



THE JOURNAL

VOLUME 27 : 3

AUTUMN 2021



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CAMBRIDGESHIRE & HUNTINGDONSHIRE

FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS: NED WAYNE & CAROL NOBLE

A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY HISTORY FEDERATION

REGISTERED CHARITY No. : 278815

The Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire Family History Society exists to encourage the study of genealogy, heraldry and family history within the old counties of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely, and Huntingdonshire. We reformed on 1 January 2020 when the separate family history societies representing Cambridgeshire (est.1976) and Huntingdonshire (est.1984) amalgamated into a single organization.

We actively support established guidelines for good practice and aim to promote considered, informed and quality research. Our projects teams continue to work to scan, transcribe and index name-rich resources of genealogical interest, to enable researchers to pursue their county ancestors wherever they happen to now live. Volunteer researchers will offer their collective opinion on almost any query.

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At the time of writing, we are hopeful that public meetings and research surgeries will be able to restart in September—please look out for updates, and we'll see you soon

In the meantime, stay safe—carry on researching, keep in touch, follow us on facebook & instagram, and contribute your progress, thoughts & queries to the journal

For latest news, and updates as the situation further evolves (& resolves)

WATCH THE WEBSITE & NEWSLETTER & FACEBOOK

CONTACT US (for additional contacts/services see p55-6)

All general correspondence via the Secretary, please :

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(we also have an answer phone 01223-853273—& leave a message)

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CAMBS & HUNTS FHS JOURNAL

VOL 27 : 3

AUTUMN 2021



Welcome to the Autumn edition of the CHFHS Journal, and to the first outing of the new and compact A5 format—the decision was not taken lightly, nor was it just change for the sake of it. However, we're limited to 56-pages, and the 'quart into a pint pot' analogy is very apt. To enable a range and variety of "feature" content to be offered, an annually updated Members' Research Directory is being compiled to supplement the journal—containing useful information and resources for research.

Among the features in this issue : the concluding of the life and times of Robert Peters of Cambridge from Ian Stephenson; the announcing of a great new book by CHFHS member, Carolyn Redmayne; an appreciation of the work of the society from overseas member, Lesley Kinch; a research report on immigrant ancestors in Australia from Vicki Salkin; a local 'character' brought very much to life by Robin Pearl; and, a summing up of the first year of a major society-funded project with local schools, "Victorian House Histories", from project director, Helen Weinstein.

Most of the regulars features found in the old format are also dotted throughout—incl : projects updates, gt-gt-grand parents, meetings' programmes (research surgeries however, remain on hold), reports of talks/events; book reviews—and much more

Print too small ?? Try the e-journal—it can be enlarged to suit all vision !!

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cover picture : from "The Spirit Of Over" by Carolyn Redmayne (see page 13)

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SEE P.42

**Wisbech Museum Project
&
Hunts Records Project**

will bring 'AncestorFinder' to
well over 5 million
searchable records online

Wisbech records : added registers-by-register

Hunts records : added parish-by-parish

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**FAMILY HISTORY FEDERATION ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT
DR JANET FEW**

In an address in the FHF's latest "Really Useful Bulletin", Janet comments ...

"...family history societies are at a crossroads. Many have seen slowly declining memberships and have struggled to fill committee and volunteer roles in recent years. Now is the time to either reinvent ourselves and our function or fade into oblivion. We cannot keep repeating the pattern that has not been working well and expect it to suddenly become relevant and appealing.

The pandemic has forced us to rethink the way in which we do many things. Societies can either put change in the 'too hard' basket or embrace it and perhaps use it as the first step to a resurgence. Societies can still be relevant in today's genealogical landscape but it takes work and insight to make them so ...".

Quite true!! The coming years will be challenging if FHSs are to maintain a position in the public eye against the resources of the commercial providers.

***THE SOCIETY OFFERS CONDOLENCES
TO THE FAMILIES OF :-***

Richard Evans 4872

Daisy Murray 4428



A WORD FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN



A new look journal — As you open this journal, the first thing that will strike you is that we have changed the paper size. As I have previously mentioned, the increase in postage costs left us with only two alternatives – to increase the subscription so the Society did not lose money every time we publish a new journal, or to take advantage of the different pricing structures and to produce an A5 journal. The content of the journals will have a greater emphasis on current news and events and articles. Much of the recurring content that we included in each issue will now be in an annual members' handbook that you will all receive, so we will save repeated pages and therefore costs. The smaller size is also easier to carry round and read.

Face to face meetings — I am writing this at the end of June, and I am very pleased that our March Branch plan to hold an exploratory in person meeting in September, to discuss how physical meetings can be safely resumed. I am looking forward to being there to get a feel for how we can do this. We have also started to talk with staff in Cambridge library, and will be planning to do the same in the WI Centre in Huntingdon. We will be holding future Face to Face meetings with Zoom alongside, so our distant and overseas members do not lose the widely appreciated benefit of being more closely involved in their Society. This is still work in progress, and we must follow the procedures of each meeting venue as well as changing government policy and direction. Please keep an eye on the newsletter and website for developments

Annual General Meeting — My thanks to everyone who took part in this online meeting in May, and particularly to our President, Elizabeth Stazicker, for her efficient and effective chairmanship. My report thanked all our members, committee post holders, and project volunteers, for the work that they undertake and the experiences and knowledge that they share. Everything went smoothly, reflecting the good position of both our Society and family history despite the significant challenges we have all faced. The minutes will be shared in accordance with our normal operating procedure and will be available for ratification at our next AGM in 2022.

Opening up — The local collections in our public libraries are now again accessible for browsing and for loan, and the Archives Office in Ely is also

available for booked visit appointments. I have recently visited both the Cambridgeshire Collection and the Archives, and it is so good to be able to have face to face conversations again with our close partners and colleagues. When I went to the University library, they too were starting to reopen, but the arrangements for Society members to use the library were not yet in place. I understand that membership renewal periods will be extended to take account of the closure period. The UL website is always a good starting point for the latest situation.

Five year plan — I wrote last time about developing a five year plan for the Society, and this will be high on our committee agendas in the coming months. Thank you to those who have already made comments, suggestions and offers of help. If you still wish to contribute, please e-mail me, chairman@cfhs.org.uk as soon as possible.

Parish Chest — Parish Chest, one of the Federation's online shopping tools does not get the level of business that might be expected from our members. There are a wide range of products available, have you checked recently? <https://www.parishchest.com/> I am assured that rates and prices compare favourably with other suppliers.

Naming patterns — After Denise Bates recent talk to us about names, I have been making good progress with testing hypotheses for my own research. Investigating likely first names based on naming patterns makes searching more specific; possible candidates can then be explored in depth, along with their siblings, and some definite connections can then be made or dismissed. By the time you read this, my own talk expanding on this will have been completed, but you can see the slides in the members' section.

Family history journeys — As travel opens up again, we have the opportunity both to visit Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire if we live at a distance, or to travel to other areas to where we have family or where they used to live. We can also add to all the information we have been able to find during lockdown and see archival resources and local collections at first hand again. I have recently had a phone conversation with a distant relative, a living member of my great grandparents' generation. Her grandmother, and my third great grandmother were sisters, one if the curious but fascinating things about family history. She has found some new family documents and I plan to visit over the coming months. I hope you too are also finding out new things about your own family history.

David Copley

The value of wills!

Received from Gill Shapland—For many years I have been transcribing all the wills for the parish of Sutton, which when completed will number around 900. Some are terse: all there is to make provision for is payment of debts. Then you come across ones like the one below. Sarah Marshall was not rich, except in relatives. Many wills offer clues to the wider family, but this one from Sutton is particularly useful for verifying family connections:

In the name of God Amen! This twenty first day of September in the Year of our Lord One thousand Seven hundred and thirty eight I Susannah (sic) Marshall of Sutton in the Isle of Ely and County of Cambridge Widow being not in perfect health but of sound and perfect memory praised be Almighty God for the same do hereby make this my Last Will and Testament as follows

Item I give and bequeath all that my Freehold Messuage or Tenement where I now dwell with the appurtenances thereunto belonging with the yard and garden to my Loving sister Susan Hines to be sold immediately after my decease and the money to be equally divided between my Brothers and Sisters Robert Feast Mary Barnes Susan Hines and John Feast Timothy Marshall Mary Brinkly Elizabeth Astwood and Esther Marshall to be divided in equal proportion to each of them according to the value

Item I give to my Father William Marshall the house where the wife of Thomas Hurst now dwells with the yard and Turffhouse there unto belonging to him and his heirs for ever

Item I give and bequeath to my sister Susan Hines the Lott in North fen up Blabys Drove for life and after her decease to my Niece Susan Hines and her heirs for ever

Item I give and bequeath unto my Sister Mary Homes all that my Home Lott in the Wash for life and after her decease to my Niece Elizabeth Homes and her heirs for ever

I nominate and appoint Susan Hines my Sister wife of Robert Hines of Ely whole and Sole Executrix of this my Last will and Testament In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the day and year first above written

Sarah Marshall (X)

Signed etc: William Dradge (X) Thomas Custance
Probate 25 Oct 1738.

Notes: Sarah buried 23 September 1738. John Marshall married Sarah Feast 1732; John was buried 5 days before Sarah.

**ROBERT PETERS
Of Cambridge
1798-1880 (pt3)
by
*Ian Stephenson***

In his late-40s, Robert Peters was a full-time officer of the Cambridge Board of Guardians and of the Improvement Commissioners. He was a rate collector for both bodies, an assistant overseer and registrar of births and deaths.

In 1845 the Peters family moved from St Peter's Street to Chesterton Road, where they remained for five years until early-1850 when they moved to 26 Northampton Street. There, daughter Rebecca Jane died on 22 May 1850 at the age of 20 of symptoms most likely associated with tuberculosis (a notice of her death was placed in the newspaper); her death certificate was signed by Robert as Registrar, but he also signed it as the informant - he quite probably recognised this to be irregular since his latter signature was in full, whereas that as Registrar only had the initial of his Christian name. Rebecca Jane was buried in the Histon Road Cemetery (which had opened in 1842 primarily to provide for non-conformist burials and was originally called the Cambridge General Cemetery) in the plot, adjacent to the path from the Histon Road entrance to the chapel, that Robert had reserved for himself and Hannah. The first family member to be buried in the cemetery, three years previous to Rebecca Jane's burial, was Robert's nephew John Peters in a plot near the SW corner of the chapelⁱ.

The 1851 Census records show Robert and Hannah with their four remaining children, all in employment, residing at Northampton Street; Robert described as an assistant overseer and registrar of births. The following year elder son, Theophilus William, married Julianna Chamberlin in the Independent Chapel Yarmouth, in Norfolk (her father was also a shoemaker). Between 1853 and 1861 she and Theophilus William would have six children; the only grandchildren that Robert and Hannah would have, despite two other of their children also marrying.

His duty as the assistant overseer of St Giles required Robert to attend an inquiry in Jan 1853 by the Examiner of Petitions upon Private Bills held in a committee room of the House of Commons regarding a project for the supply of water to Cambridge. Robert's evidence was a minor matter concerning the exact location of the parish boundary where it adjoined St Mary the Great and St Botolph parishesⁱⁱ.

Robert spoke at the inaugural meeting of the Castle District Reading Society in 1854, the purpose of the society being *to establish a reading room and library for the working and other classes residing in the parishes of St Giles, St Peter and St Clement*; the society in addition would arrange lecture

programmes. At the first annual meeting a year later he is identified as a committee member and successfully proposed a rule change to prohibit conversation and smoking in their reading roomⁱⁱⁱ.

Robert's salary as a collector for the Improvement Commissioners remained at £50 {£37k}^{iv} pa until 1855. Then the Commissioners found themselves in the uncomfortable position wherein two of their collectors, including Robert, were on fixed salaries, but the third collector's salary was based on 'poundage', that is the amount collected. Since the Commissioners had determined that the improvement rate was to increase from 6d to 8d in the pound, this latter collector would receive an inequitable one-third increase in salary. It was only a year later, when the improvement rate was raised again to 12d in the pound, that Robert's salary was increased to £70 {£52k} pa. Two years later, with a reduction in the rate back to 8d, Robert saw his salary reduced to £60 {£45k} pa^v.

The 1856 Cambridge Award Act (see Part Two) was to cause problems for Robert. The Act required the Board of Guardians to pay the parish officers from a common fund. The problem for Robert was that when the Poor Law Board was set up, twenty years earlier, the appointment of rate collectors and assistant overseers had been made by the parishes; thus Robert could not be considered a Board employee and could therefore no longer be paid by them. The obvious solution, as suggested at the Board meeting, was for Robert to resign from the positions in the parishes and for the Board to re-appoint him. Robert was apparently reluctant to do that, presumably because there was a Tory majority on the Board and he risked losing some, or all, of the offices (which would have had a considerable financial impact); this concern was also raised by a Board member. It is unclear how, at that time, the issue was resolved. For it was to return in 1863 at which point Robert, apparently, willingly resigned the parish offices and was re-instated by the Board - perhaps there was then a Liberal majority on the Board^{vi}.

The 1861 Census has Robert and Hannah at 29 Northampton Street; he described himself as a rate collector and registrar of births and deaths. With them were just: eldest daughter Hephzibah, described as a collector's office keeper - obviously supporting her father; and an Elizabeth Peters widow, visitor. This Elizabeth was most probably the widow of Robert's nephew John, the iron founder, who died in 1847 - the newspaper notice of his death stated: '*... leaving a widow and two children to lament their loss*'^{vii}; by 1861, however, both those children were also dead. Four months after the census, son Theophilus William died of tuberculosis aged 33 on 2 Aug at his residence of 16 Mount Pleasant, leaving his widow Julianna to raise their six children - she would move her family to Victoria Road and would remain there for over 40 years. Again, Robert was registrar for his son's death, but

this time daughter Hephzibah acted as the informant. Theophilus William was buried alongside his sister in the Histon Road Cemetery. Whether Robert needed to support his daughter-in-law and family is not known; however, Theophilus William, amongst other work, had been an actuary who was an agent for the sale of life assurance^{viii}, perhaps he had had the foresight to take out a policy himself.

Robert's wife Hannah died on 4 May 1862 at the age of 69, now back at 26 Northampton Street; the death certificate (again informant Hephzibah and registrar Robert) identified that she had had heart disease for many years and had suffered from water retention in the abdomen and the whole body for the preceding five months. The following year Robert and Elizabeth Peters, widow of Robert's nephew John and 22 years Robert's junior, married at Shoreditch, London; why they chose to be married in London, rather than Cambridge, is not known.

In 1864 there is record^{ix} of Robert resigning from the position of assessor of Land and Assessed Taxes for the district comprising the parishes of All Saints, St Clement, St Giles, St Peters, and Holy Sepulchre. No record has been found of his appointment; however, he does refer to the assessment activity in evidence given at an 1853 inquiry (see earlier). At age 66, this is the first sign of Robert starting to reduce his arduous workload and was the start of a gradual shedding of activities. Three years later, when approaching his 70th birthday, Robert resigned as rate collector and assistant overseer for the parishes of St Clement, St Giles, St Peter and Holy Sepulchre, whilst retaining these offices for three remaining parishes^x. The reason he gave was that the increased work under the 1867 Reform Act (which increased the size of the electorate) would be too much for him. His successor would be paid about £80 {£56k} for that work in the four parishes. The following January a dinner and presentation took place at the Pickarel Inn in honour of Robert given by the ratepayers of the parishes from which he had recently resigned. About twenty gentlemen attended the dinner and sixty subscribed to the presentation of a solid silver tankard and an ink-stand, with a total value of £20 {£13,000}. They were inscribed: '*Presented to Mr Robert Peters by the ratepayers of the parishes of St Giles, St Peter, St Clement, and the Holy Sepulchre, in acknowledgement of his faithful and kindly services for thirty years, Jan 1868.*' In his acceptance speech Robert noted that whilst collecting the rates for the seven parishes the Board of Guardians had required a bond of £2,500 {£1.6M}, '*which he was never wanting, by kindness of his friends*'^{xi}. The Apr 1869 elections to the Board of Guardians brought a change of majority (from Tory to Liberal) to the board. At the following Board meeting there were complaints of drunkenness concerning the two St Andrew the Great vote collectors, one of whom was named Robert Peters. This being comprehensively reported in the town's

newspapers, 'our' Robert felt compelled to write to the clerk to the Guardians to state that he was not the individual involved, which the clerk confirmed to be the case, and was reported in the press.^{xii}

The 1869 Post Office Directory shows Robert (and Elizabeth) still at 26 Northampton Street. Robert's widowed sister, Jane Thompson, died in 1870 at 3 Cross Keys Yard. Three years later, his spinster niece, Eliza Peters, died at the same address. In both case Robert placed notices of their death in the newspaper and arranged burials in the Histon Road Cemetery. Robert was an executor of Eliza's will, and since his sister was then dead, he was the sole beneficiary of Eliza's estate, valued at under £450 (£270k).

Thirty three years after assuming the office of Registrar of Births and Deaths Robert tendered his resignation in 1870. He was superseded by his son Ebenezer. The report of the proceedings^{xiii} noted the clerk stating: 'the average value of the appointment did not exceed £12 (£7,000) [pa], sometimes it might be £10 (£6,000) ...' A year later, in Apr 1871, Robert resigned his rate collector position for the Improvement Board^{xiv}.

1871 Census has Robert and second wife, Elizabeth, at 2 Spring Terrace (on Chesterton Road), described as a rate collector, with a 14 year old servant, Elizabeth Holloway. This is the only recorded occurrence of the household having a servant and might be associated with the onset of a disease of the spine which Elizabeth suffered from around 1865 (according to her later death certificate) which presumably was progressively debilitating. Elizabeth died in 1877 and was also buried in Histon Road Cemetery, not in the grave of her first husband, John, in which their two daughters were also interred, but in the grave containing the remains of Robert's sister Jane and niece Eliza. That is somewhat surprising as in 1859 Elizabeth had purchased a 20 year reservation on the grave, making it private - perhaps Robert was unaware^{xv}. Two years previously Robert's second son, Ebenezer, had died of (again) tuberculosis; somewhat ironically, for he had been the registrar of the cemetery for ten years, his is the only close family members' grave not to be marked with a gravestone.

At the age of 80, in Jun 1878, Robert finally retired; he resigned as rate collector and assistant overseer for the parishes of St Benedict, St Mary the Great and St Michael. The Board of Guardians' meeting noted that his resignation was due to failing health and that his tenure had been 40 years. He had had a working life of at least 65 years, possibly a year or so longer - for we do not know the age at which he started his apprenticeship as a boot and shoe maker.^{xvi} On 16 Dec 1880 Robert Peters died at home at 2 Spring Terrace where he then lived with his daughter Hephzibah; the cause being given as a strangulated inguinal hernia and exhaustion after a short illness. Present at his death were son-in-law Frederick Scruby (who reported the

death), and almost certainly his two remaining children, Hephzibah and Tryphena Scruby. Robert died at the age of 82, he had outlived his siblings, both wives and three of his children; he had seen four of his six grandchildren marry. The 18 Dec Cambridge Independent Press put his name first in its lists of deaths, other records being in alphabetical order after his. The following week's edition, 25 Dec, provided an obituary:

The death of the late Mr. Robert Peters must not be allowed to pass without reference in these columns, as, though he filled a somewhat humble sphere in life, he was a man universally esteemed. He was the predecessor of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, as pastor of the Baptist Church at Waterbeach, residing at the same time at Cambridge, where he filled various public offices. He was, until a recent period, one of the collectors under the Improvement Commissioners, and there was scarcely an audit during his tenure of the office that he was not specifically complimented on the satisfactory state of his accounts and the smallness of his arrears. As a politician, he was an earnest and consistent Liberal. The surviving men of his time will remember how his energies were called forth during the struggles for Parliamentary and Municipal Reform. As a Christian citizen, his life has been consistently spent. His funeral took place in the Histon-road Cemetery, on Tuesday last.

Robert was buried in the same plot as his first wife Hannah and children Rebecca Jane and Theophilus William; daughter Hephzibah would later also be interred there. The grave is marked by a truncated square column. Robert's will was proved at Peterborough in Jan 1881, with a personal estate in the tax-band of under £2,000 {£1M} ; that would be resworn nine months later in the tax-band of under £3,000 {£1.5M} - given that he 'filled a somewhat humble sphere in life' he had, through hard work, amassed a considerable estate^{xvii}. His executors were daughter Hephzibah, son-in-law Frederic Scruby and grandson Herbert Julian^{xviii}. The beneficiaries were his two daughters, Hephzibah and Tryphena, the widow (Juliana) and children of his late son, Theophilus William. His estate included fourteen properties, no doubt purchased to diversify his savings as they accrued and to provide an income in retirement. Of these only one remains standing: 5 Saint Peter's Street in St Giles; whether this is the property he lived in between 1842-45 is not known. The other properties were also in St Giles: the eleven two-room tenements comprising Porcher's Yard, Shelley Row, and two adjacent Shelley Row properties. His real estate was worth about £340 {£170k}^{xix}. The Porcher's Yard tenements were intended by Robert to be sold to make good the various monetary bequests of his will; however, they were retained by Hephzibah, in whose will they passed to Tryphena. The Porcher's Yard and Shelley Row properties, together with three in Cross Keys Yard, were

put to auction in 1909 after Tryphena's death; the sale advert^{xx} stated that they attracted a gross rental of £99 {£45k}. Whilst it is not known when Robert purchased the Porcher's Yard properties, their ownership discredits his name. In 1847, 1849, 1879 and 1886 (and most probably on other occasions) the Improvement Commissioners received reports of tenements, including Porcher's Yard, being unfit for human habitation^{xxi}, and whilst notices were sent to the owners (including Robert and later Hephzibah) it would appear that no action was taken by Robert. Whilst for all his merits, and as his obituary stated that he was a man universally esteemed, it seems an inescapable conclusion that Robert had also been a slum landlord.

This is not quite the end of Robert Peter's story - there would be some sort of legacy in terms of the influence he had on successor generations. It is likely that Robert's move away from trade to clerical work influenced both his sons to follow a similar employment path that led them to become accountants; both, however, died relatively young. Of Robert's four grandsons, two would do clerical work and two became tradesmen; two of his great-nephews (grandsons of brother Thomas) would also become accountants, and there is good evidence to suggest that one, possibly both, started their careers with Robert's son, Ebenezer^{xxii}. Regarding religion, there is no evidence to suggest that either of Robert's sons were as passionate as their father; however, grandson Herbert Julian Peters (1857-1922) was to act as secretary to the Cambridge and District Free Church Council for over ten years^{xxiii}. Robert's political legacy would continue for three further generations. Son, Ebenezer, would follow in his father's footsteps taking the role of Liberal registration agent in Cambridge. Grandson Herbert Julian Peters, who was the chief clerk to the County Court, was president of the Chesterton Liberal Association. Then, Herbert Julian's son, Sydney John Peters (1885-1976), who was the first member of the family to attend university (graduating in law from Cambridge in 1907, and awarded a doctorate from Dublin in 1910^{xxiv}) practiced as a solicitor in Cambridge and served as Member of Parliament for Huntingdonshire from 1929-1945, initially as a Liberal and from 1931 as a Liberal National.

NOTES & REFERENCES :

- i The area around this burial plot would eventually have 14 members of the extended Peters family i in 7 graves, the last to be buried there being in 1968. However, the cemetery register (Cambridge Archives Ref: CB/2/SE/5/11) indicates that a further 11 of the extended Peters family were located in that part of the cemetery, apparently without grave headstones.
- ii Cambridge Chronicle and Journal (CCJ) and Cambridge Independent Press (CIP) of 29 Jan 1853.
- iii CIP of 10 Jun 1854, 14 Jul 1855 and 13 Mar 1858 - this latter reference identified that the reading society had ceased by 1858: '*which died a natural death at the close of the late [Crimean] war*' to be replaced by the St Giles Coffee and Reading Rooms in Magdalen Street.
- iv The modern equivalent of 19th C monetary values is given in curly brackets (as in Part 2) - see endnote i of Part 2.

- v CCJ of 21 Apr 1855 and 27 Mar 1858, and CIP of 12 Jul 1856.
- vi CIP of 17 Jan, 24 Jan, 14 Feb 1857, 3 Jan, 14 and 28 Mar 1863; CCJ of 7 Feb and 16 May 1857.
- vii CIP of 18 Dec 1847.
- viii CIP of 4 Nov 1854.
- ix CIP of 16 Apr 1864.
- x CCJ of 14 Sep 1867.
- xi CCJ and CIP of 25 Jan 1868. It is somewhat surprising that the Tory-supporting CCJ should carry a story on the event.
- xii CIP of 17 and 24 Apr 1869, and CCJ of 24 Apr 1869.
- xiii CCJ of 2 Apr 1870.
- xiv CCJ of 24 Jun 1871.
- xv See Cemetery Register entry #1163. That Elizabeth paid to make her family's grave private (presumably for her own later interment) indicates that space in grave plots could be allocated to anyone; although, in practice that does not seem to have occurred.
- xvi CCJ of 8 and 22 Jun 1878, CIP of 22 Jun 1878.
- xvii These figures do not include debts, although given that he was retired they are likely to have been few; nor do they include his real estate.
- xviii Whilst Herbert Julian Peters was not Robert's eldest grandson, as a county court clerk Robert might well have considered him best qualified to act as an executor.
- xix Calculated from 1909 rents, and partial auction value.
- xx CIP of 12 Mar 1909.
- xxi CCJ of 17 Apr 1847; CIP of 3 Feb 1849, 15 Nov 1879 and 5 Jun 1886. The 1909 sales particulars are held in Cambridgeshire Archive, ref: 515/SP379. They show that by 1909 the eleven tenements shared a yard which had a tap and four brick-built and tiled WCs for joint use - whether that was an improvement on earlier circumstances which labelled them unfit for human habitation is not known.
- xxii 'Ebenezer Peters - Part 2' in CFHS 'The Journal' of Autumn 2018.
- xxiii CIP of 7 May 1909.
- xxiv CIP of 1 Jul 1910.

You may recall, from the Summer 2020 issue, the 100th Birthday of "Corporal Marge" (who beat the late Captain Tom to that



milestone by three weeks). Well, the next milestone has been passed, and under far more joyful and relaxed circumstances than in 2020. No passing slices of cake through a half open window from the chilly garden this time.

Around the same time last year, I recall reading about a milestone-birthday person who lived in an upper floor flat, being "visited" by a very resourceful relative via a hydraulic cherry-picker!!

THE SPIRIT OF OVER

*a new local book by
CHFHS member*

Carolyn Redmayne

I've been a member of the society for many years, and have just written a book about my village of Over. It is called 'The Spirit of Over' and takes you on a journey through the village road by road, meeting families that once lived here, learning the history of some of the older properties, and the history of

the village from many primary sources. Various branches of my family have lived in Over since the late 1400s, and is where I was born and still live. The book is my way of recording the history of Over for future generations, as the 21st century takes us further away from our agricultural roots and turns us into a dormitory village.

The village of Over is approximately 9 miles north of Cambridge, and now lies on the edge of the Fens, following Cornelius Vermuyden's draining of the Fens in the mid-1600s. At Domesday, Over is recorded as being home to 35 peasant occupiers, but from archaeological evidence, the area has been settled since the Bronze Age, possibly longer. The population rose steadily, and by the 1560s, Over was the 'most populous village in Cambridgeshire, outside the Isle', with 123 households. Always known as the 'town' of Over, due to the diverse occupations of its inhabitants, it was primarily a farming community. Queen Elizabeth I made a survey of her Manor of Over in 1575, with the Commissioners recording that 'in times past many wet years happened together' causing great suffering to the villagers as 'they lost more by death and drowning of cattle than they gained by the Fens in three years'.

In 1607, William Camden wrote about 'fen men or fen dwellers', calling them 'rude, uncivil and envious to all others whom they call upland men'. He went on to say that 'stalking on stilts, apply their minds to grazing, fishing and fowling', and that is very much how Over would have been until the Fens were drained. Opposition to the draining failed, and the village of Over as we know it emerged from its watery surroundings. No doubt life was harsh, and without the extra income from fish and fowl taken from the Fen, much harder to support families and livestock. With the agricultural slump in the mid-1800s, orchards were planted throughout the village, with flowers and soft fruit being grown for sale in towns and cities, which was made possible by the arrival of the railway station at Swavesey in 1847. By 1885, 56 acres of orchard were recorded, increasing to over 300 acres by 1935, when the village was said to be 'surrounded by plum blossom'.

Making a living from the land was still hard, but Ivy Watts, born in 1893,

remembered her growing years as ‘a blissful time, we were rich in everything except money’. Family ties within the village, and loyalty to one’s employer were incredibly strong, and in the 1930s, when farming was at rock bottom, Slonnie Few continued to work for the Hemington family without wages. He stated that ‘the Hemingtons have stood by me, and I’ll stand by them’. Having worked for the family for over 60 years, Slonnie died at the advanced age of 98 in 1978.

In 1962, George Bavin Wayman returned to Over, the place of his birth and that of his ancestors, and in 1965 he recalled that ‘in spite of having been away for over 40 years, neither time nor distance makes any difference to my memories of this village, and what I like to think of as a special something, which might well be called ‘the spirit of Over’. George had hoped to write a book about Over in his retirement, recalling village characters and the qualities that made them memorable to him, but it was not to be, as after writing several chapters he ‘came to a stop when I realised that time, the ever rolling stream, had borne too many of its sons away’. George was my great uncle, and by the time he died in May 1969, he had passed down to me, a 12 year old child, his love of family and the village we call ‘home’.

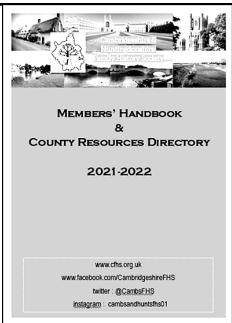
‘**The Spirit of Over**’ is my attempt at recording the village and its people, those who were ‘borne away’ many years ago, but who will now be remembered by the next generation of ‘Overites’, and those new to the village that they too call ‘home’. ‘The Spirit of Over’ will be available from June 2021; the ‘coffee table’ sized book contains 220 pages, and nearly 500 photographs. Priced at £25 (+P&P), £5 from each sale is to be donated to the Over Day Centre. Any profit made from the sale of the book, over and above the donation to the Over Day Centre, will be divided amongst other village charities and organisations.

Only to be available from the author.
To order your copy, please email
carolyn.redmayne@ntlworld.com

Carolyn Redmayne--April 2021

MEMBERS HANDBOOK & RESEARCH DIRECTORY 2021-22

**An new annual publication of useful information about
the society, and county records / resources
to complement the new-look journal is in preparation,
and will be distributed in the near future**



MY 16 GT GRANDPARENTS WERE ...

please see the Research Directory for further guidance on how to list the names. for consistency : names should be listed in the order described with Chapman Codes to denote counties etc (if a name/date/place is not known, show as "n/k")

from : Ray Weslford [5904]		
RIMMER william	1825	Formby LAN
McCARTHY mary	1828	Limerick LIM
FORBES william	1806	Dunkeld PER
GREENSHIELDS mary lindsay	1818	Carstairs LKS
ANSTEE william	1806	Hinton GLS
FLORIDA ann	n/k	Newport MON
BEASLEY henry	1814	Stretham SRY
TAYLOR carolyn ann	1815	Clapham SRY
TIVENDALE james	1826	Lundin Mill FIF
SKEEL janet	n/k	Lundin Mill FIF
STEVENSON david	n/k	York YKS
SHAW matilda	1819	Chesterton CAM
HARRIS john	1805	Southwark LND
LAING amelia	1814	Cults FIF
SPARKS george	1819	Elmdon ESS
HAYES ann	1830	Elmdon ESS

from : Peter Jackson		
JACKSON john	1808	Marylebone MDX
BUCKLAND louisa	1809	Marylebone MDX
AVES jeremiah james	1817	Burrough Green CAM
RULE susan	1818	Balsham CAM
BETTLES john	c1827	Hinwick BDF
TYE sophia	c1829	Hinwick BDF
MAYOCK john	1827	Bozeat NTH
HARRISON mary	c1830	Lavenden BKM
n/k	n/k	n/k
n/k	n/k	n/k
n/k	n/k	n/k
n/k	n/k	n/k
CLARKE richard	c1819	Charlton BRK
STACEY ann	c1817	Woodlands BRK
MAUNDER william	n/k	Quenington GLS
PURTON hannah	1825	Purton WLT

THE SOCIETY OF GENEALOGISTS IS MOVING ... *a recent announcement on the SoG website revealed their plans to relocate their library facilities from Charterhouse Buildings in Clerkenwell, London, to a new but as yet undisclosed, location in the London area. They will be closing for packing at some point, but their digitised collections and online events programme will be available throughout via their website. Subscribe to their newsletter to keep up-to-date with developments and their excellent selection of online talks.*

CHFHS @ THE REALLY USEFUL SHOW

SAT 10 APRIL



10 April saw the CHFHS Events Team in action again—and *another* virtual communication system to be mastered ! Having already used three if not four systems to facilitate online fairs, they are broadly similar and we picked this one up quite easily. Of the fairs we have attended over the past year, the bespoke software behind this, the second RUS, was perhaps the best so far. From the visitors' perspective, they were greeted with a simple “signpost”



indicating the four colour-coded zones of the fair : talks, exhibition hall, pre-booked ask the expert, and workshops. Once in a

selected zone, a simple <click> on a chosen icon took you to a “booth”, which displayed information about the organisation and gave the opportunity to engage in live chat via email, or join a pre-recorded talk or presentation.

It was, however, a fairly quiet day—but hey, we were competing with both The Grand National and lovely spring day for gardening—and, it was also “Corporal Marge’s” 101st Birthday (see p12)!! We welcomed and chatted with a few visitors with readily solved queries.

The biggest success of the day was, however, with “Finding Martha” from Steeple Gidding, the thrice married x3 gt grandmother of an enquirer. She and her widower second husband appear in 1851 at Gidding with a selection of children from both her first and second families—they then vanish. The understanding was that they went to America (which prompted recollections of the article in a past journal about emigrants' hand-cart journeys to the West), and we began searching records for possible candidates.

As researchers, we can be swamped by results from “all records” searches—using filters can help to reduce the list—but we also perhaps overlook that emigrants become immigrants, at destinations where records may pre-date ours. Basic search results may also seem vague or mis-spelled, so anything of potential interest should be checked out. Putting all this into practice turned up an immigrant couple with several children from “Steplegidden”, arriving “to join relatives” in AUSTRALIA—so much for going to America !!

WILLIAM HARRISON

The Pymore Poet

contributed by
Robin Pearl

William Harrison was born in Pymoor in 1794 the son of William and Mary. William went to school in Little Downham and his teacher was Mr Aspland. He was also taught by Reverend Law, Rector of Downham, who lent him works to read and this kindled his interest in

English poets and translations of the classical poets. His poetical career went on to last from 1814 to 1872.

William's father died in an accident when William was young. He married Rebecca Hills at Little Downham in 1823 and continued to live at Pymoor until 1831 working as a small scale farmer but became one of the early holders of the appointment of Officer or Superintendent of the Works of Burnt Fen District Drainage Commissioners: he was appointed in February 1831. In his interview for the job he was asked what he knew of the duties and he replied that he believed it was nothing, but that he had a head on his shoulders and could learn, and that he had a friend who had promised to advise him and that, if he were elected, he would serve them faithfully. He was unanimously appointed and moved to Prickwillow. His salary was to be £70 per annum "*with the allowance of the perquisites enjoyed by the late superintendent, except he is not to have the privilege of keeping cows, nor to have more than one horse. He is also restricted from keeping a breeding sow*". Harrison served the Commissioners loyally for 40 years until he resigned early in 1871 owing to his advanced age and increasing infirmities. The Commissioners voted him a pension of £40 per annum "*as a moderate provision for him after the employment of 40 years of the most useful portion of his life in the service of the District*". William composed the verse inscribed on the commemorative stone tablet placed on the south wall of the Lark Engine house in 1842.

The inscription on the Lark Engine House reads:

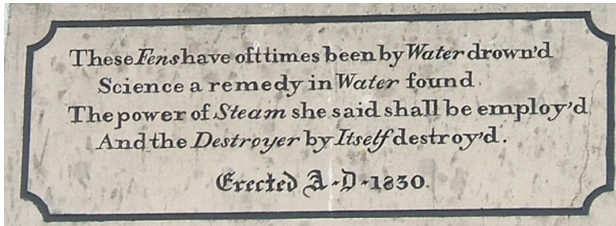
*In fitness for the urgent hour,
Unlimited, untiring power,
Precision, promptitude, command,
The infant's will, the giant's hand,
Steam, mighty steam ascends the throne,
And reigns lord paramount alone.*

Also, on his retirement, he presented a set of verses to his employers, who directed that they be annexed to the minute book.

The verses inscribed in the minute book are:

*Burnt Fen, farewell, for forty years
In calm and stormy weather
Through summer hopes and winter fears
We've travelled on together.
We took our fortunes as they fell,
The bitter and the sweet,
And might on scenes of pleasure dwell,
Or tales of grief repeat,
Our pleasant union now must cease
And have a final end,
Time will no more renew the lease
Or partnership extend.
Old age as judges appears in court
And steeled to all remorse
Proclaims on terms abrupt and short
The sentence of divorce.
Deign to accept my grateful thanks
For favours sought and found,
And may your engines, drains and banks
Still keep you safe and sound.
I've seen thee ride, Queen of the fens,
Improved on every side,
And through the work of other men
I shared the grateful pride.
Tis hard for two such friends to part
Tis like a funeral knell,
Remember it is through the heart
I say, Burnt Fen farewell.
That word divides the strongest tie
That binds the world to me,
And here my hopes and wishes are
Combined with thine and thee.
To thee the circling flight of time
Will vernal seasons bring,
But Man, poor Man, once past his prime
Can know no second spring.
In future what for me remains,
Awhile to pant for breath,
Old age and its attendant pains
Decrepitude and Death.
What then? God only sees and knows
And to His Will divine
My soul with resignation bows
And makes His pleasure mine.*

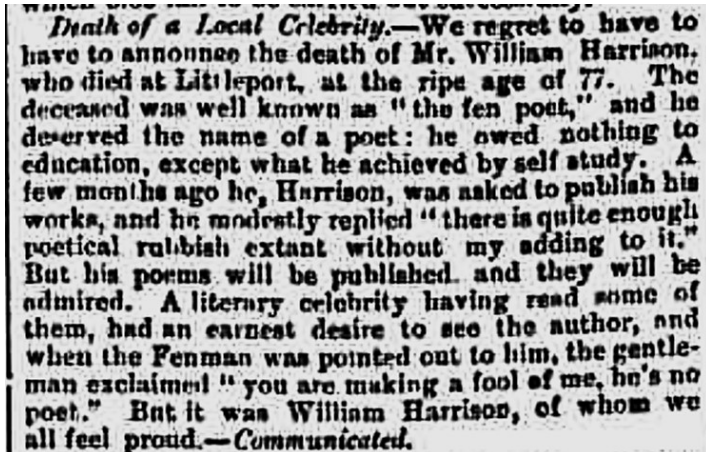
One of William's poems is there for all in the Parish of Little Downham to read inscribed on the Engine House at the Hundred Foot Bank:



In 1873 William Marshall, Esq, delivered a lecture at the Reading-room, Ely to a packed house, entitled "Our Fen Poet". Mr Marshall said that he was in possession of 6,000 lines written by William Harrison. He had recently contacted Williams son, Alfred, asking for more and received another 70 poems. Mr Marshall concluded his talk with the final stanza from William's poem "Poor Old Mole":

*When fleeting life shall reach the goal,
May I be found as fit to die,
As fit to die as poor old mole.*

William died in 1872 and was buried at Littleport.



There are several references to William's poems being published but there is not much material readily available. One of his poems "Clod's Complaint" can be read on the Pymoor CCAN website.

With extracts from "The Urgent Hour, The Drainage of the Burnt Fen District in the South Level of the Fens 1760-1981" by John Beckett

Robin Pearl

LETTER TO CHFHS FROM CANADA

received from
Lesley Kinch

I have just finished joining in the CHFHS Annual Meeting, my first one ever attended! And so I just wanted to write and let you know how much I really, really appreciate the Zoom meetings that CHFHS are doing. Absolutely fantastic!

I am so thrilled to be able to attend the zoom meetings, it is such a great opportunity for us to be able to participate. Family history is already a very interesting subject, but to be able to join in and hear other people talk who have the same interest just makes it so much more so. I have been a member since I don't know how long, maybe 2010? I live in Ontario, Canada and have been doing family history since about 2007, when my sister-in-law got me started, now, some 15 years later, she is no longer interested! For me? I can't get enough of it and wish I had more time to research properly!! I find it absolutely fascinating, going back into the past to discover the history and where we came from.

I was actually born in Bridgend, South Wales, but we lived in Southall, Middlesex until 1964, when my parents decided we were emigrating to Canada! As a teenager, I had no choice, parents said we were going and that was that! I have to say, my sister and myself were brutal, we both gave Mum & Dad a really hard time with it all. Everything worked out well, but of course, we still miss family "back home".

My boyfriend at the time, now my husband, decided to come with us, and Mum & Dad allowed it! We were not yet married and actually had only been going out with each other for about a year, he decided he didn't want to lose me and so came along! He was allowed to stay in our house sleeping in a room with my young brother; he was given a timeline of 3 months, by which time it was expected he would have found somewhere else to live. We were married two years later, so now 54 years married - quite the love story!

My husband Peter comes from a large family of 8 surviving children, his Dad, born in Ireland, and his Mother in Reading, Berkshire. In researching family history, we discovered his great grandmother was born in Isle of Ely.

My Dad came from Norwich and went to London during the war which is where he met Mum and the story goes from there. Dad always said he didn't have very many relatives, that two of his sisters died of diphtheria, very young, and so it was only he and his sister.

How amazed we were to find in researching the TRACEY family, that it turns out his great grandparents had 15 children! Of course, not all survived and

the surname changes were incredible - all we believe, possibly down to a speech impediment, when pronouncing the name, which follows through in our family to this day. How amazing is it that both families originated just miles from each other, my husbands in Cambridgeshire and mine right next door in Norfolk.

I have always wanted to attend an actual Society meeting, but to time it when visiting family, somehow never worked out. We did come to Cambridge one year, rented a car, and found our way to a building on Cherry Hinton Road, but after our "hair raising" navigation through the streets of Cambridge, while always remembering to drive on the left, the building was closed! Trying to fit in as much as possible, plus visiting family, meant that we did not have time to go back.

On another visit with my sister, we went to March I believe it was and into the Isle of Ely Museum? I even have a picture of the "Isle of Ely" sign which was in the entrance to the building. I remember we did look into some very interesting records, however, once again more time is always needed. How lovely it would be to still live there and be able to take a day or weekend trip to the area and browse at leisure.

Of course, we all have that problem now, but thankfully with the Zoom meetings, I can attend any and all meetings that are held courtesy of the History Society. As long as I work out the time correctly that is of course! Having missed a couple of talks, simply because I didn't work out the time properly, and sometimes getting up at 5 or 6 am isn't always a joy!! I sometimes find it confusing, like the time I joined the "Really Useful Family History Show", and no worries about missed talks, because I had a week to still go online and view the talks. Me, being me, leaving it to the very last day, sit at the computer, ready to watch the final talks, and it tells me, sorry, this show is now closed. Why? Its not 11 pm yet? Of course! Its 11 pm England time, not Canada!! Missed it!!

I have learnt so much with all the different talks, both with what to do with my family history research, how and where to search for different records and of course a fabulous way of how to keep track of what information I have using an Excel spreadsheet. Amazing!! Certainly, in putting all this information into the spreadsheet I have discovered a few errors, yes, but also have discovered more and more information, that I didn't realise I had. I have even learned history about Cambridge and have seen what the streets look like. All of which I never would have seen if not for Zoom.

So many interesting talks and so much interesting information and I thank you so much! I would like to offer if anyone needs any information from this end of the Commonwealth!! If there is anyone who may have links to my area, if I am able, I would endeavour to get information for you. I live in

Brampton, Ontario, which is very near to Toronto International Airport. Toronto is about a ½ hour drive, but I would be willing to travel within a 2-3 hour or so radius, if I can be of any help to anyone. Just drop me an email at: Lesley.kinch@sympatico.ca

In closing I would just like to mention if anyone has any links to my husband's family, perhaps they could also contact me :

Charlotte/Charlotta/Charloota LINSTEAD, (b 1853?);
her father, Francis Henry Humphrey LINSTEAD (b 1820?)
her mother, Ann JARRED (b 1826)
Francis' father was William LINSTEAD (b 1791; died 1874 Wisbech),
mar 1815 in Stanhoe, Norfolk, Ann HUMPHREY (b1801?)

A lot of question marks I know. From what we have discovered, we also know that Charlotte gave birth (no father named) to a son Francis Henry Humphrey LINSTEAD b1878.

I do hope that even once this COVID stuff is over, that the Society will continue with the Zoom talks, albeit I would imagine not being held as often. If any of us can say something positive came out of this it is the fact that we can meet on line virtually, it is so nice to see the same people at the different meetings, even though I am in Canada I feel I now belong! I am beginning to recognise and look for different people, and am feeling that I now know who David Copsey is, and Muriel, and Caroline and Gill and I have to say, I always look to see if Ilene is there from Texas, I wonder if she has as much trouble as I do in keeping the time straight!

Thank you, thank you, thank you CHFHS
Lesley Kinch
Member #5167 (I think?)

“Britain’s Biggest Dig” on BBC iPLAYER

If you missed this first time round—it's on iPlayer for another 3 months or so, and is well worth a look. This 3-part documentary followed archaeological digs accompanying the HS2 rail project, and significantly for us, is not about the Romans or pre-history, but covers the excavations of vast Georgian and Victorian cemeteries near Euston Station and in Birmingham, respectively.

The researchers have linked contemporary records and burial registers, and compiled stories to illustrate the life and times of a few of the thousands of folk buried in these cemeteries. Stories which have been set against the wider local and social history of their era in both localities. This is well-recommended for the fascinating insights offered into the lives of our ancestors, not just in those specific areas, but the urban setting in general—

—get some popcorn and binge-view all three in one evening !!

Our publicist, Marie, has “volunteered” these contributions—
—tweet-length responses to a selection of questions on her interests.

If you'd like to contribute your response “tweets” for a future journal ...
... just send to editor@cfhs.org.uk for the questions template. Thanks

How long have you been researching, and what first sparked the interest in family history :

I have been researching my family history for around 25 years. I started really young at about 15 years old as was fascinated by my great aunt's cottage and the fact she had no TV and her toilet was outside. I was always asking questions when visiting her and when she passed away, I was given cases of photos and diary's from the 1940's. With these items I was able to quickly start plotting out my family history.

How many direct ancestral families are you following – 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 (or even more ?) :

I am following direct lines as much as possible. Have between 32 and 64 direct lines on the go

In which area(s) of the country do your main interests lay :

I'm really lucky in that both my father's paternal and maternal lines are in Cambridgeshire (Elsworth, Bourn, Knapwell, Over, Dry Drayton, Boxworth) which is also where I live. Having the Cambridgeshire Archived within a 20 minute drive away in Ely is great to be able to confirm family stories.

Any interests abroad, and where :

Hardly any!! They all must have loved Cambridgeshire so much, they never left! Just my granddad's brother who emigrated to New Zealand in the 1980s.

Which family line have you had most success with :

It has to be my dad's side of the family, mainly the Webb's. I managed to find the records really easily thanks to the Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire Family History Society Parish Record CD's. I went to one of their Family History days and purchased a few. From there I was able to go back 6 generations almost instantly.

Do you have a “favourite” individual ancestor/relative, or family group, and why :

That has to be my great aunt, Alice Barnes; she was an amazing woman. One of 9 siblings, the youngest being my nan. Their parents died when my nan was young, and so Alice took it upon herself to bring them up sacrificing having children herself. She worked as a domestic servant and helped Jonas Smith, Grocer of Over in Cambridgeshire, and ended up being given his cottage in his will when he passed away. Alice was well known in the village for having geraniums in her windows, and was a much loved resident.

Do you read any family history magazines (past and present), and which is/was your favourite :

Yes too many! My favourite magazine was 'Practical Family History', no longer in print. I subscribe to 'WhoDoYouThinkYouAre' and 'Family Tree Magazine'.

Do you belong to any family history, or related, organisations :

I am the Publicity, Newsletter Editor and Social Media Officer for Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire Family History Society. I am also a member of the society.

Which county/other archives or events have you visited in the past 5 years – good experiences ? :

I love going to family history fairs both local and national. 'WhoDoYouThinkYouAre Live' was my favourite being able to listen to celebrities' stories; I've missed them these last few years. Virtual events are great, but nothing beats the noise of people talking to complete strangers about their family history, gaining valuable information from experts and listening to the fantastic talks and workshops.

How do you keep your own notes – paper-based, computer (which software) or a mix :

Mainly on Ancestry, however I am slowly transferring all the data I've gathered onto my own spread sheets and writing a couple of stories too. A couple of years ago I made a photobook for my dad for father's day, all about the life of Alice Barnes, he loved it.

Do you have an online family tree or your own FH website; do you collaborate with others :

I haven't but would love to create my own family history website.

Which do you use/prefer – FindMyPast, Ancestry, FamilySearch, TheGenealogist, MyHeritage, or another :

They all have their own plus points. I love FindMyPast for the newspapers. I've found many wedding announcements and the detail they used to go into is amazing—from who attended, to what the outfits were, to the gifts they received.

Thank you, Marie

Not quite the "Le Tour ..." from Cambridge Evening News - 2 Jul 1898

Despite the reported slump in cycles the ingenuity of makers in improving and adapting the steel horses to the want of riders shows no abatement. In Royston two smartly attired young ladies caused no little excitement as they proudly careered down High Street. Their ingenious double take appears to get over all the complaints against the unsociability and dangerousness of all other makes. It consists of two ordinary machines, connected side by side. The first thing that impressed itself was what a capital machine it would be for teaching nervous beginners. Another great advantage was displayed when one of the young ladies suddenly dismounted, the other lady was left seated upright on her machine which retained its perpendicularity.

LOCALS IN C19th BIRMINGHAM ?

A postscript from p22 :

The “Biggest Dig” documentaries about the cemetery archaeology projects for HS2 in London and Birmingham got me thinking. The findings, and, in particular, the

backstories which have been compiled by the programme’s historians about a selection of the discoveries, provide a fascinating overview of past lives and history—and offer all sorts of insights which we, as family historians, can draw on. Could some of our ancestors have had similar life experiences ...

In both projects, especially London, many burials are individually identifiable from coffin name plates (including that of the explorer Matthew Flinders, whose grave had been “lost” since the 1850s)—far far more, however, are not. Inner-urban cemeteries were great levellers and contain the full cross-section of society—the wealthy, the poorer and those in between, all side-by-side in crowded plots which were usually used numerous times.

The question here is—what are the chances of someone from our counties being among the “residents” of either of these cemeteries? In Birmingham, at least, it’s probably quite high. An overview survey of censuses (via

CENSUS	Cambs-born	Hunts-born
1851	122	63
1861	174	86
1871	181	106
1881	224	95
1891	183	60
1901	184	76

FindMyPast) by ‘residence’ and ‘birth county’, shows quite a few Cambs-born and Hunts-born people in the Birmingham Reg. District (which effectively covered the whole town centre).

<https://www.familysearch.org/mapp> shows something of the complex evolution of parishes in that part of

the town. St Martin, dating from the 1550s, was the ancient parish of market town Birmingham and has since been subdivided several times to include east-of-centre St Philip (1708), St Bartholomew (1847) and St Peter (out of St Philip, in 1827). The Park Street Cemetery lies in the midst of this eastern area and was established in 1810 as an overflow for St Martin; it was closed in 1872. However, archive catalogue and google searches to locate Park Street burial registers proved inconclusive. The search did turn up an article in ‘*Archaeology Today*’ (4 Nov 2019), which implies there were no separate cemetery records, and that all the burials were only recorded in registers of surrounding parishes. An enquiry to the Archives has recently confirmed this.

So, it does look as though at least some of our “locals” could have lived in this area, and may, by association, have ended up in Park St.

To be continued—

REALLY USEFUL SHOW

Fri 12 & Sat 13 Nov
2021



a third event from the Family History Federation

<https://www.fhf-reallyuseful.com>

2 days this time ... what's going to be on offer
... choose from a varied selection of informative talks
... drop in on FHSs from your area(s) of interest country-wide
... perhaps ask them a question about records of your ancestors
... chat with commercial traders & other historical organisations
... book an "expert session" to try and solve that difficult problem

**we'll be there to help with all your queries
drop in and chat with us (email or zoom)**

The Family History Show Online

25 SEPTEMBER 10-4.30

talks programme, experts panel & participating organisations to be finalised
further details & tickets from <https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com/online/>

AT THE TIME OF WRITING (late June)

Unfortunately, it's still too early to say when we'll actually be able to restart Face-2-Face Meetings and Research Surgeries. We're currently working towards September with the programme as advertised here—and, if the technology co-operates—offer a combination of zoom and F2F.

We'll announce the final arrangements nearer the time via the website, our facebook page and the Aug/Sept Newsletters. If you don't yet receive the monthly Newsletter, visit the website and join the mailing list to get the updates and news delivered automatically to your in-box.

MARCH BRANCH PROGRAMME	<u>1st Tuesday</u> of the month at 7.00pm March Library. March enquiries : march@cfhs.org.uk
July & August : no meetings	
7 Sept : “Dating Old Photos”	<i>with Tom Doig</i>
5 Oct : “Getting The Best from Newspapers & Directories”	<i>Ian Waller</i>
2 Nov : “Victorian Law & Order”	<i>with Charlotte Paton</i>

RESEARCH SURGERIES—scheduled locations/dates/times
 CHFHS volunteers hold regular help & advice sessions at society meetings and at public libraries around the county
 there are no charges for these services
enquiries : secretary@cfhs.org.uk

Cambridge Library	2 nd Sat each month at meetings	once face-2-face meetings are able to recommence	dependent on libraries fully re-opening	drop-in between 10.30 & 3.30
March Library	every Tues	when access allows every week		10.00-4.00
Ely Library	3 rd Wed alternate mths	when access allows Jan / Mar / May Jul / Sep / Nov		10.00-4.00
Bar Hill Library	3 rd Mon alternate mths	when access allows Jan / Mar / May Jul / Sep / Nov		10.00-4.00
Cambourne Library	3 rd Mon alternate mths	when access allows Feb / Apr / Jun Aug / Oct / Dec		1.30-4.30
Cottenham Library	3 rd Mon each month	continuance to be confirmed		7.00-9.00
Norris Museum St Ives	<i>A new drop-in Research Surgery is to be established as soon as circumstances permit ... look out for further news Hopefully to be 3rd Wed of alt mths (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec)</i>			

**HUNTINGDON BRANCH
PROGRAMME**

3rd Wednesday of the month at 7.00pm
Zoom or WI Hall, Walden Rd., Huntingdon
enquiries : huntingdon@cfhs.org.uk

Thurs 21 July	No meeting
Thurs 18 Aug	Queen Victoria's Coronation in Cambridge <i>with Tamsin Wimhurst</i> Via Zoom : to attend, please self register via the website
Thurs 15 Sept	topic to be confirmed Zoom (? and "live")
Thurs 20 Oct	topic to be confirmed Zoom (? and "live")

Received from the Cambridgeshire Collection :

Dropping in — you are now able to drop in to use the Cambridgeshire Collection whenever Cambridge Central Library is open. You can find those hours at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/directory/listings/Cambridge-Central-Library>. However we cannot guarantee a space for you as social distancing rules are still in place. Please note the study space is only available for people using our resources. The Cambridgeshire Collection staff will not be present after 5pm.

We suggest you make an appointment to ensure a seat

Appointments — drop-in access can't be guaranteed owing to social distancing guidelines, an appointment would ensure a seat especially if you have limited opportunities to visit

Mon, Wed and Fri : 10am to 11:45am, 12:15pm to 2pm & 2:15pm to 4pm
Tues and Thurs : 12 noon to 1:45pm, & 2:15pm to 4pm
The 2nd Sat of each month: 10am to 11.45, 12.15 to 2pm & 2:15 to 4pm

Email us at Cambridgeshire.collection@cambridgeshire.gov.uk to make your appointment, or phone us on 01223 728519.

Your appointment must be confirmed by a member of staff.

Please let us know in advance what you would like to look at so we can have it ready when you arrive. You can check our catalogue at <https://cambridgeshire.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/MSGTRN/WPAC/HOME>

CAMBRIDGE BRANCH PROGRAMME

2nd Saturday of the month from **10.30am**
Zoom or 3rd Floor, Central Library, Cambridge
enquiries : programme@cfhs.org.uk

JULY : Zoom ... rearranged to Fri 9 July & Wed 21 July [tbc], both 7.30

A Genealogical Tour Around Cambridgeshire with Caroline Norton
Our "patch" has quite a complex genealogical history, and as with any area of interest, it's useful to consider the real-world against which the records are set. We will take a virtual "tour" around the county to look at how the key records are arranged and distributed, and at the resources out there to help find/access the records. In principle, most of the topics covered could be considered "transferable", and would be broadly applicable to research in most other counties.

Similar arrangements to previous events—please self-register via the website

AUGUST 14 Sat : Zoom

12.00 A Genealogical Tour of Cambridge with Caroline Norton
Cambridge itself is also quite complex, genealogically-speaking, compared to many other county and market towns. We will take a virtual "tour" around the town and have a look at how the town has evolved since the early 1800s, and at the key records/resources which can help in our family history research.

Similar arrangements to previous events—please self-register via the website

SEPTEMBER 11 Sat : ?? Live & Zoom

12.00 Back Story : occupations & livelihoods with Caroline Norton
What our ancestors did for a living is a key aspect of the family's history, but finding much to say in a story isn't always easy. Some ideas to help tease out information.

14.00 DNA, Health, Trees and Adoptee Miracles with Cathal McElgunn
Many of us haven't yet ventured into using DNA to assist our researches or don't really understand what it's all about. Cathal's talk will help to explain some aspects of the subject and help you understand how research can benefit from DNA.

?? live meeting—alternatively, please self-register via website to attend via Zoom

OCTOBER 9 Sat : ?? Live & Zoom

12.00 Back Story : maps, directories, photos & local history with Caroline Norton
Some ideas for finding and using these resources to help enhance, illustrate and explain our families' stories, and set the scenes against which their lives "played out."

14.00 Cherry Hinton Road—then and now with Mary Burgess
We welcome back Cambridgeshire Collection librarian Mary Burgess with her latest tour of Cambridge street-scapes. This time we're to be taken along Cherry Hinton Road—once just a rural lane to a neighbouring village, now engulfed by the town. Mary will illustrate how the scene has evolved over the past hundred years or so.

?? live meeting—alternatively, please self-register via website to attend via Zoom

NOVEMBER 12-13 Fri-Sat : "Really Useful Show" ... come and join us !!

USING ZOOM—15 months on

“Zoom” has now been adopted by many individuals and organisations as a means of keeping in touch and maintaining a service—no less so than among family history societies to facilitate meetings and enable members to “attend”. In fact, the technology allows contact with a far wider audience than the traditional F2F meeting ever did. Attendees do need to register for meetings in advance—but as we’re limited to 99 attendees, it’s first-come-first served. So, why not give it a go ...

“PRACTICAL” ZOOMING—SOME NOTES FROM THE NOVICES—not all of us had bothered with or have needed to engage with fancy communications technology. A phone that makes calls and email might have sufficed, thus far. C-19, however, has been such a game-changer in so many ways, no less so than almost being obliged to take up “new ways of working” in order to keep up even in the domestic setting. Zoom has rapidly become main-stream in many walks of life by becoming the go-to means of “attending” a wide variety of activities from church services to doctor’s appointments and out-patient consultation, coffee mornings and chit-chats with groups of friends, exercise classes, school lessons, let alone working-from-home. Indeed, it’s become evident, during the past year, that Zoom has become very popular among many organisations, and it’s likely that people will want to continue Zooming even when “normality” returns.

The experiences of a cross-section of us complete novices, early in 2020, show that getting to grips with Zoom was not as difficult as was first imagined. However, one possible hitch is that an older computer etc might not have a webcam nor be compatible (we found that Zoom wouldn’t load on a Samsung tablet that’s just 4yr-old), that, and having a suitably adequate internet connection is also a necessity of course. The Zoom app for smart phones could be an alternative. You don’t have to actively participate in a meeting—by turning turn off the camera and/or microphone, you can easily just watch and listen only.

So if you haven’t done so yet—do consider getting equipped to Zoom because, undoubted, public life is perhaps unlikely to fully return to what we knew BC (Before Covid), Zoom is not going to go away, and if anything, more aspects of life and services will become “virtual”. You never know when the need for, say, a doctor’s appointment might arise and an initial Zoom appointment is offered first to save time. So, if by joining our Zoom sessions, you can learn and practice with the technology, and become familiar and at ease with its use in a relaxed and informal setting with friends ...

... then that can’t be a bad thing ...

**PIONEERS OF PRAHRAN
~ ELLIS FAMILY GRAVE ~
AT ST KILDA CEMETERY**

by
Vicki Salkin

**The
Story
Behind
The
Headstone**

This is a family of Prahran Pioneers. There are four people buried in the plot at St Kilda Cemetery, all from the Ellis family. The key person is Catherine Ellis, who was a Pioneer Woman of Melbourne. The two men are her sons, Robert and Joseph, and Ann Elizabeth is Joseph's daughter. As we can see from the words on the headstone, Catherine Ellis and her family were deeply religious people.

SACRED

TO THE MEMORY OF

ROBERT ELLIS

Who died May 22 1868

AGED 34 YEARS

Why do we mourn departing friends

Or shake at death's alarms?

'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends

To call them to His arms.

ANN ELIZABETH

DIED 3 AUGUST 1870

Aged 3 months

CATHERINE ELLIS

Died July 8 1875

Aged 71 years

JOSEPH ELLIS

Who died 2 April 1901

Aged 72 years and 4 months

A colonist of 62 years

John and Catherine Ellis and their family arrived in Melbourne in 1839, shortly after Melbourne was settled by Europeans. Sadly, their one year old

son James died on the journey to Australia. However their daughter Susannah was born on the ship in Hobson's Bay - this unusual birth place was a source of great interest for the rest of her life.

The family took up a quarrying business in what is now the Botanic Gardens. Compulsory schooling did not begin in Victoria until the 1870s, so before that time the children would share in the family's work. Martha, the eldest daughter, on the journey out to Australia was noted on the passenger list as a 'nursemaid', at the grand old age of 12.

Sadly, tragedy struck in 1841, when a fall of earth covered John Ellis and two sons. One son, Joseph, though seriously injured, escaped to raise the alarm. However, tragically the other son William John, aged 11, died immediately and the father passed away about 10 days later at home. They were buried in the Old Melbourne Cemetery.

After these tragic events, as you can imagine, the family was in financial distress, as well as grief. There is a record of charitable donations being raised to support the family, and support came in particular from Charles Joseph La Trobe, when he was superintendent of the Port Phillip Districtⁱ.

But Catherine Ellis was not one to stay down. She was one of Melbourne's pioneering women – an admirable woman, and a hard worker who took initiative. After the death of her husband, with her surviving children, Robert, Joseph, Martha and Susannah, she continued the quarrying business, and later turned to brick making. She is listed as a Pioneer Woman of Port Phillip, as she took out a pasturing licence in the county of Bourke in her own rightⁱⁱ. She sold the milk from her cows.

In about 1849 the family has moved to Prahran. They were some of the first residents in this area, and important to its early establishment. They arrived when Prahran had just a few homes, and was essentially bush, creeks and swamps.

They bought land near what is now Chapel Street, in some of the first land sales in Prahran, and the Ellis brothers built the family cottage with their own hands. The family were brickmakers in Prahran, and Catherine kept cows and had a milk round. When gold was discovered Joseph took to gold mining in 1852, bought a bullock team and carried provisions to the gold fields.

The Ellis family, and Catherine Ellis in particular, is inextricably linked to the formation of early Prahran. History books for the beginnings of Prahran show that the very first church services in Prahran were held in Catherine Ellis's home. One of the manuscripts written by another pioneer, a so-called '49er', says:

“... it was in her house [Catherine Ellis’s] that the first sound of Public Prayer and Praise was heard in Prahranⁱⁱⁱ”.

On Sunday afternoons, a Sunday School and service of worship were held in the family home. This was taken on alternate Sundays by Rev Morrison from the Eastern Hill Congregational Church in the city, and Rev Odell from West Melbourne. On some Sundays, the 22 year old William Moss attended services – he later became the pastor of the church, and was also an influential citizen in Prahran.

When the first church was built in Prahran, it contained stone provided by the Ellis family, and they undertook the cartage of materials. This Independent Church, near the corner of what is now Malvern Road and Chapel Street, is what gave Chapel Street its name. It was the only place of worship in Prahran for 2 years, and it was also the meeting place for other community groups^{iv}.

Catherine was a public-spirited woman. She was a founding member and vitally involved in the life of the Independent Church in Prahran. In addition, according to one historical account, the first public meeting was held in the Ellis cottage. This was to appoint a deputation to wait on William Moss’s employer, Mr Browning, to permit him to study for the ministry^v. As well as hosting the first church, the first school in Prahran was held in her home. One contemporary account describes it this way:

“It was in this hut where the first school was held by Mr. Masservy as master, and in the hut that the first Divine Service was conducted by the Rev. A. Morrison, minister of the Independent Chapel, Collins Street, a service to which all who attended brought their own seats^{vi}.”

Sadly, Robert Ellis, one of Catherine’s sons, died young. As we can see from the headstone, he was 34 years old. However he was already a well-known and loved person in Prahran, and an obituary reads:

“We have been desirous to intimate that to-morrow (Sunday) evening the Rev. W. Moss will take occasion to refer to the decease of the late Mr. Robert Ellis, one of the earliest residents in Chapel-street, and in whose cottage the rev. gentleman first commenced his ministration in Prahran. Mr. Ellis was interred in the St. Kilda Cemetery on the 25th ult, when the number of mourners who followed his remains to their last resting-place evidenced the esteem in which his character was held, and also their appreciation of his uniform kindness and unassuming manner whilst ever conscientiously supporting whatever he believed likely to benefit the districts in which his lot was cast^{vii}.”

Sadly also, Joseph’s daughter died at 3 months in 1870. Joseph died in 1901, himself having had a long and varied life, from quarrying to brick-

making to work on the gold fields. He was a colonist of 62 years.

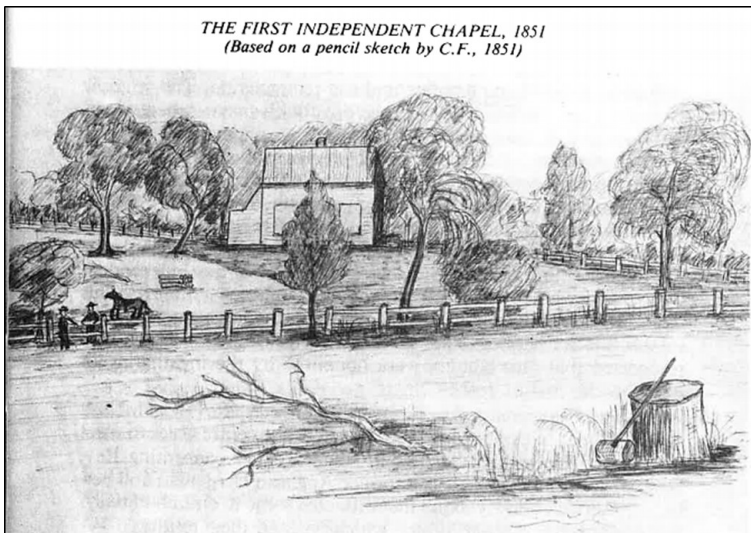
In 1875 Catherine Ellis died in the family home in High St, Prahran aged 71, having had a life of adventure, tragedy and of overcoming adversity by the power of faith.

Vicki Salkin

Great-great-great granddaughter of Catherine Ellis,
Pioneer Woman of Port Phillip

NOTES & REFERENCES

- i **Port Phillip Patriot and Melbourne Advertiser**, 'Advertising', 15 July 1841, p.1.
- ii R.V. Billis and A.S. Kenyo, **Pastures new : an account of the pastoral occupation of Port Phillip**, 1930, p122. See also R.V. Billis and A.S. Kenyon, **Pastoral pioneers of Port Phillip**. 1932, p64; and **Port Phillip Gazette and Settler's Journal**, 'Domestic Gazette', 23 August 1848, p. 2.
- iii Joseph Crook, **Narrative of the rise and progress of the Municipality of Prahran**. c1860.
- iv <http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/history/thematic-update-pp175-236.pdf>, Chapter 10, City of Stonnington, Community & Culture
- v Joseph Crook, **The early days of Prahran**. 1897.
- vi Joseph Crook, **The early days of Prahran**. 1897.
- vii **Telegraph, St Kilda, Prahran and South Yarra Guardian**, Saturday June 6 1868



This article was originally prepared for the Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV), and is also found at this link: <https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/rhsv-history-news-issue-339-dec-2018.pdf>

The Schools' "Blue Plaque" Project

Early last year, CHFHS began working with HistoryWorks, a local organisation dedicated to bringing history to "life" under their Director, Helen Weinstein. The particular project to which we have lent our support is one aimed at young people in schools—whereby an appreciation of wider historical issues is to be gained through participation in structured hands-on experiences and guided local exploration. This is to be an on-going project spread over 3 years, and once piloted in Cambridge, is to be extended to selected sites across the county (a significant condition of CHFHS's support was that the project shouldn't be seen as being solely "Cambridge-centric").

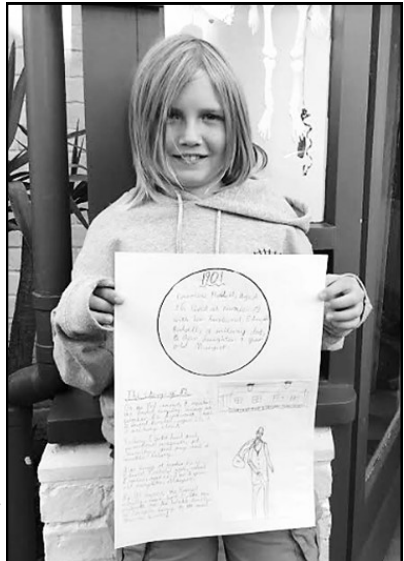
Here's a report on the progress of the first year of the project—

Victorian House Histories : Exhibiting the Past & Engaging Schools & Wider Community with Local History Sources

Helen Weinstein

Helen Weinstein, Director of HistoryWork has overseen the Victorian House Histories project funded by CHFHS and says *"I've a life-long commitment to sharing my interest in history. Two years' ago, talking to families in my area on history walks I was leading, I was struck that local primary schools were studying the Victorian era using London sources, rather than the history in our area. It turned out that this is because school teachers are not only time poor, but often do not have any historical training at primary level to help find sources and make their own resources, even though they've an opportunity to do a local history study with the older children in KS2, at primary school. Soon after, an idea was hatched to help teachers through meeting members of CHFHS at the Cambridgeshire Collection. We discussed how to engage local schools with source materials so that the teachers could be supported with local resources to make an immersive project that introduced teachers, children, their families and the wider community to history sources with funding from the CHFHS."*

**One Young Contributor
With Their Plaque**



Helen, therefore, liaised with teachers in primary schools to devise a project that started with teachers and students in the classroom, and ended with the students' work and history sources displayed as a public exhibition of blue plaques on the windows of Victorian houses and businesses. It also provided street walking trails that would be engaging for residents and the wider community walking along the streets to home or work or for leisure. The project has been very successful and gained local press coverage too.

In shaping the project, it was really important to liaise with the teachers to understand how they wanted the project to be developed—with clear objectives for each workshop, and a lesson plan with teaching inputs and activities specified. With CHFHS funding to produce resources that they would use in the classroom, and with Helen's presence and support in the first year, providing the ability to repeat subsequently. Importantly, because history is not allocated a significant amount of time in the curriculum, it was essential for teachers that this could be an immersive project. With language development, note taking and prose writing as core activities, a local history project could be cross-curriculum, additionally with developing narrative composition writing for English. Also, after meeting with the children and running some pilot sessions with them, it helped us to realize that this age group (9/10 year olds), needed the project to involve lots of activities for looking up information for themselves. Discussing it and helping one another to read the 'scratchy' handwriting made the project very participatory, with knowledge underlined via oral presentations in the classroom. The children loved the aim of having their work displayed, not only in school but in the public realm; with their census work and history narratives displayed in windows along streets close by their school.

Having developed the project with HistoryWorks to deliver to schools, Caroline Collard came to celebrate the launch of the exhibition : *“As History Co-Ordinator at St Matthew’s Primary School I am really pleased and excited by how this project has captured the imaginations of our pupils. It has helped to foster a real interest and curiosity about the people and places in our local area. It was great to see how the children used the research and ideas to create their own blue plaques, and I hope that the resources created will continue to be used and enjoyed by many more children in the future”*.

Workshops in the classroom focused on allowing the children to 'discover' places locally with significant source materials, which could easily be visited and seen—such as the local Victorian cemetery, with gravestones they could read and a website to explore; newspaper articles and pictures showing the Victorian railway line and station and steam engines and workers; other local businesses like brick making and candle-making trades; school buildings from the Victorian era, including a Ragged School; and the Workhouse. The children really enjoyed giving presentations to one another using the

resources I had made, with illustrations and further links provided online.

These overview workshops helped the teachers and children with their confidence to build on a knowledge of the area, before they found about specific Victorian house histories using parish records and the 1891 census. We chose the 1891 census because the area was developed after 1869 and only a few houses had been built by 1871, more by 1881, but almost all were built by 1891. Looking at maps and the pages of the census from each decade, allowed the teachers and their students to fully understand change over time, and the impact that the building of the railway line and station had across this area of Cambridge. Therefore, the first task we did with the census was to assign each student a house number and for them to transcribe the places where the occupants were born; to look up these places on maps, and then bring together all the information on a wall chart showing how far people had moved to live and work in the area.



Part Of The Display

Once the children had tackled this geographical mapping, using just one entry assigned from the census per student, an entire page of the census was given to each child for them to label them up. It was quite difficult for children to read the writing and learn the abbreviations, so we did this together:

like 'W' for Widow/Widower, 'S' for Single and '-do--' for Ditto. These words were written up on a white board, and we projected pages on the wall with a labelled template. The children really enjoyed having a kind of ownership of 'their' house. Transcribing the names and helping one another was a thrill in itself. They also enjoyed comparing the houses, noticing that few homes had only one or two people, and most had between five and nine. We knew that most of the houses were the same size with two rooms upstairs and two downstairs, and the children walked along the streets to view the houses; the large number of occupants did surprise many of the teachers as well as the students.

Following workshops focused on occupations, so as a class, these could be transcribed and understood. Online dictionaries of Victorian occupation were very useful. Many of the jobs like 'haberdasher' or 'sawyer' were all new

words for the children. They even found 'lodger' and 'boarder' new concepts, and we used the many examples we found to talk about poverty and how families needed extra paying guests to contribute to paying rent ,buying food, clothes and fuel.

Finally the children used their notes to design a blue plaque to represent what they had learnt from the census of 1891, with the key elements illustrated with a picture of an occupation or a family. Each child also had to write a longer narrative story to go beneath the blue plaque for the exhibition in order to allow their families, and the public passing by the display, to understand the significance of the historical sources. Due to the covid pandemic the children did not get to actually present each resident with their blue plaque for the windows, but via leafleting the ethos of the project was communicated, and a poster in the windows praised the school and gave links to CHFHS website for residents who wanted to find out more about how to engage in family histories.

There was a remarkable sight when walking along Ainsworth Street in Cambridge because over 100 houses were decorated with a blue plaque detailing who once lived there in the Victorian period. This first exhibition was only meant to be displayed for two weeks, but due to covid and the neighbourhood enjoying it so much, it stayed in situ for 2 months! Coverage was given by PTAs and school websites, and was covered by local press and history groups, who invited their members via facebook, so the window displays have had many hundreds stopping to read them. Subsequently, Hooper and Kingston Street have had all their Victorian houses covered too!

The public are really enjoying the exhibition too, many remarking that they've been surprised by the variety of occupations, including women's work, they see on the blue plaques. One resident says: *"This is so good to see the children's blue plaques telling the story of our neighbourhood's past. It could*



not have come at a better time when we have all been in lockdown for so long. It is giving an opportunity for us to converse with neighbours we've not seen for months, inviting family and friends to meet outside and chat

**Chair of MRHS,
Lucy Walker**

whilst enjoying looking at the exhibition together, a great way for the elderly to be outside with others and break this long period of isolation."

"What is so remarkable and entertaining, is that instead of a famous Cambridge figure of the Victorian era like Charles Darwin or Eglantyne Jebb, the plaques celebrate skilled working class residents such as a shoemaker, bootmaker, brickmaker, joiner, carpenter, dressmaker, needlewoman, sick nurse, laundress, teacher, printer, railway engine driver, guard, ticket collector, cook, police constable, brewer, shopkeeper. There are even many agricultural workers like dairy men and gardeners and gamekeepers. Also, the blue plaques show the huge number of children who attended local schools such as St Matthew's School Infants and Primary back in Victorian times, making this outdoor exhibition especially interesting to other children."

The blue plaque project and census exhibition would not have been possible without the support of the Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire Family History Society because the society funded resources to go into local schools, sharing copies of the Victorian census and parish records. David Copsey, Chairman of the Family History Society, helped HistoryWorks shape up the project and came to see the Blue Plaque exhibition on Ainsworth Street hosted by Helen Weinstein:



**David Copsey,
Chair CHFHS
with Teachers**



**David Copsey
with Helen Weinstein**

"I am thrilled to see the blue plaques that the children have made for every house along one street, to see every window and door covered with this outdoor exhibition. Talking to children, parents,

teachers shows how much enthusiasm and interest there is in the local community. I hope the appreciation of family and local history is something that the children will keep and develop throughout their lives.”

Tony Davies, Headteacher at St Matthew’s on coming to meet David Copsy and see the display, was astonished at how the community have embraced the exhibition, with all the houses from 1 to 110 participating on the first street participating in the Victorian House Histories project: *“This has been an amazing project for the school, helping children connect with local history that has immediate meaning for them. Hopefully that will be a start of a longer term interest in history for them. Walking down Ainsworth Street is a really touching experience, seeing how the community has supported the project and displayed the children’s work. I always wanted St Matthew’s to be at the heart of the community and this has been a fantastic way of bringing school and the wider community together. And in these times when so many people have felt so isolated, I hope it has played a part in bringing residents together too, seeing how we are all part of a shared history that is ongoing. Huge thanks to Helen Weinstein at HistoryWorks, and the Family History Society for supporting this work”.*

At the end of this first phase of the project in Cambridge, it has been heartening to see other schools coming to use the street exhibition as an outdoor classroom and to share the lesson plan and resources. The second phase of the project will be in the Isle of Ely, and we hope to take the same approach to have a cross-curriculum immersive project so that the teachers and children have a transformative learning experience, to also cascade



outside just school, and to share with their families and the wider public in a street exhibition. The next Headteacher who has asked to pilot the project for the Isle of Ely, is from Stretham Community Primary School, and heard about it via school teacher networks; we have teachers and children ready to commit time to the project in 2022.

The following year we expect to be in Huntingdonshire, so if you know a primary school with KS2 children studying Victorians who would benefit from bespoke resources covering the census, parish and newspaper records—

—do please get in touch with CHFHS.

Photos featuring children are reproduced with full consent and written permission of the parents, and was obtained by HistoryWorks prior to the exhibition and accompanying newspaper publicity

CHFHS SHOP : 20% OFF ALL CDS/DOWNLOADS

A SELECTION OF BOOKS AT BARGAIN PRICES

When the Camb FHS and Hunts FHS merged, the newly-minted CHFHS inherited a large selection of books (all new) from the HFHS. Some relate to Huntingdonshire towns and villages specifically, but many cover a broad variety of topics of interest to researchers.

The books are listed on both CHFHS and the ParishChest websites (enter parishchest.com and click on the CHFHS logo)

Note that although we can set the price of books, we have no control over the postage! In many ways it is worth ordering several books at once to be delivered together. (How's that for a sales pitch?).

To date we have already sold books to the USA and Australia so customers there have obviously thought it worth their while.

**THE STOCK IS FINITE—AND ONCE THEY'RE GONE,
THEY'RE GONE**

HUNTS RECORDS AS CDS

A SELECTION OF HUNTS TRANSCRIPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE AS CDS

(directly from the CHFHS Bookstall/Shop only)

PARISH REGISTERS, INDEXES, MIs

~~ some are searchable pdfs ~~

~~ some are photographs of typed pages of transcriptions ~~

see the new publications listing on the website

(find the link from our home page : shop>brochure)

The WisMus & Hunts Projects—newly added records

Some 24 new files have been added to WisMus since the last (summer) issue, and xx to Hunts

NB : the dates refer to the year of commencement of individual registers

WisMus Parishes :

			Walsoken	Marriages	1925
Clenchwarton	Marriages	1970	West Walton	Baptisms	1920
Emneth	Marriages	1969	West Walton	Baptisms	1920
Emneth	Marriages	1997	Wiggenhall St Germans	Banns	1933
Leverington	Baptisms	1936	Wiggenhall St Germans	Marriages	1940
Leverington	Marriages	1837	Wiggenhall St Germans	Mixed	1767
Leverington	Marriages	1954	Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalene		
Southea	Baptisms	1950		Baptisms	1848
Tilney St Lawrence	Banns	1923	Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalene		
Tilney St Lawrence	Marriages	1950		Mixed	1805
Tydd St Giles	Marriages	1948	Wiggenhall St Peter	Burials	1813
Upwell	Burials	1864	Wisbech St Mary	Banns	1946
Walpole	Marriages	1948	Wisbech St Peter	Banns	1787
			Wisbech St Peter	Marriages	1938

Project co-coordinator, Terry, updates progress of WisMus

There are 48 registers not yet released, they are all post-1950, so when transcribed they will not be available for online release owing to obligatory privacy restrictions.

A further 25 registers waiting to be transcribed — of which 12 are 1500s; 3 are 1600s; 1 is pre-1950; and 9 post-1950.

The transcribers are currently working on an additional 50 registers, of which 25 are completed and awaiting their final check. Some of these are post-1950, so again, are not allowed to be released online.

As it stands we have transcribed, checked and image-matched some 278,912 names from the completed registers.

HUNTS Parishes :

			Brington	Baptisms and Burials
Abbotsley	(all complete & online)		Broughton	Baptisms and Burials
Barahm	(all complete & online)		Buckden	Banns
Alconbury Weston	(baptism only)		Bury	Baptisms and Banns
			Conington	Baptisms and Banns
			Hartford	Banns
			Leighton Bromswold	Banns
& in progress are :			Little Gidding	Banns and Burials
Bluntisham	Baptisms		Little Raveley	Banns
Brampton	Banns and Burials			

MEETINGS REPORTS

**AT THE TIME OF WRITING, LIVE
MEETINGS MIGHT RESTART FROM
SEPTEMBER (WITH A ZOOM LINK)**

*SOME GUIDANCE NOTES TO HELP
USE ZOOM CAN BE FOUND ON P30*

WE ANTICIPATE BEING ABLE TO RESTART FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS & WILL BE PROVISIONALLY BOOKING THE VENUES AS AND WHEN—AND HOPE THAT LOCAL ATTENDEES WILL FEEL COMFORTABLE JOINING US (NB: FACE COVERINGS WILL NO DOUBT BE NECESSARY). WE'RE ALSO LOOKING TO CONTINUE TO FACILITATE WIDER ZOOM PARTICIPATION

THE MISTS OF TIME: SOURCES FOR MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN GENEALOGY

*WITH NICK BARRETT
(RAMSEY BRANCH : APRIL)*

Nick Barrett started his talk by stressing the importance of groundwork – pulling together all the clues that you have. We need to identify what we are looking for: where our ancestors lived; the work that they did; the higher their social status and the greater their wealth, the more likely it is that documents will have been created and still exist. In medieval times, there was a network of market towns, with some connectivity between them and the surrounding area. Most people would normally travel no more than ten miles from their place of birth. Agricultural labourers were tied to the land, and the evidence for using land records is based on the balance of probability.

The Manorial Document Registers at the National Archives include details of rentals, transactions, accounts. New tenants were given a copy of their ownership document, and these have been name indexed and mostly digitized from 1600, hence the term copyhold. The Victoria County History series is useful for finding the names of manors. The dissolution of the monasteries in the Tudor period provided the opportunity for people to buy their way into land holding, moving into the property market. Published heralds' visitations show descent, as do College of Arms pedigrees; some may not be accurate.

Most pre-1732 documents are written in Latin, there are published guides for family historians, spelling varied for both people and places, abbreviations are common in order to save space on valuable parchment. The use of surnames developed from the 14th century. Regnal years record the days, months and years from the accession of the monarch and are used to provide precise dates. Again, there are published guides. Nick's talk is available on the members' section of our website, and books are included.

The hierarchy went from king to nobles, knights, down to peasants. Manorial land is based on the area needed to support one knight for 40 days. The Lord of the Manor continued from 1066 to the 1920s when tenancy law changed. Money enabled ownership, and hierarchical status.

The court system for law and justice generated instructions to officials - letters close (closed) with waxed seals, and letters patent, open letters, again with a seal of authenticity. These have been calendared (indexed). Petitions are in the national archives – inquisitions post mortem are a useful family history source for next of kin, and have been calendared from 13th to 17th centuries. National courts, Kings Bench, Common Pleas can be difficult to use, although some are indexed. Local courts including assizes and quarter sessions can also include our ancestors. Many people came into contact with the law at some stage of their life. The TNA has indexed plaintiffs and defendants, and the catalogues include family archives sections.

Nick also touched on other records he did not have time to include – military; church; guild and livery; university and education. The Lambeth Palace library has Church of England resources.

The talk attracted a record attendance, in part due to Nick's reputation as a robust researcher, author and historian, but also through the "Who Do You Think You Are" series. The questions again showed how much the talk was appreciated, and Nick's clarity and expertise in unravelling these challenging but rewarding sources for family historians.

Reported by David Copey

HELP ! MY ANCESTOR HAS VANISHED

WITH SIMON FOWLER

(HUNTINGDON BRANCH : APRIL)

Simon is a very experienced genealogist and a well-known speaker and writer known for his sound practical advice in the ancestry field. His presentation on Zoom was viewed by 75 participants from far and wide, all with the same question – why can I not trace the complete history of an ancestor who I know existed?

Simon gave the number one reason why it seems the ancestor has vanished, and that was because the information you have about them is wrong in some way; the dates may be incorrect, there may be information you have missed or misunderstood on the records you have found, or you have relied on family stories that may not be accurate. One suggestion was to create a timeline by writing everything down in your ancestor's life chronologically which then makes it easier to identify inconsistencies and items that need further checking.

The next areas to double-check are the records themselves. Simple things such as name spelling and age vary from record to record and can easily lead to incorrect conclusions. People may be omitted from the census in different years; about 5% of people were never recorded, and sections of some censuses are simply missing. It is possible to find alternative records to the censuses that may help fill in the gaps, for example street directories, parish registers, military service records, workhouse registers and similar. Also check the indexing used by FH websites as they differ and someone may show up on one but not the others.

The final area to consider is other reasons why they cannot be found. They may have emigrated overseas (but one-third eventually returned home so there could be a 20 year gap in appearances in censuses), in which case they may be recorded in the country to which they emigrated. They may have moved to another part of the country; clues can be found in the birth places of the children of the family. Men may have joined the services or the merchant navy, but although many service records are online there are many gaps. They may have left an unhappy home either for a new partner, or to wander the streets. Details may be sparse as divorce was difficult and expensive and bigamy was more common. Other places to look include newspapers (especially if they got in trouble with the law) and court records, and also remember that it is possible that your ancestor did not want to be found!

It is clear that although much is known there is always something new for us all to learn. This was illustrated by one participant who had found another 400 years of his family history through a simple enquiry on a website.

Although we may reach a brick wall today, remember that as more and more information becomes available we may eventually reveal the truth behind our ancestor's vanishing act.

Reported by: John Bownass

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021 (CAMBRIDGE : MAY)

The 2021 AGM was conducted via Zoom, and held between the two talks at the Saturday Meeting. CHFHS Chair, David Copsey, welcomed the CHFHS President, Liz Stazicker, and 30-or-so members. David's report summarised the Society's success in moving to a virtual world during the past year.

The Reports, Minutes and Accounts for 2020-21 had been made available in advance via the website, and the record of the 2021 AGM will be published in the new annual Members' Research Directory (the first edition of which, is currently in preparation).

BACKSTORY : PARISH REGISTERS (C OF E)

WITH CAZ

(CAMBRIDGE : MAY)

Continuing with the theme of deducing “backstory” out of the bare facts found in records, this illustrated talk first looked at tips for finding parish register records (you need to find the records before anything else), and then at spotting clues in the records from which “story” can be deduced (clues can lurk in the raw facts, the family itself, and in circumstances surrounding the event being recorded such as: coinciding child baptism and mother burial; a delayed marriage being because a first spouse was still alive until that time; or, several children baptised together at a place where none were born).

We considered the differences which are found in PRs’ formats and content, and at how/where the original documents are housed affects the way we are able to access records. A number of resources are available which might enable either print or digital (images or databases) “copies” to be accessed : FHSs, Ancestry FindMyPast, FamilySearch, FreeREG, OPCs, plus a number of specific place/area-based resources. The importance of considering the scope of any records “collection” was highlighted—records from a variety of location compiled into a single database—but which places for which years?

Seeking a particular person in parish register records is somewhat a leap in the dark as we don’t know where/when, or even if, a record was made—and we need to draw on known information to provide clues. Not everyone will be in CofE parish records—and we might have to look to cemetery burials, civil marriages, or consider non-conformity. Any fact can add more to “backstory”.

SCAMS & FRAUD : STAYING SAFE ONLINE

WITH NIGEL SUTTON

(CAMBRIDGE BRANCH : MAY)

An unusual subject among our usual range of topics. The pervasiveness of the internet in all our lives, it’s something which any of us might unwittingly fall foul of—online scams/fraud—and there’s a lot of it out there. Scammers often prey on potential victims’ curiosity or fears/anxieties over emails or phone calls purporting to offer something or suggest consequences of some supposed non-payment or alleged bank account activity.

A former cyber-crime officer, Nigel is now a consultant working with Cambs Police to help combat scam/fraud activity by raising awareness among internet users. The slide show and contact details for reporting are available in the website members’ area—**do take a look**—as we are all at risk from scammers and fraudsters. Don’t be the one who clicks on the link offered by a fake email or gives out personal information.

VICTORIAN CRIME, POLICE & CRIMINALS

WITH ANTHONY MARR

(HUNTINGDON BRANCH : MAY)

The origin of justice comes from the monarch. The process is not well written down, particularly for common law. Acts of Parliament provide the basis for statute law, and case law applies the statutes to individual cases. The UK does not have a written constitution unlike many other countries.

Anthony's talk focussed on the 19th century when there were significant changes which affected families. Local Justices of the Peace heard cases at petty sessions; the more serious offences were referred to assize quarter sessions. Although local case records go back to the 14th century, they are rarely comprehensively indexed. The best initial source for reports is local newspapers, the British Newspaper Archive includes 41 million pages; the count increases on a regular basis. Newspapers are also indexed and imaged on FindMyPast, again using OCR technology. Libraries and record offices will have newspapers on microfilm. The FMP crime collection is very useful, and many criminal cases are also on the free FamilySearch website – the catalogue provides an entry point to records held.

Anthony used the 1867 example of his ancestor to show how records of the same case appear in different sources, sometimes with information that other sources do not have. The Old Bailey online website, <https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/> covering more serious cases includes indexes from 1674 to 1913 for everyone taking part – accused, witnesses, court officials. Prisons were formerly used as holding centres, their use as a place of detention only began in the 19th century. Transportation records and people kept on prison hulks, often for many years, and indexed on FMP and Ancestry.

The Metropolitan Police service was established in 1829 by Robert Peel; by 1856 all boroughs were required to have a police force. Some police records are in record offices, the Metropolitan records are at the National Archives. Records of payment often name wives as they were entitled to widows' pensions. The digital panopticon website <https://www.digitalpanopticon.org/> aggregates more than 50 websites for London convicts in Britain and Australia 1780-1925. Another useful site is <https://ourcriminalancestors.org/>.

Criminal records give colour to our family history, and participant questions showed the benefit of Anthony's talk.

Reported by David Copsey

THE POOR & THE PARISH

WITH GILL BLANCHARD
(RAMSEY BRANCH : MAY)

The parish is the unit for local government and is therefore a key source for family history. About a third of all people went through the poor law system at some stage of their life, and the rest of the community paid for this, so parish records will include many of our ancestors. Many of the records are in County Record Offices, some have been indexed and transcribed. Work by FHS members with the benefit of local knowledge is likely to be more accurate.

Gill outlined key developments starting in 1388 when a distinction was made between able and incapacitated people. The priest was responsible for moral supervision; churchwardens are the officers of the church; overseers of the poor were first appointed in 1572; highways were the responsibility of the surveyor. Central government could step in when there are serious problems. It was a requirement that those paying rates either took their turn in parish roles or arranged for a substitute. People often spent several years in post thus providing continuity. Settlement laws date from 1672; out relief from 1795, and in 1834 the distinction was made between deserving (including elderly, infirm) and undeserving poor. Most taxation was local - records were kept of payments. After 1894, the parish became a civil unit.

Bastardy orders can name fathers, workhouse and quarter sessions records, and newspaper reports can all include names, places of birth and age. Tate's Parish Chest is a good overview of the records. Gill showed several examples of parish records from across England, and some of the names were recognised by those attending.

Questions and comments showed the appreciation of the audience and a summary is available on the members' section of our website.

Reported by David Copey

June saw the CHFHS Events Team in action again

—twice in fact—the one day Family History Show and at The Genealogy Show, a two-day event the next weekend. Both followed a format which has become familiar over the past 18 months and offered zoned websites linking to a selection of talks, an exhibition hall showcasing family history societies et al and traders, and a panel of experts answering researchers' queries in pre-booked slots. **Why not come and join us at the next show—take an early look at the talks programmes, choose a selection to attend (also likely to be available for a while after), and identify queries to pose to the FHS researchers manning “booths” from of your areas of interest—there's nothing like talking about a query, F2F, albeit virtually!!**

BACKSTORY : CEMETERIES, WILLS, GRAVESTONES (MIs)

WITH CAZ

(CAMBRIDGE : JUNE)

A further look at creating “backstory” out of the bare facts found in records—this illustrated talk considered some tips for finding the records first, and went on to look at clues to developing backstory from what’s found. A person might feature in any, all or none of these records—we don’t know unless we look. Before searching, it’s suggested that researchers refresh their memory for forgotten clues about the person. There are no “rules” about which record to seek first—be guided by what you have, the dates and the ease of access.

With wills, the 1858 “watershed” affects ease of accessing these records: post1858 all are searchable online, but pre1858 only certain county archives collections have been digitised; however, printed indexes of the pre-1858s are browsable online. Cemeteries and, increasingly, crematoria, are always worth considering especially from c1920s and in the urban setting. It’s very much a matter of luck as to whether records of a particular cem/crem are accessible on line—many are not, and the relevant record holders may charge a hefty fee even to check an enquiry. Gravestones are perhaps the hardest to track down, many FHSs have produced collections of transcripts and the growing online photo resources may help. Of note, is that a person might only be “memorialised” in the inscription and actually buried elsewhere.

We can find a variety of back story information in these sources : death date; unknown relatives, addresses, relatives’ spouses; grandchildren; nephews; nieces; worth (many very ordinary people left wills)—as well as perhaps being able to deduce something of family circumstances at the time.

FOR BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS & FUNERALS

WITH JOHN VIGAR

(CAMBRIDGE BRANCH : JUNE)

Before civil registrations of births, marriages and deaths in 1837, churches were virtually the only places where such events were recorded, as they were also used as community venues.

The first baptisms held in Britain took place in rivers, ponds etc and Celtic Christianity baptisms were all near springs as the clear, pure water was an endless supply. When the Pope wanted to expand the Catholic congregation he instructed his priests to build churches near to such water supplies, as this was where people were meeting. At that time, it was only adults that were baptised by total immersion with water drawn from springs and wells, and after the Reformation many of the Church of England vicars followed that practice.

Medieval baptism rituals for babies started in church porches when salt was put into their mouths. This made them cry and the resultant spittle was rubbed onto the face and ears to ward off evil spirits. By the late 12th century, fonts for infant baptisms began appearing in churches, usually placed just inside the main door to symbolise entry into the membership of the church and many fine examples can still be found today, particularly from after the Reformation. Holy oil was also part of baptism and niches found in church walls often held those receptacles. The baby was anointed with the holy oil and a chrisom cloth was placed around its head for one month. Mothers did not attend these early baptisms but were Churched 40 days later to say thank you for her survival and to eliminate evil spirits, even if the baby had died.

The marriage service has had few significant changes since the Medieval period, other than those ceremonies took place in the church porch where hands were joined, and a blessing was made for the union. The reception could be held in wedding feast rooms usually alongside the church, when a Mazer – a communal drinking bowl would have been passed around.

In Medieval times funerals were conducted after the last rites, confession, anointing with Holy Oil and communion had taken place before the death. The body was taken to the church carried on a board with a pall cloth covering the board, and the pall was then used to cover the body once there. Early burials of the bodies important people were wrapped in a shroud and placed in the floor in stone coffins, which were close to the church walls. The lid of the coffin then became the floor! Poor people would have been placed in a stone coffin for the committal and then buried in the ground. The coffin would be returned to the church for re-use! Funeral biers with large wheels were used to transport the coffins and many types can still be seen in museums and churches, some of which had a cage over the top. This cage was called a hearse.

Prior to 1600 the wealthy used funeral armour to note the rank of the deceased, which was then displayed in the church. After 1600 shields of arms – hatchments – were used, one of which was placed in the church and the other outside the deceased's home for a period of time.

Effigies were produced to remember the dead, and virgin girls would be taken to their funeral carrying a crown of wood and paper as a symbol of their virginity. Funerals were marked by the tolling of the church bell.

The Church Registers were kept in chests usually made of wood or metal and in 1812 the George Rose Act required records of baptisms, marriages and burials to be kept in separate pre-printed volumes with specific information recorded, in fireproof chests made entirely of metal.

Reported by Muriel Halliday

WHAT'S IN A NAME

WITH DENISE BATES
(RAMSEY BRANCH : JUNE)

Denise's interest started with a birth certificate found whilst researching her family, the child was named as Princess Alexandra. She could not find any further references, and eventually realised that the mother was a midwife, and the child had been born on the same day as Princess Alexandra's wedding, an interesting example of a false entry. Names give a context to our families, and are well documented, FreeBMD provides a good starting point.

Her talk was split into three parts. First, tribute names, notable examples include Florence Nightingale, William Ewart Gladstone, names taken from literary characters, particularly Dickens and Sherlock Holmes. Some of these names were used for a long time, others for a short period. Commemorative names remember incidents, the battle of Alma, Armistice, and were particularly prevalent at the end of the 19th century. Coronation Street was chosen in 1911. Local names reflect places – Squire is seen in Yorkshire, Orange in the South of England, Storm may be linked to coastal places.

Gender is not always obvious from chosen names, some girls were given names of famous men, perhaps adding an A, Roberta. Disreputable names are more likely to be chosen by working class people, cultural names by middle class. Often, later records such as censuses show that the family had second thoughts, and a more usual name was used.

During the 20th century, film star names replaced military, Errol Flynn first appears in the 1930's, Scarlet after Gone with the Wind. Denise has not been able to find anyone called Abdication.

There were many other examples given by those taking part, a subject that shows a knowledge of public feeling and values, and we were very pleased that the Society is the first audience for this new talk by Denise.

Reported by David Cosey

FROM THE ARCHIVES ... re: The Kett Family

Dave Edwards tells us that he has recently been successful on our behalf, with an Ebay bid, to acquire a small collection of early 20C letters and diaries for Cambridgeshire Archives relating to the Kett family. Esther, the Acquisitions Archivist at Ely says that these documents will add nicely to the collection of Rattee & Kett family papers already held. We hope to be able to list fuller details in the next issue after the documents have been catalogued.

TRACING THE ANCESTRAL HOME

WITH DR NICK BARRATT

(HUNTINGDON BRANCH : JUNE)

Nick is a very renowned expert in all fields of historical research and was making a popular return to talk to the Society after his last one titled “The Mists Of Time”. This time his presentation was about researching the history of properties and buildings rather than the more usual subject of people. He explained that his early interest in local history began with a study of the buildings and streets around him rather than the people who lived there.

He said it is usual to start researching your own house or local buildings of interest as this enables you to root yourself in the community and its history. He explained that the methodology of search techniques for properties is slightly different to tracing people, but the knowledge gained from this approach not only helped confirm previously found information about the people who lived there, but sometimes gave new information on ancestors not discovered before.

Nick set out his approach with five planned steps, starting with the gathering of clues. Initially much information may be sought from local residents and this, together with maps, particularly aerial views, makes it possible to identify the building you are investigating through time.

Next, the architectural style of the building helps provide significant dates in its history. It may be a local vernacular style using local building material, or it could be a style typical across the country, such as Arts & Crafts. Always look at neighbouring properties; older ones tend to be near the centre.

Then check the occupancy records, such as electoral records, street directories, and rate books. Nick suggested starting with today and working back in time, looking for changes in house numbering and street names.

The 1910 Valuation Office Survey held in the National Archives is particularly useful and can be compared to the 1911 Census, that we are all familiar with, to identify the property and the people living there even if house numbers are missing. Earlier tithe maps and schedules and enclosure awards should be checked to continue the story.

A timeline can now be constructed.

Nick then turned to other records linking occupiers and owners specific to the property, starting with conveyancing and title deeds from the Land Registry. The Property Act of 1925-1926 removed the need to keep the title deed pack for many years and there is no central source of these documents, but some are kept in local archives. Then there are the Manorial records up to 1925 where the terms freehold and leasehold originate; these records are available and include many names to go with the land and property. Another source of information comes from legal records concerning property disputes

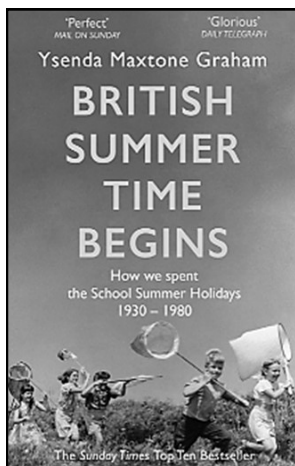
which are well documented and indexed in the National Archives.

Nick showed many other sources of information that we could use, including national events, ranging from the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s to bomb census surveys in the 20th century. He suggested you could also investigate industrialisation and transport networks, slum clearance and local authority planning, insurance records, and of course personal family papers.

In summary, Nick presented a huge amount of detail in a logical and interesting way that led to an active Q&A session and almost a reluctance to end the evening, such was the enthusiasm of the audience.

Reported by: John Bownass

A nostalgic read to while away a summer's evening ~



**British Summer Time Begins:
The School Summer Holidays 1930-1980**
Ysenda Maxtone Graham (May 2021)

“British Summer Time Begins is about summer holidays of the mid-twentieth century and how they were spent, as recounted to Ysenda Maxtone-Graham in vividly remembered detail by people who were there. Through this prism, it paints a revealing portrait of twentieth-century Britain in summertime: how we were, how families functioned, what houses and gardens and streets were like, what journeys were like, and what people did all day in their free time. It explores their expectations, hopes, fears and habits, the rules or lack of rules under which they lived, their happiness and sadness, their sense of being treasured or neglected - all within living memory, from pre-war summers to the late 1970s.

Ysenda takes us back to the long stretch of time from the last days of June till the early days of September - those months when the term-time self was cast off and you could become the person you really were, and you had (if you were lucky) enough hours in the endless succession of days to become good at the things that would later define your adulthood.

The 'showpiece' part of the summer holidays was 'the summer *holiday*', when families took off to the seaside, or to grandparents' houses teeming with cousins, or on early package holidays to France or Spain, siblings wedged into the back of small cars, roof-racks clattering, mothers preparing picnics. *British Summer Time Begins* is as much about the long weeks either side of that holiday as the trip itself: the weeks when nothing much officially happened, boredom often lurked nearby, and you vanished for hours on end, nobody much knowing or even caring where you were. Could it be that those unscheduled days were actually the most important and formative of your life?”

REVIEWED FROM A WELL-KNOWN ONLINE BOOKSELLERS WEBSITE



LAST WORD

Family Stories :
fact or fiction
*there's often a
grain of truth...*

Many of us have grown up with stories from granny, or the elderly gt-uncle who claimed a family link to some famous person, or a vast fortune or property somehow now lost. I was apparently “related” to General Lord Roberts of Boer War fame—no way—but the jury is still out on a participant in Crimean War !!

A recent query concerned the origins of the enquirer’s grandfather, Robert Stewart; the only known “facts” date from his marriage in

1884 whilst a gamekeeper in Essex, and his later life as a carman in London. Prior to 1884 he is something of an enigma : a Scottish surname (no doubt with an accent to match), a rumoured family rift, six brothers, a sister who died as a teenager. Hard facts, however, are few in number. The enquirer has picked up a few clues over the years : later-life ages consistently suggest a birth in 1859; father’s name of “Thomas, a farmer” as listed on the marriage certificate; birthplaces in 1891-1911 censuses variously of Penrith, Scotland and Westmorland; plus, the story of “baptised at Blair Atholl”. A possible candidate emerged in 1881: a 22yr-old gamekeeper living alone at Scone—just a few miles from Blair Atholl—but no records have ever been found to substantiate the clues. Could this be he—but where/how/why might the claims of “born Penrith/Westmorland/Scotland” come into the story??

After exploring several Robert Stewart b.c1859 “candidates”, a number were discounted owing to different fathers’ names or by being elsewhere in later life. However, among the remaining records were a selection of references which, despite being individually inconclusive, became worth a further look when seem collectively—two birth registrations in the Lake District area (incl a Robert in 1858); a later Scottish census family in the Blair Atholl area with similarly-named children, both listed as “born England”; the mother’s surname matching; the father’s forename/work the same as that known from 1884 marriage certificate (shepherd/farmer). *The \$64,000 question here, is whether this is the gamekeeper Robert—what do you think? We’re waiting to hear what the birth certificates show about the parents, but the clues seem pretty convincing—a case of don’t discount findings on first glances alone!?!*

Our thanks continue go to everyone who has sent in contributions—whether as articles about your families and researches, or just shorts pieces, please keep it coming—getting something down on paper to share “the story” with others is the key. Family history is so much more than just genealogical facts, it’s the stories which we either know or have deduced from the raw facts, and these need to be written down. Apologies if your piece hasn’t appeared as yet, it’s very much a matter of doing a jigsaw to fit the material into the set number of pages.

Remember—the CHFHS Journal is predominantly made up of your work ... we just put it together ...

The Editorial Team

MEMBERSHIP

The Society offers a regular programme of meetings designed to appeal to the specialist and beginner alike; the quarterly members' journal is now available, if preferred, as a digital download. The UK subscription, due on joining and annually thereafter, is £10, and includes the member's partner. The overseas subscription is £15, which gives airmail postage of the Journal. If you chose to receive the e-Journal, the annual subscription for all locations is £7 (we also offer a life membership for £100, or £70 with e-journal). Subscriptions/renewals may be made online through the CFHS website via debit/credit card or PayPal, or by DirectDebit; alternatively, sterling cheque/etc made payable to *Cambridgeshire Family History Society*, should be sent to the Secretary. Changes of address/email, and members' interests contributions, should be sent to the Membership Secretary. All contact details can be found on p52.

SEARCHABLE RECORDS & SHOP

"CAMBS SUPERSEARCH" most of the transcribed records for Cambridgeshire & Isle of Ely (available on CDs or as downloads from our online e-shop) are name searchable via this facility on our website—**now includes** a place-name search for Huntingdonshire parishes—see which transcription products might feature your names &/or places of interest

"ANCESTOR FINDER" an online 'pay-per-view' database of our transcribed records for Cambs plus digitised images of most parish registers from the Wisbech area (the WisMus Project is nearing completion), with Hunts being added as they are reformatted. Tailor searches to meet your particular needs—view only records you select using prepaid "tokens" (typically, 25p per record or less, equivalent). 25p per record or less, equivalent).

Visit **"AncestorFinder"** at : www.cfhs.org.uk

NB: "AF" mainly features records from Cambs & Isle of Ely at present; transcriptions of many selected Hunts records are being reformatted and added as they become available (are available as downloads or CDs—check their availability via the website shop)

CHFHS SHOP search the publications listings on the website to see what's available for particular locations (CDs and /or downloads)

RESEARCH SERVICES

The Society will undertake a limited amount of help for members who have reached a sticking point in their research. This can be done in two ways :-

- # general enquiries can be addressed to the Secretary by email secretary@cfhs.org.uk (or by post, with an SAE please)
- # more detailed requests should be sent to our Research Officer, Rebecca Bailey preferably by email, via the request form on the website research@cfhs.org.uk

We will attend to requests as our time allows. We ask that you remember we are all volunteers, so please be patient and reasonable in your requests. Please supply as much information about the topic/person as possible (such as the sources of "facts" you have and which records/resources have already been consulted (eg. census, certificate, a family tree, Ancestry, FamilySearch, etc)

CAMBS & HUNTS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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ALL OTHER & POSTAL CORRESPONDENCE TO THE SECRETARY, PLEASE

CHFHS tel. no.: 01223 853273 for UK only (answer machine)

please leave your name/phone no. & we'll get back to you as soon as is possible

SELECTED RESOURCES TO ASSIST RESEARCH IN CAMBS & THE ISLE OF ELY AND HUNTS

www.cfhs.org.uk

visit the CHFHS website to find listings, links and information

SIGN UP TO OUR E-NEWSLETTER

TRY 'ANCESTORFINDER'

TRY 'SUPERSEARCH'

VISIT THE SHOP

VISIT 'COFFEE CORNER' & LIBRARY

REGISTER FOR ZOOM TALKS

ACCESS TO EXCLUSIVE MATERIAL

NEIGHBOURING SOCIETIES

FENLAND, LINGS, NORFOLK,
SUFFOLK, ESSEX, HERTS, BEDS,
NORTHANTS, PETERBOROUGH

SOME E-NEWSLETTERS TO FOLLOW :

CAMBS & HUNTS FHS

ANCESTRY

FINDMYPAST

THE GENEALOGIST

FAMILY TREE MAGAZINE

WDYTYA MAGAZINE

FAMILY HISTORY FEDERATION

SOCIETY OF GENEALOGISTS

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

LOST COUSINS

CAMBS ASSOC FOR LOCAL HISTORY

HUNTINGDON LOCAL HISTORY SOC

CAMBRIDGESHIRE ARCHIVES

OFFICES AT :

CAMBRIDGE

HUNTINGDON

& ALSO : THE WISBECH MUSEUM

CAMBRIDGESHIRE LIBRARIES

LOCAL STUDIES COLLECTIONS AT :

CAMBRIDGE

HUNTINGDON

WISBECH

& : ELY, MARCH, ST IVES, ST NEOTS

MUSEUM OF CAMBRIDGE

WISBECH MUSEUM

FARMLAND MUSEUM

BURWELL MUSEUM

MARCH MUSEUM

RAMSEY RURAL MUSEUM

ELY MUSEUM

CHATTERIS MUSEUM

WIMPOLE HOME FARM

WICKEN FEN & COTTAGE

MIKE PETTY'S '*FENLAND HISTORY
ON YOUR COMPUTER*'

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY

ARCHIVE NETWORK

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HISTORY

ROLL-OF-HONOUR

PUT SOMETHING BACK INTO FAMILY HISTORY



CAMBS & HUNTS FHS WORKS CLOSELY WITH THE COUNTY ARCHIVES & LIBRARIES TO PHOTOGRAPH, SCAN, TRANSCRIBE AND INDEX KEY COUNTY RECORDS ESPECIALLY NAME-RICH ONES OF GENEALOGICAL INTEREST

we are looking for additional volunteers to help expand access to name-rich county genealogical material

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AGAINST WORD / EXEL FILES OF TRANSCRIPTIONS*

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT
projects@cfhs.org.uk or write to The Secretary**

OUR EFFORTS ARE HELPING TO PRESERVE CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S LOCAL RECORDS AND TO MAKE THEIR CONTENTS AVAILABLE FOR COUNTY RESEARCHERS TO USE AT ANYTIME ANYWHERE

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