

Encouraging the study of family history since 1976



in Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire & the Isle of Ely

THE JOURNAL

LIVE in St. Ives Saturday 20th April 2024 : 10am - 4pm

FREE HELP & RESEARCH ADVICE from:

Association of Genealogists & Researchers in Archives (AGRA);
Alde Valley Suffolk FHS; Bedfordshire FHS; Buckinghamshire FHS;
Cambridge & Huntingdonshire FHS; East of London FHS;
Essex Society for Family History; Fenland FHS;
Families in British India Society (FIBIS)
Family History Federation; Hertfordshire Archives;
Hertfordshire FHS; Lincolnshire FHS;
Huntingdonshire Local History Society;
London Westminster & Middlesex FHS;
Mid-Norfolk FHS; Northamptonshire FHS;
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Family History Books & DNA Testing; Quality Maps & More;
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PLUS EXPERT TALKS from knowledgeable speakers:

11:00 - 11:50 Ian Waller 'Bread Gruel & Suet Dumplings - Workhouse Life'
13:15 - 14:00 Nick Barratt 'The Future of Family History'
15:00 - 15:50 Gill Blanchard 'Tithe Enclosure Maps & Records for Genealogists'



Parking FREE
Admission FREE
Programme £1.00
Talk Sessions £2.00

DNA advice

BURGESS HALL, Westwood Road, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 6WU

www.chfhs.org.uk

www.facebook.com/CambridgeshireFHS

instagram : [camsandhuntsfhs01](https://www.instagram.com/camsandhuntsfhs01)

VOLUME 30 : 2

SUMMER 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

CHFHS Secretary, 15 Castle Hythe, Ely, Cambs., CB7 4BU

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS BY EMAIL TO THE EDITOR, OR THE SECRETARY BY POST. **PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE OBTAINED CORRECT PERMISSIONS FOR PUBLICATION OF IMAGES SO AS NOT TO INFRINGE COPYRIGHT (private photos; book/web sourced)**
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 : 2

SUMMER 2024



Welcome to the Summer edition of the CHFHS Journal—this issue opens with a reminder about up coming live events—the RUS Fair and the hybrid AGM at Ely Archives with Gill Blanchard as guest speaker on her behind-the-scenes role with the *WhoDoYouThinkYouAre* episodes on Mary Berry & local athlete Jonnie Peacock. Both should be good days out, with the opportunities to chat and catch up ...

A variety of topics follow—including the 2024 AGM Agenda and Accounts followed by an insight into a little known local link to D-Day; Peter J discusses some examples of local pre1858 wills; Mike S recounts his researches on the Hetley family of Alwalton; Gill F continues the story of her ancestor with an unusual name from the previous issue having now found new information about him as a police officer; Ian S describes his experiences with using DNA to help with the identification of potential “illegitimate fathers”; and by coincidence, Colin A has just that problem—could a possible father of such a child be from his own family!?

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

“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 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

AGM 2024

SAT 11 MAY

@

CAMBS

ARCHIVES

ELY

11.00 ... doors open for document exhibition

12.00 ... live talk by Gill Blanchard

WhoDoYouThinkYouAre

—Behind The Scenes—

13.15 ... CHFHS AGM

Getting there ...

Car (sat nav CB7 4GS) parking available

Railway station (5min walk)

Bus #9 from Cambridge to Ely Tesco (2min walk)

Bus #112 from Newmarket to Ely Tesco (2min walk)



A WORD FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN



Two important events

Soon after you receive your Spring journal, there are two important Society events, I hope that many of you will attend them both.

I receive several enquiries from members asking when we are going to hold live show exhibitions where you can come and visit and talk to everyone who has booked tables. Many of you will have attended the shows we used to hold in Girton, and also at St Ives. Putting on an exhibition or show is a huge amount of work undertaken by a small number of dedicated members. The issues that need to be considered include suitable venue hire; health and safety; insurance; finance; publicity; catering; ensuring there are sufficient volunteers for the wide range of jobs before, during and after the day; direction signage and many more. It was not possible to hold physical exhibitions for some years because of Covid, and the virtual shows that were held provide a different experience to attending an actual venue.

The Society is a member of the East Anglian Group of the Family History Federation, and many of the Federation officers are based in our region. EAG members are very aware of the importance of live physical exhibitions and the decision was made almost 18 months ago to find a venue and suitable date. The Really Useful Show Live will be held at the **Burgess Hall in St Ives PE27 6WU on Saturday 20 April from 10.00 to 16.00**. More than 50 tables have been sold so far, and there will be a wide range of exhibitors including many family history societies and commercial organisations. Nick Barrett, Ian Waller and Gill Blanchard are all giving talks. The event is free, programmes cost £1.00, and there is plenty of parking on site, including disabled access, as well as good public transport. There will be a small charge for talks. We are grateful to everyone involved in planning this major event and have been fortunate to draw on Richard Cook's experience as the former Huntingdon FHS chair in hosting a similar event at the Hall in 2015.

We will have our own tables so you will be able to see our shop products, talk to those staffing our stand, bring your enquiries, hear from national

speakers, have something to eat and drink, and enjoy a day out. You will also be able to talk to neighbouring family history societies. Branches of my own family came from Essex and Northamptonshire, and you will probably have similar connections outside Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire.

This is the first live event that the Federation has hosted since Covid and is your chance to say thank you in person to everyone involved in putting on the day. Please try to attend, show your support, and make the day a success.

The second event is our **Annual General Meeting on Saturday 11 May**. This year, we are holding this in the Ely Archives Office CB7 4GS. This is adjacent to Ely railway station, with a car park on site, and bus stops nearby. The Archives staff are opening the Office especially for us and will be putting on a display. We will also have a talk from Gill Blanchard. The AGM and Gill's talk will both be accessible by zoom as well as in person. Doors open at 11.00, Gill's talk is 12.00, and the AGM at 13.15.

Our AGMs are a requirement of our charitable status and provide the chance to bring together everything from the previous year, as well as voting in officers and postholders for the coming year. In order to be a valid event, we must have a quorum for the AGM, so please try to attend either at Ely, or online. All the papers will be published on our website in advance of the meeting. We shall look forward to seeing you there.

Family Search Affiliate Libraries

The Family Search range of data and records has been an essential source for family historians for a long time, and a huge amount of content is searchable and available freely worldwide at home. New records are added regularly. However, many of the records have to be consulted in Family Search Centers, there is only one in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire and its opening hours are limited.

We have approached the County Library Service about becoming a Family Search Affiliate Library, and I am advised that this has now been approved by their Head of Service. After the various technical and other issues have been sorted out, I think the records that were previously only accessible at Family Search Centers, should be accessible on library computers throughout the County, although you will not be able to see this content on your home computer. This is a very welcome development for us all, keep a look out for news of when the FSAL for Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire libraries goes live.

Archives update

The Archives service has just learnt that the Ancestry project is running late, the matching process is taking more time than Ancestry anticipated. The projected go live date is now the financial year 2025/2026, an update on the information I wrote two weeks ago in my AGM report.

At the same visit, I confirmed that the cataloguing of the Manchester collection funded by the Society is progressing well.

Wills petition

One of the many benefits of digitisation is that physical storage space for paper content is saved, and there are about 110 million paper documents for all wills since a national system started in 1858. The annual storage costs of these documents is £4.5 million, and there is a proposal to destroy the original documents after 25 years to reduce costs.

However, after something has been destroyed, it cannot be brought back, and there are numerous examples where information has been lost after digitisation for several reasons including data corruption, technological developments, unforeseen future uses. Because of all this there is a current petition to ask the government to change its mind about destroying the originals. The consultation document can be viewed online, <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/storage-and-retention-of-original-will-documents/storage-and-retention-of-original-will-documents>, and responses are invited. The Society has submitted a response, and individual members have signed the petition, which currently has more than 15,000 signatures, <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/654081>. The petition was created by a Society member, and you have until early July if you wish to sign it. If there are 100,000 signatures, the issue must be debated in Parliament.

David Capsey

The Society offers condolences to the families of :

Peter Filby

Jill Pratt 3659

Suzanne Capewell 2480

Nick Rule 6286

Sandy (Sandra) Paget

*Sandy was a CHFHS Committee Member, & programme organiser 2016-20
And is fondly remembered and missed by those who knew her*

Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire Family History Society
Charity Number 278815

Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2023

Income statement

	2023	2022
	£	£
<u>Income</u>		
Membership sales	11,710.00	9,734.00
Sales, downloads and tokens	9,634.87	11,570.51
Donations	115.00	133.00
FFHS royalty income	19,306.49	12,967.49
	<u>40,766.36</u>	<u>34,405.00</u>
<u>Cost of sales</u>		
Opening stock	729.30	931.70
Bookstall purchases and expenses	-	91.30
Closing stock	(819.50)	(729.30)
	<u>(90.20)</u>	<u>293.70</u>
Gross profit	<u>40,856.56</u>	<u>34,111.30</u>
<u>Expenses</u>		
Journal printing and expenses	7,385.62	7,927.17
Printing and stationery	199.11	279.42
Advertising and publicity	-	50.00
Postage and telephone	361.02	415.98
Website	13,654.96	14,625.27
Fairs and conferences	30.00	-
Hall, speakers and branch costs	1,948.38	2,204.41
C.R.O. and other donations	12,058.09	157.50
Accountancy	810.00	810.00
Paypal and godcardless commission	515.86	556.01
General expenses and travel	1,246.40	1,070.89
Subscriptions, donations and expenses	974.99	729.08
	<u>39,184.43</u>	<u>28,825.73</u>
<u>OTHER INCOME</u>		
Interest received	3,996.45	799.87
Investment gains/(loss)		(2,316.02)
	<u>3,996.45</u>	<u>(1,516.15)</u>
<u>Net profit</u>	<u>5,668.58</u>	<u>3,769.42</u>

Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire Family History Society
Charity Number 278815

Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2023

Statement of financial position

	2023	2022
	£	£
<u>Current assets</u>		
Stocks	819.50	729.30
Cash at bank and in hand	121,666.33	115,597.95
	<u>122,485.83</u>	<u>116,327.25</u>
<u>Current liabilities</u>		
Trade creditors	490.00	-
Net current assets	<u>121,995.83</u>	<u>116,327.25</u>
<u>Capital and reserves</u>		
Brought forward at 1 January 2023	116,327.25	112,557.83
Profit for the year	5,668.58	3,769.42
	<u>121,995.83</u>	<u>116,327.25</u>

These financial statements were approved by the board of members and authorised for issue on _____, and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Mr D Copsey
Chairman
Charity Number 278815

Eggs are an ancient symbol of fertility and new life and decorating and giving eggs was a traditional way of celebrating the arrival of spring. As Christianity spread across Europe, older pagan practices merged with newer Christian ones and the egg was adopted as a symbol of Christ's resurrection from the tomb. In Germany, the Easter hare was said to bring a basket of painted eggs to children, and these would then be hidden for them to find. Queen Victoria (whose mother was German) organised egg hunts for her children and this helped to bring the tradition to Britain. The first chocolate Easter eggs were made in France in the 1720s, but did not arrive in England until 1873 when Fry & Sons made the first English eggs, followed by Cadbury's in 1875.

Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire Family History Society

AGM 2024

Saturday 11 May 2024 at 1.00pm

@ Cambridgeshire Archives, Ely, & By Zoom

AGENDA

- 1) Apologies for absence
- 2) Acknowledgement of member organisation representatives
- 3) Minutes of the Virtual AGM held on 13 May 2023
- 4) The Chairman's Report
- 5) Financial Report for 2023
- 6) Election of the President
- 7) Election of the Officers and other members of the Executive Committee (Trustees)
- 8) The appointment of an Independent Examiner of the Charity's Accounts for the forthcoming year in accordance with clause M3
- 9) Annual Subscription
- 10) Discussion and decisions on any submitted motions (Motions for submission to the AGM shall be in the hands of the Secretary at least fourteen clear days before the Meeting, not counting the day of the Meeting)
- 11) Any other business, at the discretion of the Chairman

MINUTES OF 2023 AGM ARE AVAILABLE ON THE CHFHS WEBSITE

ATTENDING THE AGM :

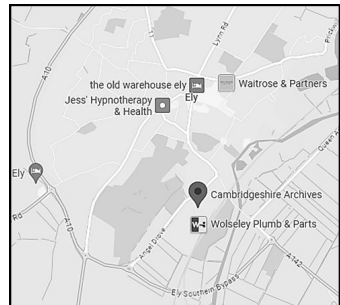
Come and join us at :

Cambs Archives at The Dock, Ely

Join via zoom :

register on the website as for a talk

**Please submit comments and motions to
The Secretary (14 days in advance)**



D-Day and a lesser known Cambridgeshire link

This year is the 80th anniversary of D-Day (6th June 1944). With each year the number of eye-witnesses inevitably declines but many of the buildings involved are still with us. So what do we think of? There are still sections of the Mulberry harbour lying off the Normandy coast (been there, seen them) and the old (replaced) Pegasus bridge, last seen sitting in a Normandy field, but what of local places associated with D-Day?

When considering Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire's parts on D-Day, for many locals the plethora of WW2 airfields in our area leads to a natural focus on the air war carried out over Normandy to protect the invasion – fighter sweeps being carried out by American planes based at Duxford, Fowlmere or Bottisham, for example. After all, we are a long way from the Channel and any naval connections. Some others, perhaps, are interested in the more cerebral WW2 struggles waged by the many Cambridge academics involved in the code-breaking activities of Ultra at nearby Bletchley Park, as featured in several films and TV series. However there is another, lesser-known local connection with D-Day.

The planned invasion of Normandy was to involve British, US and Canadian troops being landed on five beaches (codenamed Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword) along a 50-mile stretch of the heavily fortified coast of the Normandy region of France. It was going to be the largest seaborne invasion in history and thus required very extensive planning.

Cambridge was chosen as the location for 'Exercise Conqueror', in which the British Army's 30th Corps, then stationed in East Anglia, plotted out their part in the invasion at 'Gold' beach (the middle of the five beaches). A key part of the planning for this invasion was organised by senior army officers, in conditions of extreme secrecy, in the Senior Combination Room (SCR) in the Second Court of St John's College, Cambridge.

The officers stayed and held most of their meetings at Trinity College, but it was necessary for a physical model of the Normandy coastal area to be studied - for which a long, narrow space was required. Conveniently, the SCR is just such a long narrow room, 93 feet in length (just over 28 metres for youngsters), and was found to be the ideal space for extensive plans to be pored over. On 28 March 1944 'Exercise Conqueror', based on a beautifully constructed model of Normandy and its beaches, began. The main study covered the assault phase with the attendant naval and air co-operation. The room thus played a very significant role in the preparations for the landings. The exercise was complete and was deemed to have successfully achieved its aim by 31 March.

Wills

by Peter Jackson

Wills can be frustrating documents, you never know what, if anything you will find. The very simplest may simply have words to the effect “*I leave all my goods to children to be divided equally*”, which is not very helpful, it does not say how many children there were, does not name them, and gives no indication how prosperous the testator was. On the other hand there are wills like that of my 11xgreat grandmother, who died in 1588 in Balsham, of which more below. (I have written about her before).

Background: I describe here the way I am using these words. If a person makes a will, he/she is called a testator, a word derived from the phrase ‘last will and testament’, a phrase that is over 1000 years old: originally the will dealt with property or ‘real estate’ whilst the testament dealt with personal property, or ‘goods and chattels’. However, this distinction was lost many years ago: I have never seen the two separated. A will often also names an ‘executor’, the person the testator wishes to ‘execute’ the provisions laid down in the will. The items bequeathed are called bequests or legacies, the latter giving the term legatee for a recipient, but also a beneficiary.

Note too that everything changed in 1858 with the establishment of the Principal Probate Registry, today located in High Holborn, London. There is an online search facility at <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/#wills> for wills from 1858 onwards.

Prior to 1858, my focus here, wills were handled as church documents, and wills of that date almost invariably start with the phrase “In the name of God Amen” and include requests for forgiveness of sins, and where testator wishes to be buried, before moving to the bit that interests us, the various bequests.

When the testator died, his/her will (from here on I shall just write his, meaning his or her) goes to probate, or is proved. This involved the executor appearing before a court and swearing to ‘execute’ it, that is to deal with the deceased’s property according to the will. There were sometimes problems: it was not unknown for the named executor to have died and the testator not to have made an alternative provision; sometimes the executor simply refused to act.

Probate took place in a church court attached to a diocese: the diocese of Ely covers much of Cambridgeshire. The maps in the *Atlas and Index of*

Parish Registers are an invaluable guide (second hand copies can be found online for around £15), with maps of each English county, showing the parishes and the probate jurisdiction into which each fell. If a testator owned property in just one diocese his will would be proved there: if property lay in several dioceses the will would be proved at York (for those living in the north) or in the 'PCC', the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, for those in the south, including Cambridgeshire. PCC wills are now held by the National Archives: most have been digitised, the index can be searched online at <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/wills-1384-1858/> and if a will of interest is found, it can be downloaded for a fee.

At the time of probate, Ely wills were copied into will books, which survive, the original will often being discarded. Probate usually occurred within a month or two of the death of the testator, although if there were problems, such as the will being contested or the executor refusing to act, it can be longer. Cambridgeshire archives have filmed the Ely will books, and the films can be consulted. An email enquiry to them elicited the reply that pages can be copied on-site at a fee of 80p per A4 page. If you live too far away to be able to get there, they are able to provide wills for those who are remote and say "we can provide those either digital jpg or by post. The price for digitally is £6 (for up to 5 pages) then £1 per page after that. The price for post is £7 (for up to 5 pages) then £1 per page after that."

Here I take a closer look at two wills, one of Elizabeth Rule of Balsham, who is my ancestor, and her will was proved in the Ely Consistory Court. The second is Joseph Wortham of Royston, whose will is in the PCC.

So here are two images: firstly the opening of the will of Elizabeth Rule (here spelt Rewle)



This is my transcript, retaining the original line breaks and spelling: the various bequests are introduced by the word 'Item' which I have here underlined to help reading, but of course this is not in the original.

In the Name of God Amen, the fifth Day of March Anno Domini 1578
Annoque
Elizabeth Dei gratie &c 20 I Elizabeth Rewle of Balsham in the
countie of Cambridge sick in bodie yett p[er]fit and sound in mind and
remembrance doe
make this my last will and testament in manner and forme following. First I
yield
and bequeath my Soule unto almightie god my maker and my bodie to the
earth. Item I give
and bequeath unto Thomas Rewle my sonne xx^s to be paid unto him or his
heirs by the
handes of Edmund Rewle of Balsham or his assigns within one moneth after
my departure
this world. Item I give likewise unto my sonne Leonard Rewle xx^s to be
paid unto him or
his heirs by the hand of my foresaid Edmund Rewle of Balsham or his
assigns within one
quarter of a yeare after my departure this worlde. Item I give likewyse to
John Rewle the
sonne of the aforesaid Edmund xx^s to be payed unto him or his heirs by the
handes
of his said father aforesaid or his assigns within one year after my departure.
Item I give unto
Bartholomew Rule the son of the aforesaid Edmund xx^s to be payed unto
him or \his/ heirs by the
hand of his father aforesaid or his assigns within two years after my
departure Item
I give unto Richard Rule the son of the said Edmund xx^s to be paid unto him
or his
assigns by the aforesaid father or his assigns in three years after my
departure
Item I give unto William Rule the son of the saied Edmund xx^s to be paid
unto him
as aforesaid within iiij years after my departure Item I give unto Margaret
Rewle
daughter unto the said Edmund xx^s to be paid unto her as aforesaid within
iiij years
after my departure Item I give unto Bartholomew Webb, Johane

Webb Elisabeth Webb and Elisabeth Tylor the children of my daughter
Marrian

iiij^{li} that is to saie unto everie one of them or their heires xx^s to be paid by
my

foresaid sonne Edmund or his assignes within three yeares after my death

Item I give

unto the iiij children of my daughter Lettice Holland iiij^{li} that is to saie unto
everie one of them or their heires xx^s to be paid by my foresaid sonne

Edmund

Rewle or his assigns within iiij yeares after my departure **Item** I give unto

Ellen

Rewle and to Elizabeth Rewle daughters unto my sonne John Rewle xx^s

(second page)

that is \to/ saie unto eyther of them x^s to be paid unto them or their heires
by my forenamed

sonne Edmund Rewle or his assignes **Item** I give unto the poore people
inhabiting within the parish of Balsham xs to be distributed at the
discretion of my sonne

Edmund Rewle, Richard Tassel and \John/ Tailor of Balsham **Item** I give
unto everie one of my

godchildren in Balsham vjd **Item** I give unto my sonne Thomas Rewle one
mattersse two paires

of sheets thone paire flaxen thother paire linen one coverlett one blankett
one bolster one pillow

and the bedstead wherein he usually lieth and the hangings thereunto

belonging my second brasse pott one kettle

one hutch one bread hutch a foul* table with the forme thereunto

belonging, a little split a pair of cobirons my pott

kylpes* a pewter platter and a pewter dish **Item** I give and bequeath unto
Elizabeth Tassel daughter unto

Richard Tassel aforesaid my cobard one hutch at her chuse my best

coverlett my best bolster a panne my best

pewter platter one paire of flaxen thereto at his choise & my best

candlestick **Item** I give unto Joane Tassel

daughter to the aforesaid Richard my second pewter platter my second

candlestick one paire of sheets thone

sheet linen the other flaxen. **Item** I give unto my two daughters Marrian

Taylor and Lettice Holland my best brasen

pott to be devided at their own discrecion **Item** I give unto the three

women children of my said daughter Marrian

my pewter platters (that is to say) to each of them one and to each of them
one paire of sheetes thone sheete linen
thother flaxen **Item** I give unto my son Edmund Rewle a great spitt **Item**
I give unto Richard Tassell a great
spitte **Item** I give unto my daughter Elizabeth Tassell one hutch **Item** I
give unto the two daughters of my sonne Edmund
Rewle (viz) Margaret and Annable unto eyther of them one pewther dish
and to eyther of them one candle stick
and to eche of them one paire of sheets thone sheete linen thother flaxen
and to eyther of them an hutche **Item** I give
unto John Rewle sonne unto the said Edmund one hutche. The rest of all
my lynnyn and woolen and all housholde stuffe
or bedding not as yet bequeathed I give and bequeath unto my children
(viz) Marryn Lettis Edmund
Thomas Elizabeth and Leonard. All my other goodes, my debts paid my
Legacyes fulfilled and my funerall
expenses donne I give and bequeath to Edmund Rewle my sonne whome I
make my sole and onelie executor In
witness of the trueth unto this my last will and testament I have set my
marke In the presence and
sight of these men John Taylor Willm Symon and Willm Gibson.

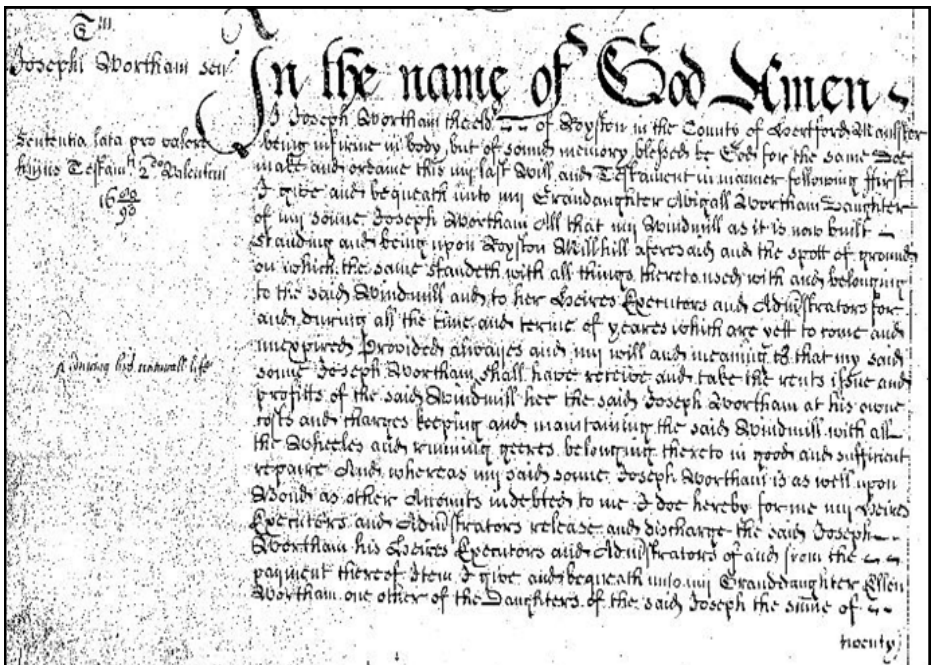
**Notes: fount: this is my best reading, but I do not know the meaning.
Kylpes: the OED has kilp “a detachable handle for a cauldron or pit”.*

As you can see, this is most informative to a family historian: she names her son Edmund Rule, who is appointed executor so we might expect him to be the eldest son; near the end she names six children Marryn, Lettis, Edmund, Thomas, Elizabeth and Leonard. We also have grandsons John, Bartholomew, Richard and William, sons of Edmund, who also has a daughter Margaret. The daughter Marrian or Marryn (both spellings get used) who married a man surnamed Taylor. I have failed to locate this marriage. It may have taken place before 1558, when the Balsham register starts, since the will is dated 1578 by which time Marrian herself appears to have had three daughters; or it may have taken place in a neighbouring parish, but I think this less likely as marriages usually took place in the bride’s parish. Finally we can note the range of goods that Elizabeth owned, and that she wants to pass on to various children, a snippet of social history. This is an exceptionally informative will, I have not found any others that provide quite so much information, but I recommend that you see what can be found

For the second will, I take that of Joseph Wortham, a PCC will from TNA — The Wortham family had a significant presence in and around Royston from the time they moved there, in the early 1600s from Ardeley in Hertfordshire, for the next 300 years. A tree of the family can be found in John Edwin Cussans monumental 3-volume *History of Hertfordshire*.

Quite a few members of the family left wills which were proved at the PCC; here this is the start of one of earliest I have found, that of Joseph Wortham. It is dated 27 September 1687, and probate was granted on 18 February the same year: and if this puzzles you, remember that until 1752 the year changed on the 25th March, not 1 January as at present, so 18 Feb 1687 comes *after* 27 Sep 1687. Cussans tree shows Joseph died on 5th October, only 5 days after making his will, but I find wills from this period were often written 'in extremis'. Cussans tree of the family shows Joseph was born 2nd Feb 1610, so was aged 76 at death. The website <https://learn.age-up.com/blog/a-brief-history-of-human-longevity/> suggests that in 17th century England, life expectancy, among the better off part of the community, was some 42 years, so in making it to age 76, Joseph had a long life.

(An aside, neo-natal death was much more common then than now, but if a child made it to 5 years of age, life expectancy was more.)



Transcript:

In the name of God Amen

I Joseph Wortham the elder of Royston in the county of Hertford, Maulster Being infirm in body but of sound memory, blessed be God for the same, doe make and ordaine this my Last Will and Testament in manner following: first I give and bequeath unto my Granddaughter Abigail Wortham daughter of my son Joseph Wortham All that my windmill as it is now built standing and being upon Royston mill hill aforesaid and the spott of ground on which the same standeth with all things thereto used with and belonging to the said windmill and to her heires executors and administrators for and during all the time and terms of years which are yet to come and unexpired provided always and my will and meaning to that my said sonne Joseph Wortham shall have receive and take the rents issue and profits of the said windmill hee the said Joseph Wortham at his owne costs and charges keeping and maintaining the said windmill with all the Wheelles and running geeres belonging thereto in good and sufficient repaire And whereas my said sonne Joseph Wortham is as well upon Bond as other amounts indebted to me I doe hereby for me my heires executors and administrators release and discharge the said Joseph Wortham his heires executors and administrators of and from the Payment thereof Item I give and bequeath unto my granddaughter Ellen Wortham one other of the daughters and the said Joseph the summe of [end of page] twenty pounds of lawfull English money

Literature

These two items are both some 50 years old, but much of what they contain is still current (just ignore the reference to shillings in Camp):

Wills and where to find them by J.S.W. Gibson. Phillimore / British Record Society, 1974.

Wills and their whereabouts by A.J. Camp. Phillimore / Society of Genealogists, 1963.

An essential reference work:

Atlas and Index of Parish Registers, ed C. Humphery-Smith, Phillimore; several editions, mine is dated 1995.

Consistory Court of Ely Probate Records 1449-1858, British Record Society, vols 103, 106, 107. This is a listing by surname of all the wills proved in the Ely Court, with date and a reference to the volume in which the will occurs. I have a copy of this set and will look up a name and give the details if interested

The Really Useful Show : Live

(FHF EA Regional Fair) Sat 20 April 2024

@ The Burgess Hall, St Ives, Cambs

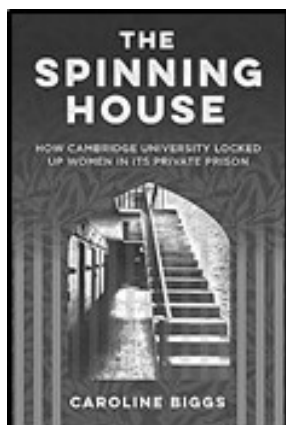
*promises to be a fantastic day for all
aspects of research across the area and beyond*

**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

LEAP YEARS

It probably hasn't escaped your notice—2024 is a leap year! Do you happen to know anyone who is a leap year baby—most people seem to joke about it, but I wonder how the “leaplings” feel about their fortune, or do they regard it as a misfortune? The Metro (metro.co.uk) carried interviews with a number of leaplings: many seem to celebrate both 28 Feb & 1 March in other years, and have a real good knees-up in leap years. Also, a number of the adults recalled confusion and puzzlement as children, and teasing by their peers over not having an annual birthday. According to the OPS, there have been 10,796 leap year babies born since 1995, with a chance of 1 : 1,461 ranking 29 Feb as the 243th in frequency of birth day in a leap year ...



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 nineteenth 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 on end to the jurisdiction of the university over the women of Cambridge.

**The Knight,
The Vicar
& The Miller**

*by
Michael Stephenson*

For several years in the early 1960s I lived in Orton Longueville, whilst teaching in Peterborough. But during that time I had never been able to gain access to the church in the picturesque village of Alwalton, a few miles to the west. Having noted that on the weekend of September 11th and 12th 2021 it was to be open to visitors, and with the added attraction of coffee and cakes, I drove northwards along the Great North Road from my home in St Ives. (I was also transcribing the Alwalton parish registers for the Huntingdonshire Archives at the time.) After a slice of lovely home-made cake and a chat with those attending the church opening I wandered around the church, noting the tablet to Sir Henry Royce (1863-1933), the co-founder of Rolls-Royce, who was born at Alwalton watermill, where his father had been the miller. His ashes were deposited in the north aisle.

But my attention was drawn to an alabaster wall monument in the south transept to Sir Richard Hetley (1738-1807). I felt sad that the large church organ had been placed in the transept, obviously over Sir Richard's vault, and making it impossible to photograph his stone from the front. But I was able to make out most of the inscription, which said that he had died in 1807 aged 69 and that he had been High Sheriff for Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire in 1800, Deputy Lieutenant of the county and was also a J.P. He was the eldest son of Richard Hetley and his wife Elizabeth and the stone also stated that six of their children had been interred in Peterborough Cathedral "which is now no longer a place of interment". Obviously his family stated this to explain why he had been buried in the lowly church of Alwalton, rather than in the magnificent cathedral in the distance. The arms at the base of Richard's stone reads gu (red background), a chevron ar (white) between three martlets (martins) of the second (white). However, I feel that these arms are spurious and I have yet to discover whether the family had ever been granted the right to bear arms.

In the north aisle of Peterborough Cathedral is a ledger stone with the same arms to Richard Hetley senior (1709-1779), his wife Elizabeth (c1702-1782)

and six of their children, as mentioned on Richard junior's monument at Alwalton. The inscription states that the family had been buried "near this spot from 1561 to 1803". It had been put in place in 1807 (the date of Richard junior's death at Alwalton) and a space had been left below to add a later name, that of Henry Hartley (1744-1832), Prebendary of Salisbury Cathedral, another son of Richard senior. I presume that it was he who had researched his family's genealogy for the carving of the stone. (Due to the stone's inscription on-line genealogical sites have given Henry's burial place as being in the cathedral, but he was in fact interred at Wilton, near Salisbury.)

Richard senior was a flour merchant in Peterborough and all ten of his children were baptised at St John's church in the city square, opposite the cathedral's gateway. The family burials took place at the cathedral as there was no space around the parish church; commencing in 1736 six of his children were buried there, as stated on the ledger stone.

The surviving male descendants of Richard and Elizabeth included the first, Richard (the knight), the second John (a baker), the third Henry (the vicar), fourth Thomas (a baker) and the fifth William (the miller).

John (1739-1778) carried on the family business as bakers by moving to London and opening a shop in the Strand. In the year of his death he made a will, leaving a guinea each to brothers Henry and William, and five guineas to his eldest brother, Richard. Thomas (1745-1795) was also a baker, who married Eleanor Smith in London in 1785. In the year of his death he shared the land tax for Alwalton mill with youngest brother William. Eight years after her husband's death Eleanor married Henry Freeman, the rector of Alwalton.

After attending St John's College, Cambridge, brother Henry's first ecclesiastical post was in 1767, as curate at Alwalton. Ordained deacon in the same year and as a priest two years later he became the vicar of several parishes in the south of England, including Wilton, his final resting place. He was Prebendary of Salisbury cathedral from 1802 until his death. He married Mary Seward in 1787 and they raised two sons, Richard and Henry, the principal beneficiaries of brother Richard's will. Henry and Mary have beautiful wall monuments in Wilton parish church.

The first appearance of the Hetley family in Alwalton's parish registers was in 1764, when Richard junior was churchwarden for the first time (he was in the post for seven years). Living close to the Great North Road one of his appointments was as a trustee of the turnpike road between Alconbury and

Wansford.

As a Justice of the Peace, in 1786 he was concerned with the repair and expansion of local jails and workhouses, limiting inmates to 24 persons in Huntingdon jail and to 12 in workhouses. Three years later at the Quarter Sessions at the Shire Hall, Huntingdon (now the Town Hall) he reviewed cases against sellers of fabric in Elton and Haddon, who were using shortened measures, and in 1793 the Q.S. met at the George Inn in Huntingdon to standardise the weight of bread. Nationally, there was a great shortage of corn, and prices were highly inflated. Bakers were taking advantage of the situation by producing underweight loaves. Monthly meetings of The Huntingdon Book Club were also held at the George Inn where Richard was a regular participant. In 1801 he also joined the Huntingdonshire association for the speedy apprehension and effectual prosecution of horse and sheep stealers within fifteen miles of Huntingdon. Having a large list of subscribers the society met at the Fountain Inn on the Market Hill.

On May 15th 1800 King George III was attending the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane when James Hadley fired a pistol at the king in the royal box. The king survived the potential assassination and Hadley spent the rest of his life at Bethlehem Hospital and Newgate Prison. Within a week, a meeting of the local nobility was held at the Shire Hall in Huntingdon, chaired by Richard Hetley. The meeting, including the Duke of Manchester, and the Earl of Sandwich, sent congratulations to the king for surviving the attack, and within a month Richard Hetley was knighted at St James' Palace. In the same year he was appointed as High Sheriff for Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire. Although his joint duties must have included Cambridgeshire to the south he seems to have confined his work to Huntingdonshire, principally around his home in the northern extremity of Huntingdonshire.

With his increased influence locally and nationally he renewed his endeavours to help the poor in Huntingdonshire and those incarcerated in Huntingdon jail. Correspondence held at the National Archives between Richard and Thomas Pelham, the Home Secretary, reflect his concerns over the plight of the poor, the small tradesmen and the renters of cottages and small farms. He suggested that some way of helping them should be adopted until the produce of the imminent harvest could be better ascertained. With signs of impending riot and disorder in the district he asked for government guidance as to what to do. Anonymous letters had been sent to several persons threatening to shoot them and to destroy their property. "The London

Gazette” reported that William, Richard’s miller brother, had been one of those threatened – “If you Don’t fall your flower next Saturday to 3/6 pr Stone we will pull your Mill Down on your hed and take your flower away. We will Dragg you a Bout the Markett place on Saturday next”. He even suggested that he might try to obtain permission to call out the militia stationed at the prisoner of war camp at Norman Cross. But by mid-September 1800 there were more fine days of weather and the cost of wheat and barley got slowly cheaper; so Richard did not need to take such a drastic action.

It is impossible to pinpoint Richard’s dwelling in Alwalton. His house and land were copyhold and the enclosure map made two years after his death show extensive buildings, the mill, and fields once in his and his brother William’s occupancy. Both brothers were tenants of the rector. Richard also rented land in Wyboston, Bedfordshire.

Approaching his final years Richard made his main will in June 1806. Being unmarried, his beneficiaries were the Revd Henry Hetley, his children and Elizabeth Canwell, possibly at that time his servant - in 1820 she was to marry his nephew Richard William, son of brother William. He requested that “a vault to be made under my seat in the parish church of Alwalton and that a marble monument to the value of fifty pounds be erected to my memory”. The resulting monument was signed by George Sparrow, monumental mason of the High Street, Stamford. But the sting in his will came in a later codicil **“saying that neither William Hetley of Alwalton miller a man that is called my brother shall never be permitted to occupy any part of my estate at Alwalton....nor none of his family neither shall his heirs or Executors be ever permitted to sell any part or parts of the said Estate in consequence of his having the impudence and ingratitude to insult and damn me for bringing him hitherto a situation that I could now at this time make a thousand pounds good will for the situation..... He has taken part of my Estate in my life time without my consent, pays no rent and would do more if he dare”**.

The brother causing the wrath of Richard was the youngest of the family, William (1758-1829) the miller. He rented the wind mill (demolished by him in 1827, the tower remains today) and later the water mill. The flour produced helped to bake the bread sold at his establishment in Peterborough, as he reported to a parliamentary inquiry into country bakers in 1812. He married Elizabeth Smith (1758-1844) at St Clement Danes in London in 1779, his first born son Henry (1791-1867) was baptised at Alwalton, but Richard William (1782-1856) was baptised at St Clement Danes.

William was churchwarden at Alwalton between 1805 and 1814, his son Richard occupying the post from the following year until 1823. He also served in the 1850s.

At this distance it is difficult to discover how William had swindled Richard out of his money, nor how he had frittered it away. But five years after Richard's passing things started to go wrong for William. He was first made bankrupt in November 1814, but "The London Gazette" recorded a far more serious bankruptcy the following year. Listed as a miller, dealer and chapman he was forced to sell his Peterborough operation at the "Angel Inn" in February 1815. The assets sold off were his bakehouse with its adjoining house and garden in Bridge Street, Peterborough, as well as his common rights within the city.

At that time he may have been living back in London. Was it "our" William Hetley who, two days before the Peterborough sale, was listed as being the treasurer of the Strangers Friendly Society in Hoxton? This society was founded "for the relief of poor families and individuals who from sickness or uncertainties are brought into distressing circumstances with London etc". If so, was he once again trying to take advantage of others for his own personal financial gain?

But by 1820 he was back in Alwalton celebrating the marriage of his son Richard to Elizabeth Canwell, previously servant to Richard. Both sons soon moved away to take up farming in nearby Orton Longueville. William died in 1829 and his wife followed in 1844. A wall monument to the couple was erected to their memory above their final resting place in the south aisle, whilst brother Sir Richard Hetley, knight lies a few yards away in his solitary vault under the organ in the south transept. A short distance away, in the modern suburb of Orton Goldhay, is a short cul-de-sac named "Hetley".

RECEIVED FROM LES WATERS

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN CAMBS POLICE HISTORY?

"In Cambridge a new Borough Corporation was elected after the passage of the Municipal Corporations Act 1835. The Corporation promptly appointed a Watch Committee which established a new Police Force for the Town. The 29 strong Force operated from a rented station house in stables in Millers Lane and was led by John Titterton, a Waterloo veteran and former Metropolitan Police Inspector. By May 1836 uniformed officers were patrolling the streets by night and day. One of the records kept by the new police was a Station House Journal in which was recorded much of their day to day work. A volume of the Journal, spanning the period March 1837 to May 1838, with around 2,500 entries, has survived, and has now been transcribed at www.arumgo.com . If you are interested in Victorian policing, or Cambridge in the 1830s, this may be worth a look."

English Tyler, The Police Force & other surprises *by Gillian Forsythe*

I should like to thank the CHFHS member, Les, who pointed everyone towards the web site of 'The Journal of the New Cambridge Police 1837 – 1838' www.arumgo.com in the March Newsletter.

This is full of interest for the social historian and for me it provided a puzzle. I found that P.C. No. 19 was one English TYLER, my own three times great grandfather. He became acting sergeant on 5th January 1838 and was succeeded by Fred Newman from 1st May 1838. He helped in a rescue from a house fire on 2nd March 1838 but, in February 1839 in the Police Journal we find that English TYLER was reported to the Watch Committee no fewer than 27 times before he was dismissed!

I mentioned my ancestor in a recent CHFHS Journal (Vol. 30 No. 1, Spring 2024) as one of a family with interesting forenames. My English TYLER was born in Bocking, Essex in 1801 but moved to Cambridge and set up as a baker and confectioner together with his wife Mary Ann SPINKS who was born in Layer de la Hay in 1803. The couple married on 20th August 1826 at Great Leighs, Essex.

English as a first name only occurs 130 times in the whole of the Free BMD records and only four of those are TYLERs. English TYLER (junior) married in 1863 while his father married for the second time in 1874. The father died in 1881 and the son in 1884. All four records are for Cambridge. The police constable has got to be my ancestor.

For the Census of 1841 English TYLER, a *baker*, aged about 39 and Mary, about 35, are resident in Cambridge with seven children including four-year old English (junior) who was born circa 1837 in Cambridge.

In 1851 English TYLER is aged 49, a *baker and confectioner*, living with his wife and four of his children but young English is staying with his married sister in Royston.

In 1861 English is 59, a *baker and confectioner*. His wife is given as May, aged 57 and two of their children are at home.

In 1871 they are in St Andrew the Great Parish. English is 69, *baker and confectioner*, Mary is 67 and they have two visitors.

In 1881 English at 79 is an Inmate of an Alms house and described as '*formerly confectioner*', address 6, Albert Asylum, Hills Road, Cambridge and his wife is Ann. Mary had died on the 18th November 1871 aged 67 and

English remarried, Ann KETLEY, in June 1874.

English TYLER was buried on 21st April 1881 in Chesterton aged 79.

Now the question is, did English TYLER give up his career as a baker and confectioner to join the police force about the time his son, also called English, was born? Was he feeling the pinch financially and left his wife to run the bakery in order to earn more money as a police man? Was he found to be unsuited to the work and returned to his baking in 1839? There is a suggestion that his dismissal was more to do with the finances of the force and local politics rather than his being late on duty a few times. *"The selection of this case [that of English Tyler] was singularly unfortunate...for though there had been many little charges against this man, there was never one made which was sufficient to have justified them in discharging him. However, ... they made a kind of constructive charge against him out of so many little ones and discharged him."*

He obviously enjoyed police work as according to the Cambridge Chronicle and Journal, on 11 Oct 1856 English TYLER was made a Parish Constable. Also called 'Petty Constables', these were unpaid, part-time law enforcement officers aged 25 – 55. English senior would by then have been 55 while his son, English was too young at only 19.

English TYLER (junior) became a baker like his father. He was born just before the GRO records started and cannot be found in Cambridgeshire for the Census of 1861. Is it he who arrives at Ellis Island on the 'Cornelius Grinnell' aged 22 in 1859, a 'baker'? He must have returned to Cambridge to marry the widow of another baker, George BAVEY. English TYLER married Rebecca née COULSON in 1863. He died on 17th July 1884 aged only 47.

My search engine did not find either of the two English Tylers in the Census of 1861 so I asked a friend to do some 'look-ups' for me and she sent me yet more records, one of which was a complete revelation. English TYLER senior had some sort of breakdown in 1855. Maybe it was triggered by anxiety about finances again as he was cited as a creditor in a bankruptcy case in 1844. There is a full record of his state of health on admission to hospital in the April and then the stages as he gets better, to be released, first on 'leave of absence' and then discharged completely on 2nd November 1855: 'Cured'. I was pleased to find that the treatment was not 'Dickensian'. The records suggest compassion and light-handed medical interventions.

All this from the suggestion that we look in the police records of a mere couple of years. Thank you, Les.

Thanks also go to Vicki Atkinson for help with records, proof reading and encouragement.

Further DNA Notes

by
Ian Stephenson

Finding A Missing Father

I have previously described in The Journal (Spring and Summer 2023) how DNA analysis enabled me to locate persons in my family tree who were the result of illegitimate relationships. Both of those concerned individuals now dead, neither having a profound effect on the here and now. Here I describe how simple autosomal DNA analysis has uncovered a current relationship.

Some 5 years, or so, ago I was contacted by L¹ who had undertaken an Ancestry DNA test in the hope that it would help to identify her father. L was illegitimate and her (by then) deceased mother had refused to tell L her father's name. All she knew was that she was conceived whilst her mother was on holiday at Butlins in the early-1960s. L had contacted me, amongst a small group of others, as each shared a significant amount of DNA with her, in my case slightly in excess of 100cM - could we establish a family connection? Apparently, I was the only person to reply. However, whilst I agreed that the DNA match could not be a coincidence, I could at that time only offer broad possibilities for a connection.

Having had the success of the unravelling two illegitimate relationships, noted above, I wondered whether a similar technique might help L. Having established with L that her search for her father had not progressed, I investigated the DNA matches which we shared. There were five, four of those matches converged with my family tree at one set of my great-grandparents (GGP). If they were also my and L's common ancestors then that would make L my 2nd cousin, or 2nd cousin once removed - relationships consistent with our DNA match. It seemed to me reasonably certain that either these GGP or either set of their parents were the common ancestors. And here I had a bit of luck. The 5th shared match was a descendant of great-grandmother's sister, so that ruled out L being a descendant of my great-grandfather's parents. Next, I noted that L and I shared a mid-teens percentage of regional DNA which for me came from my great-grandfather's line, thus seeming to rule out L being a descendant of my great-grandmother's parents. That left the GGPs being the most likely common ancestors.

Fortunately, I had already identified all my GGP's descendants down to my parent's generation, so I had a long list of 28 possible male relatives. To narrow the field of candidates down, having established that L's mother was in her mid-20s at conception, I identified all the single males within +/- 10 years of her then age. We were left with 15 candidates. Next, I reviewed our five shared matches; in each case I had a significantly larger DNA match than L with each of the five. That suggested two things: first, that it was likely that L was a generation further from my GGPs than I was (making her probably my 2nd cousin once removed), and second that it was highly unlikely that her father was a descendant of any of children of my GGPs from whom the shared matches were descended. That second assumption left L with 8 candidates to investigate.

And that was enough to narrow the field down to one. For what I hadn't known was that L knew her father's derivative name and there was only one candidates' given name from which that derivative could be formed. Furthermore, with that final candidate's surname L was able to trawl through her DNA matches to find one match (>100cM) that she could trace in the matched person's family tree down to this final candidate. I should note that I hadn't expected the endgame to be so quick or straightforward.

It seemed like L had found her father (a second cousin of mine); what's more, fairly recent electoral roll data showed that there was a good chance that he was still alive. The issue then for L was how to approach her father, now in his late-80s; for he was unlikely to know of her existence and she had no way of knowing his state of health nor how he might react. To cut a long story short, the good news is that L had a very cordial meeting her father and half-sister, he acknowledged the liaison at Butlins, he subsequently took a DNA test giving a 3480cM match to L (proving the parent-child relationship), and both have recognised each other on their respective family trees on Ancestry. Result !

It's Not All Plain Sailing

I should note here that although I have had some success with finding illegitimate relationship links in my family tree, it is not all plain sailing. I have a group of 21 DNA shared matches for which the link to me is so far elusive. Of those 21, eleven have sufficient family tree information on Ancestry to allow me to fit them into a consolidated tree with all branches linking back to common ancestors of Josiah Saville (1816-1903) and Mary Ann nee Wright (1816-1899). In the mid-19th century they lived at Saffron Waldron ESS and subsequently in the 1860s moved to the USA with their family (I have DNA matches through four of their children). Whilst the magnitude of DNA matches

spans up to 28cM, I have no shared matches outside the group which can help place the common ancestor in a particular part of my family tree. But I do have ancestors living on the CAM/ESS border at, and before, the period in question. There is no obvious linkage between my family tree and Josiah and Mary Ann Saville, or their wider families. That has led me to believe that there was probably an illegitimate relationship. Thus either one of my ancestors was the product of an illegitimate relationship between one of my female ancestors and a male from the Saville tree, or vice-versa regarding one of their female ancestorsⁱⁱ. The issue I now have is what questions should I ask of those shared matches that may then elicit useful data to progress my search - it is a work in progress.

A Speculative Approach in the Use of DNA in Ancestry Research

Ancestry research inevitably ends with a lot of brick walls. These may be due to, for example: an absence of records; an illegitimate birth with no father named; two or more candidates where the available records do not enable a distinction to be made. Can the results of an autosomal DNA be an aid to progress? In some cases I think it can.

On more than one occasion I have found that a 5th or 6th cousin match has given confidence to my assertion of a distant ancestor. That led me to conclude that in cases where I have uncertainty over the next generation back (a brick wall) I can speculatively insert into my Ancestry family tree the details of a potential candidate and see whether a DNA match appears. Here is a case in point.

Sophia Gazeⁱⁱⁱ was baptised in 1803 at Happisburgh^{iv} NFK and is recorded as the baseborn (illegitimate) child of Sarah Gaze. I had found no record of bastardy bond, or the like, so identifying Sophia's father looked like an inevitable and unscalable brick wall. However, in 1800 Sarah had had an earlier illegitimate child, baptised Alexander Balls Gaze; surely then, his father was named Alexander Balls. An Alexander Balls (1775-1853) was located in the area; he had married in 1801. Could he have also been Sophia's father? It was a possibility, so worth a try. I therefore inserted his details into my family tree, with a caveat in Sophia's record identifying that the connection was speculative, together with my rationale. I then sat back and waited, and waited.

That was some 4 or 5 years ago, and I had largely forgotten about it. However, recently up popped (on Ancestry ThruLines) a DNA match of 10cM for a potential half 5th cousin, the point of convergence of the two family trees being Alexander Balls. Tracing that potential half 5th cousin's line back

showed it to be good (that is, there are sufficient records to believe it to be valid) all the way back to Alexander's legitimate son, Samuel. This then provides some confidence in the hypothesis that Alexander Balls was Sophia's father. I should note that the potential half 5th cousin had only traced back through 4 generations and had probably been a match in the Ancestry database for a couple of years; the recent discovery being (I assume) due to new third party family trees that enabled the ThruLines algorithms to make the connection back to Alexander Balls. However, I have to accept that the DNA match could be a false positive (that is, the DNA match being a coincidence and there being no link between Sophia and Alexander Balls) and I have no idea about what the probability might be of such a false positive AND^v there existing a speculative connection. For the moment I am content to consider Alexander Balls to be a good candidate for Sophia's father and hope that another DNA match might in due course come along to provide me with additional confidence - I just hope that doesn't take another 4 or 5 years ! In the meantime I will look again at my brick walls to see where I can use this technique in cases where I am unable to distinguish between two or more candidates^{vi}; it won't work every time, but I might perhaps have some limited success.

Readers might like to try the technique to see whether it will work for them.

NOTES

- i. *I shall call her 'L' to maintain her anonymity.*
- ii. *It seems reasonable to assume that an illegitimate child would be brought up by his/her mother, whether or not the husband was aware of the relationship.*
- iii. *Sophia is my 3x great-grandmother. There is a distant connection to Cambridgeshire in that she was the maternal grandmother of Herbert Julian Peters (1857-1922) of Cambridge - see article Robert Peters part 3 in The Journal Autumn 2021.*
- iv. *As an aside, readers may know that Happisburgh is pronounced 'Haze-bruh' and in local census records I have found it abbreviated to 'Has-bro'. But in a census record some 15 miles away from the village, where I presume the enumerator was none-the-wiser, the birthplace of a number of individuals was further decimated being recorded as 'Asbro'.*
- v. *Here, AND is used as a logical construct. I recognise that the probability of a false positive of a coincidence might be quite high, but that together with there existing a connection including a speculative link is the unknown.*
- vi. *Ancestry ThruLines only makes connections back to 5x great grandparents, so there is no point in using this technique further back.*

An Interesting Fellow

by Colin Ashworth

I suppose one should not be surprised by some of the things one discovers when researching family history. It turns out that a search for my surname, Ashworth, when used as a first name, results in approaching 130,000 hits on FindMyPast. When searching the Cambridgeshire Family History Society's online database there are just 13 entries. Many of these refer to a chap by the name of Ashworth Speechley (or Speechly). I have yet to establish whether or not he is an ancestor of mine, but he lived in Coates, near Whittlesey, which is the subject of my One-Place Study.

It is not clear when Ashworth Speechley was born because his age at death, in 1901, was given as 84, which would give 1817 as his birth year. He was baptised on 9 March 1819, so if I assume he was born a few weeks earlier that year, then his age matches up with the census returns of 1861 and 1871 but not for the remaining ones on which he appears.

His name is the result of the fact that he was illegitimate. St Mary's, Whittlesey baptism registers record that he was the son of William Ashworth and Ann Speechley, both of Coates. (For clarity, this was Ann Speechley, senior)

Ashworth married Mary Dobson, also at St Mary's, on 29 October 1845. They had one child, John (b.1846, d.1847) if I am correct. Interestingly, before they were married, Ashworth and Mary were witnesses at the wedding of his sister Ann Speechley (junior aged 18) in 1844 to Francis Ireson when Ann was a minor.

Ashworth was an Agricultural Labourer for his entire working life but the records reveal that, in other respects, he was perhaps not an altogether mundane person. Indeed, the first very unusual fact about Ashworth Speechley is that he seems to have been baptised for a second time on 7 April 1858, at Coates, where it is stated that he was the "son of William Ashworth (lab) and Ann Speechley of Coates, 38 years old". Oddly, his sister, Ann, was also baptised the same day, at the age of 32 and under her maiden name of Ann Speechley. Now, I am the first to think that I may have mixed up two families with similar names. Yet it is fascinating that at Coates (also on 7 April 1858) the baptism of Ann and Francis' children took place: Francis Ireson (7y 10m) Ashworth Ireson (no age given but born in 1857 according to

FreeBMD) and Ann Ireson (4y 10m) children of Francis & Ann of Coates, bricklayer.

My attention was originally drawn to Ashworth Speechley when I found that he cropped up in the news on several occasions. On 9 May 1868 the Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal, Isle of Ely Herald and Huntingdonshire Gazette reported the Whittlesey Division Petty Sessions. Ashworth Speechley was ordered to pay damages and costs of £1 13s 4d for wilfully breaking the windows of John Hurry, Victualler. The Petty Sessions were again reported by the Cambridge Independent Press (CIP) on 23 May 1874 when "John Corby of Coates, horse-breaker, was charged with assaulting Ashworth Speechley of the same place on the 15th inst., and was fined 2s. 3d., and costs of 14s. 3d." As they say, it takes two to tango!

Ashworth is next in the news on 21 July 1877 because, on 12th, he was charged with being drunk and disorderly and assaulting two women. However, the case was adjourned because Ashworth was "under medical treatment at the Workhouse having attempted to commit suicide by cutting his throat on 8th inst.". Ely prison records show that he was received into custody (on remand) on 9 Aug 1877 and, after the warrant of 16th, he was admitted to bail on 20th. The precise details are that he "Unlawfully did cut and wound himself with a certain instrument with intent thereby then feloniously, wilfully and of his malice aforethought to kill and murder himself at Whittlesey in the Isle of Ely on the 18th July 1877". His release was not the end of the matter as one can read in the Cambridge Times of 23 November 1877.

"Ashworth Speechley was summoned by Sarah Hopper for assaulting her at Coates on the 12th of July last. - Complainant stated she was hanging out her clothes, when Speechly (sic) cut the line and pushed his cart up against them. She remonstrated, and he struck her and kicked her. - Defendant denied it, and called Thomas Lindsay, but was fined £1 and ordered to pay £1 3s. expenses: in default one months hard labour. - Inspector Burrus summoned the same man for being drunk at the Police-station on the 12th inst. The defendant went to the station for the purpose of getting his witness' summons signed, but was drunk. - He now pleaded guilty, and was fined 1s., and ordered to pay 13s. 6d. costs in default seven days' hard labour, to commence at the expiration of the former sentence. - The prisoner said: That will make five weeks, your honour. - The Chairman: Yes. - He went to prison."

The CIP of 3 April 1880 reported, "Speechley Ashworth (sic) of Coates (sic) adjourned from last bench to produce witnesses to prove the age of the dog

was under six months but failing to do so Ashworth was fined 5s and 18s 6d costs.” Also, in the CIP on 28 May 1881, “Ashworth Speechley labourer, Coates, was charged with allowing an ass to stray on the highway on the 10th instant. Fine 1s and costs 15s.”

Ashworth’s wife Mary appears on the 1881 census but he was a widower, living in the Workhouse, by 1891, although I have not been able to locate Mary’s death record. He either stayed in the Workhouse or returned before the 1901 census (described on the census as a ploughman) and died there on 18 December that year, of senile decay. He was buried in Whittlesey cemetery, but I have not been able to find a headstone.

I may, at some stage, work out whether Ashworth’s father William (and thus Ashworth himself) was an ancestor of mine. Perhaps someone who reads this could help me! The story reflects some attitudes of the past as is so often the case in our research activities.

NOTE: This article was written for inclusion in the March 2024 edition of “Destinations” the Journal of the Society for One-Place Studies which I edit.

Perhaps the technique described by Ian Stephenson in his DNA article, elsewhere in this issue, might be of use here should Colin look at pursuing the possibility of a connection between his own family and that of Ashworth and his possible father—Ed



Ten Steps to a One-Place Study

Janet Few

TEN STEPS TO A ONE-PLACE STUDY

BY JANET FEW

(BLUE POPPY PUBLISHING 2020)

From an online bookseller’s website:

One-place studies are a fascinating blend of family history and local history. This form of micro-research is becoming increasingly popular amongst genealogists and local historians. A one-place study involves investigating a small geographical area in minute detail, researching the inhabitants, the buildings and the institutions within that place, as well as the events that took place there. This booklet is an introductory guide for those who are just starting on their one-place journey and for more experienced one-placers who would like direction or inspiration, or who are seeking a more organised approach to their study.

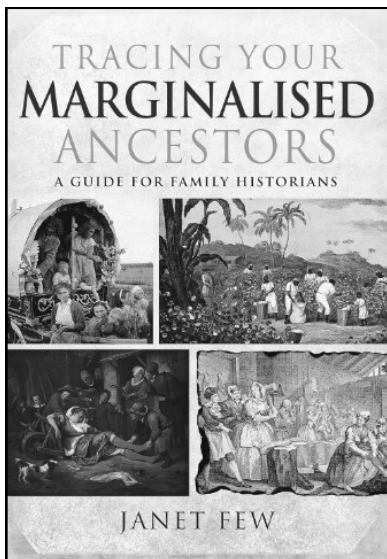
Project co-coordinator, Terry, updates progress of WisMus

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, and has been slow to get restarted.

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 and get the project finished over the coming months—

—please get in touch via my Projects e-mail



TRACING YOUR MARGINALISED ANCESTORS BY JANET FEW (PEN & SWORD 2024)

From a well-known website:

Often, our most fascinating ancestors are those on society's margins. They might have been discriminated against due to personal misfortune, or have been a victim of society's fear of difference. You may have ancestors who were poor, or sick, illegitimate, or lawbreakers. Were your family stigmatised because of their ethnicity? Perhaps they struggled with alcoholism, were prostitutes, or were accused of witchcraft.

*This book will help you find out more about them and the times in which they lived. The nature of this book means that it deals with subjects that can make uncomfortable reading but it is important to confront these issues as we try to understand our ancestors and the society that led to them becoming marginalised. In *Tracing your Marginalised Ancestors*, you will find plenty of suggestions to help you uncover the stories of these, often elusive, groups of people.*

Will you accept the challenge to seek out your marginalised ancestors and tell their stories?

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

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
	NB : from June , we may be at a different location on the top floor of the Central Library owing to reorganisation ... look out for our posters		

HUNTS PARISHES AVAILABLE TO SEARCH VIA CHFHS WEBSITE

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

HUNTS PARISHES IN PROGRESS

Alwalton	
Bythorn	
Chesterton	
Covington	
Diddington	
Easton	
Elton	
Eynesbury	
Fletton	
Huntingdon parishes	
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 Apr	The George Inn, March <i>Branch member Jennifer will be talking about this local inn—an establishment with a long history which has seen many changes over the years.</i>	with Jennifer Lawler
Wed 1 May	Further Steps In Family History <i>Mick relates stories about conducting his own research over many years—from before records were digitized to more recent times—highlighting how things have changed.</i>	with Mick Rawle
Wed 5 June	The Family History For Jonathan <i>Society member Helen recounts how the family's history was compiled for their son.</i>	with Helen Green
Wed 3 July	Outing—destination to be announced—watch out for details	
Wed Aug	No meeting	

HUNTS HISTORY FESTIVAL — July 2024

*variety of events throughout the month are being arranged
keep up to date via their website <https://huntshistoryfest.com>*

RECEIVED VIA EMAIL FROM DAVE BURBRIDGE

Just read the article in journal 30 no 1, reprinted from journal 1 no 5, on surnames used as Christian names.

In particular, the comment on the name “Bransom” rang a bell, as my 2x gt grandmother was Mary BRANSOM, born in Chatteris in 1838. Her paternal line has been traced back to Thomas BRANSOM, who married Lydia MAW in Wisbech in 1804, and several descendant lines are known, so it was not an unusual surname in the area at one time.

Its use as a Christian name is closer to our own time. It crops up three times in my tree, the most notable example being a once well-known WW2 night fighter pilot, Bransome “Branse” BURBRIDGE (1921-2016), my 2nd cousin one removed.

HUNTINGDON BRANCH PROGRAMME

3rd Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm

Zoom only (register via website) enquiries : huntingdon@chfhs.org.uk

Wed 15 May	Freedom Of Information For Family Historians with Richard Holt
Web 19 June	Littleport Riots with Susanah Farmer <i>The presentation is about war, climate change, and the cost of living crisis – in early nineteenth century Littleport. Drawing upon contemporary accounts and later research, it will take you through the events of May 1816, highlighting the contributory factors and subsequent events (with a couple of diversions along the way).</i> <i>After starting out milking cows for a living, Susanah drifted into working in libraries. She became bitten by the local history bug whilst working in Nottinghamshire, and this eventually led to a job in the library at The National Archives in Kew and a Masters in Local History from Kingston University. When the 1881 census came out on CDROM she started looking at her family tree, and on moving to Wisbech joined the Fenland FHS; she became Editor of their journal, and is also currently their Chairman.</i>
Wed 17 July	The Treasures of Ramsey Abbey with Ian Mason <i>Ian Mason of Warboys Archaeology Group will review the Heritage Lottery funded, Ramsey Abbey Community Project excavations between 2017 and 2020, the Ramsey Abbey Pilgrim's Trail and the "Treasures" exhibitions held at Chatteris Museum, The Norris Museum and Ramsey Rural Museum. Ian looks behind the remaining gatehouse at the secrets of this once great monastic estate. He will also reveal the amazing connection with March and the conversion of a King to Christianity! .</i>

HUNTINGDON

LOCAL & COMMUNITY HISTORY MONTH

various events during the month—details from the library—incl

Cambs & Hunts FHS @ Huntingdon Library

Sat 25 May 10-4

drop in & say hello

**CAMBRIDGE BRANCH
PROGRAMME**

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

Cambridge Branch talks are via Zoom only
Register via the website www.chfhs.org.uk

<p>Thurs 9 May</p>	<p>An Evening Remembering Hereward with David Maile <i>Online presentation (subtitled) featuring Rory G as Hereward the Wake.</i> NB: this session will not be recorded</p>
<p>Thurs 13 Jun</p>	<p>Ian Stone with Alec Nelson <i>A renowned amateur (and then professional) athlete, around 1900, and went on to be the highly successful Cambridge University athletic coach 1908-1940</i></p>
<p>Thurs 11 July</p>	<p>The Spinning House with Caroline Biggs <i>Did you know that during the nineteenth century Cambridge University arrested and imprisoned thousands of young women for walking the streets after dark? Senior university members wanted to keep the streets free of temptation, for the young men in their care, by punishing women who stepped out of line. The university prison was known as The Spinning House, formerly Hobson's Workhouse before it was demolished due to public outrage about an Elizabethan Charter permitting the arrest of any woman suspected of streetwalking. Mistakes were made. Riots broke out as the townspeople protested.</i> <i>For the past five years Caroline has been piecing together the true stories of some of young women flung inside the Spinning House prison, a place regularly condemned by prison inspectors for being cold and damp. There is no way of knowing if any of the women were guilty or innocent as none them received a fair trial. Being poor and pretty seemed to be the greatest crime.</i> <i>Renowned worldwide for its academic prowess, a murky past lurks below the surface of Cambridge University. During the C19th, it became infamous for a dogged determination to cling to ancient laws allowing the arrest and imprisonment of unchaperoned women found walking the town's streets after dark. Violence and legal action followed, until finally an Act of Parliament put an end to the university's jurisdiction over the women of Cambridge.</i></p>
<p>Sat 11 May 11.00</p>	<p>AGM 2024 @ Ely Archives & Zoom With exhibition and live speaker Gill Blanchard will talk about her work as a researcher with the Jonnie Peacock & Mary Berry <i>WhoDoYouThinkYouAre</i> episodes</p>

MEETINGS REPORTS

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

HINCHINGBROOKE HOUSE *WITH MARK EGERTON* *(HUNTINGDON BRANCH : JAN 2024)*

Our guest speaker was Mark Egerton, an expert on Hinchingsbrooke House and the author of a book titled "The Haunted History of Huntingdonshire". Mark started with a brief history of Hinchingsbrooke House and the people who have lived there right up to the time that it was purchased in 1970 by Huntingdon District Council to become part of Hinchingsbrooke School.

Hinchingsbrooke House is a Grade 1 Listed Building originally built as a priory of Benedictine nuns in the 11th Century. After the Reformation the property was granted to Oliver Cromwell, 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 the Montagu family until 1962.

Mark then took us on a virtual tour of the house which he knew well, as he had attended the school in the 1970's and continues to host tours around the building and grounds.

We started at the front gatehouse, which was moved from Ramsey Abbey to Hinchingsbrooke, both buildings belonging to the Cromwell family. This leads onto the Apostles' Courtyard which has twelve yew trees around the green to represent the twelve apostles, and then on to the front door.

The first room was the Inner Hall which was originally an outside space that had been roofed over with a large skylight installed. Mark told the sad story of a French teacher who had fallen through this skylight in 1976 and died from his injuries. Next was the Assembly Room which had a small stage at one end and a grand fireplace which was the source of the great fire of 1830. Then we visited the Chapter House that was Mark's classroom in the 1970's furnished with desks from the Tudor period and still used to this day.

The Library followed, the oldest part of the present building, positioned where the priory's church stood in the 11th century. This room has beautiful panelling, a very grand carved door, and several stained-glass windows. One pane which was cracked during the great fire is still in place and commemorates Edward Montagu, the first Earl of Sandwich. This room was used by the Montagu family as their sitting room.

The next picture was unexpected – a pair of human skeletons! These were discovered after the great fire destroyed the grand staircase, exposing the human remains which were buried below. Despite much research and many theories, who they were remains a mystery. The rebuilt Grand Staircase is the site of ghostly sightings to this day, though Mark has not witnessed any.

Mark interrupted his tour to give more details about the people who had lived in or visited the house. Edward Montagu became the 1st Earl of Sandwich (a title which has passed through nine generations) as a reward for organising the fleet to sail to the Netherlands and bring Charles II back to England after the death of Oliver Cromwell..

Other visitors included James I who stayed many times, Oliver Cromwell, Charles I and Elizabeth I. Samuel Pepys was a regular visitor and the steps in the garden are actually named after him.

The fourth Earl, John Montagu (1718-1792), was Lord of the Admiralty. Despite being married he had an affair with a singer called Martha Ray who was 28 years his junior, and having put his wife in a sanatorium moved his lover into Hinchingsbrooke. Martha was later murdered on the steps of Covent Garden Opera House. John continued to live the high life but also found time to accompany Captain James Cook on his voyages and several newly discovered islands were named after Hinchingsbrooke and Sandwich.

The tour continued with a visit to the Reception Room, which was in a very poor state of repair when the house was taken over by Huntingdon District Council, and used by the masons to store their tools during the renovation works. It is claimed that the ghost of a monk was seen here and the room is considered the most haunted area of the house after the staircase.

On a lighter note, Mark recalled the three-day visit of the American presenters of the TV programme “Paranormal Lockdown” which supposedly shows paranormal activities in well-known haunted houses. Their evidence was not convincing! Nor did they see the ‘White Lady’ who features in front of Hinchingsbrooke House on the cover of Mark’s book.

Mark had one more story regarding the spiritual world - the Hinchingsbrooke Werewolf. This creature was claimed to inhabit the west wing extension which was demolished by the ninth Earl at the end of WW2.

Clearly Mark is very knowledgeable about Hinchingsbrooke House: the bricks and mortar of the buildings, the famous people who stayed there, and the ghostly stories. He brought all of this together in well received presentation, and finished with questions and answers.

Reported by John Bownass

HEROES & VILLAINS OF YELLING *WITH JOHN BOWNASS* *(HUNTINGDON BRANCH : FEB 2024)*

Our speaker was John Bownass, Huntingdon representative on the CHFHS Committee and the usual reporter on the Huntingdon talks. This time he was on the podium telling of “notable characters” from his home village of Yelling. John explained that there were no real villains to present, rather those involved in minor crimes and disputes in the village. The “Heroes” would include Soldiers, a Statesman and a Rector. The “Villains” would include another Rector, some minor criminals and more serious lawbreakers who were transported.

We were told a bit about Yelling village and could see from the maps shown just how small it was. In the period that John was covering the population was 161 in 1775, 250 in 1800, grew to some 470 in 1860, and had fallen to less than 200 by 1930.

John began with some “Heroes”, the Yelling soldiers who died in WWI and are remembered on the Roll of Honour on the wall of Holy Cross church. They included several members of an extended village family, the Curringtons. Photographs of many of the young men and the places where they lived brought their stories to life.

There followed a rather amusing tale of a disagreement between the residents of Yelling and a new Rector, Thomas Elms Fisher, who took office in 1913: soon after his arrival the congregation went “on strike” and refused to attend services. The situation made the national newspapers, and while much was written about it, the reasons for the disagreement were never made clear. The Rector claimed that the villagers were “radical and hostile” and “there was much intermarrying”. The villagers claimed he was overbearing and interfered with their lives. We may never know the real reason, but the situation remained the same until the Rector retired in 1927.

A rather more heroic Rector was Henry Venn who was rector of Yelling from 1771. He was a famous orator and writer of evangelical texts who came to Yelling for a quiet life due to ill health. He regained his strength and became so popular and generous a preacher that he filled the church to overflowing. Another famous Yelling resident, Sir John See, became the premier of New South Wales, Australia in 1901. His family had lived in Yelling for a couple of generations before emigrating to Australia when John was 8.

The father of Sir John featured in the first of the newspaper reports of Yelling crimes. He was accused of driving a cart without reins while drunk and fined 10s or could choose 1 month hard labour. This was typical punishment for

petty crimes which included trespass, being drunk and disorderly and theft.

Theft of a pig, desertion of a wife, trespass, leaving work without notice, a scrap over a boundary dispute, obstructing the highway and destruction of a millstone were among the crimes and punishments of the Yelling “villains” reported in the local press.

More serious crimes led to transportation. We were told of Thomas and Rebecca Hills, siblings who both suffered this fate. Thomas was convicted of arson and was said to have stated in court that transportation would be better than living in Yelling. He served his time in Tasmania, married and had a family. His sister Rebecca, was not so lucky, also convicted of arson she died of fever on the transport ship in 1847.

Finally, Charles Bosworth was sentenced to 7 years transportation in 1835 for theft of a gold watch and diamond rings. He was freed in 1841 but recalled for pilfering in 1841, getting his final release in 1849.

We were left with a feeling of amazement that such a very tiny village could produce such a wealth of big characters. The talk is available on the members area of the CHFHS website and is well worth watching.

Reported by Joan Bennett

“OH, YES IT IS!”

JIM STEBBINGS

(MARCH BRANCH : NOV 2023)

Jim Stebbings entertained us with The History of Pantomime ‘*Oh yes it is*’. The word pantomime comes from the Greek *pan* – to mime. Originally with no spoken words, artists had to extenuate their actions with mime, posture, gesture and music and later ‘over the top’ acting. Originally pantomimes were held in each of the four seasons of the year. Pantomime is often the first experience of theatre for younger people.

Pantomime is a unique form of entertainment and a vital element of the Christmas period although they don’t contain any reference to Christmas. The origins are unclear, probably back as far as Roman times, with several countries across ancient Europe having various similar entertainments. Early theatre in Greece consisted of many comedy plays often with a *country bumpkin* as one of the main characters. Bumpkins appear in early English pantomime. Other characters still in evidence today are Emperors, a villain and a heroine. From 16th century Italian comedy, *Comedia dell-arte* can be found the origins of some other characters and features such as *il capitollo* – a large nose, the coloured patchwork costumes of a harlequin a the false bravado of military officers. 17th century comedy plays provided a rich

mixture of exaggerated cod pieces, cruel fathers, slap-sticks (using hinged sticks) making a threatening sound as in Punch and Judy. The colours of a harlequin costume represent emotions; red-anger, blue – romance, yellow - joy, black – magic, green – envy.

In 1660, the New Theatre in Lincolns Inn Fields saw the first moveable scenery. John Rich was later a theatre manager there and is seen as the father of English Pantomime. He was a dancer, acrobat and mime artist appearing under the stage name 'Lun', during the 1720s . His character – a servant – moved away from the poor, disheveled, loud and crude to a colourful Harlequin, performing tricks, dancing and magic in mime, this popularised pantomime. He later went on to start the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. By the 1840s the Harlequin character was largely extinct.

In 1737 the Kings Theatre was the only theatre where speaking was allowed. The 1843 Theatres Act gave the Lord Chamberlain the power to prohibit plays to the West End considered detrimental to good manners and decorum.

By the 1840s, pantomime is thriving and being performed in more theatres. The use of a trap door is introduced for a clown to appear/disappear. Fairies transform from rags to riches. The Victorian masters were wonderful inventors who loved technical objects. Diorama is used to blend cardboard figures into the background to create movement. Audience participation took place and an image of the dame being overweight became evident. Dan Leno (1860 – 1904) became the first man to play Widow Twankey at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane. Other males playing the parts of females (not cross dressing), were the ugly sisters in Cinderella.

Reported by John Bownass

A MOST NOTORIOUS, NAUGHTY, FALSE & LYING FELLOW

SUE PAUL

(MARCH BRANCH : DEC 2023)

Sue Paul was our speaker at the December meeting. She gave one of her light hearted talks about pirates that she has researched widely. 'A Most Notorious, Naughty, False and Lying Fellow' told the story of Henry Smith the step-nephew of Captain Thomas Bowry – a sea captain in the late C17th. Was Henry Smith a notorious global black sheep, or a maligned character? This was the question Sue set at the start of her presentation, asking that the audience make up their own minds during the next half an hour.

Sue first came across Henry Smith whilst researching Thomas Bowry. She accepted that while Smith is usually a difficult name to research, in the case of Henry she was able to discover the name of his father.

Henry Smith caught the attention of others as a 'ne'er-do-well', being sacked from the East India Company [EIC] numerous times and thrown into Newgate jail charged with piracy and murder. His career started as an apprenticed clerk in 1668 with the EIC at Bantam in Java, Indonesia in the busy spice trade, at 10/- per annum. Even at this early stage the company made enquiries about his behavior. He worked in the East for less than 9 years but had soon become involved in embezzlement and delayed accounts. The delayed accounts resulted in misdealing being hidden. When his employment was terminated records show that he owed the Company in London £125 (nearly £25,000 today). His father Ralph Smith, had other involvement with the EIC, acted as guarantor and paid the debt.

On the other hand, Henry's brother, Samuel had been appointed Chief Engineer of Bombay where he took charge of the Company of Charles II. He had received this as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza. Samuel made excellent progress in supporting Bombay to defend itself and become more powerful than Surat. Perhaps, due to his brother's reputation, Henry was given the opportunity to redeem himself by being appointed as an assistant in the Bombay Accounts Office whilst he awaited a ship home. This appointment was on a trial basis, only paying him on being able to put the disorganized accounts in order. Henry was unable to achieve anything and was forced to continue his homeward journey at the end of 1678.

Back in London, Henry was able to convince the Company officials he deserved another chance and arrived back in Bombay in 1679 where he quickly became second in command on the Council in Bombay. The President at Surat, John Child who was also Governor of Bombay, continued to have a poor opinion of Henry.

Later in 1682 Henry was sent to Sombaji with a number of requests for trade commissions. This went very wrong. Henry accompanied the Sombaji's ambassador on the company magnificent state barge which was invaded, the luggage stolen and the mission abandoned. Henry was sent off again to the embassy where gifts were to be given to Sombaji when the deal was sealed. By this time Henry had spent the money entrusted to him to buy the gifts and was no longer in the position to complete the contract.

Back in Bombay in 1682, after a dinner Henry spoke about the recent prohibition on Company employees purchasing slaves. Announcing in colourful language that he did not care about the regulations, Henry went on to buy slaves within the next few days. The ship, Berkeley Castle fired on a slave ship wounding 24 of the crew. The Company blamed Henry for this and ordered him to hand over the accounts books. At Surat, Henry made counterclaim, blaming Charles Ward, the brother-in-law of John Child, for financial misdealings. Ward convinced Child that Henry was an *evil fellow*

who had attempted to incite a mutiny.

Henry departed Surat on the Coast Frigate in 1684.

The final verdict on him by the company was that he **was** a *Most Notorious, Naughty, False and Lying Fellow*.

Reported by Linda Peckett

THE BODY SNATCHERS

WITH DON CHISWELL

(MARCH BRANCH : JAN 2024)

At the January meeting Don Chiswell told of the gruesome past events of 'The Body Snatchers'. Burke and Hare were notorious murderers who found that selling a body for £7 or £8 in the winter was lucrative. There was a need for bodies for anatomical teaching for hundreds of years before the 1832 Anatomy Act.

Murderers' bodies and those who had committed suicide were not buried in consecrated ground so were resurrected more easily than those in churchyards. People feared dissection more than death and took any measure they could to prevent their bodies being used. Hardly any bodies were donated voluntarily. There were insufficient bodies from criminals as many were transported to Australia and other colonies.

The supply of bodies for teaching of anatomy was still insufficient. Bodies for anatomical research needed to be worked on soon after death, before much deterioration had taken place. Bodies kept longer during the winter months due to the cold.

Don gave handouts that depicted some of the measures such as mortsafes – an iron cage that encased the coffin, a mort house where bodies were stored for 6 weeks before burial, a grave guard - a large iron cage that covered all sides and the top of a grave; an example can be found at Aylsham All Saints, a coffin collar placed around the neck in the coffin – making it more difficult to remove the body from the coffin. As Scotland was prominent in teaching of anatomy, many of these examples are found there, with a watch tower at Dalkeith and the mort house at Boleskine. Watch towers were manned by parishioners. An example of a sentry box from Eye parish used for grave watching can be found in Peterborough museum.

All these measures did not stop the body snatching, there were still plenty that were easier to take. Stealing a body was not a crime before the Anatomy Act 1832, more a misdemeanor punished with a fine. Whereas, stealing clothes or any other property was a crime. Fear of the Workhouse was not only a fear

of existing there but also of dissection after death. If a body was not claimed within seven days it would be sent for teaching anatomy. Unofficially money would change hands with those in charge of the workhouse. Each medical student needed three bodies to complete their studies. The authorities turned a 'blind eye' to much of the body snatching.

Edinburgh was the leading anatomical centre of Europe in the early C19th. Dr Robert Knox alone taught over 800 medical students. When one of William Hare's lodgers died he asked his friend William Burke for advice regarding the body. This was sold to Dr Knox for teaching. Hare realised selling the body was lucrative and the pair started on their murderous spree of between 13 and 30 people, mainly from the poorest parts of Edinburgh. People asked questions of where they had disappeared to, these remained unanswered. Waifs and strays were suffocated, causing no damage to the bodies. Burke's accounts show a record the bodies sold. Burke and Hare's last victim was Margaret Doherty. Other lodgers contacted the police and they were arrested. Burke was publicly hanged for his crimes in 1829. Hare escaped the noose by giving King's evidence against Burke. Burke's skeleton is held on display at the Anatomical Museum at Edinburgh Medical School.

Following this the 1832 Anatomy Act was passed following the public revulsion to the illegal trade in corpses. The Act gave license to surgeons and medical students to dissect legally donated bodies. Access was given to bodies from workhouses, hospitals and prisons that were not claimed after death. It was also possible for next of kin to donate bodies.

Reported by Linda Peckett

EXPLORING CAMBRIDGESHIRE CHURCHES

WITH JOHN VIGAR

(MARCH BRANCH : FEB 2024)

John's presentation focused on several of the medieval churches in the county, the former Isle of Ely and Peterborough. John explained that what we see now in these churches is very different to the time when they were built. Churches were empty spaces with the exception of the altar. Parts of Cambridgeshire have a wealth of natural materials, especially limestone from Castor that would have been transported by water to other parts of the county. The Normans built dozens of monasteries and parish churches, most for these churches have survived and many are in use today. If there is one building that has survived in the parishes where our ancestors lived, it is likely to be the parish church.

The first church John talked about was Barnack, St John the Evangelist, built from local limestone. The important features are the Saxon tower and the

important 13th century porch that contain features typical of the period. Just below the clock is a Saxon carving of a vine with trefoil leaves and a cockerel. The Normans added the extension to the original nave with Norman arches with chevron decoration. The splendid carving on the capitals of waterleaf mouldings surrounding a little head are not typical and demonstrate the high quality craftsmanship of the Normans that exceeded that of the Saxons.

St Wendreda at March was included. Well known for the sixteenth century double hammerbeam roof. This contains more medieval angels with their musical instruments than any other church. The extravagance of the roof demonstrates the wealth of the area at the time. At the base of the Barnack limestone tower is a processional passage. The later body of the church is of flint. In the interior evidence can be seen of the many alterations that have taken place.

Ely St Peter was the only Victorian church mentioned. This remains one of the few proprietary churches in the country, now owned in Trust by the Cathedral. Pictures showed the lovely painted rood screen by Sir Ninian Cooper that dominates the foot of the chancel. St Peter's was built privately, commissioned by Catharine Maria Sparke to commemorate the work of her late husband Canon Edward Sparke. The church welcomes the public but is not licensed.

Tadlow St Giles is the last church in Cambridgeshire, deliberately built away from the River Rhee to avoid flooding. Although the church appears to be a simple building, it is still interesting. The tower is the latest part of the building, added in the 14th century, is not aligned with the rest of the building that was not constructed in the usual east-west alignment. The Victorian architect William Butterfield created a medieval inspired reredos (an ornamental screen covering the wall at the back of the altar), that incorporates a prominent cross. At the time this was created in the 1860's it was still illegal to place anything on the alter shelf. The reredos included different coloured marbles and encaustic tiles. Major structural movement of the building led to it's closure and in now cared for by Friends of Friendless Churches.

John gave many more interesting architectural and historical snippets on lots of churches throughout the county. His new book entitled Cambridgeshire Churches, contains all these and many more.

Reported by Linda Peckett

SAMUEL PEPYS : HUNTINGDON TO LITERARY IMMORTALITY

WITH DEREK TURNER

(CAMBRIDGE BRANCH : JAN 2024)

Samuel Pepys was born in 1633 in Fleet Street, but his family had close connections with Huntingdonshire where his ancestors were reeves, bailiffs, farmers and minor gentry. The Pepys name is said to be of French origin, Pepin meaning terrible. His father, John, was a tailor and his mother, a butcher's daughter from Whitechapel. Samuel's cousins included the Montagu family from Hinchingsbrooke House, and he visited regularly, his uncle lived at Brampton. He attended Huntingdon Grammar School, and learnt Latin, although he only learnt multiplication when he was 29. He continued his schooling at St Paul's in London, and then attended to Magdalene College in Cambridge. Pepys maintained links with Huntingdonshire throughout his life, riding from London, a day's journey. Many local places are mentioned in the diary.

Pepys married Elizabeth Marchand de St Michel in 1655, she had no dowry, so he worked as a factotum in Edward Montagu's House. His financial circumstances were difficult; he had a gallstone removed in 1658 and every year thereafter held a celebration dinner. Pepys started working at the Exchequer in 1659, and began to keep his diary in 1660, writing 1.25 million words by 1669 when he stopped because of failing eyesight. He used tachygraphy, a type of shorthand.

Samuel was appointed Clerk of the Navy, and able to observe and record political and everyday events during a momentous period of history. He later became Surveyor at the Victualling Office and a Fellow of the Royal Society. Later he was Secretary to the Admiralty.

The diary includes first hand accounts of the Great Fire of London; street life; names of many famous people as well as servants. Abbreviated and censored versions were published in the 19th century, but the full text publication was not available until the 1970's. The diary is now online, so it is possible to search for individuals, places, events. Derek read many extracts showing the richness of Pepys' writing. Pepys diary was the first in what is a significant but underused resource for family historians. He retained close links with the Royal Family until his death in 1703.

Derek's excellent talk is on the members' section of our website.

Reported by David Copsey

CAMBRIDGESHIRE KITCHENERS

WITH JOANNA COSTIN

(CAMBRIDGE BRANCH : FEB 2024)

The speaker is the author of the book “A History of 11th (Service) Battalion (Cambs) Suffolk Regiment” about the local “Pals” battalion raised in WW1.

In 1914, at the start of the First World War, Lord Kitchener had become the Secretary of State for War. Despite popular opinion holding “it would all be over by Christmas”, as an experienced soldier he was one of the few to foresee it would be a long war, “probably lasting for at least three years”. He thus set in motion the recruitment of the largest volunteer army in British history. Many new units were raised by local initiative, often from men from particular localities or backgrounds who wished to serve together: these became known as ‘Pals Battalions’ and the units in general, as Kitchener battalions.

In the early weeks of the war, some 1,500 men from Cambridgeshire (town and county) joined up to form a new battalion. Unusual for the time, a local Ladies Committee was active in organising its recruitment. Although there was already an existing Territorial force based in Cambridgeshire, the sheer numbers of volunteers could not be handled by either them or by the nearest regular army (Suffolk) regimental depot at Bury St Edmunds (as the county of Cambridgeshire fell within the Suffolk regiment’s recruiting area). Officially the battalion became the “11th (Service) Battn, Suffolk Regiment” but more commonly known as the *Cambridgeshire Kitcheners* or the *Cambs Suffolks*.

The volunteers came from a variety of occupations, though unlike many other Pals battalions, the majority were agricultural workers. Initially billeted at the Corn Exchange and various local schools, training started on Parker’s Piece in unpopular blue (“postman” type) uniforms due to lack of khaki, then on to Ripon, Yorkshire (where some Fen dwellers saw ‘mountains’ for the first time!) followed by Salisbury Plain. They went overseas in January 1916, and saw action in some of the bloodiest battles of the war. Like many other ‘Kitchener’ battalions they suffered heavy casualties in their first major battle on the Somme, when 188 were killed on 1 July 1916 alone. They were heavily involved at Arras in 1917 and in 1918 were caught up in the chaotic retreats during the German Spring Offensives, and the later Allied counterattacks. .

The talk discussed what can be gleaned about the battalion from not just the official sources but local Cambridge newspaper accounts and personal documents and photographs. Details were given of an ongoing database now being created of all the men that served in the battalion.

Reported by CJ

MY LIFE ON ICE
WITH DAVID SMITH
(CAMBRIDGE BRANCH : MARCH 2024)

Dave was born and brought up in Sutton, Cambs and he learned to skate in the late 1970's when his father took him and his brothers to skate on the frozen Bury Fen in the moonlight. On his first outing on the ice, his father told him to watch the other skaters and copy what they did. Within minutes he was gliding across the ice and immediately fell in love with the sport. Since then, he has skated whenever the ice is thick enough on Bury Fen, Earith, Upware Fen, Welney Washes, Whittlesey Washes & the Well Creek. Fen skaters often skate at night and use tea lights in jars to mark any obstacles or weak spots in the ice.

Dave won his first race on Sutton Gault in 1981, one of the other skaters being Ben Robinson, the TV presenter known as The Flying Archaeologist. When the Peterborough Ice Rink opened in 1980, the manager who was a speed skater, started a speed skating club and Dave joined the club taking part in Short Track Speed skating, winning the British Championship for Juniors held in Peterborough in 1984 and was the first person to hold the British record for the 400, 800 and 1,000m at the same time. His World ranking in his age group at the end of the season was 6th in the 1,000m and 5th in the 800m.

Since 1990 he has skated in Marathon races in Holland. Dave has represented Great Britain in Long Track skating at the Master World Games and World Sprint Games since 2016. The skin suits they wear cost around £600 each, are made of rubber, and are very tight and hot! He is in the top 100 speed skaters in the world in his age group. However, he has now decided to retire from competitive racing but will, no doubt, still skate for pleasure.

Outdoor skating can be dangerous and those that do it have learned to 'read' the ice - 'If it cracks it bears if it bends it breaks'. It is dangerous if there is snow on the ice as the different colours and bumps cannot be seen. So, scrapers, modified snow ploughs and much manpower is required to clear it before any skating can take place.

He has met many famous people over the years including PC Christopher Dean when pushing an out of petrol Mini in Nottingham! He has a number of funny stories about his time on the ice which are well worth listening to!

Reported by Muriel Halliday

LETTER FROM AMERICA
A TALK @ COTTENHAM VILLAGE SOCIETY BY CHFHS
(MARCH 2024)

The CHFHS Editor was invited to give this talk at a meeting of Cottenham Village Society—a very apt topic as it's all about a particular letter (well, a captioned photo) in the village archive collection and the family to which it has been attributed. The title took artistic licence from the long-running radio programme by Alistair Cooke.

The illustrated talk outlined the trail of crumbs and clues that revealed the story behind the photo and its association with a Cottenham family—also derived from a cryptic note of a couple of names and a date on the back.

The audience were offered two perspectives on the topic:

First, the narrative about the people themselves. Two brothers were found to have gone to America at different times in latter decades of the C19th. Initially together in the same small town in South Dakota as quite successful farmers and shop-keepers, both married—but for health reasons one then went west to California and one went east to Michigan, and was later joined by their sister. Deductions can be made about their differing life-styles at opposite sides of the country—in the east, one was to become a well-respected member of his community as a fruit-grower, with a large family; the other however went on to be a travelling salesman, and a roomer (lodger) in later life with hardly any family around him. It became evident that despite the distance, they did keep in touch, and at the age of over 80, “west” went to visit “east” for the first time. The letter/photo had, it was deduced, been sent by him to his eastern relatives at some point, to illustrate the old family home back in Cottenham. Fast forward to the 1970s, and a descendant of the “east” family seems to have written on spec to relatives in Cottenham to ask about the family, and enclosed a copy of the photo. Full circle!!

Second, the research and facts from which the story emerged as. It's not just a matter of what was found, but how it was found, and the intention was that members of the audience might pick up some ideas to apply in their own research. The flow of the research trail was described step-by-step moving from resource/record to resource/record to see what turned up. Each nugget of information found prompted what to do next, although sometimes it was collective and circumstantial information which was of use rather than a single specific fact. A wide variety of records were used, but virtually everything was found through readily available online resources (Ancestry, FindMyPast and freely available material)—undoubtedly more could be added by delving into archives and other subscription websites.

The talk is to be lodged with the Cottenham Community Archive Team.

Reported by CN.

COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVE COMMISSION

WITH STEWART MCGEOCH
(CAMBRIDGE BRANCH : OCT 2023)

Stewart McGeoch gave a talk outlining the work done by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, in the UK and worldwide. His own interest in the work of the CWGC started when he visited a WW1 cemetery and saw a headstone inscribed with his own fairly unusual surname. From then he became a volunteer worker for the CWGC.

More than 23,000 locations are covered in total, commemorating men and women who died whilst serving in the armed forces, in WW1 and WW2. There are no less than 1.1 million individual headstones maintained by the CWGC, together with memorials to another 600,000. When the CWGC was set up after WW1. Its basic aims were to mark all the service deaths with permanent headstones or memorials and with stones of a standard design featuring no distinctions of rank.

The UK graves maintained by the CWGC are mainly those of people who died as patients in hospital or from accidents (especially flying accidents in East Anglia) while in service. CWGC volunteers help maintain the 170,000 graves in the UK, which are spread over 13,000 locations. It is important to note that private headstones, raised independently by family members, are not covered by the maintenance scheme. CWGC volunteers carry out a regular inspection of the CWGC headstones; cleaning them and trimming invasive vegetation if necessary. Any damaged or badly worn CWGC stones are replaced, they must always remain legible.

There are several major cemetery sites maintained by the CWGC in Belgium (including the largest Tyne Cot and the Menin Gate) and also northeast France (at Thiepval near the Somme battlefield) which contain thousands of headstones and display panels with the names of the many men killed in WW1 that have no known grave,

The CWGC work is ongoing. Each year, on average, building or agricultural work in France and Belgium uncovers the remains of 30 soldiers. Often there is little means of identification, perhaps just that of a regiment but with no known name. Near Loos, the site of a major WW1 battle, a new cemetery with room for 1000 graves has been prepared as major new drainage work is expected to uncover many casualties from that time...

Reported by CJ

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.

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“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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