsford Light and Water Company about the hall's drainage discharge, saw to the ejection of people fishing on his mere without licence, dealt with encroachments on his boundaries and dealt with the local authority about the safety of his trees. However, pleasure was obtained by providing a cricket pitch (still in use today), hosting gatherings of the Liberal Party and enabling his daughters' wedding receptions to have a suitable venue!

Mrs COWBURN enjoyed shopping and the space at Booths Hall gave her the opportunity to display her china and trinkets. An inventory of 1953 of the contents of Booths Hall ran to thirty-five pages, the contents of a display cabinet in the drawing room alone running to three full pages.

All this came to an end with the death of Mr COWBURN in December 1953, his wife dying about two months later. It took some time to clear the hall, but by March 1955 it was let and became the headquarters of C A PARSONS, the big electrical manufacturer, before being sold by the family to a company in the GEC Group in 1981.

So why, you may ask, had I become interested in this family? It dates back to my visit to the Jetty Museum on Windermere. This houses a splendid steam launch, the *SL Branksome*, which was originally built for Mrs Edna HOWARTH, the wealthy owner of Langdale Chase, now an hotel overlooking Windermere. When launched in 1896 this steam launch was known as *SL Lily*, named after Mrs HOWARTH'S daughter and granddaughter.

Amongst the wares for sale at the museum, and after an internet search, there was evidence that after Mrs HOWARTH'S death, the launch was acquired by the COWBURN family of Manchester. This sparked my interest as I knew members of the COWBURN family in Knutsford. Enquiry of them revealed that they had several boxes of papers relating to the family and WHC&C Ltd. Such papers are meat and drink to someone interested in family histories - and so it proved.

Apart from details about the acquisition of Booths Hall, the papers revealed the energy of a typical Victorian entrepreneur, W H COWBURN, how he started the business and how, particularly through his son, Arthur, the family prospered.

Links were established, possibly because of affinity to the Unitarian Church, with the powerful and large Courtauld Limited. That company was at the forefront of the development of artificial fibres. The COWBURNS were able to supply the acids needed for such manufacture. Of course, transport of such a commodity was dangerous. The railways were not keen to be involved. The COWBURNS lessened

the risk by establishing a fleet of narrow boats. These transported the chemicals required to the Courtauld plants at Coventry and Wolverhampton by way of the canals. The COWBURN's own plant was adjacent to the Manchester Ship Canal. It was said that if a cargo caught fire, the narrowboat could be quickly scuttled by pulling a lever which sank the boat. There is no evidence that this ever happened – just as well, as one could imagine the ensuing chaos! Huge lorries replaced the narrowboat fleet after World War II.

By the late 1970s with Arthur COWBURN's two sons approaching retirement age, and the increasing demands for health and safety requirements in relation to the transport of dangerous chemicals, it was time to call it a day. The family business had lasted about 100 years before its sale in 1981.

The steam launch had been renamed *SL Branksome* after Mr COWBURN's previous home in Timperley (now the Masonic Lodge there) and was sold by the family in 1961.

The moral of this short article is do not throw family papers away – they will be of interest to someone!

Reference

Acids & Assets – the Cowburns and their Chemical Domain by William Hartley.
Pub. Palatine Books (12 May 2022), 176pp, ISBN 9781910837412

Tarporley News (6)

from the Cheshire Observer, 12 April 1873

ANOTHER BIGAMY CASE – Mary Ann Waywell, 29, married, Delamere, on bail, was indicted for marrying and taking to husband one Samuel Lee, at Chester, on the 21st March, 1871, her former husband, to whom she was previously married, being then alive. Mr Brandt appeared for the prosecution; Mr Dunne for the prisoner.... When apprehended by Police Sergeant Wood, the prisoner said, "It is true; I never denied that I ever intended to do so. I did not leave him. He sold all our things and would not allow me anything, and I went to service. It is three years since I left him."

The jury found the prisoner guilty and Mr Dunne called evidence to show that the prisoner's former husband had ill-treated her, sold up the house, and left her. His lordship [Mr Justice Lush] said he did not think this was a case calling for any punishment. The prisoner's husband had treated her ill and sold up the house, leaving his wife entirely to provide for herself. He should merely sentence her to the nominal punishment of one week's imprisonment from the commencement of the Assizes, and as that term had expired, she would now be discharged.

Evacuation from Dunkirk

David Lythgoe
Membership no. 470

I thought this letter may be of interest to readers as a document connected to the evacuation of the British army from Dunkirk in 1941. I came across it amongst my aunt's effects when she died in 1999 aged 89. I have copied it verbatim.

The contents of the letter are self-explanatory, but I'll point out that my aunt was on holiday in Bournemouth at the time and the letter was sent to her by a friend in my aunt's home town, Wigan. Incidentally, I'm also Wigan born and bred although my ancestry on my mother's side is from Preston Brook.

Warning - the letter contains material that may be considered offensive.

Envelope postmarked Wigan 6th June 1940, and addressed to:

Miss M LYTHGOE,
c/o "Glenorchy",
Borthwick Rd.
Boscombe,
Bournemouth

19 Lessingham Avenue
Wigan
Thurs

Dear May

Thanks very much for your letter.

You will be pleased to hear that Albert is safe and sound and is at Ramsgate. So that's all "ours".

Joe ARROWSMITH goes to Leeds today. He was prayed for last night as the others were. I bet there were crocodile tears last night.

I met Jessie CONNOR on the bus on Monday morning and she told me a few details of Sydney's escape. His battalion was surrounded and they were told to make their way to the coast. Sydney jumped on to a gun carriage (he would) and somehow got to Dunkirk. He got into a little boat with some others, this was bombed and he was the only one left alive in it. After swimming for a while (and he can't swim) he was taken aboard a bigger ship. He was sent down to the cook's quarters to dry his clothes and

the cook had just asked him if he would have a cup of tea, when that ship was bombed, and the cook's head was blown off before his eyes. So Sydney arrived in England unscratched but minus his battalion. I suppose there are many tales such as this to be told.

Lily did not come to the meeting last night which was a missionary one.

Uncle Jack and Auntie Lily are going to the wedding of Prince Charming and his Cinderella on Saturday. On Monday they (Mr & Mrs J) are going to the lakes for a few days D.V.

Well, if the weather remains as it is, you will all be coming back looking like niggers. It is the nicest week this year. Couldn't be better could it. Katha, & I hope Lilian Hedley are coming to tea Saturday

I think you are very fortunate in having such a lovely holiday – it is indeed the chance of a lifetime, and I too wish I were with you, but as Alice says, “what has to be, will be”. So take everything in, and remember all you can to tell me when you come home – Paddy, the next best thing.

Please give my love to Evelyn, John and Arthur and remember me to 2nd Lieutenant Herbert if you please.

With love

Anne

XXX

Tarporley News (7)

from the Chester Chronicle, 15 March 1873

CARRIAGE ACCIDENT – *On Monday afternoon last, the coachman of Major Tollemache, M.P., of Tilstone Lodge, drove Mrs Stanbrook, governess to the Major's family, in a trap to Tarporley, and while she was at the shop of Mr Downes, confectioner, the coachman remained seated on the vehicle. At that moment the Cheshire hounds were in chase, and a number of the sportsmen galloped down the town, when the spirited animal became excited, and in his agitation shook off his bridle, and dashed furiously down the street. The coachman threw himself into the bottom of the conveyance, and pulled the reins with all his might, but the head of the bridle only acted against the collar. On clearing the town one of the wheels of the vehicle came in collision with that of a cart laden with coals, and the wheel of the latter was smashed to pieces... Had the coachman attempted to get out he might have been killed... he escaped with a severe shock, but was soon right again.*

The Hutchinson Family's Court Cases: Maria's Case

Sheila Jones
Membership no. 3981
secretary@fhsc.org.uk

I live in Bromborough which, whilst now in Merseyside, was part of Cheshire until 1974. Earlier this year, I idly wondered what the first entry for Bromborough was in the 1841 census and whether the individuals concerned could be traced in subsequent censuses. My heart sank initially on seeing that the entry for HO107 Piece 123 Book 5 Folio 3 Page 1 Schedule 101 was for a JONES family (no relation):

Peter	JONES	Male	40	Publican	Born in county
Mary	JONES	Female	40		Not born in county
Sarah	WILLIAMS	Female	30	F.S.	Not born in county
John	GOTT	Male	30	Gardener	Not born in county

The redeeming feature, however, was Peter JONES's occupation of publican, as this meant I was quickly able to see that the first entry for the 1851 census at HO107 Piece 2173 Folio 265 Page 1 Schedule 1 was for the same family, although Peter had died by this point.

Mary	JONES	Head	Widow	Female	51	Inn keeper born Hope, Flintshire, Wales
John	JONES	Son	Unm	Male	28	Inn keeper born Hope, Flintshire, Wales
Maria	HUTCHINSON	Visitor	Unm	Female	23	born Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire, England
Eliza	WILLIAMS	Servant	Unm	Female	23	House servant born Wales
Ann	SHONE	Servant		Female	10	House servant born Wales

The public house concerned was named in the 1851 census as the *Sportsmans Arms*. There has been a pub on the same site since at least the 1820s, under various names, although the buildings there today, on what is now Bromborough Village Road, date from 1909 and replaced the Victorian ones. Until recently it was known as *The Bromborough Hotel* but is now known simply as *The Bromborough* (perhaps to avoid confusion with the Village Hotel, Bromborough, on the A41 near Bromborough Pool).

Peter JONES had died on 30th September 1843 aged 44 and was buried in the churchyard at St Barnabas, Bromborough. His widow, Mary, continued to run the *Sportsmans Arms* until her death in 1866. Indeed, in *Bromborough In Times Past* (The Bromborough Society, 2000) there is reference to the pub being commonly referred to locally as “*Mary Jones’s*.” In continuing my research focussing on Mary, I looked to see if there were any newspaper references to the *Sportsmans Arms* and found two.

On 15th May 1856, the *Liverpool Mercury* reported that Mary JONES had been summoned for *supplying a man with a glass of ale on Sunday morning*. The article noted that *there had been no previous complaint against the defendant, who had occupied the house for 29 years, and the bench, in consequence, inflicted only 4s. 4d. costs*.

The second reference – or, indeed, references – related to Mary’s appearance as a witness in a breach of marriage case brought the following year, 1857, by Maria HUTCHINSON against Conroy CLAYTON. The name, Maria HUTCHINSON, immediately rang a bell and I went back to the 1851 census; Maria was the visitor at the *Sportmans Arms* when the census was taken.

Maria was born around 1828 and baptised on 27th January 1828 in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, the eldest child of Thomas HUTCHINSON and his wife Ann(e), née DOWNS. Thomas was an Inland Revenue Officer (later promoted to a Supervisor’s position) and within two years of Maria’s birth the family had moved to Cheshire, with the eldest son, Thomas James, baptised in Tranmere on 1st August 1830. Thomas’s job meant that they were changing location every few years: baptisms and census records show that they were in Tottington, Lancashire in 1832 and 1833, Warrington in 1840 and 1841, Runcorn in 1844 and 1848 and then across the other side of the country in Lincolnshire in 1851. However, by the time Thomas made a lengthy will on 14th February 1854, he was back in Cheshire, describing himself as *Thomas Hutchinson of Nantwich, in the County of Chester, Supervisor of Excise*.

In his will, Thomas named his daughter, Maria, together with *Mary Jones of Bromboro in the said County of Chester* as guardians of his youngest son, William Charles and as joint executrixes of the will, despite the fact that his wife and three adult sons were still living. His death certificate shows that he died on 11th April 1854 in Bromborough after a ten month illness from *phthisis pulmonalis* and a death notice on 17th April 1854 in the *Albion* records the death *on 11th instant, at the house of Mrs. Jones, Bromborough, Cheshire, after a long and protracted illness, aged 51, Mr. Thos. Hutchinson, supervisor of Inland Revenue for the Nantwich district*.

He was buried in the churchyard at St Barnabas in a plot adjacent to the grave of Peter JONES, and subsequently that of Mary, who had married again in 1861 to Wilfred Martin ROBINSON.

Clearly a close friendship between the HUTCHINSONS and the JONES's had developed during the short time that Thomas and his family had lived in Wirral and several members of the family moved back to Wirral before or shortly after his death, including his widow, Ann, who was living with two of her sons in Birkenhead in 1861. Maria appears to have taken up residence with Mary JONES after her father's death. In April 1857, newspapers from Exeter in Devon to Inverness in Scotland reported on the breach of promise case which Maria brought to the Liverpool Assizes against Mr. Conroy CLAYTON. Mary JONES appeared as a witness at the trial and stated that Maria had been known to her for all of her life and that, since her father's death, Maria had lived at the *Sportsmans Arms* as her companion and was not paid as a barmaid. Nevertheless, Maria had occasionally helped out in the bar and had thus met Clayton CONROY who had patronised it for the last two years.

Clayton CONROY, in 1857, was aged around 48 – twenty or so years older than Maria – and was a widower, living in New Ferry. He and his wife, Mary, had been living in West Derby, Lancashire at the time of the 1851 census. He had been a rope maker in Liverpool, his place of birth, since at least 1834 but appears to have moved over across the River Mersey before Mary's death in Eastham in May 1853. Their only child, Elizabeth Ann, died aged 17 in December 1853 and was buried in the churchyard at St Andrew's, Bebington. By 1857, Clayton had retired although he continued to own business premises on London Road in Liverpool.

A marriage licence bond was issued on 29th July 1856 for the marriage in the parish of Birkenhead of Clayton CONROY, New Ferry, Bebington, rope maker, and Maria HUTCHINSON, Birkenhead, spinster. The marriage was due to take place on 31st July before which point Clayton had taken Maria's eldest brother, Thomas James, to visit a site where he intended to have a house built *for his intended bride and himself* and had *also purchased two waistcoat pieces for the wedding day, one for himself and the other for the brother*. The waistcoats were to be made up by no later than 30th July but on that day, Clayton failed to turn up to collect them. Instead, he sent his lawyer to Thomas James say that he had changed his mind and would not be going ahead the following day with the marriage; whilst he loved Maria *very dearly* he had *heard something prejudicial to her character, and that he thought he never should be happy if he married her*.

Maria therefore brought the breach of promise case against Clayton and both Mary JONES and Thomas James HUTCHINSON appeared as witnesses on her

behalf. They both testified that Clayton had openly spoken of marrying Maria. Clayton did not appear at the trial, being ill. His defence lawyer implied that he had been under the influence of drink when he had made the offer of marriage and that, despite what Mary JONES might say, Maria was essentially only a barmaid and not the young lady *in a superior position in life* which she had been made out to be. It was also said that Clayton was not as affluent as witnesses had believed and that the courtship had only lasted four months. Clayton had refused to say what he had heard against Maria's character or from whom. The judge, in summing up, *said it did appear a very heartless thing to send a lawyer to break off the match, and that, too, almost at the altar. There was certainly nothing brought forward in the evidence against the character of the young woman showing sufficient reason for the breaking off the marriage in such a wanton manner.* It took the jury only a few minutes to find in favour of Maria; she was awarded damages of £400.

In 1857, £400 was worth approximately £40,600. Although her father had left Maria one quarter of funds held in trust through a couple of insurance policies, the court case had described Maria and her brothers as not having been left well provided for by his death. Clayton CONROY died of heart disease three years later on 24th March 1860 at 27 Ivy Street, Birkenhead, leaving effects valued in probate as under £1,500. This would equate today to something under £149,900 so he does not appear to have been the poor retiree that his lawyer had made him out to be. He was buried with his daughter at St Andrew's, Bebington.

Maria therefore had done well for herself out of the court case. She finally married the following year on 13th May 1858 at St. Catherine's Church, Tranmere at the age of thirty and again had chosen an older widower. Her husband, James LANDERS, who was at least eighteen years her senior, was an Essex-born timber merchant who later turned provision dealer. The married couple lived in Higher Tranmere initially, with two daughters born there in 1859 and 1861 and then two sons born in 1863 and 1867 in Birkenhead. By the time of the 1871 census they had moved to Newcastle-under-Lyme, Maria's place of birth. James died in Newcastle-under-Lyme in 1872 and was buried at Newcastle Cemetery on 10th November 1872. Maria was therefore left a widow at the age of 44, with three surviving children aged 11, 9 and 5. She continued to run the family shop at 49 Higherland, Newcastle-under-Lyme (a grocer's, I think) until at least 1896 and died there on 10th March 1900 at the age of 72. She was buried on 13th March 1900 at Newcastle Cemetery, Staffordshire and left a will valued in probate at £221 17s, rather less than she had been awarded by the courts in 1858!

Maria, however, was not the only one of her siblings to appear in court.
To be continued...

John Larden, Freeman of Chester

by Gren Dix

Membership no 4174

Some time ago I was tracing an indirect ancestor. I found that he was a freeman of the City of Chester (I must admit to a sin. I didn't keep the reference to the event). A person on another side of the family was supposed to be a freeman of the City of London. I then found his son had applied to be a freeman of London. Up until then I thought that freedom of a city was the preserve of the great and the good. I thought that I had better look a bit more deeply into the status of freeman. Cheshire Archives has a very good introduction, given below:

Guilds and Freemen (From Cheshire Archives)

The rights and privileges granted to the burgesses of Chester by their early charters, including the recognition of a Guild Merchant in the city by Randle BLUNDEVILLE, 6th earl of Chester c. 1190-3, were granted to a restricted body of persons. Admissions recorded in the earliest of the Mayors' Books from 1392 are described as entries into the Guild Merchant, while from 1452 onwards they are described as entries into the liberties and franchises of the city, although there are also some late fifteenth century admissions to the Guild Merchant, the meaning of which is not yet certain.

Traditionally there were three ways by which to become a freeman, by birth, by apprenticeship to a freeman and by order of the Assembly, and in Chester it was necessary to become a freeman before joining one of the city trading companies, which developed in the city from the fourteenth century onwards.

Citizenship (i.e. being a freeman) was valued for the privileges it conferred. In order to trade or practice any craft in the city, it was necessary to be a freeman and a member of the appropriate company. Freemen also enjoyed rights in the government of the city, and the charter of 1506 confirmed their right to elect annually the Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen and Common Councillors, although in practice the freemen only played a small part in the election of the Mayor etc., and the Assembly filled vacancies without reference to the citizens at large. Another privilege of the freemen, following the Act of 34 and 35 Henry VIII [1542-3], by which Chester returned two members to Parliament, was the right to vote in Parliamentary elections. All these rights were exercised until the nineteenth century.

RECEIPT No. 213

5th day of Oct 1926

Date of Birth 13 March 1873

Place of Birth 3 Alma Street Newport, Monmouth,

George Henry Griffiths
(Son of George Henry Griffiths late of Caerleon Road, Newport, Monmouth. Builder dec'd)
occupying premises 70 Gordon Road, Iford, Essex.

George Henry Griffiths in the City of London, and carrying on the
a Builders Manager do hereby apply
to be admitted to the Freedom of the City London, by redemption, in the Company
of London, in pursuance of the Resolutions

of the Court of Common Council of the 17th March, 1835, 13th July, 1848, 6th October, 1856, 22nd January, 1857, 16th December, 1858, 29th July, 1867, 18th June, 1890, 17th January, 1907, 18th May, 1916, 24th January, 1918, 20th October, 1921, 12th April, 1923, and 29th May, 1924, and Court of Aldermen 6th February, 1866, 14th May, 1867, 6th June, 1916, 10th December, 1918, and 4th November, 1921, or some or one of the said Resolutions; and I hereby declare that I am not an Alien, that I am above the age of Twenty-one years, and that I have not previously been admitted to the Freedom of the City.

WITNESS, 

George Henry Griffiths

By Order of Court of Aldermen _____

By Order of Court of Common Council _____

21 OCT 1926

500. D. 126 ex. - 5/25.

Charles Skipper & East, Printers, 49, Great Tower Street, E.C.3.

Admission to the freedom of the City of Chester by Birth: pre 1993

A man could be made free if he could show an unbroken male line to any direct male ancestor that had been made free. It was possible for men to claim the freemanship even if their own father was not a freeman, provided they were claiming from a direct male line: grandfather, great grandfather and even earlier. This is still the position today for men.

Proof by way of: applicants full birth certificate and proof that the direct ancestor from whom the applicant is claiming from was a freeman. Help is given by the Civic Team, and the officer of the Freemen and Guilds appointed to assist the Pentice Court

New Freemen are admitted by the Lord Mayor at a ceremony called the Pentice Court, held at Chester Town Hall. A Pentice Court is usually held in April but attendance depends on the number of applicants and additional Courts may be held later in the year.

The Pentice Court was established in Chester in 1300 by the crown, and was held by the sheriffs several times a week . It served as a market court, and also dealt with pleas of covenant, debt, trespass and detinue . The Portmote Court, which met several times a month, was presided over by the mayor and dealt with breaches of the peace and registered land transactions . On petition, a case could be transferred to the Portmote Court or even to the Chester County Court .

I didn't find a list of freemen of the City of Chester but the Archives website has the archive reference code (ZM/FR). I did find online a list of mayors and sheriffs.

For London I had no luck. There were records of some Guilds but no guidance as to applications. The National Archives has, online, a list of (Honorary) freemen of various cities.

An application for Freeman of the City of London is on the previous page.

The ancestor I was interested in is John LADEN. Below are some details of 'my' freemen ancestors.

John Laden b~1660 no further details

John Laden b~1685 - 1726

possibly baptized 22/2/1683 at Coddington

Son of John Laden of Aldersley

He was made a freeman of Chester 3/12/1709-10

Feltmaker, son of John Laden late of Chester now of Tattenhall.

Marriage license 28/9/1723, married 9/10/1723 to Rebecca Wright

Died 1726 Tattenhall. Buried 2/6/1726 at St Alban's, Tattenhall

John Larden 1723-1791

Baptised 21/7/1723 at Harthill, or 2/10/1723, or 21/7/1724 Tattenhall
Freeman 21/7/1746 son of John Larden, deceased
Married 10/2/1750 to Frances Harrison (1731-1770)
At Coddington. They had 12 children
Died 7/5/1791, buried 10/5/1791

John Larden 1755-1840

Freeman 2/5/1776, Woolen draper 'Gentleman',
Freeman by birth
Son of John Larden of Tattenhall
Married Hannah Edge (1761-1816)
Sheriff of Chester 1785-6
1801 Mayor of Chester
1826/7 Mayor of Chester
There is a Larden chest tomb at St Alban's, Tattenhall beside the porch
Died 17/1/1840 at Tattenhall (from churchyard database)
Died at his residence in Foregate Street
Buried 23/1/1840 at St Alban's Tattenhall
Probate 9/3/1840
The sister of John's wife Hannah married his brother

John Larden 1780-

Baptised 19/10/1780 at Malpas or 14/12/1780 at St Peter Chester
Married 3/3/1808 St Alban's, Tattenhall to Kezia Orton (1789-1869)
Died 29/11/1853 at Neston, buried 3/12/1853 at Neston
Children Kezia (1820-) and Hannah Maria (1825-)

Tarporley News (8)

from the Chester Chronicle, 5 April 1873

THE 5TH (P.C.W) DRAGOON GUARDS' STEEPLECHASES, AT TARPORLEY – On Wednesday last the Regimental Steeplechases were held on the Tarporley Race Course. The day being fine, the attendance was very large. With the exception of two of the horses falling, everything passed off satisfactory. We observed a large number of the leading gentry and others in their carriages and on horseback, among others, the following – Baron Schroder, Lord and Lady Cole, Lord Richard Grosvenor, Captain Griffiths, Captain Hall, Captain Kennedy, Captain Park Yates, Captain Baldwin, F. Villiers, Esq., J. Dixon, Esq., and the Officers of the Regiment. Judge, T Miller, Esq.; Starter, Capt. Dyson Bourne; Clerk of the Scales, WD Lemmon, Esq.; Hon Secretary, Captain R J Sankey.....

The Parson's Nose

by Paul Chiddicks

You just never know when you are going to stumble across a little piece of local history. On a recent visit to my local church of St. Mary's in Nantwich I was fortunate enough to meet a gentleman who was the absolute font of all knowledge. The extremely kind man was able to recount some of the wonderful historical stories of Nantwich and in particular St. Mary's church itself. It's hard to believe that work started on the construction of the church in 1280. If you want to discover more about the history of the church, there is a link to the St. Mary's Church website below.

So where does The Parson's Nose come into this, I hear you all ask? The kind gentleman who was guiding us round the church directed us towards what is known as a misericord (sometimes named a mercy seat). Basically, this is a small wooden structure formed on the underside of a folding seat in a church which, when the seat is folded up, is intended to act as a shelf to support a person in a partially standing position during long periods of prayer. On the underside of each of the misericords is a carving which was carved by the craftsman at the time they were built. Each one is different and depicts a tale which tells its own story. The gentleman showing us round pointed us in the direction of two of the carvings and told us the story behind each of carved images.

One carving shows the face of a priest on the rear end of a bird and it is this carving that is thought to be the origin of the expression, 'the parson's nose', meaning the rump or fatty end of a cooked turkey or chicken. This is a very seasonal expression and is normally heard every year around Christmas time as we prepare our Christmas dinner. The term dates back over 600 years to around 1400 AD and is thought to have originated when a local carpenter was working on providing new choir stalls for the Church. It's thought that the Vicar at the time was either slow to pay the bill or did



not pay at all. In retaliation, on the last misericord in the stalls, the carpenter carved a bird with an image of the Vicar's face with his nose positioned on the bird's rump. The phrase *parson's nose* therefore comes from the notion that the parson may have his nose in the air, upturned like the chicken's rear end. The carving is still clearly visible today as you can see from the photograph I took.

We had just enough time for one more story of the stalls, before I was literally thrown out of the church - they were turning the lights off as we left!



The story from this carving is that the woman in the middle is seen to be beating her husband over the head with a stick or broom; admittedly, the stick or broom has disappeared over the passages of time. On the left we can see a hog which the farmer's wife left cooking over the fire while she went out to run some errands. She left **STRICT** instructions with the farmer to watch the Hog! Now whether he had been to the pub or not we can't say for sure, but our unfortunate farmer fell asleep in the chair and the farmer's dog managed to eat the Hog as he slept. You can see the dog enjoying his spoils on the right of the carving.

Another absolutely fascinating tale and I can't wait to go back to hear more stories from the carvings on the choir stalls in the church. You just never know when local history or family history is going to find you!

References

St. Mary's Church History

<https://stmarysnantwich.org.uk/the-building-explained/>

Paul's Family History Blog

<https://chiddicksfamilytree.com/2024/01/18/the-parsons-nose/>

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



In the December issue I included short pieces about all the Computer Club subgroups. However, I missed one and was correctly told off for not including details of the Computer Club's Historical Newspapers subgroup. You will find a synopsis of that subgroup's activities below.

Just for the sake of completeness, I list here all the active subgroups that we have formed:

Apple-Mac Users - DNA Research - Family Historian

Family Tree Maker - Family History Recording & Publishing - Historical Newspapers

My action to highlight the subgroups has already resulted in several members asking to join in. Please have a look at the options and consider doing so yourself. Come and join us - just drop me a line at computerclub@fhsc.org.uk

We have a good mix of articles for this issue: please keep them coming.

I've introduced some Cloud storage benefits as well as a good use for my long-loved image viewer, Irfanview.

Do you maximise your use of the 1911 census inclusion of *Children who have died?* And, what about those hard-to-find Death Certificates?

Plenty for you to look at here.

The Historical Newspapers Subgroup

By Margaret Roberts – our Chair

This subgroup meets on the first Friday of the month at 2:30pm via Zoom. There are some 26 members of the group with around a dozen or so attending each meeting. We are a very friendly and chatty bunch. We share stories of discoveries using the newspaper archives, as well as helping each other out with suggestions on how to search for those elusive ancestors using a combination of keywords and Boolean search terms. New titles and free sites are also something we discuss and share; in fact the sessions are usually wide ranging, and everyone has learnt something new along the way, with some fantastic discoveries being made with the help of the members.

Everyone has the chance to take part, or you are welcome to just listen – whatever you are comfortable with. Why not come along? New members are always welcome. Email computerclub@fhsc.org.uk and ask to be added to the newspaper subgroup mailing list.

Using Google Drive to Store Documents Online

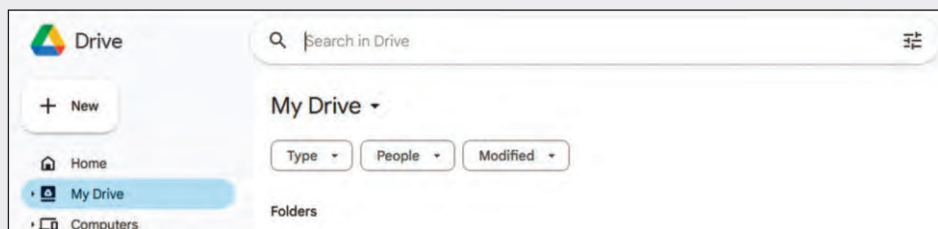
By Nantwich & Computer Club's Bill Pearson

I recently started to save all the contents of my computer online, using Google Drive <https://drive.google.com>. This means that I can access the contents of my computer anywhere that I have Internet access. This has several benefits – for instance, if I am at a Records Office, and need to cross-check a fact with an item that I already have (stored on my computer), I can easily do it. I can listen to my music on devices throughout the house, and even when I am away from home.

I can synch the files and folders on my computer with my online Google Drive. This means that if I turn on my computer and have a catastrophic hard drive failure, I will have a backup online, ready to restore to replacement hardware.

Searching Google Drive

It's very easy to search for things using Google Drive:



I prefer to use the Advanced Search, which you can get to by clicking on this icon.



The Advanced Search Facilities enable you to search by, for example, file type, storage location, etc.

×
Type
Owner
Includes the words
Item name
Location
 In bin Starred Encrypted
Date modified
Approvals Awaiting my approval Requested by me
Shared to
Follow-ups
[Learn more](#) Reset

So, for instance, I have done a search in the 1903 Johnson's Directory for A N Hornby (the famous Nantwich cricketer).

The results show that Hornby appears on five different pages. It was far quicker to do this than to open the image files and read every page looking for his name.

Type Photos & images

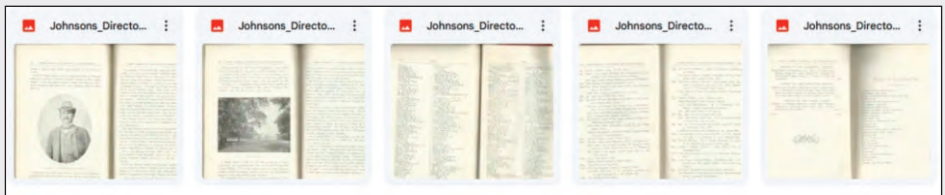
Owner Anyone

Includes the words hornby

Item name Enter a term that matches part of the file name

Location 1903 Johnsons

Search results



Powerful OCR

An unexpected benefit for me was to discover that Google Drive has some extremely powerful OCR (Optical Character Recognition) software. I recently did a search for Fry's and was very surprised that the results included a picture of my grandfather's shop. Looking carefully, I then saw an advert for Fry's chocolate above the door, which Google Drive had managed to read.



Many readers already use Microsoft's OneDrive to backup or store their files online (<https://onedrive.live.com>). OneDrive does have OCR Software built in, but when I tested it with the same files that Google Drive had read, it was nothing like as good.

Google Drive costs (added by Geoff)

You'll need to have a Google account with adequate storage space. I only get 15GB of storage on Google Drive with my account, presumably because I only have a (little-used) Gmail account. I can increase that to 100GB for £1.59 a month (£19.08 a year), or 200GB for £2.49 a month (£29.88 a year). If you use Google facilities on a wider scale, you may already have access to a significant amount of storage.

Using the Irfanview Program to Display Photos for a Talk

By Rosie Rowley – our Editor

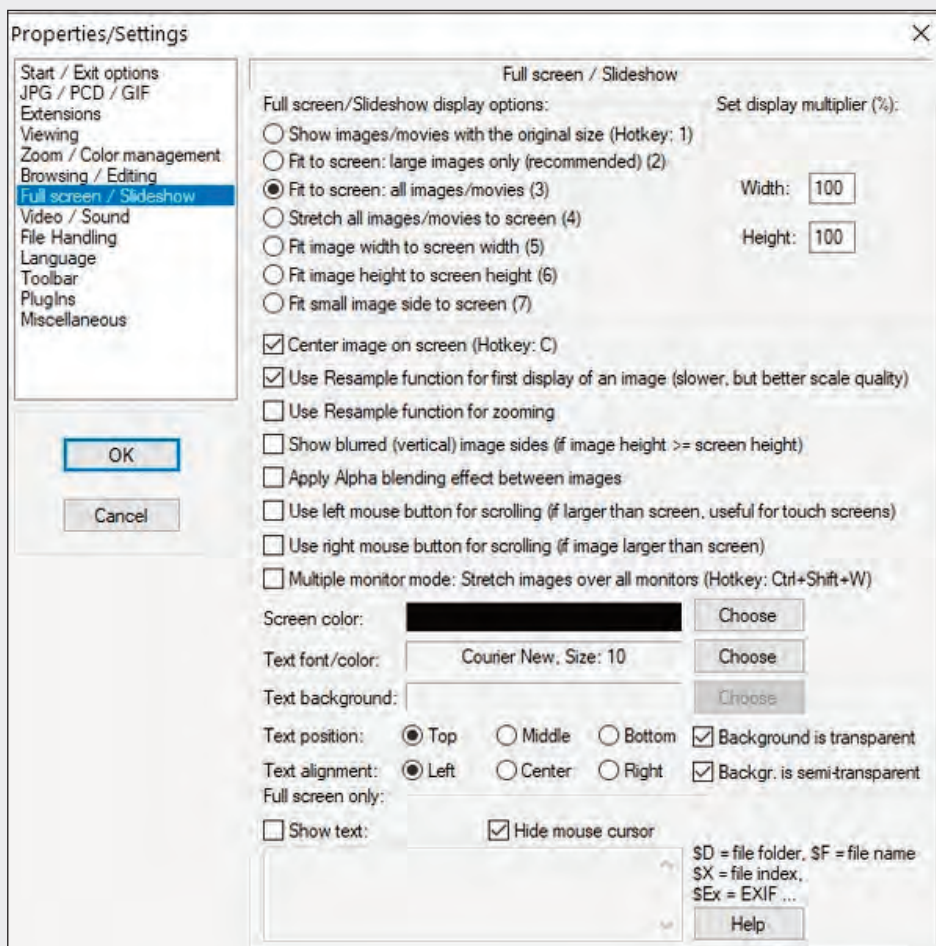
You can use Irfanview to display a series of photos, changing to the next one using your keyboard. It's easiest if you set Irfanview as your default image program. Download Irfanview from www.irfanview.com

To set up the program and photos:

1. Make a copy of all the photos you want to use and put them in a folder somewhere handy, e.g. on the desktop so you can find them easily.
2. Sort the photos into order by renaming them using numbers at the beginning – call them e.g. “001 Victoria Road.jpg” “002 West Park.jpg” and so on.
3. If, after numbering your photos, you need to insert one more, name it something like “004a Extra photo” and it will be shown after photo 004.
4. Set up Irfanview with the settings you require for the display. You will be using Irfanview in full-screen mode. There are various options – to get to them, start Irfanview e.g. by double-clicking on a photo file, then click on *View – Show full screen options*. If needed, change the settings so they are the same as those shown on the next page, then click on the OK button.

To run the “Slideshow”:

1. Find the folder with your photos in it and double-click on the first photo to start Irfanview.
2. Press the Enter key on the keyboard. This will display the first photo in full-screen mode – in other words, the only thing you will see on your screen will be that photo.
3. To show the next photo, press the space-bar, or the down-arrow or right-arrow key. All three will work.
4. To show the previous photo, press the up-arrow or left-arrow key.
5. If you need to rotate a photo because it is displayed sideways or even upside-down, press the R key to rotate clockwise or press the L key to rotate anti-clockwise, as many times as needed to get the photo the right way up.
6. To exit from full-screen mode at any time, press the Enter key again.



1911 Census and the Fertility Question

By Computer Club Secretary – Peter Rowley

NB - This article was provided to me by Peter some days before the Seminar talk by Sophie Kay on "Keeping Mum" - GJ

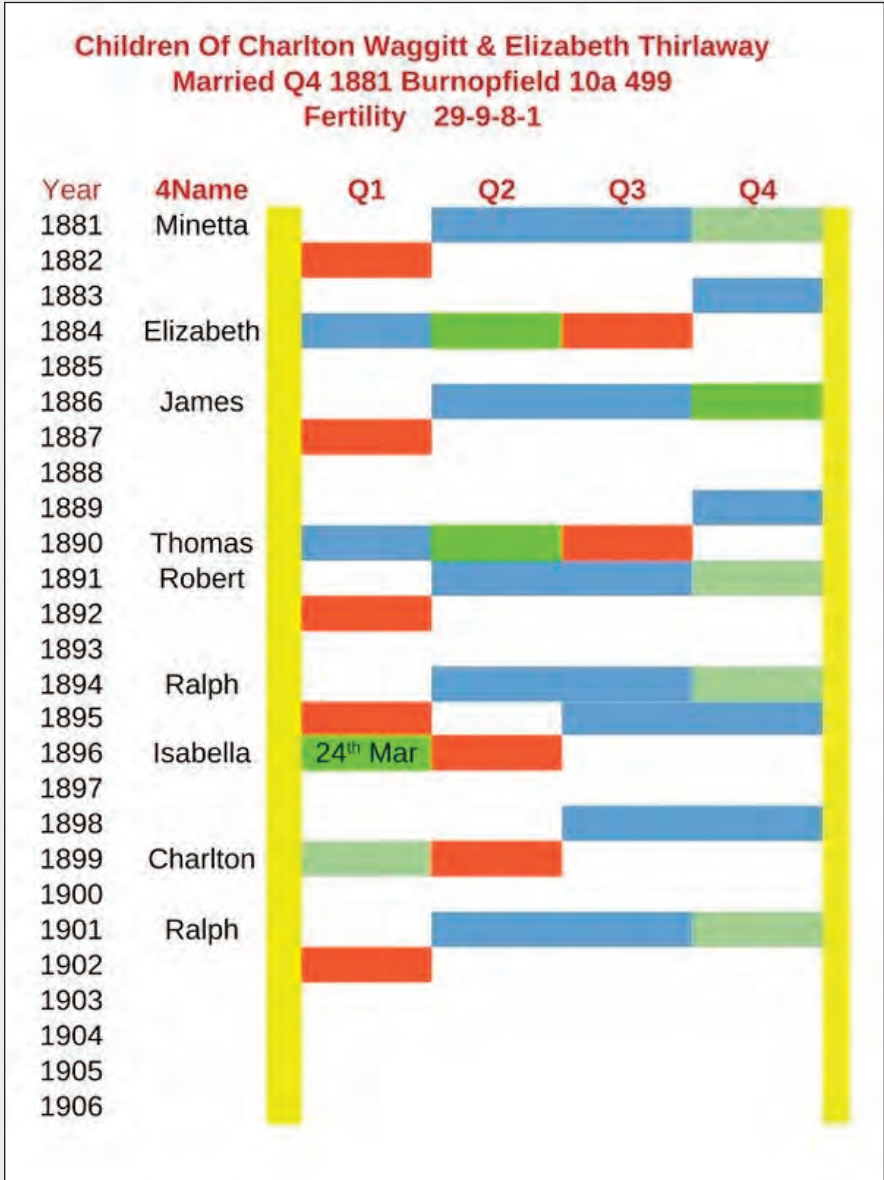
Have you ever made use of the 1911 Census's fertility question in the course of your research?

"Married 29 years, 9 children born, 8 children still living at 2 Apr 1911 and 1 died"

If a child is born and dies in the period between censuses, then there is no record of that child in the family. So how do you find them?

By searching using e.g. FreeBMD, it is possible to list all the probable children and then confirm their mother's maiden name using the GRO Index of Births.

You will have established the known children from your research in the censuses and know how many are missing. Using a spreadsheet, I then list the children in date order as in the example below.



Adding the birth quarter in green and the two preceding quarters in blue indicating that the mother is pregnant then shows any likely gap when the missing child could have been conceived and born. The red quarter is the period when the mother may be breast feeding the infant, and is usually safeguarded from another pregnancy. It is then a matter of searching the indexes in those time gaps. Caution - remember to make allowances for other spellings.

In this example, Ralph, born 1894, was the missing child and his death was found using the GRO Index of Deaths in Q4 1894 with the surname WAGGOTT, not WAGGITT.

The usefulness of this technique is obviously limited to mothers who were enumerated in the 1911 census - although sometimes this information is listed against a widowed father in error.

Possible Reasons Why You Cannot Obtain a Death Certificate

By Edward Lake from Lytham St. Annes

Some months ago, a friend asked me for help. He could not locate or obtain a death certificate for his great-grandfather, who had lost his life when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed off Southern Ireland in 1915. His body was washed ashore a few days later; his funeral took place and he was buried in Lancashire.

The answer to the problem was that no formal death certificate was issued, because there was no doctor who could certify a time of death or a place of death or a cause of death. All my friend could do was to rely on various lists of missing passengers.

In recent times there is a new database on Ancestry with the names of those lost or drowned at sea including passengers and ships' crews. It is not easy to find on Ancestry. It is included under *UK Registers and Indexes of B, D & M of Passengers and Seamen at Sea 1891-1922* with the database reference number 62598. This is the URL: <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62598/>

A list of missing passengers of the *Lusitania* was compiled by The Cunard Line. That list includes his name, age, occupation, last port of call where he joined the ship. The cause of death is given as "Supposed drowned". I suspect that this is the nearest any family historians can get to obtaining a death certificate.

A few years ago, I and another family member came across a relative who died in 1991 - not so long ago in genealogical terms. Both of us were quite unable to

obtain a copy of a death certificate. Her name is not disclosed here as I think that she has living grandchildren. We knew exactly where and when she died - in a nursing home in Ascot. Her death was published in the London Gazette. Her Executors obtained probate and settled the estate. I could not understand how this could have taken place without a death certificate to start the process.

Individually we searched the indexes of deaths, several times - absolutely nothing there. We tried name variants. We contacted undertakers and monumental stone masons in Ascot - no success. I contacted the nursing home - no success. Checked local cemeteries. Nothing found.

As most readers will be aware, it is possible now make a search online at the GRO relatively easily; I tried that - nothing listed. I telephoned someone at the GRO and expressed surprise at the absence of an entry. They were just not interested and offered no possible explanation. I visited the local Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages - once again, no real explanation; so I more or less gave up.

Quite by chance, a few months ago I met the daughter of a friend, who had died four years ago. She offered the information that they had not been provided with a death certificate, the reason being that he died in a local hospital and there were suspicions concerning the cause of death. Those concerns then featured in a court case last September. I asked if she had been able to administer his estate without a death certificate and she told me that in these circumstances there was a Coroner's Inquest and the Coroner issues an interim Death Certificate which does not show a cause of death. So, it is not included in the published indexes of deaths where one looks to search for and apply for a death certificate. The point of raising this here is that Coroner's Inquests cannot be viewed online. Anyone wishing to explore this further must visit the National Archives at Kew or employ a researcher.

I suspect that this is the reason why we never located a death for the relative mentioned above.

Comments on Previous Issues

Runcorn's Mike Hodgkinson wrote concerning Peter Rowley's *GRO Registration District & Reference codes* piece in December's Inbox:

Having read Peter's GRO article, I was looking for the death certificate of my ancestor John SMITH who died in Cheadle, Staffordshire in 1852. I could not find the full reference in either Ancestry or Staffordshire BMDs. However, I had what I believed was his burial record.

Using only the name John SMITH, the death year 1852, quarter 1 and the registration district Cheadle, I obtained a death certificate image via the GRO online deaths index. This gave me both his address and occupation, which were consistent with the 1851 census return. I had 'Netted my Serf' for £2.50. The death was registered by his son John SMITH who is also my ancestor. If it works for John SMITH, it should work for more unusual names!

Links for Finding Workhouse Ancestors

By Bill Pearson

Following his *Workhouse Voices* article in June 2023, Bill has pulled together a comprehensive list of information and links for workhouse research. However, this 5-page document is too large for the ANCESTOR, so I've placed it as a downloadable item on the Society website. Find it at *Cheshire Ancestor > Net That Serf > Articles Too Long for Net That Serf*.

From the Inbox - Breaking Down a Brick Wall

From Runcorn's Mike Hodgkinson

On returning home from visiting relatives in London, I looked at a brick wall in my family tree and thought my research could make a short article.

An 1823 advert in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* said that a farm called Stile House in Bradnop near Leek, Staffordshire, in the occupation of Mr William MILLWARD was to be let. William and Elizabeth, his wife, are my 4x great-grandparents. Elizabeth's grandfather William SMITH was born in nearby Wildgoose House in 1698 and lived in Stile House until his death in 1754. The farms are named in the parish records and these records are supported by wills.

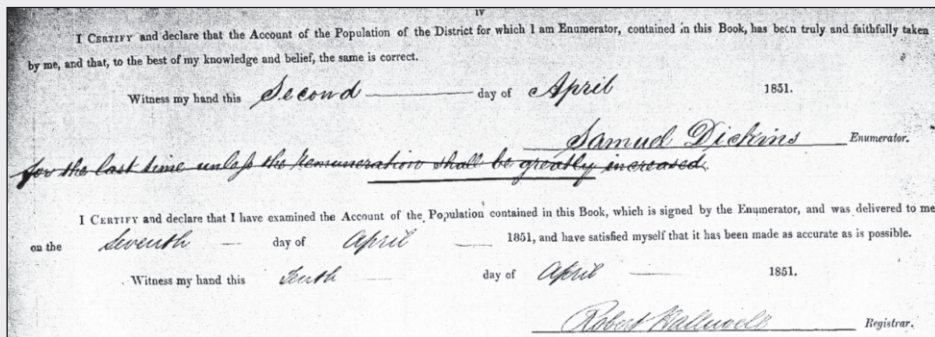
William SMITH's parents were John and Mary SMITH. However, I could not find any marriage record and did not believe the information on other Ancestry trees. I had not previously looked at the FindMyPast Staffordshire Marriage Allegations and Bonds 1636-189, but this provided a 1692 marriage licence for John SMITH and Mary FOX who lived in Leek parish. This was a possibility, but I needed more evidence. I could not find a Leek baptism record for Mary FOX, but I did find a birth record of an unnamed daughter to John FOX of Onecote, which is near Bradnop.

I decided to check whether John FOX had left a will. He was 84 when he died in 1725 and had made a will that started with the words "I give and bequeath unto John Hiney of Cauldon and John Smith of Wildgoose House my two sons-in-law..." I had found my ancestor, and was able to find John FOX's baptism record, and the will of his father William FOX who died in 1662.

Ancestry gave a hint that William FOX had married Margaret LONGDEN in Chelmorton, near Buxton, Derbyshire in 1635. It seemed unlikely, but the original unreadable Derbyshire records on Ancestry can be downloaded, trimmed, and enlarged. The record said that “*William Fox of Onecote, Stafford and Margaret Longden were married in 1635.*” – the hint was correct.

Closing Snippet

Thanks to Computer Club’s Peter Rowley for this one.

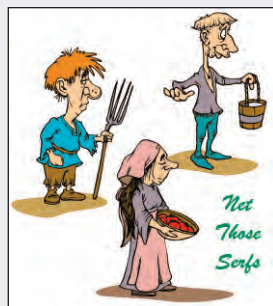


This 1851 Enumerator has had enough. In signing off his Enumeration Book, he’s written “*for the last time unless the remuneration shall be greatly increased*”.

The Registrar has crossed it out!

My thanks to the above authors, but remember, I need more input for the next issue please.

Keep this forum active – GJ



Tarporley News (9)

from the Runcorn Examiner, 25 January 1873

FATALITY TO A CHESHIRE MAN THROUGH DRINK – On Thursday last Mr George Bowyer, potato merchant, of Chester, left home on horseback for the purpose of visiting several customers about Delamere Forest. During the day he got very tipsy... with assistance he... rode off. Nothing more was seen of him until Sunday morning... a search was instituted and Mr Bowyer’s dead body was found behind a hedge near the high road... no marks of violence were found, and a large amount of money in his possession was found safe. Death had evidently been caused by exposure.

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Back cover photo: St Helen's Church, Tarporeley, Cheshire
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St Helen's Church seen from the south. The earliest record of a church on this site dates from 1230, but nothing remains of the medieval church.

The Family History Society of Cheshire

www.fhsc.org.uk

Tarporley



Tarporley, which is situated on the 'great road' from Chester to London, is listed in the Domesday Book as *Tropelei*, translated as *a pear wood near a hill called Torr*; indeed, the local primary school has a pear tree as its emblem. Consisting of a single street culminating at the southern end with the ancient manor house, the owner of which, Hugh de Thorpley, secured a grant for a market and fair in the late thirteenth century. A market is held on Thursdays, and fairs take place on May 1st, the first Monday following August 24th, and December 11th. Initially governed by a mayor from 1297 to 1348, the town now appoints only two constables.

The rectory is within the archdeaconry and diocese of Chester and is jointly patronized by the Dean and Chapter of Chester, Lord Alvanley, and the Rev. Sir P. G. Egerton, Bart. The church, dedicated to St. Helen, stands as an ancient structure made of red stone and houses some commendable monuments. An excellent description can be found on the Wikipedia website.

Samuel Lewis, in his *A Topographical Dictionary of England (1831)* states, *A school, situated in the churchyard, was endowed with £20 per annum by Lady Jane Done, who left also a small bequest for apprenticing poor children, but there are no free scholars. Almshouses have been founded for four poor widows, each of whom receives thirty shillings per annum.*