



Shropshire Family History Society



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Karen Hunter	Chair	chair@sfhs.org.uk
	Editor	editor@sfhs.org.uk
Dave Morris	Secretary	secretary@sfhs.org.uk
Paul Quartermaine	Treasurer	treasurer@sfhs.org.uk

Committee members

Simon Davies	Webmaster	webmaster@sfhs.org.uk
	Digital Strategy Group lead	
Lorraine Hunt	New Members' Secretary	membership@sfhs.org.uk
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General Postal Enquiries: For any general enquiries by post please send them to:

Shropshire FHS, c/o 48 Oakley Street, SHREWSBURY, SY3 7JY, UK

Post will be passed to the appropriate member of the Society team and a reply issued as soon as is possible.

Telephone contact: Dave Morris, 07980 870007

Front cover: Old Salop Fire Office, Market Square, Shrewsbury, 1836.
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Thoughts from the Chair

Busy times

As I write this, just before the Journal is due to go to print, I have been reflecting on the last few months since I took over this role. If nothing else, it has been busy, and for most of the time it has been fun! So, what are some of the things I have been up to?

Well, I have been 'chairing' things! The monthly Committee meeting gives the opportunity to review progress on activities, monitor our finances (ably managed on a day-to-day basis by Paul Quartermaine, our Treasurer), and to consider ideas for the future. We have introduced a monthly Newsletter for those with email which includes a summary of the key items from those meetings, and these will also be summarised in the Journal so we can keep everyone informed.

I have also had the pleasure of 'chairing' our monthly online talks, with some excellent topics presented by speakers who are clearly enthusiastic and very knowledgeable about their subjects. I wonder how many of you have been busy exploring cemeteries, ordering and reviewing wills of some of your ancestors or looking at those BMD and census records a little more closely to see if any of them reveal the occasional liar? I ordered a few wills, and have to say the service was excellent, with them coming back within about 48 hours! They weren't very revealing, although one did rule someone out of my tree, which is helpful. I now have to find the right person to fill the gap! There are reviews of each talk later in this Journal and don't forget that recordings of most of them (but not Celia's talk on Cemeteries) are available from Dave Morris if you missed it or if you want to watch again.

I also made my BBC Radio Shropshire debut on 25 April in a brief interview with Mark Elliot, when we talked about family history generally and what the Society can offer to help people. I don't know how many people heard it but we did record it so if anyone is interested I can send the link. At his request I shared it with my younger son, who generally shows no interest in my family history activities and he said it sounded OK, which is probably high praise from him! In arranging the interview I also discovered they have an ongoing thread about family history so I am hoping we can get a more 'regular' input into the show in the coming months.

Paul Quartermaine and I had a useful meeting with Sarah Davis, the Archivist at Shropshire Archives to discuss with her ways in which we might work more closely together. A new transcription project focusing on the indexing of the Calendar of Prisoners has been

launched, with volunteers from the Society getting involved. To support our Archives help-desk volunteers the Society has approved the funding of a new desktop computer for the team. Anyone who has had the challenge of working on an old, slow computer will realise what a positive difference this will make.

Meet the Chair

The online 'meet the chair' sessions took place last month. Many thanks to those few people who joined me - some familiar faces and some new ones - it was good to see you. We had a wide-ranging discussion, with some good ideas put forward. I am heading up to Shrewsbury on Thursday of this week when I hope a few local members will come along to meet with me for a cuppa and a chat and I'm sure there will be some ideas coming from that as well.

We have already taken up a couple of the ideas as follows. Firstly we are 'extending' our monthly online meetings for a while after the talk and Q&A session so if anyone has more general questions to ask of us or just wants to have a bit of a chat they are welcome to stay around. Secondly, we have 're-launched' the Members' Interests project with the aim of being able to link members up with others who are researching the same people or in the same places if they want to share information or seek help. There is more information about how to submit your interests elsewhere in the Journal.

If you didn't make it to any of these but have some suggestions or observations to share please do so - my inbox [chair@sfhs.org.uk] or letterbox [address as given on the inside front cover] is always open and I'd be delighted to hear from you.

It is fair to say there haven't been any 'significant adventures' yet, but it is early days and I am still optimistic that, with everyone's help and support they will happen.

Talking Family History Live

We are planning a live event for members on Saturday 7 October at Cross Houses from 11am-3pm and I hope to see you there. The aim is to set up a number of interactive sessions focusing on a range of family history related topics, with the opportunity to hear from others and also for you to be able to share your experiences and knowledge. Please ear-mark the date in your diaries and look out for the final programme in the September Journal. There is still time for you to suggest topics you'd like to learn more about - just email me before the end of June.

Best wishes.

Karen Hunter, Chair

The Panting Lawyers of Shrewsbury 1800-1840

Thomas PANTING (1771-1815) was born in Wellington being the third son of the local vicar, the Reverend Stephen PANTING who was the incumbent of Wrockwardine and Wellington. Stephen in turn was the son of Samuel PANTING of Wootton-Under-Edge in Gloucestershire.

When considering the PANTING family, the song *"If I were the marrying kind, and thank the lord I'm not sir"* comes to mind as generally speaking from each generation, only one of the children produced offspring and this enabled the family wealth to be maintained in a small hub. In 1766 Stephen PANTING married Josina GARDNER and it was this marriage that eventually brought much wealth to the family.

Josina was the daughter of the Reverend Laurence GARDNER (1684-1750) whose christian name was maintained in the family for nearly 300 years. Stephen and Laurence were the incumbents of neighbouring parishes though Laurence had died by the time Stephen arrived. Laurence was the son of John GARDNER a wealthy gentleman and draper whose grandfather had purchased the Sansaw estate about 10 miles North of Shrewsbury in 1622.

Sansaw Hall remained in the family for over 250 years before being sold in 1883 and the GARDNER family were also the owners of Plas-y-Court Farm near Welshpool and the Builthy Estate nearby, other properties that were associated with the family for many years.

Josina was the third of four daughters of Laurence GARDNER (the other three died as spinsters). After her marriage to Stephen, they had four children all baptised at Wellington All Saints. Firstly a joint baptism on 11 June 1767 for Stephen and Laurence (were they twins?) followed by Elizabeth on 27 December 1768 and Thomas on 15 May 1771.

This family were to grow up in typical fashion for the gentry in those days, so Laurence followed his father into the clergy, Stephen was the first of many members of the family to move into the medical profession and Thomas became a Lawyer. Elizabeth no doubt took on the peripatetic work expected of the vicar's daughter in Georgian times, no doubt preparing afternoon tea and so on.

In a mirrored copy to his mother, Thomas was the only sibling to produce offspring after he married Mary MIERES in Oswestry in 1800. In time, Mary would prove to be a very impressive matriarch to the family.

I give to my black servant the annuity of fifty pounds for his natural life & likewise give him all my personal baggage my writing desk and all my books and in this I give him also the sum of two hundred pounds that in a convenient time after my decease my son to Tobago that all his expences which he remains in his way returns before he leaves it his passage out to his baggage may be paid by my executors out of my estate and my borrow all price and cannot be too highly reward than I have been useful to him I would have given to him

The contents of his will though did redeem him to a certain degree. When he returned from Tobago he fetched his black servant John back with him and in his will he left him an annuity of £52 per year, a

considerable sum at the time and also the sum of £250 to secure his passage back to Tobago should he wish, as documented in the image overleaf.

The will showed him to be a very wealthy man leaving many thousands of pounds to be ultimately distributed amongst his nephews and nieces, the children of his younger brother Thomas.

As previously mentioned, Thomas's elder brother Laurence became a vicar taking the usual route to the clergy in those days via university attendance and he matriculated from St John's College, Cambridge in 1792. He initially went to London where he was a vicar at St Mary Lambeth, an ancient parish of which the church has now been deconsecrated where he also preached at the "Asylum for Female Orphans". [The image above is of the asylum for Female Orphans 1823 from *The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Lambeth* by T Allen (1827)



No sooner had he taken this role though that his life was to change considerably due to a significant legacy. To understand this we need to revert back to the GARDNER family of Sansaw Hall in Shropshire.

This property along with other estate had gone down a different line since 1699 when John GARDNER had died but one hundred years later, the line expired with the death of John GARDNER (1745-1801).

I'm sure Laurence would have been aware of this legacy and the will stated that the estate would be passed to the children of Stephen PANTING with the proviso that they changed their name by Royal Licence from PANTING to GARDNER thus maintaining the name if not the strict line.

As such, barely a month after the death of John GARDNER, Laurence PANTING became the first member of the family to change his name to GARDNER.

This was declared in the London Gazette on 28 April 1801, as follows on the next page:

Whitehall, May 2, 1801

The King has been graciously pleased to grant until the Reverend Laurence Panting, of the Parish of Saint Mary Lambeth, in the County of Surrey, Clerk, Master Of Arts, Minister of South Lambeth Chapel, and Rector of the Left Portion of Westbury in the Sounty of Salop, his Royal Licence and Authority that he and his Issue may assume and use the Surname and Arms of Gardner instead of those of Panting, in Compliance with the Will of his Cousin John Gardner, late of Sansaw, in the County of Salop, Esq; deceased, provided such Arms be first duly exemplified according to the Laws of Arms, and recorded in the Heralds' Office.

And also to order that His Majesty's said Concession and Declaration be registered in His College of Arms.

Evidence of Laurence's name change can be found in the following newspaper articles.

From the first time we heard Dr. Gardner preach we have never ceased to admire both his delivery and his style of composition. His sermons very forcibly remind us, which is no mean excellence, of some of our old and unequalled sermon writers of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Birmingham Chronicle, 1823

We have to announce the death of the Rev. Dr. Lawrence Gardner, Rector of St Philip's, Birmingham. who expired on Friday last, at Sansaw near Shrewsbury, at the age of 76 years. In addition to holding the above valuable living, he was Canon Residentiary of Lichfield.

London Evening Standard 31 July 1844



Laurence Gardner DD 1767-1844



Sansaw Hall, Clive, Shropshire

Although he had married Martha PEMBERTON (a second cousin on his mother's side) in 1799 the marriage was childless and so as with the estate of his brother Stephen, his wealth and the Sansaw Estate was left to the children of his brother Thomas.

Along with this also came the moral proviso in the will that whoever inherited the Sansaw Estate should also assume the name GARDNER as he did some 40 years earlier.

Laurence GARDNER in his will of 1841 made generous gifts to family members including £1,000 to his niece Josina and the same to his sister in law Mary. He left £600 to his nephew Laurence and various bits of religious regalia. This was accompanied by significant charitable provisions as well as catering for his servants and wider family.

The Sansaw estate was left to his nephew Robert PANTING with the specific request that it wasn't to be sold subject to an annual annuity of £300 for life to nephew Laurence.

As John GARDNER's will of 1801 also applied to Laurence GARDNER's heirs, Robert PANTING and his seven children assumed the name GARDNER by Royal Licence.

Whitehall, August 30, 1844

The Queen has been pleased to grant unto Robert Panting, of Leighton, in the county of Salop, Esq. second, but now eldest, surviving son and heir of the late Thomas Panting, deceased, and grandson of Stephen Panting, Clerk, M.A. some time Vicar of Wellington and Wrockwardine, in the said county of Salop, deceased, by Josina his wife, third daughter and coheir of Laurence Gardner, M. A. Vicar of High Ercall, in the said county of Salop, and Prebendary of Lichfield Cathedral, also deceased. Her royal licence and authority, that he and his issue may, in compliance with a request contained in the last will and testament of his late cousin, John Gardner, of Sansaw, in the said county of Salop, Esq. deceased, and in manifestation of his grateful and affectionate respect for the memory of the testator, henceforth take and use the surname and arms of Gardner, instead of those of Panting; such arms being first duly exemplified according to the laws of arms, and recorded in the Heralds' Office, otherwise the said licence and permission to be void and of none effect :

And also to command, that the said royal consession and declaration be registered in Her Majesty's College of Arms.

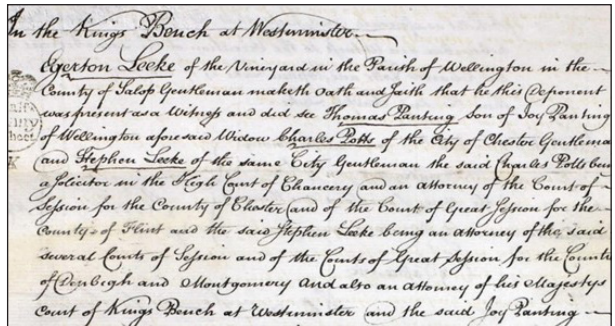
Little is known of the life of Elizabeth beyond she was a spinster and surmising the usual role of the daughter or wife of a clergyman in the parish. On the surviving 1821 census for Wellington, she is recorded on Church Street with two female servants.

She died in February 1826 and was buried in Wrockwardine. She left an estate of £7,000 with the major legacies being £4,000 to her eldest niece Josina (secured on her share of the Sansaw Estate), £1,000 to her brother Laurence and her property and land on Church Street, Wellington to her nephew Robert PANTING.

She also made a specific request that her brother Stephen should be allowed to live in the property during his lifetime, paying a rent to Robert.

As Stephen retired a short time later and returned to Wellington, it is probably safe to assume that this wish was indeed enacted upon.

In 1787, Thomas PANTING signed an indenture to become articulated as a solicitor. It is probably worth remembering that his father the Reverend Stephen PANTING had died five years earlier when Thomas was eleven. His elder brother Laurence was already at St John's College, Cambridge and



In the Kings Bench at Westminster.
Stephen Locke of the Minors in the Parish of Wellington in the County of Salop Gentleman maketh oath and faith that he this Deposition was present as a Witness and did see Thomas Potts Son of Joy Potts of Wellington aforesaid Widow Charles Potts of the City of Chester Gentleman and Stephen Locke of the same City Gentleman the said Charles Potts being a Solicitor in the Kings Court of Chancery and an Attorney of the Court of Sessions for the County of Chester (and of the Court of Great Sessions for the Counties of Flint and the said Stephen Locke being an Attorney of the said several Courts of Sessions and of the Courts of Great Sessions for the Counties of Leicestershire and Montgomery and also an Attorney of his Majestys Court of Kings Bench at Westminster and the said Joy Potts

I should imagine this put quite a strain on family finances to the extent that his widowed mother chose to cut out the university education.

So Thomas was articulated to Charles POTTS and Stephen LEEKE of Chester who practised in Chester, Flint and Denbighshire. I guess it was during this period that he met Mary MIERES. If we then roll the clock forward some 12 years they were married on 5 June 1800 at St Oswald's Church, Oswestry before moving to Shrewsbury where Thomas set up Practice.

After their marriage, Thomas and Mary moved to Pride Hill, Shrewsbury and immediately set about doing what his siblings had failed to achieve and produce heirs. [Image is an extract from the Family Bible.]



Thomas Panting & Mary Mieres were married in the parish Church of Oswestry the 5th day of June 1800. by the Rev. B. Mieres.
John their eldest daughter was born on Pride Hill Shrewsbury the 7th of July 1801
Thomas their eldest son was born on Pride Hill Shrewsbury the 17th of September 1802. D. 26 Jan. 1836
Robert their second son was born in Belmont in Shrewsbury the 6th day of December 1804.
Hannah Gortulde Charlotte their second daughter was born in Belmont Shrewsbury the 25th May 1806.
Laurence their third son was born in Belmont Shrewsbury the 26th day of October 1808.
John their fourth son was born in Belmont Shrewsbury the 1810.

Within two years they had produced a daughter and son and perhaps the imminent arrival of a further child and the lack of space led them to move house and in 1804 they purchased a townhouse in the upmarket area of Belmont.

Five more children were born at Belmont over the next nine years when disaster struck the family with Thomas passing away in 1815, leaving Mary with seven children to rear. Thomas was buried on 14 September at St Mary's, Shrewsbury.

So when Thomas died Mary was left children whose ages ranged from two to 14. Her eldest daughter Josina was by then 14 years old and I am sure she will have been absolutely vital to Mary in helping round the house. Indeed, Josina and Mary were very close and Josina lived with her mother for all of her life. [Image is of Thomas Panting]



At the time an equally pressing issue would be what to do with the solicitor's business. It would be easy to assume that the business be sold. Thomas at the time of his death had built up a reasonable business and had at least two articled clerks working for him. Evidence would suggest that Mary PANTING was a driving force behind the business and was controlling all the purse strings. Shropshire Archives holds many detailed records of "Mrs PANTINGs Cashbooks" from the 1818-1825 [ref 1709/241].

Mrs PANTING clearly had a long term plan for her children to enter the legal profession and with this in mind, she took on a young recently qualified solicitor called John Bickerton WILLIAMS who hailed from Wem to continue the practice.

The Fire Office Policy Book [ref 479/1] shows that Thomas and Mary had insured their property in Belmont for £700 with the contents valued at £300. After Thomas died, Mary firstly moved to a cottage in Abbey Foregate less than half a mile away. The new property was insured for £100 which suggests that Mary had moved to a dwelling house only whereas the property on Belmont would have been their home and business premises.

Amendments to the policy show that Mary moved to Castle Street in 1823 then the Council House on Castle Street in 1825. This ancient property was originally the Court House of the Marches of Wales but eventually split into three separate properties. [Image is of The Council House © Humphrey Bolton (cc-by-sa/2.0)]



When Mary moved here, she was also joined by her sons Thomas and Robert (and no doubt Josina). Robert's first four children were born at the Council House and by this time Mary would have been aged 60.

As a result of significant family events, Mary moved from the Council House in 1844 first to Belle Vue, by which time she must surely have retired, and two years later she moved

again to a property called Prospect House, again at Abbey Foregate. Both these moves are recorded in Policy Amendments.

Two years after Mary PANTING began to collaborate with Mr WILLIAMS a partnership agreement followed with Mary maintaining the company records and Mr WILLIAMS carrying out the business. This was a very astute call as in time Mr WILLIAMS became an eminent lawyer and author who was knighted in 1837. In the meantime, Mrs PANTING set about planning for the future, arranging the clerkships of her two eldest sons; firstly Thomas articulated to Thomas SALT who was practising at 2 Belmont and then Robert into her own partnership a few years later.

The partnership with John Bickerton WILLIAMS was dissolved in 1828 as recorded in the Deed of Partnership release [ref 1709/66/17] from Shropshire Record Office, and despite its success, I guess it was time for the newly qualified PANTING lawyers to stand on their own two feet with Thomas PANTING (junior) having qualified at the end of 1826.

So with Mr WILLIAMS moving to his own practise, it was Thomas PANTING who took the realms at the Council House presumably supported by his brothers Robert and John to a greater or lesser degree. If the Shrewsbury Chronicle is anything to go by, then he specialised in corporate work, in particular bankruptcy cases.

All this came to an abrupt end in January 1836 when Thomas died, presumably suddenly, however the business was continued by his younger brother John with a new partner Henry BLOXAM. The business was also practising property law. Henry presumably took over the work of Thomas as indicated by reports in the Shrewsbury Chronicle of 3 June 1836 and 24 June 1836

Robert PANTING (who became a Magistrate and Deputy Sheriff of Shropshire), the second son, moved away from the Council House in about 1833 to Leighton Hall so by the 1841 census, there was just the elderly Mary, her spinster daughter and John. No sooner had the census been taken than John ended his partnership with Henry BLOXAM bringing an end to the legal profession of the family in Shrewsbury, as reported in the London Gazette March 1841.

Notice is hereby given, that the Partnership heretofore subsisting between us the undersigned, practising as Attorneys and Solicitors in Shrewsbury, in the county of Salop, under the firm of Bloxam and Panting, was this day dissolved by mutual consent : As witness our hands this 17th day of March 1841.

*Henry Bloxam.
John Panting.*

Mary and Josina remained in Shrewsbury until the mid 1840s when they relocated to Worcestershire where Mary enjoyed a long retirement of another 20 years in the company of Josina.

She died at "The Mythe", Great Malvern in 1865 at the grand age of 92. Shropshire Record Office has a portrait of her which came from the Leighton Hall estate. [Shropshire Record Office ref 1846-4.]

Sometime after her death, a memorial plaque dedicated to Mary and Thomas was installed (no doubt by their son Robert) at St Mary's Church in Shrewsbury.



John Pemberton, (the 3x great grandson of Thomas Panting), 3430

Genealogy Resources on YouTube

If you enjoyed the recent talk from Dave Annal you may find his YouTube channel of interest. He says:

The idea behind 'Setting The Record Straight' is to share some of my genealogical research experiences with you. One of my main aims is to highlight some of the problems with the databases provided by the big commercial genealogical websites. There's a lot that's good about them but they often fall well short of the standards which we, as paying customers, really deserve. And when they do, we need to expose their failures and shortcomings. I feel strongly about this and examples of what I call REALLY BAD DIGITISATION will be a recurring theme of these videos.

But it won't - I promise! - be all about me getting up on my soapbox and having a moan. I also want to use these videos to look at new online releases and to share tips and suggestions to make your research smarter and more effective. And I want to spend some time exploring some of my favourite websites. The plan is to release at least one new episode of Setting The Record Straight every week. Watch this space... <https://www.youtube.com/@lifelinesresearch/featured>

Celebrating a marriage!

281409

CERTIFIED COPY of an ENTRY OF MARRIAGE, Pursuant to the Marriage Acts, 1836 to 1898.

(Printed by authority of the Registrar General.)

Registration District

1923. Marriage Solemnized at Holy Cross Church in the Parish of Shrewsbury in the County of Salop

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Occupation.	Rank or Profession.	Condition at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
151	June 11 th 1923.	George Jones	42	Widower	Labourer	9 Crosswell Rd	Robert Jones	Blacksmith
		Joyce Eleanor Robinson	32	Spinster		9 Crosswell Rd	John Robinson	Blacksmith

Married in the Holy Cross Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by or after leave by me.

This Marriage was solemnized between the George Jones in the Presence of W Jones and Joyce Eleanor Robinson in the Presence of Edith Ellen Woodall Margaret Davies Operating Minister

I, Thomas James O'Connell of Shrewsbury being duly sworn depose and say that each Register Book is now legally in my custody.

Witness my Hand this 11th day of June, 1923.

Thomas James O'Connell
Registrar



On 11 June 1923 my paternal grandparents were married at Shrewsbury Abbey in the parish of Holy Cross, Shrewsbury. Unfortunately I don't have any photographs taken on the day but the image here is of them not long afterwards.

Grandad, George JONES, was a widower with four children, who had fallen in love with his housekeeper, Joyce Eleanor ROBINSON, after she came to help look after the house and three of his children, following the death of his first wife!

They celebrated their Golden Wedding in June 1973; an event that my Dad and brother attended, but which I sadly missed as it was in the middle of my 'O' level exams. The photographs below were taken over that weekend and although they haven't been labelled I can tell that because Grandad is wearing his special Golden Wedding tie!



Grandma died at the age of 83 in Shrewsbury the following September so they got to celebrate their 51st anniversary. Grandad went on to live until January 1979, dying just eight days before his 98th birthday.

Karen Hunter, 7646



From the Society's Journal - 40 Years On

The first thing to notice about the Journal of June 1983 is the large amount of script concerned with members spelling out their research interests. Whole lists of names covered 11 pages of the Journal.

W. Hughes discovered a statement recorded by J. Whittaker, the Taskmaster at Salop County Gaol. The item was entitled 'Super Grass- 1826 style'.

The voluntary confession of John Morris, a convicted felon under sentence of transportation. He says Richard Boodle (of Whittington) stole a mare and sold it to Mr. Bradshaw, a hawker of boats. He also reported that Mr. Parker's wine vault was robbed by Thomas Hale, William Barmer and John Evans.

It doesn't say if John Morris received a lighter sentence!

An article by Barbara Philpott mentions that her book, 'A Name, a Man, a House', was now at the printers. This is a book from which I took a number of clues when researching the talk about my house, 'Wrekin Villa'. Barbara's main interest was the legacy of Richard Oakley leading to the building of Oakley Manor, which was once home to the Shrewsbury Borough Council Offices and had been used in both world wars as a hospital for injured soldiers. However, her research led her further afield...

While engaged in doing this, a notice appeared in the local press saying that St. Julians were applying to relocate selected headstones, since the Shrewsbury Council hoped to create a Rest Garden there...John Oakley's headstones was one of those scheduled for removal. Because of his role in the affairs of the town...it seemed more fitting that his stone be allowed to remain in the garden. Accordingly, I applied to the Consistory Court of Lichfield Diocese and this was agreed.

It also occurred to me that the Monumental Inscriptions should be recorded. I made a hasty appeal to Janice Capewell, Michael Hulme, Roger and Veronica Jones, their son Toby and my husband Richard. The following Sunday afternoon in the derelict and overgrown churchyard and in one great effort the M.I.'s were recorded. They have since been typed and indexed.

The M.I. Index is, of course, in the collection held by Ruth Wilford and available to our members. I'm sure our Editor will want to remind members of the importance of M.I.'s and how valuable it would be if our current collection were updated by teams of happy volunteers living in the spirit of Barbara Philpott.

On 14 October, 1756, it was recorded that William Oldes of Kidderminster aged 49 married Mary Higgs of Quatford Parish, widow aged 92 by licence....!

Our Journal printed an article first published in the 'Family History' Journal of the Institute of Heraldic Genealogical Studies in August 1982. This was the year in which they claimed Family History was 21 years old and their building was 700 years old!

The article was asking whether Family History Societies were becoming competitive and starting to develop beyond the areas of Family History and were straying off limits. The writer argued that Family History Societies should concentrate on what they can do best. i.e.

Produce a Journal devoted to purely local affairs, publishing copy of local records and registers, compiling indexes of local families and undertaking projects that need not be completed in our life time.

The writer argued

It is necessary to obtain first the material for the construction of family trees before clothing them with the stuff of history and to provide training for researchers.

By way of a challenge, they were offering a 'reward of £700 to the person to have written the best family history'. The closing date wasn't mentioned!

John Speake refers to the problem of land ownership. He noted that the Parliamentary report of 1872 simply gives 'the name of the land owner, their place of residence, acreage and rental value. Therefore, there is no indication of the land concerned, other than it is somewhere in the County'. He is puzzled that Daniel Jennings of Swansea owns 1 acre of land somewhere in Shropshire.

It was reported that a new quarterly journal, Vol 1 No1, had just been published called 'Computers in Genealogy'. A copy was held in the Shrewsbury Library and Sula Rayska had bought a copy for the Society. It was available at £1.00 per copy or £3.00 per annum. We seem to have come a long way since then, don't we!

Reg Wilford

Editor: As Reg highlights, the Monumental Inscription records are a valuable resource for family historians. If anyone is up for updating the indexes in their local area please let us know as I'm sure we can offer some advice about how to go about it.

We can't offer a £700 prize but there is always the opportunity to get published by sharing your family history story through our Journal.

News From Shropshire Archives

SFHS Help Desk

We are delighted that the Shropshire Family History Society help desk is back at Shropshire Archives. Volunteers from the society are available to help with family history queries from 10am to 1pm on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays (first in the month). The volunteers are often approached by people new to genealogy or by those who have hit a 'brick wall' in their research and want advice or another perspective. If you have done your own research and are interested in helping others, then pop in and speak to the current volunteers about their experience and maybe join the rota!



Fire Insurance Index

For the last two years Shropshire Archives has been running a virtual volunteering project, which set out to create an electronic index the 3,000 policies issued by the Salop Fire Office between 1780 and 1889. The policies were issued to insure properties against the threat of fire and cover properties in Shropshire, Staffordshire and Montgomeryshire. The insurance companies retained their own fire fighters. Properties were identified to the firefighters by small metal plaques with the emblem of the fire company.

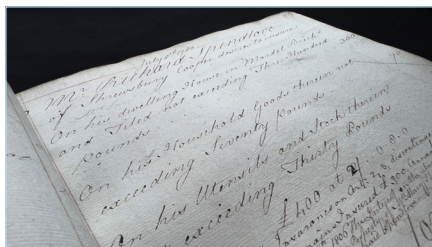
The project was started with eight volunteers during lockdown and the index was finally added to our online catalogue in March this year.

Each policy usually includes a

- Date
- Policy number
- Name of policy holder
- Property
- Tenant (if different to the policy holder)
- Value of the insurance

Further details such as the occupation of the policy holder or tenant are sometimes included. While a full address doesn't always appear, often the street name is given for larger towns. The policies also list what the building was being used for – such as a

house, workshop or stables. They may include information on the structure whether the roof was straw or tiled and the contents, especially if valuable or flammable.



You can see the value for house history and family history. Thanks to the work of the volunteers, you can search the policies by name on our online catalogue and view an accompanying image. The image above shows detail from the Salop Fire Office Policy Book 1, Shropshire Archives ref: 4791/1/

You can browse the catalogue from the following link: https://www.shropshirearchives.org.uk/collections/getrecord/CCA_XSFO_1_8_1_1_1 or use the search bar for Salop Fire and the name of the person or street, for example Salop Fire Jones or Salop Fire “Fish Street”.

Happy searching. We’d love to know whether you find more about your ancestors.

Sarah Davis, Archivist



Fire Brigade, Bishop's Castle, c1900.
Shropshire Archives ref: PH/B/16/9/8



The Alliance, Salop and Shropshire and North Wales Fire Brigade in Princess Street, Shrewsbury ref: PH/S/13/P/7/79 [sy12354]

Shropshire Archives on YouTube

Did you know Sarah Davis created and posted a YouTube during lockdown focusing on the pre 1841 census returns and Quarter Sessions which can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=44QeXzZwyY4> It is an interesting watch and also provides some ways in which you can search their website.

We have been invited to let them know if this approach would be useful to our members (including ideas for topics, format and length) so please let us know if this is of interest and we will pass on your feedback.

More of the Genealogy Bug!

Editor: In response to my query in the March edition of the Journal I have heard from three members who have sent in articles about how they caught the bug!

How I got the Genealogy bug

My grandsons were born in 1991 and 1993, so suddenly I was aware of the family progressing into the distant future, and thought it was about time I followed it back into the past. This was the first small bite of the bug so I got started: always the first bit of advice is get hold of your oldest female relative and grill her to find out everything she knows. Fortunately Aunt Emma Lavinia nee BLAKEWAY, my mother's elder sister had already written, at my behest after my Mother's death in 1982, a wonderful collection of memories, including those of her aunts and uncles and grandparents - so I had a great place to start.

An old friend near Rushbury introduced me to someone who turned out to be a distant cousin of mine, who had visited my friend to see what he knew of the area where all the BLAKEWAY family had originated. We were off! And later we founded a BLAKEWAY family history group which held annual meetings and produced a regular newsletter for ten years (copies lodged at Shropshire Archives).

My husband got interested in his own family and I decided I might as well do my father's family as well - so we were off on a mission. One day after a visit to the Family History resources in the Old Shrewsbury Library we were staying at a B& B in my part of South Shropshire when we got talking to a woman staying at the same place and doing her family history too. She showed us a meticulously laid out and organised file (we did not show her our scraps of handwritten notes) and memorably she said 'Don't start unless you really are prepared because it becomes an addiction'! We soon found out how true this was!

Well and truly bitten by the bug, as soon as retirement gave us more time, we travelled the country from Cornwall to Liverpool, taking in Essex, Leeds and Birmingham on the way using all the resources we could find. London, of course, was a favourite place where we went several times and thoroughly enjoyed handling those huge heavy tomes in what I think was the Family History Centre in Myddelton Street. What a joy! We felt we were real researchers.

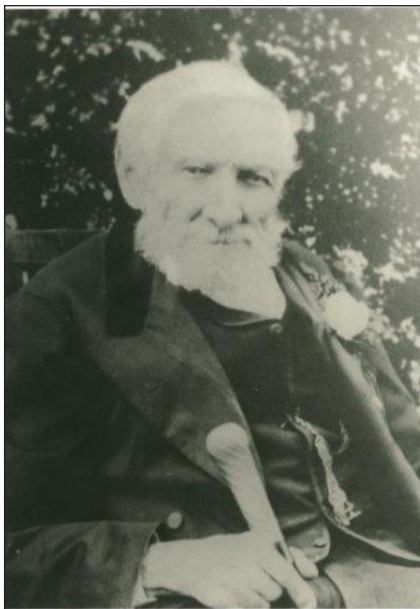
Shropshire Archives became a boon in their new buildings and we spent many hours there learning how to use microfiche machines and card indexes and exploring tithe maps.

I shall have to stop there or I might go on for a very long time and bore you with our quite ordinary, but fascinating to us, discoveries! That's one of the unexpected things grandchildren do for you.

Fay Pascoe, 3397

How I got hooked

My father, William A PELOW (Gus) [1901-1983], first started on his family history circa 1950. At that time his father, William Henry (Harry) [1864-1963], was still alive. In 1894 Harry cycled on his penny-farthing from Stourbridge to Shifnal and back, to attend his grandfather William's [1794-1895] 100th birthday party. This was held on 4 July in the grounds of Aston Hall, Shifnal. William wrote *"DV tea at six. Get on your bicycle and come"*.



William and his wife, Catherine Ann YOUNG [1790-1874], had thirteen children – three sons and ten daughters. One of the sons and five of the daughters were still alive in 1894 and Harry had fifty seven first cousins. Unfortunately he couldn't say who was at the party - *"a lot of relations"* - and he had no contact with any of them. He did however know that his great grandfather, also William [1768-1858], was a tailor in Wellington. [The image above is of William Peplow, the centenarian.]

Spurred on by my father's enthusiasm, my mother, Helen Joyce HINGLEY [1900-1983] and I wrote up a family tree of her Hingley family. She remembered her father telling her that his grandmother Hingley was a GREENFIELD and his great-grandmother a Wooldridge so the tree started about 1800. Mary WOOLDRIDGE caused me a lot of grief when I finally got the "bug". Eventually I discovered that Mary was his maternal great grandmother! I also made a vast family tree of her mother, Alice GUEST's family. This was done with the help of her first cousin Rob Guest and one of her mother's cousins, Hubert Guest, who was still alive. It started with John Guest [1772-1867] and his wife Phoebe SHORT and

covered about five generations. I did it on lining paper and it stretches about ten feet. They had ten children and the details included spouses, occupations and often where they lived. I have yet to find one of my mother's ancestors who wasn't born in the Dudley, Kingswinford, and Stourbridge triangle. The amazing thing about this tree is that it is so accurate – plenty of omissions but no errors.

Gus was a member of the Heraldry Society so he naturally became a founder member of Birmingham and Midland Society for Genealogy and Heraldry (BMSGH) in 1963 and, when it was formed, Shropshire Family History Society. By 1983 his tree went back to 1551. Now I believe it starts in 1479 after worldwide research by an American, Marie Byatt who runs the Pepl** One Name Study. However, he never took any interest in my mother's family or the women in his own. I had tea with him on the day he died and we discussed his mother's "Uncle Dave", David Cooper Spiers. Uncle Dave emigrated to Australia and father was bemoaning the fact that he'd not been able to find out anything about him. I told him not to worry, there was plenty of time!! Gus died on 29 November 1983. He was a man of many interests and belonged to a number of societies. As a result over the next few weeks we were besieged with monthly and quarterly journals and magazines. Later my brother said that one of us should continue membership of some of them and I joined in BMSGH and Shropshire FHS in 1984. However, by then I was already hooked.

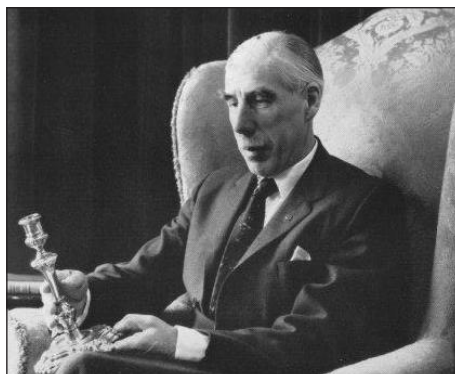
How was I hooked? In December 1983 I took home one of those quarterlies. It was THE MIDLAND ANCESTOR, closely followed by the SHROPSHIRE JOURNAL. I know quite a lot about Uncle Dave now.

It changed my life. I've been in contact with so many cousins (and still meet a few) around the world and I have expanded those trees beyond my imagination back then.

Sarah Riley, 1411

The photograph is of William A Peplow [1901-1983], Sarah's father and a founding member of Shropshire Family History Society.

Editor: It is great to hear that one of our founding members passed on his enthusiasm for family history to his daughter. Have your offspring started to pick up the bug from you so there is someone to whom you can pass on all your work and research?



Ingots of Cornish Tin!

In the March 2023 Journal Maggie Littlejohn wrote how she became interested in genealogy, as a result of her father's previous work. The Editor asked if anyone else wanted to say how they got started, so here is my tale...

Genealogy started for me, not with any previous delving, but oddly with two ingots of Cornish tin. These were among a large number dredged from a shipwreck in the wider Bristol Channel in c.1990. Measuring about 18"x6"x3", and weighing 28lbs each, they were presented to the museum where I was employed. They represented the first smelting of tin from the ore (the main ore is the mineral cassiterite, SnO₂), and would have been on their way to South Wales or Liverpool for further refinement and use. They were likely loaded at Falmouth. The ingots came with some information about the wreck, and I decided to investigate a bit further.

The vessel that sank was the unfortunately-named *SS Cheerful*, a small coastal vessel plying between London and Liverpool. It was rammed by a Royal Navy torpedo depot ship (*HMS Hecla*) in thick fog in July 1885. It sank within four minutes and a number of lives were lost. To try and find out more I went to The National Archives where I found that the log book of the naval vessel was preserved. Being the military, every detail of movement and timing was recorded. More importantly, there was a list of names of survivors and victims. I copied the names and the (very brief) details of their abodes, and started to see if I could trace them. This was before the days of on-line resources and it required frequent visits to the old Newspaper Library (at Colindale, north London) and the Family Records Centre in central London. Gradually, I amassed information about them. The quest and detective work was exciting, though the Newspaper Library was slow and cumbersome.

The logbook had shown that c.13 lives were lost and only two bodies recovered. They were mostly ordinary working folk, perhaps going back to families or even taking a holiday but also included a medical doctor, his wife and son, from Hendon and a world expert on Australian wool from Suffolk. On and off, I am still working on trying to solve it for some of them but the scant original information available probably means I won't manage it. But I was now 'infected' with the bug.

For the record, the names involved were as follows [S=survivor; V=victim]:

Leopold BECHHOFER [S] ostrich feather worker from Roth, Germany; Philip BERNARD,[V] bank clerk from Widnes, Edgar Percy CARTER, [S] wool expert from Suffolk; Joseph Rufus and Mary CHADWICK [V] from Manchester; James Beswick CHARLTON, [S] insurance

clerk from Manchester; Henry CALLEN [S] builder from Lee, Kent (now London); Elizabeth CONNOLLY, [V] ship's stewardess from Ireland; William Thomas COTTON [S] solicitor's clerk from New Romney, Kent; Herbert DIVE [S] painter from Islington, London; Daniel Alfred [V] and Alfred Henry HARRISON [S] landed gentry from Kensington, London; 'HARTLESS' or 'HARTLES', [V] possible bank clerk from Liverpool (details unknown); Dr Edward [S] and 'Minnie' HOULBROOK [V], and son William [S] , from Hendon, N.London; David JONES (ship's mate) [V] from Cardigan, Wales; Walter LONG [V] (Cabin boy) possibly from Upper Norwood, London; John and Christine METCALF [S], banker from Wallington, Surrey; George NEIL [V], joiner of Leicester; 'STEVENS'[V] unknown pensioner from Falmouth; Alfred NEEDHAM,[S] cotton worker from Manchester; William E. SIMPSON [V?] from Manchester; John TRUEMAN, [S] grocer from Manchester; Albertus VINCENT, [S] son of a grocer from Camborne, Cornwall; Herbert WHITE,[S] metal dealer from Widnes; Arthur H. WOOD, [S] details unknown from Chelsea/Fulham, London.

While this continues, I have looked with varying success at my own lineage and tree, and have done about 20 lineages (tracing a single name backwards) for acquaintances from ex-work colleagues to fellow dog walkers, with much appreciation. But now I have just about run out of 'clients' (or is it victims?). As a retiree, I can't get more work colleagues, but anyone got a dog or some tin ingots?!

Peter Tandy, 7790

Did you know?

The University of Strathclyde Glasow, Centre for Lifelong Learning has established 'The Strathclyde Institute for Genealogical Studies (SIGS)', with the aim of developing new courses, supporting innovative genetic genealogy research, and working alongside a growing network of partners and organisations.

More information about what it is all about can be found through their website at:

<https://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/genealogy/>

Although based in a Scottish University it is not just aimed at those with Scottish ancestors and the courses they offer are universal! Some of their courses are free to access while others are longer, assessed programmes leading to qualifications in genealogy. I believe some of our members have previously or are currently studying there so perhaps, in among their essay writing, they could provide a review to tell our members more about what is on offer.

Can you help?

Barry has asked for help for further information on a query raised with him, as he explains below.

I posted on Facebook about the volunteers and the help desk to get more people into the Archives. I got two asking for help! One I knew and the other one was from USA, originally in Shropshire and her text, exactly as written, is shown below. It is I think a bit above my head and looks like no information available. I have done travellers searching for my family tree but only in modern times so know how hard it is. I had a look at the Shropshire Archives and looked at the major sites and only came up with John Peacefull baptised 18 July 1784 at Mancetter on Warwickshire/Leicester border but could have travelled there. Parents were John and Hannah. The censuses say he was born Wrockwardine Wood. I found an R Robitz marriage in Vienna 9 January 1702 so much too early (and it turns out R is a man married to Maria Liedlin). Has anyone any ideas? She did say that it could be leading from another country!

"Hello, you very kindly said you would take a look at a problem that a lot of people descended from this man have encountered.

His name is John PEACEFUL b 1780, probably. There are all sorts of stories about him but not one original source. One is that his mother was a Romanian gypsy called Rėvanya ROBOTZA 1737 and she left him on church steps in Shrewsbury and fled. The story is that they named him Peaceful because he was such a quiet baby. There is also some tale about his being left with a wet nurse, together with siblings (no record) and this was in the village of Little Pulley near Bayston Hill.

The rest is well documented. He lived in Trench and died in the area. We know his wife and children and that he was probably a shoemaker. I have contacted several descendants, and no one knows any more. I hate to give up, but I'm lost at the moment. I am descended from him through my mother.

I and a lot of people would be very grateful if you could solve the mystery."

Barry Deakin, 4421, barrydeakin@blueyonder.co.uk

Editor: I would remind everyone of the Forum on our website, where you can post your Shropshire and family history related queries. It is open to members and non-members but you will need to register first to be able to post comments but that is a simple process. <http://www.sfhs.org.uk/forum>

FamilySearch - A cautionary tale!

Following the excellent Zoom talk about FamilySearch by Ian Waller on 20 September last I was spurred on to try to add missing pieces of information on my Family Trees. If I recall correctly, Ian said that he felt that FamilySearch was more reliable than Ancestry.

My paternal grandmother was Lucy Maria Everall, nee JAMES, of Bishops Castle, Shropshire, born there 19 May 1876, and baptised in the Parish Church only a few hundred yards from her home, the Field Farm, on 11 June that year.

She had brothers and sisters, all born at the Field and baptised at St. John the Baptist Church:

Frances Louisa, baptised 15 March 1874

Edith Harriet, baptised 17 Nov 1878

Laura Jane baptised, 5 June 1881

Percy Richard baptised, 27 April 1884

Sydney Jeremiah baptised, 21 October 1888



The parents (my great-grandparents) were Jeremiah James and Jane (nee SYAS). *The image is of St John the Baptist, Bishop's Castle, as featured on the SFHS website <http://www.sfhs.org.uk/bishops-castle-2>*

I have seen these entries in the actual Bishop's Castle Registers many years ago, before the Shropshire Archives moved to their present location and they are also recorded in the history of the family of James of Mainstone, composed by the Rev. C.S. James BA decades ago and printed in the volumes of the Shropshire Archaeological Society.

When entering the above names in FamilySearch I was somewhat perplexed and annoyed to find their names recorded as being baptised in Berrington, near Shrewsbury; a village with which, as far as I can tell, the family had no connection.

Having found what I thought were mis-transcriptions I placed a query under feedback on FamilySearch and was then asked to provide the URL so that someone could look at the matter further. I wasn't sure what this was so asked for guidance and was told that once one had clicked on the entry it was the citation shown against each one giving where the documents were to be found.

When I had provided this information I received the following response :

This is a new one for me: I noticed that there's a little down-arrow next to the event place, as if it has been edited -- twelve times?!

*Event Place Berrington, Shropshire, England, United Kingdom ^
Bishop' s Castle, Shropshire, England, United Kingdom
Badger, Shropshire, England, United Kingdom
Billingsley, Shropshire, England, United Kingdom
Aston Botterell, Shropshire, England, United Kingdom
Astley, Shropshire, England, United Kingdom
Ashford Carbonell, Shropshire, England, United Kingdom
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, England, United Kingdom
Benthall, Shropshire, England, United Kingdom
Shrewsbury, St. Chad, Shropshire, England, United Kingdom*

However, the images are not (or no longer) available (or not to non-LDS like me, anyway), so the "Edit" button is greyed out. This means that those extra entries cannot be the result of user edits.

I'm not sure what's going on with the index's display, but I think it goes back to the relevant microfilm: it was a multi-item film containing parish registers from ten different places in Shropshire (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/results?count=20&query=%2Bfilm_number%3A1657518).

What it looks like to me is that instead of figuring out which item a particular image (and the associated index entries) went with, they just added all of the possibilities to the Event Place field, in random order. Unfortunately, that random order put Berrington first, not Bishops Castle, so the wrong location is displayed.

Hopefully, users of this index will know never to take an index as fact.

Since receiving the above "explanation" I have again visited the FamilySearch site and found that the entries for Lucy, Edith, Laura, Sydney, Frances and Percy now appear under Betton Strange! Berrington seems to have disappeared. Frances, however, now also appears under the correct parish of Bishop's Castle.

I have also noted that when Lucy Maria and Frances's names appear in the index under the heading of 1881 census it gives their place of birth as Castle-Pulverbatch. However, when one looks at the image of the census, it shows the birthplace as Bishop's Castle.

I live in Shropshire and had I not known the area where my ancestors lived, under the explanation given above I could have been wasting much time hunting in entirely the wrong part of the county. As the responder from Family Search said, "*Hopefully, users of this index will know never to take an index as fact*".

Peter J. Everall, 696

My Railway Ancestors

My great-grandfather William JONES and great-great-grandfather, also named William JONES, were both engine drivers with the Great Western Railway, based at Wellington. Their GWR employment records make fascinating reading, with one of them nearly causing a train crash. In the case of my great-great-grandfather, his GWR pension record also broke through my long-standing brick wall surrounding the date and whereabouts of his death.

William JONES junior (seen here as an older man) was born 13 March 1870 in Wellington and started on the railway as a cleaner in March 1885. His GWR record is particularly useful to flesh out the places where he lived between the census dates. He started his career in Stourbridge; and then moved to Wellington in 1891. In the census of that time he was in Lye, Stourbridge; and his wife was living with her parents in Ketley near Wellington. He transferred to Wolverhampton in 1896 and back to Wellington in 1900, though the 1901 census records him and his family in Bushbury, Wolverhampton, not too far from the large railway depot that is still there today.



A lot of his record relates to the numerous tests of his vision during his career, but there is one incident of note:

- *24 January 1920 at Market Drayton. Cautioned for slightly overrunning the home signal and coming into contact with vehicles standing on the same road. The impact caused the wagons to foul the shunting siding, resulting in one wagon sustaining damage.*

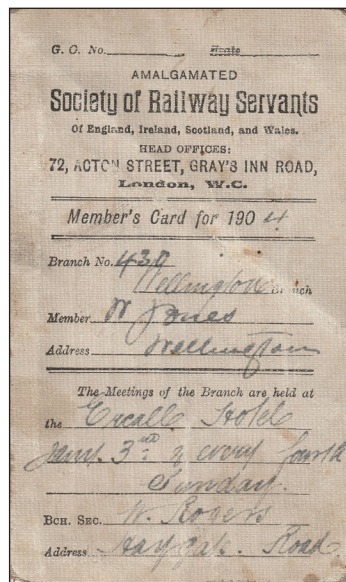
He's more remembered in the family for being the driver of the train that ran from Wellington through Ketley and south to Coalbrookdale and Much Wenlock.

William JONES senior was born 4 November 1842 in Shrewsbury and began his railway career as an Engine Cleaner there in August 1860, becoming a Fireman in 1864 and ultimately an Engineman based at Wellington in 1868. His record at times was certainly enough to raise a few eyebrows:

- 01 August 1867. Reprimanded for not uncoupling his engine when the valve buckle had become disconnected from the spindle causing 2 hours delay to passenger train.
- 16 November 1868. Fined 2/- for not properly making a mud hole joint after washing engine and thereby causing considerable delay to Severn Junction branches and connecting trains.
- 22 April 1879 at Presthoke. Fined 5/- for allowing his fireman to work the engine during his absence, causing engine to be damaged.
- 18 February 1893. Fined 2/- for neglecting No. 763 engine's right-hand driving axle box and right-hand big end, causing them to get hot.
- 25 June 1894 at Shrewsbury. Fined 5/- and suspended for one day for passing a starting signal at danger at Severn Bridge Junction, narrowly escaping collision with a London & North Western engine.
- 5 June 1899 at Wellington. Cautioned for running engine off the line at catch points.

He retired in 1900 and remained in Wellington, with the 1901 and 1911 censuses both recording him living in Glebe Street in the town, but after that date I couldn't find any trace of him. His son, William JONES junior was born, lived and died in the Wellington area, so I initially assumed that William senior would have remained in the area too.

William JONES, of course, is a very common name and the search for his death quickly became like searching for a needle in a haystack. I found several possible candidates in the Wellington area in the GRO death index and duly ordered the certificate for each in turn, but all to no avail. It was at this point back in 2021 that I turned to the Wiltshire and Swindon Archives and asked them to search the GWR pension fund registers, on the assumption that his pension would have been paid until his death.



William Jones Jr: Society of Railway Servants Members Card

What a success this was. Not only did his record continue to his death, his date of death in 1922 was written down and it also showed that he moved from Wellington in 1918,

so not only could I now obtain his death certificate but hopefully his entry in the 1921 census when it was released the following year.

If only it was that easy. With such a common name, even with the exact date there was still more than one possible death recorded in that quarter; and none were in Shropshire. Again, I started ordering each one in turn and got what looked to be the correct one at the second attempt: William JONES, aged 79, Locomotive Driver (Retired), in Chadderton, Lancaster. The informant was A. SUTTON, daughter, of Canterbury.

So now to be sure I had the correct person I needed to confirm who A. SUTTON was. A quick search of FreeBMD revealed a marriage between Ann JONES and Robert SUTTON in Canterbury in 1916; and then a check of the 1911 census revealed an Annie JONES, born in Shrewsbury, working as a Warder at Canterbury Prison. It all matched up.

When the 1921 census was released the following year, the address on William's death certificate was the first thing I checked. It did indeed confirm that he was born in Shrewsbury and his wife Mary was born in Norbury near Bishops Castle.

Without the GWR pension records it would have been almost impossible to locate William's whereabouts prior to the 1921 census being released.

Stuart Massey, 7798

Editor: Do you have any railway worker ancestors in your family tree? I have at least three in mine, all of whom worked in Shropshire: my grandfather, George Jones was a signalman from 1910 to the late 1940s (firstly at Upton Magna, then Craven Arms, and then Shrewsbury from about 1915); my great uncle, another William Jones, was signalman at Leaton Station and my great uncle-in-law, Harry Jones, was a



signalman at Wellington Station. The image is of Shrewsbury's Severn Bridge Junction Signal box, taken in November 2012 ©Michael Hunter.

If you do, you may find the Railway Work, Life and Death website helpful. <https://www.railwayaccidents.port.ac.uk/> They are working to make it easier to find out about railway worker accidents in Britain and Ireland from the late 1880s to 1939, with a database freely available with details about who was involved, what they were doing on the railways, what happened to them and why.

Book Review: The Psychology of Family History - Exploring our Genealogy

At recent SHFS online Talking Family History sessions, there has been much discussion about “Why do we do Family History?”. So when I came across this book, I was pretty apprehensive, if not a little scared. If I read the book would it tell me I was a nutcase for spending hours doing “FH”?

It's by three Australian academics and is based on their interviews with eight hundred Australians. It reads rather like a PhD thesis although it is easy to read - and sometimes quite boring. Towards the end I found myself scanning and skipping. The book, thankfully, lists key points at the end of each chapter.

The survey discovered that of 800 Australian family historians indicated that the ‘*typical*’ amateur genealogist was an older woman, married with children, but there were many exceptions. It tells us that after online shopping and pornography, FH is the most popular online activity.

From my perspective it seemed to have plenty of ‘stating the obvious’ in rather grandiose language. One interesting idea I was introduced to in the book though, was that in 1950 Psychoanalyst Erik Erikson created the term ‘generativity’ to explain the 7th stage in his theory of the stages of psychosocial development. It encompasses the middle ages of one's life, 40 through 64. Generativity was defined as the ‘*ability to transcend personal interests to provide care and concern for younger and older generations*’. It took over 30 years for generativity to become a subject of empirical research. Modern psychoanalysts, starting in the early 1990s, have included a concern for one's legacy, referred to as an ‘*inner desire for immortality*’, in the definition of generativity. So we are perhaps all generatives - rather than degeneratives.

The final conclusion of the book reads as follows: ‘*We began this book by commenting on the passion and enthusiasm of amateur genealogists. Our exploration of their motivations and experiences has led us to the conclusion that while the popularity might wax and wane there will always be family historians ready to face the barriers and challenges presented to them. They will continue to enjoy their ancestral stories and cultural heritage and contemplate their lives within the context of history*’.

So there it is. I have decided that I am not a nutcase being involved in FH after all. How about you?

Bill Allison, 7760

Family Treasures - helping to tell our stories

Bill, a friend who also has a passion for family history, suggested to me the other month that perhaps the Journal could include a series of articles on some of the family treasures we hold, highlighting the memories they provoke. Co-incidentally I then came across an article by Janet Few in which she talked about looking for *'a vehicle for the stories of the family treasures that I am privileged to have in my temporary care. Without the associated narratives, these heirlooms become mere 'things'; I feel the need to explain their significance and let others know why they are precious. Artefacts also provoke memories; memories of their owners, memories of occasions when they were in use and associated narratives'*. [<https://thehistoryinterpreter.wordpress.com/2023/04/>]

Many of us will have a variety of family treasures, perhaps handed down by members of the family for safe keeping, or gathered together over time as we explore more about our ancestors. As Janet highlights they might remind us of someone special, or an event, and they can often help to enrich the story of our ancestors.

I have a number of these family treasures from which I could choose but went for this one as it probably holds some of the most vivid memories for me from my childhood.

My 'Knock at the Door' teaset!



This teaset brings back many memories of the times I visited my great-grandparents, Herbert FOTHERGILL and Lucy (nee ELLWOOD), when I was a young girl in the early 1960s. At that time they were in their late 70s/early 80s, living in a small bungalow in Albrighton, with a front room and bedroom and kitchen in the back.

Back then the teaset sat on the dresser in the front room and I also very well recall that dresser which had small metal handles on each of the drawers, which I spent time 'knocking'. I have often thought the reason for calling it the 'Knock at the Door' teaset, was because of its decoration, but I wonder if it was also linked to my habit of annoying all the grown-ups with my knocking of the handles on the dresser! When they got tired of that entertainment my siblings and I were usually taken along to the local swings to keep us entertained.

The other big memory this teaset triggers is closely observing the District Nurse when she visited to give my great-grandad his insulin injections! In those days this was administered using glass syringes and reusable needles, which used to sit in disinfectant on the bedside cabinet between uses! My fascination was linked to my career plan to become a nurse - a decision taken when I was about four years old - and the visiting nurse used to suggest I could almost give the injections myself, given quite how closely I observed the technique! I don't have any memorabilia linked to those injections but my career choice became a reality some years later and I often thought about those early 'lessons' when I was working, although fortunately they had moved on from reusable equipment for injections by the time I was practicing!

Karen Hunter, 7646

Shropshire BMD

I expect many of you have used the online BMD index [<https://www.freebmd.org.uk/cgi/search.pl>] as part of your family history research. I certainly have, and often use it in tandem with the GRO index for births and deaths [<https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>], as they offer slightly different search features.

But did you know there is also a local Shropshire BMD site [<http://www.shropshirebmd.info/index.php>] which has been a project by Shropshire Registration Services who have digitised all the birth marriage and death records from 1837 for the County, (Church and civil registrations) then indexed them and created a searchable website site. As of 23 March 2023 there were 848,148 births, 236,190 marriages and 547,703 deaths included and they are almost up to date.

Sadly however, I have discovered that they do not cover the areas which fall within the Telford and Wrekin area as they have separate Registration Services - frustrating for those of us with ancestors in that part of the old county of Salop!

Karen Hunter, Chair



Manorial Records – Life on the Manor

Talk given by Les Mitchinson, FHG, on 21 February 2023

The concept of 'the manor' started with the Normans in 1066, but started to die almost immediately. They introduced the feudal system, where the manor (later the parish) was the basic unit of Government. All land in 1066 belonged to the King (hence terms 'royal' and 'real' estate), who retained land but gave parcels (sometimes quite large) to barons (called tenants-in-chief) to reward loyalty; in return they gave services, mainly men for the army. Barons selected their own estates, then 'granted' (or 'sub-infeudated') smaller plots, known as 'Knights Fees', to lesser barons and knights. This ended in 1290 with the Quia Emptores Act, which prohibited the creation of new tenures. The tenants-in-chief were above the mesne lords, and they in turn above the manorial tenants (free and unfree).

Medieval England was almost wholly rural; each manor was a community. The lord's land was known as the demesne. Unfree tenants were known as villeins, who had an obligation to farm the land; free tenants also had obligations to the lord. The land was characteristically divided into strips, but there was also forest, lakes, and meadows for communal use.

The highest manorial official was the lord, but he probably didn't run the manor. He had a steward (or seneschal) as his agent to manage the land and preside over manorial courts. A bailiff collected rents and ensured obligations were met. His assistants were elected from the villeins, and their chief was the reeve. A constable maintained law and order, while a pinder rounded up stray animals, and a hayward maintained hedgerows and meadows. Many of these positions gave rise to surnames; others might be miller, scrivener, woodward, akerman (ploughman).

The villeins provided the labour force, but were unfree and could not leave the manor. They worked for the lord but got security and free rent. Free tenants were slightly better-off, had an occupation (miller, smith etc), and were free to leave the manor. Rents were collected by the custumal. Those with customary tenure had a copyhold tenure. This was fine until the Black Death in 1348-49 which decimated the population and created a demand for labour. This took away some of the power of the lord.

The community was ever changing as people died, got married or moved away. Upon the death of a tenant, a fine called a 'heriot' had to be paid, and the new tenant had to pay a 'relief' to be admitted to the land. On a widow's death, land usually went entirely to

one of the children, usually by 'primogeniture' (to the eldest son), or by 'borough English' (to youngest son) or by 'gravelkind' (equal sharing between sons). Land came as either freehold, leasehold or copyhold. After 1290, freeholders could transfer property without consent, so long as the new tenant held it subject to 'fealty and homage' in accordance with the customs of the manor. The use of the land was held in 'fee simple' (until the death of the last surviving heir); then it was transferred to the Crown. Copyhold was unique to the manor, and tenants needed permission to inherit, sell, sub-let or mortgage (known as 'surrender and admission'). This was only abolished in 1922 with remaining copyholds being transferred to freehold by 1925!

Parish and manorial boundaries rarely co-incide. Some manors were only a few acres, others covered areas spread over several parishes.

Manors had three types of court. 'Customary courts' met sometimes as infrequently as every seven years where they assessed rent from various tenants, and set terms, responsibilities and customs. The 'Court Baron' might meet every three weeks, and administered the manor, enforcing local customs and agricultural practices. They also settled minor disputes and debts, recorded property transfers. Minor offenders might be fined ('amerced'). The 'Court Leet', was a continuation of the Saxon court known as the 'View of Frankpledge', and dealt with local matters. In time it fused with the Court Baron.

Each of these bodies produced records, and those that survive are a rich source for genealogists. Most important are 'Court Rolls' which are records (minutes) of the manor. They are rolls, and thus difficult to handle, possibly delicate, and pre 1734 may be in Latin. Four different types of survey were done: 'Extent Surveys' listed every building and piece of land on the demesne; 'Terrier Surveys' arranged descriptions of land topographically; 'Customal survey's recorded customs, rights etc; and 'Rental Surveys' recorded rents paid by tenants. Early records may be on parchment or vellum and difficult to read, and may be in abbreviated Latin. But they did follow a formula.

The Victoria County History series of volumes is a great source giving a general history of the county and detailed histories of each parish. Important families are listed with pedigrees. Parishes are grouped by hundreds. Some volumes can be viewed on-line at www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk. Jury lists can be an important source of names from the 13th century. Juries (normally 12) were drawn from a list (Nomina Juatorum), although free men were often exempted.

Locating records can be difficult as they can be held in private hands. Many early ones were destroyed in the Peasants Revolt; later, solicitors often made space by getting rid of them. The best place to look is the Manorial Documents Register (MDR) which shows

surviving manorial records and locations. This again may be on-line at <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/manor-search>. Other records are in County Record Offices, along with gazetteers, county directories and topographical histories. As there were no manors in Scotland there are no manorial records, but there are some Welsh ones.

All agreed this talk gave an interesting insight into surviving records of a long-past period.

Peter Tandy, 7790

Cemeteries and Graveyards

Talk given by Celia Heritage on 21 March 2023

The speaker started with a summary of the history of churches and churchyards in this country starting with the third century when Christianity was well established and it managed to survive the invasion of the pagan Angles, Saxons and Jutes during the fifth and sixth centuries. In 664 AD the Great Synod of Whitby established Roman Catholicism as the main religion in Britain. Minster churches were established and from them, as the church grew in power, parishes were established from the minsters. Of course, many churches have been replaced over the centuries but the churchyard is often much older. Churches were not places of burial until the tenth century. Most churchyards have some sort of boundary to segregate the church from the lay landscape and to make it stand out. In 1229 the Bishop of Worcester specified that churchyards should be properly enclosed. The speaker suggested that, before visiting a church, a map should be consulted. The church is often not in the centre of a settlement but some way out - near the lord of the manor's home. The church in Studley, Warwickshire was given as an example and throughout the talk photographs of churches all over the country were used to illustrate different points.

The earliest type of gravestones were decorated coffin lids called 'cross slabs' which were set over the sarcophagi. Many survive but they are not usually in their original place. They may be displayed inside the church. In medieval times the parish became secular as well as religious and was responsible for collecting taxes etc. Churchyards were used for animal grazing, wrestling matches, markets and so on. One should always take a look around the external walls of the church. Local building materials would have been used and there are often external monuments which would originally have been inside. Gargoyles and green men often decorate the outside of the church and an example was shown of a sundial mounted on the wall. Many churches are huge in relation to the size of the parish and this reflects the importance of their benefactors. Much secular business

was conducted in the porch - probate courts were held and poor relief dispensed. Pews in churches were not a feature until Elizabethan times - before that the congregation stood.

In the 1530s Henry VIII broke with Rome and became head of the new Church of England. At the same time, on the continent, there was opposition to the Catholic church. The Protestant religion was growing as an alternative to Catholicism. The interior of churches changed - all the colourful imagery and shrines were removed and the walls were whitewashed. Many remnants can be found, even today, of the earlier decoration in churches - the speaker showed a painting of the day of atonement with heaven and hell depicted, found during renovations in a church in Suffolk. Also spiral staircases are often still present which once led up to the gallery. After the Reformation the churches contained the coats of arms of the monarchs and, as people were able to read the bible in English, quotes were often displayed on boards. The speaker suggested looking out for carving on the pews and on the ceiling (binoculars useful here!)

Types of grave were explained - earth cut graves did not have memorials until the seventeenth century and coffins were not introduced until the eighteenth century. There are also brick lined graves and vaults - these would have been for the wealthy people. Vaults have an arched roof and are underground. The coffins, which are placed in them, have three layers - lead, wood and material. Often the coffin had a plate with the name on and these have sometimes been taken and hung on the church wall. The chest tombs you see in the graveyards are just for show - the body is in the ground. Of course, most people could not afford memorials. Those memorials that do exist have often been moved as alterations have been made - they are sometimes piled up or used as paths.

This interesting talk was followed by a lively question session. The speaker has written two books which are available on Amazon - 'Cemeteries and Graveyards' and 'Tracing your Ancestor through Death Records'. There is also a handout available at www.chfh.co.uk.

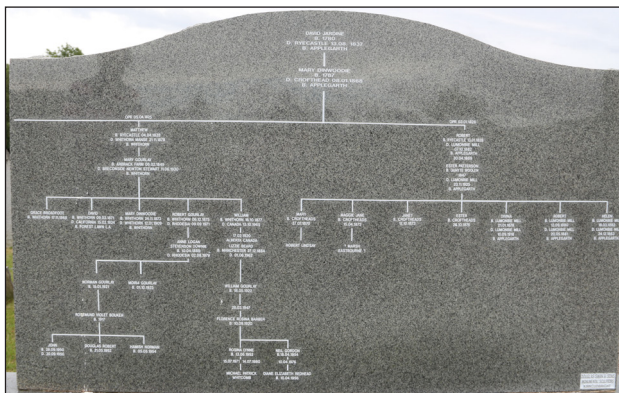
Christine Head, 5373

Cemeteries and Gravestones hold a fascination for many family historians and if you're anything like me I love to explore them, even if they are not in areas where I'd expect to find my own ancestors.

Barry Deakin has shared with me an image of a gravestone which had been published in the Romany and Travellers Family History Society magazine. Unfortunately that image was not a high enough resolution to reproduce well. However, co-incidentally, while on holiday in Scotland back in 2019 I came across the same, rather unusual gravestone

which can be found in a beautiful cemetery alongside Sweetheart Abbey in the small village of New Abbey in Dumfries so I have been able to include the photographs I took of the same gravestone. The image below is of the reverse of the stone, with the front image being included on the back page of this Journal, allowing for it to be reproduced in colour.

I wonder if any of our members have discovered any unusual gravestones in their wanderings around cemeteries? If so, please share them.



Where there's a Will **Talk given by Ian Waller on 18 April 2023**

This was a very interesting and somewhat eye-opening talk about the value of wills to family history research.

Wills inevitably start with the words 'Last Will and Testament' - a will was originally related to land, and land cannot be owned (only the freehold interest is owned), the testament related to personal belongings and chattels which can be given to someone. Since 1950 or so the terms have become interchangeable.

If people make no will they are intestate and, if there is sufficient estate, it will go into administration to be divided according to certain rules. If a person makes a will then they can decide how their goods are divided. The documents produced in both cases are underused resources. People often think that their ancestors were too poor to leave a will but plenty of agricultural labourers and unskilled people left wills. They provide cast iron evidence of family relationships and it is possible to find ancestors you didn't even know existed. They can also provide details of burial places and assist with the contemporary history of the family.

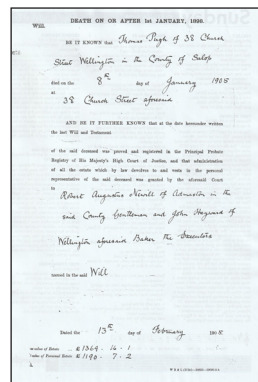
The speaker said that, whilst 80% of the content of wills is jargon, the following things can be extracted:

Name of testator. Address at the time the will was made. Occupation (sometimes enhanced). Date the will was made. Burial instructions. Names of relations and beneficiaries. Property - often with attached inventories or codicils. Executors, trustees and witnesses (who can often be related to the testator).

If a person left no will, letters of administration are granted to the widow or next of kin and the estate is distributed according to rules and under supervision. The hierarchy of recipients is - spouse, children (equal shares), parent, brother/sister, uncle/aunt, anyone else at the discretion of the court. Unmarried partners will never benefit, neither will step or foster children. Any previous will is invalid if a person marries or remarries.

Before 1858 Letters of Administration were issued by ecclesiastical courts and these provide many of the details found in wills. After 1858 Probate Calendars, issued by civil courts, provide much of the same basic information.

If a will exists, after 11 January 1858, they came under the civil court system. To find a will you can go to the government search website and fill in the details. The cost is £1.50 for a pdf copy. Also at this site are soldiers' wills made between 1850-1986. On Ancestry the National Probate Calendar can be found 1858-1966 and 1973-1995. British India will calendar entries for British people who died in India are on FindmyPast and often give more information than the wills themselves. Latter Day Saints centres record copy wills from 1858-1925. You can look for free but you need to know the date of probate and other information from the probate calendar. (There is an LDS centre in Wellington).



Before 11 January 1858 wills were administered by the ecclesiastical courts which were usually determined by the location of the land or property. The speaker then went into the hierarchy of courts from the Prerogative Courts of Canterbury and York through the diocesan courts to archdeaconry courts. It is, therefore, necessary to locate where a will might be. For the south try Canterbury and for the north try York. Wills administered by local courts can often be found in county archives and some record offices hold indexes and catalogues of wills. Some wills, e.g. Wiltshire wills, are online. The speaker gave advice on reading a will which is often in difficult handwriting. He also gave details of documents often associated with wills - Inventories which list property owned and value (1342-1760). Bank of England will extracts held at the Bank of England covering people

who held Bank of England investments between 1717-1845, or held Bank of England stock, bankrupts and lunatics - an index can be found on FindmyPast. Royal Navy wills 1786-1882 held at the National Archives which can be searched on their website. East India Company wills held at the British Library for people who died in India between 1774-1938 - these can be searched on FindmyPast. Death duty registers 1796-1903 are held at the National Archives and an index can be found on Findmypast. Litigation on disputed wills again held at the National Archives and indexed on FindmyPast 1574-1714.

The Zoom meeting ended with a lively and very helpful question session.

Christine Head, 5373

My ancestor was a liar: ignorance, half-truths and wilful deceit

Talk given by Dave Annal, FSG, 16 May 2023

The speaker started by asking just what ancestors were most likely to lie about, and said that ages, names, birthplaces, parents and marital status were most prevalent. But the key questions were, how easy was it to lie, and what reasons did they have to do it? And having done it, how easy is it for us to be able to spot it? For all this we need to know how and why records were created, how reliable they are, and understand the legislation surrounding them. We must remember that records were not created with family historians in mind!

Legislation at any time gives details of penalties for not complying, some of them severe. Rules governing parish registers, since 1538, stated that failure to comply would not be tolerated, and various penalties could be levied. Rose's Act in 1812 which introduced the standardisation of baptism, marriage and burial records in Anglican churches also stated that non-compliance carried a penalty of transportation for 14 years! The Births and Deaths Registration Act of 1874, carried a penalty of penal servitude for up to 7 years for failure to comply with the requirements. Financial penalties under the 1840 Population Act were introduced for failure to complete the census form, for omissions or providing false information. But there were very few effective checks. For instance, there was no need to prove who you were when getting married and the same was true when registering births and deaths. On census returns it was easy to lie, as they were completed by a member of the household rather than a person in authority. That person in the household might be a boy or girl who had enough schooling, or maybe a local trader who knew the family. The motive for lying often related to where a couple were

living together but not married or illegitimacy as illegitimate children faced severe local and social discrimination.

The speaker said that there is no aspect which is less reliable than our surnames. His study of illegitimate children in Bushy (Herts) showed that 74% had taken their mother's surname, 16% their step-father's surname, with 10% showing a mixture. There was also a correlation between the time between the birth of the child and the adoption of a step-father's surname.

Between 1835-1907 marriage between a man and his deceased wife's sister was not allowed, nor between a woman and her deceased husband's brother. Divorce was available from 1858, but was far too costly for most people. Of the choice between bigamy and adultery, most chose the former. Even after law changes, bigamy increased, even though bigamous marriages were frequently reported in local newspapers. People had no obligation to divulge that they were already married when marrying a second time.

Ages are often inaccurate and may be a pointer to some nefarious practices. Significant age differences can be a clue, especially if the woman is older than the man. The speaker also spoke about military records, of which he had made a special study, where ages were problematic.

Another problem is the use of fictitious names, but can be hard to spot unless you do rigorous cross-checking.

The speaker showed many examples (not reproducible here) which he had found and proved to be lies. At the end of the talk the speaker asked what did people not lie about? He showed a blank screen!!

It was agreed that it had been an eye-opening talk which would send many people back to re-examining their own family trees, and he was warmly congratulated.

In answer to a question, the speaker reminded people that while the 1911 Census was the first to be actually completed by the householder, for previous censuses the enumerators only completed the census books and census returns, using information supplied by the householders on prepared sheets. Enumerators had large areas to cover and many people to distribute forms to (and collect later) so did not have time to investigate households. In answer to another question, the speaker said that illegitimate children had no right to inherit money or land etc, but there was nothing to stop people granting such things in a will.

Peter Tandy, 7790

Members' Interests Refresh

As some of you will already be aware we are updating our database to enable members to search and find if there are any other of our members who may be researching the same or a similar name. The database will also be shared with the Family History Federation to provide a consolidation of Member Surname interests from each of the Family History Societies and searchable by members of other societies. Please note that no personal details will be disclosed.

If you would like to be part of the scheme, stage one is to gather together everyone's interests. An Excel spreadsheet has previously been circulated for members to return the information to Dave Morris. However it is appreciated not everyone has a spreadsheet facility, so if you would prefer to provide the information in another format please contact Dave Morris and we can then decide how to gather your information.

We hope this will become a useful tool in helping us all continue our research and interact with other members with the hope of sharing information. Any problems or concerns please do not hesitate to contact Dave. [Contact details inside front cover.]

Data fields required:	
Membership number or surname and postcode	
Surname	Surname or Family name of the individual
Variant	A variant spelling of the SURNAME. E.g. . For SURNAME = SMITH you may have a variant name of "Snmythe". In this case two entries will be added to the database so that the record may be searchable using either.
Place name	Town or City name, NOTE a value of "Any" or leaving blank is allowed
County name	County name, NOTE a value of "Any" or leaving blank is allowed
Chapman Code	A valid chapman code for the County, NOTE a value of "Any" or leaving blank is allowed (details available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chapman_code)
Country name	Free format Country name, NOTE a value of "Any" or leaving blank is allowed
Period	Free format period covering the surname interest .Suggested format option examples include "1900", "1800-1900", "before 1900", "after 1850" etc

From the Editor

I was pleased to receive an email the other day from one of our long-time members, John Speake (member 124), who got quite a surprise to find himself mentioned twice in Reg's series 'From the Society's Journal - 40 years on' (September 2022 and March 2023). He tells me he started his hunt for his Speake ancestors back in 1972 and comments 'how time flies'! I wonder if some of our members who have joined more recently might, 40 years along the track, find themselves mentioned in the SFHS Journal of 2063?!

I mentioned last time that my articles cupboard was looking a little bare and it is still is, especially now that this edition has been completed. So, unless you want to see the same few names repeated over and over again in each edition I need more articles to publish, so here are some suggestions of things you might share.

Building on Bill's suggestion and the story of my 'knock at the door' tea set I hope there will be some Journal readers who will share their stories of some family treasures, bringing them to life with a picture and a short article about the memories they bring back or why they are so significant. If not this will be a very short-lived series!

As the September Journal will cover the annual period of remembrance do you have a story about one or more of your family who served in the armed services, or of how those who remained at home coped during the war years? Can we pay tribute to some of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom? Have you visited one or more of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemeteries, or is there a CWGC gravestone in your local churchyard? Or perhaps there is a family treasure and associated story linked to this topic which we could feature?

I am delighted that Sarah Davis, the Archivist at Shropshire Archives has agreed to provide a regular article for the Journal. At the moment we have agreed to aim for one every other edition, but if there is news to share in between times we will include it.

I have had an offer of help from one of our members should anyone be **really** struggling with reading/transcribing an old handwritten will. However, to avoid swamping our volunteer, please only ask if you've tried all other possible avenues. If there are others who might be willing and able to help with this please let me know.

I look forward to my inbox filling up with your contributions.

Karen Hunter, Editor

Talks Programme 2023

20 June	“Tracing the History of the Ancestral Home” A technical talk exploring the sources that enable us to research the history of the houses where our ancestors lived.	<i>Nick Barrett</i>
19 September	The Lloyd George Domesday Survey 1909-1915 Discover what records exist, why they were introduced, where to find them and how to use them	<i>Gill Blanchard</i>
17 October	Thirty Days Hath September etc. Why are our months different lengths, what happened to February and why did the New Year begin on March 25th and other intriguing calendar anomalies	<i>Robert Hodge</i>
21 November	Wenlock Abbey – a Shropshire Country House 1857-1919 Exploring the rich architectural and historic heritage of the abbey and the history and associates of the Milnes-Gaskell family who lived there	<i>Cynthia Gamble</i>
19 December	In the Family Way – illegitimacy between the First World War and the Swinging Sixties Looking at the social stigma that having an illegitimate baby brought to women and the secrecy surrounding illegitimacy and the ways in which society coped with this discreetly hidden subject.	<i>Jane Robinson</i>
16 January 2024	What’s That Job? Delving into a range of resources and strategies for demystifying unfamiliar occupations, including some Shropshire-specific jobs and industries. Preceded by the Society Annual General Meeting.	<i>Dr Sophie Kay</i>

Talking Family History

The Talking Family History 'group' meets each month via Zoom. SFHS members 'tune in' from not only Shropshire but from Montana, New South Wales and Nova Scotia. Big Shropshire diaspora! In May members revealed their links with Shropshire and their Shropshire heritage, in every case proving to be fascinating. After that everyone outlined FH they had been up recently and the list is wonderful. The subjects put forward included:

- The richness and depth of the FamilySearch archives, including a detailed account of the covered wagon journey of ancestors from the UK across the USA from New York to Salt Lake City in the late 1800s.
- How a metre square Indenture Financial Legal Document which had been signed, sealed and delivered in Oswestry in 1869 had travelled with family members, disembarking in New York, and now resides in Port Angeles, Washington State. Although we couldn't see the detail a full size reproduction was shown to the group.

Some members were born in Shropshire and some still live there, some have Shropshire ancestors but were born elsewhere and some don't have any family links to the County (or at least they haven't found them yet) but all have an interest and enthusiasm for family history which they share enthusiastically during the sessions.

Members also suggested the following resources that others might find useful in their research:

- The Modern Record Centre at Warwick University which is the main British repository for national archives of trade unions and employers' organisations, and also has strong collections relating to pressure groups, fringe political parties and transport <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc/>
- The British Newspaper Archives where you can read millions of their newspaper pages for free, although not all are free to access <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>
- Reading University, through the Museum of English Rural Life hold a number of Agricultural Records <https://merl.reading.ac.uk/merl-collections/>
- Books by Ian Waller and Janet Few

Bill Allison, 7760

Editor: These 'Talking Family History' sessions are on the first Thursday evening of the month (apart from August and September) for anyone who is interested so if you want to join in just email Karen Hunter on editor@sfhs.org.uk and she will add you to the list.

New Members

Welcome to the following new members who have joined us in the past few months.

- 7926 WRIGHT Mrs C; SOUTHPORT, Lancashire
- 7927 MCKIERNAN Mr C; STOCKPORT, Cheshire
- 7928 JENKIN Mrs A; HOLMFIRTH, West Yorkshire
- 7929 THOMAS Mrs S; BRIDGNORTH, Shropshire
- 7930 OAKES Mrs R S; TELFORD, Shropshire
- 7931 OAKES Mr P N; as above
- 7932 DAY Mrs N M; NORTH MARSDON, Buckinghamshire
- 7933 THORNTON Mrs Y; HARLOW, Essex
- 7934 PARKINSON Mr J A D; WELSHPOOL, Powys
- 7935 KYLE Mr G; OSWESTRY, Shropshire
- 7936 CUNNAH Mrs M; as above

We have been notified of the deaths of the following members and we offer our condolences to their families and friends.

RICKARDS Mrs S R; RETFORD

HERDMAN Mrs D A; DARLINGTON, Durham

DOWNS Mrs J; SOLIHULL, West Midlands

HILL Mr L G; NORTH FERRIBY, East Yorkshire

ELLIOT Mr D R A; LUDLOW, Shropshire, SY8 2DJ

FamilySearch Help

Picking up on Peter Everall's article highlighting some challenges he experienced in using FamilySearch this resource might offer some assistance if you are trying to find your way round their site.

They describe the FamilySearch Help as the place *'where beginner and advanced family history researchers can go to get answers to questions they encounter as they seek to find their ancestors'*.

These resources can be found at <https://www.familysearch.org/en/help/helpcenter/landing>

Update on Committee Business

Website: The 'prototype' for the new website has been created and work is now in progress to populate it and ensure the content is accurate. We also have some technical challenges to resolve before we can launch the site. We are conscious that some of the projects we want to develop will require the new website to be operational. We are doing everything we can to get it up and running as soon as we can and we will let everyone know when it's ready to go! We are very aware the functionality of the old site is not as we would like it to be but we are doing what we can on it.

Hybrid meetings: We have carefully considered the options for hybrid meetings but currently there are not enough helpers available to make them viable. If more people come forward to help we can and will reconsider this option. Please be assured our monthly online meetings will continue on the third Tuesday evening of each month (except July and August).

Digital Journals: Starting with this edition members will have the option of receiving the the Journal as a digital copy instead of the printed paper copy. If you are interested in this and have not yet let Dave know you can do so at any time.

Accounting Policy: A change in the way in which our accounts are reported has been agreed and this will be implemented from this year.

Social Media: A Social Media Policy has been agreed and progress is being made to appoint a Social Media Manager to provide oversight/management on our SM platforms to free up the Chair and Secretary from this responsibility.

Exchange Journals: We have arrangements in place with 39 Societies to exchange Journals in electronic format. This will save costs in printing and postage and, once the new website is operational, it will also make them more easily accessible for our members.

Monthly Newsletter: A monthly newsletter, including details of news and forthcoming events, and a summary of key decisions and items being considered by your Committee has been introduced and is being sent out to all our members by email. Apologies to those who do not have/use email communication but it is not feasible for us to send it out by post. However, we are now including this high-level summary of Committee business in the Journal.

If you want to know more or have any questions about any of this please contact our Secretary, Dave Morris.

Certificate Exchange Scheme

The following are all birth certificates:

Surname	Forename	Date	Parents	Location
EVANS	Thomas	29 May 1859	Absalom & Harriet	Llanfyllin, Mont
JONES	Jane	21 Oct 1864	Elizabeth	Llanfyllin, Mont
WILLIAMS	Elizabeth	3 Feb 1878	Thomas & Sarah	Loppington
WILLIAMS	Robert	31 Jan 1841	William & Mary	Prees

The following are all death certificates:

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Location
BIRD	Mary	6 Aug 1848	59	Llanwnnog, Mont
EVANS	Margaret	16 Mar 1862	54	Llanfair, Mont
EVANS	Margaret	19 Jul 1865	17	Llangynog, Mont
JONES	Ann	15 Jan 1865	65	Welshpool, Mont
LEWIS	Jane	12 Jan 1907	75	Oswestry
LEWIS	Jane	10 Feb 1924	87	Llansilin, Denbs
LEWIS	Jane	21 Jan 1917	86	Oswestry

Anyone wanting to make enquiries can contact Christine using the email address below. There is no charge for a certificate but please send a stamped addressed envelope to the postal address, on the inside front cover. Unwanted certificates can be sent to the same address. For a full list of certificates available please go to the website and look under 'Forums'.

Christine Head, 5373 xchangeCERTS@sfhs.org.uk

Talking Family History LIVE

Date: Saturday, 7 October 2023

Time: 11am-3pm

Venue: The Old Chapel Community Centre, Cross Houses, SY5 6JH

We hope to see you there.

Programme details will be in the September Journal.

Notes for Contributors

Please:

- All contributions should be sent to the Editor at editor@sfhs.org.uk, or by post using the address inside the front cover if you don't have email.
- Include your name, membership number, e-mail and other relevant contact details in the same file as the text of your article and indicate which of them can be included. Otherwise, only your name and SFHS number (if appropriate) will be printed.
- Send pictures as separate image files (eg e-mail attachments), and only include them within the item or article as well, to give the editor an idea for suitable positioning. The relevant place could just be clearly referred to in the main body of the text.
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- It is assumed that place names, surnames etc will be spelt correctly and they will be printed as submitted unless otherwise informed.
- If possible, please CAPITALISE all family surnames within your submitted articles.
- Any pictures or other images should have a file size as large as possible. Most digital cameras and those in mobile phones are more than adequate but the higher the resolution, and therefore quality, the better.
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- Original pictures, documents etc, can be submitted and scanned by the Editor but this should preferably be a 'last resort'.
- All items (articles, images, photographs) submitted must have permission to print granted with the correct acknowledgement included when submitting them.
- Please note that items which essentially consist of full or significant transcriptions from Wikipedia or other websites will not be published.
- Any submitted articles may be edited by the Editor.

The Journal is getting about!



Jackie Owen has taken up the challenge of sharing an image of reading the Journal in an unusual place!

Jackie was visiting York Minster at the end of March and found a convenient bench in the South Aisle of the Minster to take a rest and catch up on some of the SFHS news!

Ever the genealogist, she says the inscription on the Monument reads:

In memory of the 13 officers and 360 men of the 84th (or York and Lancaster) Regiment, who fell during the mutiny and rebellion in India, in the years 1857-8-9.

Erected by their surviving comrades

Copy Dates

Publication Date

September 2023

December 2023

March 2024

June 2024

Items to be submitted by

1 July 2023

1 October 2023

1 January 2024

1 April 2024

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Copy should be submitted to the Editor. The Society reserves the right to refuse any advert it considers inappropriate.

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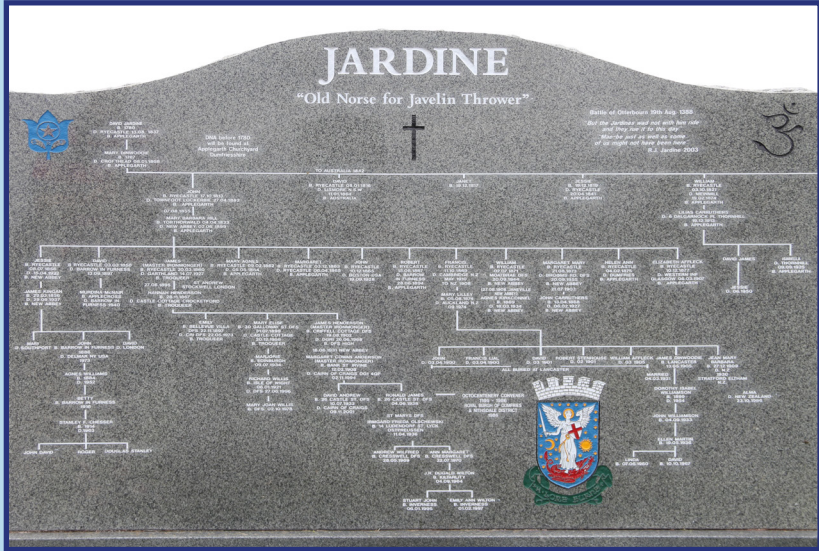
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Back cover: The front face of the gravestone in New Abbey in Dumfries, as referenced in the Talks Review on page 84 ©Karen Hunter



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