

# CHESHIRE ANCESTOR



The Journal of the  
Family History Society of Cheshire



**In this edition:**

*Discovering Medieval Cheshire Ancestors*

*The Whittaker Family of Chorley Hall*

*What an Amazing Age! ❖ Baskervilles of Goostrey*

*Write a Book, not Just a Tree and more...*

**Volume 54**

**June 2024**

**Issue No. 4**

ISSN 1460-0277

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**Front cover photo:** Hulme Hall, Port Sunlight, Wirral.

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Built in 1901-02 and named after **William Lever's** wife **Elizabeth Ellen Hulme**, Hulme Hall was originally used as the Girl's Dining Hall, seating 1,500 girls at a time. It was here, on Saturday 18 August 1962, that **Ringo Starr** made his first official appearance as drummer in The Beatles.



# CHESHIRE ANCESTOR

Registered Charity: 515168

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

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

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

# Editor's Page

by Rosie Rowley



Many thanks to those who submitted articles for this issue after my plea in March. Unfortunately I have already used nearly all of them due to the NTS section having very few submissions, so more articles and letters are needed! Please remember that submissions by email are preferred to avoid having to retype your article into the computer.

When we think about our ancestors, we tend to assume they didn't live as long as we expect to now. In Victorian times, someone celebrating the age of eighty or more was often reported in the local newspaper. Imagine Lynford Dean's surprise to find an ancestor's gravestone where the age at death was recorded as 103! Elizabeth HULME, who died in Rushall, Staffordshire in 1851, outlived her husband Joseph by fifteen years; you will find the article on page 38. On the other hand, a research paper suggests that we should not be surprised by Elizabeth's longevity - see [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2672390/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2672390/)

The subscriptions of many FHSC members are due at the end of June so please help our membership volunteers by renewing your subscription promptly, or advising them if you do not wish to renew. Note also that an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the Society will be held in July to consider a new Constitution for the FHSC, arising out of the recommendations made by the recent Focus Groups - please see page 21 for full details.

## **ITEMS FOR THE CHESHIRE ANCESTOR**

*Articles and letters about family history or Cheshire local history for the Cheshire Ancestor are very welcome. Deadline dates are the 10th of January, April, July or October, but please send items as early as possible. Publication is at the discretion of the editor and is subject to space being available. **Articles should preferably be sent by email in Microsoft Word, Open Office Writer, or plain text, to avoid having to retype them;** or by post as a clearly-written manuscript. Suggested length of articles is 300-2000 words. Please write all surnames in CAPITALS. Illustrations must be your own, copyright-free images, not copied from a book etc. Please email images separately in a high quality (low compression) JPG format, minimum 300 dpi.*

## View from the Chair

by Margaret Roberts



The last quarter has certainly been lively in terms of happenings at FHSC. We were 'out and about' with representation at both the Wirral History and Heritage Fair and the Manchester Family History Fair; a heartfelt thanks to all volunteers who helped out at these events. The Focus Groups mostly concluded their work by the end of February and a synopsis of their findings can be found on pages 16–21. Additionally, a survey analysis summary from the Services Focus Group is included in this report.

Our lineup of events during the first quarter was as diverse as ever, featuring a blend of in-person and Zoom talks, allowing so many more members to engage with our offerings. Topics explored by the groups included *Nantwich on Fire*, *Liverpool and Slavery*, *Children of the Potteries*, *the China Farm story*, *Streets and Buildings of Old Macclesfield*, *Captain Benjamin*, *Sex, Sin and Probate* and *The Mersey Ferries*. We also hosted educational talks on using estate and manorial records, as well as civil registrations and what you can discover from these. Special acknowledgement goes to all group leaders for arranging these talks. I'd like to take this opportunity to once again remind members that you are more than welcome to attend any talk, both in person and via Zoom, that any group holds, you do not have to restrict yourself to the group you may be affiliated to.

The Cheshire Research Buddies sessions remain popular, this quarter covering Runcorn, Congleton, and Wilmslow. Thanks must go to Linda Wilding for sharing a series of Runcorn images, which everyone enjoyed. At other meetings some lovely family stories sparked some memories and helped to partly demolish a few brick walls. We always have members with knowledge of the area on hand, so come along and join a session related to your area of interest. Details can be found in the Events listing of the website and on page 9 of this issue.

We were fortunate to have a bonus Seminar this quarter, featuring Susan Snell from the Museum of Freemasonry, who discussed their remarkable records and how members could access them. Susan's enthusiasm was contagious, and she generously offered to help any member seeking further information. Several members have already benefitted, receiving valuable information not available

elsewhere. Dave Annal's talk *Walls Come Tumbling Down* was not only an interesting talk on how to track down elusive forebears but an excellent lesson in using spreadsheets for effective record-keeping. We certainly all went away determined to brush up on our Excel skills! Ann Larkham returned to continue her series of talks on Photogenealogy, focusing on scanning techniques when copying your precious photographs as well as a run through of the pros and cons of the different scanners on the market. Finally, Julie Goucher presented her talk on *Tracing European Ancestors*, addressing the common challenges faced by members in researching records across continental Europe. Please note that handouts provided by speakers are distributed via email to all attendees and posted on the members area of the website.

The Services Focus Group concluded the analysis of the survey responses at the end of January. Some of early findings were featured in my March 2024 Cheshire Ancestor column; highlights from the final report are included below.

### **Key Findings**

The supplementary written survey responses were overwhelmingly positive, with many participants expressing appreciation for the efforts of all volunteers and the enhanced accessibility provided through Zoom, particularly those residing outside the county or country. Many members emphasized the exceptional value they received from their subscription.

The demographic makeup of survey respondents indicates a significant portion of Society members are retirees, with a majority residing in Cheshire or areas formerly part of the county. Nonetheless, subscription data reveals that around 60% of our members reside outside Cheshire, including those living abroad. Several members from contiguous counties reported attending in-person meetings and, since the pandemic, remote engagement has been well-received by out-of-area members. The large number of printed responses returned by those without email addresses were primarily from older members, who do not use or indeed desire computer or internet technology. Many expressed regret that they were no longer active participants of the Society but found solace in receiving the Ancestor, which maintained their connection to Cheshire.

The survey has brought into sharp focus the fact that there is a 'digital division' within our membership, and this is not just FHSC by any means. This divide however is not simply a case of those who have access to digital technologies and those who do not. The latter group can be further subdivided into members who have no interest or desire to engage with technology and within both groups there are those who may be digitally excluded for a myriad of reasons, including

unequal access, sensory impairment, lack of skills, motivation, or confidence, and finally digital or data poverty.

The pandemic certainly made digital exclusion a more visible issue. Different people are affected in different ways, and it has to be remembered that digital exclusion is not binary or inert; people's experiences change over time, with education/training, income, and geographical location being some of the changes encountered. Technology also evolves, meaning that skills need to be constantly 'topped up'. As a society then, FHSC needs to identify and understand our digitally excluded members by offering assistance/help/training/education to those wishing to engage with our online programmes.

Respondents were asked to rate their experience of using the research centres at Crewe or Mobberley. Volunteers at both centres were said to be helpful, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and welcoming. The overall satisfaction rate at Crewe was 4.5 out of 5 and 4.1 at Mobberley. The biggest concerns raised regarding Mobberley were, both in terms of travel, car parking, and disabled access, as well as IT hardware and software capability. The main negative factor at Crewe was the opening hours.

Feedback on local group meetings was generally positive, respondents indicating that they find the groups welcoming and easy to find for those that travelled. The social aspect seems very valuable, and members enjoy the various talks offered. A slight contradiction was apparent however in the responses, with some members saying they wanted more local history rather than family history talks, others stating the opposite or that there was too much or too little Cheshire content. Many respondents recognised that they had not attended an in-person event since the pandemic, preferring to engage with the Zoom meetings, especially in the winter months. Research evenings were thought to be a good innovation by the groups that held them. Negative comments included those from out of county members who for obvious reasons cannot attend and therefore feel excluded, along with requests for all local groups events to be recorded or made hybrid.

Zoom meetings are largely seen as a boon to the Society, allowing engagement by not only the out of county and country members, but also those who for many reasons cannot attend a face-to-face meeting. As a generalisation the Zoom meetings are considered excellent in both terms of content and organisation, with most members finding them easy to join. Those who said they had had difficulty with this aspect were happy to report that they had received individual help. Some negatives to online meetings were expressed - a few members found

meetings too long and wanted handouts or requested for meetings be recorded. Several respondents found certain meetings a little 'cliquey', complaining that they struggled to interject as several people tended to over-dominate the conversation. Other suggestions included more weekend online events, more online content for those outside Cheshire, and more thought to those whose time zone is not GMT.

When asked what prevented a responder from attending any FHSC meetings [online or in person] answers included: lack of technology, inability or desire to drive/travel especially at night, not enough time, events clashing with previous engagements, and lack of interest in the meeting topic.

The Ancestor is mostly viewed as a good publication, which kept those who had moved away from the county 'in touch' with their roots. The many recipients of the printed journal appreciate the ability to read and re-read at will and prioritise this experience over accessing the content online. Only one responder proposed eliminating the printed version, while others passionately advocated for its retention. On the other hand, there were several responses stating that the member had no time or inclination to read the journal, others admit to forgetting to read it, some finding it staid and outdated and a small number not even aware of its existence.

Reactions to the newsletter were mixed, many 'enjoyed the read' and were enthusiastic about the content while others found it far too long and focused only on a small part of Cheshire. Many considered it a useful addition to the journal with the opportunity to catch up with links from social media feeds, the monthly calendar of events noted as being useful. Time and inclination were reported as being the major factors behind why members do not download the newsletter.

The daily feeds of information were welcomed by those that followed the Society's social media platforms. Weekly updates and referrals to family history blogs and other resources were appreciated. The serendipity was applauded by some and disliked by others, who would prefer Cheshire only content.

The responses to the various website related questions proved problematic to analyse, mainly due to the many changes which were carried out, radically altering the look and feel of the website. Many of the later respondents noted that they were unable to comment on the website as they had not had a chance to 'try out' the new format. The reactions to how easy or otherwise members found the website to use, show that almost half of members had trouble navigating the website. A good deal of replies stating that they have given up trying to locate something out of frustration, with many reporting that they mostly only use the



website for finding out about events, booking seminars or when prompted to do so for renewal purposes. There were respondents who found the website easy to use, and a good number also commenting that completing the survey was the first time they had visited the website for some time, years in a few cases. Happily, within that group there were some expressions of delight, if not surprise at the amount of information contained on the site.

## **Conclusions**

The survey results show that the services offered by FHSC are generally appreciated by the membership. Responding to the survey gave many the opportunity to evaluate what the Society offers, and they found themselves pleasantly surprised. There were many suggestions for improvements right across the board from the ANCESTOR to the website, but no responses indicated that any of the services we offer should be curtailed. Communication and messaging to ensure that members are feeling well-informed regarding updates and offerings remain paramount, although some members complained they were receiving too many emails from the Society. This is highlighted by the frequent survey comments regarding recording of Seminars, issuing of handouts and availability of Ancestry and FindMyPast to members outside the Research Centres, all of which are beyond our control. Furthermore, all these points have been communicated to members over time, so we must ask why these messages are not getting across? Likewise, the suggested bias towards certain parts of the county within newsletter and ANCESTOR articles are somewhat inevitable; unless contributions are forthcoming then the editors can only publish what has been submitted.

Many of the ideas expressed take precious volunteer time to implement and without an increase in volunteers then constructive suggestions such as providing more online resources, sessions for new members and an educational programme are problematic. Our current volunteers are all working to capacity, and we need new volunteers to step forward. It cannot be stressed enough that without volunteers the society would cease to exist, so if you can spare any time at all on a regular basis, please let me know.

Out of county members are largely content with the offering from the Society. Since the pandemic, their access to our services has vastly increased, much to the satisfaction of the majority. One or two respondents requested more activities for out of country members; it's hard to see what more we can offer as a Society over and above what we already do. Membership of the Society is seen as excellent value for money, with some respondents commenting on the low cost for the benefits received. Members see FHSC as mainly 'doing a good job',

compliments were received on the wealth of knowledge and experience of our research centre volunteers and group leaders.

FHSC is a respected society within the family history world. To maintain this standing it is crucial that we consistently align our service delivery, where feasible, with the needs and preferences of our members. FHSC was one of the first family history societies in the country to embrace Zoom, significantly enhancing the Society's operations. This spirit of innovation and determination should persist, encompassing both online and face-to-face interactions, ensuring that no member is left behind. The last word is from one survey respondent: *so much has changed, especially since the pandemic, but I think FHSC are on the ball with what they're doing.*

## 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 1 February and 2 May 2024:

AMER

BAILLEE, BESWICK, BIRCHENOUGH, BLOOM, BRACEGIRDLE, BROWN,  
BULKLEY/BULKELEY, BYHAM / BYAM/ BIAM

CHADWICK, CONRY, DOWNES/DOWNS

EDWARDS, FLEET, GRIFFIN

HOLLINGWORTH/HOLLINGSWORTH/HOLLINWORTH

JARMAN, LOMAS, MCGECHAN, MOORE

OWEN, PARROTT/PARROT, PERRIN

ROBERTS, WHITTY, WINDSOR, WOOD

## 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 please check on the Group pages which follow.

Date	Group	Subject
5-Jun	Runcorn Group	TBA
10-Jun	Northwich Group	F: TBA
12-Jun	Sale Group	Open forum <i>discussing family name or location name variations</i>
17-Jun	Alsager Group	<i>Members' Memories - What would you tell your grandchildren's generation about your grandparents?</i>
18-Jun	Congleton Group	TBA
18-Jun	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	F2F at Crewe: <i>The story of Lidice, a small village in Central Bohemia, which was destroyed in 1942</i> by Steve Booth
18-Jun	Wallasey Group	<i>Watch the Birdie: Photographic Studios in Wirral and Cheshire 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 Group	<i>The Granelli Family in Macclesfield</i>

27-Jun	Tameside Group	Visit: to the new Woodhead Railway Industrial Heritage Museum at Guide Bridge Station
29-Jun	Research Buddies	Z: <i>Bebington</i>
July	Alsager Group	TBA: we usually visit a local place of interest and the date may vary from the usual meeting date.
July	Congleton Group	Visit TBA
July	Macclesfield Group	TBC Visit to Granelli's Ice Cream Museum
8-Jul	Northwich Group	F: TBA
10-Jul	Sale Group	Visit to Bramall Hall; booking required - see Sale Group info
11-Jul	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	F at Crewe: <i>The Striking Children of Haslington School</i> by Margaret Roberts
16-Jul	Wallasey Group	AGM followed by <i>An Illustrated History of the Liverpool Tobacco Industry</i> by Rob Jones
17-Jul	Society Seminar	Z: <i>Genealogical Marshmallows: Bias and Willpower in Family History Research</i> by Dr Sophie Kay - NOTE: This is a joint talk with Devon FHS
20-Jul	Society EGM	Z: Extraordinary General Meeting of the FHSC
22-Jul	Bebington Group	<i>Birkenhead Park</i> – Speaker TBA
25-Jul	Chester Group	AGM and talk <i>A Mersey Pilot</i> by Victoria Doran
25-Jul	Tameside Group	H: Brian Groom talking about his new book " <i>Made in Manchester</i> "
27-Jul	Research Buddies	Z: Chester
August	Alsager Group	No Meeting
August	Chester Group	No Meeting
August	Congleton Group	No Meeting
August	Tameside Group	No Meeting
12-Aug	Northwich Group	F: TBA
13-Aug	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	F at Crewe: AGMs of both Crewe and Nantwich Groups, followed by TBA
14-Aug	Sale Group	AGM followed by an open forum on Family Migration/Immigration
19-Aug	Bebington Group	<i>Bromborough Now and Then</i> by Judith Beastall
20-Aug	Wallasey Group	<i>A Coastline Journey from the River Dee to the River Dovey</i> by Mike Blackburn

21-Aug	Society Seminar	Z: <i>Humour in Genealogy</i> by Chris Broom
27-Aug	Macclesfield Group	<i>Postcards of Old Macclesfield</i> by Peter Kirk
31-Aug	Research Buddies	Z: Northwich
9-Sep	Northwich Group	F: TBA
10-Sep	Crewe & Nantwich Grps	F at Crewe: <i>The River Weaver</i> by Helen Cooke
11-Sep	Sale Group	<i>Newspaper - 2nd Edition</i> by Sylvia Dillon
16-Sep	Alsager Group	Group AGM, usually with a short talk
17-Sep	Congleton Group	AGM followed by an open meeting, topic TBA
17-Sep	Wallasey Group	<i>Wondrous Wirral</i> by Barry Humphreys
18-Sep	Society Seminar	Z: <i>Walking the Weirdstone</i> by Alan Garner with Archaeology by Dr James Wright
23-Sep	Bebington Group	<i>Romans on the Wirral</i> by Peter Jenkins
24-Sep	Macclesfield Group	AGM
26-Sep	Chester Group	<i>Coming of the Canal to Chester and the re-cutting of the Dee</i> by Mike Royden
26-Sep	Tameside Group	H: AGM followed by <i>Maps for Family Historians</i> by Adrian Brown
28-Sep	Research Buddies	Z: Wallasey

### ***Bebington News (1)***

*from the Birkenhead News, 20 August 1904*

**WANTED BREAD** - An elderly man named **Henry Holden**, of Lower Bebington, was charged with having stolen two cauliflowers, the property of **Robert McCready**, of Wynstanley-road, Lower Bebington, on the 15th inst. **Elizabeth McCready**, wife of prosecutor, said that in consequence of having frequently missed vegetables from the garden a watch was set, and on Monday prisoner was noticed in the garden... **P.C.247 (Stanley)**, who arrested prisoner, said the vegetables, valued at 6d, were taken to Rock Ferry by prisoner, and sold for 3d. **Inspector Leah**, of New Ferry, said the police had had a tremendous number of complaints of garden robberies from the Lower Bebington district... He asked the bench to deal with the prisoner as an example to others. Prisoner, who in answer to the charge said he wanted money to buy bread with, was sent to prison for fourteen days with hard labour.

# 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 are unable to 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. You will receive a confirmation email and links will be sent out on the morning of the Buddies meeting.

## 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*

Meetings are usually held at 7.30pm on the 4th Monday of the month (excluding Bank Holidays) at OUR NEW VENUE St. Barnabas Village Institute, Church Square, Bromborough, CH62 7AB. 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.

### **Chester Group Helpdesks**

We have a helpdesk in Storyhouse, Hunter St, Chester CH1 2AR 10am - 12noon on Tuesday mornings.

### **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](mailto: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 Zoom 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](mailto:crewe@fhsc.org.uk) in good time before the meeting. Please do not leave it to the last minute before you register.

Crewe/Nantwich joint 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 visit a place of interest in July, 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.

When they resume, Nantwich Group's F2F meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Nantwich Parish Rooms, opposite St Mary's Church in 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 Helpdesks**

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 24th June and then break for the summer. The date of restarting will be confirmed later.

### **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 £2, and visitors are most welcome. Car park 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*

Our open forums allow members and visitors to share their research with the whole group, and they have proved extremely informative for everyone.

On July 10th we have a visit to Bramall Hall with a guided tour of the house. Cost £10 per person. To book a place,



please contact Marion by email on [mariondavid.hall@gmail.com](mailto:mariondavid.hall@gmail.com)

Meetings are usually 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:book.sales@fhsc.org.uk))**

# Summary of Reports from the Focus Groups

*by Sheila Jones  
Honorary Secretary*

As previously reported to the membership, a number of Focus Groups were set up in 2023 to review the future operations of the FHSC. The majority of these Focus Groups have now completed their conclusions. These were considered by the Executive Committee in March 2024 and are summarised below. A fuller version of the conclusions is available in the Members Documents section of the FHSC website.

## **Committee Structure Focus Group**

- There is a lack of clarity with regard to the governance of the FHSC, particularly in relation to the identification of which members of the Executive Committee are Trustees, including a number of discrepancies in the definitions within the FHSC's Constitution.
- The current Executive Committee is too large a group to allow effective decision-making.
- To ensure that there is good coverage of all of the FHSC's activities and that the Officers are not overburdened, there is scope to increase the number of Officers.
- As the current Constitution designates the length of term for an elected Officer to be only annual, this leaves a degree of uncertainty in terms of continuity of business.
- There should be a mechanism by which potential Trustees and Officers can put themselves forward for election. It would also be good practise to require those doing so to provide a statement as to why they wish to stand for election.
- There is a need to consider how every member can cast their vote at AGMs.

## **Charitable Status Focus Group**

- The way in which the FHSC conducts its operations meets the Society's primary objective, namely 'to advance the education of the public in the study of family history in all its many aspects' and meets the 'public benefit' requirements of charity law as stated by the Charity Commission in their guidance.
- The benefits in relation to the FHSC's charitable status have been captured by the Focus Group in an 'Audit Trail' reference document. This identifies

benefits to the public and to members, including how charges for ‘services’ were applied to members only and to the public.

- Despite careful review of advice and guidelines available online from HMRC and from other websites, including that of the Family History Federation, it is still very unclear as to whether the FHSC is eligible to claim Gift Aid.

### **Research Centres/CALS Focus Group**

- Discussions between the FHSC and Cheshire Archives and Local Studies have been taking place for more than a decade about possibilities for closer collaboration and co-locating our research centres within the new CALS archives facilities due to open in Chester and Crewe in Spring 2026.
- At Crewe preparations are already well in hand to relocate and consolidate the Crewe Family History Unit as a designated ‘FHSC Hub’ within the new archives centre. This entails a considerable amount of work in pruning, cataloguing and moving existing research resources. Many detailed practicalities and occupancy terms remain to be worked through and agreed with CALS but there are not thought to be any significant impediments.
- At Chester the FHSC would be starting from scratch and it has not hitherto sought to transfer any of its own library resources. As a result, less space has been earmarked than at Crewe. However, that would not inhibit the recruitment of additional volunteers, establishing a help desk opening as many days as possible during the week.
  - Options for the future of the Mobberley Research Centre were the subject of differing views and more intense debate. On the one hand, there is a strong desire for the FHSC to retain its own independent premises and pool of committed volunteers, which points to retaining Mobberley or finding an alternative, less expensive location elsewhere. On the other hand, the high costs of Mobberley, its less than ideal location and its relatively small and still declining customer base relative to overall FHSC membership coupled with the FHSC’s continuing sizeable financial deficit, point to consolidation and inevitable withdrawal sooner or later when funds are depleted. An alternative was considered but the expense of setting up and running with management/service costs was considered prohibitive.
- The FHSC does still need a ‘flagship’ base offering a range of online and library resources together with space and facilities for volunteers to assist visitors, to hold small group meetings, to undertake projects outside public opening hours and to mount displays and occasional events. However, these capabilities will be available at the new archives centre at Crewe. Opportunities to use rooms at local libraries or community centres elsewhere

to run family history workshops or classes involving other local volunteers in the future also mean that aspect of the FHSC's activities need not be curtailed and, indeed, could be widened geographically across the county.

### **Local Groups Focus Group**

- In recent years, six Local Groups have folded, mostly because of lack of volunteers to run them and fewer attending, and it is quite likely that a number of others might go the same way resulting in about five or six larger Groups remaining in ten years' time.
- Ideally, a Group should have at least a leader, a treasurer, a programme secretary and a publicity and social media officer. It is often the post of treasurer that people were reluctant to take on and where necessary the payment of room hire and cost of speakers could be taken on by the FHSC Treasurer just leaving the Groups to deal with petty cash.
- It can be very difficult to run Groups successfully on a budget of £500 per annum on the basis of room hire, cost of speakers, printing flyers etc. Groups are finding it a struggle and are providing fewer sessions with expensive outside speakers, especially since attendance (and hence direct income) has declined so much since the pandemic.
- Not all Groups provide help sessions in local libraries; there were some difficulties such as local libraries closing, little interest and lack of suitable volunteers. Regular Buddies Sessions could partially overcome this, but not all members have the necessary computer skills to make use of these.

### **Services Focus Group**

The key findings from this Focus Group are covered in the 'View from the Chair' section on page 3.

### **Website Focus Group**

At the time of writing (April), this Focus Group has yet to meet as it was previously agreed that its work could not really commence until the recommendations from the other Focus Groups had been considered. However, considerable work has been undertaken in the meantime to improve the website and the Focus Group will now be convened to take other issues.

### **Recommendations from the Focus Groups to the membership of the FHSC**

**The Executive Committee, at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2024, agreed to recommend adoption of the following recommendations to the membership of the FHSC through a new Constitution, to be put to the membership at an Extraordinary General Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2024 (see page 21).**

- 1 That the FHSC's governance be restructured to comprise of a Board of Trustees, a Management Committee and Operational Teams.
- 2 That the Board of Trustees should comprise the elected Officers of the FHSC plus five elected Trustees. Its role would be to ensure that the FHSC was operating in accordance with its stated aims and would approve the Accounts and the Annual Report to the Charity Commission. The Board would also approve major structural changes to the FHSC, policies and strategies and recommend to the EGM changes to the Constitution. All elected Trustees should serve for a period of three years, re-electable for a further three years. The Constitution should also include a statement on how the FHSC should manage any vacancies in Trustee or Officer posts.
- 3 That the three existing main Officer roles should be augmented by a further two elected Officer roles, namely a Communications Officer and a Membership Services Officer.
- 4 That the Executive Committee be replaced by a Management Committee, reporting to the Board of Trustees and comprising of the five main Officers.
- 5 That a number of Operational Teams be established to focus on specific activities of the FHSC and to make recommendations to the Management Committee, to which they should report. The initial Operational Teams envisaged are:
  - Financial Operational Team: Deals with all reports and recommendations relating to the FHSC's finances including sales and Shop, proposes annual budget to the Management Committee.
  - Local Group Operational Team: Deals with all matters relating to operation of Local Groups, Cheshire Research Buddies seminars.
  - Education and Research Operational Team: Deals with matters relating to the Research Centres, Computer Club, educational and research projects, Research Seminars Series.
  - Membership Services Operational Team: Deals with all issues relating to renewals and recruitment of new members (including relevant aspects of the website), Ancestor distribution, Member Handbook any other membership services e.g. surveys.
  - Communications Operational Team: Deals with social media and publicity, Ancestor (except distribution), newsletters, website, attendance at external events, books and CD sales.
- 6 That the notice of the AGM and a call for nominations to fill forthcoming Officer/Trustee vacancies should be published annually in September Ancestor with a deadline of 30th September for receipt of nominations. From no later than 8th October, details of those who come forward for election

should be available on the website; members who do not use the website would be able to request a postal copy.

- 7 For online voting, one login=one vote; those with family memberships would need to have more than one login to have more than one vote. Anyone wishing to vote other than online would need to request a voting slip which should be returned to a designated Returning Officer before the AGM.

### **Other recommendations from the Focus Groups which have already been approved by the Executive Committee**

- All Trustees, including the Officers, should receive formal training in relation to their role and responsibilities in accordance with Charity Commission guidelines. A Register of Interests should also be maintained for all Trustees.
- The website should have a Governance section accessible by all members, under which they would have access to the Constitution, the Regulations for the Running of Groups, brief summary of business discussed by the Board of Trustees, AGM agenda and minutes, statements of candidates for election at AGM, policies.
- That the FHSC should remain a registered Charity.
- That the Financial Sub-Committee should review the 'Audit Trail' document.
- That, subject to any response from the FHSC's accountants, the Executive Committee, at its next meeting, should consider whether it would be appropriate to approach HMRC for guidance regarding Gift Aid.
- That a plan be developed for the phasing out of the Mobberley Research Centre over the next five years, coupled with the recruitment of volunteers for the FHSC's expected presences at the new Chester and Crewe CALS facilities.
- That a set of guidelines should be produced for Local Group leaders which would include overhauled Regulations for the Running of Groups, guidance on support available from the main FHSC, and principles and expectations.
- That an FHSC 'handbook' should be produced for members, to be published on the website and periodically updated.
- That the Trustees should set an FHSC educational programme to be delivered both online and in person via the Research Centres and Local Groups.
- To include an age group question on the membership form.
- To consider the age and condition of the IT hardware at both Research Centres, noting that the cost of any new equipment must be considered in the light of the move to the new History Centre by the Crewe Research Centre and the longevity of the centre at Mobberley.
- To devise and publish on the website a Safeguarding Policy and a Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

- Not to consider a fully-digital FHSC at this stage; however the FHSC needs to ensure that our online delivery is second to none, both in terms of the website and Zoom talks.
- Over time to merge some of the Local Groups or hold more combined face-to-face talks at various venues across the county.
- To consider an FHSC fair/conference, in collaboration with Cheshire Local History Association.
- To conduct regular, targeted surveys to ensure the FHSC is meeting membership requirements.

## Notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Family History Society of Cheshire

In accordance with Sections 9 and 11 of the Constitution and at the request of the Executive Committee, an Extraordinary General Meeting of the FHSC will take place electronically using Zoom on Saturday 20th July 2024 at 2.00pm. The meeting is being convened to consider a new Constitution for the FHSC, arising out of the recommendations made by the recent Focus Groups. The draft new Constitution, together with registration details for the meeting, will be made available to all members by no later than 1st July 2024 by email to those members for whom a valid email address is available and by postal copy to all others.

### EGM AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Chairman's Remarks
3. Consideration of a new Constitution for the FHSC
4. Any other business relevant to the EGM

### *Bebington News (2)*

*from the Birkenhead News, 11 June 1904*

*LOWER BEBINGTON - AMBULANCE CLASS - Results have just been received of the examination of the above class. All the students presented succeeded in passing the examination of the St John's Ambulance Association, thus reflecting great credit upon the lecturer (Dr Caine) and the instructor for practical work (Mr C K Atkinson) respectively. Names of the candidates are: First examination: A Bryning, A Cochrane, A Dillon, T Gray, H Hall, M Hodson, E Jones, T Jones, A Kirkpatrick, J Magna, B M Ormerod. Re-examination: G D Mather, W Murray, and R Smethurst. Final examination: C K Atkinson, J Podmore, J Pulford, E Turkington, J E Woodhall, I Lloyd, A? Margerison, E Davies, R Kerridge.*

## 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](http://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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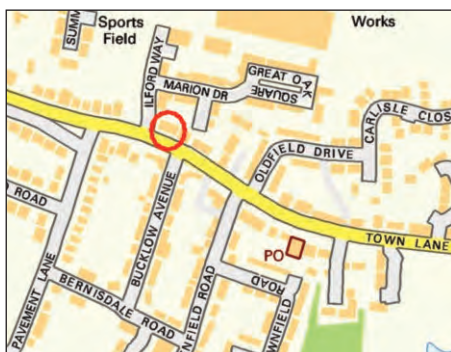
## Research Centre News

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](http://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



Now that summer is here you may be taking advantage of the warmer weather and light nights to visit the places your ancestors lived in. There are many resources to help you find the places though not necessarily the actual addresses of ancestors, e.g. census returns, electoral rolls, parish registers, wills and directories. Our volunteers will help you discover more about the places where your family lived.

I thought I would put the spotlight on the Society of Friends or Quakers in this journal. Peter Davenport and I have been busy digitising the memorial inscriptions of many churchyards in Cheshire and amongst them are several Quaker burial grounds. The Quakers were founded by George Fox in the 1650s and he built up quite a following. George travelled around the country living a simple life, believing that God can speak directly to everyone without the need for a church or clergyman. Like many other nonconformists of the time, the Quakers were persecuted because of their beliefs. They refused to attend the Established Church, pay Church Tithes, swear oaths, and were opposed to war. For their beliefs they were subjected to fines, whippings, imprisonment and banishment from their communities. We have a copy of the 1677 fines imposed on these early Quakers. The list covers a wide area of mid-Cheshire and includes names and occupations. The warrants were issued by the Parish Constables and include the fines paid - worth checking if you had Quakers in your family or have 'lost' an ancestor. The reference is CH/GEN 188.

At Mobberley we have the following burial grounds with some MIs:

Birkenhead Friends Meeting House MIs – ref: CD CHS 79

Eaton by Congleton Quaker MIs- ref: CH/M 166

Low Leighton Quaker MIs- ref: CH/M 228

Macclesfield Quaker MIs - ref: CD CHS 110

Mobberley Quaker Burial Ground - ref: CH/M 215

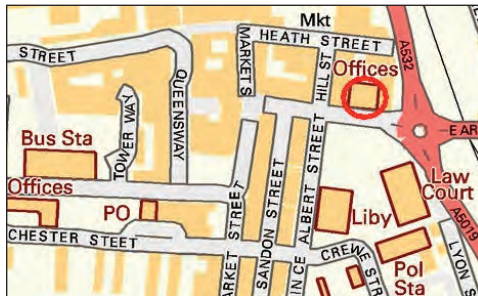
Wallasey Friends MIs - ref: CH/M 24 + CD CHS 79

Wilmslow Quaker MIs- ref: CH/M 183

Births, marriages and burials were recorded by the Quakers and in 1837 the government ordered all nonconformist registers be sent to the General Register Office. Many of these can be found on Find My Past and Ancestry. To find out more, Mobberley has a copy of the book *My Ancestors were Quakers* (ref: REL 32).

## 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

Thanks to our visitors who have co-operated with our volunteers during the few weeks when the lift in the Municipal Building was out of use during repairs.

We are also very happy that the society has been able to negotiate an Ancestry subscription on one computer in our room.

We open for one Saturday morning per month; the date is added at the beginning of the month to our website page. This extra session is not very well attended and I wanted to take this opportunity to remind you and encourage you to visit.

## 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](mailto:editor@fhsc.org.uk) or post a letter to the address inside the front cover, including your name and membership number, and tell me if you also want your email/postal address to be printed so other researchers can contact you.

### CHESHIRE ANCESTOR, March 2024

Hello Rosie

I have just read the Tarporley News (3) item at the foot of page 23 in the March 2024 CHESHIRE ANCESTOR and couldn't resist the temptation to see if modern records would reveal the marriage.

*Ed.: A solicitor advertised in the Chester Chronicle of 31 May 1873, offering a ten shilling reward for a copy of the certificate of marriage of Samuel WALLEY and Esther NEWTON, both from the Tarporley area, who were thought to have married in Chester between 1818 and 1830.*

I first tried Find my Past but didn't find the marriage so I then looked in Family Search which brought it up at the top of a list. The date was 31 August 1821 – so why didn't it appear in the Cheshire records on FmP?

A new search on FmP using the date showed that the surname of the groom had been transcribed as MALLEY but a look at the image of the marriage register clearly showed the surname to be WALLEY. I have reported the error to FmP.

I fear I may be too late to claim the 10 shillings reward!

**Michael Hulme**

**Membership No. 5820**

### ***Bebington News (3)***

*from the Chester Courant, 23 December 1874*

*Mary Connolly, 15, servant, Rock Ferry, was indicted for burglariously (sic) entering the dwelling house of Henry James Hutchinson, at Higher Bebington, and stealing therefrom a box containing a watch, the property of Edward Fiddes. Prisoner (was found) guilty and sentenced to four months' imprisonment with hard labour.*

## Family History Events

For news of family history events, see these online calendars

<http://geneva.weald.org.uk/doku.php>

[www.familyhistoryfederation.com/events](http://www.familyhistoryfederation.com/events)

[www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/genealogy/](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/genealogy/)

<https://conferencekeeper.org/>

### Cheshire Villages Great War Society presents Exhibitions Commemorating WWI and WWII

1 June 2024: D-Day and Wilmslow Servicemen  
at Handforth Community Centre, Old Road, Handforth SK9 3AZ

29 June 2024: Bickerton World War One Servicemen  
at The Village Hall, Long Lane, Bickerton, Cheshire SY14 8AU

Both events are open 10am - 5pm.

Admission is free and refreshments are available.

### 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](http://www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/2024-live)

### The Family History Show

10am - 4pm on Saturday 22nd June 2024

at Knavesmire Centre, York Racecourse, YO23 1EX

and 10am - 4pm on Saturday 5th October 2024

at Kempton Park Racecourse, Sunbury-on-Thames TW16 5AQ

Ask the Experts - Free Talks - Exhibitors - Archives

Tickets available at [TheFamilyHistoryShow.com](http://TheFamilyHistoryShow.com)

## **Wirral Archives Monthly Workshops**

**6 June:** The Wirral on the Home Front

**4 July:** History of the Wirral, from Prehistory to the Middle Ages

**8 August:** Birkenhead Park

**5 Sept:** History of the Wirral, from the Tudors to the Georgians

**3 October:** Port Sunlight Between the Wars

Workshops are at 2pm on the first Thursday of the month  
in the Search Room at Wirral Archives, Lower Ground Floor  
Cheshire Lines Building, Canning Street, Birkenhead, Wirral CH41 1ND  
[www.wirral.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/wirral-archives-service](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/wirral-archives-service)

## **FIBIS (Families in British India Society) 25 Years Conference**

27th - 29th September 2024 at DoubleTree by Hilton Oxford Belfry,  
London Road, Milton Common, Thame, Oxfordshire, OX9 2JW.

Residential or Day booking options

Booking essential at [www.fibis.org/25-years-conference/](http://www.fibis.org/25-years-conference/)

## **All About That Place 2024**

Friday 27th September to Sunday 6th October 2024

Join the family and local history virtual event of the year, broadcast over social media, consisting of very short (c.10 minute) talks on a plethora of subjects and supported by an interactive workbook of tasks and activities.

[www.subscribe.com/allaboutthatplace](http://www.subscribe.com/allaboutthatplace)

## **Cheshire Local History Association presents Cheshire History Day: The Future of Cheshire's Past**

9.30am-4.30pm, Saturday 19th October 2024

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

Ticket price £15

*The Future of Cheshire's Archives: a story shared*

*Cheshire Archaeology: current revelations and development challenges*

*PAS: public finds, local heritage and enhancing community engagement*

Tickets and information at [www.cheshirehistory.org.uk](http://www.cheshirehistory.org.uk)

# 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](http://www.findmypast.co.uk/blog/new) for *FindMyPast* news.

### British Home Children Collection

<https://www.findmypast.co.uk/blog/new/home-children-record-sets>

Between the 1860s and 1970s, over 130,000 children from orphanages and other institutions were sent to live in overseas dominions by the British government. Published in partnership with Library and Archives Canada, these four new sets of educational, work and travel records tell the stories of some of these children, known as British Home Children.

### WW2 Prisoners of War

<https://www.findmypast.co.uk/search-newspapers/results?newspaper=prisoners%20of%20war%20news&sid=197>

Prisoners of War News was published by the British Red Cross from November 1940. It gives the names and other details of British soldiers who were held as prisoners of war in Germany during the second World War

## News from Local Archives Offices

Wirral Archives reopened on 8th April.

Cheshire Archives will now close to research visitors on Thursday 25 July, not 27 June as originally planned. All online services are unaffected, and staff will continue to respond to research and digitisation requests. Access will resume when the new buildings open in Winter 2025/6.

For the latest news see the websites [www.cheshirearchives.org.uk](http://www.cheshirearchives.org.uk) and [www.wirral.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/wirral-archives-service](http://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](http://www.ancestry.co.uk/cs/recent-collections) for Ancestry news.

### **UK, Battle of Jutland Crew Lists, 1916**

[www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/63021/](http://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/63021/)

This collection contains ship crew lists from the Battle of Jutland in 1916. They contain names of those confirmed at the battle and also those who might have been at the battle. The data is from the Battle of Jutland Crew Lists Project.

[www.jutlandcrewlists.org/jcl-sheets](http://www.jutlandcrewlists.org/jcl-sheets)

### **UK, Admiralty Records of Marriages and Baptisms, 1754-1878**

[www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62629/](http://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62629/)

Images of marriage and baptism records for Royal Navy personnel dated between 1754 and 1878. The records appear in registration books and as individual certificates. The registration books typically have printed column headings with handwritten entries, and some records are simple handwritten notes. The information held in the records varies.

### **Blacksmiths and Related Trades Index, 1720-1940**

[www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62979/](http://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62979/)

This collection contains an index of tradespersons who were employed between 1550 and 2023. This is not a comprehensive list, and the majority of the records are from 1720-1940. Most records are for blacksmiths, but a variety of other related trades are included. Records are primarily from the United Kingdom, but records from the Commonwealth and the United States are also included. The data is from The Blacksmiths Index, compiled by Ann Spiro.

<https://blacksmiths.mygenwebs.com/index.php>

## The Genealogist

Go to [www.thegenealogist.co.uk/news/](http://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/news/) for *The Genealogist* news.

### **UK, Residential and Trade Directories 1900-1929**

Over 10 million new individuals recorded in directories from the early 1900s to 1929 including publications from all over the United Kingdom and Ireland have been added. These directories are filled with listings of people, their addresses and details of the places they lived in. Other directories list businesses and offer a fascinating glimpse into ancestors from this time.



# The Family History Society of Cheshire

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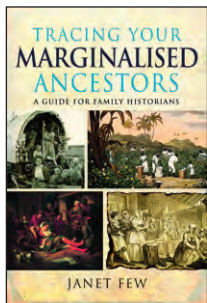
Membership Team (Angela Moore & Kevin Dean)

## Location of Groups



## Book Review

by Margaret Roberts



### *Tracing Your Marginalised Ancestors* by Janet Few

This book is an excellent guide that considers a challenging and therefore often-overlooked aspect of genealogy, the lives and stories of those who have been marginalised by history. Janet's meticulous research, combined with her passion for uncovering hidden narratives, makes this book an invaluable resource for anyone interested in exploring their family history beyond the mainstream.

Janet provides readers with practical advice on navigating historical records, understanding societal structures, and interpreting the often-scarce documentation available. Whether readers are searching for ancestors who were perhaps criminals, witches, disabled, immigrants, inebriates or economically disadvantaged, to name just a few of the categories, Janet offers guidance on where to look and how to piece together their stories. Janet further highlights the importance of empathy and understanding when researching ancestors who faced discrimination or oppression, encouraging readers, by contextualising historical events and public attitudes, to recognise the resilience and agency of their ancestors, even in the face of adversity.

Throughout the book, the author illustrates her points with fascinating case studies, detailing those often disadvantaged through circumstances beyond their control or comprehension. Janet's clear and concise writing makes this book easy to understand for the beginner while offering valuable insights for more experienced researchers. The book is well organized, with each chapter focusing on a different marginalised group and featuring practical tips, resources, and further reading suggestions.

In conclusion, the book is a must-read for anyone interested in uncovering the hidden stories within their family history. Janet Few's passion for genealogy and her dedication to amplifying marginalised voices make this an informative book which I highly recommend.

Published by Pen and Sword, February 2024. 208 pages, 30 illustrations.

ISBN: 9781399061858, Paperback £14.99, Epub £6.98

[www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/Tracing-Your-Marginalised-Ancestors-Paperback/p/24417](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/Tracing-Your-Marginalised-Ancestors-Paperback/p/24417)

## Two Edwardian Postcards of Port Sunlight

by Brian Lea

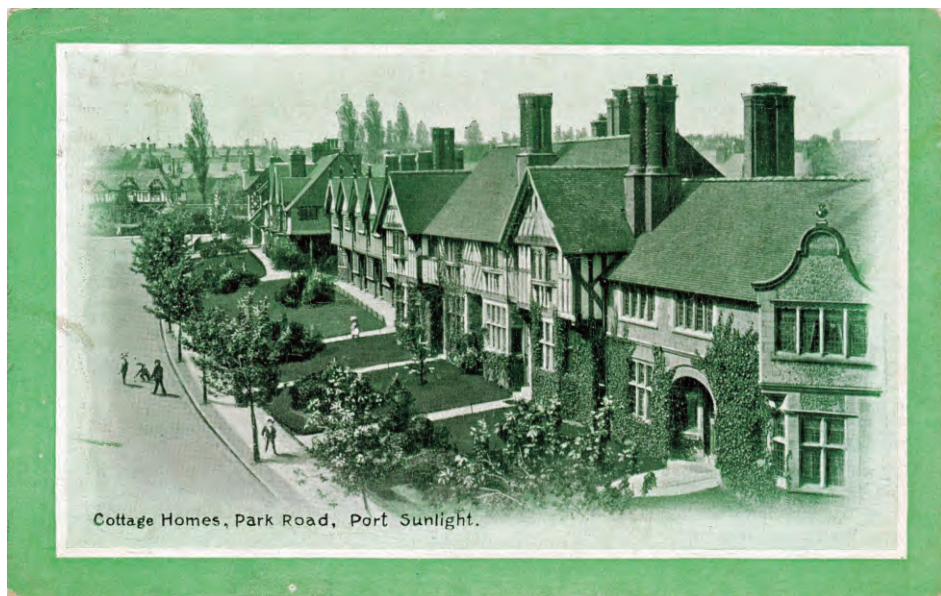


I have little local knowledge of Bebington, but seeing it appear as the focus for the Research Buddies meeting at the end of June, I had a faint memory that amongst my collection of old family postcards were two postcards of Port Sunlight village sent by my grandmother Nellie in May 1909. Not that my grandmother lived in the locality; more that she had them to hand at a time when sending postcards was *de rigueur* in the early 1900's. She could confidently post one of them from Openshaw on Wednesday May 12<sup>th</sup> to her sister Annie in Cheadle Hulme with the message: *Dear A, Coming tomorrow Thursday on 11.30. Don't forget to meet me. Yrs with love, N.W.* And all for a halfpenny stamp!

It may even be that the cards themselves were free – perhaps given away with Sunlight Soap. They are two of a set of *Pictorial Post Cards of Port Sunlight* printed and published by Lever Brothers and give every indication of promoting how well the company looked after its employees in the idyllic surroundings of the company village. It was a claim which was true in many respects, as one newspaper reporter testified.

*Cheshire...boasts no more beautiful village than that of Port Sunlight – small wonder it attracts sight-seers from all parts of the world...Our first impression is one of wonderment and pleasure – broad streets avenued [sic] with trees; large open spaces at the intersection of the principal avenues; creeper-clad cottages for the workpeople with lawn fore-courts and gardens...commodious dwellings at moderate rents, fitted with every need for comfort; sanitary, well-paved streets, leafy nooks, grassy lawns decked in flowers, do not exhaust the advantages of the fortunate workers at Port Sunlight.<sup>1</sup>*

Identifying the exact location and features of buildings on postcards isn't always easy. But having 900 Grade II listed buildings in Port Sunlight village helped. As well as the usual architectural details of listed buildings on the Historic England website, in this case there was also the benefit of some of the original architectural drawings available from the online Drawn Together exhibition.<sup>2</sup> Matching these to a contemporary OS 25inch map<sup>3</sup>, the present day Open Street Map<sup>4</sup> and modern Street View photographs<sup>5</sup> enabled me to identify the following: The **Bridge Street** postcard shows a terrace of four houses built in 1894, numbers 3,5,7 and 9. In the background, far right, is a further terrace of houses in Wood Street numbered 27, 29, 31 etc.



The **Park Road** postcard shows the houses from the corner of Bridge Street as far as Greendale Road in the far distance. The large house nearest right is number 23 (Bridge Cottage), with a row of three houses with jettied gables (numbers 19,

21 and 23) in the middle of the picture, and beyond them a further terrace of five houses, all with jettied gables (numbers 9, 11, 13, 15 and 17). All these houses were also built in 1894.

The year these postcards were sent, the electoral registers for 1909 show that all of these houses were occupied; details are shown below. I have also included the occupation of the head of household from census returns and the numbers of residents and rooms - kitchen, living/dining rooms and bedrooms but not bathrooms - from the 1911 census, to give some idea of the comparative sizes of these houses and their households. Numbers 9 to 17 appear to be quite small for the sizes of their households.

**Table 1: Bridge Street**

House	Rooms	Registered Occupier	Occupation of Head
3	6	William KENNEDY + ?	Not known
5	6	Edward BARON + 1	Engine fitter at soap works
7	6	Frederick BRAITHWAITE + 7	Joiner at soap works
9	6	John GASKILL + 6	Engineer at soap manufacturer

**Table 2: Park Road**

House	Rooms	Registered Occupier	Occupation of Head
9	4	Joseph GILL + 4	Labourer on wharf Sunlight Works
11	4	Thomas Brentnall TRUMAN + 3	Foreman, timber stores at soap manufacturer
13	4	Frederick Reginald CHAPMAN + 4	Clerk at Lever Bros.
15	4	John TAYLOR + 5	Barge engineer Sunlight port
17	4	Isaiah Clutton HUXLEY + 3	Fireman/Boilerman at soap manufacturer
19	8	Harry Leaton EDWARDS + 3	Analyst at soap manufacturer
21	8	Thomas FAULKNER + 3	Glycerine Manager at soap manufacturer
23	8	Edward TURNER + 2	Head Teacher

By far the most spacious houses are the three in the foreground on the Park Road postcard. Of these, number 23 seems to be the most elegant. Hardly surprising then, that it was the only one named (*Bridge Cottage*) and that it was the home of Lord Leverhulme himself in 1896-7. Whether four-roomed or twice as large, it's



interesting to note that the National Heritage architectural description for all of these properties ends with the most practical of words - *with privies*.

Electoral rolls, census returns and architectural drawings are all very well, but the houses pictured on the two postcards remain just names, numbers and architectural features until we look at them as homes. From the early 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards, these were real homes with real people experiencing all the ups and downs of life. The figures depicted walking and playing in these postcard pictures may well be amongst those named on the 1901 and 1911 censuses.

It's hardly surprising that I found almost all those of working age in the census returns for these homes in Bridge Street and Park Road were working for Lever Brothers, with a range of occupations. Joseph GILL was a labourer; the older daughters of the TAYLOR household and two daughters of the GASKILLS were employed making up cardboard boxes; the eldest son in the BRAITHWAITE family worked as a soap cutter and John GASKILL's elder son worked as an apprentice plumber. In the three largest houses, numbers 19, 21 and 23 Park Road, lived a department manager, an industrial chemist and the headteacher of the village school. The EDWARDS family at number 19 was the only household to employ a live-in servant, Minnie JONES, from Shropshire.

I only had a few days to write this article, but the most interesting part came as I started to look into these families' everyday lives, when I searched through newspaper articles and (with due diligence) some of the openly accessible family trees on the Ancestry website.

At least three of our residents were deeply involved in the local community. Frederick BRAITHWAITE at 7 Bridge Street was voted in as one of two Foundation Managers from the local community for the schools in Port Sunlight<sup>6</sup> as well as serving as a local councillor for Port Sunlight Ward alongside his near neighbour Thomas FAULKENER of 21 Park Road<sup>7</sup>. Edward TURNER at Bridge Cottage, on his death at just 50 years old in 1914, was remembered as *one of the most respected and untiring workers in the social and religious, as well as the educational life of the community...being an officer of Christ Church, secretary of the Port Sunlight Literary Society [and] President of the Cheshire County Teachers' Association...His death has caused profound sorrow throughout the village*<sup>8</sup>. Edward's widow, Frances, afterwards moved with her daughter Muriel to a house in nearby Greendale Road. The census of 1921 finds her well into her 60's teaching infants at Chester Road School, New Ferry. Later, her daughter Muriel would go on to marry an industrial chemist called Walter DICKEN and go to live in Croydon where her mother would join them in her old age.

Further tragedies had also come to other homes on our postcards. In the summer of 1908 Thomas TRUMAN of 11 Park Road was given the unenviable task of identifying his nephew's body. Thomas James TRUMAN had a few days earlier gone out for a swim with two friends whilst on a camping holiday, near the pier at Rhos, close to Colwyn Bay. The inquest report<sup>9</sup> described the tragedy:

*They were about five minutes in the water [when one said] "Where's Tom? Are you all right, Tom?" He heard a shout for help and saw [Tom with] his hands up as though in trouble, and he disappeared...*

The previous autumn, across the village green at 5 Bridge Street, Edward BARON and his family were dealing with the sudden death of his father, George BARON.

*One of the oldest inhabitants of Port Sunlight...who had lived with his son at 5 Bridge Street...and was a hale old man to within a few days of his death... He had been in the employ of Lever Brothers for about 17 years and had been enjoying the pension which that firm gave to their old servants...The funeral was well attended...the neighbours testified to their respect of the deceased by lowering their blinds on the day of the funeral.<sup>10</sup>*

In 1909, when our postcards were written, the dark shadow of a world war was just over five years away. All these households would be affected in some way, some more than others. So it was for the TRUMAN family at 11 Park Road. After the tragic drowning of Thomas and Rosina's nephew in 1908 came the news in May 1917 that their only son, Corporal Eric Brentnall TRUMAN had been killed in action.<sup>11</sup> As was the case in many families up and down the land, their son's future prospects had looked so good in those years immediately before the war. Whilst at school in Port Sunlight, Eric had won a scholarship to Toxteth Technical School, which led to an engineering apprenticeship at Lever Brothers. Four days before his nineteenth birthday in September 1914 and just 5½ weeks after war had been declared, he enlisted. A year later he was posted to serve in the Lewis Gun Section, 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Cheshire Regiment, where he saw action in France and Flanders. We can only imagine the difficult days which lay ahead for the family when Eric was posted missing on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1916. Long days of uncertain hope were shattered ten months later when the family received the news that Eric had been killed (in action on the Somme) the previous July.

Other parents saw their children grow up and leave their family home with hopes for a happy future undimmed by tragedy. The Edwardian era was a time of mass migration, especially to the dominions and colonies of the British Empire, which by 1920 had expanded to cover almost a quarter of the world. In the early 1900s Canada was actively promoting the settlement of its territories – especially

Ontario. In 1906 almost 150,000 immigrants entered Canada, the vast majority from the British Isles.<sup>12</sup>

One of them was the elder son of Harry and Annie EDWARDS, John Muir EDWARDS. He left the family home at 19 Park Road towards the end of October 1906 at the age of 21, setting sail from Liverpool for a seven-day voyage to New York on the Cunard liner RMS *Campania*. The New York Arriving Passenger List for the voyage notes that he was in transit to Toronto. His declared occupation was a clerk and his passage was paid for by Lever Brothers. John was to settle in Toronto, marrying Anita PEARSON in 1914.

Looking at the images of Park Road and Bridge Street today on Street View, the houses on our two postcards are still easily recognisable, though the *leafy nooks and grassy lawns decked in flowers* of 1905 have largely disappeared. "If only walls could talk," the saying goes. The walls of the houses on our postcards might not have talked, but we have nevertheless been given the privilege of a brief glimpse into the everyday lives of those who occupied these homes in Park Road and Bridge Street in the early years of the last century.

#### References:

- 1 *Gloucestershire Chronicle*: 18<sup>th</sup> March 1905
- 2 <https://drawntogether.portsunlightvillage.com>
- 3 Ordnance Survey 25" Sheet: Cheshire X111.16 Bebington & Bromborough, Rev. 1908-1909. Pub. 1917
- 4 Open Street Map
- 5 [www.bing.com/search?q=map+of+port+sunlight+village](http://www.bing.com/search?q=map+of+port+sunlight+village)
- 6 *Birkenhead News*: 28<sup>th</sup> March 1903
- 7 *Birkenhead News*: 17<sup>th</sup> March 1906 and 6<sup>th</sup> March 1907
- 8 *Birkenhead News*: 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1914
- 9 *North Wales Weekly News*: 21<sup>st</sup> August 1908
- 10 *Birkenhead News*: 12<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1907
- 11 *Birkenhead News*: 5<sup>th</sup> May 1917; *De Ruigny's Roll of Honour 1914-19 Vol. 4*
- 12 Statistics Canada; *100 Years of Immigration in Canada*, Boyd M. & Vickers M., Canadian Social Trends Autumn 2000

### ***Bebington News (4)***

*from the Cheshire Observer, 3 October 1874*

**MARRIAGE** – *On the 30th ult at the Parish Church, Lower Bebington, by the Rev George Troughton, LL.B., William Corrie, of Birkenhead, to Jane, eldest daughter of Mr John Oxton, of Higher Bebington.*

## What an Amazing Age! Elizabeth HULME 1748-1851

by Lynford Dean  
Membership no. 3160

Imagine my astonishment when I came across this memorial stone while researching my HULME family in Rushall, Staffordshire! Joseph and Elizabeth HULME are my 3x great-grandparents, and the inscription reads:

*Sacred to the Memory of  
JOSEPH HULME*

*Died December 7th 1835*

*Aged 85 Years*

*Also of*

*ELIZABETH HULME*

*Died January 22nd 1851*

*Aged 103 Years*



Initially I was sceptical as to how anyone could have lived to the age of 103 in a time before pills, potions and antibiotics existed as we know them today. We all know how family stories can quickly develop and our ancestors can become heroes or villains as the narrator wishes!

To try to substantiate Elizabeth's great age, I have found a possible wedding, Joseph HULME and Elizabeth WRIGHT married at St Michael's Church, Lichfield on 2nd February 1780; but my work on the parish registers to ascertain the accuracy of their births is still ongoing and I have relied on other Ancestry researchers work to fill in the gaps for now.

I wonder how many other FHSC members have come across examples of great ages like this in their research?

*Ed.: Find My Past has images of Staffordshire records, including the burials of Joseph and Elizabeth and a copy of Joseph's will.*

# The HUTCHINSON Family's Court Cases: John's Case

Sheila Jones

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In CHESHIRE ANCESTOR Volume 54 Issue 3 (March 2024) I wrote about the HUTCHINSON family and specifically, Maria HUTCHINSON's breach of promise court case in 1854. Maria, however, had not been the first of the HUTCHINSON siblings to appear in court; that dubious honour fell to one of her brothers.

John HUTCHINSON was born on 13th December 1833 in Tottington, near Bury in Lancashire, the third-born son of Thomas and Anne, although their second-born, also called John, had only lived for seven weeks in the previous year. The second John's baptism took place at St Anne's Church, Tottington on Christmas Day 1833. In 1841, he was living with his parents and siblings in Warrington but in January 1850, just a few weeks past his sixteenth birthday, he was apprenticed to James CHAMP - a *respectable master butcher* - in Newcastle-under-Lyme in Staffordshire, the original home of his parents. The premium which his father (presumably) had to pay for the apprenticeship was £15, of which an initial payment of £7 10s was made.

Nathaniel WHITLOCK, writing in his book *The Complete Book of Trades: or the Parent's Guide or Youth's Instructor in the Choice of a Trade, Business or Profession* in 1842, commented, *There is no great capacity or education required in order to become a good Butcher: any strong healthy boy, with a common understanding, that has no dislike to a laborious, dirty employment, may learn the art of killing and dressing an animal in a short time.* He did go on to say that, for those operating in London, *a quick, clever boy will perform this business with more neatness and a greater rapidity than a dull youth will. Though this is a dirty business, it is by no means an unwholesome one, if we may judge from the hearty appearance of the boys employed in this business in the metropolis.* This latter quote is of particular interest with regard to John HUTCHINSON's case, as it would appear that his own experience of apprenticeship to a master butcher might have been rather less than wholesome.

On 4th October 1851, the *Staffordshire Advertiser* printed an article headed *Charge by an Apprentice against his Master.* James CHAMP had been summoned by John *on charges, first, for supplying him with unwholesome food, and next, with assaulting*

him. John gave evidence that, in April that year, a sheep had been found dead in a field and his master had ordered it to be skinned, dressed and taken to market. What was not sold was then brought home, including a shoulder of mutton which was cooked and served to the apprentices for Sunday dinner, after which John had been taken ill; on that day, his master and his family had eaten *flat ribs of beef... and did not eat of the shoulder of mutton*. He also said that *on another occasion had broth been set before him, made from old killed meat, with maggots in it large enough to fish with. This also made him sick, and when he complained to his mistress about it, she told him that if he did not eat it that there was nothing else for him*. John further alleged that on 4th June, during an altercation about a dog, his master struck him and *pulled a lock of hair from his head*.

The paper reported that Mr CHAMP's lawyer *subjected the apprentice to a searching cross-examination, in the course of which he said that his master supplied many respectable persons with meat, and that no person killed better than he did. He admitted that he had been blamed for not going to church and that he had run away from his master's service, and Mr CHAMP had threatened to take proceedings against him*.

This admission certainly does appear to be true. The 1851 census, taken on 30th March 1851, shortly before the 'mutton incident', shows the CHAMP family living at Aston, ten miles from Newcastle-under-Lyme, just across the county boundary into Shropshire. The head of the household is James CHAMP, aged 34, *a farmer and butcher 60 acres employing 4 men*, married to Mary and with seven children aged between 4 months and 14 years old. Also in the household are a female visitor, a male butcher's apprentice (William HILL, aged 19) and three male and one female servant (the latter being Anne DOBSON, aged 12). John HUTCHINSON is therefore conspicuous by his absence; he is actually to be found nearly fifty miles away, at 11 Rex Street, Hulme, Manchester, the home of his paternal aunt and her husband, Maria and George BROUGH.

The other apprentice, named as William HILL in the census but John HILL in the newspaper report, was called as a witness for John HUTCHINSON's case and *corroborated the main portion of the complainant's statement, (he having at the request of his master dressed the dead sheep) and said that when the shoulder was cooked he eat [sic] a little, but it went against him*. However, when cross-examined, HILL also admitted that *the defendant had once taken proceedings against him for leaving his service*.

John's father, Thomas HUTCHINSON, who had been living in Brigg in Lincolnshire at the time of the 1851 census, was also called *and stated that his son had made complaints to him of his master's treatment towards him*.

James CHAMP's lawyer suggested *that the complainant having been away from his master's service since June, the present proceedings were simply a retaliation for having threatened to bring him before the magistrates for absconding.* The lawyer called the young domestic servant, Ann [sic] DOBSON, as a witness and she testified that she assisted with the cooking of the food and had never seen any maggots in it. Two master butchers from Newcastle-under-Lyme, John TURNER and Robert MAYER, both of whom had served their own apprenticeships under James CHAMP, testified *that they lived well in his service, and that the quality of the food given was good. No one killed better meat than Mr CHAMP did.*

The upshot was that the magistrates clearly decided that the apprenticeship was no longer tenable on either side. They cancelled the indentures and ordered James CHAMP to refund £2 10s, a portion of the original premium received. As they additionally ordered James CHAMP to pay the costs, it would also appear that they did have some sympathy with John HUTCHINSON.

Quite what John did after that is not clear. By 1854, when he was twenty, his father had died in Bromborough, Cheshire, leaving him one-fourth part of Trust funds when he attained the age of 21 years. By 1861, however, John was living in Birkenhead, at 50 Watson Street, with his widowed mother, Ann, and his youngest brother, William Charles. John's occupation is given as butcher, suggesting that he completed his apprenticeship and it is possible that he may have done so in Birkenhead as his eldest brother, Thomas James, was already living there at the time of the 1851 census so might have taken him in. Interestingly, William Charles's occupation is also given as butcher. At the time of Thomas HUTCHINSON's death, William Charles was only ten years old and provision was made in his father's will for a portion of his share of the Trust funds, up to £25, to be set aside to pay for an appropriate apprenticeship, so it is possible that it was decided to keep this money within the family and for William Charles to be apprenticed to John.

John continued in trade as a butcher in Birkenhead. He is listed under that trade in the 1864 *Morris & Co. Directory* and in the 1878 *Post Office Directory of Cheshire*, still listed at 50 Watson Street in 1878. He married Hannah THORPE at St. Mary's Church, Birkenhead on 10th September 1865, with his sister Maria LANDERS, née HUTCHINSON as one of the witnesses. The couple had three daughters and three sons, although of these, only one daughter and two sons survived infancy. In the 1871 census, his paternal aunt, Maria BROUGH - with whom he had been living at the time of the 1851 census - was living with him as a widow; his brother William Charles had died two years earlier. By the time of the 1881 census, the family had finally moved from 50 Watson Street and were now at 5 Bedford

Street, with John still listed as a butcher, although he is not listed in the 1883 *Slater's Directory*.

It is therefore slightly surprising to find John in the 1891 census at 105 Vittoria Street, Birkenhead, listed as a railway porter! Whatever the reason for the change in occupation, John clearly regarded himself as first and foremost a butcher, given that in the 1901 census, still at 105 Vittoria Street living as a widower with two of his children, he gave his occupation as *retired butcher*. In the 1911 census, now a boarder at 2 Rhyl Street, Birkenhead, he was simply an *old age pensioner*, and he died in the first quarter of 1915, aged 81.

The HUTCHINSON's legal history, though, is not yet complete. The last court case to be followed is that of Thomas HUTCHINSON's eldest son, Thomas James – and this one was not a simple Magistrate case but rather a Cheshire Quarter Sessions' case with Thomas James in the dock! *To be continued...*

## Runcorn M.I.s

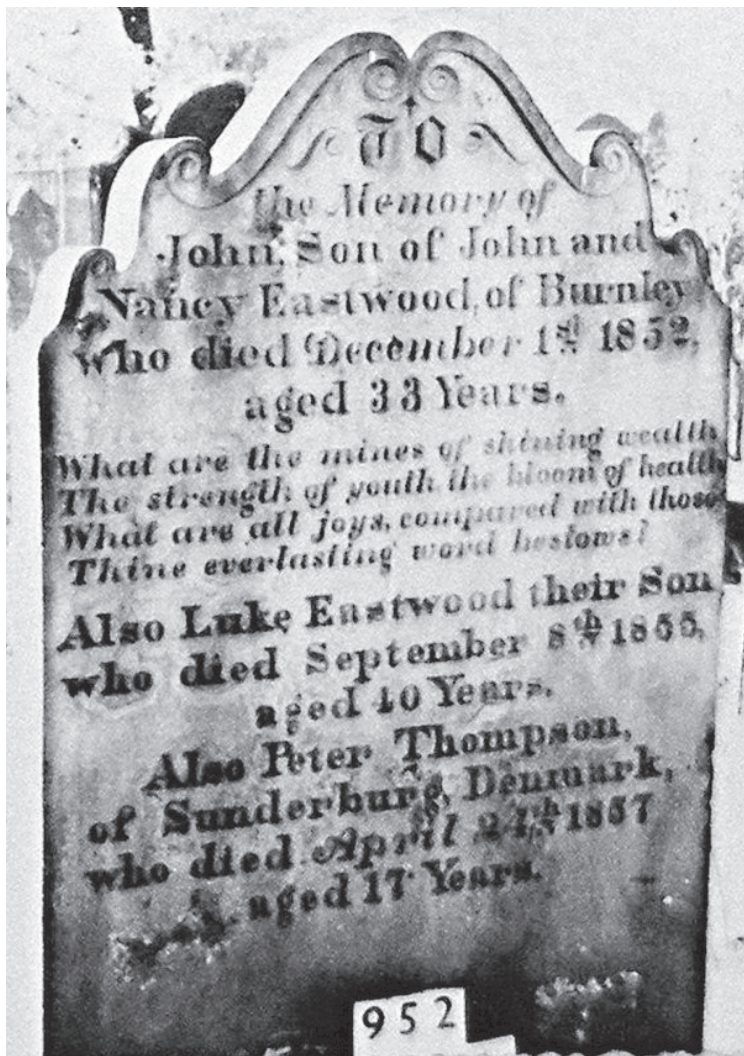
*Linda Wilding*  
*Runcorn Group*

I have been transcribing M.I.s for All Saints Church (the oldest church in Runcorn) for the Runcorn Group, and have come across some stray burials that might interest our members. The transcriptions are being done from photos of the gravestones which were taken before the council started laying the stones flat in the mid-1960s. The stones are very old – the earliest I spotted was dated 1780. Most of them were very worn even before they were laid flat. All Saints Church and Bethesda Church were the only burial places in Runcorn for many years, until Greenway Road cemetery was opened in 1860.

The photographs include a number, which is the grave number. There is a plan of the churchyard showing the grave numbers which can be viewed on Runcorn Group research nights. We also have both a hard copy and a digital copy of the grave photos.

On the next page is a photo of grave no. 952, belonging to the EASTWOOD family. It commemorates **John, the son of John and Nancy EASTWOOD of Burnley, who died December 1st 1852, aged 33 years. Also Luke EASTWOOD their son who died September 8th 1855 aged 10 years. Also Peter THOMPSON of Sunderberg, Denmark who died April 24th 1857 aged 17 years.**





The Memory of  
John, Son of John and  
Nancy Eastwood, of Burnley  
who died December 1<sup>st</sup> 1852,  
aged 33 Years.

What are the mines of shining wealth,  
The strength of youth the bloom of health,  
What are all joys, compared with those  
Thine everlasting word bestows?

Also Luke Eastwood their Son  
who died September 8<sup>th</sup> 1855,  
aged 10 Years.

Also Peter Thompson,  
of Sunderburg, Denmark,  
who died April 24<sup>th</sup> 1857  
aged 17 Years.

### *Bebington News (5)*

from the Cheshire Observer, 3 October 1874

FATAL ACCIDENT AT BEBINGTON - About noon on Wednesday, a woman named Hannah Peers, the wife of an ex-police-officer, living at Green-lane cottages, Higher Bebington, was killed whilst crossing the railway at the station by a goods train from Chester. She was crushed in a shocking manner, and her body was removed to the Railway Inn, Lower Bebington, to await an inquest.

## The WHITTAKER Family of Chorley Hall: From Mobberley to Salt Lake City

by Val Kennewell  
Membership no. 10161

My five times great-grandfather Andrew WHITTAKER of Chorley near Wilmslow had three sons: Isaac, Ralph and Andrew. Andrew died young after having two sons with his wife Hannah (née OAKES), John and Isaac. They were baptised in Alderley in 1790 and 1791. Isaac appears to have married Ellen COPE in 1811 in Bucknall, Staffordshire. He married by licence and, as he was under age, permission was given by his guardians Ralph and Isaac. His brother John was a witness. This was a surprising location, and I can find no reason why Isaac might have turned up in Staffordshire but these names certainly seemed to fit for his uncles and his brother. Isaac died in Lane End, Staffordshire in 1841, but did not appear on the Census.

I have assumed that Andrew's other son was John WHITTAKER of Chorley who married the widow Ann CHANTLER by licence in Mobberley later in 1811, giving his age as twenty-three (born in 1788?) There were several John and Ann WHITTAKERs having children in that area at that time but it seems likely that Andrew Isaac WHITTAKER, born in 1812 and baptised at Mobberley, was their son.

Interestingly, the inclusion of Andrew Isaac WHITTAKER in my tree generated a large number of Ancestry hints. At the moment, Andrew Isaac WHITTAKER appears in 550 Ancestry trees. From these I found out that he was a well-documented member of the Church of the Latter-day Saints (LDS), and an early settler in Salt Lake City.

This Andrew Isaac (b 1812) has biographies by his granddaughter Martha R BRIMHALL and great grandson Oran WHITTAKER available on Family Search ([www.familysearch.org/patron/v2/TH-301-43733-229-91/dist.pdf?ctx=ArtCtxPublic](http://www.familysearch.org/patron/v2/TH-301-43733-229-91/dist.pdf?ctx=ArtCtxPublic)). These have obviously been copied from handwritten material and include the belief that Andrew Isaac was a *lawyer*. This has been much repeated without question, but the biography suggests that he was a *very handy man in the early days of pioneering* and it seems more likely that he was a *sawyer*. This is borne out by census entries and birth records.

However, I was not sure that this person was really the Andrew Isaac WHITTAKER born in Mobberley. Find a Grave suggests that he has two

gravestones in Salt Lake City ([www.findagrave.com/memorial/27687905/andrew-isaac-whittaker](http://www.findagrave.com/memorial/27687905/andrew-isaac-whittaker)); the first corresponds to his death record in 1874 with the name *Isaac WHITTAKER* and the other erected later by his grandchildren has the name *Andrew Isaac WHITTAKER* - a name not used in this person's adult life. I suspected that in search of a pedigree for him they had adopted a name that was a close fit for his date of birth (1812). The authors of the two biographies were born a long time after his death and are not even consistent with each other.

This American *Isaac WHITTAKER* is easy to track, both through LDS and through birth, marriage and census records. He is shown living in Salt Lake City on the 1850, 1860 and 1870 US censuses as a sawyer and later a farmer. In 1850 he was married to Sarah and in 1860 and 1870 he was married to Betsy. Although the censuses do not reveal more than one wife at once, he married his second wife before his first wife died. Martha BRIMHALL tells the tale of how, when advised by his friends that his wife was getting past a productive age, he had a dream about a young girl. He told his wife that he had seen his future wife, so when a new girl in town knocked at her door to buy some milk, Sarah recognised her and invited her in.

This Isaac's membership of The Church of the Latter-day Saints can be traced back to when he lived in Staffordshire and he is mentioned in the memoirs of Wilford WOODRUFF, a prominent LDS elder and missionary. In January 1840 Wilford *spent the night in Burslem and took supper with Brother Isaac WHITTAKER*. There are several mentions connecting Isaac to the Lane End area of Stoke-on-Trent at <https://wilfordwoodruffpapers.org/subjects/andrew-isaac-whittaker>

Isaac had married his first wife, Sarah AMASON, in Wolstanton, Staffordshire in 1832. The births of five children were recorded: Ellen (1833), Grace (1835), John (1837), Sarah (1838) and Elizabeth (1840). The last two were registered at Furnace Road, Lane End to father Isaac, a sawyer. In 1841 five of the family boarded the ship *Rochester* in Liverpool and arrived in New York on the 20th of April. Isaac and Sarah were accompanied by Grace (who later became Julia Ann), Sarah and Mary Ann (who had been Elizabeth at birth). Also on board the *Rochester*, returning to America, were LDS elders Brigham YOUNG, Wilford WOODRUFF and Heber C KIMBALL. By 1844 Wilford WOODRUFF records Isaac as being in Nauvoo, Illinois which was the Mormon (now LDS) capital at that time. The Mormons encountered prejudice and aggression from people in the neighbouring towns and, in fact, their leader Joseph SMITH was killed nearby. In 1846 Brigham YOUNG initiated the exodus away from Nauvoo which took them across the Mississippi river and thirteen hundred miles to the Salt Lake area. Isaac probably arrived in Salt Lake City in about 1849.

Only three children left for America with Isaac and Sarah. Ellen and John died of measles in late 1837. As this was just into the era of civil registration it meant that I was able to download their death certificates. John's certificate contained unexpected information. The child's death was registered by his grandfather John WHITTAKER.

Further evidence that John WHITTAKER formerly of Mobberley was in Stoke comes not only from the fact that his brother was there but also from a marriage licence for a John WHITTAKER, widower, who married Ann TOWNSEND in Stoke-on-Trent in 1817. To me, the signature on the licence was very similar to that on the marriage licence of John to Ann CHANTLER.

Martha R BRIMHALL's biography is consistent with my pedigree for Andrew Isaac WHITTAKER. She states that he was the son of John and Ann WHITTAKER born 1812 in Mobberley and that his parents moved to Lane End, Staffordshire. However, Oran WHITTAKER's biography states that Andrew Isaac's mother died in 1816 and his father died in 1818 and that he went to live with an uncle in Lane End. If John WHITTAKER registered his grandson's death in 1837, he could not have died in 1818. Had Oran WHITTAKER incorrectly used the vast genealogical resources of Salt Lake City to research his great grandfather rather than relying on oral history? It does seem likely that Ann WHITTAKER died in Mobberley in late 1815; there is a possible burial record which would make her considerably older than John. Thanks to the FHSC's memorial inscriptions I was able to find a John WHITTAKER, married to Ann HOUGH, who was buried in Knutsford in 1818 and died aged thirty-four. This Ann died in 1857 and is buried in the same grave so they are not a fit for the parents of Andrew Isaac described in the biographies. This John and Ann were unlikely to be the parents of Andrew Isaac in any case as their children were born in Knutsford, not Mobberley, as Andrew Isaac was.

I may, of course, be mistaken in my research as, out of the 550 trees, not one agrees with me. This disagreement stems from the idea in the Oran WHITTAKER biography that John WHITTAKER died in 1818 at the age of thirty-four. This has led to researchers turning themselves inside out to find a suitable John WHITTAKER born in 1784. A favourite candidate is John an illegitimate son of Ralph WHITTAKER and Hannah BRAY which is why my 5x great-grandfather Andrew appears in 179 trees (for the wrong reason!)

My account of Andrew Isaac does contain some unresolved issues; not least that I cannot find a death or census record for John WHITTAKER after 1837. John and Ann appear to have had another child, Julia, baptised in 1814. She was buried in 1819 with her abode given as Mobberley, which is not consistent with John being

in Stoke at that time. It seems likely that Ann was the widow of Thomas CHANTLER. They had three daughters; two named Phyllis and one named Mary. One Phyllis is buried with Thomas and another also has a burial record, but I can find no further trace of Mary. Another slight discrepancy is that although John WHITTAKER's signatures on the marriage licence to both Ann CHANTLER and Ann TOWNSEND match well, the signature as a witness to his brother's marriage is slightly different.

Finally, I would have hoped to find a DNA match with a distant cousin among Andrew Isaac's many American descendants but there are none so far. However, I am hopeful that, despite his being a 2nd cousin 4x removed, a match will emerge one day.

## **BASEY Brick Wall Busted – I think!**

*by Gren Dix*  
*Membership no. 4174*

Below are details of a genealogical brick wall. As well as giving the results of breaking it, I will give details of the process. This meant following at least three generations and also casting the net wider than just the direct line.

### **Who is Lydia?**

I was looking into Isaac BESEY's genealogy. My starting point for brick wall busting was the 1851 census:

1851 Census, Rackheath, Norfolk

Isaac BESSY     head, mar, 46, farm labourer, born Rackheath (*about 1805*)  
Lydia BESSY    wife, mar, 64, (no occupation), born Rackheath (*about 1787*)

Thus he was married to Lydia, who was born in Rackheath (a few miles north east of Norwich) in about 1787.

It was fairly easy to find Isaac's marriage in 1822 (when he was 18) to Lydia NICHOLSON. Looking carefully at the details on the marriage certificate showed that she was a widow. She was nearly two decades older than him (a toy boy?). From her age she probably married for the first time between 1805 and 1822, probably in or near Rackheath. I searched 1813 +/- 10 years; only a few possibilities were found. In 1804, at Rackheath, Thomas NICHOLSON married

Lydia KEMP (so she was then about 17). I looked for the baptism of Lydia KEMP in Rackheath, and then in all of Norfolk, but none looked suitable. I then looked for any KEMPs born in Rackheath (her probable home town) around 1777-1797 and found only one family, that of John and Ann KEMP. Their children were:

Mary, born 1777  
Sarah, born 1780  
(no Lydia born 1787)  
John, born 1788  
Jessie, born 1793

At this stage it looks as if 'my' Lydia could be in the above family even though I haven't found her baptism. At this point I looked at the genealogy of Lydia's possible siblings and at the descendants of Lydia and both her husbands.

I found that Lydia had a son, Ebon, from her first marriage and also a grandchild named Ebon. In the 19th century there were only six occurrences of the name Ebon in Norfolk. The clincher was that her sister Sarah married March BULIFANT and Lydia had a grandchild named March Bulifant BASEY.

#### Points to remember

- Look at the details of a marriage to find the couple's marital status and possible relatives as witnesses.
- If you cannot find a baptism look for other possible family members - is there a 'gap' in the births, in which the person might fit?
- Look for names repeated across generations.

### ***Bebington News (6)***

*from the Birkenhead News, 9 July 1904*

**DEATH OF MR J CLARK** - *On Thursday afternoon, Mr John Clark passed away at his residence, 44 Old Chester-road, Tranmere. The deceased gentleman, who was in his 60th yea, was a native of Chester, but came to Birkenhead upwards of 40 years ago to enter the employment of Messrs Laird Bros Ltd. He had been with them less than five years when he was appointed a foreman rivetter. Mr Clark had suffered from ill-health for nearly three years, and during the past eighteen months was unable to leave the house, his complaint being cancer in the throat. He leaves a widow (Mrs Rebecca Clark) to mourn his loss. The interment will take place at half-past three this afternoon at Bebington Cemetery.*

# BASKERVILLEs of Goostrey

by Ian Pidgeon

Membership no. 9481

Email: [i.c.pidgeon@ntlworld.com](mailto:i.c.pidgeon@ntlworld.com)

This article was first published in the *North Cheshire Family Historian*.

In the March 2024 issue of the *CHESHIRE ANCESTOR* I described how my brick wall had crumbled when I discovered an 1857 document in the possession of a 4th cousin which showed that our 3x great-grandfather Henry PIDGEON had come to Stockport from Cullompton, Devon. His ancestors have since been traced back to the small village of Cotleigh, Devon in the early 1600s, but that is a story of more interest to the people of Devon than of North Cheshire. However, in the same tin box where the document was found, there was another document, dating from nearly a century earlier.

On the 19th December 1764, Articles of Agreement were signed by *David BASKERVYLE of Blackden in the county of Chester Yeoman (only Son and Heir of Daniel BASKERVYLE late of Blackden aforesaid Yeoman deceased)* and *Anne WASHINGTON of Middlewich in the said County Widow and Relict of John WASHINGTON late of Middlewich aforesaid Gardener deceased*. Blackden was a hamlet in the chapelry of Goostrey. This was a pre-marital agreement, *Whereas a Marriage is intended (by God's permission) to be shortly had and solemnised between the said David BASKERVYLE and Anne WASHINGTON*, running to four pages of 18th century legalese.

In essence, David had inherited from his father Daniel a three-acre plot of land leased from John KINSEY (possibly the grandson of the 1673 landowner of the same name, who was also mentioned in the above article), and also a cottage, in which his parents had lived, and leased from *John BASKERVYLE (now GLEGG) Esquire William FALLOWES Gentleman and the said John KINSEY*. Two trustees had been appointed, and one of their first tasks was to ensure that David's mother Hester BASKERVYLE was allowed to continue living in the cottage for the rest of her natural life. Secondly, money was to be taken from the profits and rental income from the land so that £12 could be paid for the apprenticeship of Edward WASHINGTON, Anne's son by her deceased husband. He was also to receive *all necessary and suitable Clothes* during his apprenticeship. A further £10 was to be shared equally between Edward and his brother John WASHINGTON when they

each attained the age of 21. It was also agreed that Anne would continue to benefit from a property of her own near Middlewich, and that David would have no control over her income from it.

When this document came to light, the question it raised was, why was it in the possession of the PIDGEON family? After Henry PIDGEON arrived in Stockport, the first record of his presence there was his marriage – to Ann BASKETFIELD, widow, in 1792. The name of BASKERVILLE has already been spelt in two different ways above, could BASKETFIELD be yet another? And if so, whose widow was she?

The marriage of David BASKERVYLE and Anne WASHINGTON took place at Sandbach on 20th December, 1764 (the day after the agreement was signed), with the groom's name appearing as "BASKERFILD". The baptisms of their children were: David in 1765 at Middlewich (he died 4 months later), Ann (1767), Elizabeth (1769), Danial (sic, 1770) and Joseph (1772), all at Goostrey.

At first, I thought that either Daniel or Joseph may have married and died, leaving the widow Ann to marry Henry PIDGEON. But they would have had to do so at a very young age, in fact before they were 21 years old. Furthermore, no such marriage could be found. An answer to this conundrum was supplied after I was contacted by Steve BASKERVILLE, a retired history professor from De Montfort University, Leicester.

Steve claimed to be descended from Thomas BASKERVILLE (not the above landowner, but possibly named after him), who was baptised at Lower Peover, Cheshire in 1786, the baseborn son of Ann BASKERVILLE. He has researched the BASKERVILLEs of Cheshire in great detail, and most of the information about the family in this article comes from him.

The last child of David and Anne (Joseph) was baptised in 1772, the same year that Anne died, perhaps as a result of the birth. Nothing further can be found of either Joseph or his sister Elizabeth, so perhaps they died, too, in infancy. David was thus left with at least two small children to bring up, Ann who was five at the time of her mother's death, and Daniel who was not yet two. David, himself, died in 1782, when Ann was only 15 and Daniel not quite 12. It is very likely that Ann kept house for her father and brother from a very early age, and after his death went into service of some kind at Over Peover.

The young Ann BASKERVILLE gave birth to two illegitimate children at Over Peover: Thomas, as we have seen, in 1786 and Sarah in 1790. With two young fatherless children, she may have found life at Over Peover intolerable and been



attracted by the anonymity of a large town such as Stockport, where she could easily claim to be a widow, as she did when marrying Henry PIDGEON. So David BASKERVYLE and Anne WASHINGTON were my 4x-great-grandparents, and this is why their pre-marital agreement is in the possession of the PIDGEON family.

Ann's son Thomas BASKERVILLE returned to the area of his birth and married Sarah DRINKWATER in 1809 at Great Budworth. Her daughter Sarah was also married at Great Budworth, in 1814 to William PEERS. Thomas and Sarah BASKERVILLE settled at Hale, Altrincham, and their great-great-grandson Professor Steve BASKERVILLE was eventually born at nearby Sale.

These BASKERVILLES of Cheshire had settled there centuries earlier, and had probably proliferated to the extent that there were several family groups living in the area by the 18th century. The fact that the agreement does not mention any kinship between David BASKERVYLE and his landlord John BASKERVYLE is significant. The two men were not known to be related within living memory, and in fact were not related genetically at all. David's father Daniel BASKERVILLE was the illegitimate son of Margaret BASKERVILLE, who was the widow of a William BASKERVILLE. Even this William and the landlord John, by Steve's reckoning, were only 4th cousins once removed.

John BASKERVYLE, the landlord, had married Maria GLEGG of Heswall, Cheshire and changed his name to hers, hence the above reference to "(now GLEGG)". He was the grandson and heir of Thomas BASKERVILLE of Old Withington, the 1673 landowner. John's grandson and heir would eventually change the family name again, to BASKERVYLE-GLEGG, and this branch of the family continued to live in Cheshire through to the 20th century.

Historically, there were three BASKERVILLE families in England: this one from Cheshire, another from Herefordshire, and one from Devon which was cursed by the Hound. That story, in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes novel featuring the BASKERVILLES of Dartmoor, was entirely fictional, of course.

## ***Bebington News (7)***

*from the Cheshire Observer, 23 May 1874*

**BEBINGTON - WIRRAL TRAMWAYS** - A bill bearing the name of Lord Dunmore was issued on Wednesday... to confirm the provisional orders of the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870 (including) that for authorising the construction of tramways in Birkenhead, Tranmere, Higher Bebington and Lower Bebington.

# PUGH: the Value of Obituaries

*by Gren Dix*  
*Membership no. 4174*

The last half of the 19th century is a bit of a golden age for genealogical data. We have censuses and many parish records online (at a time when many people were baptized), plus sites such as FreeBMD, the General Record Office BMD website and forces enlistment records (which sometimes give family details) means that we are reasonably well-served for research materials. For this period we can now obtain the mother's maiden name on GRO birth registration enquiries. A further source is memorial inscriptions, but few are on line.

From the mid-20th century there is a relative dearth of data. If you are searching for a branch of a family for which you have no personal knowledge you can get a bit stuck. What other sources are available? I have found the following useful.

## **Street directories**

These often give the names and professions of those over 21. The disadvantage is that you have to know something about the family. They can give the names of adult children.

## **Voting Lists**

These can be difficult to trawl through; also, since 2014 people can opt out of being listed.

## **Probate Register**

These will often give the abode of the deceased and to whom probate was granted (not necessarily the same person as the beneficiary).

## **Newspaper Obituaries**

I have found another source which has proved useful - death and funeral reports in local newspapers. These usually give a list of close relatives and attendees at funerals and commitment services. These days such reports are in decline; the names of attendees are rarely printed.

Here is an example where a death report proved useful. I have been tracing the children of James PUGH (1888-1959). He had three children, all born in Wilmslow (the Bucklow and Altrincham registration districts):  
Jessie PUGH (1911-), James PUGH (1914-) and Hilda Mary PUGH (1919-)

## Jessie PUGH, b 1911

### Marriages

Found in the 1939 register (birth date matches) with the added surnames CLAYTON and HIGSON

M1 1941 Q1 Bucklow 8a 550 mar George H CLAYTON

M2 1957 Q2 Bucklow 10a 153 Jessie CLAYTON mar Clifford HIGSON

## James PUGH, b 1914, not found in 1939

### Possible marriages

M1 1932 Q3 Bucklow 8a 568 mar Kathleen JOHNSON, 2 children

M2 1946 Q4 Bucklow 10a 307 mar Elizabeth MCCORMICK  
2 possible children in Liverpool

M3 1953 Q3 Willesden 5f 714 to Winifred PUGH/DIKE/WATKINS

## Hilda Mary PUGH, b 1919, not found 1939

### Possible marriages

M1 1939 Barton Hilda M PUGH mar George LIVESEY

M2 1947 Q1 Bucklow 10a 284 Hilda M LIVESEY mar John S G BLACK  
and Hilda M PUGH mar John S G BLACK

(The above two marriages belong to **Hilda May PUGH**, found in the 1939 register in Stretford and born in 1921).

M3 1947 Q2 Bucklow 10a 319 Hilda M PUGH mar John LIMB - 2 children

## Report of death (from the *Manchester Evening News*, 4 March 1959)

*SWEEP DIES - Chimney sweep James Pugh, whose family had been in the trade for three generations, died suddenly at his Hawthorn-street, Wilmslow home, aged 70.*

## Funeral report (from the *Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser*, 13 March 1959)

*The funeral of Mr J PUGH of 70 Hawthorn St, Wilmslow, who died March 3rd age 70, took place on Saturday at Stockport Crematorium. The service was conducted by the rector, Canon E D REEMAN. The mourners were: Mr & Mrs HIGSON [Jessie married a HIGSON] (also representing Mr & Mrs J LIMB and family in New Zealand) [a Hilda M married a LIMB], Mr & Mrs J PUGH jnr [is this James?], Mr & Mrs A PUGH [is this Archie, the deceased's brother?] and so on..*

Using the information from the funeral report, some informed guesses can be made about the marriages of the children. Thus from funeral data:

Mr & Mrs J PUGH Jnr. I assume that this is James

Mr & Mrs HIGSON I assume that this is Jessie

Mr & Mrs HIGSON represented Mr & Mrs LIMB and family in New Zealand. Mrs LIMB is probably Hilda; this suggests that she and her husband emigrated.

## Discovering Medieval Cheshire Ancestors

by Mike Hodgkinson  
Membership no. 7929

Brick walls! We've all met them and we've all tried to find new sources of information to break through them. I've done this before, of course, but never expected to have to use quite so many as I have done in getting back to a medieval knight in the reign of Henry IV.

This article explains how, on reaching a brick wall using parish records, wills and 1666 Hearth Tax records, I found two new sources of family history research information, namely a marriage settlement and a book, *Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland*.

When I started serious research, I did not know whether I had any Cheshire ancestors, although my father was born in Leek in Staffordshire, not far from the Cheshire border. An unpromising branch was his grandmother Ann SMITH whose marriage certificate said that her father was John SMITH. She had been orphaned but I found her living in Leek with her grandfather Mark ABBOTT in 1871, as her parents had died at a young age.

Mark ABBOTT's wife was born Martha MILLWARD. Her mother had been Elizabeth DEAVILLE and had died as a seventy-three-year-old widow in Leek Almshouse. She was described on her death certificate as *worn out* – after raising ten children this is hardly surprising! Her father John DEAVILLE had been a yeoman farmer like his great grandfather John DEAVILLE (DEVELL) of Tittesworth near Leek. This relationship is supported by BMD records and wills.

This earlier John DEVELL had needed a marriage settlement to marry his wife Mary BULKLEY in 1667. The document was held by the Staffordshire Record Office. Although I could not find a marriage record, baptisms of some children born to John and Mary DEVELL of Tittesworth are recorded in the Leek records. John and Mary DEVELL of Stockwell Street, Leek were buried within months of each other but did not leave any property in a will. They must already have given the Tittesworth farm to their eldest son John, as he refers to it in his will.

I considered that there was sufficient evidence in the marriage settlement document and the records of the children's births to believe that John DEVELL and Mary BULKLEY had married, as marriages frequently went unrecorded at

this time. But who was Mary BULKLEY? I had obtained a copy of the BULKLEY section of *Staffordshire Pedigrees 1664-1700* online. This identified a BULKLEY family living in Stanlowe Hall in Longsdon near Leek. Was my research correct and was it worth going to Stafford just to see the marriage agreement?

I have seven DNA matches with descendants of four of Elizabeth DEAVILLE's siblings so I thought it was worth it but by the time I decided to arrange to see the marriage settlement, the Stafford Record Office had closed due to COVID. After COVID the Record Office has remained closed as it is being relocated to a new History Centre where public access is restricted. I asked whether staff were able to access some records and send copies to the public for a fee, and if they would they provide a cost for copying the DEVELL-BULKLEY marriage settlement? After they had retrieved the document, they said it was much larger than an A4 and had to be photographed. I was given a fee estimate which I accepted and signed a copyright declaration. Shortly after paying the fee, the Record Office emailed me a copy of the document in jpg format. The writing was too small to read even when it filled my PC screen. I enlarged the document on my PC and started to transcribe it into a Word document.

The marriage agreement was described as an *Indenture Tripartite* between John DEVELL, yeoman of Tittesworth in the parish of Leek of the first part, James BULKLEY of Bankend in the parish of Leek, gentleman in the second part and three others in the third part - John JODRELL of Longsdon in the parish of Leek, gentleman, Sampson BULKLEY of Bradnop in the parish of Leek, gentleman and Richard HEATH of Horton, yeoman. The agreement identified James BULKLEY as the father of Mary.

The BULKLEY section of *Staffordshire Pedigrees 1664-1700* identifies James BULKLEY of Bradnop as the fourth son of Arthur BULKLEY of Stanlowe and Sampson BULKLEY as his son. James BULKLEY was buried in Leek on 5 September 1673. The probate of James BULKLEY of Bankend in October 1673 was given to Sampson BULKLEY.

In the 1666 Hearth Tax, James BULKLEY, gentleman was paying tax on properties in Bradnop and Longsdon. The Ordnance Survey map shows there is a Bank End Farm close to Stanlowe Hall in Longsdon. It seems likely that James BULKLEY was registered for the Hearth Tax at both properties, but that his adult son Sampson was living in Bradnop. John DEVELL's property in Tittesworth was registered under his mother's name - Ann DEVELL, widow. I believe this confirms that James BULKLEY of Bankend was the son of Arthur BULKLEY of Stanlowe and the father of Mary.

*A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland Vol. III* (which I'd not used before) published by John BURKE Esq. provides more information on the BULKLEY family. Arthur BULKLEY was born at Stanlowe near Leek in 1563 and died in 1614. He was the 2x great-grandson of Richard BULKLEY of Parwich in Derbyshire who inherited the Lordship of Stanlowe when his wife's father died.

John BURKE identified Richard BULKLEY as the great-grandson of Sir William BULKLEY of Eaton near Tarporley, who was the Chief Justice of Chester in the reign of Henry IV (1399-1414). His father Robert BULKLEY was Sheriff of Cheshire in 1341. The family had lived in Cheshire for centuries and possibly took their name from Bulkeley Hill, near Peckforton.

How reliable is the information in BURKE's pedigrees, and do I have any independent sources to corroborate this information? I have a handwritten copy of the *Visitation at Stanlowe* dated 29 April 1664. This gives the ages of some people who were living at that time.

I also have a transcript of *A List of Families in The Archdeaconry of Stafford 1532-3* which is a collection of over 50,000 names in Staffordshire recorded in family groupings before the inception of parish registers. In Longsdon Side in the parish of Leek, Humphrey BOKELEY and his wife Joan are listed with ten children, the eldest being William. William BOKELEY is also listed with his wife Alice and two children, including his eldest son Thomas. I have a will for Thomas BULKLEY dated 1573 in which he left his property in trust to his widow Catherine as his son was too young to inherit it. Thomas and Catherine are the parents of Arthur BULKLEY who was born at Stanlowe near Leek in 1563. This is consistent with the information in BURKE's pedigrees.

John BURKE identified Humphrey BULKLEY as the son of Richard BULKLEY of Parwich in Derbyshire who acquired the Lordship of Stanlowe when he married Joan SHERRATT. In John SLEIGH's *History of Leek*, published in 1862, he states that Richard BULKLEY was wild in his youth and killed someone in a duel near Leek. As a result, he was obliged to obtain the pardon of King Edward IV (1461-1483) which cost his family much trouble and great expense.

I cannot verify the ancestry of Richard BULKLEY from an independent source but if the information in John BURKE's book is correct, Sir William BULKLEY is my 17x great-grandfather. I didn't get too excited about this as I have calculated that I have theoretically over a quarter of a million 17x great-grandfathers! In fact, many of them will, of course, be the same people, but this is the only branch of my tree which has led me to a medieval knight.

## Write a Book, not Just a Tree

*by David Hemmings*  
*Membership no. 10403*

My interest in my own family history dates back to the early 1970s when I first started putting pen to paper, before the advent of computers for everyone and, even, for those of us for whose research it can be crucial, before the arrival of the Internet.

My great grandfather had impressed upon me how important it was to visit the origins of the HEMMING family in Oddington, a place that I had never heard of. Oddington was a tiny village in Gloucestershire, near Stow on the Wold. The clue, he said, was to visit the church - the only church in Oddington, fortunately. A pre-arranged visit to the vicar, as he dashed from one Sunday service to the next, was to get the ball rolling. We agreed a fee of £15 for the church funds and he promised to look into, as well as write up, entries from the parish registers. He knew our surname and said it might take some time. We agreed we had plenty of time; the family history had been waiting at least 100 years, so we thought a few more months meant nothing at all. Little did we know that it would easily exceed one hundred years - more like one hundred and fifty years!

Those months dragged by until one day a brown envelope arrived stuffed with a letter and five pages of closely written names, starting in the early 1800s and going through to the 1920s - what a surprise! I had already collected a few files of paperwork from the family and I had a mounting collection of birth, death and marriage certificates. The ancestry possibilities had changed with one envelope.

Six months later my initial twenty pages, starting from 1845, had more than doubled to over forty pages. I decided that I had the basics for a small book, particularly if I asked the family to each make a contribution by providing a story. Let me say now that I have already written several books, so I knew what I was doing, but I had expected this family research to produce a few family trees, with supporting text, not a book.

It's important with any book to start with a synopsis. What's a synopsis? Well, it's a listing of all the main points of, in our example, family research. Here are the central facts I concentrated on, to help you make your own version in due course.

- 1 Where it all started – The church at Oddington
- 2 The place – the village/town/city or country.
- 3 The most important marriage. Establish a focal point
- 4 Introduce the main ancestral family members. Give them prominence.
- 5 A simple family tree, e.g. on an Excel spreadsheet.
- 6 Branches of the family. Have any emigrated or returned from overseas?
- 7 Collect as many old photos and relevant illustrations as possible. Aim for one picture for every two pages of type. There is nothing more boring than looking at page after page of typeface, in my opinion
- 8 Collect the stories directly from the family and always save on A4 documents in Word for ease of use .
- 9 Any relations serving in The Great War 1914-1918 or World War Two?
- 10 Census returns are important sources of very specific information, to discover new details or to verify old information. 1921 is the most recent census released but remember the 1939 Register holds everybody in the country at that date, apart from members of the armed forces in barracks.
- 11 Where is the family today? Don't forget that grandmothers are important.
- 12 The Family History Society is not only an office with the software set up for immediate research but is staffed by a team of volunteers who are well versed in solving some of the hidden gems of your long lost relations.

This list is not intended to cover all the potential family combinations, it is just meant to get you started and on your way. For example there is no mention of individual chapters, that comes next. Chapters should come naturally, towards the end of collecting all the synopsis material and when a page count starts to come together in each of the subject headings. One page of A4 paper is approximately 500 words but the inclusion of an image obviously reduces the word count on that page.

In my book the count grew to 150 pages for two main reasons. The first was the sheer number of new family members discovered within the church records and the second was that all the birth and other certificates could now be scanned at home in full size A4, to make for an interesting read to supplement the text.

Final layout. Consider using the page in landscape format instead of portrait. Most of the early documents present themselves in landscape, such as official certificates and census returns, as well as family trees.





The book itself can be printed on a home computer, of course, but finding a “fast print shop” allows a choice of soft backed combinations, such as comb bound and glued spine, and makes for a professional-looking finish.

There you have it, a book written about your own family, no longer about gossip but about factual history that is almost certain to have unearthed some amusing anecdotes along the way. It is there to establish the ancestors who went before you and for all of those who follow, finding a book not just a tree.

I would like to extend my particular thanks to the FHSC Mobberley Research Centre and to two volunteers in particular, Sue Ritchie and Dave Thomas. It takes a skilled hand to extract all the online material that is available today and it probably added twenty extra pages to my manuscript; it was well worth the time and effort to make the book a better read.

### ***Bebington News (8)***

*from the The Birkenhead News, 9 July 1904*

*TO LET: GOOD DWELLING-HOUSE in Lower Bebington Village, 4 bedrooms, 2 entertaining-rooms, bathroom, h&c water, w.c., kitchen, scullery etc. Rent £30.*

# Net That Serf

## The Computer Section

Compiled by Geoff Johnson

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### From the Desktop



I'm sad to report, readers, that this is all you're going to get! There are two key reasons. The first is that I've had an episode of poor health, which developed to a crescendo with this very debilitating coughing virus. I've been more or less completely inactive for the past month.

The second key point is that when I did set out to look in my 'NTS-Next Issue' folder for articles, I find it's all but empty! Nobody has sent me anything substantive for inclusion in this June 2024 edition. I've had no comment referring to previous articles, nor any snippets of interest, and I'm certainly not in a strong enough state to create anything myself this close to the editorial deadline.

I must have member input to keep this forum active. So please let me have some questions we can air, or research experience that you can share with others.

I look forward to a more creative situation in July – GJ

### *Bebington News (9)*

*from the Cheshire Observer, 11 June 1904*

**CHESHIRE SCHOLARSHIPS** - At the meeting of the Higher Education Committee of the Cheshire Education Committee, at Crewe on Friday, the Director of Education presented a report on the examination held on April 23rd for the scholarships in Class 1 (for boys and girls to proceed to Secondary Schools) and Class 1a (for boys and girls who are intending to become pupil teachers after a course in a Secondary School)....

The scholarships were awarded in Class I as follows... **Bebington and Neston District** (Seven allowed, but only six gained): **William Williams, Little Sutton; William Phillips, Bromborough; Wilfred Jones, Whitby; Henry Maxlow, Thornton Hough; David Williams, Lower Bebington; Lawrence Sheridan, Bromborough.**

The scholarships in Class Ia... **Bebington and Neston District** (Ten allowed, but only four gained): **Ernest Harvey Bromborough Pool; Theresa Mealor, Burton; Florence Wharam, Neston; Annie Dalziel, Bromborough Pool.**

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**Back cover:** St Andrew's Church from the northeast, Bebington, Wirral  
cc-by-sa/3.0 - © User Repton1x at Wikimedia Commons  
[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bebington\\_-\\_DSCO4560.JPG](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bebington_-_DSCO4560.JPG)

The Saxon church was later replaced by a Norman church. The tower was built 1300-1350. Some rebuilding took place in the 14th, 16th and 19th centuries.

## Bebington



*St Andrew's Church, Bebington Credit: Repton1x, CC BY-SA 3.0*

Bebington, located in the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral and historically part of Cheshire, encompasses the original villages of Higher and Lower Bebington. Definitions of Bebington also extend to neighbouring areas such as Port Sunlight, New Ferry, Spital and Storeton. In a 2015 study by the Centre for Economics and Business Research, Bebington's CH63 postcode was identified as the most desirable in England in which to live and work.

The name Bebington is believed to have Anglo-Saxon origins, meaning *the village of Bebba*. In 1801, the town had 273 residents. St Andrew's church, on a site occupied since Saxon times, dates back to the 14th and 16th centuries. The high-quality creamy sandstone quarried at Bebington was used in the construction of Birkenhead Town Hall and the Empire State Building in New York. In later years, the quarry was infilled with debris removed during the building of the two Mersey Tunnels.

Bebington has been home to several prominent individuals, including actress Jean Boht, historian Hilda R Ellis Davidson, former Prime Minister Harold Wilson, and sports personalities Phil Liggett, David Mather, Lottie Dod and Dixie Dean. It was, however, in the film *Chariots of Fire* that the local sports ground, the Bebington Oval, took centre stage. Transformed into the State Colombes, the stadium for the 1924 Paris Olympic Games, it provided the backdrop for the climactic races captured in the film.