



# Shropshire Family History Society



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

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Front cover: 'Santa Pipe Cleaner' ©Rosemary Sargent - [see page 174]

# The Journal of the Shropshire Family History Society

Registered Charity No. 514014 Founded 1979  
Member of the Family History Federation



ISSN 2050 053X

Volume 44 - Part 4

December 2023

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## Thoughts from the Chair

### Challenges of creating a new Website

You will have read, and heard me say repeatedly, that we are working to get our new Website functioning. However, this is proving to be rather a challenge. I know people are becoming very frustrated by the delay, especially given that we can't update significant parts of our current site. I can assure you those frustrations are shared, and probably amplified, by myself and your Committee members and we are exploring all options to get this resolved. If we had only wanted a front-facing site that essentially provided information and news it would have been easy but we need much more than that! Among other elements we want to give people the chance to join and renew their membership online; to set up a members' only section from where you will be able to directly access some of our data sources, past Journals and exchange Journals; to create and keep updated a searchable Members' Interests database; and to ensure we have a forum through which people can post queries and get responses. I promise I will update you as soon as I am able.

### Getting together

I was delighted to be able to meet a number of our members at the Talking Family History LIVE event in October, with members both long-standing and new coming along. Many thanks to those who gave up their Saturday to come and share with us their passion for their subjects. I was even able to meet my third cousin once removed in person for the first time, having only ever communicated by email and through social media until then. There was lots of conversation and people who had only seen others on Zoom were able to catch up in person – be that to discover how tall people are or to keep up the conversations which had been started online. I know there were a few of the Talking Family History Online group who were pleased to be able to meet in person for a change. Ideas for what in-person events we might do in 2024 are invited so we can start making plans.

### DNA and Family History

Our new DNA Special Interest Group has launched and is proving popular, hence the need for a reserve list. Many thanks to Jane Wilcox for volunteering to host the group and I have heard there have already been some interesting discussions and opportunities for people to share their stories and learn from each other which is what it is all about.

Have you been watching the latest of the BBC2 series DNA Family Secrets? This programme which seeks to help people find answers to life-changing questions through the power of a DNA test, takes a very sensitive approach with every person but is also not afraid to show when DNA can't find the answers people are searching for. I was lucky enough recently to attend a talk by Professor Turi King, the DNA/genealogy expert on the programme. As well as providing some background to some of the stories featured on the programme she spoke about her role in identifying King Richard III and highlighted some of the challenges of using DNA in both criminal investigations and, as in the programme, to resolve long held family mysteries. If you are interested in learning more about any of this she has a website [<https://turiking.co.uk/>] from where you can also access her YouTube and Podcast channels to find out more about these and other topics with which she is involved.

## **One Place Studies**

One of the topics at our TFH LIVE event was on One-Place Studies and it was followed a few days later by *All About that Place*, a unique 10-day event online celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Society for One-Place Studies. Undertaking such a study has been bubbling in the back of my mind for some time and, perhaps foolishly, I have now taken the plunge and registered a study! This will explore the small village of Eyton upon the Weald Moors in Shropshire, a place I feel quite connected to as both my great great and great grandfathers were the village blacksmiths; it is where my grandmother was born and lived during her childhood and early adult life, and it is the final resting place of a good number of my family including my grandparents. Given everything else I am busy with, it is going to be a slow-growing project but one I am looking forward to developing over the coming months. I will keep you posted as to how it goes and if you are involved in a one-place study it would be great to hear about how it is going. I know there are a few places in Shropshire which have been registered and you can find out more about them on the Society for One-Place Studies website. [<https://www.one-place-studies.org/>]

## **Thank you**

Thank you to everyone for your encouragement, kind words, support and help during my first year as Chair. It's certainly been a busy 2023! You will see elsewhere that I have indicated I will put myself forward for re-election at our AGM in January and I hope I will have your support as we move forward into 2024.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year,

**Karen Hunter, Chair**

## William Jarvis - My Great Uncle

My interest in family history started in 2003 when I found out that seven of my great uncles were killed in World War One and another survived the Boer War and WW1. I have researched them all and visited the battle grounds where they were killed.

This article is about one of them, William JARVIS who was born in 1878, the eldest son of William and Elizabeth Jarvis who lived on Lythwood Road, Bayston Hill, Shrewsbury. In 1894 at the age of 17 years 11 months he signed on in the Shropshire Light Infantry Militia at the Barracks in Copthorne and was part of the 3rd Battalion SLI, No.3185.

On the 27 December 1894 he attested for and joined the regular army, signing up with the Kings Shropshire Light Infantry (KSLI) for seven years. He was now Pte 6160 W Jarvis of the 2nd Battalion KSLI and was posted to India.

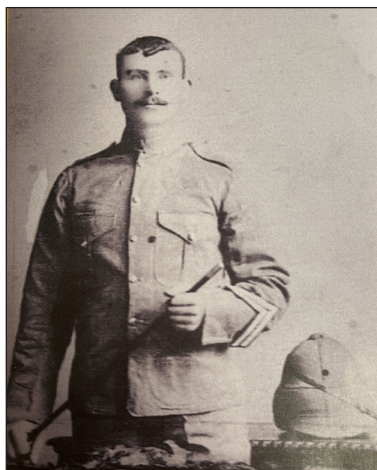
Still in India, on 20 November 1901 he was permitted to extend his service, signing on for another five years with the Colours. He must have enjoyed Army life because he signed on again on 20 August 1906 while in Tyzabad India to complete 21 years with the Colours.

However, his records show that for a reason we will never know, William applied for his discharge from the Army, returning to Copthorne Barracks from India on 21 January 1908 and discharged in June 1908 having served 13 years 173 days in India: he was now a reservist.

We next catch up with William in the 1911 census which shows that he was living with his mother Elizabeth and his brothers in Bayston Hill. He was aged 32, single and working as a quarry hand, probably at Bayston Hill quarries.

On August 8 1914 war was declared on Germany, William went to the depot at Copthorne Barracks to join his old battalion: he is now 6160 William Jarvis "Y" Company 2nd Battalion, Kings Shropshire Light Infantry. He went through intensive training whilst waiting for his battalion to return from India.

At the outbreak of WW1 William's old 2nd Battalion, KSLI were still in Secunderabad, India, they returned to England immediately on the troop ship SS Neuralia leaving Bombay on 14 August 1914



with 46 transports escorted by three men of war and a further 29 transports joined them at Karachi.

The German cruiser Emden was still at large which forced the convoy to sail with due caution with no lights at night. Passing through the Mediterranean the convoy was escorted by French war ships which were relieved by the British at Gibraltar.

After a safe voyage they landed at Plymouth in November 1914, their warm clothing sent out from England somehow missed the connection at Aden so the troops landed in their thin Indian clothing, resulting in the men suffered considerably from the cold.

From Plymouth the Battalion proceeded to Winchester by train and went into camp at Mourne Hill just outside the town where they were attached to 80 Brigade forming the 27th Division.

They spent a month at Mourne Hill training and route marching, and by now the weather in Winchester was atrocious. They were under canvas and the camp was a sea of mud, and all ranks were glad when the orders to proceed to France arrived. The Battalion marched 14 miles to Southampton on 20 December and embarked to France on SS Maidan the same afternoon, although William remained in the UK, still training.

The Battalion landed in Le Havre on 21 December, moving up to Aire (220km), on 23 December where they went into billets at Blaringhem for twelve days, spending their time digging trenches in the rain. On 5 January 1915 they marched 10kms to billets at Strazeele, the next day 4kms to Méteren, en route to the front line. When they arrived at the front the conditions were atrocious. They were taking over from the French, they experienced heavy rain, frost and gales and the ground was sodden, making movement of troops almost impossible. The trenches were well-nigh uninhabitable, with many of the men going sick with ailments, including trench foot.

William's medal record states that he entered France in January 1915, and he took part with his Battalion in the 1st and 2nd Battles of Ypres. During their time on the Ypres Salient the Battalion endured the first gas attack by the German Army, and they fought at Saint-Éloi, Gravenstafel Ridge, Saint-Julien, Bellewaarde Ridge and Frezenberg Ridge.

William was injured in the village of Potijze on the 8 May 1915 during the battle of Frezenberg Ridge, receiving a severe wound to his neck. The Battalion was ordered to hold the trenches from Bellewaerde Farm to the Railway: they were being pounded by German artillery all day. Ten men were killed, and three officers and 25 men were wounded during this heavy artillery attack.

William was evacuated back to the UK several days later, on 13 May 1915 and was admitted into Croesnewydd Road Military Hospital in Wrexham where he died of his wounds on 17 May 1915 at the age of 40.

The body was conveyed by train from Wrexham to Shrewsbury and was buried five days later: the Shrewsbury Chronicle reported on 21 May that he had a full military funeral. The KSLI Band, conducted by Sergeant Bugler Newall, preceded the hearse and played the "Dead March" en route to the cemetery. A detachment of men from the Depot and a firing party also marched in the cortege. The service was taken by the Rev. W H Bather; the coffin was enshrouded with the Union Jack and the bearers were soldiers. At the conclusion of the service the firing party fired three volleys over the grave, and the buglers sounded the "Last Post".

William was not buried in the WW1 military section of Shrewsbury Cemetery, but in the old part of the general cemetery.

In 2009 I visited Belgium and the Menin Gate and was disappointed to find that William Jarvis is not commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial in Ypres along with his comrades with whom he fought and died.

I wrote to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) and the reason for this appears to be because he died of his wounds in this country, and therefore the family would have been given the choice of having his name on the Ypres memorial or commemorating his death with a private gravestone. William is however, commemorated on the South end wall of Memorial Hall in Bayston Hill, Shrewsbury.

### **Bob Davies, 6372**

*Editor: This article is just a short precis of the life of William Jarvis, taken from Bob's significant research and set of records which document in great detail the stories of all seven of his great uncles.*

*We all sort our research in different ways - all on paper; all held digitally on computers; all on subscription sites; or perhaps piled into a shoebox (or six) under the bed or more likely a combination of some or all of these methods. The trick is to find what works best for you and to let others know how you do it and how to access it. Then, when you are no longer interested, or no longer able to focus on your family history, there may be someone else who can pick it up and take it forward, or at least preserve it for future generations who might be interested one day.*



## Resources at the Archives: Marriage Duty Act Assessments

The little known Marriage Duty Act Assessments are a wonderful, if rare, source for family history.

In fact, they are much more than marriage duty assessments. The Act of 1695 granted 'to His Majesty certain rates and duties upon marriages, births and burials and upon bachelors and widowers for the term of five years for carrying on the war against France with vigour'. Graduated taxes to reflect wealth and social status were added in over the 11 years that the tax was actually collected.

As well as raising money for the war, the Act was also a way of ensuring that registering vital events was carried out by an Anglican vicar and not a non-conformist minister. In a precursor of Hardwicke's marriage act of 1754, the Act stipulated that couples should marry by bans or licence.

The cost for registering a birth was 2s, for a marriage it was 2s 4d and for a burial it was 4s. Only those in receipt of alms were exempt. Some genealogists have suggested that this might explain some missing entries in baptism registers as parents tried to avoid the tax. In some cases, parents held off baptising their children until the tax was abolished.

Assessors were instructed to provide the names of every resident including their social standing, occupation, marital status and property ownership. The assessments therefore provide a wonderful source for family history.

Unfortunately, their survival is very rare. For Shrewsbury we are fortunate that the assessments survive from 1695-1702 [ref 3365/275-278] within the Shrewsbury Borough Collection.

Over the past years, the assessments for 1695-1697 have been transcribed by our dedicated volunteer David Petley Jones. Coping with fragile documents, difficult handwriting and all manner of strange spellings he has produced searchable PDF transcripts. These are available via our PCs accompanied by high resolution images of the originals. Please ask staff to load them for you.

**Sarah Davis, Archivist**

*An example from the document can be seen on the back cover.*



## “So you think it will be over by Christmas”

### Harry Stinchcombe’s Story 1914-18 Part 2

#### France 1917

The Battalion reached Le Havre on the Normandy coast in the early hours of Sunday, 29 July 1917. The next day they moved to a rest camp at San Vic on the north side of the harbour. They were re-equipped and rearmed, and transport and horses were issued. Harry and the men were given warmer clothing to replace the thinner tropical khaki uniform worn for the past three years. They received instruction at the training school on wiring, bombing and gas, a horrendous new danger that they would be exposed to.



Fig 4. Corporal Albert Henry Stinchcombe

Orders were received on 23 August to join the 190th Brigade 63rd (R. N.) Division and after a long journey of about 155 miles the Battalion were billeted at Maroeuil, about four miles northwest of Arras. It was here that Harry for the first time heard the sound of guns in action and saw the shell holes in the walls of their billets.

After an initially peaceful war on garrison duty in Rangoon and Hong Kong, I can imagine the mixture of emotions felt by Harry and the men as they went into the front line for the first time.

The men received intensive training in technical subjects. It’s likely that Harry was one of forty other ranks, who with ten officers were sent to the 63rd Division Signalling School. The family recalled that Harry had been a signal instructor in Hong Kong.

They moved from Maroeuil to Wakefield Camp and on 22 September, to Magnicourt for training. On 2 October the Battalion left Magnicourt and arrived at Hazebrouck at about midnight. It was discovered that their rest billets were at Hardifort, more than seven miles away in pouring rain. The heavily fatigued men arrived, with their clothes soaked through, at Hardifort in the early hours of the following day. On 4 October the Battalion marched via Wormhoudt and Herzeele to Houtkerque arriving on 7 October, where they trained for future operations at Ypres. Demonstrations included the use of message rockets and ground flares with final training for operations on 22 and 23 October.

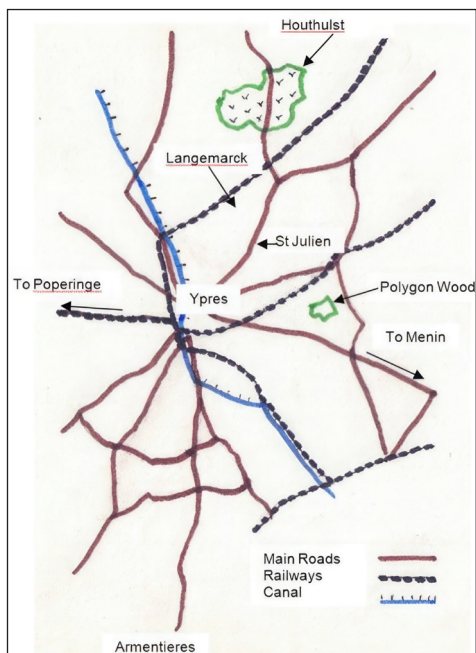


Fig 5 Map of Ypres, 1917

On 24 October 1917 Harry travelled by bus to the Dampre Camp and the following day marched to the canal bank at Ypres. The battle known as *'The Second Battle of Passchendaele'* during the Third Battle of Ypres, commenced on 26 October. There had been heavy shelling since their arrival.

By 28 October following days of heavy rain, the level of the canal had risen considerably and overnight by nearly two feet. After salvaging as much equipment as possible, most of the Battalion spent the night on top of the canal bank. They were wet through and there was a sharp frost. Every dug-out was flooded and after a short spell the men were evacuated to Irish Farm, four miles north-east of Ypres where they were bombed, but there were no casualties. They

arrived at Albatross Farm just before midnight the following day.

Less than twenty-four hours later they were instructed to send two companies to attack Source Trench. By the afternoon A and D companies had moved via Kronprinz Farm for the attack on Source Trench, to fill a gap in the line near Varlet Farm. Harry had been with A Company when he left Hong Kong. The two companies sustained many injuries from machine gun fire.

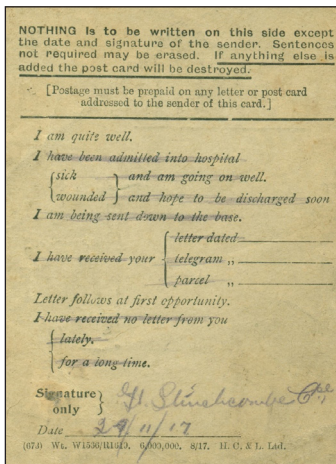
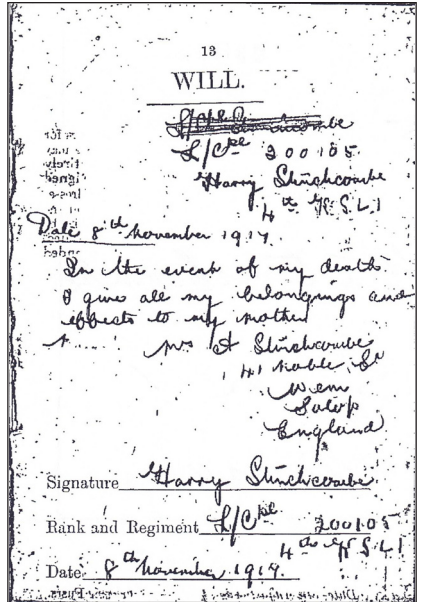
The conditions were difficult as they moved forward through the thick slimy mud. It was reported that this Territorial Battalion, under fire for the first time in France, when ordered to advance despite the fire the lines moved forward as accurately as on parade. The third Company (B) had in the meantime been ordered to the Canadian Headquarters at Kronprinz Farm, a position near Source Farm and later joined A and D companies. Harry was uninjured but one officer and 21 other ranks had been killed, 106 were wounded and one man was missing.

After dark on 31 October 1917 the Battalion were relieved by the Nelson Battalion, and the following day Harry with the 4th KSLI travelled about 9 miles from Ypres by train to Poperinghe and marched to the billets. On 6 November the Battalion was ordered to Brielen, near Ypres to work on the light railway being constructed from St. Julien to

Langemarck. The men worked hard leaving camp each day at 4am, marching three miles and travelling to the point in the railway that was being constructed or to repair a section of the line destroyed during the night. This work was not without risk, and the working parties and camps were continually bombed and shelled.

On 8 November 1917 Harry completed a handwritten informal will, [Fig. 6 as below], he wrote "In the event of my death I give all my belongings and effects to my mother, Mrs. A. Stinchcombe". The wills were kept by troops in their pocket service books and tucked into their uniforms.

The Battalion moved to the Eringhem area by bus on 22 November, and by march route on 28 November to Houtkerque for training. On 29 November Harry sent a field postcard to his sister Jessie stating that he was quite well. [See images below] Field postcards were used by soldiers on active service to send a quick message home without the need for censoring by their officers. The soldier was allowed to choose pre-printed sentences e.g. "I am quite well" or "I have received your parcel". The sender signed and dated the card but if anything else was added the postcard would be destroyed.



A week after Harry wrote the postcard the Battalion route marched to the Godewaerswelde area. They continued stopping briefly at Miraumont, Rocquigny arriving at Metz-en-Couture on the Somme. Harry wrote another postcard on 1 December to his sister Ivy to let her know that he was quite well, had received her letter and a letter *"follows at first opportunity"*. The standard sentence *"I am being sent down to the base"* was not crossed out. On 16 December they marched into line on Welsh Ridge, opposite Marcoing, south west of Cambrai in Northern France to relieve the Royal Irish Rifles.

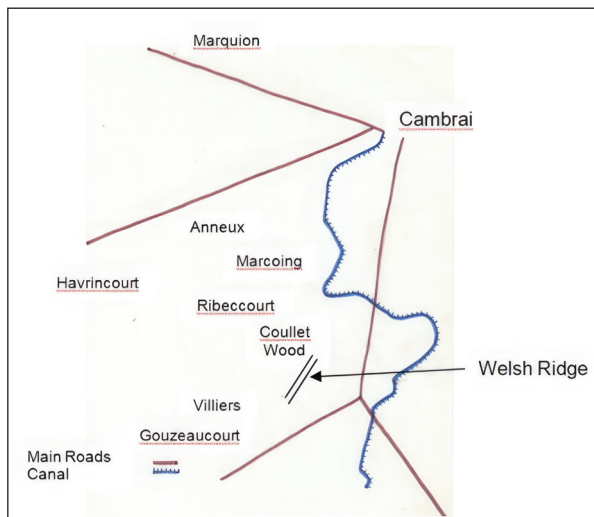


Fig 8. Map of Cambrai and Welsh Ridge

they had one of the highest casualty rates of any regiment.

For the past three years Harry had spent Christmas in the heat of Burma/Hong Kong; this Christmas, it was bitterly cold. Snow fell on Christmas Day covering the frozen landscape pock marked with shell holes. By the following day the snow started to drift. The Battalion were digging new trenches and strengthening existing lines, as the enemy shelled working parties. There were about ten casualties recorded.

In the final days of the First Battle of Cambrai, on the night of 27 December the Battalion returned to the Front Line where it was quiet, as the snow fell heavily. Harry had written a field postcard earlier that day to his sister Evelyn, to let the family know that he was *"quite well"*, and reassured them that he was safe.

It remained quiet until 6.30 am 30 December, when a bombardment commenced and communication wires were cut. During a lull two runners were sent to the Battalion Headquarters. The previous night enemy transport had moved through Marcoing to prepare for the attack. It was recorded in the war diary that the enemy had rushed

It was relatively quiet for the next week as the men improved trenches and wiring, and laid duck boards. On 23 December they were relieved by 1st Battalion Artist's Rifles and moved back to the support line.

The Artists Rifles were a volunteer regiment formed in 1859 and many who joined were artists, actors, musicians and architects. During WW1 they became a training regiment for officers', leading from the front

the trenches to the right of the 4th Battalion and captured or killed two companies on their right. Orders were received that a counter attack battalion, the 1st Artists' Rifles were moving up to retake the lost trenches and two support companies of 4th King's Shropshire Light Infantry (KSLI) were to co-operate with them. This was partially successful but the Battalion suffered heavy losses as they regained hold to their section. The KSLI achieved their objectives after a bombing party led by Lieutenant G H Morley had forced the enemy back. As Lieutenant Morley returned he was hit by a sniper and killed. The German soldiers had worn white camouflage smocks enabling them to move unseen across the snow-covered landscape.

The 1st Artists' Rifles as well as fighting in battle painted vivid pictures of the war. The painting '*Over the Top*' is one of very few officially commissioned works depicting a specific action, which commemorates their involvement in the attack on the morning of 30 December 1917. John Nash painted scenes from Cambrai of a group of soldiers 'going over the top', two lay dead and another had fallen face down in the snow. The surviving soldiers plod forward. It is apparent in the painting that the soldiers in their dark uniforms are clearly visible against the stark white background, they do not blend into the landscape and their rifles have not been painted white like those of their enemy. Through this painting one can imagine what Harry witnessed and experienced at Welsh Ridge. [Editor: *The image of this painting is copyright so can't be included here but it can be found at <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/20015>*]

31 December 1917 was quiet, clear, cold and frosty, early in the morning as the bombardment began. After a lull, shelling continued on both sides all day, adding slightly to casualties. Harry's dark winter uniform offered some protection against the bitter cold but made him vulnerable to a hidden enemy. A shot rang out from a German sniper wearing white and concealed in the snow. Harry fell with a bullet wound to the left thigh.

Harry's admission and transfer, the same day, by the 149th Field Ambulance was recorded in their records, with other soldiers of his Battalion and 1st Artists' Rifles. The field ambulance was a mobile front line medical unit manned by troops of the Royal Army Medical Corps, and was based at Lechelle between 30 December 1917 and 3 January 1918. On 30 and 31 December, approximately one hundred men from 1/4th Battalion KSLI and other battalions, were admitted to 149th Field Ambulance Hospital, many with shrapnel wounds, and others gassed or with trench foot.

The 1/4th Battalion KSLI war diary recorded casualties to date; three officers and about forty other ranks killed, five officers and about one hundred other ranks wounded, and fourteen missing.

Less than two miles from the Field Ambulance Hospital at Lechelle, the No. 3 Ambulance Train left Ytres at 00.45 am on 1 January 1918, a steam engine pulling the carriages of wounded and sick men tended by nurses. Harry was almost certainly on board.

The No. 3 Ambulance Train was one of three locomotives with a number of carriages which had been gifted to the Royal Army Medical Corps in August 1914 and converted into ambulance trains. The trains comprised of wards, dispensaries and surgical dressing rooms. Doctors and nurses provided vital treatment to the sick and wounded in cramped conditions as the trains rocked back and forth along the rails. Early medical care was crucial to many soldiers survival.

It was clear but very cold that day as the convoy of 74 sick and 140 wounded were admitted from No. 3 Ambulance Train between 10 am and 12.30 pm to No. 47 Hospital, Le Treport on the Normandy coast, after a journey of about one hundred miles.

Le Treport about 18 miles from Dieppe, had become an important hospital centre and by July 1916 contained three general hospitals, (the 3rd, 16th and 2nd Canadian), No. 3 Convalescent Depot and Lady Murray's B.R.C.S. Hospital. General Hospital No. 3 was partly in the Trianon Hotel, a luxury hotel completed in 1913, standing on the 348 foot cliff overlooking the harbour and sea.

The canvas No. 47 Hospital had arrived in the town in March 1917. From April through the summer there had been 1,040 beds available until heavy rain and gale force winds in October and November 1917 blew down many bell tents, ripping the canvas hospital wards and stores tents. Some tent beds were demobilised owing to the storms and the use of wooden huts in preparation for winter.

On the day Harry was admitted, 1 January 1918, the fourth New Year's Day of the war, 710 of the 835 beds were occupied.

Harry's parents received a telegraph informing them that Harry had been wounded. His father Albert wrote a letter to him dated 6 January 1918.

*My Dear Harry,*

*We all hope your wound is not serious and that you are going on well, and we are most thankful that it was not anything worse. We shall be very anxious to hear how you are getting on.*

*After an update on family news Albert wrote Well Harry I will draw to a close with fondest love from all.*

*Your Affectionate Dad*

Harry's youngest sisters Kitty, Jessie and Freda added their names and kisses at the end of the letter. Kitty, then aged eleven, had also written a letter asking Harry to hurry up and come home, and wrote *"thanks very much for your card. I received it the day before New Year's day. We are expecting you to come to England"*. Seven year old Freda wrote *"when are you coming home again. I am sorry you are hurt"*.

The family were later told that Harry had been shot with a dum dum bullet, which expanded on impact producing a larger wound. The bullets had already been banned by the Hague Conventions of 1899. Harry had suffered a serious wound to his left thigh and various other wounds. Harry's leg was partially amputated, in the hope that the amputation would avoid the spread of infection.

The ice and snow began to thaw as heavy rain fell and the frozen ground around the tents turned to mud. On 8 January, all tent beds were abandoned reducing the number of beds available to 674 hutted beds.

Antibiotics had not yet been discovered. As his condition deteriorated, Harry's leg was removed completely at the hip but not before the infection had spread to his trunk.

On 13 January 1918 a telegraph was sent from 47 General Hospital, Le Treport to Harry's parents and with the help of the Salvation Army, Annie and Albert arranged to travel to France to see Harry. Crossing British channels at this time was not without risk. In the previous two weeks several cargo ships in the English Channel had been torpedoed and sunk by German submarines or U-boats.

In June 1915 the YMCA had opened a hostel in France, for the use of relatives visiting dangerously ill men. A YMCA car met the visitors at the port and took them to see their soldier relative. A large number of Salvation Army huts and centres similar to the YMCA ones were also established.

Annie wrote to her eldest daughter Evelyn when they arrived at the YMCA Hostel in France.

*My dear Evelyn,*

*This is hard. We started sail about 3 o'clock, January 16, when all put lifebelts on, but I soon took mine off, feeling so ill but not from the sea. Then we were taken to a place for full tea, then twenty miles by motor arriving here.*

*I could not get on further. Harry is about 5-6 miles from here. We are doing our best to see him. We may be home soon and it may be Saturday. We are so near Harry we must try our best to get close to him for the last time. I will write when I get to Folkstone.*



*Love and kisses to Freda, Jessie, Kitty, Ivy, Hilda, Doris, Blanche and Francis.*

*Loving Mother,*

*A. S. Stinchcombe*

Harry died between 4 and 5pm on Wednesday, 16 January 1918 at Ward C5, No. 47 Hospital, Le Treport, five days before his twenty-sixth birthday. He was buried at the Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport two days later.

There are 2,128 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and seven from the Second World War. The cemetery also contains more than 200 German war graves.

Now fields of crops surround the cemetery and the sea breeze blows across this peaceful corner of the Normandy coast. [to the right, Fig 9. Corporal A H Stinchcombe's Grave]

Harry's parents wanted to thank the Salvation Army for helping them to make the journey to France and for the remainder of the war they welcomed servicemen into their home. Annie received a letter from the mother of an Australian serviceman thanking her for the kindness she had shown her son.



I remember as a child gazing at a large framed photograph of Harry on my Grandmother's parlour wall. Harry was fondly remembered by his sisters. It is their retold memories and letters Harry wrote to them during the war that have enabled his story to be passed down to generations that have followed.

### **Hilary Newman, 7394**

*Editor: Reading this makes me realise how lucky I am, as my husband's grandfather also fought at the Battle of Cambria, with the Tank Corps. Fortunately he survived, being reported in the War Office Weekly Casualty List, January 29th 1918, to be a Prisoner of War in German hands, and returned home to Glasgow in 1919, when he rejoined the Police and went on to marry and have a family.*

*Hilary did provide a fully referenced article but space does not allow me to include them in Journal. however, if anyone would like a fully referenced copy please let me know [editor@sfhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@sfhs.org.uk)*

## Discoveries through the GRO

My MELLING ancestors seem to have been a trifle odd to say the least. A 2x great grandfather Richard G Melling married a girl from Hertfordshire, Susannah HILL, whom he met in London, and when she died 34 years later he went back to Hertfordshire and brought her niece, Emma Jane ROGERS, back to Lancashire as his 'Housekeeper' eventually marrying her after six years, she being 27 years his junior.

Then there was my 4x great aunt Mary Melling who had two illegitimate children, (sons, William and John), both of whom were brought up by her parents James and Alice Melling, as if they were their own, except the date of one was much too close to the birth of their own child to have fooled anyone. The great aunt in question eventually married her Melling cousin John, three months after his wife Eleanor nee CARTER died, leaving me to wonder if he was the father of the illegitimate children, more especially as she had named one of them John. By that time the son John had died, but they do not appear to have taken over the upbringing of the other one. This son, William, also married another Melling, cousin Betty and both lived to ripe old ages. James and Alice's own son James (my 4x great grandfather) married an illegitimate girl who was baptised Elizabeth Geenhalgh BALDERSTONE, which was quite clever of Agnes (Nancy) her mother because, when Thomas GREENHALGH made an honest woman of her, she was able to drop the Balderstone surname and was called Betsy for the rest of her life, even using it when she married James (which it was probably not legal to do) in Manchester Cathedral.

Three of James' spinster sisters lived together until Elizabeth died in 1842. Until the internet I had never been able to discover anything about Martha so when the GRO came up with this splendid idea of being able to view certificates for a relatively small sum of money, I decided to have a look at Martha's death certificate in 1853, as I have always been fascinated to see the causes of death. Elizabeth and her mother both having died from 'Typhus', I was expecting something similar, or else 'Consumption' which seems to turn up on a fairly regular basis, so I was nonplussed (not being a Latin scholar) to read 'Cause of Death - Partus'. A quick look at Google gave me the word 'deliver' which was not something to die from, though I think at this stage a slight alarm bell was beginning to ring in my head. Typing in 'Translate' the answer came up 'Childbirth'. I have to say that even with my knowledge of the Mellings and their ways, this completely floored me because Martha was then a 40 year old 'Spinster'. The 'informant' was a Robert GREENHOW of 'Radcliffe Hall' and he says he was 'Present at the Death'. My mind went into overdrive as I concluded he must be the Squire of Radcliffe Hall who had had his

wicked way with her and was present at the death because he was trying to conceal the birth! It was only when I decided to see if Mr Greenhow was a married man that I found he was married to Ann Melling, the oldest sister of the family (who until then I had thought died shortly after birth) that I came down to earth and realised Martha was still a 'Weaver' and not a servant in the 'big house' and that as she had given birth in the family home, her youngest sister Sarah must surely have been present. In addition to this, my contact in Lancashire informed me that there had never been a Radcliffe Hall and it ought to have said 'Hall, Radcliffe' in other words Hall was a part of Radcliffe. That should stop me getting carried away and jumping to conclusions, though I don't suppose it will. Of course, it leaves a whole raft of unanswered questions as to who seduced her (or worse) or convinced her she couldn't get pregnant at her age, or what she must have gone through once she knew she was pregnant and whether the baby was born alive or a stillbirth. The certificate just says 'Partus 2 hours'.

The only other death certificate of any note was for Sarah Hill a little girl aged 3 who died from 'a crooked back' so I assume the poor little thing had scoliosis and must have been in excruciating pain.

**Gillian Posner, 5130**

## GRO extend certificate availability

For anyone who has not yet caught up with the news - the General Record Office have announced an extension to the years for which death records will be available through their Online View service.

The following records are now available, at a cost per image of £2.50:

- Historic birth records from 1837 up to 100 years ago
- Historic death records from 1837 to 1957

This will hopefully provide more opportunities to find out about some of our more recently departed ancestors.

However, beware that occasionally the scan may not cover the whole of the document, which is frustrating to say the least! I understand that, should that happen to you it is possible to request a refund and they will remove that image, which is not helpful for you being able to find out the details you were searching for but should mean you will not be out of pocket.

## Light on Family History

I was very pleased to read Bill Allison's review of 'Common People' by Alison Light in the September journal. I too have been beating the drum about this book for some time. Indeed I fully endorse Bill's opinion that it is 'the best book I have ever read about family history'.

As the reviewer remarks, Alison Light brings her research to life by taking us on a compelling journey of discovery. We learn so much from her investigations into churches, chapels, the navy, mental hospitals and other institutions and the individual stories of her ancestors are brought to life so vividly. Her work also highlights two issues that I have found crucial to my own research.

My article 'On the Move' in the journal of March 2020 was partly intended to challenge the myth that our rural ancestors never travelled far from their cottage hearths; my maternal ancestors the LEWISs of East Shropshire followed a very different way of life. 'Common People' also is full of men, women and children criss-crossing England, usually on foot, in search of work, a place to live or to join up with relatives. Driven by poverty, ambition or family pressures, our ancestors were far more mobile than we sometimes believe.

I still fall into the 'cottage hearth' trap myself. Seeing my great-uncle James Lewis in the 1901 census described as a farm labourer aged 23 living with his widowed mother, I assumed that he was one of those who stayed in the countryside all his life. However, research has recently shown that, around 1912, he moved with his wife Esther and their four children from the village of Pattingham to the mill-town of Linthwaite near Huddersfield. Jim and most of his children found jobs in the textile mills. As with many such migrations, the motives remain obscure. Did he have connections in Yorkshire, or were the mill-owners actively recruiting workers? Whatever the reason, Jim Lewis and his family (there were seven more children) left the rural environment of the Shropshire borderlands for the steep-sided valleys of the Yorkshire 'Heavy Woollen' district. Old habits died hard, though: filling in the 1921 census in his neat copperplate script, Jim was still describing himself as a farm labourer.

'Common People' helps to shatter another myth. We still hear claims that, in the Industrial Revolution, home-workers such as handloom weavers were all forced into the new factories. Alison Light writes eloquently of the needle-makers of Alcester in Warwickshire, who worked not in factories but 'lean-to workshops ... low outbuildings tacked on to their

cottages'. She demonstrates convincingly that, in many trades, the growth of factories did not abolish out-working but stimulated it and often, indeed, depended on it. My own research emphatically confirms this point.

My great-grandfather James STOKES (1827-1909) was born in Bloxwich near Walsall, where he learned the family trade of lorinery, working as a smith making ironmongery for the leather trade. By the 1840s, he had moved to Walsall itself and started to specialize in buckle-making, using a workshop adjacent to his house. In the 1860s, a buckle-making factory was opened in the same street. Again, preconceptions misled me: surely, I thought, James had abandoned his workshop for the securer environment of the factory. I even travelled to Walsall and found the factory's location. Soon, though, contemporary trade directories proved me wrong. James remained in his workshop, purchased machinery and founded 'Stokes & Co, buckle-makers'.

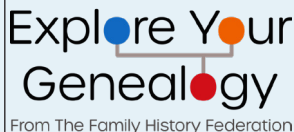
Alison Light shows that most of the needle-makers of Alcester were not so fortunate: mostly women and girls, they worked in cramped, hot and insanitary conditions for poor wages. No doubt the same was true for many outworkers across Victorian England, but, whether their experiences were positive or negative, our ancestors who powered the great Victorian workshop economy seem to have been ignored by most historians. I am not an expert on the industries of the area that is now encompassed by Telford, but I assume that workshops and domestic outworking must have played a huge role in places such as Wellington, Oakengates and Ironbridge. It would be interesting to hear from members who have researched along those lines.

With thanks to Sue Bentley for the use of her research.

David Stokes, 7734 [david.stokes7@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:david.stokes7@tiscali.co.uk)

## Explore Your Genealogy

The Family History Federation have recently launched a website, Explore your Genealogy, which they describe as *a unique educational website developed by the FHF that relates to every aspect of tracing your family history from the very first steps to more complex research*; with the main purpose to promote the study and interest in family history (and associated disciplines including local and social history) in a free-to-access, easy to navigate website. It is early days and it looks like there is still work to be done but may well be a useful resource for people, especially those new to this hobby of ours! <https://www.exploreyourgenealogy.co.uk/>



## A Good Journal is a Keystone of a Family History Society

The first Journal of the SFHS appeared in 1980 - SFHS Journal Volume 1 Part 1 January 1980. It was received very favourably. SFHS Journal Volume 1 Part 2 was published in April 1980 and contained reviews of the first Journal from a variety of sources far and wide. One of these was from Lt Col I.S.Swinerton T.D. J.P. D.L. F.S.C. who said,

*I write to thank you for the copy of your Journal and to congratulate the Society and everyone concerned on such a splendid start. A good Journal is the keystone of a Family History Society.*

Hence the title of this article. For it was true then and is certainly true now, forty three years later - yes forty three!

The last Journal – SFHS Journal 44 Part 3 September 2023 was no exception. Forty eight pages of articles, book reviews, contributions, information and notices. Three of the articles were based on the theme suggested for that issue, featuring members' ancestors with military backgrounds. Understandably these articles provoked response from other members when reading them. We feature two:

Michael Hulme (No: 0251)

*When my copy of the September 2023 issue of the SFHS Journal arrived I was immediately drawn to the cover image and its mention of Condoover, the place where I was baptised and went to school for many years. The whole thing became even more interesting when I found the reference to the German Prisoner of War Camp which had been situated about half a mile from the farm where I lived. I used to visit the camp. I can remember the camp in the late 1940's when the gates were open and the only Germans remaining there were those who had not been repatriated.*

*As mentioned in Bill Allison's article many of the German prisoners worked on local farms, including my father's farm. I can only remember one, named Erwin Kruger, who had been a university student when he had to join the army. Eventually the decision was made to close the camp, probably at the end of the 1940's, and at that time Erwin moved from the camp to live in our farm house where he remained for several years before eventually returning to live in Germany. Erwin used to send my parents a Christmas card each year but unfortunately he never put a return address on the envelope so they couldn't send one back.*

*With the help of the Internet I decided I would try to trace Erwin Kruger but all I had was his name and a very approximate year of birth. During the War records of POWs were kept by the British Red Cross but they informed me that all records of German POWs had been returned to the German authorities at an address they provided. I don't speak German but luckily a German lady lived near me and she wrote a letter on my behalf.*

*The lady also suggested writing to a magazine in Germany. A short note with enough information to identify Erwin was sent to Germany and published in the Freizeit Revue in May 1995. Amazingly it was read by Erwin's daughter-in-law so I was now in touch with his family but sadly he had died a few years earlier. The family explained that the reason he had been reluctant to return to Germany was that he had originated from the area which became East Germany after WWII. I did also receive a letter from Erwin's son telling me more about his father's life after his eventual return to Germany.*

Michael also added in all his years as a member that this was the first time he had responded to an article and enjoyed responding and offering his knowledge in this way.

John Davies also got in touch. His father had a farm in Oswestry where POWs were billeted. From his own archive he turned up a document that his father passed on to him. This fascinating document is shown overleaf.

John adds:

*My father had both Italian and German prisoners billeted on his farm in Maesbrook. The "Instructions for Famers" from the War Office were given to him by the Camp Commandant at Weston Rhyn, Oswestry.*

*The Instructions tell us a great deal about how POWs were treated in Britain. The Instructions reveal that they were treated humanely. They had a great deal of freedom of movement and could not be worked harder than local men.*

*From time to time my father found himself dealing with unusual situations. An example of this was when my father reported to the Camp that he had to separate two POWs who were fighting each other with knives. Just after the War had ended a tragedy occurred on the farm. A prisoner was due for repatriation but could not face the humiliation he felt that he would have to face back home and drowned himself in the River Vyrnwy. He had left a note on a riverside stump. The police dragged the river and found his body downstream.*

*I was only an infant during the War but my parents and some of my older brothers became quite friendly with a few of the prisoners and some correspondence was kept*

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FARMERS - GERMAN BILLETED PSW

1. These instructions incorporate all previous letters and are therefore in lieu of any instructions issued prior to the date. Old orders are cancelled.
2. Rations. The following ration cards are issued for each billeted German PW:-
  - (a) RB8X and RB8C for registering with retailer.
  - (b) RB8R - these will be renewed monthly.
  - (c) RB8X and RB8R should be returned to Camp, when the PW ceases to be billeted with you.

3. Mail.

German PsW are allowed to write four postcards and two letter per month. They are not permitted with anyone in the U.K. without first obtaining the consent of the Commandant. All mail will be handed to the farmer for transmission to the Camp. It is strictly forbidden for PsW to post mail in public letterboxes. Regulation notepaper will be used at all times.

4. Medical and Dental treatment.

In the case of a PW requiring medical or dental attention (and in all cases involving an injury to a PW) the farmer should contact the Camp by telephone. Telephone Number C H I R K 2176 or 3172, when the necessary arrangements will be made. Local doctors will be summoned to attend PsW only in the case of accidents or illness of a serious nature.

5. Clothing.

German PsW are not allowed to wear civilian clothes. The outer clothing issued to PsW, must be worn at all times.

6. Boots.

Farmers are requested to co-operate with the Camp and to examine billetees boots frequently and arrange to send boots, in need of repair, to the Camp as soon as possible, in the interest of economy and of the PW's comfort. Wellingtons cannot be supplied by Camp. Applications for these should be made to the War Agricultural Committee.

7. Pay.

German PsW are entitled at the end of each week to receive goods to the value of 5 s., which the farmer is required to purchase. On no count will the maximum of 5 s. be exceeded. The claim-form for the recovery of money expended by you on behalf of your billetee bears the same number as the form you rendered to the Commandant in the case of Italian billetees.

This claim must be rendered monthly and should be sent to the Camp by the 5th of the following month. Signature and the address of employers will be appended on all claim-forms rendered, and the signatures of each individual PW included on the claim will also be appended in the space provided. A separate claim-form must be used for each individual billetee.

With each individual payment made by the Commandant in respect of A.F.W. 3495 claims (billeted PW accounts), a form of receipt will be included, this should be signed by you and returned to Camp immediately.

On no account will English money be given to PsW.

Gifts of any descriptions are prohibited.

There is no need to run out of plain forms, as they can be obtained from the Camp upon application.

Each individual claim rendered by you is charged to the PW's personal account. Delayed claims cannot be entertained as there is no other to which claims can be made, and an accumulation of amounts to be claimed will undoubtedly place the PW's account in debt.

8. Visits to Camp.

Farmers should inform the Camp, if he wishes to send or bring his billetee into Camp on Saturdays or Sundays.

*up after they were repatriated. My mother felt so sorry for one of them who wrote of his destitution that she sent him a pair of boots!*



9. Travel and entertainment.

All billetees are permitted, when not working, to leave the farm for walks for the period of 1½ hrs. in the radius of 1 mile. They are not allowed to remain out after Lighting-up Time. They should also be told that they are not permitted to go into large towns, even, if this comes within the mile-radius. They are not allowed to visit public houses, shops, ~~cafés and~~ restaurants, post-offices or any place of public entertainment. They are not allowed to travel in public service vehicles.

There is a scheme in operation, whereby billeted German PsW may visit either the main-camp or the nearest hostel, provided it is within 3 miles walking distance or seven miles cycle distance. If they are within cycle-distance, only W.D. or W.A.C. cycles will be used, civilian cycles are not permitted.

They will use a fixed route, which is planned at the camp and entered on their permanent pass. Farmers will enter the time of leaving and of returning to the farm. This pass will also be signed by NCO i/c Police or Hostel.

Details of the above scheme and the necessary passes have already been sent to farmers.

10. Baskets and Toys etc.

PsW are permitted to make baskets and toys for their own pleasure, but are prohibited to make the same for the purpose of barter. It is an offence both on the part of PsW and of the people, who give them gifts of money or goods in exchange for them.

11. Working hrs.

German PsW are entitled to one restday per week, preferably on sundays, apart from this their work should not exceed the average number of hours performed by your other civilian employees.

12. Firearms.

German PsW must not have the use of firearms.

13. Fraternisation.

German PsW are not allowed to fraternize with members of the public, except as far as their work or personal comfort at the farm is concerned, under penalty of severe disciplinary action.

100 German Working Camp,  
St. Martins Camp  
St. Martins Nr. Oswestry  
Salop

*W. H. D. D. D.*  
Lt. Col.  
Commandant.  
(W. H. D. D. D.)

17th of September 1946.

John also sent along copies of the form that farmers had to use to reclaim money they had spent on behalf of their POWs billeted on their farm. [See image overleaf.]

So there it is. Some wonderful responses to an article printed in our last Journal. A good journal indeed is the keystone of a Family History Society and it is safe to say that ours is.

(2447) Wt.51162/5016 224.000 246 A.&E.W.Ltd. Gp.498 ARMY FORM W. 3495.

**APPLICATION BY EMPLOYER FOR REFUND OF MONEY EXPENDED ON BEHALF OF PRISONERS OF WAR IN RESPECT OF NORMAL EVERY-DAY REQUIREMENTS**

To The Commandant,  
 No. 240 G. 600 Prisoners of War Camp,  
A. 750707 WEISS, Karl F 119  
4 weeks ending: 30 August 47.

I hereby request the refund of £ - : 16 s. 0 d. which I certify has been expended by me in respect of goods purchased at the request of prisoners of war working for me.

Signature of employer \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address Re B. Davies, Dyffryn, Maesbrook, Llanymynech, Salop

I/We, the undersigned, have received goods to the values shown below.  
 Noi, i sottoscritti, abbiamo ricevuto merci ai valori come sotto.

Value of goods	Signature of Prisoner of War
Valore delle merci	Firma del Prigioniero di Guerra
£ <u>16</u> : s. <u>0</u> d.	

And this brings me to the final point. One of the things we have developed is more frequent contact though TFH and the Monthly News Letter. Members seem to like this. Perhaps we could develop more response to articles in this manner and members may well be able to help the writers of the articles develop their own understanding. Furthermore this information could well be of interest to us all.

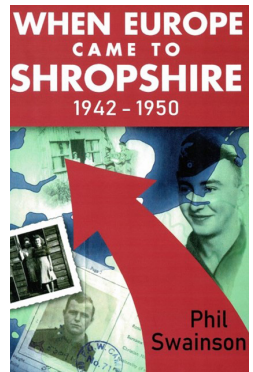
**Bill Allison 7760**

## When Europe came to Shropshire 1942-1950

After several articles in the last SFHS Journal 44 Part 3 September 2023 the following publication came to light, written by Phil Swainson.

This is an important book. Important for a variety of reasons. It features oral histories of eighteen people of various European nationalities who all found themselves in Shropshire during and immediately after the Second World War, most having been POWs in camps in Shropshire. Swainson was able to meet them over a period of time and get to know them. Many settled here and made new lives in Britain. Fascinated by this, Swainson was able to interview them and write up their story exactly as they had told it but protecting their identity by giving them new names.

Nothing quite like this has ever been produced in Britain about this period and published in this manner. Perhaps the nearest is the work of the American Pulitzer Prize writer Studs Terkel. His 1985 book, *The Good War*:



*An Oral History of World War Two*, detailed ordinary peoples' accounts of the country's involvement in World War II. It covers the same time period as Swainson's book in the same manner using oral tradition. People telling their own stories. The major difference is that Swainson's work much more powerfully weaves a tapestry of stories from almost every nation in Europe. A glance at the contents of the book and the names of the "characters" speak for themselves; Giuseppe's story, Rudolph's story, Margareta's story and Ciro's story amongst more than a dozen others. So we have histories for example of the contributors telling stories of joining the Hitler Youth and feeling excited by it, only to know the outcome. Refugees from the Balkans and others fleeing from Stalin. We have a whole history of World War 2 by ordinary people who were there and saw everything and told it like it was.

The book also provides a richness of facts that are not, perhaps, as widely known as they could be. In Britain there were over a thousand POW Camps including 18 in Shropshire. In 1946 there were 400 000 German POWs in Britain and 200 000 Italians. At the end of the War labour was so short in the country that POWs were offered the chance to stay and make a new life. Many did. However there was still a shortage and European workers were invited to come under the European Voluntary Workers Scheme and 100 000 came and settled, housed initially in POW camps. All the stories in the book reflect these ideas and more. The people detail their own backgrounds and outline their own family history. And, of course that too is what we are about, for us Salopians or those of the Shropshire diaspora, as family historians, there is plenty here to expand our knowledge and more fully understand circumstances people found themselves in in our beloved county. However, please note that the names of the individuals interviewed have been changed.

If you are interested in purchasing a copy of the book it is available from the Wellington Orbit Cafe in Wellington or 'the book-ends', 8 Duke Street, Wellington at a price of £5.

## The Family Histories Podcast

The Family Histories Podcast is a free independent family history podcast for and about family historians. Hosted by British family historian Andrew Martin, each episode features an interview with a genealogy obsessed guest, a life story of someone they've researched, and a brick wall they need the listeners help with. Andrew then offers each guest some help via something he keeps in his garage..... a secret time machine! Series six has recently been launched. for more details of all the episodes see their website: <https://familyhistoriespodcast.com/>

## How it All Began

When Karen suggested articles on how we got started on family history it made me think. I've been immersed in it for so long that I really had to give some thought into what got me started. I suppose the object that started me off is something that lots of families have - a family bible that has passed through the generations. This particular bible has the following inscription:

*A Reward of Merit  
Given to George Head by the trustees of Claverley Free School  
25th December 1843  
Aged 11 Years*

This piqued my interest. This was 25 or more years ago and, in my innocence, I wrote to the vicar of Claverley church and asked if I could look at the birth records. He very kindly replied that all registers were now deposited at the Archives. That led to my first visit to the Archives where I had to get to grips with the microfiche machines and look at the Claverley registers. It turned out that George Head was my husband's great grandfather. Anyway, I quickly got hooked and there followed many, many hours spent at the Archives, and trips with the Shropshire Family History Society down to the Family Records Centre in London where the censuses were held. I worked on my husband's tree for two or three years before turning to my own. I must say it's been a wonderful hobby.



**Christine Head, 5373**

## St John the Baptist, Ightfield - New Guidebook

A comprehensive and fully illustrated guidebook on this church is to be launched early in the New Year. It will provide detailed information about its long and fascinating thousand-years-long history and is set within the wider contexts. It will also describe and explain many features illustrating the structural history of the building itself, together with providing new information about the Warren and Mainwaring families, Lords of the Manor of Ightfield for nearly 500 years, from the 13th to the 18th centuries.

## A Call for Trustees/Committee Members

Our AGM is approaching fast and will be held online on 16 January 2024 at 7.30, with our monthly talk following on immediately afterwards.

Our Constitution states that *'The Executive Committee shall consist of three officers: a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer together with a minimum of four and not more than nine ordinary members, who shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting'*. So as part of the AGM we will be electing our Trustees/Committee Members for the year. Please note that the initial commitment is only for a year as we are required to elect all Committee members on an annual basis, however people are eligible to stand again.

All the current members of Executive Committee have indicated they will stand again: these are Karen Hunter (Chair); Dave Morris (Secretary); Paul Quartermaine (Treasurer); Simon Davies, Loraine Hunt, Cathy Matthews and Graham Shenton and there are five vacancies. Any member can apply to join the committee in any of the roles, providing they meet the requirements of being a Trustee as determined by the Charity Commission. If there is more than one application for each of the Officer positions or more than nine applications for the Ordinary Member positions a ballot will be held at the AGM.

Our Committee meetings are held on the Zoom platform on the first Tuesday afternoon of each month (excluding July and August).

If you are interested in applying but want to know a little more about what is involved before you do please get in touch with Dave Morris ([secretary@sfhs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@sfhs.org.uk)) who will be happy to answer any questions and you are also welcome to come along to one of our meetings to get a feel for what we discuss.

We circulated an application form with the November Newsletter and will also include it in the December newsletter but if you have not received it and want to apply, please contact Dave.

To comply with our Constitution, applications must be received by **Tuesday 19 December** and the details of all who are standing for election will be published in our January Newsletter.

We understand this level of involvement is not everyone's 'cup of tea' however, we do hope a few of you will come forward - new faces, new voices and new ideas are always welcome and it would be great to have a full complement on the Committee for the coming year.

# The Lloyd George Domesday Survey 1909-1915

Talk given by Gill Blanchard on 20 September 2023

Not so many genealogists are aware of the survey of land and property initiated by Prime Minister David Lloyd George between 1909 and 1915 (and 1920 in Scotland). He wanted a Pensions and Unemployment Benefit Act, and had to find a way to pay for it. Officially called the Inland Revenue Valuation Office Survey 1910-1915 (but as the first national survey since 1086, it was unofficially called the “Domesday Survey” or “Second Domesday”). The idea was to take a survey of properties across the UK before introducing a new land tax. It was not intended to cover the whole country, and as it turned out it was too slow to arrive and was abandoned in 1920. People would pay tax on land and property over certain values: land had to have increased in value by the owner doing nothing to it. So, value could be increased by the actions of Government (or maybe local authorities) if amenities such as new railway lines, sewerage systems, telegraph wires etc had been introduced, thus raising the potential value.

The Valuation Office created 118 districts and sent agents out to map ownership boundaries on large scale Ordnance Survey maps for each district. They produced detailed maps which were later colour washed to distinguish ownership (the colours chosen were arbitrary). This information was later transcribed into Registers. In addition, Field Books were drawn up which gave much greater detail. But progress was slow and wasn't helped by the start of War in 1914. By 1920 the idea had been abandoned.

The speaker showed a few examples of the maps and registers produced from Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. Each holding was given an ‘assessment number’; she was at pains to point out that this was NOT an OS field or acreage number but is solely related to this survey. The Field Books are particularly interesting for genealogists. They start with a field number related to that on the accompanying maps. They show the description of the holding, its size (in acres), and properties on it, and the quality of land (e.g. ‘land of poor quality’). They also give the names of landowner and the occupier, who paid land tax, rates, taxes and insurance. Any easements (new additions which affect the value) may be shown. Details of former sales of the land/property and how long tenants have occupied it are also listed. Outbuildings may be listed, and in some detail, including the number of rooms and construction details (‘brick and tile’ or brick and thatch’ etc). Farms and estates usually have more details than ordinary houses. In rare cases there may even be a sketch or drawing of a property.

The speaker ended by saying that these are good sources for information on people, occupations, addresses, indicators of social status, land ownership and building details. Unfortunately, for various reasons not all survive, not least damage inflicted during WW2. In addition, the maps and field books are not kept together. Field books and original maps can be found at The National Archives, Kew. Valuation registers and working maps are likely to be in county archives. The Genealogist is slowly digitising and indexing maps and registers at county archives, but is doing it alphabetically (good news for those in Bedfordshire, not so good for those in Yorkshire!!). The City of London valuation registers are on Ancestry, but not the maps.

In answer to a question of whether schools and headmasters' houses were included, the speaker said they were if the premises provided accommodation. Another questioner asked whether squatters on common land would be included. The speaker said it was an interesting point and she wasn't sure, and hadn't come across an example. But she didn't think a tent or caravan would be included.

It was agreed that it had been an informative talk about a lesser known genealogical source.

**Peter Tandy, 7790**

## **Thirty Days Hath September etc.**

**Talk given by Dr Robert Hodge on 17 October 2023**

This was a fascinating but very complicated talk about something we take for granted and don't really give much thought to - our calendar. The speaker went in detail into the history of our calendar which was based on the waxing and waning of the moon - there is a full moon every 28 days. He showed an illustration of a Roman calendar from 84-55 BC which had an eight-day week and ten months beginning in March and finishing in December. Six of the months had 30 days and four had 31 days which makes a total of 304 days. This left a blank period of about two months which had no name - a time when no crops were planted or growing. As there were just 10 months this explains why the names September, October, November and December are based on the figures 7, 8, 9 and 10.

The Romans amended the calendar many times, making complicated adjustments for time discrepancies that occurred over the years. Julius Caesar was influenced by the Egyptian way of ordering time which was based on the rise and fall of the River Nile. The Egyptians had three seasons of 120 days each, plus days to make up the year. They knew

it was 365 days because of the Nile floods which happened at the same time every year. They also added one day every four years - they invented leap years.

The Romans named the days of the week after gods. Our own days are largely named from Old English and Norse - the sun, moon, Tiw, Woden, Thor, and Frigg (with Saturday retaining its Roman name after Saturn). The speaker then went through the names of the months - January after Janus, February after the Roman festival of purification because they thought of it as dark, dismal and unlucky, March after Mars, April of uncertain origin but may be from 'to open', May is Maia, June is Juno, July after Julius Caesar, August after Augustus, and September, October, November, December have numerical derivations as explained earlier.

In 1267 Roger Bacon wrote to the Pope complaining about the anomalies and inaccuracies in the calendar. It took until 1582 for anything to be done when Pope Gregory XIII deleted several days in October of that year. England didn't take up the new calendar until 1752 when 11 days were removed from September for that year. The new year started on 1st January instead of 25th March. There have been attempts to change the calendar over the years - for example during the French Revolution when the calendar had a 10-day week, and in 1902 Moses Cotsworth presented a new design of 13 months, each of 28 days. This latter calendar was promoted in the USA by George Eastman, founder of the Kodak Company and they used the calendar from 1934 to 1989.

The Christian way of counting the years from before and after Christ is probably inaccurate. By common agreement what was originally known as AD (Anno Domini or 'in the year of our lord') is now known as the Common Era.

I have to say there were many more details given in the talk - but no room for them here, even if I could get my head around them! The speaker himself said he found difficulty with some of them and he has a maths degree!

### **Christine Head, 5373**

*As Christine highlights this was quite a complex talk with lots of facts so if anyone wants to rewatch it to help get their head around it, or if you missed it and want to watch, a recording can be requested from Dave Morris.*



## Santa Claus is Coming to Town

I was born across the road from the River Teme in Ludlow. We lived in a row of prefabricated bungalows, built at the end of the Second World War across the country to solve the housing crisis. They were called "People's Palaces" because they had indoor toilets, hot and cold running water, built in kitchens and large gardens. Ours was a palace indeed, since although I was born there, my brother had been born in 120 Old Street and that was not a palace and had none of the features listed above. He was born in 1949 and I had been born in 1953.

Those childhood years were wonderful. We didn't have much but, since we were in the country, we always had a great big green Christmas tree. There was nothing else but real trees then. The early fifties were still the make do and mend years. So although we had a big tree we didn't have a big pile of decorations to put on it. Sometimes we made stuff but my mum made more or less everything that went on it. As she got older she gave the decorations to us to share with our own children. Presto - a family tradition was born.

One of my favourite possessions is a pipe cleaner Santa. I always remember it hanging on our Christmas tree at home when I was a little child. Now it hangs on ours, although we don't have a real tree now. It's artificial and lives in the attic most of the year. But it comes down in early December with boxes of decorations and although we have lots now, my eyes always light up, a bit like the lights on the tree I suppose, when I see Santa Pipe Cleaner. *[Editor: You can see the image of Santa Pipe Cleaner on the front cover.]*

He's long and straggly as you might expect so there's no way he would get stuck coming down anybody's chimney! Red felt has been wrapped around his arms, legs and tummy and that's not a fat tummy either! His boots have been carefully cut out of black felt and his gloves are grey. His head is a ping pong ball, covered in cotton wool. Everything's got a bit tatty over the last seventy years but he's still smiling and he brings a smile to my face when I see him. So this year, like every other, he will hang on the tree and for me he will take pride of place.

As someone involved in Family History what I have written brings home to me that it is not just about the people and places, the dates and births and deaths but also about the treasured possessions we have and pass on in the hope that they will bring as much pleasure to others as they have brought to us.

**Rosemary Sargent**

## From the Society's Journal - 40 Years On

The December 1983 Journal included a final report from the retired Secretary, Stanley Clifford, in which he wrote extensively about the sterling work of the early committee members who had created the Society.

Mrs. Gina Lewis was elected as the new Secretary at the AGM which was held at the Coalport China Museum on Saturday 29th October, presided over by the President, John Dugdale, Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire.

The Accounts and Chairman's Report are not shown in the Journal but were accepted without question, as always!

There were 47 new members in this quarter from around the globe, the latest being no. 571 Mrs. K.M. Carter from Vancouver.

There were 11 pages covering 'Members Interests'. I wonder how many of these requests/contributions have led to a eureka moment for someone? I wonder, too, if anyone has recently made a connection through the 40 odd years of 'Members Interests' catalogued on our Family History Website?

Mrs. E. Pryer, (member 87), certainly had a success story in 1983 when she was contacted by Mrs. Lambie in Weybridge, which resulted in them exchanging photos and documents relating to the Prinn family.

A similar success was had by Elsie Turner (438), who discovered a connection with the Ralph family through Mabs Turner of Chester, whom she *'now regards as a great friend.'*

Colin Branford, (Member 11) from Coalfield had considerable problems reading the 1841 census microfilm so he wrote to the guardians in Portugal Street in London, who, quite brilliantly, provided him with a copy of the original document.

This was in sharp contrast to a complaint from Dr. Day of the North Cheshire FHS, who was unhappy about the £4.60 charge being made by St. Catherine's House for copying certificates. He was demanding that more records over 100 years old be put onto Microfilm, thus making them more accessible to the public. Amazing that just 40 years later, microfilm is yesterday's answer to the problem of access!

If you were wondering what the equivalent of £4.60 for a certificate would cost today, then an article by D. W. Hills in our Journal entitled 'Monetary Values' might well have

answered your question, except of course, he was writing in 1983! His article showed that £1 in 1750 had purchasing power of 60p in 1850, 18p in 1950 and just 2 pence in 1983.

I therefore looked up monetary values on the internet which showed that a certificate costing £4.60 in 1983 would now be £19.65 at the current rate of inflation. No wonder Dr. Day was lobbying people to write to their MP seeking fair charges for access to copies of records at St. Catherines.

Access to records was becoming a big issue in 1983. The Family History Federation was gearing up for a fight concerning access to records at both national and local level where there was a threat that Record Offices might charge researchers to look at records placed there by FHSs. So...we were being asked if we would withdraw our records if such a charge were implemented.

Under the heading of '*Federation News Flash*' members were informed that arrangements were underway for a 10th Anniversary Party of the Family History Federation, which would be held at Stratfield Saye, home of the Patron on June 9th, 1984. Members attending would be promised a '*fun*' event, not a conference, with exhibitions, county craft demonstrations, souvenirs and a big cake

Congratulations were extended to Janice Capewell, who '*had recently become engaged to David Cox*'. This means they will be celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary in February 2024. I am sure our many members who have benefited in the past from Janice's tireless work as Project Organiser will want to wish her and David a very happy anniversary.

#### **Reg Wilford, 5564**

*Editor: It is interesting to read of the on-going debate about access to records and their costs, which continues today. Although there are now many records available online, many of them are held on 'subscriber access only' sites which can be a restriction, and access to the resources at various Archives can be challenging unless you are lucky enough to live on their doorstep.*

*As a Society we are looking at how we can make the various resources and data we hold more easily accessible to our members. If any of you have any ideas on what we might do to achieve this please let us know.*

## An accidental death?

Alfred Cookman LOCKETT was born in Jamaica in 1876 to Emily (nee EATON born in Market Drayton) and George LOCKETT (born in Cheshire), a Methodist minister in the West Indies.

Alfred trained as a dentist in Philadelphia and Edinburgh and moved to England, working first in Buckinghamshire and then London.

In 1910 he married Harriet EATON (born in Sheffield in 1886) whose father John (born in Market Drayton in 1851) was Alfred's mother's half-brother. Alfred and Harriet had two daughters, both born in Buckinghamshire, Dorothy in 1913 and Madeline in 1915.

The 1921 census showed the family living in a house in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire with a living in staff of a cook, maid, governess and poultryman. Although continuing to appear on the electoral roll for this area until 1926 it appeared that the family had taken up residence in various London hotels from before this date.

On Monday 5 January 1931 Alfred, by this time a successful and highly esteemed dentist, fell from his surgery window on the third floor of a property in Grosvenor Street, London. At his inquest, which was widely reported in both UK and overseas newspapers, it was reported that following morning surgery Alfred had dismissed his apprentice saying he would clear up himself. Shortly after a thud was heard in the basement and Alfred was found unconscious on the ground, dying in the ambulance taking him to St George's Hospital.

Mr Oddie the Westminster Coroner appeared to find the case puzzling, stating that the evidence against suicide was strong but equally so was the evidence against an accidental death. Alfred's widow said that they had been happy and had no financial worries. *[Editor: as recorded in a number of newspapers from across the UK, the Coroner returned an open verdict.]*

At the time of his death Alfred had £3000 in his bank account (about £168,000 in today's money). He had recently let lapse three insurance policies worth £15000 (over £130000 now) - was this because he knew that they would not pay out in the case of a suicide verdict? Alfred had made his Will in September 1930 bequeathing to his brother George, a surgeon in Jamaica, the sum of £500. In a codicil dated November 1930 this sum was increased to £900. In the Will there were various bequests to staff, the remainder of the money going to Harriet and their daughters.

During his professional life Alfred was the first secretary of the British Society for the study of Orthodontics, secretary of the European Orthodontical Society and secretary of the 2nd International Orthodontic Society Congress.

After Alfred's death, Harriet and her daughters moved to Bournemouth. Dorothy died of TB aged 26 in 1949, Harriet in 1964 aged 78 and Madeline in 1965 aged 50 in St George's Hospital, Stafford. Neither of the girls married.

So what do you think, did Alfred fall or did he jump? We will probably never know.

**Julia Ayres, 5121**

## From the Editor

Many thanks to those who have submitted articles for the Journal over the last few months. I can assure you I have them, however the papers related to our forthcoming AGM have taken up a bit of space in this edition so I haven't been able to fit them all in this time. I do hope to publish them in future editions. There is always a need for more contributions so please keep them coming in.

As you will have read there was a great response to Bill Allison's article *Peace and Understanding Amongst Nations* in the September Journal. Bill has shared some of those responses and recollections in this edition and highlights the 'added value' that can be achieved through submitting articles and sharing of information with others. So do please keep sending in your articles and sharing information about them if you can, as I'm sure others will benefit from any additional insights people can bring to our articles.

On holiday this summer I read the book *Common People*, as reviewed in the last edition, and found it fascinating and intriguing, particularly as each section seemed to have some link to my own life - the place I was born, the area I now live, and the county I grew up in all featured! David Stokes' article, picking up from the same book review, was insightful and he is now seeking some information, as highlighted in his article. If you can help please get in touch and again we can share that more widely with all our members.

After my suggestion in the last edition I was pleased to receive the article about 'Santa Pipe Cleaner' - a Christmas tree decoration which still has pride of place on the family Christmas Tree and helps to bring back memories of family and past times. Perhaps when you come to decorate your tree this year there will be an item or two which will get you reflecting on Christmases past.

**Karen Hunter, Editor**

# Shropshire Family History Society

## Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Shropshire Family History Society will be held online via Zoom on **Tuesday 16 January 2024** at 7.30pm. The link will be sent in January by email to all members with a registered email address.

### Agenda

- 1 Members attending
- 2 Apologies
- 3 To approve the Minutes of the previous AGM held on 17 January 2023
- 4 Matters Arising from these Minutes
- 5 To receive the Annual Report presented by the Chair, Karen Hunter
- 6 To receive the Certified Accounts for the year ended 30 September 2023 presented by the Treasurer, Paul Quartermaine
- 7 Election of a Competent Person to Examine the Accounts of the Society
- 8 Election of Officers: To confirm the appointment of the Officers in accordance with applications received by 19 Dec 2023
- 9 Election of Ordinary Committee Members: To confirm or elect the Ordinary Committee Members in accordance with applications received by 19 Dec 2023
- 11 Any Other business (Accepted at the discretion of the Chair - to be submitted in advance to the Secretary by 20 Dec 2023)

### Minutes of the Forty Second Annual General Meeting of Shropshire Family History Society held on Tuesday 17 January 2023 at The Chapel Community Centre, Cross Houses, Shrewsbury and via the Zoom platform

The Chairman, Peter Grocott, welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited our Patron Mrs Anna Turner JP, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Shropshire to conduct the business of the AGM.

#### **1. Members attending**

89 members attended the meeting. Their names are available from the Secretary.

#### **2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Janette Lyon (5458) and Angela Bradley (7898)

#### **3. To approve the minutes of the previous AGM held on 18 January 2022**

The minutes were approved by the meeting and signed by our Patron.

#### 4. Matters arising from these minutes

There were none.

#### 5. To receive the Annual Report

Peter Grocott, Society Chairman, presented the report which had been published in the December 2022 journal and addressed questions raised by members and submitted to the Secretary. Peter finished by thanking all members, committee members and volunteers for their support during the year. The report was approved by the meeting.

#### 6. To receive the certified accounts for the year ended 30 September 2022

Paul Quartermaine, Society Treasurer, presented and explained the certified accounts which had been published in the December 2022 journal, and thanked Andrew Fairchild, Independent Reviewer, for examining the accounts. Paul then invited questions and replied in relation to website costs satisfactorily the accounts were accepted as a true record of the Society's activities during the year and approved by the meeting.

#### 7. Appointment of a competent person to examine the accounts of the Society

The Committee, having ascertained his willingness to continue in the role, recommended that Andrew Fairchild be officially appointed as the Society's independent assessor of the accounts for the year to September 2023. The appointment was approved by all present.

#### 8. Election of officers

The appointment of officers in accordance with nominations received by 20 December 2022 was approved by the meeting:

		Proposed	Seconded
<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Karen Hunter</b>	Bill Allison	Pauline Sieler
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Dave Morris</b>	Karen Hunter	Michael Hunter
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Paul Quartermaine</b>	John Shearman	Nadine Shearman

#### 9. Election of ordinary committee members

The appointment of ordinary committee members in accordance with nominations received by 20 December 2022 was approved by the meeting:

	Proposed	Seconded
<b>Simon Davies</b>	Karen Hunter	Michael Hunter
<b>Loraine Hunt</b>	Peter Grocott	Margaret Grocott
<b>Cathy Matthews</b>	Dave Morris	Rosie Morris
<b>Graham Shenton</b>	Jackie Owen	Dave Morris

**10. To approve the executive committee's recommendation that changes be made to the society's constitution** (These changes were described in detail in a note attached to the agenda and published in the Society journal 43-part 4 December 2022)

i. The Executive committee recommends that Rule 4b should include the following:

The Society shall have the right to hold meetings online where agreed by the committee  
ii. The Executive committee recommends that Rule 7 should include the following:

The Society shall have the right to hold meetings online where agreed by the committee  
Mrs Anna Turner JP called for acceptance of these changes. Acceptance was proposed by Dave Morris and seconded by Jackie Owen and accepted by all those present.

### **11. Any other business**

Karen Hunter our new Chair thanked the meeting for supporting her nomination and looked forward to contacting as many as possible in the coming months. Karen thanked Peter Grocott our outgoing Chair and retiring committee members Joan Gate, John Ravenscroft, and Sue Tarr for their contribution to the Society over the years.

Our Patron formally closed the meeting at 19:58 and handed over to Peter Grocott, who introduced the speaker for the evening, Claire Moores, to talk about using Quarter Sessions.

**David John Morris, Trustee/Secretary**

## **Shropshire Family History Society Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 30 September 2023**

### **Chair's Report**

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 30 September 2023.

#### **Structure, governance, and management**

Shropshire Family History Society (SFHS) is a charity registered with the Charity Commission (514014) and governed by its Constitution. The Executive Committee members are Trustees of the Charity with the responsibility to administer the affairs and funds of the Society.

#### **Objectives**

The objects of the Society are to promote the study of genealogy and history especially of Shropshire families and places, to educate the public therein through advice and instruction and for the public benefit to encourage the preservation and transcription of relevant documents and records especially for the County of Shropshire.

#### **Activities, Achievements and Performance**

As at the end of the year membership of the Society stood at 1034 (of which 116 were the second family member), with members from across the world.

Our Journal is published quarterly and distributed to all members, either in printed form by post or as an electronic copy. It includes articles and contributions from members, and provides education, information and help for family history researchers.



Monthly talks are offered online (apart from July and August) covering a wide range of topics related to genealogy and family history. Using an online platform enables us to include members from across the world and we regularly have upwards of 60 people in attendance.

Our Talking Family History Online sessions are held on a monthly basis, providing an opportunity for members to come together for an informal, informative, and interesting discussion.

In-person talks and events have been held occasionally during the year at Cross Houses and consideration is being given to how we can introduce more events there in the coming year.

Although not currently attending Fairs in person we have attended some of the online events held during the year, offering an opportunity to promote our Society and to help attendees in their Shropshire based family history research.

We provide a free help desk at Shropshire Archives three mornings a week. This is staffed by volunteers from the Society who offer help and advice to anyone interested in tracing their family history. Operating from the Archives enables access to paper-based and microfiche records, online resources and other computer-based records.

SFHS is managed by, and all activities are run by volunteers who are members of the Society, with all the 'behind-the-scenes' administrative functions undertaken by volunteers.

Work on our new website has not progressed as quickly as we had hoped, which we acknowledge is a frustration for everyone. However, work is progressing, so we can hopefully have it fully functional as soon as possible. The new site will provide an enhanced experience for everyone; enable more effective sharing of information; opportunities to promote our Society; and provide more support, help and access to our resources for our members and the wider public.

Sales of books and CDs have reduced significantly and during the year the Committee took the decision to cease the sale of books altogether. Following a successful final sale of stock the remainder have been provided to Shropshire Archives to enable wider access for the public. We are however looking at how we can make our resources easily accessible to our membership, including through the new website.

Registered charities are required to comply with statutory and Charity Commission Public Benefit requirements and we believe that our activities as outlined above meet this guidance.

**Karen Hunter, Chair**

## Financial Review

The Society continued to use spreadsheets as opposed to an accounting package given the limited transactions.

### Policy on reserves

The Trustees believe it necessary to maintain unrestricted funds for the following purposes:

- a) to cover obligations to pay future hire and storage fees of the Cross Houses Community Centre in the event of a fall in normal revenue income.
- b) to buy research material which may become available from time to time.
- c) to renew and to buy further equipment to assist research and education.
- d) to invest in website improvements and other technology to enable greater engagement with members.

The Trustees believe that the current level of funds is adequate for these purposes.

The Society's General Fund shows a deficit for the year of £516 which, when carried to reserves leaves a balance to carry forward of £94,371.

The Society will keep the level of reserves retained to ensure it is sufficient to fulfill our future obligations. Although the Society's funds are healthy, membership of family history societies continues to fall. The Society will continue to look at investing its reserves to build up capital to replace any anticipated fall in membership income. The Committee and Trustees will continue to keep payments and receipts under review during the coming year.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Karen Hunter, Chair

David Morris, Secretary

Date: 7 November 2023

Date: 7 November 2023

## Independent Examiner's Report

Please note the Accounts have been submitted to our independent Examiner. We are working through the final stages of his review and so his report on the financial statements of the Society is still awaited.

The full set of documents, including his report, will be circulated by email in advance of our AGM in January and will be published on the website.

## Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 30 September 2023

	30/09/2022	30/09/2023
<b>Receipts</b>	£	£
Subscriptions	9,131	9,228
Gift Aid	1,081	1,071
Interest on Bank and Investment Account	528	1,123
FHF Quarter sessions	573	754
Profit on Sales - see below	248	(1,012)
Donations	735	380
Miscellaneous	5	-
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>12,301</b>	<b>11,544</b>
<b>Payments</b>		
Journal Postage and distribution - 121 Direct Mail	3,797	3,932
Journal Printing - WPG Ltd	3,623	2,605
Journal Costs - Sundry	182	182
Depreciation -- see assets sheet	1,918	572
Room Hire	80	193
Family History fairs	504	-
Zoom fees	377	292
Mailchimp Fees	-	161
Storage hire	550	700
Subscriptions	500	479
Website expenses	282	144
Printing and Stationery	65	80
Postage and telephone	103	178
Lecture Fees & Expenses	430	662
Insurance	241	238
Travelling expenses	61	16
Archive Costs	235	1,103
Purchases for the Library	-	74
Cross Houses Infrastructure costs	-	188
Equipment	99	-
Miscellaneous	14	261
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>13,061</b>	<b>12,060</b>
<b>Excess / (Deficit) for year</b>	<b>(760)</b>	<b>(516)</b>
<b>Sales</b>	2022	2023
Sales of Books, CDs, etc	355	1,039
Opening Stocks	2,413	2,306
Purchases	0	0
	2,413	2,306
Less Closing Stock	<b>(2,306)</b>	<b>(255)</b>
<b>Profit / loss on sales</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>(1012)</b>
	70%	-97%

## Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2023

	30/09/2022	30/09/2023
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Per Schedule below	2,824	2,252
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Stock of Publications at Cost	2,306	255
Current account & cash	17,115	8,136
<b>Bank Deposit Accounts</b>		
Hampshire	15,000	15,002
Lloyds Deposit Account	6,507	16,563
United Trust Bank	51,135	52,163
	94,887	94,369
<b>Less Current Liabilities</b>		
Sundry creditors	0	0
	94,887	94,371
<b>Capital Account</b>		
Opening Balance	95,647	95,887
Excess of Receipts Over Payments	0	0
Deficit for Year	(760)	(516)
Closing Balance	94,887	94,371

### Fixed assets movement

2021/22	Additions	Depreciation	Loss on sale	2022/23
2,824	0	572	0	2,252
<b>2,824</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,824</b>

Paul Quartermaine (Treasurer)

On behalf of Committee

Date:

## Notes to the Accounts Year ended 30 September 2023

### 1. Accounting Policies

a. Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on a Payments and Receipts basis in accordance with the Charity Commission guidance.

b. Tax reclaims on donations, gifts and subscriptions

Gift Aid is claimed when there is a valid declaration from the donor and is included in receipts when the claim is settled by HMRC. Any Gift Aid amount recovered is considered to be part of that donation, gift or subscription.

c. Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

d. Trustee expenses

During the year expenses totaling £1,219 (2021/22 £1,201) were paid to Trustees to reimburse them for administration costs e.g. postage, travel expenses, Zoom fees etc. incurred on behalf of the Charity.

e. Depreciation policy

Provision for depreciation of fixed assets held by the Society is made at rates calculated to spread the cost less residual value of each asset evenly over its expected useful life. The rates applied are as follows:

Current year purchase	10% if purchased between 01/10 & 31/03, 0% if purchased after 01/04.
General depreciation	20% of previous year's closing Net Book Value

### East Surrey Virtual Family History Fair

If anyone is interested the East Surrey Family History Society are hosting their Virtual Family History Fair on Saturday 27 January 2024; 10-12 and 2-4. This is free of charge and will be accessed using Zoom. For more information and to register for one or both sessions please visit their website <https://www.eastsurreyfhss.org.uk/>

We may be attending so, if you do see us there, please drop by and say hello!



## Certificate Exchange Scheme

The following birth certificates have all been advertised before but not for many years.

Surname	Forename	Date	Parents	Location
GRIFFITHS	John	22 Jan 1849	David & Mary formerly WALKER	Madeley
HINKS	Alice	4 Oct 1879	William & Jane formerly MORRIS	Condover
HODNET	Emma	25 May 1862	John & Emma formerly HARTSHORNE	Benthall
HODNETT	unnamed boy	1 Dec 1838	William & Martha formerly WATKISS	Horsehay
HODNETT	Benjamin	13 Mar 1838	John Hodnett & Hannah Abel JAKEMAN	Ditton Priors
HODNETT	Elizabeth Ann	9 Feb 1863	James & Ann formerly BOYCOTT	Little Dawley
HODNETT	Esther	9 May 1867	John & Emma formerly HARTSHORNE	Benthall
HODNETT	Reuben	13 Nov 1884	Jeremiah & Sarah formerly JONES	Holdgate
HODNETT	Richard	7 July 1861	John & Louisa formerly MILLINGTON	Dawley
JONES	Charlotte	21 Aug 1854	Edward & Charlotte formerly JONES	Ruyton XI Towns

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**

## Talks Programme 2023/2024

<b>19 December</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In the Family Way – illegitimacy between the First World War and the Swinging Sixties</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">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</p>	<i>Jane Robinson</i>
<b>16 January 2024</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>What's That Job?</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">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</p>	<i>Dr Sophie Kay</i>
<b>20 February</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and Using their Archives</b></p>	<i>Sarah Moody</i>
<b>19 March</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Counting the People Using the Census</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">This talk will introduce some essential techniques for searching online databases and will provide some vital clues for tracking down elusive ancestors</p>	<i>David Annal</i>
<b>16 April</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sin, Sex and Probate: the work of the Church Courts</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">There is a wealth of information to be found in the records of the Church Courts from fines our ancestors paid for playing football on a Sunday to excommunication and its aftermath, with lots of saucy doings in between, as Dr Chapman will demonstrate</p>	<i>Dr Colin Chapman</i>
<b>21 May</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Murder, Sex and Mayhem in English Churches</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">A look at the information to be found about our ancestors within the English Parish Church</p>	<i>John Vigar</i>
<b>18 June</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Everything you wanted to know about Heraldry – and were afraid to ask!</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">A gentle introduction to the fascinating world of heraldry and how it can be used to further family history research</p>	<i>Chris Broom</i>

## Online sessions

Our **Talking Family History** online sessions continue on the first Thursday evening of each month (apart from August and September). There is room to squeeze in a few more people so if you are interested in joining just email Karen Hunter on [editor@sfhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@sfhs.org.uk) and she will add you to the list.

Our **DNA Special Interest Group** has been launched and we have had a great response from members keen to participate. the current group is full but we are taking names if anyone is interested and will slot you in as we are able or, if there is someone willing to lead the sessions we could set up a second group. Email [dnasig@sfhs.org.uk](mailto:dnasig@sfhs.org.uk) if you are interested.

## Update on Committee Business

**Members' Interests data:** The data has been standardised to the data fields used by the Family History Federation and are to be submitted to the Federation for inclusion in their database. We are working on ensuring the data will also be searchable on our new Website. Dave can provide a spreadsheet to anyone who still wants to add their interests to the database.

**Library and Resources:** The Committee has agreed to setting up a group to look at how we can make our resources more accessible to our members and has approved the project plan. We will report on our proposals in the coming months.

**Budget for 2023/2024:** We have considered the proposed budget for the year and this is scheduled for approval at our December meeting.

**AGM:** The Committee approved the Annual Report and Accounts for 2022/2023 and have been included in this edition of the Journal so members have the opportunity to read them before the AGM on 16 January 2024.

**Website:** The committee continues to consider the challenges we have been faced with in regard to the development of our new website and if the latest iteration of the new site does not meet our requirements we will acknowledge we will need to consider an alternative provider. We realise this would delay the launch of our new site but we believe it is critical that we secure a robust solution for the future.

Please contact our Secretary, Dave Morris on [secretary@sfhs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@sfhs.org.uk) for any further information about any of these points.



## Members

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

- 7946 BOSANO-ANDREWS Mr E; CO LOUTH, Ireland
- 7947 STANDLEY Mr D; ALBRIGHTON, SHROPSHIRE
- 7948 WILLDER Mr E A; SHREWSBURY, Shropshire
- 7949 WILLDER Mrs J A; SHREWSBURY, SHROPSHIRE,
- 7950 HARRISON Mr N; SHREWSBURY, Shropshire
- 7951 PRICE Mr S; STOCKPORT, Cheshire

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

- ADEY Miss M R; Wellington, TELFORD, Shropshire
- PURSLOW Mrs W; Oregon, USA

Those of us in the Talking Family History group were sad to hear of Wendy's death. She was a regular member of the group and was always willing to share her knoweldge and understanding of family history with everyone. She will be missed and we send our condolences to her husband and the family.

## Notes for Contributors

Please:

- All contributions should be sent to the Editor at [editor@sfhs.org.uk](mailto: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.
- List the filenames of any pictures you are sending in the e-mail with relevant acknowledgements.

- 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.
- Scanned photographs etc should be at a minimum of 300dpi if at all possible. JPG (or JPEG) is the preferred file format but in certain circumstances, others could be considered. Please contact the Editor for clarification if necessary.
- 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.

## Copy Dates

<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>Items to be submitted by</b>
March 2024	1 January 2024
June 2024	1 April 2024
September 2024	1 July 2024
December 2024	1 October 2024

## Advertisements

The Society welcomes adverts relevant to the interests of family historians. Prices are per issue.

Members	£20 full page	£10 half page
Non Members	£24 full page	£13 half page

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

## **Other appointments**

### **Membership**

Gift Aid	Paul Quartermaine	<a href="mailto:treasurer@sfhs.org.uk">treasurer@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Subscription Renewals	David Burton	<a href="mailto:subs_renewals@sfhs.org.uk">subs_renewals@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Strays	John Shearman	<a href="mailto:strays@sfhs.org.uk">strays@sfhs.org.uk</a>

### **Editorial/Programme/Publicity/Website**

Programme Secretary	Joan Gate	<a href="mailto:speakers@sfhs.org.uk">speakers@sfhs.org.uk</a>
DNA Special Interest Group	Jane Wilcox	<a href="mailto:dnasig@sfhs.org.uk">dnasig@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Publicity	Vacant	<a href="mailto:publicity@sfhs.org.uk">publicity@sfhs.org.uk</a>

### **Enquiries/Help**

*(Please note we do not undertake personal research but will assist if we can)*

General Enquiries	to the Secretary	<a href="mailto:secretary@sfhs.org.uk">secretary@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Research Queries (Members only)	Christine Abram	<a href="mailto:enquiries@sfhs.org.uk">enquiries@sfhs.org.uk</a>

### **Reference Material**

For look-ups or loan see Website for details

Certificate Exchange	Christine Head	<a href="mailto:xchangecerts@sfhs.org.uk">xchangecerts@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Members' Interests Records	John Jennings	<a href="mailto:members_interests@sfhs.org.uk">members_interests@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Library/Exchange Journals	Graham Moore	<a href="mailto:library@sfhs.org.uk">library@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Parish Registers Books	Graham Moore	<a href="mailto:library@sfhs.org.uk">library@sfhs.org.uk</a>

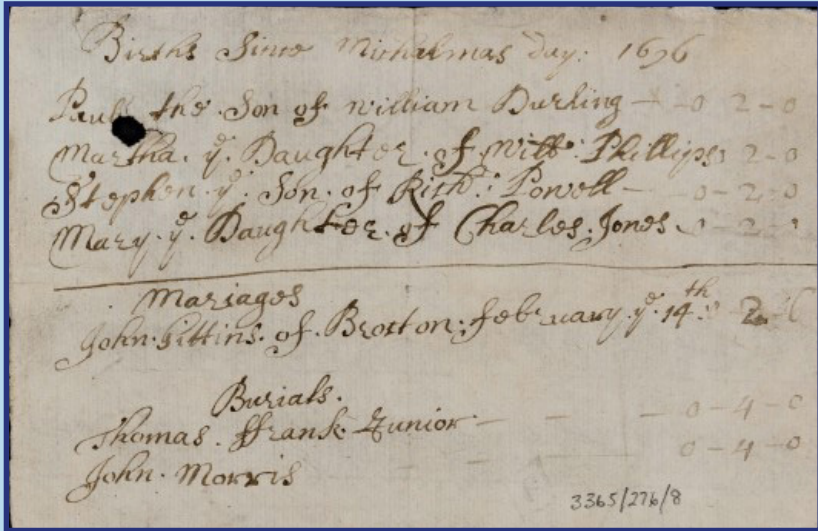
### **Sales**

Microfiche	Ruth Wilford	<a href="mailto:fiche@sfhs.org.uk">fiche@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Monumental inscriptions	Ruth Wilford	<a href="mailto:copies@sfhs.org.uk">copies@sfhs.org.uk</a>

### **Projects**

Projects Co-ordinator	Vacant	
Electronic Publications and National Burials Index	Vacant	<a href="mailto:nbi@sfhs.org.uk">nbi@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Shropshire Marriages Index	Joan Gate	<a href="mailto:index@sfhs.org.uk">index@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Original P.R. and 1851 Census Microfiche (Shropshire)	Christine Abram	<a href="mailto:enquiries@sfhs.org.uk">enquiries@sfhs.org.uk</a>
Help Desk Volunteers at Shropshire Archives	Liz Roberts	<a href="mailto:archives_volunteers@sfhs.org.uk">archives_volunteers@sfhs.org.uk</a>

Back cover: a small section from a scan of the original Marriage Duty Act Assessments published with the permission of Shropshire Archives. [See page 151]



Published by  
 SHROPSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY  
 Printed by WPG, Welshpool

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ISSN 2050 053X

December 2023