



Shropshire Family History Society

SHROPSHIRE.) THE Examination of *Joseph Brothwood* — an
To wit. Inhabitant of *Ham's Lane* in the Parish of
Wilsall in the said County. *Coltrey*
touching the last Place of his Legal Settlement, taken and made
before us *Richard Whitworth* and
Ralph Locke Esquires — two
of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said County, this
Monday — Day of *May*. 1811.

THIS Examinant saith, that he — is about *twenty one* Years
of age, was born at *Ham's Lane* in the Parish of *Wilsall*
in the County *expressed* where his Father
Joseph Brothwood then lived but that he
was a Parishioner at *Dawley magna* in
the said County, And this Examinant
further saith that the Place of his legal
Settlement is in the said Parish of
Dawley magna, he not having ever
done any Act to gain a Settlement
separate from his said Father since
his Birth And hath a wife named
Sarah and one Child named *Rebecca*
born in *laudful Woodcock* Aged *eight Months*
or thereabouts — The Mark of
A
Joseph Brothwood

Taken and Sworn at *Newport* in the
said County, the Day and Year first
above written, before us
R Locke
R Whitworth
Singer, Printer.

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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: An example of a Settlement Examination Document - see article on page 73 for more information

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Thoughts from the Chair

How time flies - it seems like only yesterday that I was preparing my thoughts for the March Journal. I have to admit that much of my time over the last few months have been rather more focused on the living than any of my ancestors but I don't suppose those aforementioned ancestors will be going too far so will still be there for some research when life settles down a little!

I don't know about you but wherever we travel we tend to check out if any of our ancestors lived there, just in case we need to visit one of the local churchyards or particular places! Occasionally we even plan our trips to take in particular places. This year we are heading over to Canada and spending some time in Nova Scotia and I have some recollection that some of my husband's family emigrated in that direction so I probably need to do some checking before we depart.

Celebrating 45 Years of SFHS

This year is our 45th Anniversary, which is quite an achievement. That success is down to many people who, over the years, have stepped up into the various roles within the Society, and to the enthusiasm and support of all our members. I am delighted that some of those who had the vision of setting up the Society and who got 'stuck in' with making it happen are still members. Reg Wilford's regular article, *From the Society's Journal - 40 Years On*, gives a picture of what it was like in the early days and illustrates how some things never change and how other things are almost unrecognisable now.

To mark this anniversary we are holding a live event '**Forward to 50! Building from the Past into the Future**' at Cross Houses on Saturday 12 October from 10.30 to 3.30. The programme is being finalised but will include talks from Dave Annal and Sarah Davis the Archivist from Shropshire Archives. Full details will be included in our forthcoming newsletters and the September Journal. Make sure you have the date in your diary and we look forward to seeing you there if you can make it.

A New Treasurer

I am delighted to say someone has stepped forward in response to our call for a new Treasurer. We are in the process of finalising the details at the moment and will give more details in the next Journal. The plan is for them to shadow Paul over the next few months so they understand all the processes involved, especially in relation to year-end before taking up the role.

Our New Website

Dare I mention this? Our hope for a launch of the new site in late Spring, as suggested in the March Journal is unfortunately not going to be met. We do have the basic structure in place but there is a lot of testing and detail still to be sorted. I appreciate this is very frustrating for everyone but it needs to be fully functioning before we can launch it. However, just to show something is happening, please see below a snapshot of part of the front page of the site!

Part of the site will be for members only and will include items such as back copies of the Journal, Exchange Journals and recordings of talks where we have permission to use them. To access that section you will need to have registered an email address with us, which is standard practice for such things. Please can I ask that, if you have not yet advised us of your email address or it has changed since you did, you let Dave Morris know (secretary@sfhs.org.uk) so he can update our database of member information. If you have a family membership it is possible to register different emails for each person which will allow individual access. Please also let Dave know of any changes to your postal address.

Once it is all up and running we will provide information about how to access it and what you can find there.



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Shropshire Family History Society website. At the top left is the society's logo, a gold crest with the letters 'S' and 'F' intertwined, followed by the text 'Shropshire Family History Society'. To the right of the logo is a navigation menu with links: Home, About Us, Join Us, News/Events, Members Area, Resources, Forum, and Admin. Below the navigation is a large banner image of a street scene in Shropshire, featuring a building with a sign that reads 'The Music Hall'. Overlaid on the banner is the text 'Welcome to the Shropshire Family History Society.' At the bottom of the banner is a blue box containing the following text: 'The Shropshire Family History Society is dedicated to researching, preserving and sharing the history of the families who have called Shropshire, England their home. We have a passion for genealogy and family history and are keen to share that enthusiasm and our knowledge with others as they also explore their family roots. We are funded through a small subscription, which enables access to a number of members-only features.'

Karen Hunter, Chair chair@sfhs.org.uk

A Wedding in Quatt

One of my most valued reference books is 'Collins Guide to Parish Churches of England and Wales', edited by John Betjeman (1980 edition). The selected churches are those, apparently, which were 'worth bicycling twelve miles against the wind to see', but perhaps the wind blew too hard in south-east Shropshire, the homeland of my maternal families. Apart from the splendid church of Tong, only St Andrew's, Quatt, gets a cursory mention. However, it is with that fascinating church, in a small village above the Severn, south of Bridgnorth, that our story begins. (*Excellent videos of the church are available on YouTube, including this one: youtube.com/watch?v=e4LDUg0_I_k and there is an image of the Church on the back cover of the Journal.*)

The parish register of St Andrew's records the following in 1797:

Banns of marriage between George Bentley of the parish of Worfield and Sarah Page of the parish of Quatt were published in this church and the church of Worfield on April 9th, 16th and 23rd. The above George Bentley and Sarah Page were married in the parish church of Quatt the 30th day of April by me, John Harding, Curate of Quatt.

The bride and groom made their marks in the register; the witnesses who signed were Jane Clare and Richard Rhodes.

George BENTLEY (1776-1845) and Sarah PAGE (1776-1867) were my 3x great-grandparents. The church where they were married is worth far more than Betjeman's brief mention. It originated with a medieval sandstone chapel of the Wolryche family of nearby Dudmaston Hall. In 1763, a fine red-brick Georgian church was added to the old chapel with arched windows and an ornamented tower; sumptuous monuments trace the history of the Wolryches. When George and Sarah came here in 1797, they stood before the altar of a beautiful new church.

How do I reflect on this marriage of two young countryfolk over two centuries ago? Firstly, I notice that everything has been done correctly, with the reading of the banns in both churches carefully recorded. All rather different from the wedding of my great-grandfather Luke BENTLEY (1851-1909, grandson of George and Sarah) who decamped from Patshull to Wolverhampton to marry his already pregnant bride and then declared himself single in the 1871 census a few days later, a rare blemish in a respectable life. Like the register of St Andrew's, other records suggest that George and Sarah came from well-established rural families. George had been born in Albrighton (possibly Boningale) and was living in Worfield as an 'ag lab' at the time of his marriage. Sarah was christened at St Mary's, Patshull, on the Earl of Dartmouth's estate; unless her parents lived on the estate,

she was probably born in the adjacent village of Burnhill Green. She was to return to Burnhill Green where she spent the later years of her long life and where George died in 1845 (the connections of the Bentley family with the Patshull estate are described in my article 'Shropshire Lodge: Life on the Border' in the March 2019 edition of the Journal).

I also reflect on the journeys of individuals and families of which that day in Quatt was one brief staging-post. George and Sarah had already moved westwards across the county from their birthplaces to the Severn Valley. They soon moved back east to Boningale where their first two children were born and then to Beckbury where my 2x great-grandfather George junior (1805-1856) was christened at St Milburga's, another attractive church ignored by Betjeman. The younger George's journeys took him to Kemberton, where he was married in 1829, then to Wrottesley and Tettenhall, north of Wolverhampton, his final resting-place being St Michael's, Tettenhall, just half a mile from my family home. In the later nineteenth century, these movements of the Bentleys interweave with those of the Lewis family, the other side of my maternal family. A century after the Bentleys, the family of my Lewis great-grandparents settled for a time in Beckbury, where their first two children were christened; in the early twentieth century Worfield, with its lovely church of St Peter (another missing from the Collins Guide), became home to several branches of the Lewis family.

I used to think of these families as moving eastwards over the years from the Severn Valley and beyond, through the villages of south-east Shropshire towards the magnet of Wolverhampton, where so many of them had settled by 1900, some much earlier. I now see that these movements were much less straightforward. People and families moved in various, sometimes unpredictable, directions, impelled by the search for work and suitable accommodation: places with connections to family, friends or previous employment acted as hubs which appear at multiple points – with the Bentley and Lewis families, Worfield is a notable case in point. The paths which lead forward from that day in Quatt form a dense and complex network.

Let's return, though, to the young couple on that April day in 1797. I hope it was a sunny spring day as people gathered in the fine new church above the Severn. Surely Sarah's family, based in nearby Chelmarsh, were there in force and hopefully some Bentley relations came from further afield. The wedding is the earliest family event of which I've found a detailed record and very important to me for that reason; but now is the time to admit that I have never visited Quatt myself, though I hope to put that right one day.

I would be happy to hear from members who would like to comment on this article.

David Stokes, 7734 (david.stokes7@tiscali.co.uk)

Follow The Yellow Brick Road

The Highs and Lows of Family History Field Work

Part Two: The Wild Goose Chase

After the Paper Chase, in November 2023, Julia, my wife, and I went to London for several days to find the places Ellen Isabella Allison had lived and to attempt to retrace her footsteps. We travelled by train from our home in Blackpool and stayed in a Premier Hub near Farringdon Street Tube. London is not a place that we go to very often and so the size, noise and speed of everything always hits us. We feel like aliens, landing on a strange planet where everyone knows where they are going and what they are about to do. Nowhere more so than on the Tube. Every resident of the capital seems as if they know the Underground system inside out and upside down. Not us. Every morning we stood in the entrance to Farringdon Street Tube, tracing our fingers across the map, trying to work out what lines we needed to get, to go to the places we wanted to go to. As grownups, we feel rather silly trying to ask directions from passers-by and too embarrassed to ask Tube staff, as helpful as they are. It seems pretty stupid to have to say to them we wanted to go to places an ancestor of ours lived in the late 19th Century somewhere in London. Such is the escapade that is Family History, as we attempt Time Travel using the addresses we have gleaned from the Paper Chase.

We know from George Allison's will of 1858 that Ellen Isabella was in the employ of Sir Archibald Edmonstone then, since it stated that she lived at Kilsyth in the County of Stirling. However the first reference that recorded a London address for her was the 1871 Census. This was the Edmonstone's town house, 34 Wilton Place, Belgravia. Estate Agents now describe it as;

one of the swankiest streets in London, home to modern hot spots and historic properties that date to the 19th century. St Paul's Church and The Berkeley Hotel are famous Wilton Place landmarks. It is a stone's throw from Knightsbridge, Hyde Park Corner and the Embassy of France and the Wellington Arch.

What is now Wilton Place was conceived in 1837, and construction of St Paul's Church, a Grade II monument, began in 1843. Finally, just in case you were curious, the most recent property that changed hands in Wilton Place, sold as a five bed terraced house with five bathrooms, 22 Wilton Place, was £10 million pounds in October 2022. Number 22 is worth a Google to get a feel of a similar house that Ellen Isabella lived and worked in.

Don't know if you have ever tried to locate posh expensive houses, but they never seem to have numbers on the door. It was difficult to work out which house was 34 Wilton Place. We took it to be the house on the extreme left of the photo here.

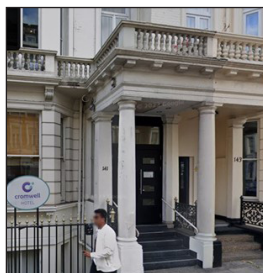


We stood in the rain and cold of a November London day, straining our necks, looking to the sky or at least the top floor of the house and were reminded of the wonderful Brian Blessed on *Who Do You Think You Are?* Having located his great, great, great, grandfather Barnaby Blessed's shop in *Book Sellers' Lane* near Covent Garden, threw his head back and in his best Falstaff voice, boomed out a greeting to Barnaby. How could you not believe that Barnaby heard it? Perhaps he did, or didn't. However we weren't convinced that Ellen Isabella had would hear us even if we shouted out as feebly as it might sound.

We weren't sure what to do next. We didn't feel we could knock on any doors because we didn't know which one to knock at. Anyway if we got any answers what do we say? "*Cuse me. An ancestor of ours lived in this house for twenty years or more, about one hundred and fifty years ago.*" Maybe they would have pointed to the "No Cold Calling" sign or have rung the Police. Who knows? So we left. Next stop 141 Cromwell Road.

Tube maps, more silly questions, in a vast metropolis where no one is local and very few seem to speak English, still tourism is its life blood and what are we after all? But we get there. Cromwell Road is a major London road in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, created in the 19th century, near South Kensington Underground Station. The Victoria and Albert Museum, the world's largest museum of applied arts, decorative arts and design, founded in 1852 is situated on Cromwell Road and throughout Ellen Isabella's time there, it was still being built along with other museums in the vicinity. One wonders if she ever had time to get out and inspect what was going on or was she too busy housekeeping and other domestic duties. For us too, it was the right time now to be domestic too, especially when we discovered that the V&A was the first museum in the world to provide researchers and guests with a catering service. We had always taught our children to take coffee in Museums or Art Galleries since they were well priced, never overcrowded and obviously contained sophisticated clientele just like us, in pursuit of other times. So it was the V&A before 141 Cromwell Road.

It turned out now to be a Hotel. Five stories high. The Cromwell Hotel. We rushed into a rather small reception area and couldn't hold ourselves back, blurting out that an ancestor of ours had lived there almost one hundred and fifty years ago. Expecting the receptionist to be as excited as we were and exclaim "Wow!" We were disappointed - rather disappointed - very disappointed when she looked at us as if we were stupid. We couldn't help feeling like the man in the last scene of the



film *Persian Lessons* as his dreams were shattered. The young lady receptionist shouted across the room to someone else and said, "You've been here a long time. Do you remember this woman?" We pointed out that she had died in 1896.

On that note we decided to call it a day. Tomorrow would take us to Greenwich. 11 Royal Place, Greenwich. There was plenty of travel to get to this one. Tube, Bus, Docklands Light Railway and eventually the Ski Lift high above the Thames with Canary Wharf and the rest of 21st Century London as a backdrop. Ellen Isabella could never know that this would be the shape of things to come. All rather splendid really. You name it we took it. All for the sake of Time Travel.

We found it and were suddenly into swankiness again as a previous estate agent described 34 Wilton Place. Even more so. 11 Royal Place Greenwich was listed as follows;

11 Royal Place, London is a 4 bedroom freehold terraced house spread over 1,733 square feet, making it one of the largest properties here. It is ranked as the 3rd most expensive property in SE10 8QF, with a valuation of £1,646,000. Since it last sold in February 2016 for £1,550,000, its value has increased by £96,000.

However there was some one-up-man-ship at work here. 11 Royal Place was rather more swanky than 34 Wilton Place. Nos 11 to 17 Royal Place, seen as a consecutive terraced group, one after another, were recorded as Grade 2 Listed buildings of mid-19th century town houses. Each house has three storeys, sunken basement, with two windows. They



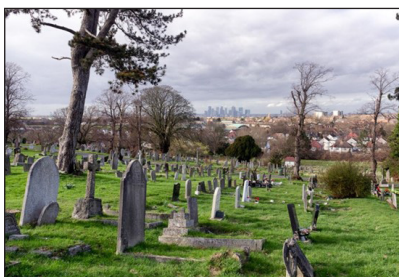
are made up of multi-coloured stock brick with a Stucco frieze, cornice and parapet and slightly projecting bays at flanks and centre. The first floor has a stuccoed windowsill band. There are gauged, flat brick arches to recessed sash windows with glazing bars. Ground floor windows have rectangular recesses. There are

gauged round brick arches to doors. The front doors are flanked by cast iron, spearhead fencing.

We took 11 Royal Place to be the house with the yellow burglar alarm above the front door in the photographs. 11 Royal Place seems to have been the seat of much of Allison activity in London. Ellen Isabella died there. William Launcelot and Emma Elizabeth lived there. It was the residence of Thomas Allison, Ellen Isabella's uncle, who was a retired engineer. It's possible that Thomas, with his wife were the first residents of the house.

Having found it we didn't dare knock on the front door. "Oh by the way, ancestors of ours lived in this house over one hundred years ago." "Really?" We had had enough of feeling stupid. No more trying to invoke souls of previous times. We stood on the door step to take a selfie. Then realising there was probably a doorcam, we legged it. We legged it all the way to Greenwich Cemetery where we knew that Ellen Isabella was buried. The dead won't let you down.

Greenwich Cemetery, Well Hall Road, Eltham, Greenwich was opened in 1863, one of many opened as part of a national scheme. After a series of cholera epidemics in the early 1800's with so many deaths, church yards had become overcrowded. In 1832, Parliament finally acted and several private companies were authorised to establish cemeteries on the outskirts of



London. These cemeteries were designed as vast parks with wide, tree lined boulevards, containing Greek revival chapels, grand tombs and monuments, all seen to be fit for a final resting place. Many took Père-Lachaise Cemetery in Paris as their model. Greenwich Cemetery, positioned on the side of Shooter's Hill looks out over central London, has many of these features and having seen that Ellen Isabella was rather a grand lady in life, this seemed a rather grand setting for her final resting place.

Now the search was on. There are said to be 94000 burials in the cemetery, with the grave stones, it seemed to us, all kneeling and praying at the grave they were guarding. Fortunately we had a reference from findagrave.com which highlighted the area where Ellen Isabella was buried. It wasn't the nicest of November days, rather dark, even at eleven o'clock in the morning, as we stumbled around the narrow plots, packed in next to each other, trying to avoid standing on them or falling over and disturbing their privacy.

We drifted apart as we read each stone and passed on to the next row. Suddenly in what seemed a vast distance from me, Julia was leaping up and down, waving her arms and

shouting with great glee, "I've found it. I've found it!" I ran over at break neck speed, so to speak, avoiding the grave plots between me and her. Then we both stood in silence in some kind of reverence as we looked and read the inscription.



In Loving Memory

- of -

ELLEN ISABELLA ALLISON

WHO ENTERED INTO REST 17TH AUGUST 1896 AGED 77 YEARS.

WELL DONE THY GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT. ENTER THOU INTO THE JOY OF THY LORD.

There it was. The wild goose chase was over, as she had led us, after the lows and highs of Family Field Work to where she was. The fruitless searching, the disappointment and the deflation of our excitement, which no one else seemed to understand, the knock-a-door run, all seemed a long time ago now. It had all been worth it to be here now. Brian Blessed didn't find his Barnaby but we had found our Ellen Isabella. All was well. All's well that ends well.

I enjoyed the escapade, enjoyed writing the article and enjoyed reading it back to myself. I hope you have enjoyed it too. I have tried to write something that contrasts with the dry Paper Chase, the first part of this article, something that attempts to capture the fun and exciting adventure that Family History is. I hope I have caught it. However. There is always a however. This really now this brings me to the point of the second part of my article. After all the chasing, the frustration and ultimately finding our goal, we have to wonder what is the relationship between the Paper Chase, the Census material, the Birth, Marriage and Death Certificates and the reality of these places now. The Wild Goose Chase.

It's all rather like the Holy Grail isn't it? Searching. Continually searching for something you are not sure exists.

When I was a boy growing up in Bolton in the 1960s I can recall how every late afternoon, coming home from school, through the town centre, everything and everywhere was

shadowed by and drenched in thick smog. An awful, filthy material that was a product, not even a by-product, of the black smoke from the chimneys of the dark satanic mills. But I can still recall the outline of buildings and their location. When I went back to Bolton recently, thankfully there was no smog, and not so thankfully, the buildings I could recall, had all gone. I remember saying to one of my sisters, who was with me, that this used to be here and that used to be there. Then it struck how silly this was. These places only existed in my head now. The world, Bolton, my life, had all moved on, for better or worse. The past and present had collided. They have to, in order to make way for the future. That clichéd statement seems like Christmas cracker wisdom. All very silly but all very true.

And, of course, the point being that the places that Ellen Isabella lived, as much as I would like them to be a reality, as much as I would like people who live in the houses to say "Come in" and show me around, taking me to places she lived and worked. It isn't going to happen.

So what is the relationship between the way things were and the way they are now. What is the relationship between the Paper Chase and the Wild Goose Chase? Who can say? You tell me.



One final thought. Since writing both these pieces I have discovered that Ellen Isabella's employer, for forty years, Sir Archibald Edmonstone (1795- 1871) died without any children and his title passed to other branches of the family. So there is an Sir Archibald Edmonstone today living in the family seat - Duntreath Castle, Strathblane in Stirlingshire and its description on the internet reads as follows;

The original 15th century keep remains relatively untouched but the 19th century residential wing has been modernised and decorated to the highest standards. The warm welcoming atmosphere is particularly commented on by all visitors. The famous garden stands in 20 acres of lawns, with herbaceous borders, ornamental waterfall and gardens set against the stunning backdrop of the Campsie Hills. The South-facing terrace looks down the valley to Ben Lomond, of which an even better view can be had from the Tower battlements. Classically described as "a magical place", Duntreath Castle, with its warm welcome and stunning gardens, provides the perfect setting for every event Sir Archibald and Lady Edmonstone (Archie & Julie to everyone!) are happy

to hold a variety of occasions, either within the house or keep or in the gardens and extensive parklands. These include hosted lunches, teas and morning coffees where visitors are free to admire all the private rooms. Julie is also an amusing and informed lecturer on Scotland's Gardens, on which she is an expert.

Well Ellen Isabella. Things keep getting bigger, bolder and even grander. The Castle is a Grade One Listed Building to boot.

Now just to confuse you, I want now to take a giant leap from Scotland to Wales for a paragraph or two. To Erddig Hall near Wrexham which is, in fact, a rather large 18th-century manor house with its ornate 12000 acre garden. It's a wonderful National Trust property, perfect for a day out, as they all are. Since it's near where we live, we have been often. One of the things that I am always excited by is that over the years each successive generation of the Yorke family, who own the property, has had a tradition



of having portraits painted of the principal servants and hung on the walls throughout the property. At the advent of photography, the Yorkes then added photographs rather than paintings, such as the group of servants outside Erddig in 1912 with Phillip Yorke 11 and his family in the window.

Now wouldn't be fantastic if somewhere in Duntreath Castle, there would not only be records of Ellen Isabella in estate books and suchlike but, wait for it, a photograph on a wall, waiting for us to come and look. It would be "*Oh Isabella*" for sure. Indeed for real. Then, perhaps, the past and present would really collide.

So now we are planning a trip to Duntreath this summer. You take the High Road and we'll take the Low Road and we'll be in Scotland a'for ye. Follow the Yellow Brick Road. We'll let you know. Bring it on!

Bill Allison, 7762 juliaallison@btinternet.com

Editor: This sounds like quite an adventure. I am sure many of us have taken off on a trip to seek out more information about our ancestors or to walk down the same streets they might have done, to see the houses they lived in and to find, if possible their final resting places. Perhaps you have knocked on a door and told the current inhabitants about those who occupied the house before. If so, please think about sharing your adventure with our members.

Constructing a family tree

I have just been developing my family tree on Find My Past (I also have it on Ancestry in case different information comes to light) and chose to concentrate initially on my mother's female line. We made up our tree many years ago, before computers, based on Mum's knowledge, and we also had the benefit of my cousin Richard Hughes' (of Ash Wood, Ash, near Whitchurch, our ancestral home) extensive notes researched the hard way. I believe he gave a talk to SFHS on his researches many years ago. Mum and Dad were second cousins once removed and thus her female line leads back to the main Hughes line.

I'd worked back to her great grandparents, William Rodgers and Mary Ann Hughes but the next step was taking me to a Staffordshire family rather than staying with Ash or Whitchurch. I eventually thought of doing a search on her name in the marriages records and was astonished to find two couples with the same names (give or take an 'e' on the end of Ann) were married in Whitchurch in 1836, possibly within days of each other. Fortunately my pair's marriage certificate, with recognisable names of witnesses, is on the FMP system.

I found Mary Ann Hughes on later census forms, living in Gawsorth, Cheshire, as expected, but she'd given her place of birth as Bickley in Cheshire, not Ash or Whitchurch, which I couldn't understand. Then I noticed in cousin Richard's records that her parents, Richard Hughes of Ash Wood and Elizabeth Clare, had been married in Bickley (Bickley is near Malpas and not a great way in the pony and trap from Whitchurch), so it would seem that Elizabeth had gone home to mother for the birth.

My own Mother was my Dad's second wife but their marriage in 1949 does not appear on Find My Past – they don't seem to have the records. They are, though, on Ancestry.

These items illustrate some pitfalls possible in building a family tree and the marriage coincidence reminds me to keep an eye on ages appearing in sources.

I was interested to read in the March Journal about the three children of the same name who died in succession. There was a case in my wider family of a child dying in infancy. Her (later) brother and his wife were planning to name a child after her but were warned not to – she also would die early. They went ahead anyway and, sure enough, she died aged 12.

Mark Hughes, 7460

Update from Shropshire Archives

Help desk

The Shropshire Family History Society help desk now has a more prominent place at the Archives and volunteers continue to help with all sorts of enquiries. The new desk is part of our redesign of the public spaces. As use of microfiche and microfilm has declined over the last few years, we've reduced the number of microform readers and created a new room which is being well used for events and volunteering. We've also been lucky enough to acquire some new (to us) shelving, so we've expanded the number of local and family history books that are available to browse through. Rare and fragile books will remain in our stores, available on request, but we hope that the re-arrangement means our book collection is better used. More guidance and shelf labels will be added soon, so please ask if there's something you can't find.

Quarter Sessions rolls and files – work in progress

Quarter Sessions records are an excellent source for family history. The court met four times a year and heard a wide variety of criminal cases, as well as dealing with administrative matters such as maintaining bridges and licensing private asylums.

The Calendars of Prisoners (ref QS10) are a good introduction as they list prisoners awaiting trial. These are being indexed by volunteers.

The Quarter Sessions rolls (ref QR) contain the documents generated in each sitting of the court. Records can include lists of names of justices and officials, indictments (formal accusations), recognisances (or bonds to ensure defendants and witnesses appeared in court), coroner's inquests and poor law removals.

Many years ago, the Shropshire Family History Society numbered and indexed the Shropshire Quarter Sessions rolls from 1831-1920 and the index appears on www.findmypast.co.uk. We now have a team of volunteers cataloguing the individual items in the older Quarter Sessions rolls, which are tricky because they still tend to be rolled up and difficult to read and handle. Volunteers are working from the earliest roll, 1696 and making steady progress towards the 1831 onwards listing. Their list is being added to the online catalogue at www.shropshirearchives.org.uk.

Another team of volunteers are working on the Shropshire Quarter Sessions files 1731-1888 (ref QS/6). The files contain documents relating to the administrative and judicial business of Quarter Sessions, but subsidiary to those included in the rolls and often

generated between the court sittings. There are many references to paupers and debtors as well as to officials and workmen. Again, the work is being added to the Archives online catalogue. Another possible source of information for family history.

It's worth noting that the boroughs were entitled to hold their own Quarter Sessions. Survival for these records is slightly patchier than for the Shropshire County Quarter Sessions. You can find lists in the relevant borough collections (pre and post municipal re-organisation in 1835). For Shrewsbury, volunteers have listed the content of the Quarter Sessions rolls, 1564-1836 in great detail. [see Ralph Collingwood's article in the March 2024 Journal.]

We are thankful to volunteers for all their dedicated work on these records.

Electoral registers and poll books

During 2024, Shropshire Archives will be hosting Ancestry to digitise historic electoral registers and poll books. The older registers up to 1965 will be searchable on the Ancestry website in due course.

Sarah Davis, Archivist, Shropshire Archives

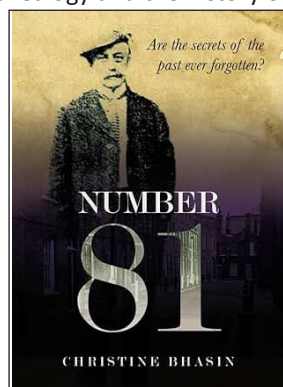
Number 81

Number 81 is the debut novel from Shrewsbury-born author Christine Bhasin. Christine was inspired to write her book by research she did into her own family tree. Indeed the story is entirely set in Shrewsbury and references lots of well-known local streets and buildings. Many of the characters and their stories are based on real-life local people as well.

We think it would be enjoyed by anyone with an interest in genealogy and the history of Shrewsbury in particular.

Christine began writing this book in 2018. Unfortunately in 2021 she suffered a stroke which left her unable to continue for writing a year. She was encouraged to restart writing though, and finishing and publishing the book has played a significant part in her ongoing recovery. Indeed she is now starting to write a follow up book.

Number 81 is available to buy on Amazon and there is a copy held at Shropshire Archives.



Being a Volunteer - 19

Editor: Barry has provided this summary of his experience in volunteering on the Shropshire Archives Helpdesk , with examples of some of the queries he has been involved with over the past six months or so.

We have had a new computer system fitted in the room, a lot quicker than before and a new keyboard which I can read. The old one had been with us a long time. Still have access to 'Find My Past' unlike the Telford libraries who have taken it off.

Ian was dealing with a required baptism in Shrewsbury of a living person in 1930! C of E or Catholic! Nothing we thought that you would find on internet. Not sure where you would go from here, although I am sure someone will know. He also had a person looking for LAWLEY in Button Oak near Bewdley and Dawley in the 1830s.

I had a person looking for information from memory but they could not remember details so will come back with paperwork! Another one was looking for TOMPKINS married to a TOMPKINS: found in 1881 and 1891 census. He had a will showing the family split of money. We verified all the children and found out that her maiden name was TOMPKINS. There were two families in Finedon, Wellingborough with the same surname, probably related going back through time.

John had a visitor to Shropshire from down south looking for a Nancy JONES. They looked in census records and Kelly's Directory as the relative was a servant. Good luck John.

Had a regular in who writes for the Bicton News pamphlet which I have mentioned before I believe, and he said his deadline was the weekend for the editor. He was looking for a Richard and Mary GITTENS in the area. He did have a partial summary page for 1911 but I could not find the full page. We did have a look for other names but were having difficulty finding anything.

A Shropshire couple came in after WILLIAMS and RICHARDS in Naval records. Found the 1888-1970 naval list for promotions in 1941. No other found but we gave her the address to write to for naval records.

Straight away we had a member from Oklahoma looking for mill workers/owner in the wool trade in Shropshire in the early 1800s. Unfortunately he had looked at all the information that previous volunteers could tell him on Edward EVANS d1845 - I saw him there the day after. I did suggest to try the Flaxmill as a long shot. Hope he got on ok as

he will be reading this! He was off to Church Stretton and Oswestry group meetings good luck!

We did have three ladies at the end of a session looking for an inquest report and a house in Stipperstones. As an aside I was talking in Wellington to the author of "Shropshire's sacrifice in the great war" produced by Neil Evans, Phil Morris and St Chad's Church. It took four years to compile. There is a reference copy in Wellington Library.

[Editor: I have found a digital copy on the Internet at https://issuu.com/shropshirero/docs/roll_of_honour_final_-_6_october/23]

A customer came in looking for the AVISON family but unfortunately nothing was found! Then for a GRIFFICK in Northamptonshire: the family had nine children and four died if I had it right. Checked through 1939 Register only to find what he had already.

By the end of 2023 the room is different with a covered in room, (called the "Lily Chitty" room after the archaeologist), at the back, for the use of groups and events, and we have moved to the end of the room, facing the entrance, so customers can see us, and the screen is gone.

We had a customer today looking for TURFORDS in Turford area. He had been given information back to 1677: I found a marriage again in 1703 but no baptism. He had relations in Caynham in 1732. Looking on British History Online we have an outlying property at Turford in Richards Castle which belonged to the TEMPLARs in 1227. The Templars acquired estates in Shropshire by 1158. I did a search on the Internet for Turford but found nothing, only a house in Ludlow of Turford name. Anyone aware of Turford? I guess an ancient village that has now disappeared.

Barry Deakin 4412, barrydeakin@blueyonder.co.uk



Editor: Obviously not an image of Barry, but of one of our other volunteers 'manning' the help desk. To all our helpdesk volunteers, thank you for the time you give to this role - it is obviously appreciated by the Archives and those who come seeking help and guidance on their family history and is also a great way for us to promote the Society and helps us to meet our Charity objects.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission and their Archives

Talk given by Sarah Moody, Regional Public Engagement Co-ordinator on 19 February 2024

The concept behind the CWGC is “Their name liveth for evermore”. This was thought up by Rudyard Kipling, as covering those of all faiths or of no faith. Prior to WW1 we were poor at commemorating war dead; most were buried in mass graves, only those with wealth or rank being buried with honour. The Commission exists to ensure that the 1.7m people killed in WWI and WWII are remembered in perpetuity.

By 1915 the problem was starting to be recognised, and Sir Fabian Ware, who was too old to fight, was put in charge of a mobile Red Cross unit and started (unofficially) to record the graves of the fallen. In 1917, the War Graves Commission was established by Royal Charter with the Prince of Wales as President and Ware as Vice Chair. The principal was that each death was to be commemorated by a uniform head stone, with no difference for rank or status. By the Armistice in 1918, there were 587,000 graves with 559,000 registered dead having no known grave. 1.1m were killed but we only know where 50% are located. The Commission sought the highest expertise including Sir M. Baker, Sir Reginald Blomfield, and Sir Edward Lutyens. Kipling, whose son John was killed, was made literary advisor for inscriptions. For the graveyards the garden designer Gertrude Jekyll and Arthur Hall of Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, were appointed. The commemoration dates are between 4 August 1914-31 August 1921, and 3 September 1939-31 December 1947. This allows for the end of the conflict, but with time to include those who died later as a result of wounds sustained.

Consensus was difficult early on, and with problems concerning repatriation (it was logistically difficult anyway) victims would be buried where they fell. Also, headstone shape (uniformity was important, as was no crosses on the grave). Exhumation and concentration of graves on one site, also, posed problems.

The speaker showed some examples of cemeteries. At Tyne Cot, the largest cemetery, commemorating the 3rd Battle of Ypres which killed 11,900 service men, only 3,600 names are recorded, with 35,000 casualties having no known grave. At the Menin Gate in Belgium where 54,000 Commonwealth soldiers died with no known grave, a ceremony is held every night of the year. And the Australian memorial at Villiers-Bretanneus which was the final monument, was only completed in 1938, just one year before war broke out

again. With WW2 being of greater global context, war graves sites were established at Kranji (Singapore) and Rangoon (then Burma, now Myanmar).

Headstones were standardised with what information was available, usually the regimental unit with service badge, service particulars and date of death, plus a default cross and short personal inscription at the bottom (though not for New Zealanders due to objections by the NZ Government).

Apart from maintaining far-flung global graveyards and memorials, the CWGC has extensive archives, divided into a casualty archive and a commission archive. The former covers registers of casualties, grave memorial registers and headstone schedules. The latter has admin files, architectural drawings, cemetery plans, correspondence, minutes and reports, a photo archive and staff records. There is also a 7-volume Roll of Honour of Civilian War Dead, between 1939-1945, kept at St George's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, and covering those who died as a result of enemy action. Grave registration reports give the plot, row and grave number.

Recently, >200,000 details of conversations with families, including requests for repatriation, personal inscriptions on headstones, grave photos, attempts to locate missing people, issues concerning maintenance of graves, exhumation/reburial, and the return (from parish churches) of wooden crosses have been added to the website. The website also includes a number of 'How to...' guides, which are free to download. The speaker showed examples of pages from the website. A free photographic archive can be accessed anytime on-line, but physical viewing at the HQ in Maidenhead is by prior appointment.

CWGC work continues with WW1 African regiments which were often not treated equally, as well as adding names to gravestones or correcting errors. The CWGC has a Foundation responsible for outreach and education. In total the various grave sites cover the equivalent of 994 football pitches, with work on every continent except Antarctica. The work is Government funded with 80% from the UK, and it is said you are never more than three miles from a war grave in the UK. The CWGC welcomes stories from the conflicts to be added to the website.

Following the talk, there were some of questions:

(1) How are some people buried locally at home if repatriation is not done?

They are people who died in the UK as a direct result of war (provided they were in the military and their death was between the commemoration dates).

(2) Why is it restricted to those in the World Wars?

It is complex and to do with the charter and establishment. Inter-war graves tended by the MoD may be looked after by CWGC on an agency basis

(3) What were the arrangements for families to visit memorials?

There were some early tours but not organised by CWGC; many of the people had never left the UK before.

(4) Some gravestones are being worn away; what is being done?

They will re re-engraved as necessary

(5) Is there a minimum size for a graveyard?

No. The smallest has just 4 graves.

(6) Your location map showed sites in most areas of the world and some of these may now be anti-Commonwealth or anti-British. Are there international safeguards to protect graves in such areas?

Historically, a few places were too dangerous, and the CWGC had to withdraw, but looks to go back at a later date. It is the same for removal of war memorials.

All agreed it had been an excellent talk.

Peter Tandy, 7790

Counting the People using the Census

Talk given by Dave Annal on 19 March 2024

From the first Census in 1801, and then every 10 years up to 1831, the job was a simple head count. No official returns were made of individual people but some collectors made their own lists and c.800 still survive. From 1841-1901, enumerators delivered a form, householders filled it in, enumerators collected it, then copied the details into a summary book; original schedules were then destroyed. For 1911 and 1921, schedules were completed by householders; these were retained. Returns from England and Wales for the 1931 Census were completely lost in a fire, although the Scottish returns survived in full and the expected 1941 Census was abandoned due to war.

Each Census from 1801 to 1911, was authorised by a special Act of Parliament (the speaker advised reading these Acts as they are very informative). They also specified fines for those refusing to give information.

Between 1841-1901, enumerators delivered schedules in the week before Census day, then collected them the day after Census day, and checked them for completeness. Details were then laboriously copied into summary books often by candlelight or gaslight but many errors were made. Many were not happy with this. Some even said so on the summary books, citing (mainly) poor pay. The job was taxing, especially if the enumerator's area covered grimy inner cities where squalor was rife. Enumerators had to go back to householders to check errors, but many found this too much and probably made guesses. The books were sent to the District Registrar and then to the London Census Office. The data was checked by an army of clerks and a report published. The original householders' schedules were then destroyed.

For the Censuses of 1911 and 1921, the process was similar but the summary books were much slimmer (and only survive for 1911). Transcription errors are rife and on-line databases require another transcription to allow search engines to find things, another potential source of errors. What we see is essentially third hand information – and that relies on it being correct to start with! The speaker showed two images of householders standing at the doors of properties, being spoken to by an enumerator. They looked very similar. But..., one was from the UK, the other from the USA, with the big difference that the UK enumerator was being handed a completed form, while the USA enumerator was filling one in at the door. The American system allowed errors if the speech/hearing was poor. Beware if you use American Censuses!!

Although images of summary books are black and white, in reality there is some colour to them, as the clerks 'check marks' were often done in coloured crayon. In 1841, clerks had minimal input (similarly in 1851). After that clerks added many marks (we have all seen thick 'black' lines and added numbers on census forms). He showed a page with a series of vertical black lines next to some of the birth locations. These picked out those who were not born in the census area. Numbers after the profession or job, referred to lists of professions in a clerk's handbook; almost all entries in 1901 had them.

The 1911 Census was very different. For the first time it asked about the number of children born and who had died, which meant asking about people who were not actually on the form themselves. Another check mark is a red number next to the house details, which totals the number of children under 10 living there.

How easy was it to avoid the Census? Not easy at all especially for earlier Censuses since local enumerators usually knew most people in the area. In addition, there were fines of up to £5 in 1841 for non-compliance.

Dave spoke about the “context” of entries, and advised people to look at several pages before and after the entry sought, to look at what type of area was being enumerated. Was it rural or urban, did people employ servants (indicating wealth) etc. Maps also give ideas about an area. Sadly this context is lost in the 1921 Census, but it does tell us not only what people did, but also where they did it.

Finally he illustrated searching databases, with a random series of 4-5 different shapes, of 4-5 different colours and each one numbered. Trying to search with too many parameters might miss what you want, and advised using a combination of a few different facts. Often the old adage ‘less is more’ applies.

Following the talk there were questions and comments.

One person asked about street children? The speaker said systems were in place, but difficult to apply. The police were given books to gather information. Canal boats, which may move between the distribution and completion of forms was another problem. This ran into another question about people appearing twice. The process allowed it to happen as there were cases of forms being delivered, filled in promptly, only for a relative/friend to arrive on Census night, having already been counted elsewhere. Another questioner said that there are no house numbers on early forms. The speaker said up until the penny post, most didn’t have one. House numbers should NOT be confused with schedule numbers. Finally a questioner said that he had a relative who had put down 5 different birth places in 5 censuses. Without looking at it, the speaker didn’t know why.

Peter Tandy, 7790

Demystifying DNA tests

Review of a talk given by Dr Penny Walters on 16th April 2024

In a change to the advertised programme, Dr Penny Walters spoke about DNA tests and their application to genealogy. This talk was largely pictorial, and almost entirely based on the speaker’s own experience.

All who research a family tree start with a paper trail, culled from asking questions of relatives, BMD records, censuses, maps etc., finding names, places and anecdotes in doing it. As a self-confessed adoptee, the speaker said she has two family trees, one based on her adopted name, the other based on biology. Until she obtained a birth certificate she was unaware of her real name. She undertook a ‘paternity test’ but it was of no help as it didn’t reveal her father either because it wasn’t known or because it wasn’t recorded. Naively, she took a DNA test thinking it was a paternity test.

After some further discussion of her own circumstances, she said that there are three types of DNA test: (1) the MtDNA test which traces the male line, (2) the YGNA test which traces the female line, (3) the Autosomal Analysis test which looks at all 22 pairs of chromosomes from the mother and biological father.

She said that the big companies (e.g Ancestry, FTDNA, Living DNA, MyHeritage and 23&Me) do their tests by a spit sample or a swab. All have web sites with both advantages and disadvantages. My Heritage is particularly good for European and Jewish ancestry.

So far about 40 million people have bought a direct-consumer test. If that rate continues, there would be about 100 million by 2028! She pointed out that your DNA is 100% yours, even for twins. Of the available databases, which have grown massively, she said that Ancestry is the largest one.

If you do one, what do you get? There are ethnicity estimates together with maps. You get matched with other people as a random list of names with computer estimates of possible relationships. There is a potential for collaboration with others, and you can put your results on their website which may give hints about relationships. Some websites also break down countries/regions into smaller units; she illustrated this with her own discovered Irish connections.

For adoptees, she pointed out that it was possible to attach your tree to a bigger tree, and she advised completing two trees (one on names/pedigree and the other on biology). She reminded people that connection to a wider tree is often useful, as an adoptee's birth parents might also be searching for their offspring.

One term which will be encountered is 'Centimorgans' (cM). This is the frequency of genetic recombination, with 1 cM equal to a 1% chance of one section of DNA splitting into 2 separate segments during a generation; they are units of probability, and the more centimorgans shared by 2 people, the closer they are related. Direct children get $\frac{1}{2}$ of their DNA from each parent. Grand-children get $\frac{1}{4}$ from 4 grandparents. The percentage then reduces as 12.50, 6.25, 3.13 etc.

The speaker showed examples of pages from websites and explained what each area or symbol meant. She then showed a consanguinity relationship chart (developed by John Tierney to show the average amount of shared DNA, and viewable at <https://www.family-tree.co.uk/dna-testing/consanguinity-relationship-chart-how-much-dna-do-you-share-with-your/> or the Family Tree website). You need to be aware of the range of possible relationships.

You can upload your DNA chart to most sites (but not Ancestry) and it is mostly free. Uploading a DNA result to GEDmatch gives e-mails of potential matches for you to contact. It also gives many matches and has many useful tools. Another site is DNA Painter which is free at the point of access. You enter the number of cMs shared with a match and it calculates the possible relationships for you to consider. She also showed an interesting pedigree chart in the shape of a fan (i.e. radial).

Finally she pointed out that the USA police use DNA connections with fake names and profiles in order to locate potential relatives of suspects; you should be aware of this! But it doesn't (?yet) happen in the UK. One member pointed out that GEDmatch changed its Terms and Conditions so that you now opt in/out of allowing the police to use your profile.

One member asked about Ancestry using only a small amount of your DNA and thus not finding relatives. After a short discussion she said that there were two alternatives: either the DNA has weakened over time (so wasn't detected), or there is an error in the family tree.

Another member said it was 'family knowledge' that they had an Italian ancestor, but a DNA test only showed English/Welsh origins. The speaker said ethnicity is watered down over time, but biology isn't. Also, it may be that the 'family knowledge' is simply wrong!

It was an entertaining and well-delivered talk about a subject which can divide genealogists.

Peter Tandy 7790

Editor: Thanks as ever to Peter for providing these reviews of our monthly talks. As mentioned in the last edition we are looking for someone to join Peter in this task but as yet no-one has stepped forward. Please give this some thought as to whether you might be able to help so the work can be shared out during the year. If you can help please drop me an email at chair@sfhs.org.uk

Do you have postal worker ancestors in your family?

If so this free site might be of help. Find your postal worker ancestors for free

<https://www.family-tree.co.uk/news/find-your-postal-worker-ancestors-for-free/>

Lilleshall Settlement Examinations

Early in 2023 I noticed that a small number of Lilleshall settlement examinations were being sold. Recognising some of the names from my own family tree I purchased each of them and then discovered that the seller had 24 of them in total, having already split the collection and sold perhaps another 50 to 60 individually. I couldn't let the collection be split any further so purchased all that remained.

The seller had taken photocopies of the complete collection but was reluctant to let me make copies of them. Perhaps our members have some of them and we could bring at least some of the collection back together?

The key details from each of the documents in my collection follow. If any of our members would like a digital copy of any of the originals, then please email me and I'll happily send a copy.

<p>David TANKS 28th March 1817 50 years of age born St. Agnes in Cornwall Father John TANK Moved to Lilleshall 1793. 12 years ago came to reside at The Rookery in the parish of Lilleshall</p>	<p>James LATHAM of Donnington Wood 29th June 1816 30 years of age born at Wrockwardine Wood Father Adam LATHAM Place of legal settlement Wellington Wife Mary, one child named Stephen aged 4 years</p>
<p>John CORBET of Lilleshall 2nd July 1804 40 years of age born at Wellington Servant to Joseph BOYCOTT of Lilleshall, then William VICKERS of Preston Wife Jane, children Ann 8, Robert 5, John 3, William 9 weeks</p>	<p>John MADDOCK of Donnington Wood 25th June 1804 26 years of age born at Sutton Wood in the parish of Madeley Father Cornelius MADDOCKS Place of legal settlement Broughton Wife Elizabeth, children Thomas 2, Mary Ann 2 months.</p>

<p>John ROE of Lilleshall 25th June 1804 28 years of age born at Drayton Father John ROE Wife Elizabeth, children Mary 1 and a half, George 3 weeks</p>	<p>John WOOD of the Trench 25th July 1816 40 years of age born at the Hoo in parish of Preston Place of legal settlement Lilleshall Wife Ann, children Thomas, Jane 12, James 10, John 3</p>
<p>Joseph BROTHWOOD of Pains Lane 20th May 1811 21 years of age born at Pains Lane Father Joseph BROTHWOOD Place of legal settlement Dawley Magna Wife Sarah, child Rebecca 8 months</p>	<p>Joseph BROTHWOOD of Donnington Wood 25th June 1804 29 years of age born at Pains Lane Place of legal settlement Dawley Magna Wife Mary, children Elizabeth 6, Mary 4, Ann 3 quarters of a year</p>
<p>Joseph TROW 1st April 1778 Previously of Lynn in the parish of Woodcott</p>	<p>Joshua EDGINGTON of Donnington Wood 20th May 1811 30 years of age born at Mumporn Hill in parish of Shiffnall Father John EDGINGTON Place of legal settlement parish of Shiffnall Children Joshua 7, Rebecca 4, Mary Ann 3 months</p>
<p>Margaret PALMER of Donnington Wood About 34 years ago 1782 married late husband Samuel PALMER Children William 23, Robert 18, Jane 16, Margaret 14, Samuel 12, Charles? 9</p>	<p>Moses PRICE of Donnington Wood 20th May 1811 20 years of age born at Wrockwardine Wood Father Aaron PRICE Place of legal settlement Shiffnall Wife Elizabeth, no children</p>
<p>Nathan LOWE of Lilleshall 25th June 1804 32 years of age born at Edgmond Father Thomas LOWE Wife Mary, children Sarah 9, Thomas 7, John 5, Jane 2</p>	<p>Rebecca MANSELL of Ketley 4th June 1813 54 years of age Place of legal settlement Lilleshall</p>

<p>Richard ASTON of Muxton 2nd November 1816 76 years of age born at Muxton</p>	<p>Richard ROYSTONE of Ketley 14th March 1816 35 years of age born at Donnington Place of legal settlement Lilleshall Children Ann 12, Mary 10, Martha 7, Elizabeth 5</p>
<p>Richard STEVENTON of Pains Lane 25th June 1804 27 years of age born at The Old Park in the parish of Dawley Father Thomas STEVENTON Wife Sarah</p>	<p>Robert MURHALL of Donnington Wood 25th June 1804 31 years of age born at Ketley Father Hugh MURHALL Wife Elizabeth, children Jane 8, Elizabeth 6, Ann 1</p>
<p>Thomas GRIFFITHS of Donnington Wood 20th May 1811 24 years of age born at Hales Common in parish of Sheriffhales, an illegitimate child Wife Ann, child Sarah 9 months</p>	<p>Thomas JONES of Donnington Wood 29th June 1816 22 years of age born at the Trench Lane in the parish of Wrockwardine Place of legal settlement Wellington</p>
<p>Thomas LOWE of Donnington Wood 27th April 1805 24 years of age born in Drayton Father Thomas Lowe Place of legal settlement Chetwynd Wife Rosanna, one child William aged about 3 months</p>	<p>Thomas OSBORNE of Ercall 21st December 1816 37 years of age Place of legal settlement Lilleshall Wife Eleanor, children John 10, Elizabeth 6, Robert 4</p>
<p>Thomas WALLET of Donnington Wood 2nd July 1804 39 years of age born at the Trench Lane in the parish of Wrockwardine Father Joseph WALLET Place of legal settlement Kemberton Wife Mary, children Susanna 10, William 8, Joseph 6, Jane 4 Thomas 3 quarters of a year</p>	<p>William WILLIAMS of Donnington Wood 25th June 1804 36 years of age born at Kinnersley Father Thomas WILLIAMS Wife Ann, children Elizabeth 13, Thomas 10, Apolonia 8, William 6, Richard 9 weeks</p>

Stuart Massey, 7798, stuart.massey@googlemail.com

FHF 50th Anniversary AGM... and the wonder of water closets held on Saturday 11 May 2024

Yesterday I trundled down the Hammersmith & City underground line, before strolling along Moorgate, peering up at the colossal skyscrapers which now define the City of London. Bathed in sunshine, I found my destination nestled in amongst them. 'Wesley's Chapel' opened in 1778 and was built under the direction of John Wesley himself. It was a wonderful and fitting location for the 50th anniversary AGM of the Family History Federation; an organisation with its own significant past, considering its position nestled amongst the information services and communities that have shot up since the advent of the Internet.

The Warm Up Acts

Having been greeted by the lovely Debbie Bradley at the door, I'd say around 60 of us filled a well-lit presentation room to be formally welcomed by the booming and mischievous FHF Chair, Steve Manning. As well as recommending a visit to the perfectly preserved Victorian toilets, he teed up and teased the 'very handsome' Nick Barratt who proceeded to deliver an absolutely gripping talk.

'When Harry Met Dotty' is his personal account of the search for his illegitimate Grandmother's origins. The research had to wait for her passing; it was too sensitive to broach. I won't give too much away, but let's just say it has it all... medieval Europe, imposters, the Mayflower, and above all poignancy. I am sure Nick will be sharing his journey at society talks up and down the country – don't miss it.

The FHF AGM 2024

After a quick comfort break to visit the Victorian toilets (and they are magnificent), about twenty Society representatives gathered for the AGM proper, with other representatives on Zoom. I am setting out here some hopefully informative highlights.

FHF President Janet Few kicked off before handing over to FHF Chair Steve Manning. The AGM proceeded at a pace, approving minutes and accounts. I was interested to understand that the FHF comprises of two bodies: the FHF Charity and the FHS Services Company.

Treasurer, Gary Stephenson explained. The Services Company deals with FindMyPast income (and its redistribution to societies), Parish Chest, the Really Useful Show, and

Family History book sales. The main income is from FindMyPast (just over £73,000 last year). Total 2023 income was just over £101,000, direct costs were just under £44,000, total expenditure being over £59,000, leading to a net profit of over £40,600 for the year. Profits from the Services Company are transferred to the FHF Charity.

The FHF Charity's main income apart from Services Company transfer, is from subscriptions and totalled £28,600 for the year. Total expenditure was just over £62,600, and net movement after that £45,000 transfer was just over £11,000. For FHF Charity and Services Company combined, total income was just under £129,600, total expenditure was £121,600 leading to a net overall profit of just over £8,000.

Education officer, Ian Fuller, reported a new FHF website is due, but delayed (know how he feels). This will be a resource for member societies dealing with practical support relating to insurance, finance and the like. The public facing www.exploreyourgenealogy.co.uk is up and running, helping individuals with their personal family history research journeys.

Society liaison officer, Margaret Roberts, reported on the well-received society officer zoom get togethers in which experiences and ideas are exchanged for each function (e.g. education, programme secretaries, treasurers...) She also highlighted that there will be a family history youth conference on 5 October.

International Officer, Ruth Graham, is also the CEO of the Society of Australian Genealogists. In both roles, she is spearheading a hard-headed look at what 'sustainable societies' might look like in the future; collaboration and engagement across the global diaspora being a big part of her developing thesis.

Networking officer, Penny Walters, reported that the current FHF membership situation is 65,544 fee paying members (2023). Penny is developing a potentially very helpful statistical approach to assessing what works and what does not, in terms of how societies deliver and communicate into the future.

General discussion: the FHF needs more executive committee members. In particular, individuals willing to get involved in a project to generate greater ties with archives and museums around the country.

Steve Manning stated that there was unlikely to be a future nationwide in person event, but that the recent regional version in St Ives, Cambridgeshire, was very successful. This summer will see events in Nottingham (15th June), Belfast (10th Aug).

The next AGM will be held on 10th May 2025.

The Family History Revolution – Janet Few

After a sociable and buzzing buffet lunch, Janet cut the 50th Anniversary cake, before a really enjoyable, and thought-provoking meander down memory lane...arriving at the more challenging crossroads of 'where to now?'

As many will know, Janet has been a trail-blazing genealogist from a young age; indeed she was FHF President and cake cutter at the 10th Anniversary. On that occasion, she noted a sabre was provided. Her reminiscences took us on 'crack of dawn' coach trips up to record offices of London in the 1970s, returning late and fulfilled with one birth record. She recalled the heyday of fairs, including a 5-day jamboree on the Isle of Wight, and the tented NW Kent Society event (the venue having let them down at the last minute). Through Janet's slides, the march of technology flashed before our eyes: microfiche, banda binders, Ceefax family history pages, overhead acetates, those first PCs and floppy disks...and the Internet.

At this point, Janet left us with a stark warning. Her home county Devon FHS counts 20% of its membership as being under 65, and only 4% under 55. Societies urgently need to adapt and become more inclusive. Increasingly the heritage of someone living in the UK extends into all regions of the World, fundamentally how can we be, and demonstrate, that we are more inclusive.

I will leave you Janet's words of wisdom...

Simon Davies,

Editor: Many thanks to Simon for attending the FHF AGM and providing this report. The FHF website is <https://www.familyhistoryfederation.com/> On this site you can also sign up for the Really Useful Bulletin which is published monthly.

Simon didn't get a photo of the water closets he mentioned but this is an image of the interior of the chapel itself.



Simon Davies with Steve Manning, FHF Chair

From the Society's Journal - 40 Years On

The Editor announced that *'The lapel or stick pins are ready. These have been made from an adaption of the winning design submitted by Julia Gracy-Cox. They are very attractive in the shape of Shropshire Council edged in gold with the letters SFHS intertwined in gold on a royal blue background. They are available from Mike Hulme, custodian of our Journals and M.I.'s, for £1 plus a stamped addressed envelope'*.

The annual coach trip to London for research at Somerset House was planned for July 1984.

There was a full page advert concerning the FHS 1984 Annual Conference to be held in Norwich from 31st August- 2nd September at the University of East Anglia. The theme of the Conference was *'Communications and Mobility showing how our ancestors made contact with each other, how and why they moved and the social factors which led to such changes throughout the centuries'*.

Howard Stoner sent a letter outlining the historian's problem of spellings and place names. His particular concern related to villages named or misnamed Saxelby, Saxilby, and Saxby found in both Leics and Lincs.

The Journal carried an article entitled *'The Man who tried to save a King'*. Published by the Bridgnorth Journal (16.12.1983), the article referred to how the Cressett family of Upton Cressett Hall had tried to rescue King Charles 1 from Carisbrook Castle in 1648, where the king was imprisoned.

Janice Capewell provided a fascinating three page article concerning the marriage licence records of St. Mary's Shrewsbury. The article explained the history of marriage licences, the different types of licence and who was empowered to approve marriages. The article also outlined the deficiencies in the system due to error or neglect!

Janice also provided the Late 17th Century Tax Lists for Shrewsbury and its Liberties. She said *'Amongst the records deposited in the County Record Office (ref 3365/149-301) and catalogued in the 'Calendar of the Muniments, published in 1896 are some truly marvellous and dated tax lists for Shrewsbury and its 'Liberties'. The whole article covered two pages and a map of the Liberties of Shrewsbury. [Editor: The map image is included on page 81.]*

Our editor reported that if you were around in 1851 you would have received the following instruction concerning the Census:

To the Householder

You are requested to insert the particulars... respecting all the persons who slept or abode in your house on the night of 30th March, in compliance with an Act which passed the House of Commons and the House of Lords and received the assent of her Majesty, the Queen, on 5th August, 1850.

This paper will be called for on Monday March 31st, by the appointed officer, and it will save trouble if you have the answers written in the proper columns by that time. It is his duty, to verify the facts, and if you have omitted to comply with the above instruction, to record them at your residence on the day.

Persons who refuse to give the CORRECT information incur a penalty of Five Pounds; besides the inconvenience and annoyance of appearing before two Justices of the Peace and being convicted of having made a wilful mis-statement of age, or of any other particulars.

The return is required forpopulation, age, families....'

plus another whole page of instructions concerning details for which we family historians are very grateful today!

Mr. J. Elliott (223) discovered that there was a 10 guinea reward in 1818 for the missing Register of Births, Marriage and Deaths for Wombridge between 1775 and 1781. Another bad luck story for some family historian. They are still missing!

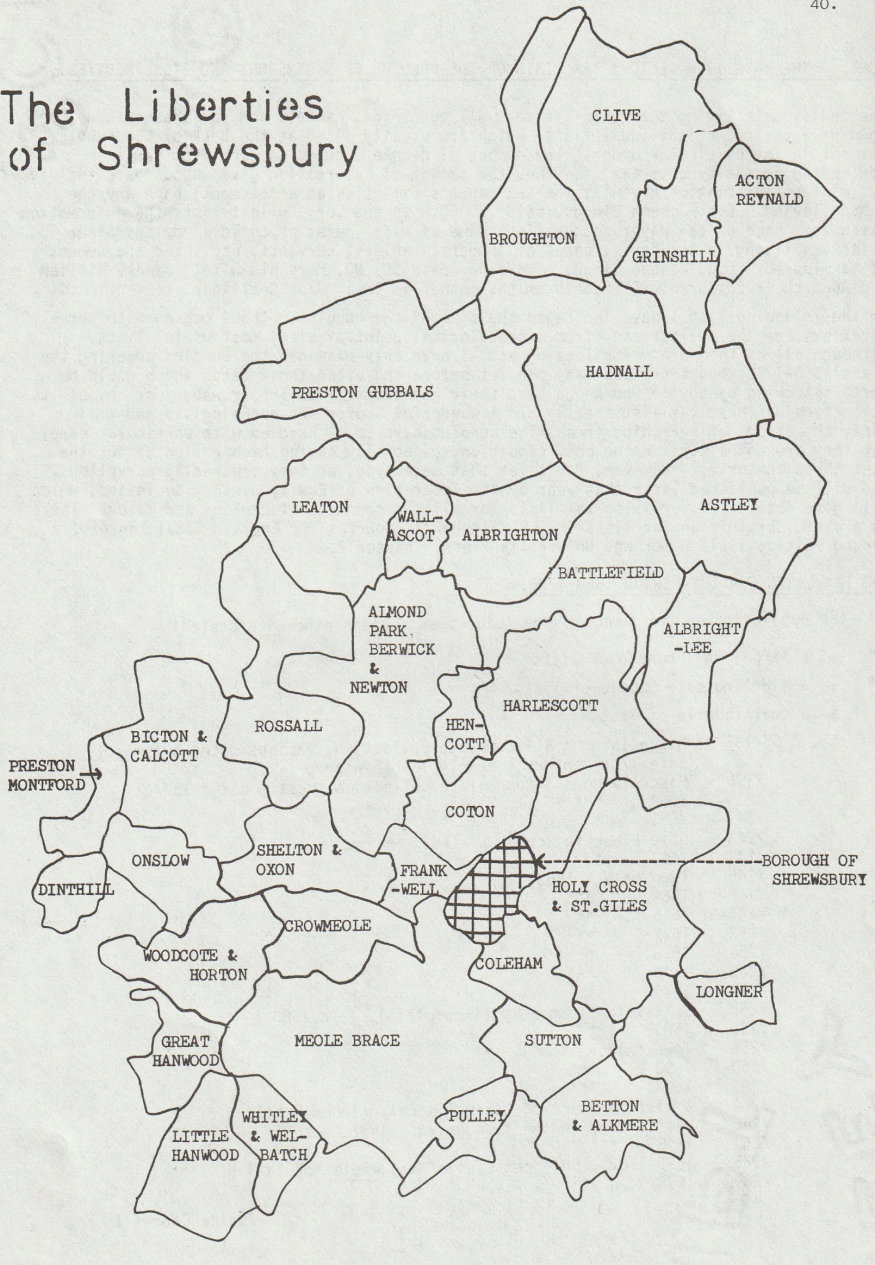
Mr. Elliott also provided a story about Harvey Humphreys, aged 68, born in Shrewsbury but living in Vancouver He wanted to trace an old friend back In Shrewsbury. Having arrived here, he discovered that this friend had also gone abroad..."*Guess where?*" he says. Yep..Vancouver!

An article reported extensively on the work of volunteers who were transcribing baptism registers and marriage registers of Non-Conformist Chapels. It listed the names of 27 people who contributed to the research. It was a time when our members contributed in large numbers to the work of the Society.

May I offer the observation that there seems to be less enthusiasm to give time to the Society today, even to the extent that we are short of Committee Members. My experience of being on the committee was one of learning and reward. Could there be someone reading this who might join the committee? I could almost guarantee you'd get back more than you give!

Reg Wilford, 5564

The Liberties of Shrewsbury



Book Reviews

Could Be Worse - Church Stretton Workhouse 1881

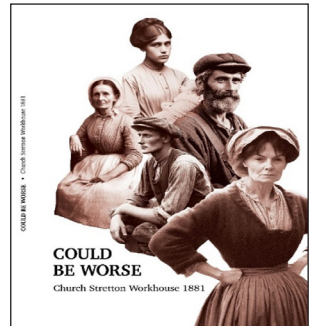
On the 3 April 1881, 86 people were recorded in the census at Church Stretton Workhouse. They included 71 residents, aged between 1 month and 85 years; 12 vagrants lodging for the night; and 3 members of staff. Church Stretton Area Local History Group (CSALHG) has produced a new book examining the lives of all these people. As researchers we wanted to shed light on these forgotten individuals. Who were they? Why were they there? What happened to them afterwards?

Little research had previously been done on Church Stretton Workhouse. Perhaps this is partly because the Church Stretton Workhouse building no longer survives, and many local people are not aware of its existence. St Lawrence Church of England Primary School now occupies the Workhouse site on Shrewsbury Road in the town.

The lives examined in the book include William Cox – aka Billy The Sweep – who claimed to have swept every chimney from Bishop's Castle to Church Stretton; the young boy taken out of the Workhouse by the benevolent employer of his sister, who took them both with his own family for a new life in Australia; and the story of Charlotte Yapp, who spent 80 years in the Workhouse until her death at the age of 91.

Anyone with a family connection to Church Stretton and the surrounding area in the later 19th century will find the book of interest. We have taken an innovative approach by using AI (artificial intelligence) software to generate illustrations of the people we have researched, given that no actual photographs of them appear to have survived.

Details of all the research which resulted in the book will be deposited at Shropshire Archives and available on our website at www.churchstrettonhistory.com.



The book, priced at £5 is available from Burway Books, Church Stretton Library, and The Mayfair Centre in Church Stretton, or by post, with postage and package for £8. Email strettonworkhouse@gmail.com, or phone 07721 865895 for further details.

Mary McKenzie, 7862 and also Committee Member CSALHG

How much beer?

The Servant's Story by Pamela Sambrook

"The personal triumphs and tragedies of country-estate servants and managers: who they were, what they did and what happened to them."

Overview

Initially I eyed this potentially unwanted Christmas present with suspicion, but my fears of a laborious factual grind were soon swept away. The author does a brilliant job bringing to life the colossal never-ending performance behind the scenes of Victorian England's wealthiest non-royal family, the Leveson-Gowers (aka the Dukes of Sutherland).

The book focuses on the 1830s and early 1840s, and centres on servant life at the largest Sutherland estate at Trentham Hall in Staffordshire, and to a lesser extent Lilleshall in Shropshire, Stafford House in London and Dunrobin Castle in the Highlands. A more detailed overview of the Sutherland dynasty comes after the main book review.

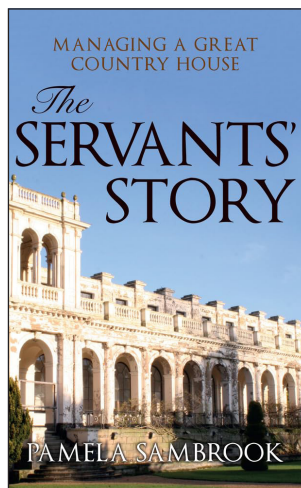
At any one time, in the region of 350 house and estate servants were employed, and from among their number characters emerge, untimely death is a constant, but not as constant as the daily beer allowances... 3 pints a day by right for all male staff, 2 pints for women. Oh, what a happy band... well not all the time.

Building the picture

If you go to the Staffordshire Record Office you will find the 'Sutherland Collection' of Leveson-Gower family papers, purchased in 2003 for just under £2m (half from the Lottery). It contains two types of information.

Firstly, a vast array of administrative records; wages books, cellar books, accounts, meal books, bills, tenants' reports, porters' lodge books and estate savings bank records. Armed with these, the author skilfully builds a picture of the hierarchy and structure of the servants that powered James Loch's generally well-oiled machine. She exposes all the interconnected centres of activity within the clearly defined sub-domains of employment:

- Agents and Clerks
- Outdoor Staff
- Housekeepers and Resident Staff



- House Steward and Travelling Staff
- Part-timers

Secondly, the collection includes copious amounts of correspondence, especially those to and from the organisational kingpin and Chief Agent, James Loch. With these, the author brings to life a handful of characters who occupied positions up and down the employment ladder of the household. We hear their voices and use of language, and can form an opinion of their characters and situation. Ultimately, I felt that I had a pretty clear picture of the closed society created by these aristocratic power houses, and the precarious nature of living a life in these times before welfare and modern medicine.

Staggering scale

Reading through each functional unit of the operation, it starts to sink in that everything to do with keeping the Sutherland's in the style to which they were accustomed was a mammoth undertaking. For example, take the task of simply moving the family from London to their Highland seat at Dunrobin; a distance of 600 miles that would take around 11 hours by car today. In 1820 this took horse drawn carriages up to 10 days. Each day consisted of several stages at which the horses were changed. Post boys were employed to return each team to their start point, the logistics all being organised by mail in advance. In 1840, James Loch opted to send the family and entourage by steamer up the east coast. Later the railways reached Inverness and the Duke paid for the line to be extended directly to Dunrobin. The cost of each migration (made several times a year), was considerably more than most employees earned in a year.

Accompanying the family wherever they went were the House Steward and travelling household servants who numbered 40 individuals (recorded in 1939-40). They would take over and augment the permanent housekeeper and personnel who kept each estate household in order during family absences. One of their principal challenges seems to have been pandering to the fact that much of aristocratic life was a non-stop process of entertaining and being entertained. The Sutherlands, with their wealth and royal favour, were the pinnacle of this elite social life. The book paints a vivid picture of the logistical effort required each summer when a series of balls put the servants through their paces. On a weekend in July 1872, there were 77 sitting down to luncheon, including the Egertons from Tatton, Cavendishes from Chatsworth, the Cokes from Holkham, the Westminsters and the Fitzgeralds. The Prince of Wales joined them on the Monday in time for the first of three 'ball suppers' for 300. Their number swelled to 400 on Tuesday and 421 on Wednesday. In addition to the guests, an extra 1300 meals were required for all involved, including two bands comprising of 37 individuals.

Some colourful characters

As the pages fly by, you become increasingly familiar with the routines. At this point the author makes great use of the collections of correspondence to pull some of the more colourful characters onto centre stage. Testing times always produced a helpful flurry of letter writing, especially as the Victorians seemed apt to defend any hint of character assassination or grievance in flowery messages to their superiors.

Among the pilfering housekeepers, indignant land agents, victims of religious prejudice (the 2nd Duchess was displeased to find two maids were Roman Catholic), there is one personality that stands out. The exotic Italian house steward, Zenon Ruffino Gio Battista Vantini. His father was the mayor of Portoferraio, the main town on Elba. As a young man, Zenon was one of Napoleon's aide-de-camps whilst in exile on the island, and almost certainly accompanied him when he returned to France, all the way to Waterloo. Vantini was a marmite type that people seemed to love or hate. He was flamboyant and infectious, but also extravagant and corner cutting. He eventually left to pursue his entrepreneurial flair, setting up the North Euston hotel in Fleetwood to take advantage of the new railway network. When this went into decline he moved on to establishing the first railway station refreshment rooms.

The Commissioner

Fittingly the book ends with a deeper dive into the mastermind at the helm of the Sutherland empire. 'Commissioner' James Loch (1780-1852) is described

In cultivation he was his employer's equal; in business, his master and tutor... he was remarkably influential in the improvement and modernization of agricultural and industrial property across Victorian Britain.

James had a ferocious work ethic and exchanged letters with his key personnel in each estate every day, sometimes twice a day via the Victorian postage system. There is a fascinating passage describing the evolution of the mail system and Mr Loch's efforts to maximise its efficiency. He would have loved email!

He studied law at Edinburgh University, before setting himself to estate management where he pioneered centralized management and was an adherent of the principles of fellow Scot, the economist Adam Smith (1723-1790). He held a variety of additional positions: superintendent to the Bridgewater Canal, director of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, founder member of London University, Member of Parliament, and one of the architects of the Reform Act of 1832 (to name a few).

James Loch was not a universally popular character. Although he was not the architect, he was responsible for implementing much of the Highland Clearances on behalf of his employers. In the removal of Highland crofters to coastal areas he urged a compassionate approach. But he was not there, and the enforcers were often brutal in their methods.

James Loch had nine children and lived with his family at 12 Albemarle Street, Mayfair, London. At his death, his personal wealth amounted to £41,000. His grateful employers the Sutherlands marked his passing by erecting a substantial monument on the edge of the Highland estate he oversaw. Semi-engulfed by the surrounding woodland, it stands now half forgotten and unloved, a curious treat for walkers off the beaten track.

Conclusion

Pamela Sambrook's "*A Servants' Story*" is fascinating and very easy to read. As a keen amateur family historian it does more than lift the lid on one particular aristocratic household, it also gives a deep sense of the early 19th century world most of my ancestors lived in. It lays bare the social hierarchies and symbiotic relationship between the lower and upper classes. As part of the former, if you found a position and matched it with competence and application, you pretty much had a job for life within an institution that would not turn its back on you. Long serving retirees were often found accommodation, given a pension and ultimately might have had their funeral expenses covered. Invaluable, hard working stalwarts such as Trentham's land agent William Lewis, even had large debts paid off by the Duke himself.

But on the flipside, fall out with people and develop any festering grievances and the system would spit you out. Employment without any references was almost impossible to come by and the workhouse beckoned.

This book is a priceless snapshot of a time just before the industrial revolution was in full swing. The Dukedom's power and privilege had reached its Zenith, and ahead lay its drawn out twilight. In less than one hundred years the lands and houses would be gone. Industrial cities replaced landed estates as the power house driving the countries economy.

Available from all good bookshops or from <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Servants-Story-Managing-Great-Country/dp/1445654202/>

Simon Davies, 7860

From Monty Python to Family Historian

Great-Uncle Harry by Michael Palin

When presented with a box of family memorabilia related to our ancestors I imagine that most of us would want to dive in and see what can be unearthed about the individuals to which the material relates. The curiosity would no doubt get the better of us as family historians.

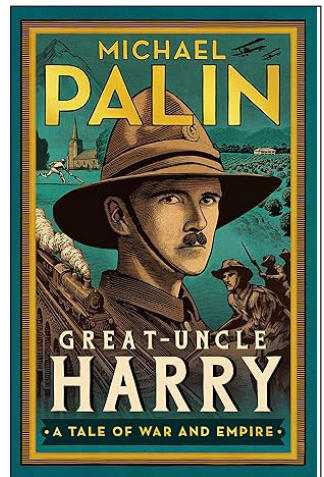
However, for Michael Palin, the curiosity took some years to bubble up but, when it did, the story was certainly worth telling.

The initial box of documents were delivered to his parents way back in 1971 with more to follow six years later, among which was a photograph of a young man in military uniform (one of his great uncles) which 'piqued' his curiosity but 'life' got in the way of finding out more at the time. It wasn't until 2008, while working on a documentary about the First World War, when he found the name of this individual on one of the war memorials in France that he realised he needed to find out more about this man.

The result, given Michael's propensity to write, is perhaps not unsurprisingly a book, *Great-Uncle Harry: A Tale of War and Empire*, which tells the story of Harry the man, his parents and wider family as well as providing a very personal account of the experiences of a soldier in the First World War, based on Harry's personal war diaries which he kept and which, very fortunately, were contained in the memorabilia deposited with the Palin family was back in the 1970s.

Unlike many of us in our family history research, Michael had many 'good' contacts who were able to do some of the research for him – all of whom he credits in the book – but the story he tells is clearly his interpretation of that research and makes it a fascinating read. Most of us won't write a book or books about our ancestors nor, as Michael also did, make a film about them, but the book does show how a few documents can evolve into a story of interest to all, with no need to be related in any way to the individuals involved.

Karen Hunter, 7646



Using the census to track my family

My Grandmother Alice was one of the thirteen children of James and Mary Ann Baker (nee Wootton) and the first census she appeared in was that of 1881, aged 5. She was living at 41 Listley Street, Bridgnorth with her parents, James aged 36 who was working as a rural postman, and Mary Ann who was 32 and a number of siblings: Mary, 12; James, 10; Mercy, 8; William, 3 and May, 11 months. All the children were born in Bridgnorth, apart from Mercy who was born in Dewsbury. At some point after young James was born the family made their way to Dewsbury in Yorkshire where Mercy was born in 1872. I have no way of knowing the reason for their move (unless I get her birth certificate), but I know that Central Dewsbury Railway Station opened 1874. As James was already labouring on the railway in Bridgnorth it seems logical to me and we were told as children that he had helped build the railway in Bridgnorth.

Also living in Listley Street was James' mother Elizabeth, an umbrella maker, but no house number is given for her.

Their eldest daughter, Ann Elizabeth, aged 13, was at the home of her grandmother Ann Wootton at 6 Ebenezer Row, Bridgnorth, whose occupation was detailed as Charwoman. Living with her were her sons John, 27, a sawyer and George, 24, a bricklayers labourer. There were also Wootton families living at 3 and 5 Ebenezer Row, possibly relations, and several of the men in the family were sawyers.

Ten years later, in 1891, Alice Baker, who is now 16, is employed as a Domestic Servant at 22 Lordswood Rd, Harborne in the household of Charlotte Bloomer. Her parents had moved up the road in Bridgnorth to 61 Listley Street with James now described as a rural messenger, and more children had been born into the family in the ensuing ten years William, 13; Mary/May, 10; Edith, 8; John, 6; Maggie, 2; and Thomas, just ten months. However, some of the older siblings had moved away, either for employment or having got married.

Annie Baker, 23, was working as a housemaid for the Palethorpes family, the sausage manufacturers, at the Firs, Dudley. Mary by this time was married and was lodging with her husband John Noakes, a drapers assistant, at 4 Earl St. Cleator, Cumberland in the household of Esther Marchbanks. With them as a visitor in the household is Maud Baker, aged 4, who is Mary's sister.

However, I have been unable to track down Mercy, 18, and James, 20 in this census and have not been able to find out when he signed up with the RFA.

Moving forward to the 1901 census, Alice has moved back home and is now working as a setter in a carpet factory although home was now 56 Listley Street, so another move for James who is still working as a rural postman, along with Mary, his wife, Laura Maggie, 12, and Thomas, 10.

Meanwhile May, 20, and Edith, 18, are employed as cook and housemaid respectively in the household of J Horrocks, Sheetting manufacturer, Ashmount, Blackburn.

Their sister Mary Noakes, 32, her husband John, 33, Tailor, are now living at 8 St James St. Burnley and, at the time of the census, two of her siblings, Mercy, 28, a machinist, and Maud, 14 were with them.

Annie was married by 1901 and was living at the Pump Tavern, Wolverhampton with her husband, Thomas Wilbraham who was a public house manager, and their two children Violet M, who was two, and Edith Mercy, who was just two months old. (She was born Q1 1901 and sadly died Q2 1902 in Stourbridge.)

Albert John, aged 16, was a boarder with the Lord family in Blackburn, Lancashire and was working as a Butcher's Assistant.

This time I have been able to track down James, now aged 30, who is actually in South Africa serving in the Boer War as a Gunner in the RFA. (I have to acknowledge Gwynne Chadwick for his extremely useful booklets based on the Bridgnorth Journals for this information.) His brother William Baker, 23, has not yet been located, but was possibly also serving in South Africa in KRRI.

Searching for James and Mary Baker in the 1911 census in Bridgnorth revealed nothing and neither were there any deaths registered. However, another news item in Gwynne Chadwick's booklet recording a death notice for James Baker in 1917 in Padiham, Burnley, Lancashire gave me the starting point for searching for the whole family.

I found James, a retired postman, living at 117 Lyndhurst Rd, Burnley, with his wife Mary to whom he had been married for 44 years, and as detailed on this census, they had had 13 children of whom 11 were still living. Also with them was their daughter Laura Maggie, who was working as a confectioner.

Annie Wilbraham, had been widowed in the preceding 10 years and was now at the Orphanage in Wilpshire, Lancashire, working as a cook/servant, together with her daughter Violet who was 12 and described as an 'inmate'.

In 1902 Alice had married John Weale, a foreman in the scouring department of a wool mill and by 1911 they had six children, five of whom were with them on the night of

the census: Kathleen M, 7, Mary Alice Mercy, 4, John E, 2, James G, 1, and my father, William J, 2mths. They were boarding with Emily Watkins, a widow, at 54 Offmore Rd. Kidderminster. (Like Alice, John Weale had been born in Bridgnorth.)

Their sixth child, Marie Janet Weale, 9, was staying at 216 Manchester Rd, Burnley with her uncle John Noakes who had been widowed in 1910 following the death of his wife Mary. He was working as a tailor and clothier and also living there was Mercy Baker, his sister-in-law who was described as the housekeeper. In 1913 John and Mercy were married.

The other siblings I have traced in 1911 are as follows.

James Baker, now aged 41, is working as a Coachman/Undertaker, and boarding at 3 Florence Place, Bracebridge St. Birmingham.

William Baker, aged 33 is now a Clothiers Assistant, and is living at 8 St James St, Burnley, with his wife Mary (Addison) Baker, 40, having been married for six years.

May had married Arthur Henry Harper, 37, round about 1905. Arthur who had been born in Broseley and in 1911 was working as a Lamplighter, and they were living at 77 Alderson Rd, Saltley, Birmingham. May was the only sibling of Alice's that I knew.

Edith had married Tom Harrison in 1907 and they, together with their children Edith Rachel, 2, and Maggie, 1 were living at 24 Shaw St, Blackburn. Tom was born in Birmingham and the children were born in Blackburn.

Albert John, aged 28 was now employed as a Pork Butcher, and was living at 44 Millham St, Blackburn with his wife Mary, aged 38, they had just married in the first quarter of 1911) and Mary's two children Doris Platts, aged 13, working as a Tenter in a Cotton Mill, Arthur Platts, aged 11.

Maud was now married to George Frederick Hamer, aged 24, and they were living at 72 Derby St, Blackburn. Maud was a Laundry Packer, and George was a Railway Clerk.

Thomas, now aged 20 was also in Burnley, as the Union Hotel, Padiham Rd, working as a Hotel Boots Servant,

As noted in the 1911 census return James and Mary Baker had had 13 children of whom two had died. Already noted is Mary who died in 1910 and I have since been able to find that they also had a son, George who was born and died in 1875.

Our grandma Alice Weale died in Kidderminster in 1957. She had the biggest family of all of her siblings. She kept an allotment, chickens and a pig as well as looking after lodgers. We all loved her dearly.

I have explored earlier census returns to track James Baker and his family although that has not been included in this article. Further investigation into the family through the 1921 census and the 1939 Register is still required but I am too busy with grandchildren at the moment to pursue that.

Mary Dean, 6796

Editor: Using the Census records to track our families is something I am sure most of us have done as part of our research. Perhaps one of the learning points from Mary's search is not to assume families stay in the same place all the time!

Commemorating the 80th Anniversary of D-Day

The 80th Anniversary of D-Day falls on 6 June 2024 and I am sure many of us will have family who took part or know of others who did. A group from across France have come together to commemorate those days by creating *The Longest Yarn*, a 3D depiction of 6 June 1944 in wool art! This includes 80 scenes which cover the build up in England, the horrors of the landing beaches and the inland battles, with some of the scenes depicting specific WW2 veterans that were in that theatre of war in Normandy.

This unusual work is being displayed initially in Notre Dame Cathedral in Carentan, Northern France from 28 May to 1 September with the hope that they will be able to find other places for it to be displayed after that. So, if you should be travelling in that part of France over the summer it may well be worth a visit. If you can't visit they have a website, which is where I discovered the project and where you can find out more about it. <https://www.thelongestyarn.com/>



From the Editor

In the March edition I published a newspaper article 'Shropshire Dialect' and I asked if anyone could translate. I have had one response, from Mark Hughes who provides the following for a few of the words: clemmed – hungry; moithered – mithered, bothered; pikel – pitchfork (I've got one); tup – male sheep, widely used; biddy – not one of Mum's words but widely used for "old lady". This is a start and if you can help with any of the other unusual words do let me know.

I have also been contacted by Michael Hendry who was searching for the baptism records for the nine children of The Rev John Bayley Davies, the rector of Waters Upton from 1866 until his death in 1905. He married Susan Anslow Jukes (1846-1927) on 31 August 1875 and their children were born between 1876 and 1891. Michael felt it seemed inconceivable that none of these children were baptised and I agreed this did seem highly unlikely. But then Michael discovered that the Baptism Register for the parish covering those years is still in use, and in fact was started more than 145 years ago! That must be quite a record! For anyone with family connections to the parish of Waters Upton one of our members, Steve Jackson, has a comprehensive website linked to his One-Place Study and it can be accessed at <https://waters-upton.uk/>. Michael's query does however pose the question - are there other parishes in a similar position with Registers dating back into the almost distant past and still in use today? If you know of any in Shropshire please let us know as it might help to resolve a brickwall or two for some of our members.

I have recently had some problems with my editor@sfhs.org.uk email with some people receiving a message telling them that the delivery has failed and it has been returned to sender. In some cases the message does actually get through but I can't guarantee that is the case for all of them. We are trying to resolve the issue but not yet been successful. Therefore, if you do send something to me using the editor email and get a message like that I suggest that you use my other email chair@sfhs.org.uk as that does not appear to have the same problem.

It is your varied contributions that make the Journal what it is so please keep the articles coming in. As we celebrate 45 years of the Society you could perhaps write an article reflecting back on your experiences of being a member over the years or share your vision for the future as we move towards our 50th anniversary.

Karen Hunter, Editor

Talks Programme 2024

18 June	Everything you wanted to know about Heraldry – and were afraid to ask! <i>A gentle introduction to the fascinating world of heraldry and how it can be used to further family history research</i>	<i>Chris Broom</i>
17 September	Our Rural Ancestors <i>In this talk, Dr Barratt explores the sources and techniques you can use to find out more about your ancestors who were agricultural labourers and the communities in which they lived. He looks at how they may have been employed, the sort of work they did and how they made their mark on history.</i>	<i>Dr Nick Barrett</i>
15 October	The Mourning Brooch <i>Writing and presenting as Jean Renwick, our speaker will talk about the family history she uncovered behind a mourning brooch which she inherited. Her talk covers part of the late 19th and early 20th Century, and how relatives left Yorkshire, the Welsh Marches and other parts of the country to seek their fortunes as far apart as California and Turkey. She invites members to produce any pieces of their own mourning jewellery as a start to a conversation before and after the meeting.</i>	<i>Dianne Page aka Jean Renwick</i>
19 November	Crime and Punishment in Rural Shropshire 1768-1898 <i>In this talk Dr Hodge will highlight some interesting findings from fourteen South Shropshire parishes with an analysis of crime and punishment in the area at a time when hangings, whippings, transportation and internments were commonplace.</i>	<i>Robert Hodge</i>

Editor: There is certainly plenty to look forward to with this varied programme of talks for this year. Many thanks to Joan Gate who works hard to book the speakers.

New Members

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

- 7954 CLEOBURY Dr E; SHREWSBURY, Shropshire
- 7955 MACE Mrs V; MARCH, Cambridgeshire
- 7956 EMMS Mrs L; Priorslee, TELFORD, Shropshire
- 7957 RANDALL-WEMM Miss H; WOLVERHAMPTON, Staffordshire
- 7958 WAUKEY Ms B; BOTHWELL Ontario, Canada
- 7959 SIMPSON Mr K; MANCHESTER, Lancashire
- 7960 OSTROWSKI Mr A P; Wellington, TELFORD, Shropshire
- 7961 OSTROWSKI Mrs J; as above
- 7962 EVANS Mrs P K; MARLBOROUGH, Wiltshire
- 7963 EVANS Mr P; as above

Update on Committee Business

Alongside the regular business of the Committee, including considering the Treasurer's report and reviewing the monthly accounts much of the Committee's time has been taken up with the new website project. As indicated in the Chair's article, this is still presenting some challenges and our hoped for launch in late spring is going to be delayed. However the Committee is of the mind that we can't launch the site until we have confidence that all aspects are fully functioning. Please bear with us as we work our way through this.

The Family Histories Podcast

The Family Histories Podcast, started in 2021, aims to be a positive, conversational, fun show about family history and our family historians – the often un-sung heroes tirelessly breathing life back into our collective social history.

The seventh series has recently been launched and can be found anywhere you might get your podcasts from and includes a programme in conversation with Dave Annal.

For more information see the website: <https://familyhistoriespodcast.com/>

Certificate Exchange Scheme

The following are all birth certificates

Surname	Forename	Date	Parents	Location
DAVIES	Elizabeth	14 Mar 1846	Richard & Elizabeth	Clungunford
EDWARDS	Elizabeth	13 Mar 1854	John & Sarah	Hadley
EDWARDS	Sophia	21 Jun 1851	Thomas & Jane	Trewern
EVANS	George Henry	11 Jun 1885	William Charles & Mary Jane	Madeley
EVANS	Thomas	31 Jan 1859	John & Mary	Wrockwardine Wood
EVANS	Thomas	6 May 1859	Samuel & Ann	Broseley
EVANS	Thomas	27 Dec 1859	James & Elizabeth	Ercall Magna

The following are all death certificates

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Location
EDWARDS	John	11 Sep 1888	83	Wellington
EDWARDS	Sarah	11 Sep 1887	78	Wellington
EVANS	Thomas	30 May 1911	69	Bicton
HARPER	William	11 Dec 1853	10 months	Wombridge
KENT	Henry	10 Apr 1853	48	Shrewsbury

There is also one marriage certificate

John EDWARDS and Sarah WYCHERLY, 8 Oct 1849, Wellington

Anyone wanting to make enquiries about Exchange Certificates can contact Christine at xchangecerts@sfhs.org.uk

There is no charge for a certificate but please send a stamped addressed envelope to Shropshire FHS, c/o 48 Oakley Street, SHREWSBURY, SY3 7JY, UK.

Unwanted certificates can be sent to the same address.

Feedback

Re: Article about the talk by Dr Cynthia Gamble about Wenlock Abbey

During her presentation, Dr Gamble stated that Wenlock Abbey “*is in poor repair at present*”. I do not know if this was referring to the period 1857 to 1919, or the present day. In May 2023, I visited Wenlock Abbey. The visit was arranged by Historic Houses <https://www.historichouses.org/> who organise visits to properties that are not normally/ only occasionally open to the public. The visit was hosted by Gabrielle (the owner of Wenlock Abbey) and friends. I made a second visit in November for an evening with Sir Derek Jacobi, an event organised by the Louis de Wet Foundation <https://www.ldw-foundation.com/>. I can clearly state that Wenlock Abbey is not in a poor state of repair, but is a beautifully furnished, well-maintained property in good condition.

David R White, SFHS 1514

Copy Dates

Publication Date	Items to be submitted by
September 2024	1 July 2024
December 2024	1 October 2024
March 2025	1 January 2025
June 2025	1 April 2025

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	treasurer@sfhs.org.uk
Subscription Renewals	David Burton	subs_renewals@sfhs.org.uk
Strays	John Shearman	strays@sfhs.org.uk

Editorial/Programme/Publicity/Website

Programme Secretary	Joan Gate	speakers@sfhs.org.uk
Publicity	Vacant	publicity@sfhs.org.uk

Enquiries/Help

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

General Enquiries	to the Secretary	secretary@sfhs.org.uk
Research Queries (Members only)	Christine Abram	enquiries@sfhs.org.uk

Reference Material

For look-ups or loan see Website for details

Certificate Exchange	Christine Head	xchangecerts@sfhs.org.uk
Members' Interests Records	John Jennings	members_interests@sfhs.org.uk
Library/Exchange Journals	Graham Moore	library@sfhs.org.uk
Parish Registers Books	Graham Moore	library@sfhs.org.uk

Sales

Microfiche	Ruth Wilford	fiche@sfhs.org.uk
Monumental inscriptions	Ruth Wilford	copies@sfhs.org.uk

Projects

Projects Co-ordinator	Vacant	
Electronic Publications and National Burials Index	Vacant	nbi@sfhs.org.uk
Shropshire Marriages Index		index@sfhs.org.uk
Original P.R. and 1851 Census Microfiche (Shropshire)	Christine Abram	enquiries@sfhs.org.uk
Help Desk Volunteers at Shropshire Archives	Liz Roberts	archives_volunteers@sfhs.org.uk



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