

**Bedfordshire
Family History Society
Journal**

Vol 23 No 5 Mar 2022



Bedfordshire Thatch and Plaster

**BEDFORDSHIRE
FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

A member of the Federation of Family History Societies

Founded 1977

Registered Charity No. 281677

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**BEDFORDSHIRE
FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
JOURNAL**



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MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL AND AGM

Accompanying this *Journal* is a notice regarding renewal of your membership and notification of the Annual General Meeting of the Society on Friday 10 June, including a nomination form for election to the Executive Committee of the Society and areas where the Society needs your help.

BRICKWALLS IN YOUR RESEARCH

We are planning to hold a further workshop over Zoom (date to be confirmed) to assist members in resolving any brickwalls in their research. To help us in planning and preparing for this session please send Mary Wooldridge at research@bfhs.org.uk details of your brick wall or burning question. We feel that being able to investigate and formulate answers in advance will allow us to best prepare for running a workshop for you.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES AND PRICES FOR 2022

The UK Royal Mail have harmonised their overseas postage zones and to take account of this we are simplifying our membership categories for 2022 as shown in the renewal insert and inside back page of the journal. There are no changes for UK members or any members taking the journal via email in PDF format.

For worldwide (outside Europe) members taking the printed journal, the price is £18. This is actually a reduction in price for members living in Australia and New Zealand.

For members living in Europe, but outside the UK, taking the printed journal, the price remains at £14.

The printed journal is sent by 2nd class mail in the UK and by International Standard mail outside the UK. We are no longer offering worldwide economy mail.

We encourage members to take the journal by PDF if suitable for you.

We hope that members taking the printed journal like the introduction of some pages being printed in colour. The PDF is always in full colour.

Please note that the membership runs from 1st January to 31st December each year regardless of your joining/renewal date.

If paying by bank transfer please remember to put your name and membership number in the reference.

FROM DUNSTABLE TO SILESIA **Via Blandings Castle...?** *Barry Neale*

Wesley NEALE, a brother of my great-grandfather, was born in Hockliffe in 1868, where his father John Neale was the village baker. Wesley was baptised at Dunstable Wesleyan Methodist Chapel - hence his name; and in 1890 he married Eleanor BUNKER, the daughter of a Dunstable draper's assistant. He followed his father's trade as a baker, and by 1898 he had premises in Edward Street, Dunstable, where the family lived for several years before moving to nearby Albion Street, where Wesley is shown living, a retired baker, in 1939. Wesley and Eleanor had two children: Stanley Bunker Neale, born in 1893, and Florence, born in 1897.

In the 1911 census, Stanley is shown, aged 17, assisting his father as a bread baker, but after the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 he joined the Army, where he served as a Private in the Army Service Corps, and was awarded the Victory Medal and the British War Medal. But what happened to him after the war? On the 1921 Absent Voters List his address is shown as 16 Albion Street, Dunstable, his parents' home, but where was he, and what was he doing? The answer - or part of it - came from an unlikely source: Nazi Germany's Wehrmacht records, provided from Red Cross sources by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The German records show that Stanley Neale died from a heart attack while being interned at the Tost Civilian Internment Camp on 21 July 1941, aged 48. They also show that he was married to Marie-Louise Neale nee SOUGNE who was living in the Belgian town of Theux. It appears that Stanley had married a Belgian girl sometime before the outbreak of the Second World War, had lived with her in Theux, and that the couple had at least one child, before he was captured as a British civilian (he was aged 47) in 1940 by the German occupying forces, and eventually taken to the internment camp, where he died the following year.

Tost was located in Germany in 1940 (it was handed over to Poland after the war), and is situated in Upper Silesia. One of Stanley's fellow-prisoners (and a rather more famous one) was the English author P G (Plum) WODEHOUSE, who was also captured by the Germans while living in Europe in 1940, and who was unimpressed with his new surroundings in Tost. He is recorded as having commented that "if this is Upper Silesia, one wonders what Lower Silesia must be like"! Later in 1941, Wodehouse was transferred to Berlin, where he made a number of what were regarded as anti-British and unpatriotic broadcasts, which brought him a considerable degree of notoriety. I wonder, did the creator of Lord Emsworth and the Empress of Blandings meet the former baker of Dunstable during their incarceration together?

My family history research has revealed that there are several people living in and around the Belgian town of Theux who share my surname, and Stanley's, and since it must be an unusual name in Belgium, it is a distinct possibility that they are descended from that European marriage which ended so tragically. Stanley Bunker Neale was buried in a cemetery near Krakow, in Poland; his name is included on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Civilian War Dead Roll of Honour. His father, Wesley, died in 1948, and is buried in West Street cemetery in Dunstable. □

A VERY BRIEF MARRIAGE

Jan Darts

The earliest DARTS ancestor I have traced is Thos Darts. According to St Peter's, Wrestlingworth, parish register¹, Thomas (I am assuming that Thos is a contraction of Thomas) married Eliz LAW on Monday 31 Aug 1778 (I believe this is Elizabeth Law, born 1756).

SE 16	Jn	Cole, widr.	Phoebe Davis
1778 AU 31	Thos	Darts	Eliz Law ←
1779 JA 10	Edw	Franklin	Alice Clark
FE 11	Wm	Watson (Weston, Herts)	Mary Cole

Whilst Elizabeth has a pedigree within Wrestlingworth, born to Edward Law and Ann BATTEN, Thomas arrives and disappears in the mist of the fenlands. Bedfordshire parish records have no record of his birth or death.

Although earlier records for a Thos Darts have been found there is insufficient evidence to link these people to my Thomas despite trying name variations. The search has been dogged with many red herrings because there appear to be Darts and DART clans, with the Dart clan based in south west England, probably linked to the Devon river. Transcriptions often miss the 's', moving possible candidates from Darts to Dart and vice versa. Clusters of Darts are found in Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Essex but linking these to the Bedfordshire Darts has proved difficult at times. Darts can also be found in the Low Countries².

From the marriage of Thomas and Elizabeth, over 30 Darts would be baptised in Wrestlingworth between 1778 and 1850 creating a dynasty of farm labourers. However, there is evidence that Thomas would not live long enough to understand or enjoy the legacy he would leave.

Whilst no record of Thomas's death appears in any Bedfordshire parish register, a death of Thos Darts on 11 March 1779 can be found in England Deaths and Burials, 1538-1991³. Confirming that this is my Thomas required some detective work.

The marriage of Thomas and Elizabeth produced a son Thomas (designated Jnr by me), christened 22 Aug 1779 according to St Peter's, Wrestlingworth, parish registers.

1779 JA 10	Whyant	s Whyant	Kath	Hinton
MR 24	Thos	s Thos	Ann	Endersby
29	Maria	d Rich	Eliz	Endersby
MY 2	Maria	d Wm	Jane	Smith
JN 24	Geo	s Wm	Martha	Ell
JL 11	Sara	d Jn	Ann	Pion
18	Thos	s Jn	Mary	Chapman
AU 22	Thos	s Thos	Eliz	Darts ←
SE 12	Sara	d	Mary	Titchmas, illeg.

¹ All register entries from Bedfordshire Parish Registers, Vol II. September 1931.

² Although my name is the male 'Jan' there is no recent link to the Low Countries I am aware of and why I was given the name is a mystery. Something to confuse future family historians!

³ A variety of sources that include <https://search.ancestry.co.uk>

By the time Thomas Jnr is christened, Thomas Snr would, if the death record is correct, have been dead more than 5 months, having conceived the child in late 1778.

Marriage records show that Elizabeth Darts, widow, married William ROWEL on 10 October 1784.

1784	NR	1	Rob	Endersby	Eliz	Kirkling
	OC	10	Wm	Rowel	Eliz	Darts, wid.
	OC	11	Wm	Sharp (Cockayne Hatley)	Eliz	Endersby

However, other parish records indicate that Thomas Snr died well before Elizabeth's remarriage. Elizabeth had a another child, William, who was not Christened until 1785 - after her marriage to William Rowel - and the St Peter's register is very revealing.

1785	JA	23	Ann	d Jas	Sara	Bonnet
		23	Mary	d Wm	Sara	Townsend
	FE	18	Francis	s Francis	Mary	Huckle
	NR	27	Ann	d Wm	Sara	Gillions
	AP	17	Eliz	d Jn	Ann	Randal
	MY	22	Simeon	s Thos	Sophia	Nash
	JL	2	Jas	s	Susan	Endersby, widow, illeg.
	SE	26	Betsy	d Sam	Eliz	Townsend
	OC	2	Mary	d Rich	Ann	Baxter
		18	Jn	s Jn	Ann	Pion, born JA 19, 1781
		23	Jn	s Jn	Eliz	Carver
		30	Jn	s	Ann	Salt, widow, illeg.
	NO	6	Sal	d Jn	Ann	Seymer
		13	Wm	s Wm	Jane	Smith
	DE	28	Betsy	d Jn	Ann	Harris
		28	Wm	s	Eliz	Darts, illeg., born SE 30, 1781

The Rector of St Peter's at the time of the christening was Samuel HICKS who was appointed in 1744⁴ and with 40 years of service in the parish understood his parishioners better than most⁵. He has only just married Elizabeth and she has now decided to christen her child William, but the Rector records that the child had been born 30 September 1781 and was illegitimate. Was this an attempt by Elizabeth to give William the Rowel name or the insistence of her new husband that the child must be baptised no matter what this would reveal?

If the birth date for William is reliable, this suggests the Rector knew William was born out of wedlock and could not have been conceived by Thomas Darts Snr, particularly if his death was in March 1779. So was William Rowel the father of

⁴ <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk>

⁵ Some Rectors took more than a passing interest in their parishioners. In tracing Rachel Darts (b 1808, d 1866) I came across her marriage on 16 July 1831 in All Saints, Croydon cum Clopton, Cambridgeshire, just across the Beds/Camb border from Wrestlingworth. What caught my attention was the "Speculum Gregis 1843 'An Account of all the Inhabitants of the Parish of Croydon in the County of Cambridgeshire commencing from 1 January 1843' by Reverend Francis Fulford 1803-1868 (Rector at Croydon 1841-1845)", https://www.wimpolepast.org/speculum_gregis. His commentary on his parishioners makes for interesting reading.

William Darts? It would be nice to think that he was given his father's Christian name but, with a family tree liberally littered with children born out of wedlock, waiting 3 years to marry the father is rather unusual, so it is most likely the father is someone else. Not unreasonably, the Rector chose to give William the surname of his mother at the time of his birth.

Poor Thomas Darts Snr, married Elizabeth in Aug 1978, and was most likely buried by March 79. A very brief marriage that produced a son, Thomas Jnr, never seen by his father!

Thomas Darts Jnr and William Darts both married and created the vast dynasty of the Darts Family that lived in Wrestlingworth. I am descended from William, but does our half of the family tree have a claim to Darts DNA? I doubt it and, with the rampant illegitimacy in subsequent generations, I am probably related to most families in Eastern England! Quite recently, I came across an article⁶ by Sean Coughlan, BBC News royal correspondent, looking at our DNA links to royalty with an item where someone researching their family found that their father was not their father. The person in question concluded that "...family is not necessarily genes, and family isn't necessarily ancestry...". With my family history I can only agree.

As an aside, the story of Thomas Snr illustrates the danger of taking information from others' research published online. Ancestry has a time line for Thomas Snr showing a death of 1820 plus, but with no reference to any source. It seems all too easy to have taken that date of death and not picked up his earlier death.

⁶ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-59041055>

REMINDER

The CLOSING DATE for articles to be published in the
June 2022 *Journal* is **30 April 2022**.
(Articles submitted near the closing date may not
be published until the following *Journal*)

INTRODUCING THE 1921 CENSUS

If you do not receive emails from us, you may not be aware that we had an addition to our normal monthly talks in January. It was arranged after the December *Journal* had gone to print but it was advertised on our website.

The talk was via zoom on 21 January and entitled '*Introducing the 1921 census*' presented by Mary Mckee from *Findmypast*.

If you missed it, do not worry as it was recorded. It may be viewed in the Members' Portal of our website until the end of March. Please see the article later in the *Journal* on how to access the Portal. Should the video not play on your device in the normal way, please click on the '*Alternative to play video*' at the bottom of the screen.

BEDFORDSHIRE

Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Huntingdonshire

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Association of Genealogists & Researchers in Archives*

Professional Service Offered. All Enquiries Welcome

MEMBERS' PORTAL

If you are a member and have not had a look at our members only page of our website, bfhs.org.uk, then go to the *Members' Portal* button and fill in the request form. A username and password will be sent to you. You will require your membership number and email address. If you are not a member but think you may enjoy looking at these items, then why not join us. To do this click on '*Society Information/Membership*'.

The Members' Portal includes the following content:

Zoom Meeting details and invites

AGM Documents

Documents for our AGM on 10 June 2022 will be posted here when they become available.

BFHS Journals

Volume 1 to 19 are available on CD. Those available on the portal start from volume 20 issued in March 2015 going up to the current issue.

Members' Meetings videos (when available)

The article that follows gives detailed instructions on gaining entry to the

Portal and how to access these videos.

Members' Handbook

Journals from other Societies

We continue to add new society journals each month. We now have 38 societies in all with many hundreds of journals and some newsletters.

Lending Library listing

This is the list of all the books we hold in our lending library which is available at our monthly meetings when held at Mark Rutherford School.

Clapham Church Memorial Inscriptions

Memorial Inscriptions from the graveyard of St Thomas Becket Church, Clapham, Bedford.

Funeral Directors Records

An ongoing project and we have digitally copied ledgers from T&E Neville Ltd (now Neville Funeral Services Ltd) for the period 1905 to 1925. There are further ledgers to copy up to 1955. All these ledgers are at the Records Office in Bedford and can be viewed by appointment. We understand that further ledgers are going to be deposited in due course. Ledgers from AL&G Abbotts Ltd of Bedford from 1904 to 1955 have also been digitally copied. We hold the ledgers up to 1980 and are currently working on these. Transcribing all these records is slow but we have made good progress with well over 3000 names now on our index. By the time you read this note we hope to have all the digitally copied records on the Members' Portal and added to the index as the transcribing is completed. We can also report that discussions with Saunders of Luton (Funeral Directors) is continuing, and we hope to add their records later. Your feedback would be appreciated if you have looked at these records. If you have details of any other funeral directors in Bedfordshire, please contact **distribution@bfhs.org.uk**.

St John's Pharmacy Book

Fully indexed records kept by St Johns Pharmacy, Bedford. Reproduced by kind permission of Barry Moulang.

Mary PHILLIPS Clophill Archive

Mary Phillips wrote a history of Clophill, Bedfordshire and did a great deal of research into other Bedfordshire villages in the vicinity of Clophill. After her death her son found a huge collection of notes she had made on this subject, wills, baptisms, property sales etc. They are handwritten on scraps of card. Rather than destroy the papers, he has donated them to the Society and we are digitising them with the aim of gradually putting them on the BFHS Members' Portal.

CHERRY Family History

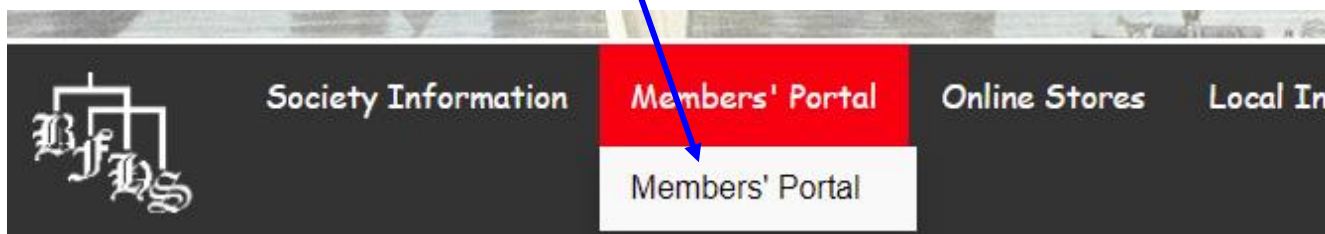
A book of some 94 pages by Richard Cherry, 2014. □

RECORDINGS OF MONTHLY TALKS TO BFHS MEMBERS

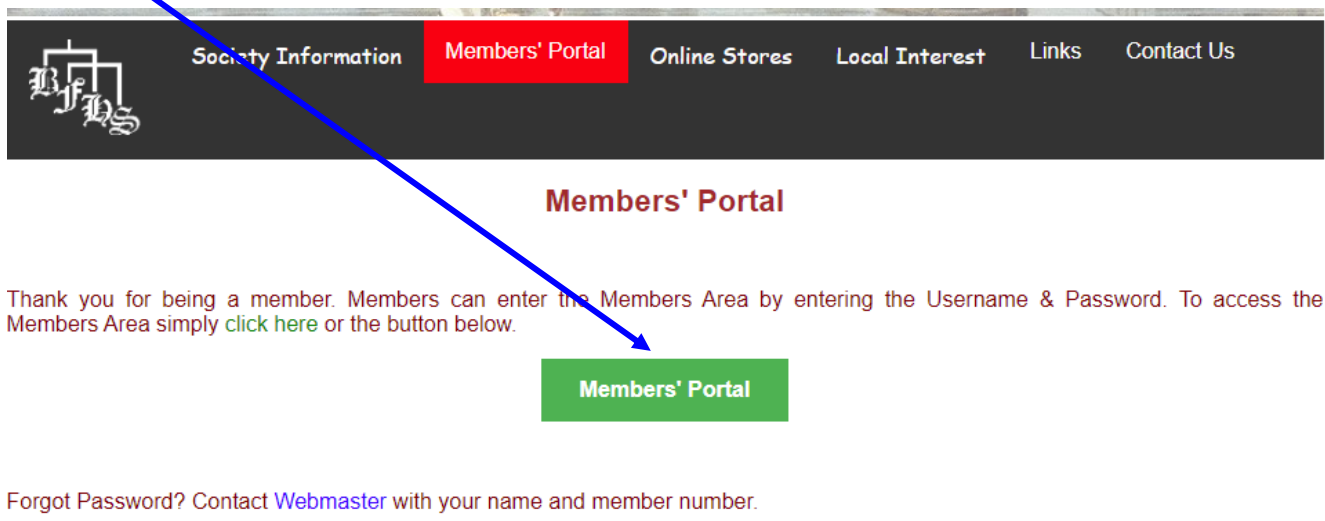
When we are given permission by the speaker, we record our monthly meetings and place them in the Members' Portal of our website www.bfhs.org.uk. The recordings are normally available until the end of the following month and a list of those available are shown on the home page of our website.

In case you are unsure of how to access the recordings, here are some guidelines including screen snips of the web pages.

1) Within our website, click on 'Members' Portal'.



2) If you already have a password for the portal, click on the green button shown below.



3) If you do not yet have a password for the Portal, then please complete the form shown below and click on the grey 'submit form' button. If you are unsure of your membership number, please contact either membership@bfhs.org.uk or treasurer@bfhs.org.uk for confirmation of your number.

Members' Portal

Thank you for being a member. Members can enter the Members Area by entering the Username & Password. To access the Members Area simply [click here](#) or the button below.

[Members' Portal](#)

Forgot Password? Contact [Webmaster](#) with your name and member number.

Current members requesting access

If you are a current member and would like access, please complete the form below and click on *Submit Form*. Your username and password will be emailed to you in due course. If you already have a password email [Webmaster](#)

Name:
Email Address:
Member Number:

Put a [website form](#) like this on your site.


Please click on *Continue* at the top of the next page.

4) After clicking on the green 'Members' Portal' button you will see the sign-in box shown below.

Sign in
 http://www.bfhs.org.uk
 Your connection to this site is not private

Username
 Password

5) Once you are successfully logged-in to the Portal, click on 'Members' meetings videos' and select the video that interests you. You can also see the invitation to the next talk.

NB: We recommend that your refresh or reload  any page that you access to ensure you have the latest information.

Welcome to the Members' Portal

Talk by Mr Richard Morgan entitled
'The Brookes Family of Flitwick Manor'
via Zoom, on Friday 7th January 2022

Talk by Mary McKee's entitled
'Introducing the 1921 Census of England & Wales.'
via Zoom, on Friday 21st January 2022

Documents for AGM 4 June 2021

Bedfordshire FHS Journals

Members' Meetings videos (when available)

Members' Handbook

Journals from other Societies

Lending Library listing (pdf)

Clapham Church Memorial Inscriptions

Funeral Directors' records

St John's Pharmacy Book

Mary Phillips Clophill Archive

Cherry Family History

6) Any problems with access to the Portal please contact Brian Payne by email at webmaster@bfhs.org.uk.

Happy browsing.



THE FRONT COVER ILLUSTRATION

Stagsden is a small but sturdy village, notable for quite a few things, including its connexion with John Bunyan (it was one of the places for which he applied for preaching licences in 1672), its five 'Ends', its vicarage garden, and its wide pastoral vistas. Its cottages were built to endure, and this sketch shows one of them in the main street - a typical Bedfordshire 'thatch and plaster', which once bore the sign of the 'White Horse'. It ceased functioning as an inn several years ago, but it has been in the occupation of the family of Mrs Flute for nearly half a century.

This illustration and text are taken from '*Our Heritage: A Bedfordshire Sketch Book*' drawings by G Alan Fortescue FRIBA, notes by '*Touchstone*', published 1943. □

THE FRONT COVER ILLUSTRATION AS IT IS TODAY

Paul Woodcraft



Little has changed since the sketch of c1943. The church can be seen to the right of the cottage. The only change I could see is the introduction of a lamp post and the removal of a smaller cottage.

The village remains a lovely place to visit with several walks round the area. The church, St Leonard's, stands proud in the centre and is dedicated to a sixth century French nobleman who is the patron saint of prisoners, and one of the stained glass windows in the south wall shows St Leonard holding a prisoner's chains and would make the day out one to remember (that is if you like old buildings). Try lunch at one of the locals. □

OUR RETURN TO MARK RUTHERFORD SCHOOL

We are pleased to announce that the Friday night meetings of the BFHS have returned to Mark Rutherford School. The meetings offer members instructive, interesting and often amusing talks on subjects that fascinate all interested in history and genealogy in general, and are usually particularly relevant to those with a Bedfordshire heritage. We look forward to seeing you in person again.

Returning to the school is subject to whatever COVID restrictions may be in place at the time and, of course, the weather!

Please do not attend the meeting if you have a cough, fever, or other COVID symptoms.

When attending, please be mindful and respectful of others and occupy seats with plenty of spaces. On entering and leaving, please maintain some social distancing out of courtesy to others. Although it is not a legal requirement to wear a face covering, the government advice and encouragement is that we wear them in indoor spaces where we gather with others who are not in our own household. Hand sanitisers will be available. Additional ventilation of the venue may be required so wrap up warm!

Where possible, talks held at the school will be live streamed or made available later on the website in the members' portal, subject to approval by the speaker.

The address of the venue is Mark Rutherford School, Wentworth Drive, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK41 8PX.



WHY NOT WRITE SOMETHING FOR THE JOURNAL?

We are always on the lookout for contributions to the *Journal*, any size, short or long. To give you some idea, a *Journal* page takes around 450 words to fill. We would also welcome items shorter than a page. You might feel more comfortable writing a letter or email on a topic and this would be included in a 'Letters' page in the *Journal*. No need to worry if you are not used to writing, we are here to help. Seeing your own work in print can feel like a real achievement and others will appreciate your effort. Simply writing down your 'brick wall' can help you see the problem more clearly and, you never know, someone reading it may be able to help you move forward. If you need ideas to get you going or would like to discuss your ideas, please send an email to journal@bfhs.org.uk.



PROGRAMME

All talks are scheduled to take place at Mark Rutherford School (see page 13 for details). Doors open at 7 pm with the talks starting at 7.30 pm.

**The Admiral and His Mistress – Horatio and Emma
David Fowler
Friday 4 March 2022**



Retired Chartered Civil Engineer, Bedford Tour Guide, whose family history goes back for at least 190 years around Bedford.

We all know about Horatio Nelson, but the rise of Emma from a blacksmith's daughter, to a lady setting the style in London and even on the continent was astonishing. She must have been one hell of a character!

The 'APRIL' talk is scheduled for March because of the timing of Easter!

**My Ancestor Was A Liar
Dave Annal
Friday 25 March 2022**



Dave Annal is a professional researcher with over 40 years' experience. He is a former Principal Family History Specialist with the National Archives and he worked at the Family Records Centre for many years. In 2019 he was awarded a Fellowship of the Society of Genealogists. Dave has written a number of family history books including the bestselling beginner's guide *Easy Family History* and Pen & Sword's *Birth, Marriage & Death Records* (with Audrey Collins) and, with Peter Christian, he is the co-author of *Census: the Family Historian's Guide*. He is also a regular contributor to Family Tree Magazine where he runs the Family Tree Academy. Dave is a popular speaker on the

family history circuit and has spoken at a number of major events including Who Do You Think You Are? Live and Rootstech, as well as giving regular talks to family history groups.

Dave has been researching his own family history since the mid-1970s and he has not finished yet!

Sifting through the evidence to find the truth (or what passes for the truth in the world of genealogy) is a skill which all serious family historians need to develop. The information left by our ancestors is all-too-frequently misleading, inaccurate or just

PROGRAMME (cont'd)

plain wrong! As we become more experienced, we find that they had any number of reasons to be economical with the truth.

Of course, sometimes our ancestors simply did not know the answer to the questions thrown at them by the clerks, registrars and enumerators. Using real examples, this talk will look at some of the reasons why our ancestors might have lied and offer suggestions on how to recognise their varying degrees of ignorance, half-truths and wilful deception.

Cholera in Bedford Maurice Nicholson Friday 6 May 2022



Maurice Nicholson is a retired pharmacist who now pursues his interests in local history and digital mapping, working on projects for the British Library and other institutions, and giving talks on a variety of subjects in the Bedford area.

This talk charts the spread of successive cholera pandemics across the globe in the 19th Century, with particular reference, using contemporary reports and records, to the two major outbreaks in Bedford in 1832 and 1849, finishing with the measures put in place in the decades afterwards to improve sanitation in the town.

AGM plus a talk by Pamela Birch - Bedfordshire Archivist Friday 10 June 2022



On her mother's side Pamela comes from a line of Bedfordshire agricultural labourers and was born and raised in the Bedfordshire parish of Stotfold. In 2005 she gained a Masters degree in Archive Administration via University of Wales, Aberystwyth, and since 2014 she has been the county archivist in charge of managing Bedfordshire Archives.

The content of the talk after the AGM is still under consideration but perhaps you would like to understand more about county record offices or the soon to be completed catalogue of wills? If you have any topics you would like Pamela to address, then please send your ideas to Mark Tresidder via the BFHS postal address or by email to chairman@bfhs.org.uk.

Please note that this meeting will not be live streamed.

OBITUARY - GEOFF SEWELL (1952- 2021)

George Ruscoe



Geoff joined the committee of the BFHS in June 1987 and by the December Journal was named as Programme Secretary, a post that he filled for the next 34 years up to the time of his death. He took an early interest in the use of personal computers for family history, and organised a couple of meetings of a Computer Group although these were not pursued once members became more familiar with PCs from work, and began to use them more for recording data and producing trees. A major project, following on from the transcription of the

1851 census for Bedfordshire, which was produced by typewriter, was the National Burial Index. This was implemented by a computer program, and Geoff was keen that we should be involved.

As well as serving on the committee and later as Chairman, Geoff had his own personal interests: he was gathering data about his family's home village of Croxton in Huntingdonshire, which lies on the Cambridge road between St Neots and Eltisley. He and a local group were using an early database to collect records from the parish. He also had a special interest in WW1 matters, and managed to join in a variety of activities beyond the world of the FHS. As BFHS chairman, he also became involved in the East Anglian group of Societies, and the Federation meetings nationally.

On the occasions when he spoke to the Society himself, he would involve the whole family to help with demonstrations and displays. And regularly for many years, his mother sat on the door to give a warm welcome to meetings, until she was no longer able to do so. Perhaps that is where he was inspired to become interested in Family History - I know that both my parents and theirs in turn were full of valuable facts about the family.

Geoff encouraged the publication of data for the county, in the form of missing books from the Parish Register transcripts, the 1851 census indexes, and the books produced by the Society that give access to the Indexes of Poor Law Papers and the probate registers from the Archdeacon of Bedford's court in Tudor times (transcribed in her retirement by Patricia Bell, former County Archivist and a friend of the Society over many years) both in paper (the Wills books) and electronic form. But probably his major achievement was the five-day Conference organised with Northampton FHS and the Federation in 2006, "Putting Flesh on the Bones; A Study of the Common Man". Once again his family and many active members of the Society played a major part.

His knowledge of good speakers from all over the country was great and in this respect alone he will be hard to replace. □

GEOFF SEWELL - A PERSONAL REFLECTION

Brian Payne



I was very sorry and shocked to hear of Geoff's passing.

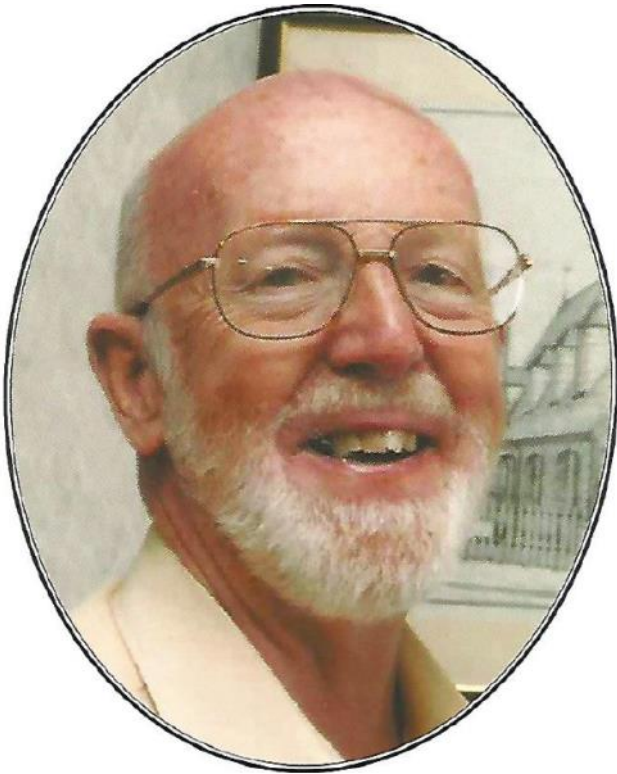
When I joined the Bedfordshire Family History Society, Geoff was already on the committee doing the programme secretary job. A job he was still doing after he left the committee. Finding 11 great speakers every year to talk to us always amazed me.

It was not until he became Chairman in 1996 and when I joined the committee that I got to know him better. He had good powers of persuasion (I got volunteered as Journal Coordinator) and I also found him to be a very fair person. We had good conversations in his Carlton as we travelled down to Luton for a committee meeting.

Every year he would organize a one-day conference at Houghton Conquest. Again, a lot of organising went into that, at which he excelled. The biggest project he was involved in was the International Conference in 2006 with 4 days of speakers. When I moved to the USA in 2001, we kept in touch even exchanging Christmas cards. I always found him to be a very diplomatic person who was willing to help with driving to and attending many shows around the country. He will be sorely missed. □

OBITUARY - JACK STEEMSON (1931- 2021)

Marie Steemson



Jack enjoyed his time as a member in the Bedfordshire Family History Society and was treasurer of the Society for many years. He died on 11 December 2021, two days after his 90th birthday. He leaves a wife, four children, nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. □

SUGGESTION BOX

Your committee is continually looking for ways to improve what is offered to members and following the useful responses from the recent Members' Questionnaire, we thought how could we keep the ideas coming.

So, to encourage more feedback from members at meetings we now have a suggestion box. For members who are not able to use the suggestion box we invite you to email us at bfhs@bfhs.org.uk.

Your committee appreciates any help, ideas or suggestions that you may have regarding any aspect of the BFHS organisation. □



BEDFORDSHIRE HERITAGE TEA TOWELS

The Society has had a supply of Bedfordshire Heritage tea towels printed and these are now being sold to raise funds.

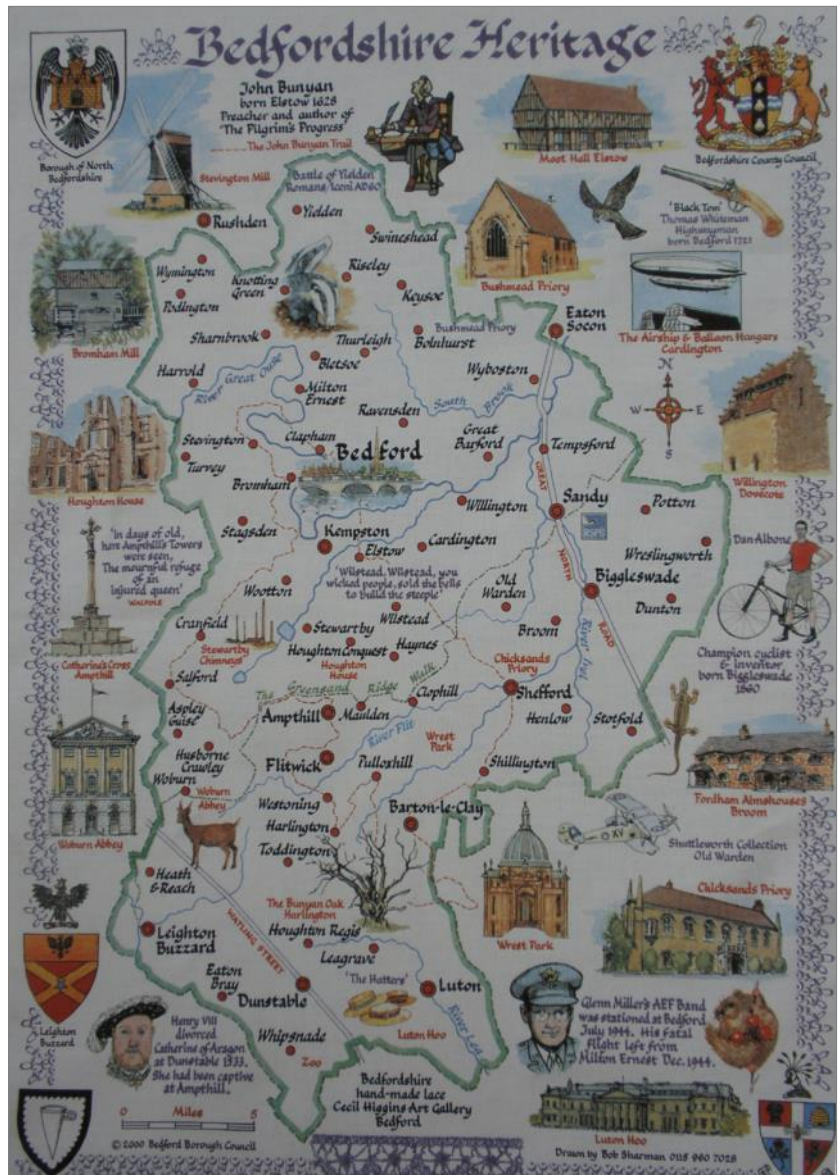
These tea towels are really too nice to use for drying up; they are beautifully colour printed with some famous Bedfordshire landmarks forming a border for the County map. Even if you do not have any Bedfordshire ancestors they make ideal gifts.

They are 100% cotton and at £4.50 each can be obtained from the bookstall at members' meetings, by email to Lynn Manning at:

secretary@bfhs.org.uk,

or by post to Lynn at:

38 Risborough Road, Bedford, MK41 9QW, Tel. 01234 306482.



For UK orders please add postage and packing as follows:

- Up to 2 tea towels add £2.00
- 3 to 6 tea towels add £3.00

For orders from outside the UK please enquire before ordering.

Cheques should be made payable to Bedfordshire Family History Society.

LIBRARY NEWS

John Partridge, Librarian

New Librarian Required.

After managing the BFHS library for the past 15 years I am stepping down from the role sometime during this coming year, as we have a tentative plan to move away from the county, however I shall remain a BFHS member. In addition to this, my library helper Judith Mooney, tells me that she can no longer commit to coming to monthly meetings. So initially there is a requirement for some help for me as soon as meetings come back to the school, to set up and put away the physical library and assist me at meetings. Then the Society will be looking to get a replacement librarian to carry on my role. Details of the job role and processes required will be made available as soon as possible, but if anyone is interested then do let the BFHS Committee know. It would be beneficial if someone could take on the role while I am still in the county to learn what is involved.

Returning Borrowed Books/Journals

With the possible return of physical members' meetings at the school, I remind members to seek out those books and journals that were borrowed from before the 'lockdown' of March 2020 and return them at the first meeting that they attend. As per my records there are only 7 books outstanding that were borrowed Jan/Feb/Mar 2020, prior to that there is 1 O/S book borrowed Mar 2019 by H Bateley, and 6 O/S books on Luton borrowed Feb 2017 by member 2809 P Sear, could you check for these please.

Beds FHS Facebook page

In the December 2021 journal I reported that we had 1039 'likes' and 1200 followers as at 21 Oct. As we rolled into the New Year we had 1060 'likes' and 1220 followers and, following my plea to get those I have invited to like the page, as at 5 Jan 2022 we have achieved 1076 'likes' and 1236 followers. What I do not know is how many of these are BFHS members. Thanks to all of you for your continued interest regarding your Bedfordshire ancestors. If you need assistance then why not message us or drop us a Visitors Post and we will attempt to respond to you with an answer.

BACK TWO GENERATIONS

In our June *Journal*, Wendy VARVEL explained that her grandfather William LANCASTER was born in 1855 and her grandmother Eliza JOHNSON was born in 1856. The question was posed as to whether other families went back so far in just two generations. The December *Journal* reported that, Josephine KNIGHT's maternal grandparents were born in 1865 and 1865.

Member Cynthia BROWN has written to say she has maternal grandparents Joseph BETTLE and Dinah Bettle (nee WALTERS), both born in Cranfield in 1868. Her mother, Lily Bettle, was born Dec 1912 in North Crawley, a short distance from Cranfield. She was told that her mother was unlucky number 13, although there were only 10 siblings that lived. Her mother Lily was the youngest child of Dinah and Joseph, and Cynthia was the youngest child of her parents Lily and Arthur WATTS, hence the span of more than 138 years.

THE TINGRITH EMIGRANTS

Richard Webb

In April 1870 my great-great-aunt Susan ODELL (WEBB) left Bedfordshire to start a new life in Ontario, Canada with her husband George and eight children (George, Phoebe, Henry, Susan, William, Jane, Ann, and Sarah).

Between September 1868 and April 1870, 105 men, women and children from Tingrith and surrounding villages (Westoning, Eversholt and Milton Bryan) made the journey due to the generosity of the three TREVOR sisters, Mary, Elizabeth Jane and Catherine, owners of Tingrith House and the surrounding estate.

The first wave of 23 emigrants left Tingrith in September 1868¹ and sailed from Liverpool to Quebec on board the Allan Line ship 'SS Austrian'. The party comprised three families – Joseph, Elizabeth, Edward and Thomas ARMSDEN; William and Elizabeth Odell and their eight children; George and Harriett COX and seven children.

In April 1869 the second party of 27 comprising families and young single men left Bedfordshire for Canada². Like the first group of emigrants they sailed from Liverpool to Quebec this time on the Allan Line ship 'SS Nestorian'. The seven single men were – Joseph Cox, John CARR, Frederick William Carr, James Odell, Henry Armsden, Frederick HUDSON and William Odell. The three family groups were James and Ann GURNEY and their two children, William and Elizabeth SMITH and their six children, and Joseph and Jane BRINKLOW with six children.

George and Susan Odell sailed from Liverpool to Quebec on the 'SS Austrian' in April 1870 with forty five other emigrants from the Tingrith area. The group also comprised families and young single men. George Odell was accompanied by his parents, James and Mary and younger sister Louisa. There were also two other Odell families - Charles and Fanny and three children and Thomas Odell, his wife Sarah and infant son John.

Another large contingent of the April 1870 party comprised three Hudson brothers and their families. James and Lucy with three children, Richard and Emma also with three children, and George and Susan and two children. Other family groups consisted of Thomas and Elizabeth Armsden and four children, Charles and Ann Gurney, James and Ellen Carr and their young daughter Emily. The party was completed by nine young single men - Thomas FAIREY, Frederick Brinklow, George Carr, Henry Brinklow, Daniel Bunker, William Smith, Joseph Smith, John BANWELL and George SPACEY.

There are thought to be a handful of others who left for Canada after 1870. When the last surviving Trevor sister, Mary, died in 1883 her obituary³ mentioned 112 emigrants.

For a number of years I have been researching the life of George and Susan Odell and their time in Canada. I have extended my research to include the other 'Tingrith' families and have slowly managed to build a detailed picture of their lives.

¹ Bedfordshire Mercury 26 September 1868.

² Bedfordshire Times and Independent 4 May 1869.

³ Leighton Buzzard Observer and Linslade Gazette 30 October 1883.

Many interesting stories have emerged. On arrival in Canada the majority settled in Ontario but in subsequent years many moved into the industrial cities of the USA or to the Canadian prairie states (Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan) to take advantage of Land Grants. One emigrant, Ebenezer Odell ended up in Aspen, Colorado, prospecting for gold.

My aim is to put together a story of the emigrants and would be interested to hear from other members with any information that may help - family mementoes, photographs, etc, to add to what I already have.

I am also keen to learn more about the Trevor sisters. I have seen the piece about the Trevor family on the Bedfordshire Archives Tingrith pages but have found very little else other than newspaper cuttings and wills. As far as I am aware there are no family papers for the Trevor sisters held by Bedfordshire Archives. □

THE BEDFORDSHIRE CLANGER

Lynn Manning

Going through some of my parents' old papers recently, I came across the following which was read out and then handed to visitors to the Mayor's Parlour by the then Mayor of Bedford, Brian Frank DILLINGHAM who held the post in 1974 and again in 1985, however it doesn't record who originally wrote the poem. It reads:

In bygone days the usual dish
From Heath to Moggerhanger,
Of every village ploughboy was
A dumpling called a clanger.

Boiled in a cloth of oblong shape
And rolled up tight and neat,
One end of which was filled with jam,
The other filled with meat.

And others were of global shape
And filled with pork and onion
This kind was known in Bedfordshire
Before the days of Bunyan.

For nourishment its value is
Accepted without question,
But for a feed one thing you need
Is a good and sound digestion.

On weekdays it was eaten cold
When in the fields all day,
He could not have it hotted up,
When home was far away.

On Sundays he would dine at home
And have it piping hot
As Mother served it on a plate
Just straight from out the pot.

Day after day and week by week
His diet was the same
He very rarely had roast meat,
And rarer still roast game.

So why, dear housewife do you stand
And wear that puzzled look
When here a tasty dish to hand
So easily to cook.

Now all you Mums with hungry lads
From Heath to Moggerhanger
Don't pander to their whims and
Fads - cook 'em a good old clanger.

The following recipe for the Clanger was handed down by my mother, Connie PILGRIM:

8 oz plain or self raising flour
Teaspn salt
4 oz shredded suet
¼ pt cold water
2 large peeled and cubed potatoes
8 oz casserole pork
1 onion peeled and chopped finely with large pinch of parsley and sage
4 oz of any jam or fruit pie filling

Mix flour, salt and suet together. Stir in enough water to give a light elastic dough, knead very lightly until smooth. Roll out to about ¼ inches thick into an oblong shape - imagine this in two pieces.

Cut the potatoes and pork up into cubes. Chop onion and parsley finely then add sage. Put this mixture in the middle of one side of the pastry, sprinkle with pepper. On the other end spread the jam/pie filling quite thickly.

Roll up the entire thing like a Swiss roll then wrap in pudding cloth with string or foil and steam the clanger for 2-4 hours depending on the filling.

When the clanger is ready, serve the meat and potatoes half with vegetables, then the jam end with custard. □

DO WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS?

We notify our members via email about any zoom/hybrid meetings; however, some get bounced back and for some members we do not have an email address.

If you have not been receiving these emails from us it means that:

1) we do not have your email address.

or

2) the email address we have is incorrect.

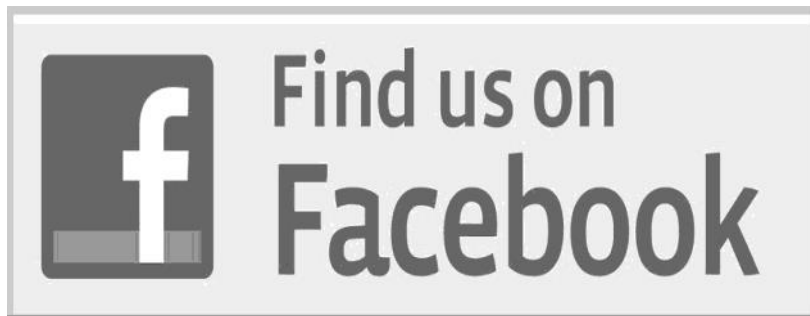
or

3) your mailbox is full.

If you have an email address but are not getting our emails but would like to do so, please send your current email address to **treasurer@bfhs.org.uk**

Many thanks,

Peter Sharp, Treasurer



Bedfordshire Family History Society now has a presence on Facebook for news and discussions visit

[facebook.com/BedfordshireFamilyHistorySociety](https://www.facebook.com/BedfordshireFamilyHistorySociety)

Membership Subscriptions by Standing Order or Bank Transfer

If you pay your **2022** membership by SO or BT please drop an email to **treasurer@bfhs.org.uk** to advise your name, post code, payment method and membership type.
Your help would be appreciated.

BEDFORDSHIRE PARISH REGISTERS

Many new computers do not have CD drives so we are pleased to announce that all our CDs are now available for sale as downloads from Parish Chest and Genfair.

The available downloads include all 128 Bedfordshire Parish Registers, Bedfordshire Nonconformist Registers, Marriage Licences, Poor Law papers, BFHS back *Journals* Vol 1-19 with an index to surnames and subjects, and the four Bedfordshire Will books. BFHS *Journals* volumes 20-23 are available free in the Members' Portal of the BFHS website.

To access the stores directly please visit **parishchest.com** or **genfair.co.uk**, although the simplest way of accessing a BFHS download is to visit our website **bfhs.org.uk** then select 'Online Stores'. If you then select Parish Chest the majority of the downloads are to be found in the 'Downloads' folder, but Poor Law, Journals and Wills book are listed under the appropriate folder located down the left hand side of the screen. If you select Genfair, the downloads are listed alongside the CDs in the relevant section. Both stores have a search feature and the content of each product is given. Downloads are the same price as the CDs.

BFHS has produced a resource to help in finding your missing relations. If they were baptised or buried before 1852 or married before 1837 (and in some cases later) in Bedfordshire and appear in the Parish Registers, then they will appear on our Surnames CD, available as a free download on the home page of **bfhs.org.uk**. Alternatively, the CD is available for only £10 including UK P&P, from Sales, Bedfordshire Family History Society, PO Box 214, Bedford MK41 8WB, enquiries to **bookstall@bfhs.org.uk**.

CDs for all 128 ancient Bedfordshire parishes listed below are available from:

Sales, Bedfordshire Family History Society, PO Box 214, Bedford MK41 8WB,
or **bookstall@bfhs.org.uk**

Each CD or download contains, for one parish:

All Parish Register transcripts up to 1812 (images)

Searchable Indexes to the Parish Registers for:

Baptisms at least 1813-1851 (some parishes all up to 1851)

Marriages up to 1885; and all Burials to 1851

The relevant 1851 Census Index for Bedfordshire (images)

CDs marked † also contain Monumental Inscriptions (MIs) from a graveyard in the

parish (church, chapel or cemetery). Those marked * contain records from the registers or graveyards of Nonconformist chapels in the parish, photographs, and other records are included as available.

‡ Holwell: MIs and Burials only, not Registers (now in Herts).

Prices include UK or overseas post and packing. The cost of a full set of Parish CDs is £1,250.

Any recently revised CDs are indicated by the **issue number in bold**. Please note that **CDs will no longer be updated** whereas downloads will be updated when more indexes and any new MI listings become available.

Parish	Price	Issue	Parish	Price	Issue
Amphill † *	£15	2	Dunton †	£15	2
Arlesey	£20	2	Eaton Bray	£20	2
Aspley Guise †	£15	4	Eaton Socon † *	£25	2
Astwick †	£10	2	Edworth †	£10	2
Barton	£15	3	Elstow †	£15	2
Battlesden	£10	2	Eversholt †	£15	2
Bedford St Cuthbert †*	£15	2	Everton	£10	2
Bedford St John *	£15	2	Eyeworth	£10	2
Bedford St Mary † *	£15	2	Farndish †	£10	1
Bedford St Paul † *	£25	2	Felmersham † *	£10	2
Bedford St Peter *	£10	2	Flitton *	£15	4
Biddenham †	£10	2	Flitwick	£10	2
Biggleswade † *	£15	2	Goldington	£10	2
Billington †	£10	2	Great Barford †	£15	3
Bletsoe	£10	2	Harlington †	£10	2
Blunham † *	£15	3	Harrod *	£10	2
Bolnhurst	£10	2	Haynes †	£20	2
Bromham †	£10	3	Henlow †	£10	2
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Campton & Shefford † *	£20	2	Hockliffe † *	£10	3
Cardington † *	£15	2	Holwell † ‡	£5	1
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Chellington	£15	2	Hulcote †	£10	2
Clapham †	£10	3	Husborne Crawley †	£20	2
Clifton	£20	3	Kempston	£15	3
Clophill †	£15	3	Kensworth †	£15	2
Cockayne Hatley	£10	2	Keysoe † *	£15	2
Colmworth †	£10	2	Knotting	£10	2
Cople †	£10	2	Langford	£15	2
Cranfield † *	£15	2	Leighton Buzzard † *	£20	6
Dean † *	£15	1	Lidlington †	£10	2
Dunstable † *	£15	2	Little Barford †	£10	1

Parish	Price	Issue	Parish	Price	Issue
Keysoe † *	£15	2	Shelton †	£10	2
Knotting	£10	2	Shillington †	£15	2
Langford	£15	2	Souldrop †	£10	2
Leighton Buzzard † *	£20	4	Southill † *	£20	2
Lidlington †	£10	2	Stagsden †	£15	2
Little Barford †	£10	1	Stanbridge *	£10	2
Little Staughton † *	£10	2	Steppingley †	£10	2
Lower Gravenhurst	£10	2	Stevington † *	£10	2
Luton † *	£30	3	Stotfold † *	£10	2
Marston Moretaine †	£15	3	Streatley †	£10	2
Maulden † *	£15	2	Studham	£15	2
Melchbourne †	£10	2	Sundon †	£10	1
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Northill †	£15	2	Tilbrook	£10	2
Oakley †	£10	2	Tilsworth † *	£10	2
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Podington	£15	1	Upper Gravenhurst	£10	2
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Ravensden †	£10	2	Wilden †	£15	2
Renhold	£10	2	Willington †	£10	2
Ridgmont † *	£15	2	Wilstead †	£20	2
Riseley	£10	2	Woburn † *	£20	2
Roxton † *	£10	2	Wootton	£15	2
Salford †	£10	2	Wrestlingworth †	£15	3
Sandy † *	£15	1	Wymington	£10	1
Sharnbrook	£10	2	Yelden †	£10	2

UPDATE TO BFHS POST CODE ADDRESS

Please note that we have been advised that our old post code of Mk42 9RX is no longer in use (although it still seems to work OK).

Our updated postal address is Bedfordshire Family History Society, PO Box 214, Bedford. MK41 8WB.



Bedfordshire Genealogy, Family and House History

Specialists in genealogy, family and house history research in
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- P.G. Cert. in Family and Local History
- P.G. Dip. in Archive Management

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bedfordshireresearch.co.uk

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Correspondence for the Executive Committee should be addressed to the appropriate person and sent to:

Bedfordshire Family History Society

PO Box 214 BEDFORD MK41 8WB	Internet: bfhs.org.uk Email: bfhs@bfhs.org.uk Web Sales: genfair.co.uk parishchest.com
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The following email addresses are also available:

chairman@bfhs.org.uk secretary@bfhs.org.uk treasurer@bfhs.org.uk journal@bfhs.org.uk librarian@bfhs.org.uk membership@bfhs.org.uk bookstall@bfhs.org.uk publicity@bfhs.org.uk research@bfhs.org.uk searches@bfhs.org.uk gdpr@bfhs.org.uk social@bfhs.org.uk webmaster@bfhs.org.uk distribution@bfhs.org.uk	Society Chairman & Information Manager Society Secretary Society Treasurer Journal Co-ordinator Society Librarian Membership Secretary All BFHS Publications Sales Enquiries (CDs, Micofiche, Books) Publicity Officer Research Co-ordinator Search Co-ordinator Information Manager Social Events Organiser Society Webmaster Journal Distribution
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(1 January - 31 December)

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Family Membership per each additional member at the same address, but no additional <i>Journal</i>	£1.00 pa
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