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THE JOURNAL



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VOLUME 30 : 1

SPRING 2024

CAMBRIDGESHIRE & HUNTINGDONSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

PRESIDENT: ELIZABETH STAZICKER MA (OXON), DIPL ARCHIVE ADMIN, FRSA

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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For latest news, and updates

WATCH THE WEBSITE & NEWSLETTER & FACEBOOK

CONTACT US (for additional contacts/services see p51-2

All general correspondence via the Secretary, please :

secretary@chfhs.org.uk or by post to

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Additional guidance for contributors can be found on the CHFHS website

We aim to publish The Journal quarterly : mid-late Jan / April / July / Oct
You can submit material for publication at any time. We will include it in the next available issue (please be patient, space is finite and we will keep you posted)



CAMBS & HUNTS FHS JOURNAL

VOL 30 : 1

SPRING 2024



Welcome to the Spring edition of the CHFHS Journal—this issue opens with AN IMPORTANT NEWS FLASH made just as this issue was going to print about the CHFHS AGM in May—we are to hold a zoom/live meeting at Ely Archives with Gill Blanchard as guest speaker (talking about her behind-the-scenes role with the WhoDoYouThinkYouAre episodes on Mary Berry & local athlete Jonnie Peacock)

A variety of topics follow—Gill F picks up on the idea of unusual forenames from previous issues, and we reproduce an old article by prolific local transcriber TPR Layng on strange forenames he had encountered. An extended article from Kay S reproduces autobiographical notes penned by her late father-in-law, Charlie, over 25 years ago and recalling his early life in the area. Sally K from the University Library highlights the value of CHFHS's support of the recent IoE Assize records project. Oh, and don't forget the 'ReallyUsefulShow LIVE' coming up in April at St Ives—the first live local fair for a number of years, and promising to be a great day!!

All the regulars features are to be found dotted throughout—projects updates, research surgeries and meetings' diary (zooming of talks is continuing, to enable a wider participation at meetings); reports of talks; book reviews—& much more

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

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cover photo : RUS LIVE @ Burgess Hall St Ives : Sat 20 April (see pp. 5 & 29)
"The Event Of The Year" a date for your diary ... see you there !!



MEMBERS HAVE FULL ACCESS TO THE ONLINE RECORD SEARCH

Keep an eye out for new content on the website

All members now have FREE access to the transcription database, which is accessed via the 'Members Area' (click top right; then select <search the database>)

- **Registering for zoom talks** : you will receive an acknowledgement by return whenever you register, but no zoom link. The link will **only** be issued 48hrs ahead of the event—so, please recheck your emails.
- **Cambs and Hunts Research** : a new records database search / retrieval system has replaced AncestorFinder and SuperSearch, and is accessed **only** via the members area login. The big difference now, is that :

all searches and results are FREE TO ALL MEMBERS

**NEWS
FLASH**

AGM 2024 ... SAT 11 MAY @ ELY ARCHIVES

11.00 ... doors open for documents exhibition

12.00 ... live talk by Gill Blanchard

“WhoDoYouThinkYouAre—behind the scenes”
(Jonnie Peacock & Mary Berry episodes)

13.15 ... Cambs & Hunts FHS AGM

The Society offers condolences to the families of :

Ralph SNUDDEN

Michael EASTON

Malcolm BYE

Susan CHAPMAN

2470

5043

2778



A WORD FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN



A new year and new data

I am writing this a few days before the start of 2024, a time of new year resolutions, but also the time when new information and records are released. It is a good time to revisit your family history and see what you can learn from records you have not been able to see before. The 100-year rule means that everyone with a birth date on 1923 in the 1939 register should no longer have their entry redacted. Every year, I can add actual days of birth to more people on my tree; I always find it satisfying to fill in gaps.

All the major record sites have cut off dates as does our Society, in order to protect the privacy of individuals, and the start of each new year unlocks a new batch of records and sometimes new functionality. The cut off dates will differ from site to site, so it is worth checking each one. Many of these newly released records are mentioned in publicity and family history news sources, but not all.

I have recently come across something I've not seen mentioned anywhere, although I could of course have missed it. This is an expansion of the basic data on the Free BMD site that I am sure most of us use. An envelope to the right of the entry means there is additional postem data, and you can click on this to find out more. I found this out through researching the talk I gave to Mill Road Community Centre and repeated for the Society in December. The recording is on the website, and you can find the postem data by searching for deaths of everyone called William Finbow. There are almost 100 entries on free BMD for William Finbow, but the only one that has this postem data is the 1923 death that explains why he died so far from his Cambridge home. You can search the postem data by date added and other fields, 95 were posted on 23 December. Examples from this single day include linking a birth entry to a marriage in Turkey; a death mentioning the actual date and name of the sunk ship; links to the Royal family, television personalities and Mount Everest, as well as spelling corrections. Free BMD also has a ? symbol on some entries, again showing further information. My new year resolution is to check my own family further on the Free BMD site.

How our Society is run

Although your committee meets in alternate months, many things happen between each meeting, and decisions are made on a daily basis. We always try to operate in a consistent way, the Society aims are applied to such things as funding new projects, development plans, and the content of a range of policies. A new policy on the growing area of Social Media will soon be available on our website along with the other policies that the Society has. Please have a look. The Annual General Meeting provides you all with the chance to comment, ask questions and receive information. The 2024 AGM will be held on Saturday 11 May at the Ely Archives Office; we hope to see many of you there to attend the meeting and Gill Blanchard's talk, as well as others on zoom. Keep a look out for more details nearer the time.

The University Library

The UL is conducting a series of interviews with library users about their experience using the library and its archives. One important constituency is family history; we have been asked to find someone willing to be interviewed about this. Please let me know in the near future if you would like to help the University and the Society in this way.

It is very pleasing that the UL visits tailored to our Society have been so popular and that many of our members have taken up the free UL membership offer. We are currently in discussion about one or two significant further projects with the UL which will make it much easier to access records and data from their huge collections. The Society will contribute funding, but, some of the work involves typing entries into excel spreadsheets. I am sure we have members who can do this, and therefore save paying UL staff and on costs, as well as saving time on completing projects. Please let me know if you can offer your copy typing skills.

Honorary Life Membership

Each year we award HLM to any members we judge have made a significant and sustained contribution to the Society over many years. In 2021, we awarded Honorary Life Membership to both Beryl and Ralph Snudden, and the work they did on marriage licences was mentioned in our current discussions about future projects with the University Library. Looking again at this work, UL staff commented about the very high standard of their work. A few days after this, news came that Ralph had died. Our thoughts are with Beryl and his family and friends. An appreciation is included in this issue of our journal.

County Archives

We have recently donated money to the County Archives service so they can purchase a range of items such as boxes, laptops, suction tables, drying racks and other items that are used for their day-to-day work. New ebay purchases to be added to the Archives collection include deeds for Tydd St Giles.

There are now more than 5400 catalogued items from the Duke of Manchester collection; the wide range of papers include plans of a flower garden, a 19th century letter to the County Fire Office, Huntingdonshire rent accounts, 18th century foreign maps. The KMAN* search is a good starting point, and again new items are added on a regular basis using Society funds to pay cataloguing staff. Kimbolton itself is well worth visiting as is the Castle with its links to Katherine of Aragon. I would not agree that it is an “insignificant place” as the quoted spotlight article in our latest newsletter suggests. What do you think?

David Copley



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Nebuchadnezzar And Overin

by Gillian Forsythe

The latest Journal (Vol 29:3 page 34) puts a spotlight on this Biblical first name.

I remembered that it had been mentioned before and found the reference in the Journal of August 1981 thanks to the index of past Journals.

While I do not have an encyclopaedic memory; I remembered because 'Nebucanezer' ASHBIE is my eleven times great grandfather. He was born circa 1561 in Linton and married Joane BENTLYE on 2nd Oct 1586; they had seven children. Another reference I found to him, spelled the name Nabugodanezer!

The best family I have for interesting forenames is the TYLERs of Chelmsford and Cambridge. English TYLER and his wife Mary SPINKS had ten children: Keturah, Anthony, English, Mary Ann, Sarah, a second English, Levina, Eli, Nathan and another Anthony. The first three were born in Chelmsford, the rest in Cambridge between 1827 and 1847. Levina born 1st Dec. 1838, Linton is my great great grandmother. However, it was the parents of English senior who had started the trend. Anthony Tyler and his wife Sarah Ann née AGER called *their* ten children: Anthony, Isaac, Philip, William, English, Nathan, Eli, Sabina, Lavina and Keturah.

In the Cambridgeshire part of my family tree there are one or two interesting Christian names based on a mother's or grandmother's maiden surname, for example Buttle HYMUS 1756 -1852 of Castle Camps whose grandmother was Mary BUTTOLPH and Precious MARSH born 17 Oct 1735, son of Robert MARSH and Martha PRECIOUS.

While some of the above are unusual, none of these is unheard of but related to my family, although not direct ancestors, we find the TAYLOR family of Balsham. Amongst other perfectly ordinary names, Thomas TAYLOR bap. 16 Nov. 1589 Balsham and his wife Ann or Alice née WEBB of West Wickham call one son **Overin** b. 31 May 1637. Next generation, Overin and his first wife Mercy ELSDEN of Balsham give common names to their children except for another Overin b. 17 Apr 1685. He married Elizabeth COOTE on 7th April 1706 and they named a son Overin. Meanwhile, brother John and his wife Elizabeth REVELL who married 26th Sept. 1720 have five children including an Overin. Their son Benjamin TAYLOR and his wife Mary CHAPPEL have eleven children including Barzillai b. 1763, Balsham and of

course, Overin b. 1747. Then John TAYLOR, another son of John and Elizabeth REVELL has an Overin with his wife Mary WOOD/s and this son was also born in 1747 on 13th Sept in Balsham. I have discovered a few more Overin TAYLORs whom I have not yet managed to link to this family. They have records from Bottisham, Fenstanton, West Wrating, Swaffham Bulbeck and Cambridge but they tend to be active in Balsham. Just one marriage takes place outside the county in Maddermarket, Norwich.

FreeBMD lists only four: Overin TAYLOR who married Hannah PEPPER in June quarter 1841 in Cambridge; Overin TAYLOR who died in March qu. 1853, Linton age 73; a birth of an Overin TAYLOR in Sept. qu. 1856 in Cambridge (the son of Overin and Hannah PEPPER) and the latter's death in Dec. qu. 1896 age 40 in Cambridge. Finally, and unaccountably, there is an Overin **RUSHFORTH** who died in March qu. 1885 age 49 in Bradford, Yorks. This is only Overin who is not a TAYLOR. At this stage I wondered how the name had travelled from Cambridgeshire to the West Riding of Yorkshire.

Then it occurred to me that Overin was probably a surname. FreeBMD lists quite a few, virtually all of whom come from Yorkshire, in particular from Skipton. I had got the story the wrong way round. Very few people with the surname are recorded outside Yorkshire and the first to be in Cambridge is the death of Sarah J. OVERIN in Sept 1944 age 71, closely followed by her husband James OVERIN who died in Sept 1944 age 72 in Ely but he was born and married 'correctly', as the authors of '1066 and All That' would put it, in Skipton.

MARCH ST MARY BURIALS @ MARCH CEMETERY

It has recently become evident that the first 61 burials in the March St Mary burial register (covering the period 14 March 1874 to 24 April 1893) did not actually take place at the St Mary Churchyard. They were all buried in the March Station Road Cemetery.

This was due to poor drainage in the new churchyard which was not resolved—the site did not receive Home Office approval for burials until 1893, when the first burial was of one Frederick William Grainger on 6 June 1893.

We thank Dave Edwards for this note

Surnames As Christian Names

Journal Vol 1 No 5 – February 1978

Contributed by T.P.R.Layng

An interesting little throwback article from an early Cambs FHS Journal by Mr Layng who, some of you may be aware, was a prolific transcriber and indexer of parish registers around the county, and to whom all users of many society transcripts are forever indebted for his efforts. No doubt the comments here were derived from observations made during his work

The use of surnames as Christian names was widespread throughout the historic county of Cambridgeshire from the earliest days of parish registers, and was by no means confined to Willingham or the Few family, as mentioned by Mr. Gautrey in the November number. I will give a few examples out of many, from which I have excluded those that I know belong to the gentry.

Barnham More, son of John More and Elizabeth Barnham was baptised at Linton 1596; Fuller Dallison son of Edmund Dallison and Mary Fuller at Great Shelford 1660; Bowman Person, son of Thomas Person and Goodday Bowman at Litlington 1626; Collieridge Scare, son of Nicholas Scare and Charity Collieridge at Litlington 1692; Chamberlain Matthews, son of Joseph Matthews and Elisabeth Chamberlain at Guilden Morden 1725; Atkin Hicks, son of Richard Hicks and Bridget Atkin at Whaddon 1614. Many more sons have surnames as Christian names where the reason for the name is not obvious; sometimes perhaps the reason was snobbery. The Millicents owned Barham Hall at Linton; there were many boys as well as girls who were christened Millicent at Linton and the neighbouring villages. Several boys were christened Allington, and in the south-west of the County, North.

A name whose prevalence I cannot explain is Bransom; a Christian name at Little Gransden, Gamlingay, Hatley St. George, Stapleford and Great Shelford in the families of Peters, Haggis, Edwards, Bangle, English and Rowning.

Before the middle of the eighteenth century daughters were rarely given surnames as Christian names, but I have found Cary Brown at West Wrattling 1660; Collin Archer, base born daughter of Thomas Collin and Anne Archer at West Wickham 1627; Ratcliffe Crispe at Gamlingay 1628; Mean Grey at Litlington 1743; North Rowell at Steeple Morden 1607; and Branson Peters at Great Shelford 1669.

In the eighteenth century the custom began in the families of the gentry of

giving a surname as a second Christian name to both boys and girls. This habit gradually spread, especially at the opposite end of the social scale, where illegitimate children were sometimes given the father's surname as a second Christian name, eg, Lucy Cockerton Baker, base born daughter of Anne Baker of Weston Colville 1780. The earliest example of this that I have found is Roger Vince Smith, base born son of Joanna Smith at Wood Ditton 1714.

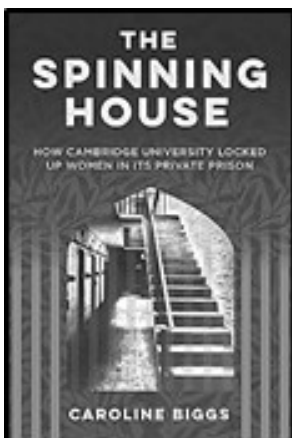
The cruellest naming of children always involved surnames; in this county there were children named Brown Scarf (Isleham), Gowing Gray (Wilburton), Surplus Fuller (Little Gransden), Sadd Tottman (Litlington) and Charnell Cooper (Duxford), but the last of these apparently did not resent it as he called his son Charnell Cooper.

RECEIVED (BY COINCIDENCE) FROM JAN NICOL :

I have just received my latest copy of The Journal and when I read the article "Another Unique Name..." it brought a smile to my lips. One of my ancestors didn't have a really unusual name—more a distinctive one—Butcher Fear. He was born on 21st October 1829 in Bluntisham cum Earith, Huntingdonshire. He was called Butcher as his mother was Mary Butcher (father, William Fear). He was the second Butcher Fear, as the first child with this name had died in March 1829.

My maiden name is also Fear. I first came across the name Butcher Fear through Family Tree Maker many years ago, and I thought that he sounded like a mass murderer!

Butcher emigrated to the USA with young wife and first child in 1852, settling in Boscobel, Wisconsin, c1860. He died in 1911 and his obituary described him as clear minded, quiet, conscientious and honest—a model man who made everyone around him feel at ease a far cry from a murderer!



PUBLICATION EARLY MARCH 2024

Description from "well-known online bookseller" ...

Cambridge University is renowned worldwide for its academic prowess, but below the surface lurks a murky past. During the ninetieth century it became infamous for its dogged determination to cling to ancient laws allowing them to arrest and imprison any women found walking the streets of Cambridge after dark.

Mistakes were made. Violence and legal action followed until finally an Act of Parliament put an end to the jurisdiction of the university over the women of Cambridge.

**BETWEEN
RECESSIONS**
An Autobiography

by
Charles Henry
Simpkins

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To the Plumbers of this world:
“May their Stilsons never get Rusty”
C.H.S. 1996

FORWARD by Kay Simpkins

Charlie died in 1996 at the age of 84. He mentioned to a friend Roy Haig, that he was writing his 'life story' and he showed him his pencil-written script, and he offered to type it for him. I have now re-typed it so that it can be available on the web. I would like to add my thanks to Roy—typing from his typed copy is far easier than the original pencil script.

“Charles Henry Simpkins was an ordinary, conscientious hardworking man, but above all a 'gentle' man in the full sense of the word. He was dedicated to his wife and family and loved his chosen profession. It is of great significance to me that the last word he wrote in this unfinished story was 'PLUMBING'—Roy Haig, 1997”

EARLY DAYS

Born in the Isle of Ely, I suppose I am what has become known as a Fen Tiger, but on the contrary I am really a docile enough chap. My parents were hard working people also brought up in the Fens. Father was born at Witcham a small village about six miles from Ely off the Chatteris Road, my mother at a small Hamlet between Ely and Littleport with the Biblical name of Gilgal. The little terraced house where I'm told I was born is still in use having apparently being modernised quite recently.

Having been born in 1912 and my father going to War in 1914, I do not remember a great deal of the first few years of my life, but I would like to record some of my later years starting with my school days.

The school where I first attended under the watchful eye of Miss Cross and Miss Knight, was in Market Street, or rather still is there, but not as a school, to my knowledge it has been a stores and shop for Second Hand and Antique furniture, and now the last time I saw it of all things it was an Indian

Restaurant.

By this time, it must be about 1920 our Family had moved from Back Hill where I was born to a new Council House at Barns Road. Our Family consisting of Mum and Dad, three Step Brothers and myself. Mother was a widow when my father married her, having been left with three small children, until I arrived to make the foursome roughly three years difference in all our ages.

Our childhood at New Barns was a very happy and fulfilling one, playing and wandering across the fields when we were not helping with the chores as we now call them, we played all kinds of games, Marbles, Top Spinning, Running an Iron Hoop, Cricket using two large conker trees as wickets, and my favourite, Football on the Common. This was not so good, sometimes we had to avoid the cow pats for if we fell in one of those there was trouble when we got home.

SCHOOL DAYS

Today I was reading in the paper about the shortage of cash for materials in the Schools, and it has set me wondering if that was the trouble in my Infant School days, as instead of Books and Pencils we were taught to write in a Tray of Sand using a wood Meat Skewer, and as we got older we had a Slate and Slate Pencil, I just wonder what the children would think of that today; and we also had to go home for our lunch which was about one and a half miles so it would be six miles a day for our little legs to walk.

Anyway, I survived the Infant School, and I suppose I must have been about nine years old then when I went to the "Big School" as we called it in Silver Street. Of course, now we had about twice as far to go to School but still went home at lunch time, there was always the usual gang going the same way so we mostly kicked a tennis ball along the road and chased after it. This could not of course happen now, but in those days, it was an event to see a car in Ely.

I distinctly remember going back to School one lunchtime and got into serious trouble; the usual gang of lads were together Elli, Buster, Rocky, and myself and we saw three High School girls going back to their school which was in St Mary's Street, we started larking about with them and eventually chased them up what is now Cromwell Road but was only a lane in those days. The next day I was sent for by the Headmaster, Mr Carpenter, and asked why I and the other boys had made these girls late for school, I didn't need to know why I had been singled out so quickly, because I had the misfortune to have a bandage around my cut head, which had been stitched; and as a result all we boys got a few strokes of the cane, on our bottoms after leaning over the Desk to receive our punishment.

I remember missing one thing when I left the Infants School I had a particular friend there Leslie Holland, his parents had a Pork Butchers Shop in Market Street and sometimes after school I used to go and play with him in the garden at the back of their Shop and House, and quite often his mother gave us tea, I did think she was a lovely Person and felt quite proud to be so treated.

Nowadays we read in the Paper about the poor condition of schools, but in our day, there must have been at least 40 boys in a class. We had no Central Heating, just one fire at one end of the room and the Teacher usually stood in front of that so you could not see it. Toilets inside of course were unheard of and as there were no doors on them, if they were used, it was an absolute necessity.

In spite of everything I consider we did very well at school, we at least were taught the three Rs. although I am afraid, I was not much good at any of them, my best subjects were woodwork and football, and I was proud to be picked to play for the School Team against Local Schools from Littleport, Soham, Sutton, etc the highlight being when we played Norwich and Kings Lynn both games of which we lost.

PLAY DAYS

When we were not at school, we always seemed to be well occupied, of course when I am recalling now the 1920. We did have much more severe winters and we used to get frosts lasting from two to four weeks and skating on the flooded fields beside the river Ouse was very popular, so also were the Snowball Fights our School used to have with the Needham's School Boys on the way home from School.

Then, of course, the other side of the coin, in the Summer we had beautiful hot days in which we could indulge in all sorts of activities, we used to roam all over the fields and play, nobody seemed to bother us and our mothers did not have to worry about where we were or what we were doing.

We of course were not little angels, we could creep through the hedge of Baggly Murfitt's Orchard and pinch his apples and walnuts, or the same for Mrs Downay's Strawberries on the Lynn Road but we never got caught so it is something I will have to live with. There was one time I remember I thought I'd had it, we were pinching walnuts in the Dean's Field next to the park at the back of the Cathedral, when we saw two gardeners coming from the Deanery and from the other direction a Policeman was walking across the park, we chose what we thought was the best course and went to the Policeman emptying our pockets as we went. We were lucky the Policeman asked our names but we heard nothing more of it, I expect he had done similar things in his time.

One of our favourite places to play was down by the River we used to spend hours by the River near Cuckoo Bridge and the Cresswell's one day we were lucky enough, or unlucky whichever way you look at it, to find three Barges moored side by side in the River, at the side of each Barge was a wood walk way on which the men used to walk to push the Barges along, someone in the gang suggested we should get one these walkways each and race to the other end, we thought a great idea but it didn't turn out so for me as when I got to the end I didn't stop but went into the River. I remember stripping off and bashing my trousers etc. against the wall of Cuckoo Bridge to dry them. I don't think my Mam ever got to know of that or I would have been for it.

Another place we boys used to get in Summer is what we called the Four Foot so called I presume because it was a strip of water about that Depth which had been man made to take the loaded Barges of clay or gault from the Roswell Pits to the River Ouse to build up the river Banks.

I would venture to say that most of the boys from the New Barns and Waterside areas learned to swim there, I know that two of my brothers and myself did, and poor George my eldest brother was never very strong in his younger days, so Mother said he hadn't to go in the water until he could swim, and as he couldn't learn on the hearth rug, I don't think he ever did manage it.

FAIR DAYS

On a more serious note, one of my earliest recollections is the unveiling of the War Memorial in the Ely Market Place to the Fallen of the 1914-18 War. I remember standing with my mother watching the soldiers parading I suppose my dad was still in the Forces as when he returned from France, I have heard him say he transferred into the Royal Flying Corps now the R.A.F. and being based at Cranwell and Duxford which are still R.A.F. Stations today.

Research has revealed that Iak, as his father was known, joined the Suffolk Regiment in December 1902, when he was 20 years old. He served with them for three years, when he was then placed into the Reserves. Once WWI commenced, all reserves were recalled, and he re-joined the Suffolk Regiment on 5th August 1914, and served with the British Expeditionary Force. As his period of engagement, he original signed up for finished on 9th December 1915, he was stood down. However, eventually we found his records joining the Royal Air Force in 1918.

Other highlights on the Calendar were the bi-annual Fairs which were held on the Market Place every May and October. I can see now in my mind's eye the Coach and Horses opposite the White Hart Hotel and Kempton's Greengrocers and the Cakewalk near the fountain on the corner of the Market Place at the Top of Fore Hill, not to mention the "Rock King" with his

big Stetson Hat on and waxed moustache. The usual Darts, Coconut Shys etc., in fact the Market Place was crammed with stalls with just aisles to walk down in between.

Oh! I must tell this story about getting in trouble again, I seemed to be doing that quite a bit at this stage in my life I suppose I would be about ten years old now and the fair was at Ely. I asked Mother if I could go to the fair with my pals, I had not been without my Mum and Dad before so thought I was getting grown up. Of course, I was lectured to behave myself and watch what I was doing so off we went. It was not long before my spending money was exhausted, in spite of the fares for a ride in those days being I think two pence for adults and one penny for children. Having no money left I noticed some other boys waiting for the Coaches and Horses to slow down and then jump on the step and have a free ride until they stopped. I was quite enjoying this until I was suddenly dragged off by the arm and cuffed around the ears, my Mum had copped me.

Then there was the Horse Fairs as we called them, I suppose Horse Dealers and Gypsies from miles around brought their Horses and Ponies to sell. It used to be I remember in Market Street, the people selling the Horses used to be holding on to the Halters and running the Horses up the street to show off their paces I suppose. It used to be fascinating for we kids to watch the Men bartering arguing and hand slapping but we never ventured too near as there were some rough customers among them.

In later years I remember these Fairs were held in St. Marys Green, maybe I think when we got a bit more traffic about.

POCKETMONEY DAYS

It is all very well going out to play but there comes a time in a chap's life when he wants something more and to get that he must have the where with all to do it, and by that, I mean cash. Now the only way to get that as far as I know is to earn it. Up to now my pocket money had been one penny a week given to me by my mother as I went back to school after Thursday lunch time, I used to call in the shop where my dad worked Bennett's in Market Street, and if I could see Miss Edwards in the shop I was in clover because she knew me and gave me a bag full of sugared Bon Bons for my penny.

There was of course, other ways of supplementing my pocket money. I used to look around the hedge bottoms for empty beer bottles that the farm labourers had left after drinking their cold tea for Dockey (Packed Lunch) wash them out and take them back to the Pub and get a penny for them and we could also take empty jam jars to the jam factory in Brays Lane.

Sometimes of course I could get a more lucrative job as weeding the paths in

Mr Pledger's Garden for which I would receive from two pence to six pence depending how long I can stick at it. And then on Saturday morning I could sometimes get a job fetching Coke from the Gasworks in Station Road, on the barrow my dad made for me using a pair of Pram Wheels and a Tea chest.

All these jobs are performed of course when I am not wanted at home to help my dad in the garden, or to go and collect sticks for lighting the fire for at this point we still had no gas installed in the house and had to light the fire to even boil the kettle for a cup of tea.

We were a very lucky family as my father always seemed to have a good job, as jobs were at this time, in fact he seemed to usually have more than one going, often he came home from one and then turn out to another, especially when it was Harvest time or when the farmers were lifting their crops or threshing the corn he always seemed to be very much in demand.

CHURCH YOUTH CLUB DAYS

Now that my finances are a bit better through my earnings, I can of course afford to splash out a little, so I join the Holy Trinity Church Boys Club. It was not called a Youth Club as they now are known, but I suppose the same thing, we met in the Church Hall in Newnham Street and I was very proud when I got my Badge to wear which was inscribed with H.T.P.C.C. (Holy Trinity Physical Culture Club).

We had quite good equipment such as Horizontal and Parallel Bars, Climbing Rope Boxing Gloves and a Pair of Stands with adjustable pegs and a wood rod across to jump over. Then on a Saturday afternoon we would go on Cross Country Runs and Paper Chases etc. We of course, had a couple of older Church Members in charge of proceedings and I must say that things always seemed to go very smoothly.

I must have been very satisfied with the Boys Club because before very long I had joined two more, one at the Countess of Huntingdon Chapel and also the Methodists now pretty well all my evenings were well occupied. It would I am sure be very appropriate here for me to thank a few good People for helping to shape my life. The Vicar of Holy Trinity Rev. Hare, Mr Saunders, Lay Reader Mr Mckenna, Mr [?????] at the Countess of Huntingdon Chapel and Mr Fenn at the Methodists these good folk I am sure I will never forget.

Now that I have joined the Holy Trinity Boys Club it is not long before my Mum reminds me that I should also go to Sunday School. So of course, being a good lad and always doing as Mum said this is not long in coming about, and after Sunday School we used to occupy the back three rows of pews in the Church. This does not go down very well with us, because it

meant sitting quiet through the Sermon and how long they seemed to drag on. Before very long the Vicar is looking around for boys to join the Choir, I can't say what persuaded me to join but I did enjoy singing, especially hymns then on the other hand it could have been the pay for we got the handsome amount of half a crown a quarter, and another night out for Choir Practice so most of my time is taken up now. It is time that I mentioned that our Parish Church was the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral, therefore, was quite large the heating was four large round Combustion Stoves which were never adequate to warm the place a fault I have noticed in most Church of England Churches over the years

BROTHERS WORK DAYS

By this time my brothers are getting old enough to go to work. I remember George's first job was as a gardener for Mrs Grainger that owned the Vineyards at that time, also another large orchard on the Lynn Road, alas it is no longer there but has been built on. Even the Vineyards now has bungalows built there, which in the days I am writing about would have been unthinkable. During the fruit picking season, I used to go in these orchards to help my mother who always went to work during the season picking Apples, Plums, Pears Etc. It was hard work for the women but they seemed to think nothing of it and could climb and move the short ladders from tree to tree without much difficulty.

Reg my next eldest Brother was the next to start work. His first job was as a Gents Outfitters Assistant at McFall's shop on the Fore Hill. Reg used to get his leg pulled because he had a "dressed up" job and was regarded the Spiv of the family at the time.

Cecil the next Brother always known as Cec. had, I remember a couple of jobs before settling down, first he worked for Mrs Tawn, in St Marys Street it was a Confectionery and Greengrocers Shop. He used to take Greengrocery orders out and do all sorts of odd jobs one of which was to turn the handle on the Churn to make Ice Cream in the hot weather, and I remember they also had a Barrow made so that Cec. could go around the town selling it, I say it was a Barrow but I think a cart would be a more apt description for it was big enough. It caused quite a bit of friction at the time because up to then Mr Tom Jones, who had a Confectionery Shop in Broad Street was the only person to sell Ice Cream in the City.

However, none of the three Brothers kept to their first trades, George left Gardening and learned to be a Painter and Decorator, Reg left his Outfitters and worked at the Sugar Beet Factory when it was being built, and continued to work there all his working life, as he was proud to relate. Cecil left Mrs Tawn's and went to work as a milkman for Mr Robert Martin at Barton Farm,

this job however did not last long as I think with my dad's persuasion, He too went to learn a trade, Painting and Decorating. And I must say here that both George and Cec. did turn out to be good at their jobs George as a matter of fact stayed in it all his working life. Cec., was another story as he was a joiner when he retired, I think that came about when he was in the Royal Air Force for a short period at the beginning of the second world war but I don't know the details.

What I do know is that when he left Mrs Tawns, I dropped in for the job I think with me being somewhat smaller they hadn't the heart to send me out with the Ice Cream Barrow.

DENTISTS

I stayed working at Mrs Tawn's for quite some time and one story I must relate, Mr Tawn was a Dental Mechanic by trade and worked for a Dentist in the town. But he had a shed in the back yard at the shop where he used to do a bit of work on the side, moonlighting as it is now called. One day he filled a garden wheel barrow with the Plaster casts He had used for making the Dentures covered it carefully with sacks and told me to take it to Mill Pits which was the local rubbish dump. He told me to be careful and cover it over with Rubbish before I left it, However I only got to the end of St Marys Street before I managed to up-tip the Barrow in the middle of the Road for all to see, I collected it up the best I could and finish off the job but didn't of course tell what I had done. My Dad is now persuading Cec. to leave the Milkman's job and learn a Trade so he finally leaves and goes to work at the same place as George for Mr Spinks at West Fen Road He was a well-known local tradesman and both brothers seemed to do well with him. What I am leading up to is that I left Mrs Tawn's and went to work on the Milk Round for Mr Martin.

MILK

Now I have to get up earlier in the morning for I start work at 7a.m. but am excused school until 9.30a.m. so I get two hours in the morning and do odd jobs after School in the afternoon, one of my main jobs was to clean the boots and shoes for the Family. The first time I did them I had to do them three times before Mrs Martin would pass them, I had to be told to clean them under the bottom between the heel and the sole but it did me good I have never forgotten it. Another incident I well remember, there was two horses which pulled the Milk Floats; young Tom and old Tom, one day Mr Martin told me to take young Tom to have his shoes replaced at the Blacksmiths in St Marys Street. He put a halter on him and said just lead him and don't try to ride him, well that was alright going but, on the way, back going past the Cathedral there was some handy cast iron posts with chain from one to the other, I thought now if I get a foot on one of those I can get

on Tom's back and get off before we get to the farm, but Tom had other ideas. I got aboard alright and he started to trot and try as I might I could not stop him until we reached the farmyard, there was, of course, a reception committee awaiting and I was given a ticking off but all ended well.

My work at Barton Farm continued until I left school and up to now, I had kept a clean sheet and had not had the sack from my job. Now I have reached the age of fourteen and have really got to start work, my dad decreed that I was going to learn a Trade so he obtained a place for me with Mr E Dean who at that time was the only man in the City that did Contract Plumbing.

APPRENTICE

I started work in May, Bound Apprentice in September. F. Tucker and Sons were the main Building Contractors in the City then and Mr Dean had a Workshop in the Builders yard in Newnham Street.

My Schooldays finished on the Friday and I started my Plumbing Career on the Monday this would be in 1926, my first task I well remember was to Sweep out the Workshop and believe me it needed it having no lad to do it, I don't think it had ever been done before. There were boxes, tins, putty drums and all kinds of fittings to move and sweep behind and I am pleased that I did, for when the Boss came in the first thing He did was to look and see if I had swept behind them. Mr Dean employed another man George Clarke and sometimes I went to work with Him and sometimes with the Boss depending on the type of work we were doing. We were working on Houses mostly built by Tuckers quite a few council houses I remember, St Johns Road was one site, Little Downham another and several were built for Private People these being mainly for Business People in the City, and Methodist Friends of the Tuckers and Deans.

SOHAM

The first larger job I went to work on was at Soham. We were to convert a large country house into a Grammar School, I think it is still in use today. One of the first jobs we had to do was to remove some large lead tanks out of the roof space, I remember getting shouted at by George Clarke because I was stepping over the ceiling joists and walking on the lathes, if it had been today's building, I would have gone through into the room below. One thing that has always stayed in my mind about this Soham job was the marvellous Plaster work on the Covings, Cornices as they were known, I remember where the walls were knocked out between the rooms to make the Assembly Hall Etc., these cornices had to be matched up and it was a work of art because they were very large anything from eighteen inches to two feet wide consisting of flowers leaves and all kinds of animals and figures, this work was executed by a well-known local family of Plasterers Harlock Cooper and

Sons.

I worked on several jobs after with the younger Mr Cooper but I don't think the older Gentleman did a lot more work after Soham was finished. I often think about the people I worked with then in particular, I think of the Macer Brothers, Vic and Fred from Soham, father and son bricklayers Albert and George Leach, they were good old Tradesmen in those days. I must not forget the best of them, he was Charlie Partridge a Navvy and labourer, He could dig a trench for the Footings of a house or a water main across a field as straight as a die, and seemed to go on hours without a rest. He used to have what I would term a little wood spade pushed into the strap which He always wore below His knee, it was used to clean his spade if the soil was sticking, I once asked him the name of this tool and his reply was "Its a Prolonger" because it "Prolongs my resting time"

I used to like to go out to jobs with George Clarke because he had a nice motor bike with an aluminium Sidecar. Boy did I swank on that if we passed any of my late school pals. This did not last however, because by this time it was getting bad to obtain work and Mr Dean finished poor old George. This I don't think worried George unduly, because he worked for himself, I think for the remainder of his life.

DISASTER

By this time, of course, I am getting to do a few jobs on my own, my first task was to do the lead flashings on the roofs of the houses the council houses in St Johns Road, Ely, this was where I started this type of work, and over the years I must have done miles of it and used tons of lead. By now there is only the Boss and myself on the within the firm, I am mostly with him. At this time quite a few folks are going in for Central Heating in their homes, a few I recall were Mr Roberson on Back Hill, I have just recalled that incidentally this house is opposite the one where I was born. We also did one house opposite the Catholic Church in Egremont Street. I do not recall the name of the people that lived there, then the Tuckers built a nice house on Lynn Road for Mr Tucker Senior to live in when he retired.

Of course, Central Heating was not the same then as now, it was all done with wrought iron pipe usually about one-and-a-half-inch diameter main pipe, with half inch branches to the cast iron Radiators, and not a pumped system as nowadays but a gravity system heated by a small Ideal Solid fuel boiler usually situated in the Kitchen. Of course, everything did not always go to plan and I must relate to the time when I was really a bad lad.

Mrs Dean came through to the Workshop one day and asked if Mr Dean was there, I said He was not, and she went on to say that someone was required

at Mr Bennetts new house on the Lynn Road to connect the gas supply to the Meter which the Gas Company had fitted. Now this job was well within my capabilities so of course I said I could do it, off I went on the trusty bike, tools on the handle bars, all I had to do was to sweat or solder the meter union onto the lead pipe which had been connected to the Gas appliances previously then screw and tighten the union on to the Meter this I had done before nothing to go wrong, or so I thought. So having done all the necessary now to test the installation, I turned on the main Gas Cock and asked for some money to put in the Meter and was watching the dial on the Meter, I had been round and checked if all the appliances had been turned off, not many in those days only a cooker and a gas cock for the Gas ring or water boiler. Low and behold the finger on the dial of the meter was going around quite fast so obviously there was a leak somewhere.

Fortunately, I had helped Mr Dean to install the pipes so knew where the pipes ran, from the Closet in the front Hall where the Meter was situated, we had taken the pipe up and over, to drop down into the Kitchen for the Cooker, the first place I put my nose I could smell gas of course the old coal gas was very easy to detect, the smell was coming through the floor boards at the top of the Staircase. After turning off the gas I went to get a carpenter to take up the floor boards for me, they were not very happy about this as you will guess but less so when we discovered that when the boards were put down someone had put a nail through the lead pipe.

It was not a long job to repair this damage I soon had some solder put on the holes after the nail was removed. I turned on the gas again and had a good smell around my repair and could smell nothing, "now for the crunch", I decided to be sure and struck a match that was fatal there was an almighty "Bang" which nearly blew me down the Stairs, I rushed to turn the gas off and when I went into the Kitchen there was not a bit of plaster left on the ceiling, all that could be seen was the wood lathes which were used then and not Ceiling Boards as used nowadays.

Later it was found that the Plasterers had put nails through the pipe when putting the lathes on the Kitchen ceiling but had pulled the nails out and said nothing so I think that must have taken the heat off me for I got away with it except for a bit of leg pull. It taught me a lesson though I have not looked for a gas leak with a lighted match since.

EARLY THOUGHTS AGAIN

Once again it is here the 3rd of February and my mind goes back to the days when I was a little old Boy as we used to say in Ely, I little thought in those days that fifty-nine years later I would be a fully-fledged Yorkshireman. Thinking back to when it must have been about nineteen twenty, I remember

standing with my mother on the Market Place in Ely among crowds of other People, I think I could safely say thousands of folks, to see the unveiling of the Memorial to the War Dead of the 1914-1918 War. This occasion sticks vividly in my mind and from then onwards I seemed to start growing up, we had all kinds of jobs to do in those days which we did not really regard as work, but they were essential to help with getting a living and bringing up a family.

My father by this time of course was home demobbed from the Army and was a great joy to me. Mum had been married before and had lost her Husband and was left with three small Children all Boys George being the Eldest being about Ten years old and then there was three years between the other two Reg, Cecil, and myself Charles. I have thought in later years what a man my dad was to take on a Family like that, we all lived very happily together as a Family but my dad was always a busy man. He usually had a couple of jobs on the go and then when he came home there was always the garden and an allotment to see to, for we were always self-sufficient with garden produce. My best days were with my dad, "Pop" as we all called him, I used to go setting potatoes on the Allotment with him. He dug the ground, left a trench I put good old Farmyard Manure in and then the spuds then Dad dug again filling in the trench and leaving another and so on it was hard work but I never heard him complain.

On Saturday mornings when we were off school, we all had our tasks to do, go over the fields and get a bag or two of sticks to light the fire with for we used very little coal, I think Mother bought the odd bag but there was always a stack of tree branches in the Back Garden which my dad used to cut up with one of us Boys on the other end of a crosscut with him. Another chore we had was to go to the Jam Factory to get a bag of Straw for the Chickens to scratch in also for the nest boxes, also we used to take a Brush Shovel and a Bucket and get a Bucket full of grit from the gutters to put in the Hen Run

BRASSO DAYS

Another nice job I well remember we did was the Rex Cinema this was built by another Builder that had got going in the City Harry Wykes who did quite a lot of work in the Area in later years. There was I remember some nice Sheet lead work on the Roof of the Cinema Foyer of which Mr Dean was very proud it was certainly a work of Art because in those days there was not lead welding as we have today.

We are doing quite a few jobs now for Harry Wykes I remember going to St Ives to do the Plumbing on a Private House Brasso Bush was my mate and I remember we both lodged with an old lady there while we did the job. Brasso

real name Fred was a member of a well-known Ely Family, His Father an Ex. Policeman with a family of I think four Sons all of which were over six feet tall they all attended I feel sure the Cathedral Choir School, Brasso My Mate acquired his Peculiar "Nick Name" there because as He once told me He was so "Brilliant".

We also worked in a Bungalow on Ely Road Littleport but as that was only five miles from Ely we had to travel there on our Bikes. What we should have done without our Bikes I do not know, I remember Brasso and I were doing a job at Haddenham and we wanted some Half inch Galvanized Pipe so the Boss set us both off with a length each on our Shoulders riding our Bikes all of nine miles, what would the lads think today, anyway it would not be safe to do so now with all the traffic on the road

Also, on the job at Haddenham I had my first Personal Accident, Brasso and I were lifting the bath into position when I trapped my little finger between a pipe and the bath which resulted in Charlie minus a finger nail and I think about two weeks off work.

SAD/HAPPY

We are now in the year 1930 a very sad year for me I'm afraid it was on the 3rd March 1930 that my dad at the early age of 47 years Passed away this was a great shock to me and to us all for we had not been used to seeing Pop poorly He was always so full of energy. After sixteen weeks in Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge Dad was sent home incurable, something wrong in his throat, which they said was an enlarged artery. After being with us for seven weeks the end came and the mainstay of the Family gone

George and Reg are married by this time there is only Cec and I at home now with Mother, Cec is courting and going to Littleport most nights to see Phil. so that means Charlie has to stay home to keep Mother company so my activities are curtailed quite a bit I can't get to the youth clubs as much now. Mother wanted to go to Church now on a Sunday night so that was one night a week we went out together for quite some time. After a few months Mum did get Friendly with another Lady and that let me off the Hook a bit when they started going out together.

My best Pals now are Elli Butcher and Bert Lambert. Elli lived next door but one to us and we had been Friends since starting school, Bert had come from Canada; His Mum and Dad had immigrated and I think Bert was only a baby when they went when they returned, He was about our age so teamed up With Elli and I we were all good Pals until I left Ely. Elli was Bound Apprentice the same day as me, He went as a Motor Engineer to Gravens

Garage in Broad Street and I understand his last job was with Sir Frederick Hiam. He was a big Farmer in the Fens with land in the Prickwillow Area. Elli was responsible for the Maintenance of the Farm Machinery and I think had a good job. Bert was working at the Ely Beet Factory when I left Ely and but more about that later.

Mother is now getting over the loss of my dad and going out with Her Lady Friend so I am able to go out with Elli and Bert more. We go to the Pictures quite often there was three in the city at that time, the Rex opposite the Post Office one in Market Street and another on the Market place, so we had a choice. After I left Ely, I think another one was built in Newnham Street. Sometimes on a Saturday night we would go to a dance there was a hall in Market Street and sometimes we went to a Village hop as we called it to one of the nearby villages, Streatham, Little Thetford or Soham we of course went on our trusty Bikes no other means.

We of course are getting young men now and I don't really think that dancing appealed to any of us that much, I think it was the opposite sex that we were getting interested in and it is not long before one or the other of us is getting a date. Littleport was a Favourite place to go and that is where I found my first Girl Friend, we kept company for quite some time and were quite compatible I think, but after a while Mum started to grouse as I was going to Littleport too often so for peace and quiet it had to finish.

About the same time that my Dad Died, Uncle Fred at Doncaster lost his wife Aunt Emma, Mothers sister she was and Uncle Fred and Mum started to write to each other. and in due course Mum asked me if I would go to Doncaster with her for a holiday I of course did so and that was I think when it was arranged that eventually Mother and Uncle Fred would get Married I at that time was too blind to see it.

Mother and Uncle Fred did of course get Married on the same August Bank Holiday weekend that Cec and Phillis did likewise. This left me as the only one in the Family not Married, Mum and Uncle Fred went to Doncaster and Cec and Phil said I could stay and live with them as they had taken over Mothers House.

This arrangement was alright for a time but as work was getting less and less and Mr Dean had his son Eddie, Brasso and me to find work for it was not long before it was becoming difficult. So it was that the end of January 1933 I was working on a Barclays Bank in Littleport when Mr Dean came to tell me that He could no longer find work for me so I would have to go. But he did say that he would send for me when He got some work, as it is now 1992 and he has not sent for me, I think I have been forgotten.

In spite of the treatment, I got from Mr Dean we did keep good Friends and I went to see him when I went to Ely, the last time I saw him He was over 90 years of age and I am sorry to say has now Passed on a wonderful man and a good Friend to me.

DONCASTER

So now I am in a fix I am out of work and getting fifteen shillings a week Dole money, living with Cec and Phil whom I can't expect to keep me as they will be struggling also as times are bad. The next move I write to Mother and explain the situation to her and very quickly I get a letter telling me to come to Doncaster and try for a job, well I have nothing to lose so why not. So, on 3rd February 1933, I arrive m Doncaster Station with my worldly possessions, Tool Chest, a bike, a case with my clothes in and probably three or four pounds in cash, I don't remember really.

My first week in Doncaster will always stay in my mind, it was midweek Wednesday when I arrived and got settled in with Ma and Uncle Fred at 64 Elsworth Street Doncaster. The weather now had turned extremely cold and I wondered what I had let myself in for, on Friday evening it started to snow and it went on until the Sunday late evening, when we looked out on Monday morning we were well and truly snowed in, the snow was piled high against the back door where it had drifted and there must have been about two feet of it in the Front Street, I don't think I had ever seen more snow and not since either, I thought what a welcome.

Well, I am now in Doncaster but not too happy I don't know anyone except the few relations, and of course being out of work and only getting Fifteen Shillings a week dole money, I am not able to do a great deal. Mother and Uncle Fred were very good they did not expect me to pay any Board until I got some work so I was able to go to the Pictures on an afternoon and by showing my Dole card managed to get in to see a film for sixpence.

Eventually though I got quite good Pals with my cousin Ernest, He and His wife Hilda were very good to me and seemed to be glad of my company, Hilda was expecting their first child then so they were not able to get out much. Their house in Christ Church Road was a very popular calling place for lots of Friends and Relations, and were all made very welcome, I don't think anyone called and the tea and cakes were not put on the table I well remember going to the Hamilton Lodge Nursing Home in Hyde Park with Ernest to see Hilda and baby Joy when she was born. They of course were very Proud Parents but unfortunately Joy did not grow up to be a very healthy child but more about this later.

Well now I manage to fill in my time by doing some Decorating for Mum, Something I have never done before having two Brothers in the trade, but I

don't think I made a bad job for it was not long before Ernest and Hilda found me some to do, so I was able to pay them to some extent for their kindness to me. Then Aunt Jess that was Uncle Fred's sister who lived a few houses down the street from Ernest wanted some Decorating doing so one way and another I was kept quite busy. At any rate the time is passing nicely the weather has improved but I can't say that I am Happy with the situation I miss my pals at Ely and the only way I get to know any news is from a Girl Friend that I left behind we had only been keeping company a few weeks before I left home and I did receive the occasional letter from her.

JOURNEYMAN

My luck however did change as it was about the end of April when I went to the Dole office to sign on and I was given a Green Card to Report to a building site for a job as a Journeyman Plumber. Right up my street I thought but I found otherwise when I arrived on the Site with my tools on the Handlebars of my Bike. In those days for a start my Fen Boy Brogue gave me away and all I knew I was not from Yorkshire. Very soon, as I was walking up the Site with the Boss to set me a job, he said to me I'll give you a job fixing the Fire back Boilers and me of course being on the Ball said "Will we have Stocks and Dies there". He looked at me gone out and said "What do we want with Stocks and Dies" I replied "well we used Galvanized Iron pipe for Boilers where I come from". I'll bet he thought we've got a right one here.

However, when He took me in one of the houses to show me everything was revealed, the lead Boiler pipes had been threaded down the Chimney and connected to the cylinder upstairs and what I had to do was wipe two boiler unions on these pipes and connect them to the Boiler, making sure of course that the Flow Pipe went to the Flow connection on the cylinder and Boiler also that they were watertight. Anyway, I must have passed the initial test alright because before long I was promoted to Second Fixing which was fitting all interior Plumbing. i.e., tank, Cylinder, Bath, Wash Basin Toilet Pan and Cistern, Sink and Sink Taps at this time of course High leek cisterns Glazed Earthenware Sinks and Cast-Iron Baths were being used so the work was quite heavy, not to mention all lead pipe including the waste pipes.

Something else I learned in Yorkshire, Plumbers did the Glazing that surprised me for the Painters had always done this at Ely, I mentioned this to the Boss and He said "Don't worry we're happy with what you are doing the lads can do the Glazing"

This Site, the first I worked on in Doncaster was at Oswin Avenue Balby, the Builders Thompson & Dixon the Plumbing Contractor Allan Marrison known in the trade as Lightning Marrison I think because He expected you to move

like a streak of Lightning. I will say at that time you had to work to keep your job as there was still plenty of People out of work. By the way I celebrated my Twenty First Birthday on this Site, and one of the apprentices was sent to the Plough on Balby Road for Bottles of Beer all round at Charlie's expense of course at dinner time. This Site now is nearing completion so as it has always been in the building trade we are expecting to get moved to another Site, or the sack, this is what happened - the Boss said "The next site is the Flat-Topped Houses at York Road they are not ready for Plumbers yet so we will send for you in a week or two"

When I arrived home and told Mother I had got finished she was not very Pleased but as I said I had been in work for about six months and that was something at that time. When we were talking later in the evening Uncle Fred had a thought and said "Why not go and see Albert Micklethwait, He may help you". Albert, was he said until recently a near neighbour and Friend that worked for a Plumbing firm, but had gone to live in a new Council House at Intake. So, the next day being Saturday off Charlie went with the instructions and address to find Albert Micklethwait. When I found the House, I discovered it was in the Centre of the largest Housing Site I had encountered up to that time, Mrs Micklethwait answered the door and having explained who I was she Pointed out a Builders Cabin to me across the Site and said I would find Albert around there. Sure, enough he was there hard at work Wiping joints and making up Pipes for the new Houses, it turned out that Uncle Fred did me a good turn for Albert was the Foreman for the Largest Plumbing Contractors in the area at that time.

I was told to report to a new Housing Site at the Greyhound Track on York Road on the Monday Morning so I was very lucky not to be out of work again. Charlie being the New Boy and of course the Odd Ball was given the job for a start that is not very Popular with most Plumbers, that was the sheet lead work, that is covering the Bag Tops and Flashings around the Chimneys and Bay Windows, I didn't mind the job though I had a good schooling for it at Teddy Deans. As time went on, I was eventually accepted as one of the Lads and must have pleased for I did stay on with A Nicklin Ltd. For Seventeen and a half years

COURTING/PARTING/LONDON

We did a good variation of work with this Firm and nearly all the time we were on new work, such as Houses, Bungalows, Hotels, Pubs, and Schools and it was after I had been working on the Wheatley Park School in Doncaster a few weeks I got a shock. Albert Micklethwaite the Foreman came on to the site and said to me "the Boss wants to see you at the Office", now I thought what have I done, I need not have been alarmed for He only wanted to ask me if I would go to North London to take charge of the

Plumbing work on three new Sites of Flats that were just being started, now this puts me in a dilemma, I have not mentioned this before but I have just met a young lady that I am interested in and don't particularly want to leave Doncaster now.

I tell the Boss that I don't really think I am up to the job and that the following weekend which is a Bank Holiday I am going down to Ely for the Weekend which was true, I had arranged to take my new young lady with me.

However, after a lot of talk He won and I said I would go to put the water service on for the Builders water and take it from there. And now that the subject has been touched upon, I had better explain how I met Maud that eventually became my Life Partner for we have now been Wed Fifty-Five years.

It was I would say just over a year since I came to Doncaster and one night I was at Ernest and Hilda's House and they were discussing a Scout Dance that Hilda's Brother Edgar was helping to organize, Hilda was going, also Cousin Muriel and two Friends Kathleen and Molly and eventually Charlie was roped in as well. I of course was well helped up with Four Ladies that I knew at the Dance but Kathleen and Molly had brought another one with them and that was Maud who worked at the same place as them, it seemed we must have clicked because Maud was the one, I took Home from the Dance and have been taking her home ever since.

To get back to work again, it was arranged with Mr Nicklin that I should go back to London to put the water on for the Builders during the following week and then back to Ely for the weekend and Maud would meet me there, and as it turned out Mother and Uncle Fred were going to Ely so Maud was able to travel with them, so after a very pleasant weekend and Maud's first visit to my home City, the first of many I may add, it was back to London and work. Not wanting to go into too much detail this job proved to be a great help to me and my future life, I had to try three lodgings before I got one to suit me but eventually, I had a good comfortable one with Mr and Mrs Morgan, Maud can vouch for that because while I was there, she came to spend a weekend with us.

While I was at London, I did manage a week's Summer Holiday. Maud's Mum and Dad and Maud and my Mum and Uncle Fred went to Great Yarmouth by train, cars were out of the question in those days I'm afraid, I went from London and we had a very memorable week together. With all due respect to the Elders, I do mean Maud and I had a very memorable week for I know that was the time when we decided to spend the remainder of our lives together and became engaged. Maud's Mother and Father were always very good to me and we got on well together, I think they were a bit dubious

at first because I was a foreigner but I must have grown on them because we never had a wrong word and I was always most welcome at their home.

As I have already mentioned this work at London was a great help to me because when I left Ely, I was on my Beam Ends, so with the Nicklin's permission I was able to work as long as I wanted so consequently, I worked lashings of overtime so was able to get quite a bit of Cash by me which I had never possessed before. After about Eighteen Months the Contracts were drawing towards the end so I asked Mr Nicklin if I could go back to Doncaster and leave an older man to finish off the job. This chap was a Doncaster man but parted from his wife so was not bothered about being away from Home, me I wanted to get Home and see a bit more of Maud.

Mr Nicklin agreed that Chris was O.K. so Home I came to Doncaster very pleased with myself. But it didn't last, I had been Home about a couple of weeks when the Boss came to me and said "Charlie, I want you to go back to London, that so and so will be there for ever He will never get finished", apparently, He was enjoying it there and someone had let the Boss know about it. So back I had to go and finish off the job it didn't take me long I had been away long enough. There was plenty of building work at that time around Doncaster and District 1935-37 work was there for the taking as long as you were.

Able-bodied men had to register for Service with H.M. Forces. I went to Sheffield where I signed on to go into the R.A.F. So now I like lots of other people am awaiting calling up papers, then I joined the L.D.V., Local Defence Volunteers, later to be named the Home Guard, so now with work, Home Guard Duties and fire watching during air raid warnings we are kept quite busy.

MARRIED DAYS

We did not have a very exotic Honeymoon but went to Newmarket of all places to my Aunt Mary, so Maud met another of the Family and one she will not forget in a hurry I'll bet, however we enjoyed ourselves and were fortunate enough to be able to go Home to our own little new and comfortably Furnished House, No 9 Wellington Grove Bentley Doncaster.

Charlie was my father-in-law, and I can only agree with Roy's definition of him. Kind, polite, nothing ever too much trouble. He dreamed of a Simpkins Grandson, while loving his two Granddaughters unconditionally. After 12 years of marriage, we decided it was time for a family, and the result was Jonathan, who he had for 11 years before his death, they were great pals, and one of his greatest pleasures was taking him to Chapel with him on Sunday.

[To better reflect Charles's thoughts and memories, the punctuation and capitalisation as in the original document has mostly been retained—Editor]

The Really Useful Show : Live

(FHF EA Regional Fair) Sat 20 April 2024

@ The Burgess Hall, St Ives, Cambs

*promises to be a fantastic day for all
aspects of research across the area and beyond*

**watch out for more information on our website & facebook
as arrangements come together over the coming months**

or visit the show website: www.fhf-reallyuseful.com

Ralph Snudden—an appreciation of a life-times work to help widen access to county resources by Gill Shapland

When I first started working at Cambridgeshire Archives in the early 1990s, Ralph and his wife Beryl had been involved in local and family history for some time.

Ralph's focus was the Flendish Hundred: the parishes of Horningsea, Fen Ditton, Fulbourn, Teversham and (Cherry) Hinton. He transcribed Horningsea Churchwardens' Accounts, 1773 – 1847 [1998]. He also transcribed and indexed (with Beryl) Caldecote baptisms and burials, 1599-1640 [2004] and Caldecote baptisms and burials, 1599-1640 [2004]. Perhaps more importantly in general terms, they transcribed Consistory and Archdeaconry Court marriage licences 1594 – 1979, held at the University Archives and others from surrounding counties. Ralph had been hoping to complete a transcript of the wills of the Flendish Hundred, with other historical notes, but poor health meant the work is incomplete.

We hope that Beryl, perhaps with help from other friends, will be able to see this to completion.

CHFHS VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY (CUL)

Tuesday 5th September 2023

by Lisa Constanti, Research Officer for the CHFHS

On the 5th of September, CHFHS members and committee members had the pleasure of visiting the CUL as part of a planned tour. Sixteen of us congregated in the lobby after putting our personal possessions in the lockers and collecting our visitors passes at 2pm, from which point our tour guide, Kevin Roberts, gave an overview of the tour to come. We were then handed over to Michael Taylor who provided us with a historical tour of the University Library.

We listened to interesting facts about how the University Library came to be, mainly because the prior repositories for such collections within Cambridge's centre had become fit to bursting over a period of several centuries. The CUL was opened in 1934. Designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, Michael emphasised how well designed the architecture was to support the needs of a growing home for the now 6 million+ publications the library houses. We were taken on a tour downstairs to earlier space allocated to library resources and were shown several glimpses of how the library, over time, has taken space saving innovation to a new level. The periodical stores downstairs comprised of floor to ceiling moveable shelving that concertina using crank handles to maximise the space available. We were also told that the Atrium area in the centre of the Library, currently a lovely space with benches and trees, was raised a level from the floor below in order to add an extra room for publication space! It was quite impressive quite how eloquently the Library had utilised every scrap of space without making the place seem overcrowded and stuffy.

Cambridgeshire University Library is a Copyright library meaning that it keeps a wide variety of copyright works within their collections from across the UK.



These may include published and unpublished works.

From here, the group were taken to the map room, a room used by a diverse number of people wishing to study cartography for various reasons. A group of budding architects were receiving a talk in the room when we arrived and there were a number of interesting maps and surveys laid out across the tables in the room, not least was a large Ordnance Survey map of Huntingdonshire.

The main part of our tour was a trip to the Manuscript reading room on the 3rd floor where a large number of antiquarian records and volumes were on display for the group to review. David Copsey took a moment to remind everyone that as a member of the CHFHS, we have access to the CUL and can obtain a 2-year membership reader card to come onsite.

Our hosts then, in turn, gave us a snapshot of each of the selection of record sets they had provided today and their significance. We were treated to a quick talk from Sally Kent who had spent the last 14 months processing a large Assize collection for the Library. Most of this collection is now online and available to search and book out. Assize courts were generally used for some of the most serious crimes, murder, treason etc but were also used for smaller crimes such as theft or property disputes. As the Bishop of Ely had powers within the Isle of Ely that fell outside the remit of the Cambridgeshire courts, they were able to hold their own Assize courts at intervals twice a year. This also meant that some small crimes sat in Ely due to the geographical convenience of the court location in Ely.

They started the project by working on the biggest and most difficult assize rolls in the collection because of the difficulty in physically handling the rolls and transcription difficulties. For some perspective, one large roll, might contain over 600 hundred entries, which might include 30-40 cases a day. For an idea of how they can be used genealogically, Assize rolls might include details like names, the charges, dates and sometimes a brief description. These were all the better if they came with deposition documents that provided witness statements. Some examples were set out for us to view.

The collection runs from around 1557 to the 1770's with some gaps. A common occurring type of case were witchcraft trials, like in the case of John and Bridget Bonham of Sutton in 1636, who were first taken to court when bones were discovered on their property and the local neighbours took no time in adding depositions to blemish their character. They were found not guilty, but when the witch trials came around a few years later, they were put on the stand again....

Kevin then gave the group a small talk through the record sets he had selected for the day, which included a Diocesan Guardianship register (18th C) from the collection for the Diocese of Ely which is stored at the Library. They also store many Registers of Marriage licenses for the county as well as Parish register Transcripts. Amongst other records were Manorial records, difficult collections to find, but extremely useful for researchers studying pre-18th century subjects. Logbooks from Witcham, Wentworth and Witchford from 1770 to 1788 were available for the group to review.

The group had the opportunity to review Cambridge Market returns, logbooks from schools in Littleport, Choir school registers and the gem of the display was Alexander's book of the Apocalypse! Entitled 'Expositio in Apocalypsom', m, mid-13th Century MS Mm.5.31. A rather amazing volume packed with exquisite Illustrations.

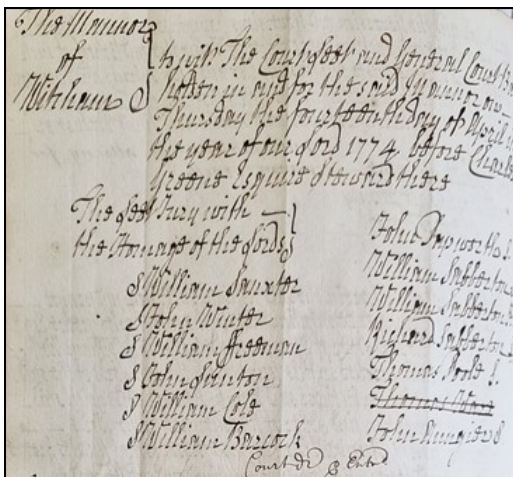
Jackie Cox, the Keeper of the University Archives provided the group with record sets like membership sign up sources which provide good genealogical evidence for

researchers. Matriculation records were available, 3 volumes worth, which are not available online. It's well worth noting that there are a number of records not available online and a visit to the CUL is well worth the effort.

Finally, Liam Sims, Rare Books specialist, spoke to the group about a recently acquired collection of school magazines from schools across England. Several examples were on display, and they are a unique and rarely accessible source of information for those wishing to find other methods of investigation into their research.

Cambridgeshire and its universities had many types of Courts, one being the Vice-Chancellor Courts. Most courts were for University members, but the Vice-Chancellor court was for Scholars, servants and privileged persons to use when they wanted to sue or be sued. These records are also found at the CUL.

The groups spent around two hours at the Library and our tour guides were thanked profusely for their very interesting and informative tour.



Manorial records, the 'Mannor' of Witcham 1774. From Witcham, Wentworth and Witchford court baron manorial minute book, 1770-1788.

WITCHCRAFT, DEFAMATION & THEFT:

A whistle-stop guide to the Isle of Ely assize records

Between 2019 and 2021, the CHFHS generously funded a cataloguing project to improve the discoverability of 218 years' worth of court records in the Ely Diocesan archive housed at Cambridge University Library.

What are the assizes and why is the Isle of Ely significant?

The assizes formed part of the criminal court system in England and Wales until 1971 when they were replaced by a single permanent Crown Court. Unlike petty sessions and quarter sessions, which were usually presided over by unpaid local gentry, the assizes were presided over by professional judges appointed by the Crown. The assizes have been described as a form of itinerant justice – judges were sent out from London to set up temporary courts and to dispense justice across seven circuits in England and Wales.

The Isle of Ely, an historic administrative region now forming part of northeast Cambridgeshire, fell under the especial jurisdiction of the Bishop of Ely and operated outside the circuit court system. The records of the Ely assizes are unusual in that they have remained within the county; most assize records are held centrally at the National Archives in Kew.

The records cover the period 1557 to 1775, with a single stray roll from 1515, and a number of gaps in the sequence. The courts usually sat twice a year, alternating between Ely and Wisbech. In principle, the assizes dealt with serious criminal cases such as homicide, assault, infanticide, larceny (over the value of 12d), witchcraft, vagrancy and recusancy. In practice, the assizes also dealt with a range of less serious crimes including petty larceny (theft of goods under the value of 12d, of which there are countless examples in the Ely records from a bowl of milk to a brass kettle), breach of promise (debt) and trespass.

What did the project achieve?

The cataloguing concentrated on the least accessible records, the assize court rolls (also known as plea rolls), the formal written-up proceedings of each session. The rolls are physically challenging to handle, each being several membranes of parchment secured together. Once unrolled, the parchment naturally tries to spring back into its original roll. Most rolls comprise about ten membranes; the largest roll covering the period 1558-1566 comprises a staggering 81 membranes. In addition, the court proceedings are written in heavily abbreviated Latin, in a distinctive legal script and contain technically abstruse language. For a simple example, in

the case of petty theft, an entry might use a form of words translated as ‘with force and arms [he] feloniously stole, took and carried away’.

The original typescript list produced in the 1970s by the then diocesan archivist, Dorothy Owen, provided only classmark, physical extent and covering date, with no further information on the content of each roll. The new online catalogue now records the following:

- # date and place of the court;
- # names of judges;
- # names of the accused, often with their place of abode and occupation;
- # summary of the charges against the accused and date of the alleged offence;
- # plea, verdict and sentence.

The formal proceedings do not include witness statements, depositions or examinations; as a result, it is not always possible to work out why an individual was acquitted or found guilty.

As a result of the project, 138 rolls were examined with 133 catalogued in detail (5 rolls were too fragile to be consulted) resulting in 5261 discrete entries or cases. There is now a wealth of names, occupations, places and crimes available to search online.

Alongside the court rolls, cataloguing also extended to the assize files, the working documents or background papers of the court. The files comprise a series of large and often unwieldy bundles of paper and parchment, some still secured together with an original parchment tie. They contain a mixture of examinations, witness depositions, indictments, coroners’ inquisitions, bonds to appear in court or to give evidence, lists of court officials, gaol calendars, correspondence and an array of related papers. In some case the files supplement information contained in the rolls and in other cases they present entirely new information.

Unlike the rolls which are ‘of the record’, that is formulaic and largely devoid of specific detail, the assize files provide a much fuller picture of the individuals accused of crimes. A good example – the macabre and fascinating case of John and Bridget Bonham who fell under suspicion of infanticide following the discovery of an earthen pot full of bones in the village of Sutton in 1630 – has been described elsewhere by Gill Shapland, member of the CHFHS and stalwart volunteer on this project. The survival rate of depositions and examinations is generally quite patchy. Those that do survive are real gems, full of detail and personality, and provide as close to a first-hand account of an incident as is possible.

Another 1400 discrete entries were added to the online catalogue relating to the assize files. This replaces the single paragraph of text in Dorothy Owen's published catalogue, *Ely records: A handlist of the records of the Bishop and Archdeacon of Ely* (1971), which listed only classmark and covering dates.

What do we now know about the Isle of Ely assizes?

At a rough estimate, the cataloguing drew out around 10,000 names of individuals connected with the assizes. Of course, some names are repeated with spelling variations, while others are obviously repetitions. For instance, Lancelot Flower of Ely, described in the records as a gentleman, appeared 29 times between 1574 and 1593, both as defendant and plaintiff. Elizabethan England, in particular, was a litigious society. Apart from the assizes, there were a range of courts available from the petty and quarter sessions to manor and borough courts, the University courts, the King's Bench and other central courts in Westminster. The court system was more accessible than we might imagine and, as such, court records remain a largely untapped source for family and local historians.

In terms of general observations, the alleged criminals were overwhelmingly male, accounting for perhaps 80-90% of cases. There was a relative lack of really serious crime in the Isle of Ely. Most cases in the assizes appear to be opportunistic or borne out of necessity. Frustratingly, the outcomes are seldom recorded and little or no explanation is given where verdicts do exist. It is perhaps unsurprising that the assize records have been largely under-exploited by family historians and researchers alike. It is hoped that this CHFHS-funded project, and the resulting catalogue, will go some way towards encouraging wider use of these fascinating records.

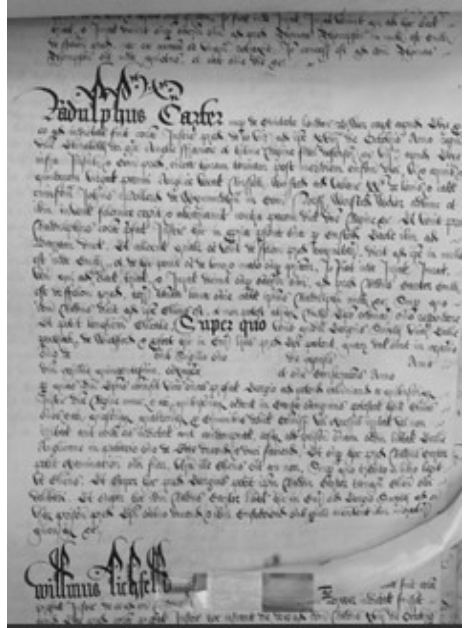
How can family historians access the records?

The assize court records can be searched or browsed on ArchiveSearch.

To search for records, enter a search term at <https://archivesearch.lib.cam.ac.uk/>. Use the filters on the right-hand menu to restrict your results to Cambridge University Library. Under the heading 'ARCHON code (for CUL materials)' click on 'Archives and MSS Dept. (GBR/0012)'. Entries for the assize records are prefaced by the reference MS/EDR/E. Once within a record, the scope and content field can be expanded by clicking 'see more'.

To browse the records, follow this link https://archivesearch.lib.cam.ac.uk/repositories/2/archival_objects/3991 and use the tree structure on the right-hand side of the page to navigate the catalogue.

Please email mss@lib.cam.ac.uk for general enquiries. Note that some records are simply too fragile to be consulted. Any material unsuitable for



Widening access to archived documents by indexing of names/places and summarising content—might **your** family be listed??



consultation has been marked accordingly in the online catalogue.

Lastly, do take advantage of the offer available to members of the CHFHS to obtain a reader's card for Cambridge University Library. CHFHS members are entitled to free membership. You will need to go through the normal public application process detailed at <https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/using-library/your-library-membership> and bring a letter from the CHFHS Membership Secretary to confirm you are a member of the society.

Sally Kent
Cambridge University Library
November 2023

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@chfhs.org.uk

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|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Ely Library | 3 rd Wed alternate mths | Jan / March / May | drop in between 10.00-4.00 |
| Norris Museum St Ives | 2 nd Wed alternate mths | Feb / Apr / June | drop-in between 10.30 & 3.30 |
| Bar Hill Library | 3 rd Mon <u>every</u> mth | Jan / Feb / Mar / Apr / May | drop-in between 1.30-4.00 |
| Huntingdon Archives | 4 th Wed <u>every</u> mth | Jan / Feb / Mar / Apr / May | drop-in between 1.30-4.00 |
| March Library | 1 st & 3 rd Tues <u>every</u> mth | *** NOW TWICE MONTHLY *** | drop-in between 10.00-4.00 |
| Cambridge Central Library | 2 nd Sat <u>every</u> month | Jan / Feb / Mar / Apr / May | drop-in between 11.00 & 2.00 |

HUNTS PARISHES AVAILABLE TO SEARCH VIA CHFHS WEBSITE

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Abbotsley | Huntingdon All Saints |
| Alconbury Weston | & St John 1690s |
| Barham | Leighton Bromswold |
| Bluntisham C Earith | Lt Gidding |
| Botolph Bridge | Lt Raveley |
| Brampton | Lt Stukeley |
| Brington | Somersham |
| Broughton | Wood Walton |
| Buckden | |
| Buckworth | |
| Bury c Hepmangrove | |
| Caldecote | |
| Colne | |
| Denton | |
| Gt Staughton | |
| Hartford | |

HUNTS PARISHES IN PROGRESS

| |
|----------------------------------|
| Alwalton |
| Bythorn |
| Chesterton |
| Covington |
| Diddington |
| Easton |
| Elton |
| Eynesbury |
| Fletton |
| Huntingdon |
| All Sts, St Marys & St Benedicts |
| Ramsey |
| St Ives |
| Stilton |
| Warboys |
| Yelling |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| MARCH BRANCH PROGRAMME | | <u>1st Wednesdays at 2.00pm</u> |
| Wednesday Face-2-Face Meetings | | March Library, March enquiries : march@chfhs.org.uk |
| Wed 3 Jan | Burke & Hare : body snatchers | with Don Chiswell <i>Discover the true story behind the infamous Burke and Hare who, while not actually body snatchers, are always associated with the name. The fear of the body snatchers was very real and extraordinary measures were taken to counter their trade: on one occasion resulting in a two hour gun battle. Why did the medical profession condone the practice? How was it brought to an end, or was it?</i> |
| Wed 7 Feb | Cambridgeshire Churches | with John Vigor <i>As a county Cambridgeshire is hard to define, having been artificially formed by the amalgamation of several previously independent historic areas, each with its own character. Its diverse geology includes some of the best building stone in England, and some of the worst, as well as areas that have no native building stone at all. Parts of it were once managed by the Crowns of both England and Scotland and much of it was held by monasteries and Cambridge Colleges where the wealth of those institutions can easily be identified in its buildings. Yet it still has areas where wealth never reached and where the architecture is pedestrian as a result.</i> |
| Wed 6 Mar | Beyond Hatches, Matches & Dispatches | with Sarah Doig <i>Some curious tales derived from Suffolk parish registers— collapsing church spires and extreme weather conditions, as well as some of the tragic and humorous circumstances in which people lived and died.</i> |

Project co-coordinator, Terry, updates progress of WisMus

With the end finally in sight, work on completing the project had, unfortunately, to be temporarily suspended to enable the switch over to a new data management system embedded in the new website.

Join us for that final push once the data input facility is back up and running. At the last count there is just a handful of registers remaining (although a couple are in Latin, the others are quite readable). To date we have completed over 555 registers with not far short of 400,000 records.

If any of the old volunteers, or new ones (and particularly if you have skills with old handwriting and/or reading Latin) would like to help with the final push to completion—

—please get in touch via my Projects e-mail

HUNTINGDON BRANCH PROGRAMME

3rd Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm

Zoom only (register via website)

enquiries : huntingdon@chfhs.org.uk

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| <p>Wed 17 Jan</p> | <p>Hinchingbrook House with Mark Egerton <i>Hinchingbrooke House is a Grade 1 Listed House built as a Benedictine Monastery and dates from the 11th Century. After the Reformation the property was granted to Oliver Cromwell – the uncle of the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell, by Henry VIII. The property then passed to Sir Sydney Montagu – the Earl of Sandwich – and remained in their family until 1962. The building has been restored a number of times over the centuries and following purchase by Huntingdon District Council became part of Hinchingbrooke School in 1970.</i></p> |
| <p>Web 21 Feb</p> | <p>Heros & Villains of Yelling with John Bowness <i>The stories of how a few inhabitants of the small village of Yelling stand out in history – for both good and rather more dubious reasons – from an Australian statesman to a rector whose actions reduced the church congregation to one, and that was his wife!</i></p> |
| <p>Wed 20 Mar</p> | <p>Buried Deep—but not lost forever with Linda Hammond Discovering your ancestor's final resting place. <i>Discovering a deceased ancestor's death record is often the final step in our search, yet uncovering their burial place and any markers can provide invaluable information. This presentation guides you in narrowing down search areas for your ancestor's burial sites, exploring available records and accessing online resources. We will also investigate the variety of information you can find and the usefulness of that information. Finally we will look at how to prepare for a graveyard visit and explore some tips for reading difficult tombstones.</i> <i>Linda Hammond is a professional genealogist and member of the Register of Qualified Genealogists. She has been active in genealogy for over 35 years as both a researcher and a lecturer and is currently a tutor with the University of Strathclyde on their Post Graduate genealogy courses</i></p> |

RECEIVED FROM LUKE FROMONT [member 2660]

I am trying to locate any clocks which were made by either my great grand father Henry Pryor Fromant who traded in Stamford in the late 1800's - the early part of the 1900's. Or by his brother Frederick D Fromant who traded in St Ives in the late 1800's to the early part of the 1900's. Or by my grand father John Henry Fromant who traded in the Market Place Market Deeping from the 1920's to the mid 1940's. On his clocks he put Fromant Deeping on the clock faces. If by any chance any members have any clocks by any of my family & who would be interested in selling I would be interested in buying them. So please let me know.

**CAMBRIDGE BRANCH
PROGRAMME**

2nd Thursday of the month at **7.30pm**
enquiries : programme@chfhs.org.uk

From September, Cambridge Branch talks will via Zoom only on the
2nd Thursday evening of the month
Register via the website www.chfhs.org.uk

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Thurs 11 Jan | <p>Samuel Pepys : from Huntingdon to literary immortality with Derek Turner</p> <p><i>Insights into the life and times of this local “celebrity”. Born into a modest family in 1633, Pepys, as we all know, went on to great things. His diary of 1660-70 is now regarded as a literary classic and also one of <u>the</u> primary sources for the history of the period.</i></p> |
| Thurs 8 Feb | <p>Cambridgeshire Kitcheners with Joanna Costin</p> <p><i>A History of 11th (Service) Battalion (Cambs) Suffolk Regiment recounting experiences of the 1,500 men from across town and county who joined up together during WW1. They formed the Cambridgeshire Kitcheners, or Cambs Suffolks. An on-going database of all men in the battalion, this is very much a work in progress—and any information would be gratefully received.</i></p> |
| Thurs 14 Mar | <p>Fenland Skating with Dave Smith</p> <p><i>Since learning to ice skate as a child on the frozen Fens in the late 1970’s Dave has achieved many accolades and has been representing Great Britain at Master World Games and World Sprint Games since 2016. Dave has many stories to tell about “fun and games” associated with skating, travelling to and from competitions, people, places, and daft things he has done.</i></p> |
| Thurs 11 Apr | <p>Heroes & Ghosts with Michael H Hallett</p> <p><i>Wing Commander Harold Blackburn MC AFC— how scandal and shame affect genealogy. A personal insight reflecting on how unconscious shame affects the way memories are carried in a family, both in terms of what is remembered—or allowed to be remembered—and in terms of what mementos survive.</i></p> |
| Sat 20 April | <p>Really Useful Show LIVE 2024 Burgess Hall, St Ives</p> |
| Sat 11 May 11.00 | <p>Advance Notice of AGM 2024 @ Ely Archives & Zoom With exhibition and live speaker</p> <p>Gill Blanchard will talk about her work as a researcher with the Jonnie Peacock & Mary Berry <i>WhoDoYouThinkYouAre</i> episodes</p> <p>Further details in the next issue and on the CHFHS website</p> |

MEETINGS REPORTS

*Don't forget that many of the talks
are recorded and available in the
members area of the website*

THE HUNDRED PARISHES *WITH KEN McDONALD* *(HUNTINGDON BRANCH : OCT 2023)*

Ken McDonald has led a diverse and active life including racing cyclist, chartered accountant, genealogist and Stop Stansted Expansion campaigner; and is now secretary of The Hundred Parishes Society.

Ken explained that the Hundred Parishes is an area of the East of England of about 450 square miles of northwest Essex, northeast Hertfordshire and southern Cambridgeshire. Its name derives from the fact that the area includes just over 100 administrative parishes which have many common characteristics based on their rural settings and historical connections.

The Society website (hundredparishes.org.uk) has background information and photographs of all 103 parishes as well walking routes around each parish. For this talk Ken concentrated on the southern parishes of Cambridgeshire which fall within the Hundred Parishes: Bartlow, Castle Camps, Duxford, Great & Little Chishill, Heydon, Hildersham, Hinxton, Ickleton and Linton.

These nine parishes in Cambridgeshire have a total population of 9,600 (in 2021) compared to the total population of the Hundred Parishes of 150,000. Linton is the largest at 4,500, then Duxford with 2,200; the smallest is Bartlow with just 110 people.

Ken took us to each of these nine parishes, travelling from west to east, with descriptions of significant residents from the past and important historical buildings, supported by professional-quality photographs.

Here are just a few of the many interesting details Ken highlighted:

- Great Chishill church and war memorial and windmill stand at the highest point in Cambridgeshire at 480 feet above sea level.
- Heydon church was damaged by German bombing. Memorial window to the Braybrooke family. Arthur, the Kattomeat cat (for those of us who can remember the advert), lived here.
- Duxford is steeped in aeronautical history particularly from WW2, including people such as Douglas Bader and Frank Whittle. Duxford also has two

grade 1 listed churches.

- Hinxton has several historical buildings. The clock on the church tower is unusual in that it has black hands on a white face rather than the more normal gold hands on a blue or black face, and also has the Roman numerals IV instead of IIII. Hinxton Hall, an 18th century building, now houses 2,000 people on the Genome Campus.
- Ickleton has many fine listed buildings including the church (built 1100) which has an external Sanctus bell and an extensive set of wall paintings that were covered over during the Reformation and only discovered when repairs were being carried out in 1979 following an arson attack.
- Hildersham's Holy Trinity Church dates from the 13th century and is notable for the colourful late-Victorian decoration of the walls and roof of the chancel with floral motifs and Biblical scenes.
- Linton is a market town and was connected to the rail network in 1865 until its closure in 1967. The District Council designated Linton as an "outstanding conservation area" such is the wealth of its historical buildings. It is also unique in having both a vineyard and zoo close to the village.
- Bartlow's unique feature is the three burial mounds which are the highest in Europe north of the Alps. Bartlow also had a railway line which was built through the middle of the mounds, though this is now closed.
- Castle Camps once had a castle and a WW2 airfield which was one of 13 wartime airfields in the Hundred Parishes.

Once Ken had led us through the Cambridgeshire parishes he moved onto several of the other parishes within the society's defined area.

They included Saffron Walden and the Sun Inn with its very elaborate and ornate plaster work (pargetting); Thaxted and its 200 listed buildings including the Guild Hall; Finchingfield – probably the most photographed village in Essex; Hempstead where Dick Turpin was born at the Blue Bell Inn, and its church which houses the Harvey family vault with the remains of 50 members in lead coffins, many with the faces moulded in the lead.

This was a fascinating and expertly delivered presentation of an area rich in heritage. Ken has obviously put an enormous amount of work into the Hundred Parishes study, including his excellent website which I would encourage our members to investigate.

Indeed, one of the viewers took inspiration from this talk and intends to follow the same process for his area study.

Reported by John Bownass

THE HISTORY OF THE ROMANY PEOPLE

WITH CHARLOTTE PATTON
(MARCH BRANCH : OCT 2023)

Charlotte started by giving the Romany greeting 'sastimos' and portrayed an obvious empathy and interest for her subject that she has researched widely.

She started by showing a picture of a painted vardo (caravan) with the words 'cushti atchintan', that she played in as a child; this later sparked an interest in Romany people. It was owned by her god-mother who allowed the children to play and have fun in the vardo. Earlier the vardo had been bought and used for the film 'Zigara'. They had painted it in the colours seen. Charlotte pointed out the 'mollycroft' that provides extra height and light to the vardo.

Charlotte explained that most vardos were burnt after the death of their male owner, so it is unusual to be able to buy one. This is a superstitious custom to ensure everything about the deceased had gone – they would not be able to come back and haunt others and to make sure those left would not 'rest on their laurels' and work to provide for their families. Vardos were the pride of the Romany women, all their wealth lavished into them, dressed with silk and fine china. In essence, it was a status symbol, representing the ladies front room and used for entertaining guests. It was not used for sleeping, they slept underneath the van, children were not allowed. The only time a woman would cook in a vardo was when the weather was very bad. The vardo was kept immaculately clean as the women were scared of illness and disease. After guests had used the china, it was broken to protect them from disease. The term 'mockaty' means unclean, dogs are unclean and not allowed in. Horses were deemed to be clean but obviously too large to be in a vardo. Inside there is a queenie (stove) for warmth, the wood inside decorated in traditional colours and patterns. The women especially like Crown Derby china as a sign of wealth. If necessary this could be sold for cash. Charlotte showed a photograph of a van selling Crown Derby at Appleby Fair.

The women were also herbalists, using remedies made into salves or a tea to drink. Willow, foxgloves and lungwort were used; these still form the basis modern day medicines. Early pharmacists called upon the knowledge of Romany women to make remedies. Women also made curled wood flowers, she showed an example bought from a named Alan who sharpens knives near Holt in Norfolk.

The Romany Tribe originated from northern Pakistan, hence the dark complexion and hair. 1000 years ago they were the lowest Caste of India and Pakistan who moved slowly north and west reaching Egypt (hence the

term gypsy), Spain and Romania. In 1385 the king of Romania had them enslaved and made to do hard labour. When the railways came in the 1850's they were released but not allowed any land, money or education. They lived in appalling circumstances turning to crime to survive. They travelled further to Norway, Finland and Scotland in the 1500's. The King of Scotland was taken by their exotic looks, flamboyancy and wild lifestyle. He took them in as court jesters for entertainment. The Protestant/Catholic clash in the early 1600's drove the Romany people further south to Kilder Forest where they lived for a long time. The women told fortunes by reading hands (they picked up clues from their customers). If they were caught they were branded with a 'V'. If caught twice they were hanged just for being a Romany gypsy.

In Victorian times they were welcomed to work on crops and able to earn money from agricultural work and entertainment. The Gypsy King would work out a price with the farmer and distribute the money. Their normal mode of transport was the horse and cart, sleeping at night with a tarpaulin pulled over. Hazel twigs were stuck in the ground and bent right over the cart and into the ground on the other side; then a tarpaulin pulled over. The term 'up sticks and go' originates from this practice when the Romanies pulled up the twigs to move on to the next place. The first horse drawn vardo dates back to the 1840's when old horse drawn carriages were in plentiful supply as other chose to travel on the new railways.

Many folk songs have been sung that relate to the Romany people. 'Raggle Taggle Gypsy', which originated as a Scottish Border ballad. Artists Edward Seago and Sir Alfred Munnings both embraced the gypsy traditions and way of life. Seago (1910-1974) lived an unconventional life among the gypsies, circus people and ballet dancers whilst mixing with aristocrats and the gentry. Some of his paintings depicting gypsy life sell for many thousands of pounds at Christie's. Munnings (1878-1959) was captivated by the nomadic life and befriended gypsy families who became models for his paintings showing their dress, horsemanship and way of life. He wrote 'More glamour and excitement were packed into those six weeks than a painter could contend with. I have a vision of brown faces, black hair, earrings, black hats and black skirts; of the little figures of women and children, of men with lurcher dogs and horses of all kinds'. Queen Victoria was also fascinated by gypsies.

Gypsies have different religions, mainly Christian and appear in church records for baptisms and deaths. Although as a sector they have no formal marriage, they are linked for life. They also appear on Census records.

Entertainment included dancing on boards; most movement was below the waist. Bare knuckle fighting took place to settle disputes between families;

both shook hands at the end.

During WW1, 500,000 Romany Gypsies were sent to the gas chambers. They were made to wear a brown triangle to identify them. They were also killed where they lived in German and Polish forests. Many gypsies fought hard for Britain during both World Wars. Once the wars were over they were treated as outsiders again. It became too dangerous to travel on the roads by horse and caravan due to the increase in traffic.

Reported by Linda Peckett

CAMBRIDGESHIRE INVENTIONS

MARY BURGESS

(CAMBRIDGE BRANCH : NOV 2023)

Mary started her talk with a brief overview of the Cambridgeshire Collection.

Family historians will be aware of just how important this is as a resource, and Mary briefly described some of the collection content—apart from books and printed materials, there are objects such as pots of jam!! The collection was started in 1855 by John Beard, and it was very appropriate that Mike Petty who developed the collection from the 1960's to recent times was a member of the audience. Mary is herself now the Collection archivist.

The inventions Mary spoke about were categorised under five main headings – healthcare and biology; computing; transport; scientific instruments; agriculture. She highlighted buildings, people and artifacts. The full talk is online and available in the members section of our website. Among the local inventions covered are: IVF; transplants; DNA; Spectrum, Acorn and BBC computers; hovercraft and hovertrains; Lister cars; the Portholme aerodrome; Pye radio; the Scientific Instruments Company; science parks; Chivers jams; Unwin seeds. People mentioned ranged from Patrick Steptoe; Rosalind Franklin; Christopher Cockerell.

As a comparative newcomer to the area, I had some awareness of the importance of the county for innovation, but Mary's talk gave me and all the audience a wider perspective of the breadth, depth and significance of so many inventions.

The Cambridgeshire Collection on the third floor of the Central Library in Cambridge has an online catalogue, a card catalogue with more details on parts of the collection, many items on the open shelves and others that can be produced for research and further study.

Reported by David Copsey

BRINGING FAMILY HISTORY TO LIFE ON THE PAGE

WITH FIONA CHESTERTON

(HUNTINGDON BRANCH : NOV 2023)

Our guest speaker was Fiona Chesterton, who is well known to the Society, this time to describe the process of turning your family history story into something that others would want to read, and then the subsequent and more difficult task of actually publishing and marketing the book.

Once you have done your family research, what is the story you want to tell, and who do you want to share it with and how? Every family has a story but what makes yours interesting? Often it is just for family members but in Fiona's case she saw a theme running through her research that she believed was of interest to a broader audience – hence the idea of the book. Of course, if you decide to write a book it has to be a compelling story that will interest others. It needs to reference the facts of the life you are telling but it must be creative with a plot and written with imagination and structure. Fiona attended a writing retreat and found it a transformational experience which she thoroughly recommended. A few of the tips she learnt and subsequently followed were:

- # First write a chapter synopsis;
- # Write every day;
- # Aim for 70 to 80 thousand words;
- # Ask a friend to read it and give honest feedback;
- # Be aware that it is a long hard road, it took Fiona five years from start to finish.

Fiona then moved on to turning your manuscript into a published book and the first word of warning – rejection is the norm and it takes more time than you ever imagined, but do not be discouraged.

After securing an agent and a publisher the final step is marketing which is so important for success. Fiona covered almost every promotional route one could imagine—zoom and live presentations to groups such as ours, Facebook, social media, local papers, book groups, audio books, local radio, Amazon reviews....

Finally, we were shown a photograph of a wedding party from 1915 which Fiona hinted could be her next book. After all “Every picture tells a story”.

This short presentation was followed by extensive questions and discussion with the audience, some of whom had either self-published a book or were thinking about writing one. I wonder if any of our members watching will have been encouraged to write a book in the near future?

Reported by John Bownass.

A VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

WITH LIZ DAVIES

(HUNTINGDON BRANCH : DEC 23)

Our guest speaker was Liz Davies, an expert on Huntingdonshire history and customs from her experience in Peterborough and St Neots museums, and well known to the Society.

Liz took a look at local Christmas customs and celebrations and how they have been observed in St Neots and the surrounding villages during the mid-Victorian period. She made much use of local newspapers, memories and other local sources; these included a diary by a Dr. Walker and a book by Charles Dack (curator of Peterborough Museum in the late Victorian period) titled "Yuletides from the Past". These two publications covered the 1860s and 1870s as did a series of jokes appearing in the Peterborough Advertiser. These jokes were interspersed throughout the talk but I have gathered some of them together at the end of this review.

Liz started by describing the rural setting of Huntingdonshire, and St Neots in particular, and how the population doubled between 1800 and 1860. This was a period of industrialisation, improved literacy, and the general movement of people from working on the land to the towns. It was also a time when Christmas customs started which we still follow to this day.

Liz described each aspect of the Christmas celebrations as follows: Christmas decorations became more elaborate. Evergreens had long been used by the pagans two thousand years ago and adopted as symbols for Christians and by 1860 fir, ivy and mistletoe were popularised. Flowers and flags were also used to decorate rooms.

Christmas cards began to appear in 1843, but at 1/- each were only for the wealthy. In 1870 the half-penny stamp was introduced for postcards which included Christmas greetings on one side and the message on the reverse.

Indoor entertainments such as concerts and plays became popular in the newly-built commemoration halls and institutes in St Neots, St Ives and Huntingdon. There were local amateur groups and professional touring companies; one example was the Ethiopian Serenaders who performed in the Public Rooms in St Neots in 1859. They were actually white performers with black makeup like the Christy Minstrels. An amateur group called the Eaton Socon Amateurs performed at the same venue reading stories, singing and performing comedy skits. They were raising funds for the cotton workers in England who had been laid off as the American Civil War prevented cotton leaving the States.

There were outdoor attractions as well including Wombwell's Menagerie - a travelling zoo featuring animals which included a tiger, lion, 25ft long boa

constrictor, leopard, gorillas and an elephant, and fairground attractions.

The food at Christmas was special, as it is today. There were meat shows held in the build-up to the festivities and local butchers displayed turkey, goose, pheasant and hares outside their shops. Food advertising was almost non-existent before the 1860s. Alcohol featured strongly in the special Christmas hampers.

Christmas parties for workers became more commonplace as larger companies sprang up. One example was a builder who provided dinner for his 41 workers at a local pub. This included several meats and unlimited Paines XXX beer, and after supper pipes and tobacco were provided as they sang songs and made toasts to the Queen, their boss and each other.

Christmas gifts date back to Roman times but with increased prosperity in the Victorian age advertising became important to sell your product. Strangely the first advertisers of goods at Christmas presents were hairdressers. Jewellery was the most popular gift for the wealthy but there were novelties for sale including penny articles for the children.

Carols were derived from medieval folk songs and became the anthems of Christmas during this period. Choristers from St Neots parish church walked and sang their way round town collecting money, a tradition still alive today.

Finally Christmas Day arrived and the churches were decorated in greenery and flowers and had a service on the day. The Christmas meal as described by Charles Dickens in 1850 was food in excess including boar's head, baron of beef, turkeys, plum pudding and a bowl of hot punch. At the other end of the scale even the Workhouse was able to provide a special dinner. In 1859 with 159 inmates the annual treat included roast beef and plum pudding. After dinner the men were provided with ale and tobacco and the women were given snuff! The children enjoyed apples and oranges. After the dinner games were played including charades, dancing, acting, blind man bluff and reading aloud. One particular game was called snap dragon where raisins were scattered in a bowl filled with brandy. The brandy was set on fire and then the participants picked out the raisins. Christmas Day was also a popular day for weddings as it was a guaranteed holiday.

Liz concluded with a word about the weather. In 1860 in St Neots the temperature dropped to -5 degrees fahrenheit (-20 degrees centigrade) and the river was frozen allowing skating on the ice, and in 1862 the Aurora Borealis was visible in St Neots causing much excitement in the town.

This was an extremely well researched and entertaining presentation by Liz, but I'm not so sure the same can be said for the jokes from 1864.

As promised here are some of the 'best' for which I make no apologies;

In what order did Noah come out of the ark? – *He came forth*;

Who carried his luggage? – *The elephant carried his trunk*;

- # Why is a pig in the parlour like a house on fire? – *Because the sooner it is put out the better;*
- # I have the best wife in the world said the long-suffering husband – *she always strikes me with the soft end of the broom.*

Some questions and discussions followed to conclude a very appropriate presentation putting us all in the mood for Christmas 2023.

Reported by John Bownass

A matter of a day or so before closing this issue prior to publication, we were pleased to receive this from “MW” after having viewed the talk :

Hello,

I watched with interest Liz Davies’s “Christmas in St Neots”, which features a photo taken on the Market Square of an attraction that she thought was a circus or menagerie and that it may have been Wombwell’s Menagerie. The photo shows a fairground ride, a set of steam Dobbies. I don’t know the owner of this ride, but several travelled during the 1860s and 1870s. The famous Cambridge showman Henry Thurston bought his first Savage-built steam Dobby in 1869.

The dog and lion fight was at Warwick on 26 July 1825. The lions were named Nero (who wouldn’t fight) and Wallace (who soon saw off the dogs). The menagerie travelled by road hauled by horses. Elephants were sometimes used to haul wagons and the band carriage. From the 1890s, several traction engines were used to haul the heavy wagons. The last menagerie to travel, Bostock and Wombwell, finished in 1931.

Near the end of the presentation, reference is made to elephants walking from the station. These were circus elephants. Both Chipperfield’s and Billy Smart’s Circuses travelled by road, but their elephants travelled by train and would parade from the station to the circus site. Bertram Mills’ Circus travelled by four trains. Robert Brothers and Sir Robert Fossett’s Circuses travelled by road but would take their elephants to the station and then parade them to the circus site.

Perhaps this is of interest and could be passed on to Liz.

Our thanks to “MW” for sharing this additional information.

PS ... adding in these comments prompted a reminiscence from CJ—to recall that for many years the Roberts Brothers Circus kept their winter quarters at Polebrook near Oundle. CJ’s father ran the ironmongers shop in Oundle for many years, and had frequent dealings with Bobby and Tommy Roberts; Nicolai Poliakov (“Coco The Clown”) was with Roberts Bros in the early 1970s and also an occasional customer.

LAST WORD by Lisa Constanti, CHFHS Research Officer **Radio Talk – BBC Cambridgeshire Radio 30th October 2023**

Once again, I had the great pleasure of being asked to make an appearance on a radio show to talk about Genealogy. In this case, BBC Radio Cambridgeshire were asking the public questions based on research that suggested the following interesting statistics:

- 2 in 3 don't know their grandparents' full names and birthplaces.
- 20% regret not learning more about their grandparents before they died.
- 60% don't know their ethnic heritage

As a result of this research, I dropped in with Kev Lawrence who wanted to know more about what a Genealogist is and what we do. We discussed validating sources and understanding about the availability of records. We talked about the first steps of getting to grips with one's own family history and taking on a professional genealogist. Gathering information and evidence from family members to build a picture of the family tree, research at your local Archives and libraries for more information ranks highly as a starting point when starting your own research as well as joining family History societies like the CHFHS to get access to more records and utilise our services.

We discussed finding records in your history that can potentially cause distress like illegitimacy, prison records or workhouse documentation – skeletons in the closet that perhaps people never expected to encounter when doing their own family history research but are just as important in understanding our roots.

I also took the opportunity to talk about the upcoming events that the CHFHS was putting on, including our Research Surgeries held at Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire libraries monthly and November and December events (past at the time of writing).

The host talked about his own experiences with recovering information about his Ancestral roots and with the above reference about a 5th of people regretting not learning more about their grandparents before they died, it makes sense that more people are becoming more curious about finding out more about their own ancestors, not asking more questions from family members when they could. We may not see it at the time, but writing down and recollecting stories and anecdotes about our past when we remember to do so is an invaluable part of our own self-discovery. Not just to ensure that we know where we came from, but also as a valuable tool to pass on to our children and descendants for the future.

But this begs the question: *how much do you know about your grandparents and where they came from?*

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 jigsaw puzzle to fit the material into the available pages.

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 also available, if preferred, as a digital download. The UK subscription, due on joining and annually thereafter, is £12, and includes the member's partner. The overseas subscription is £17, which gives airmail postage of the Journal. If you chose to receive the e-Journal, the annual subscription for all locations is £9 (we also offer a life membership for x10 annual rate). Subscriptions/renewals may be made online through the CHFHS website via debit/credit card or PayPal, or by DirectDebit; alternatively, sterling cheque/etc payable to *Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire Family History Society*, should be sent to the Secretary. Changes of address/email and members' interests to the Membership Secretary, please. See p52 for contacts.

SEARCHABLE RECORDS & SHOP

“Cambs & Hunts Database” When fully operational, the new CHFHS website will feature a brand new records search and retrieval system (replacing both “AncestorFinder” and “SuperSearch”). On offer will be a basic search facility freely available to all comers, and the records database with searchable access to over 5m of CHFHS's online transcribed records from across Cambs & The Isle of Ely and Hunts. The database is **available to members only** and accessible via the website members area. Additional records not suitable for the format can be found as browsable pdf files.

CHFHS SHOP Search the publications listings on the website to see what's available for particular parishes and locations (CDs and/or downloads). Additional material not suitable for the database is also available as CDs and/or downloads. Also shop via: www.ParishChurch.com (incl books).

RESEARCH SERVICES

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

- # general enquiries can be addressed to the Secretary by email secretary@chfhs.org.uk (or by post, with an SAE please)
- # more detailed requests should be sent to our Research Team, preferably by email, via the request form on the website research@chfhs.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 already have, and which records/resources have already been consulted (eg. BMDs, census, wills, parish registers, a family tree, Ancestry, FindMyPast, FamilySearch, etc)

CAMBRIDGESHIRE & HUNTINGDONSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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

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**FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT
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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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