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THE INSTITUTE OF HERALDIC AND
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NORTHGATE, CANTERBURY, KENT CT1 1BA

www.ihgs.ac.uk
01227 768664

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The Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies is an independent educational charitable trust established to provide full academic facilities for training and research in the study of the history and structure of the family. It was established in Northgate, Canterbury, in 1961.

Set in its own grounds in a charming property dating from the thirteenth century, the Institute arranges courses of instruction leading to qualifications in genealogy and heraldry. We offer a range of Distance learning Courses, including our renowned Correspondence Course in Genealogy which was established to train professional genealogists.

The fees for membership are an initial fee of £37.50 for the first year and then an annual fee of £22.50; membership includes access to the library, discounts on courses and in the bookshop, and the bi-annual journal *Family History*.

The Institute is famed for its library, especially the Heraldic collection, and for its publications including the celebrated *Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers*. Library opening hours are 10:00 – 4:00 pm, Monday-Tuesday. IHGS members have free access. The rate for non-members is £10 a day or £5 per half-day. Since space in the library is limited, all members and visitors must make an appointment with the librarian.

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THESE are to certify, That *Rebecca Clark*
Daughter of *David Clark*
and *Mary* his Wife, who was Daughter of
Jonathan Sarah Best was Born in *Ironfield*
in the Parish of *Ironfield*
in the County of *Serby* the *Fifteenth*
Day of *May* in the Year *one thousand*
eight hundred at whose Birth we were

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FAMILY HISTORY

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registrar@ihgs.ac.uk

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Edited by Dr David Wright, Principal
principal@ihgs.a.uk

Front cover:

Bethsheda Chapel. Image credit Pam Smith.

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

David Wright, Principal

February 2024

News from The Institute

A very Happy New Year to all our members, colleagues and friends. Another typically very wet post-Christmas week is all too visible through the window panes as I begin to write, but notwithstanding the dismal view, some early daffodils in the sunny south garden are a mass of swelling buds just about to open.

Legal wheels turn slowly, especially when they are turning for you, but we are (hopefully) now close to disposing of No.79 and thereby reducing our office space by about a quarter. The library from that part has been moved and reshelved, unexpected oddments and detritus jettisoned, and the large accumulation of second-hand books now sorted, listed and priced. They are all viewable on our website and enquiries (and purchases!) will be most welcome. If you wish to come and browse, please make an appointment with me for a Monday or Tuesday – necessary in any case if you are looking for heraldic volumes as these still await checking. In due course all books should be housed in our refurbished reception and partly viewable to passers-by now that our venerable but decaying front-window knight has gone to a better mediaeval place in the sky.

* * * * *

Writing a Parish History

Have you considered writing the history of a church or, better still, also of its parish? You might wish to choose one which interests you geographically, historically, scenically or genealogically. Granted, it is not a task to be undertaken lightly, and one which is to some extent still only in its infancy, as too often the church visitor finds no historical guide, just a half-page cribbed photocopy, or perhaps the valiant but modest efforts of a local and enthusiastic parishioner. A serious and well-researched publication is akin to the proverbial hen's teeth and to be devoured eagerly when it comes across. In some places where the church is the only building of interest, an account of that alone will effectively be at least a partial parochial history as so much of human affairs revolved around it. Even for remote and poor places, do not underestimate the quantity of literature and manuscript sources which will need investigating, some perhaps already initiated by an early but now out-of-date history of church and people – for early antiquarians often described things of interest which have now disappeared.

Three years ago I cast my net widely around east Kent for just such a project, eventually settling on Reculver where my mother lived. For today's tripper there is a country park, a ruined church, a pub, a tiny shop and a café, and that is all (apart from an excessive rash of caravans), other than big views over the marshes towards Thanet.

But if you walked around for an hour or two with open eyes and an open mind, much more would start coming to light: Roman walls very well preserved in places and the remains one of the most venerable Anglo-Saxon churches in England founded in 669, later a monastery and now a sad ruin within the walls of both its mediaeval successor and plumb in the middle of the former Roman fort of *Regulbium*, one of the chain of Saxon Shore forts which guarded south-eastern England in post-Roman times when Viking raids on lonely, vulnerable and richly appointed ecclesiastical buildings were easily accomplished. Today the church is most picturesquely perched on the cliff edge following centuries of gradual collapse and subsequent modern concrete underpinning to preserve what still stands. As there are no monastic remains, it is presumed that they lay to the north and have all disappeared. The patchy list of early abbots peters out around 900, after which there is no further monastic history.

A millennium ago the view of Thanet was then towards a physically separate island encompassed on one side by the Wantsum Channel, a major waterway on the route from Richborough to London which avoided sailing around the North Foreland, but which today is a sluggish and brackish backwater revealing nothing of its former strategic importance. Although Bede never came to Kent his sources were good and he gives what are probably pretty accurate figures for its length and width.

The silhouetted outline of the ruined church visible from afar in many directions is the direct result of human vandalism: during the 1800s constant maintenance and repairs took their toll in a poor parish and led to an ultimate vestry meeting in 1808 and a vote as to whether continuation or demolition was preferable, seemingly swayed by the vicar's wife who saw what went on in St Mary's as 'little more than a puppet show'. The axe fell, many materials were sold off for goodly sums and the rest put towards the building of a second parish church a mile away towards Hillborough. This was a poor job which lasted barely half a century before the third St Mary's on its present site was erected in the 1870s.

From that first Anglo-Saxon church there remain, or once remained, two remarkable artefacts. Two magnificent carved columns from the former central nave screen may now be seen in the cathedral crypt. John Leland, visiting Reculver and writing in the 1540s, described a remarkable tall carved cross with painted images of which only fragments now remain, but substantial enough to warrant the modern judgement that this monument was utterly unlike anything else in England at that time.

Even in a small and remote parish there were pockets of wealth, notably with the Cobb family of Bishopstone Manor. The Cobbs were legion across Kent, this family branch having come up from Romney Marsh in the 1400s. Typically they exercised various parochial roles, especially those of church wardens, estate valuers, parish overseers and so on. One of the Cobb daughters was married to the herald Ralph Brooke who became York Herald and was buried at Reculver. The Court family ran the Cobbs a fairly close second in such activities.

The Domesday entry for Reculver offers the usual tantalizing brief entry, typically difficult of perfect comprehension as 'Reculver' probably referred to the manor which was then much larger and incorporated the future daughter parishes of Shuart in Thanet, Herne and St Nicholas-at-Wade. These would all be made separate in 1310, but still dependent on the mother church. There is the usual long run of parish registers from 1603 and wills from the 1400s.

The splendid East Kent wills online index allows one to see at a glance that the numbers of testators peaked markedly between 1480 and 1620 for reasons as yet not understood.

So much for tangible and visible objects. But when one investigates the written record much more may come to light. The long run of *Archaeologia Cantiana* from 1858 provided large numbers of leads. Reculver parish initially included Hoath Borough, later to become a separate parish in its own right. The manor was an archiepiscopal one, having been granted in 949 by King Eadred's charter and consequently generated surveys and other records which throw great light on some aspects of mediaeval life. Information may be found on early inhabitants and the lands they occupied, including names of fields, streams and other pieces of land, some still on the map today. The maintenance of sluices and sea walls across the marshes feature prominently, as do sheep-farming and the considerable income and profits made from them. Archbishop Kilwardby's survey of 1273-4 recorded that the manor produced £141 in receipts from rents and profits, pasturage and herbage, the sale of wood, grain and dairy products, and of fleeces and woolfells. In the next decade Archbishop Pecham's survey of 1283-5 noted that Reculver had 250 acres of arable land, 82 acres of meadow, 74 acres of woodland and four windmills.

After three years of work, the surface has, I think, now been scratched. It is highly likely that manorial and other early records at the British Library, Kew and Lambeth will reveal more to build up a fuller picture of this tiny and remote parish whose population of around 300 was remarkably stable over many centuries. There is so much to learn and write about for a tiny parish of two square miles!

* * * * *

Archdeaconry of Canterbury Probate Index, 1577-1639

I am informed by Cliff Webb that this much-anticipated and long-awaited index is moving towards publication by the British Records Society, probably at some point in 2024. It will follow on from B.R.S., Index Library 50 *Index of Wills and Administrations now preserved in the Probate Registry at Canterbury 1396-1558 and 1640-1650* (1920) and B.R.S., Index Library 65 *Wills and Administrations at Canterbury 1558-1577* (1940). Some 70,000 slips comprising the index in its original format were inherited by the B.R.S. when it absorbed English Record Collections. These were then digitized and rekeyed by SBL Ltd of India, paid for by the monies inherited from E.R.C.

All the slips were checked (even if the slips were very clearly written) and such pairs as 'Mich' and 'Nich', Francis and Frances, Bennett and Benjamin all expanded or clarified, as well as the usual Kentish doublets of Aldington/Allington, Selling/Sellindge, and Canterbury St Mary Bredin/Bredman being carefully distinguished. Much other help was generously given by the late Duncan Harrington.

Kent Record Collections, which later became English Record Collections, was founded in 1984, the moving force being the leading genealogist Philip Blake, who finally retired to Folkestone and died there in 1994.

The initial plan was to act as the records committee of the Kent Archaeological Society and to suggest various record publications, as well as the primary focus on testamentary material. Early volumes included *Abstract of Cranbrook Wills 1396-1640* edited by Jules de Launay (1984) and *Freemen of Canterbury 1800-1835* by Stella Corpe and Anne Oakley (1990). Subsequent years saw many changes of trustees and the change of name to E.R.C. with accompanying broader remit. Charitable status was finally achieved in 1991. Much discussion was had between the Trust and B.R.S. about computerizing the slips to the wills, this being partly covered by Dr Shoichi Okinaga of Teikyo University, Tokyo when he became a Trustee and donated one million yen annually to the Trust. Other high-profile donors included Lord Sainsbury and J. Paul Getty. By 1998, however, it was clear that E.R.C were unable to carry out their original plans and it was decided to wind up the organization and merge its funds with B.R.S., who were able to carry on those plans with aims very similar to those of E.R.C.

The forthcoming volume, edited by Cliff Webb, will be of a predictably high level of scholarship and include the usual ancillary but fascinating indexes of forenames, occupations and parochial statistics. Its publication cannot come soon enough.

* * * * *

A Parish with Extra Details

The parish registers of Ash in west Kent (not to be confused with its much larger namesake near Sandwich) can for an all-too-short period offer the researcher extra information that every genealogist craves. Between 1790 and 1807 at every baptism the vicar recorded the place of the parents' marriage. These included many parishes within the usual ten-mile-radius, others in east Kent, a fair number in the major parishes of central and south London, two in Essex, two in Sussex and one in Devon. What had occasioned all these movements?

Too often we light on the 'right' marriage in the 'right' place at the 'right' time, but is this good and accurate genealogy? Large online marriage indexes have equally large geographical coverage and should therefore alert us to two or more marriages with a groom of the right names and a bride of the right forename, one of which may be ancestral, but is there yet another candidate over the county boundary?

How are we to explain the considerable percentage of marriages outside of Kent and a family's move to a small and remote part of the world in the late 1700s? Perhaps the fathers' occupations will offer clues, but if they were ordinary labourers, then what? Were some returning to their parish of birth after travels further afield, or following other relatives who had settled at Ash? Were the baptisms for eldest children or for late ones after many elder siblings born who knows elsewhere? Here surely is a splendid research project which might well produce fascinating results. If only other clergy had been so zealous in their recording!

* * * * *

ONE-PLACE STUDY: HERALDRY SOLVES A GENEALOGICAL MYSTERY

By Pam Smith Dip. Gen., IHGS Heraldry Student
and Custodian of Rillington One-Place Study



Bethsheda Chapel. Image credit Pam Smith.

One-Place Study (OPS) research explores a combination of local and family history records over a defined period of time. Other sources such as old postcards, diaries, maps, biographies, letters and ephemera help to fill in the gaps between the records as inhabitants immigrate and emigrate in-between the decennial census.

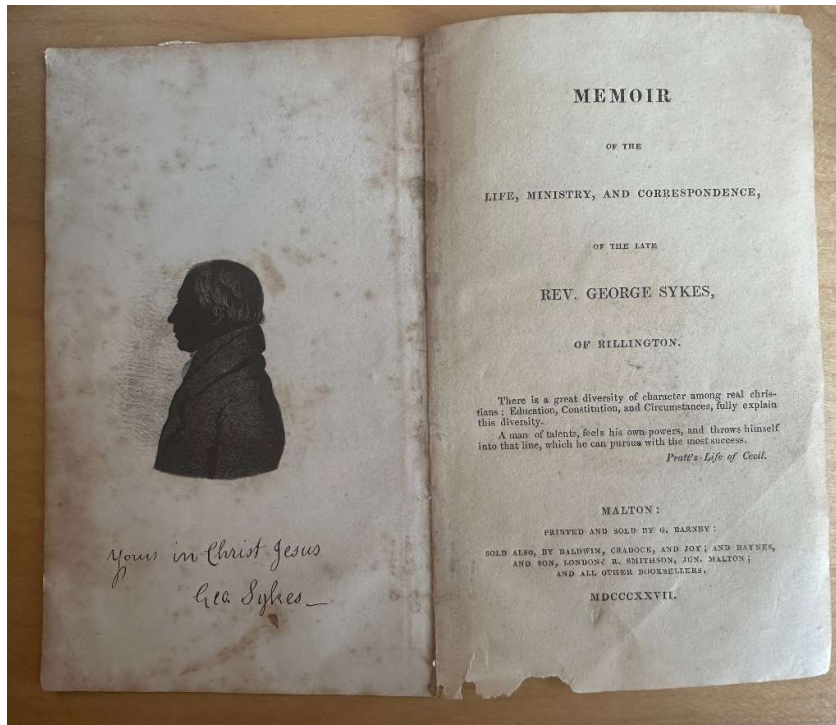
A biography of Reverend George SYKES, Independent Minister, Bethesda Chapel on Low Moorgate, Rillington was written in 1827 by W. GREENWOOD, a fellow minister and friend¹; it has been a valuable resource in developing the topic of nonconformity in my One-Place Study of the village of Rillington.

¹ Greenwood, W., *Memoir of the Life, Ministry, and Correspondence of the late Rev. George Sykes of Rillington*, G. Bamby, Malton 1827



1827 Biography of Rev. George Sykes Image credit Pam Smith

This precious book, enhanced by its fragility, is comforting in the knowledge that many people have turned and read the pages. The book also bears a silhouette and signature of Reverend George SYKES.



Inside, the narrative records anguish suffered by George as he struggled to come to terms with secession from the Wesleyan Methodist church. With this knowledge, two Rillington residents, Messrs SPANTON and SMAILES invited him to lead the congregation of the Independent Chapel built in 1818. Together with the anguish experienced by the deaths of his wife and daughter in his absence, this testimony records emotions intertwined between dates, names and places.

Inside, a book plate bears an heraldic shield for the Reverend Christopher SYKES. Also known as an 'ex libris', it is an inscription to show the name of the book's owner. My initial thoughts focussed on whether the two men were related. Two ministers in the same place at the same time and sharing the same surname? A mystery was waiting to be solved.



Bookplate showing the arms of Christopher SYKES. Image Credit Pam Smith.

Starting with the main coat of arms described using the *Petra Sancta* method, the blazon for the shield is *Argent, a chevron Sable between three sykes or fountains, a mullet for difference.*² Burke's General Armory confirmed it represented a member of the SYKES family of Sledmere and offered a crest which also matched the book plate: *A demi triton issuant from flags or reeds blowing a shell and wreathed around the temples with like flags all proper.*³ The three sykes/fountains are roundels and are a play on words for the SYKES surname. Sledmere house has been in the possession of the SYKES family since the early eighteenth century and is only 11 miles south of Rillington.

² Papworth, J. W., *Papworth's Ordinary of British Armorial*, T. Richards, London 1874, *Heraldry Today*, London 1985 p.404

³ Burke, Sir Bernard, *The General Armory of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales*, Harrison and Sons 1878 p. 992

Furthermore, the *Clergy of the Church of England Database* confirmed Rev. Christopher SYKES was the third son of Sir Christopher (2nd) Bart. of Sledmere and the curate of Scampston in Rillington parish 1802-9. He was born in 1774 and on 14 May 1799, married Lucy Dorothea, daughter and co-heir of Henry LANGFORD of Stockport and her mother Sarah STAFFORD. Christopher died on 9 Nov 1857 at Roos Rectory.⁴

The quartered arms held in pretence on the arms for SYKES are: *Quarterly, first and fourth, paly of six, Argent and Gules on a chief Azure, a lion passant guardant for LANGFORD*⁵; *second and third Or on a chevron Gules between three martlets sable for STAFFORD*.⁶ The pedigree of the SYKES family was readily established through genealogical printed sources. An image of the coats of arms of these two long-established families can be seen below *Fig. 1.* in the first and second quarters of a shield which also contains arms in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries for the NORRIS and HERNE or HORNE families documented in the Berkshire Visitations.⁷

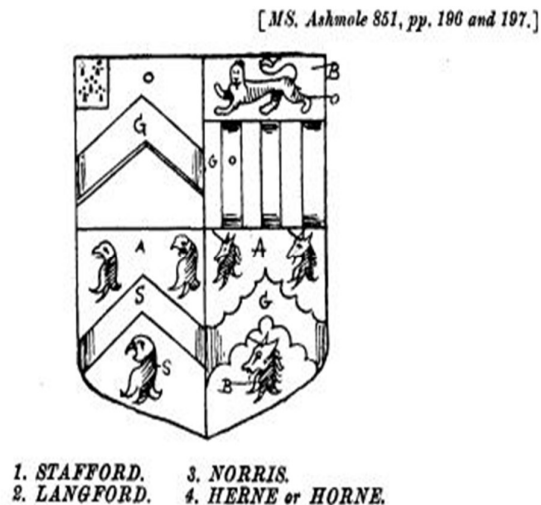


Fig 1. Quartered shield including arms for Stafford and Langford

A similar search for George SYKES was not as fruitful. GREENWOOD suggested that George was born 14 Feb 1761 in Sheffield, however a search for an anglican or nonconformist baptism proved inconclusive.⁸ GREENWOOD intimated that George's father was a wealthy tradesman, however a more detailed explanation was not offered. The biography shares a fascinating insight into the life of an itinerant Methodist minister and how far he travelled to preach and attend conferences in the late eighteenth century. According to GREENWOOD, George died on the eve of his birthday and he was recorded in the burial register, age 65, an Independent Minister who resided at Low Street, Malton but late of Rillington. He was buried in the parish of St. Leonard, New Malton on 16 Feb 1826.⁹

⁴ *Clergy of the Church of England Database (CCEd)* accessed 10 Nov 2023

⁵ Burke, Sir Bernard, *The General Armory of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales*, Harrison and Sons 1878 p. 582

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.958

⁷ Rylands, Harry W., Ed., *The Four Visitations of Berkshire 1532, 1566, 1623 and 1665-6* London 1907 Accessed online via *The Genealogist* 10 Nov 2023

⁸ Greenwood pps 3-4

⁹ *Yorkshire Parish Burials 1600-1856*, p. 112, original data: Bishops' Transcripts, Borthwick Institute of Archives, accessed 13 Nov 2023

A comparison of the similarity of existence can be seen in Fig. 2 below.

	Birth year	Marriage	Death
Rev. George Sykes	1761	Not known	1826
Rev. Chris. Sykes	1774	1799	1857

Fig. 2. Comparison of birth, marriage and death events

Proof that the two men were not related removed the potential of an exciting coincidence. My theory remains that Rev. Christopher SYKES owned the book and marked the cover plate with his coat of arms in the way names are written inside a front cover to confirm ownership. Although the two ministers may have known each other through their vocation and close geography, heraldry was the tool which solved a genealogical mystery within the village.

* * * * *

ZOOM TUTORIALS

Date	Day	Time	Tutorial
13/2	Tue	12pm	Palaeography Level 3: Intermediate Palaeography with Dr Caroline Adams
27/2	Tue	12pm	Palaeography Level 4: Palaeography – Taking it Further with Dr Caroline Adams
28/2	Wed	7pm	How to Draw Pedigrees Using PowerPoint with Ann Ballard
29/2	Thurs	12pm	Manorial Records: The Anatomy of Manorial Court Records with Sarah Pettyfer
29/2	Thurs	7pm	Marshalling Part 1: Simple Quartering with Ann Ballard
7/3	Thurs	7pm	Marshalling Part 2: Complex Quartering with Ann Ballard
14/3	Thurs	7pm	Marshalling Part 3: Bringing it all together with Ann Ballard
21/3	Thurs	12pm	Tracing Your Tudor and Stuart Ancestors with Gill Blanchard
6/6	Thurs	12pm	What Can My DNA Do For Me? With Dr Sophie Kay
20/6	Thurs	12pm	A Practical Approach to Finding Chancery Records at The National Archives with Sarah Pettyfer

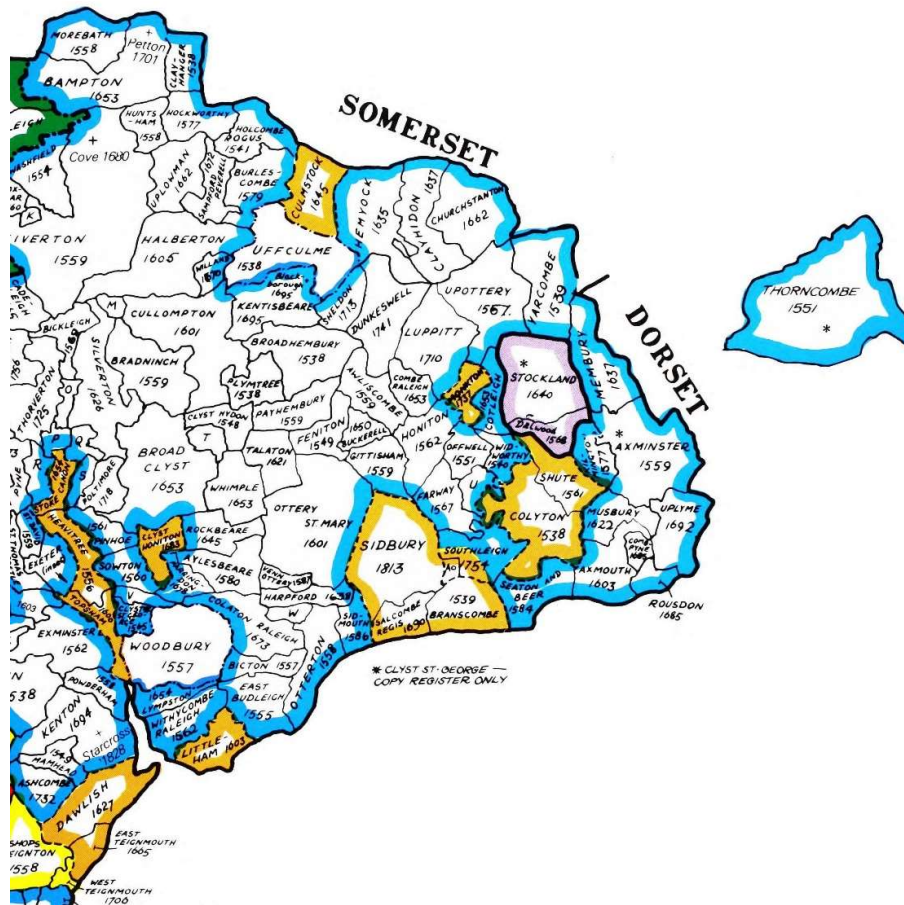
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* * * * *

SURVEY OF THE FALL IN POPULATION OF AN EAST DEVON VILLAGE BETWEEN 1871 AND 1881

By John Piney

Most researchers content themselves with tracing just a family or two in a parish over a period of time and whether they stayed or moved away. Seldom do we consider the larger picture, general trends and social movement. In this article the entire population of a rural parish is analysed in great detail between 1871 and 1881.



IHGS Devon parish map

(1) Introduction

Farway is a farming village in a valley at the head of the river Coly in the East Devon Area of Outstanding National Beauty. There is a school dating from the eighteenth century and a church dedicated to St Michael and All Angels displaying some Norman features. In 1871 there was an inn and there would soon be a sub-post office but no shop.

The centre of Farway is 260 feet above sea level and the surrounding commons about 750 feet. Those commons are reached by single-track roads, at points with gradients of one-in-four, and beyond them anticlockwise from the northeast to the southwest, are the parishes of Offwell, Honiton, Gittisham and Sidbury. Nestled in the “pleasant ... declivity” along with Farway are the villages of Northleigh and Southleigh; the market town of Colyton lies down the wide valley to the east.

A detailed record of land use in Farway is to be found in the Deed of 30 August 1838 setting out the terms of compliance with the Tithe [commutation] Act of 1836. Most farms have gardens, orchards, pasture, arable and meadow. Some also have common and woods and one has a vineyard. Mixed farming, then, including beef, cattle and sheep but, given the rich grasslands, predominantly dairy: little is likely to have changed by 1871.

(2) This survey

Charles Vancouver’s *General View of Agriculture of the County of Devon* published in 1808 notes (p.421) that “Under the Act of the 41st of His present Majesty” [ie: 1801] Farway had 61 inhabited dwellings with two vacant and 287 souls (143 male and 144 female). *White’s History, Gazetteer and Directory of Devonshire* (1850) states the population at 378 (p.421). The 1901 census records total inhabitants of 223 (114 males and 119 females). So, at the mid-point of the nineteenth century the population is 31% higher than it was at the start and by the end of the century it has dropped by 41%. A demographic profile broadly reflected in all of the adjoining villages except for Gittisham which declines in number from 1800 to 1850 and has a much less steep drop from mid-century to 1901.

The Farway censuses from 1841 to 1871 record an almost stable population: the maximum variance from one decade to the next being 2.1% (or 8 people). This is an anonymised précis of a survey of the change from the start and end of the decade in the nineteenth century which experiences the largest fall in population: between 1871 and 1881 it declines by 87 from 375 to 288, or 23%. Where do those people go who are living in Farway in 1871 but not in 1881? And, how does a drop in the population by almost a quarter affect the number of “agriculturalists” (to use a term from the contemporary newspapers)?



Hodders or The New Inn

(3) The agricultural population in 1871

The agriculturalists are divided into three classes: landowners, (tenant) farmers (with those on the larger farms often called yeomen) and farm workers.

Only one of the landowners warrants mention here: the ninth and last baronet of Netherton, proprietor of almost 1,000 of the 2,600 acres of land in the parish, is aged 78 and residing at the mansion house in 1871. All of the other landowners live elsewhere.

Of the fifteen farmers in 1871, eleven are native to Farway, one was born in an adjoining parish, the other three elsewhere in East Devon. The largest two farms are each about 350 acres, the next largest are between 200 and 349 acres, four are between 100 and 199 acres, three are between 50 and 99 acres, three between 25 and 49 acres and there is one smallholding of 8 acres. The farmers of one of the larger and one of the middle-sized farms are female, both daughters and widows of Farway farmers.

There are three dairymen and one dairywoman in 1871. These terms are imprecise: they sometimes mean dairy farmer (ie: direct tenant of a landlord) and at others denote a farm worker in charge of the dairy herd. Two of the four are certainly in the latter category, the third probably is; the dairywoman is probably a dairy farmer.

The largest component of farm workers in 1871 is thirty-nine labourers, the youngest aged 18 and the oldest 70. There is a carter and a plough boy aged 17 and 12 respectively. Of the twenty-six (all male) indoor farm servants (ie: living in the household of their employer), the youngest are 9 and 10, three are 11 and two 12, fourteen are in their teens, four in their early twenties and one is 58. One male farm servant aged 17 is recorded and one female aged 58. Two dairymaids are listed. The distinctions between farm servant, indoor farm servant and agricultural labourer are beyond the scope of this article but an explanation may be found elsewhere (1).

(4) Comparison of the farming population in 1871 and 1881

In 1871 there are, then, seventy-four farm workers. Eleven sons, nine daughters and one granddaughter of farmers and dairymen are also probably working on the farms or in the dairies; adding in these, the fifteen farmers themselves, one female dairy farmer and eleven farmers' wives produces a total of 122 engaged on the land and in the dairy houses. The comparable figure for 1881 is 107. So, in the course of the decade there is a 12% fall in those working in agriculture compared to the 23% fall in the overall population.

(5) Other occupations in 1871

The other specified occupations in Farway in 1871 are: the rector, a gamekeeper, eight boot-and shoe-makers ("cordwainers" or "cordwinders"), three thatchers, three carpenters, one blacksmith (whose 31-year-old son has no specified occupation but is also a blacksmith) two gardeners, a coachman, a groom, two schoolmistresses (one private), two nurses, two dressmakers, two lace-makers, a housekeeper, a laundress and 23 domestic servants.



Annings: Home of the Blacksmith from 1841 to 1911

(6) Who is still in Farway in 1881 and who is not?

The landed proprietor

Sometime after the 1871 census the baronet, his fourth wife and their household quit Netherton Hall, Farway, for 3 Hesketh Crescent, Torquay where he dies on 10 February 1875 and his widow on 17 March 1879.

The farmers

Three farmers retire between 1871 and 1881: one moves to Honiton, another to Seaton; both die in 1876. The third is in a cottage in Farway in 1881. Two farmers die while still working farms in Farway: one at the age of 47 in 1872 and the second aged 65 in 1878.

A fourth retiree is the “farmer” of 8 acres. He is by trade a tailor who was sometime schoolmaster in Farway. By 1881 he is listed in Bridgwater, Somerset in the household of his son-in-law (a railway porter born at Northeigh) and eldest daughter.

Three farmers are on the same farm in 1881 and 1871. A further two have moved to other farm houses while still farming the same farm in 1881 as in 1871 along with an additional farm in 1881, and one of these two is a widow and daughter of Farway farmers who, at the later date, jointly with her eldest son, is farming 550 acres.

One farmer, of the second smallest farm of 30 acres in 1871, has by 1881 moved to the third largest, Poltimore, of 306 acres. The farmer who gives up Poltimore between the two census dates is, in 1881, at a 46-acre farm in Axminster with the additional occupation of sanitary inspector. Two other farmers move to farms elsewhere by 1881: one in the adjoining parish of Offwell, the second in the nearby parish of Awliscombe.

The dairymen and one dairywoman

The dairywoman is retired by 1881 and living with her nephew in Northleigh. One dairyman dies in Farway in 1875. The other two take on farm tenancies and one is farming in neighbouring Sidbury in 1881, the other in nearby Upottery.

The farm workers

Of the thirty-nine agricultural labourers in Farway in 1871, twenty-six are still agricultural labourers there in 1881 (one of whom later becomes a Farway farmer), two die between the two census dates, three move to adjoining parishes as ag labs (two of whom are later back in Farway as ag labs), three are ag labs elsewhere in East Devon in 1881, one is a farmer in Farway by 1881, one becomes a dairyman in Farway (it is unclear whether as a farmer or herdsman), two become road contractors (one of whom is later back in Farway as an ag lab; the other is later an ag lab elsewhere in East Devon), and one is a cattle dealer in Farway in 1881 and later a farmer there.

The farm carter in Farway in 1871 is, by 1881, an ag lab in Hertfordshire. The plough boy is a labourer in Sidbury (it is not clear whether he is an ag lab or not); but by 1891 he is a railway porter in Southampton. The male farm servant is not traced. The female farm servant is just a servant in 1881 (probably a farm servant because that is what she is throughout her life, all spent in Farway). One of the dairymaids (a farmer's daughter but head of the household on a separate farm to her parents in 1871) marries a Farway dairyman who is later a Farway farmer. The other dairymaid is not traced after 1871.

Of the twenty-five male indoor farm servants, one dies between the two census dates, three are ag labs in Farway in 1881, one an ag lab elsewhere in Devon and one in another county. Two are still indoor farm servants in 1881, one in Farway the other in Awliscombe, one is a dairyman in Exeter, one a farmer in Stockland. One has left the land but is still in Farway as a shoemaker, one is a railway porter in Salisbury. Of the thirteen who are not traced in 1881, one is a farmer in Farway by 1891, one is later an ag lab or chimney sweep at various parishes in East Devon, one is a blacksmith in Honiton and then in Somerset, two are on the railways, and one a licensed victualler, later a potman (barman) in London. Seven are not traced at all post-1871.

Farmers' and dairymen's older children

Of the eleven farmers' sons who are not scholars and who are of an age to be working full time on their parents' farms in 1871, eight are still on the land in 1881, five of those in Farway. One is a dairyman in an adjoining parish, another a dairyman in a nearby parish, the third who is on his father's farm at Upottery in 1881 later becomes a licensed victualler in the East Devon parish of Broadhembury. Five become farmers in Farway at some point of whom all but one later move away to farm elsewhere (Stockland in Devon, Dorset, Hampshire, Middlesex and Northamptonshire). Three are licensed victuallers by 1881, one in Bridport, Dorset and two in London (St Pancras and Greenwich).

Eight of the ten farmers' daughters who are probably working in the dairies in 1871 marry a farmer or dairyman, one marries an agricultural labourer. The tenth marries a teacher (born in Seaton) and they are living in Yorkshire in 1881. Only one of the farming couples farm long-term in Farway, the others are to be found locally apart from one couple who move to West Dorset.



Church of St Michael and All Angels

The agricultural labourers' families

One ag lab's wife and one daughter have specified occupations and are mentioned below. Six wives of ag labs die between the census dates, the remainder are with their husbands in 1881. An ag lab's widow is with her unmarried brother (a shoemaker) in both 1871 and 1881

There are forty-seven children, three grandchildren and one niece of ag labs not already mentioned. Twelve of this group of fifty-one are at school in 1871. One boy and two girls die between the two census dates. Three girls and two boys who are infants in 1871 are at school in Farway 1881.

One scholar in 1871 is an ag lab in Farway in 1881, later a postman in Honiton. Five boys are indoor farm servants in Farway in 1881 and three of these (all brothers) later become Farway farmers, one later becomes a coachman there, the fifth later a gardener in Torquay. Eight are indoor farm servants or plough boys elsewhere in 1881: one at Hornshayne (which is on the Colyton census for 1881 but on later censuses for Southleigh, then Farway), four are in neighbouring parishes, two in parishes nearby and one in Dorset; three of these remain on the land, one becomes a gardener in Dorset, another a potman (barman) in London) and another joins the railways.

The others are not traced subsequently. A further three, all aged fourteen, are still with their parents in neighbouring parishes in 1881 with no specified occupation: two of these are later ag labs locally and one possibly enlists in “the Devons”. Of the final two males in this group one is a shoemaker in Farway in 1881, the other a gardener in Torquay (later to be joined by his younger brother).

Of the daughters, one granddaughter and one niece of ag labs in 1871, one is a domestic servant on one of the Farway farms in 1881, one a domestic servant at Netherton Hall where her parents are caretakers, four are domestic servants elsewhere in East Devon, one in Tiverton, one in Bedfordshire and one in Lancashire. One is an invalid living with her widowed father in Farway in 1881. Two are living locally with their widowed ag lab fathers, one (with her grandparents in 1871) is living with her father in Somerset in 1881, one is married to an ag lab in Honiton and one to a tailor in East Budleigh. Six are not traced in 1881. Four are later found married: one to a farmer locally, one to an ag lab locally, one to the inn keeper and carpenter in Farway and one to a carpenter in Northleigh; the sixth, is, in 1891, a domestic servant at the Berkeley Square residence of a leading Liberal politician later to be Prime Minister.

The parson and his family

The rector of Farway dies on 17 August 1871. His widow and their younger children are in Exeter in 1881, and later in Bayswater, London. The eldest daughter marries a merchant in 1886 and moves to Ceylon; later they are to be found in Hertfordshire. Of the three sons who were born in Farway and living there in 1871, two are still at school in 1881. The other, gazetted second lieutenant in the 18th Regiment of Foot in 1873, later transfers to the cavalry in India. The youngest is later commissioned into the Supply and Transport Corp of the Indian Army. The third is later a solicitor in London.



Gate and steps to Farway Church

Those with other occupations

No innkeeper is recorded in 1871 but one of the carpenters is at the *New Inn* where, in 1881, he is listed as carpenter, wheelwright and innkeeper. His father, also a carpenter, is still listed as such in Farway in 1881 at the age of 74. The other carpenter dies between the two census dates.

By 1881 the gamekeeper is in the same occupation on the Killerton estate at Silverton eight miles north of Exeter. Three of the boot and shoemakers are still in the same trade in Farway in 1881, one in the same trade in Whitchurch, Hampshire; one has become a carpenter in Northleigh, one a coal porter in Honiton where another has retired. The eighth is also in Honiton in 1881 as a boot and shoe manufacturer employing twelve men and six boys; he is later to be found in Philadelphia, USA, employed in the same trade. The blacksmith dies in 1873; his son moves to London and continues working as a blacksmith. The gardeners are both still gardeners in Farway in 1881. The coachman has become a game dealer, later a farmer, near Chard, Somerset. The groom at Netherton Hall has moved to Southleigh as a dairyman by 1881.

The schoolmistress at Farway School is not traced in 1881 and neither is the private school mistress although she is found later as a spinster and needlewoman in Stockwell, south London. One nurse (an ag lab's daughter) is married to an ag lab in the nearby parish of Widworthy by 1881, the other is a domestic servant at Gillingham, Dorset. One of the dressmakers, an ag lab's wife, is still in Farway in 1881 and listed as a lacemaker; the other is the coachman's wife who moves to near Chard with her husband. One of the lacemakers (an ag lab's daughter) dies unmarried age 32 in 1879; the other who is lodging with an ag lab in 1871 later marries an ag lab from Sidbury with whom she is later back in Farway. The housekeeper to an elderly widowed farmer in 1871 is still in Farway in 1881 as nurse to the infant son of one of the younger farmers whose wife has just died. The laundress is in the same occupation in Farway in 1881 and later.



Signpost in the centre of the village

The nine domestic servants at Netherton Hall and four of the five at the Parsonage who are not native to Farway have all moved away by 1881. The only domestic servant at the Parsonage born in Farway marries the groom from Netherton Hall who, as mentioned above, is, in 1881, a dairyman in Southleigh. One domestic servant in 1871 is a domestic servant on the same farm in 1881, one is married to an ag lab in Farway, one has moved to Lichfield as a domestic servant, one is married to an ag lab in Curry Rivel, Somerset, one is married to an ag lab in Stoke Fleming in the South Hams District of Devon, one is married to a decorator in Exeter who later, as a widow, is running the business, one is in the Devon County Lunatic Asylum at Exminster, and the final four are not traced.

The children not already mentioned plus a farmer's son's widow

One farmer's son dies aged 16 in 1877, another, on his mother's farm in Farway in 1881, later succeeds to her tenancy, one is a farmer in Awliscombe in 1881 and is later employed as a dairyman in Surrey, one is a dairyman in Honiton in 1881, later a farmer there and then a farmer in Stockland, one is a dairyman in Luppitt in 1881 and then in Dorset, two are barmen in London in 1881 and both are later back in East Devon as dairymen, one is a licensed victualler in Lyme Regis in 1881 and later a licensed victualler and smallholder elsewhere in Dorset, two are still on their father's farm in 1881, one is later a licensed victualler in London and retires to a farm in Somerset shortly before he dies, the other is later a farmer in Widworthy and then at Colyton.

One farmer's daughter dies in 1872 aged 2, one dies aged 16 in 1877, one is on her parents' farm in 1881 but dies aged 26 in 1889. One dairyman's daughter dies aged 23 in 1878 shortly after marrying a dairyman from Clyst Honiton. Two farmers' daughters, infants in 1871, are at school in Farway in 1881. A farmer's daughter age 13 in 1881 is visiting her maternal grandparents on their farm in Ottery St Mary on the census night; she later marries a farmer's son from Farway and they farm at Dunkeswell and then at Ashill in Somerset before returning locally to a farm at Northleigh. Another marries a farmer's son from Northleigh and they farm in Farway before moving to Awliscombe. One marries a dairyman in Awliscombe and they are later farming in Luppitt. One marries a dairyman in Honiton, another marries a farmer there. One who is on her father's farm in 1881 later marries a farmer's son from Sidbury who is a dairyman and then a farmer at Ottery St Mary. Another, also on her father's farm in 1881 with an illegitimate son later marries the boy's father (an indoor farm servant on her father's farm); they are later at a dairy and then farm in Offwell. One remains single and works for her brother in his drapery business in Chard and then in Sidbury. Her sister is working for a draper in Honiton in 1881 and later marries the farm bailiff on the Addington estate at Uptontery. One dairyman's daughter marries a Farway thatcher who is later a dairyman and then a farmer at Salcombe Regis before they return to farm at Farway. A dairyman's granddaughter is on her grandfather's farm in Sidbury in 1881; she is later married to a farmer in West Dorset. A farmer's niece is aged 16 and housekeeper at her cousin's public house in Southwark, south London in 1881; she later marries a farmer's son from Colyton where they too farm.

The widow of a Farway farmer's son is also to be found at her cousin's London public house in 1881 as a "Lady helper". Her husband, the landlord of the *Three Horse Shoes* on the main road from Colyton to Sidford died in early 1868, and at the 1871 census date his widow and three infant children are living on his parents' farm in Farway.

The widow, a farmer's daughter from Payhembury, had lived as a teenager with her uncle at Netherton Barton where he was the baronet's largest tenant, and her youngest son, born a month after her husband's death, bears as one of his middle names the baronet's surname. The lady herself never remarries and becomes a poultry farmer at Hanley Swan in Worcestershire. Her daughter is at school in Honiton in 1881. She later marries a farmer and lives in Colyton, then in Seaton. The eldest son is with his mother at most of the later census dates. The youngest son is as elusive as the reason for his given middle name; he possibly joins the Middlesex Regiment and predeceases his mother.

One son of the gamekeeper is in domestic service in Hampshire where he dies, a butler aged 30, in 1893. The other son is not traced in 1881 but is later employed as a coachmaker in Exeter. Two daughters are in domestic service in 1881, one in Hampshire and one in London. The youngest daughter, at school in 1881, is in domestic service in Yorkshire by 1891. The son of the laundress is a trainee baker in Northleigh in 1881, later an assistant baker in Honiton. His sister is not traced post-1871. The daughter of one of the shoemakers who is at school in 1871 is a lacemaker in 1881 and later married to an ag lab in Farway. The daughter of another shoemaker is married to a barman in London by 1881 who is later a licensed victualler; her brother is a shoemaker in Somerset by 1881. The daughter of a third shoemaker is at school with her younger brother in Honiton in 1881; he is later a railway signaller in Cheshire; their older brother is a draper's porter in Honiton in 1881. The coachman's niece who is at school in 1871, is a barmaid in her father's hotel in Chard by 1881. One of the gardener's sons becomes a shoemaker in Farway by 1881, the other a groom there. The other gardener's daughter who is aged 15 in 1881 when she has no specified occupation, is by 1891 a domestic servant in Farway. Her brother is an indoor farm servant in 1881; he later enlists in the newly reformed Devonshire Regiment and, after service in India, retires to Honiton having reached the rank of colour sergeant.

Those aged 70 and over in 1871

Eight men and five women are in their seventies in 1871, two men and two women are in their eighties and the widowed mother of an agricultural labourer is in her mid-nineties; she dies at the end of 1872. A further ten die between the census dates. Four are still in Farway in 1881, one has moved to Sidbury, one, as mentioned above, is visiting his daughter in Bridgwater, the last, not traced in 1881, dies in 1887 aged 87.

(7) Some context

Scanning through section (6) of this article the impression gained is of perpetual movement. Only one Farway farm is in the same family, passing from father to son through five generations in the century from the 1838 deed under the 1836 Tithe Act to the compilation of the 1939 Register and this will have involved at least one renewal of the tenancy because the longest leases granted were for the shorter period of 99 years or three lives - typically those of the grantee, his widow and their eldest son. As the nineteenth century progressed long tenancies became less common and a lease might be for seven years or less, renewable, of course, if the landlord and his tenant could agree terms. If not, a valuer would be called in and the incoming tenant would pay the outgoing one for the crops in the ground and any livestock he agreed to purchase. The outgoing tenant would pack his moveables onto carts and depart down the valley or up a steep, stony brake and over the commons to a farm perceived to offer greater opportunity.

Because no one made himself or herself (and there were seven female farmers) wealthy from farming a Farway farm in the second half of the nineteenth century, only two left estates of £3,000, a few hundred pounds being the norm; in contrast, those young men who went to London to run a public house and prospered in that trade left effects valued at several times those of any Farway farmer.



Netherton Hall: East Facing Elevation

The narrative above records many instances of labourers becoming dairymen and taking tenancies. Those who remained agricultural labourers lived a life and earned wages which changed little in over a century and more. Vancouver notes (for around 1800 and summarising the position for the whole county) that a labourer's wages were 7 shillings (35 pence) a week, between a quart and three pints of ale or cider daily, and a patch of land for growing potatoes and other vegetables and rearing a pig. The rent for his cottage is stated as averaging a little under 40 shillings (£2) per annum (pp.361-5). A labourer's wages for Devon in 1851 are given as 8s 6d (42.5 pence) per week (8). An entry for 15 January 1910 by a local diarist records a conversation with the chatelaine of Netherton Hall in which she says that the Farway "labourers' wages are nominally 15/-, but 2/6 they have to take in cider; they pay £3 a year for their cottages; the wife lays by 2/6 a week for clothing, and thus has only 10/- a week to feed the family." (2) So, in the decade 1871 to 1881 a farm labourer's weekly monetary wage was somewhere between 8s. 6d. and 12s. 6d. (42.5 and 62.5 pence).

In the early eighteen-sixties agricultural associations began to be established to promote good relations between the three classes of agriculturalist and best practice by those working the land. A report in *The Western Times* of 18 October 1874 of the eleventh annual meeting of the Farway, Northleigh, Offwell and Widworthy Agricultural Association records the winners of the ploughing, hedge-laying and turnip-hoeing competitions plus other prize-winners and the speeches at the dinner following the day's events.

After the Loyal Toast and a toast to “The Bishop, clergy and ministers of all denominations” the vice-chairman notes that the clergy are more assiduous in their duties than they were a generation ago. The only local Rector present praises the benefits of education and says the “agriculturalists” should not be content with just a little reading, “cyphering” and being “able to tell that twice two made four” but should apply their minds to their work because in “being educated and intelligent they would do everything better”. After a toast to “The Army, Navy and Reserve forces” the sergeant-major of the local yeomanry bemoans the fact that not enough men are enlisting. The Chairman gives “Success to the Association”, chides the landed interest for not being present and warns the parson that the working man doesn’t need too much education. Prizes are given, more toasts drunk. We leave the men of Farway (and it is all men) at their convivial evening with their neighbours in the *Rose and Crown* at Widworthy.

Sources

- (1) *My Ancestor was an Agricultural Labourer* by Ian W Waller (SoG, 2nd edition 2019, pp 8-10.)
- (2) Diaries of Sir Ernest Satow edited by Ian Ruxton and published by lulu.

* * * * *

SAVE OUR WILLS

The Ministry of Justice is holding a consultation on the proposal to digitise and then allow the destruction of post 1858 original wills after 25 years. Join in the consultation and help the campaign to preserve these valuable documents. Responses are needed by the 23rd February 2023. For more information on the MoJ consultation paper Storage and retention of original will documents

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/storage-and-retention-of-original-will-documents/storage-and-retention-of-original-will-documents>

Join the campaign to help stop the original wills being destroyed and the sign the petition <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/654081> .

#SaveOurWills!

* * * * *

SILENT WITNESSES OF FAMILY HISTORY

By Peter Džuppa – Szemere

Using the example of one family, the article shows the possibilities of how events from centuries ago can be explained by direct and indirect correlations. It incorporates facts from known sources and offers a new perspective on historical events from times when the written word was not yet common.

In this paper, we discuss events from more than a thousand years ago, which have become part of our history. Around 896, seven Hungarian tribes gained new territories for their descendants in the Carpathian Basin. Their chieftains were Huba, Előd, Kund, Ond, Tas, Töhötöm and Arpád's father Álmos.

It is not possible to reliably compile a genealogy of any family from the Árpád period. There are practically no records of genera from this period. This also applies to Szemere family, despite the fact that its members served at the royal court. Unfortunately, even the existing precious documents were destroyed over centuries, marked by wars, raids by Turks and Tatars and by cruel civil unrest.

The Szemere's derives its origin from duke Huba. The genus is mentioned in the scholar literature and was described in detail in the genealogical tables in the so far most important comprehensive, eight-volume work by Iván Nagy (1824-1898). (1) Later publications describing the Szemere's draw information directly or indirectly from this work. A detailed probe into the history of the family was published by Gáspár A. Zarándy (2) in the *Huba's Blood Szemere*, a book written in cooperation with prominent Hungarian genealogists and academics at the turn of the nineteenth century to the twentieth. The book initiated and published by imperial and royal chamberlain Miklós Szemere (2) was published in 1910. The Slovak translation was made, supplemented, and published by the author of this paper in 2021. (3)

The male line of the Abov-Zemplín branch of the family died out in Slovakia at the end of the 20th century, and the family continued through the female line. (4, 5)

As we mentioned in the introduction, the historical documents were destroyed by the bloody wars and civil unrest. The archives in Veszprém (1276), Nitra (1273), Oradea (1241) burned down. In 1528, the Čičava Castle was also destroyed by fire. The fire also destroyed documents related to the Counties of Zemplín, Borsod and Abov (4, 5), where the ancestors of the family held important positions. (4.5) For this reason, we have little information about the founder of the family, Duke Huba, and the activities of his descendants in politics, their military affairs or financial situation. In addition to the known sources, there is a third alternative, which we will describe below.

The first source of information is family tradition. Traditionally, information was transmitted by word of mouth through successive generations. We learn about the events and deeds of our ancestors and their lineage from parents and family members. Some information is supported by inherited artifacts and written documents. However, we assume gaps in this area as well, because our generation grew up under socialism and, especially in the fifties of the twentieth century, during the harsh communist regime, our parents (they died before 1989) did not tell us much about their noble origin, lest we accidentally mention it somewhere. It was only later, when the regime weakened, that we could speak more freely about the origins of the family.

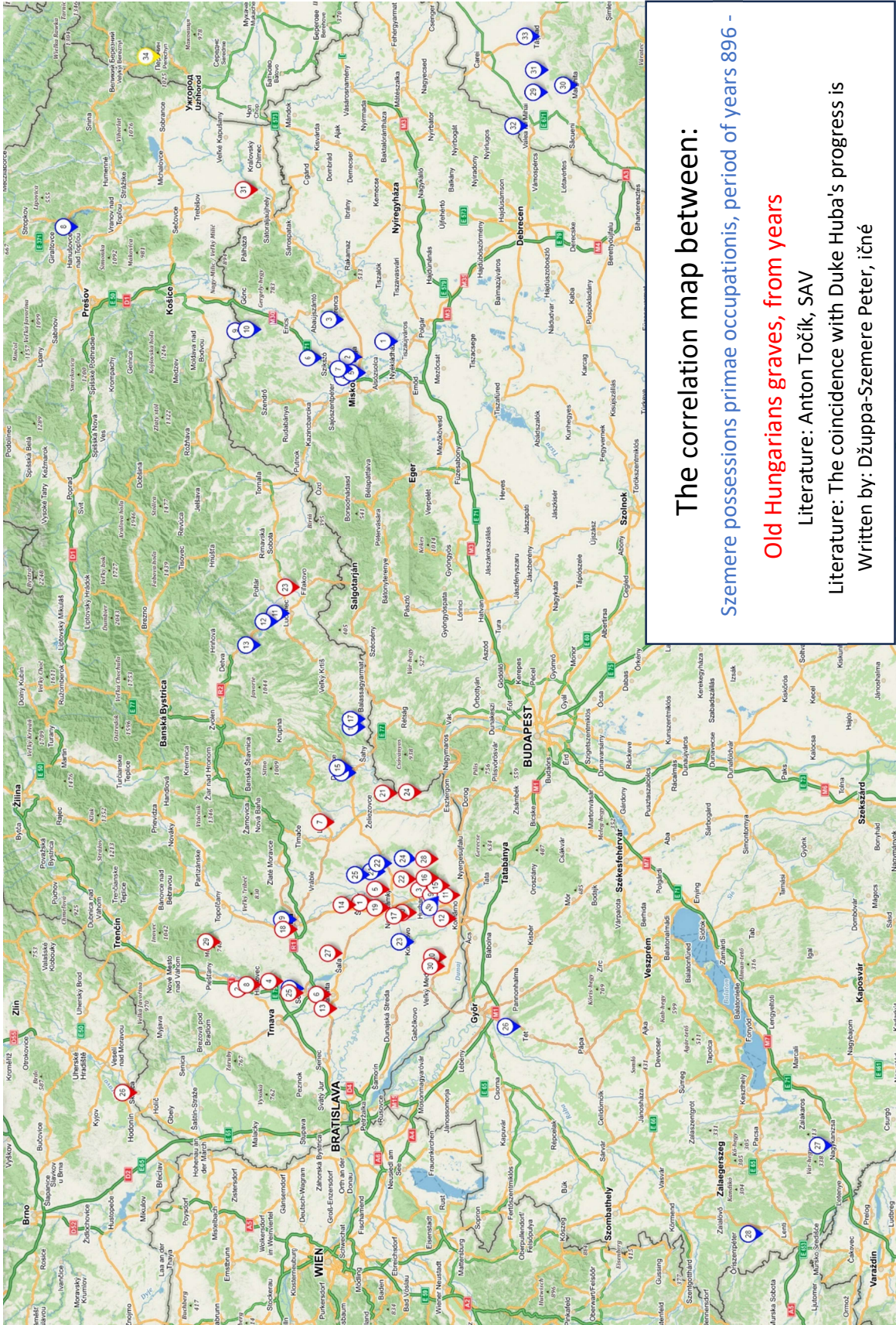
The second, written source of information on the ancient past is the *Gesta Hungarorum* (Deeds of the Hungarians). It was compiled by an unidentified notary working at the court of King Bela III (1172-1196). (3) Historiography often questions the occupation of Great Moravian Nitra by Old Hungarian tribes (Duke Huba around 896), as well as the development of events described by Anonymus in his Chronicle. However, it is indisputable that the author knew the geography of the country excellently. Apparently, he also approached the writing of ancient history in the best will and responsibly, based upon the sources he was able to obtain in the twelfth century. The Chronicle represents a single and unique comprehensive evidence of the distant past, including the territory of today's Slovakia.

Duke Huba is the first known ancestor of the Szemere family. Huba was one of seven leaders called Hetumoger, who occupied the Carpathian Basin around 896. Among the seven leaders, they chose Álmos, father of Árpád, the founder of the royal dynasty, as their leader. (6) It is also necessary to mention an important fact that the origin of the Szemere family from Duke Huba was confirmed on November 13, 1917, based on the evidence presented and the document signed by King Charles IV. on the battlefield. (4)

Even the written legacy of Bertalan Szemere (1812-1869) to future generations of the family proves the strong ties to the tradition of Duke Huba. On March 30, 1857, this prominent liberal politician and Hungarian Prime Minister sent a letter from exile in Paris beginning with the words: "Don't forget your ancestor Huba...". (2)

The strong tradition and pride of the family was an incentive for its important member Miklós Szemere. The well-educated imperial and royal chamberlain Miklós, a diplomat, patron, founder of shooting sports in Hungary and today's Slovakia, owner of winning thoroughbred riding horses, famous card player, built a tradition on solid foundations. He entrusted the leading academics of the period to compile the history of the family. His magnificent work succeeded and was published in a representative edition in Hungarian, German, and French in 1919 in Budapest. (2) The publication and its supplement (4) are found in the collections of the world's leading state libraries in Budapest, Berlin, Paris, Vienna, and Prague.

The third source of information is based on the correlation between the location of Old Hungarian graves from the first half of the 10th century (Anton Točík) (9) and the location of thirty-three properties that the Szemere's, *de genere* Huba, (2) owned until 1526 - the area east of Žitava River, approximately from the line connecting towns Vráble and Komárno. This correlation has an important telling value. It confirms the movement of Duke Huba's army in the territory of today's Slovakia as described in the Anonymous Chronicle. A. Točík's work contains the results of the post-war archaeological research of 245 graves in thirty locations in Western Slovakia. Thanks to that, we can point out to the relationship between the properties of the Szemere's and the remains of Old Hungarians in this area. The findings of archaeological investigations after 1968 were not included in the correlation. That is a task for the future. Our considerations are based on the premise that the position and majesty of the family was, for several centuries, determined by its ancient origin, participation in the management and defence of the state, and last but not least, land ownership. Members of the family were usually buried in the same place where they had lived on their dominion for centuries.



The correlation map between:

Szemere possessions primaie occupationis, period of years 896 -

Old Hungarians graves, from years

Literature: Anton Točík, SAV

Literature: The coincidence with Duke Huba's progress is

Written by: Džuppa-Szemere Peter, ičné

In the publication “Huba’s Blood Szemere” there is a list of documented properties of the Szemere family until 1526. (2) It contains references to documents from which we obtained information about the ownership of properties in the counties listed below. It is interesting to see how the information from these three sources complement each other.

The first mention of the military and property dominion of the Szemere family can be found in the Deeds of Hungarians chronicle (lit. 6) on page 85. Quote: “*In that joy, Arpád appointed Huba as the governor of Nitra and the other castles and, donated him land around Žitava River up to the Turčok Forest,*” the area between Žitava and Hron Rivers northeast of Vráble. (6, 7) The names of villages, still in use today, derived from the name of the Szemere family originated in the mentioned. For example, Szemerovo and Horné and Dolné Szemerovce in the south-east. The village of Csúz also belonged to the portfolio of descendants of the Szemere family, who later, accordingly, adopted the surname Csúzy. (10) Today, the village is part of Dubník in the district of town Nové Zámky, and there is a preserved manor of the Csúzy family (Szemere).

The map shows the ancient possessions (*primae occupationis*) that Duke Huba conquered with sword. Therefore, the Szemere family did not receive donation deeds for those territories. Over time, however, new donations or confirmations appeared (e.g. a new donation document issues by Belo IV in 1255. (2)

The location of the properties is sorted by county. Some properties appear repeatedly in old property deeds with different dates (we indicate this in parentheses). The numbering of properties and Old Hungarian graves from 1 to 30 corresponds to their location on the correlation map of Szemere properties and Old Hungarian graves.

Possessions of the Szemere family in Žitava, Nitra, Váh river basins from around 896 to 1526 years

Led by Archduke Arpád and other leaders, the individual tribes of the united people settled in separate places. Duke Huba and his tribe settled under the Carpathians. According to Anonymous Chronicle, Arpád made Huba the governor of the Nitra County and, donated him land from Žitava River to the Turčok Forest. It was probably the territory between Žitava and Hron rivers northeast of Vráble, according to V. Múček (6) along the Žitava River to Komárno.

If we assume that it was the territory of the Žitava river basin up to the Nitra, the Váh river, the mentioned territory was, compared to the total size of the occupied country, only a negligible area (approximately the size of the Nitra County), therefore, we believe that area donated to Huba, mentioned by Anonymus, was the territory that was occupied last. Previously, before leaving the mountainous country near town Szerencs, he occupied the land at the confluence of Tisza, Hornád and Slaná Rivers, and certain areas between Tisza and Váh Rivers. Huba conquered these territories together with Arpád’s nephews Zoárd and Kadocsa.

The *primae occupationis* property conquered by Huba's family in the western part of Upper Hungary stretched between Žitava and Váh Rivers and included today's Nitra County and certain areas of Bratislava, Trenčín, Tekov and Komárno Counties. These territories correlate with the sites of Old Hungarian graves. The location of the graves and properties is shown on the map.

Old Hungarian graves (1-30 according to A. Točík (9))

1 Bánov, 2 Červeník, 3 Svätý Peter, 4 Dvorníky, 5 Dvory nad Žitavou, 6 Galanta, 7 Géňa, now part of Levica, 8 Hlohovec, 9 Chotín, 10 Imeľ, 11 Iža, 12 Komárno, 13 Košúty, 14 Mlynský Sek, 15 Marcelová, 16 Mudroňovo, 17 Nesvady, 18 Nitra - Mlynárce, 19 Nové Zámky, 20 Okoličné na Ostrove, 21 Pastovce, 22 Pribeta, 23 Prša, 24 Salka, 25 Sereď, 26 Skalica 27 Trnovec nad Váhom, 28 Vojnice, now part of Bátorové Kosihy, 29 Vozokany, 30 Zemianska Olča, 31 Zemplín.

***Primae occupationis* properties (Gáspár A. Zarándy (2))**

The attached map shows the approximate location of thirty-three “*primae occupationis*” properties of the Szemere family from the period 896 - 1526 (2) in southwestern part of Slovakia and, the location of 33 Old Hungarian graves mentioned by A. Točík. (9) The other listed properties of the Szemere family are located in northeastern part of Hungary and northeastern part of Romania. Grave site No. 31 in Zemplín belongs to an Old Hungarian prince whose remains were found under a tumulus from the 10th century. (11, 9)

Szemere estates, dominions, are located in five areas where the widely branched family operated.

- A. In north-eastern part of Hungary: 9 – Szemere, 10 – Fúlókercs, 6 – Aszaló, 3 – Legyesbény, 4 – Zsolca/Felsőzsolca, 7 – Onga, 5 – Zsolca/Alsózsolca, 1 – Abony
- B. In north-eastern part of Romania, Transylvania: 29 – Hercygh, Salacs region, 30 – Hercygh, Marghita region, 31 – Herczigh, Sarvazel region, 32 – Zalacs Castle near Valea lui Mihai, 33 – Tasnád – Szarvad
- C. In central part of Slovakia: 11, 12 – Lučenec – Tomášovce, 13 – Tuhár, 14 – Dolné Szemerovce, 15 – Horné Szemerovce, 16 – Veľká Ves nad Ipľom and Malá Ves nad Ipľom, 17 – Balog nad Ipľom
- D. In western part of Slovakia: 18 – Chotín, 19 – Nitra, 20 – Šintava Castle, 21 – Szemerovo, 22 Nyék (between Szemere and Jasová), 23 – Kolárovo, 24 – Strekov, 25 – Veľké Lovce
- E. In the north-western part of Hungary: 26 – Győrszemere

The location of the *primae occupationis* of the Szemere's *de genere* Huba coincides with the advance of Huba's army from the Veretskyi Pass through south-western part of Slovakia to Nitra.

The correlation map of properties from 896-1526 with Old Hungarian graves from 920-930 in the southwestern part of Slovakia points out to the credibility of the Deeds of Hungarians. It supports the above-mentioned donation of the *primae occupationis* by Arpád to Huba, from the eastern area of the Žitava river, stretching north from the Turčok Forest, approximately on the line connecting Vráble and Komárno.

Another dominion was located in the eastern part of the country, in the Counties of Borsod, Abov and Zemplín, where the medieval seat of the family was in the town of the same name, Szemere.

Within the restitutions after 1989, part of the large estate of approximately seven hundred hectares in Malé Ozorovce, was returned to the possession of the descendants of the family, but now only through the female line.

We believe that comparing the location of medieval graves with the location of properties acquired in the relevant period would not only contribute to the knowledge of the history of families, but also to the knowledge of the history of the entire region.

Peter Džuppa – Szemere

In Bratislava 2024

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MY GENEALOGY JOURNEY

An Interview With Pollyanna Bristol-Murphy BSc DipGen RQG AGRA Member

1. At what point did you become interested in research and family history?

Family history has always been important in our family. I had a paternal and maternal uncle who were both keen family historians and from a young age they were producing family histories. But it wasn't until Ancestry.co.uk became popular c2006 that I started investigating the original records. Although I had read the pieces my uncles put together it was the excitement of discovering the source material for myself that got me hooked!

2. Was there something in your own family history or childhood that sparked your initial interest?

There was always a mystery around the ancestry of my paternal great x2 grandfather's ancestry; a surveyor who lived in Carlisle. Several generations of my family had failed to work out where he came from although there were links to Independents/ Congregationalists in the West Country who were also allegedly smugglers. It was fascinating delving into the 18th century world of non-conformists, excise men and soap boilers. A first-hand account of one of these particular families brought the history alive and I discovered a passion for reconstructing the past.

3. What was your first step into the world of Genealogy?

After getting myself going on Ancestry.co.uk, I went to a WDYTIA conference at Earls Court and came across the IHGS stand. I realised I needed to understand these records I was busy collating, I signed up for the IHGS Correspondence Course in Genealogy. Life got in the way of giving it my full attention and it took a while to complete but I am so pleased I did. A brilliant course, it gave me a fantastic grounding from which to launch myself into professional research.

4. What steps have you taken (Degree/Courses) to reach your professional level?

I completed the IHGS CC in 2020 and went straight on to the IHGS Diploma in Genealogy, which I completed in 2021. With the qualifications under my belt and an initial client base I applied for full AGRA and QG membership. Being a fully accredited genealogist made a big difference with the number of enquiries I received; understandable clients want to know that you have the skills to tackle their research queries.

5. Have there been any highlights?

So many highlights, it is difficult to condense them down, but I would say the IHGS online lectures, combined with the online shows like those put on by the Family History Federation and RootsTech, were key in consolidating my knowledge. Listening to the experts bring the records to life, through case studies and research techniques, was enormously helpful. David Annal, Sophie Kay and Joe Saunders, for example, excel in teaching technique, content and context respectively. You never stop learning.

For the full interview please visit <https://www.ihgs.ac.uk/my-genealogy-journey-an-interview-with-pollyanna-bristol-murphy-1821>

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The Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies

Northgate, Canterbury CT1 1BA

01227 768664