

Bod-Kin

Volume 16

Number 7

September 2026



**Journal of the
Bradford Family History Society**

BRADFORD FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

www.bradfordfhs.org.uk

**A member of the Family History Federation and the
Yorkshire Group of Family History Societies.**

Chairman	Mrs Sue Steel	9a Grove Ave., Shipley, BD18 3BG chairman@bradfordfhs.org.uk 07855773102
Secretary	Mrs Bobbie Hipshon	1 Norfolk Close, Chapel Allerton, Leeds, LS7 4QB Secretary@bradfordfhs.org.uk
Treasurer	Mr. Stewart Varley	16 Oakleigh Avenue, Clayton, Bradford BD14 6QE Treasurer@bradfordfhs.org.uk
Membership & Members Interests Secretary	Mrs. Andrea Brown	20 Canberra Drive, Cross Roads, Keighley, BD22 9DG membsec@bradfordfhs.org.uk
Publications Officer	Ms Sally Tetlow	Sleepy Hollow, Soaper Lane, Halifax, HX3 7PX
Information Officer	Mr Derek Dyson	07855773102
Committee Member	Mrs Anne Attfield	
Committee Member	Mr Gordon Holmes	
Committee Member	Mrs Anne Luciw	
Committee Member	Dr Gill Overend	
Committee Member	Mrs Shirley Sura	
Committee Member	Mrs Pat Whitford-Bartle	
Committee Member	Mrs Liz Wright	
Non-Committee Member		
Link Scheme Co-ordinator		Contact by email to research@bradfordfhs.org.uk
Bod-Kin Editors	Mrs Anne Luciw Mrs Liz Wright	5 Salisbury Road, Bradford BD12 0AA Bodkin@bradfordfhs.org.uk

Many others help the Society from time to time. Without their help, we would not function so well.

Please include your membership number in all correspondence and a SAE if you require a reply unless you are purchasing items that include postage.

© Bradford Family History Society

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recorded or otherwise without the prior permission of the Author and Bradford Family History Society. No article appearing in the Bod-Kin may be submitted for publication in another journal without the permission of the Author. Where the author's permission is given, the date and issue number of the Bod-Kin in which the original article appeared should be included in the new publication.

The Society does not accept responsibility for the views expressed in the articles.

N.B. Articles and any attached media sent to the Bod-Kin for publication should be owned by the author and not subject to copyright unless: the written permission of the copyright holder is sent with the article, or, in the case of a book review, Fair Dealing rules apply (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/exceptions-to-copyright>).

Contents

The Editors	--	1
From T'Chairman	Sue Steel	2
Crime	--	2
Victorian Inquests	Catherine Flynn	3
The Baker Street Drama	David Broomfield	6
Edward Robinson Starkey	Sue Steel	10
Outlaws of Cannock Chase	Stefan Luciw	13
Wanted	--	15
Bombing of Bradford, WWII	Sue Carson	15
Have You Told Your Story	Sue Steel	17
Is this Your Family	Sue Steel	19
Family Links	Sue Steel	20
My Sunderland Ancestors	John Parker	22
Meeting Programme 2026	--	24

Front cover picture – Arraigned for the Murder of her Husband, lithograph of Mrs Ellen Byrnell, courtesy of: National Library of Ireland on Commons.Wikimedia.org. This issue's theme is 'Crime' (see p2).

The Editors

Many of us enjoy a good murder mystery, but it seems that we are also not averse to digging up '**Crime**' committed by our ancestors! As our theme for this quarter, members have come up trumps once again with a fascinating range of narratives.

Also, in this issue, our Chairman, Sue Steel, invites members to step forward to fill upcoming vacancies on the Committee.

Sue has been busy this quarter; in a separate article she asks the compelling question: 'Have you told your story?' This prompted us to wonder about events in your own life that would be of interest to future generations when they research their family history.

With that in mind, the theme for our December issue will be ***My Past – Tomorrow's history***. We would love you to share the moments you would like recorded for posterity. We can't wait to receive your articles!

The submission deadline for the next issue is **6 November 2026**. Remember, no article is too short or too long. Longer pieces (over six pages) may be serialised and/or featured in full on the Society's website.



From T'Chairman

Sue Steel

How have you all coped with the hot weather this summer? As I write this, I have windows open, patio door open and have just eaten an ice lolly! Still hot though. I wonder what our Victorian ancestors would have done? Certainly not taken off as many clothes as decently possible and that's just the children. Penny licks of ice cream possibly, rather than my ice lolly.

We are still looking for a Speaker Finder to help with the 2027 Programme. Plus, would anyone like to take charge of a project to photograph and transcribe Holme Lane Chapel records (off Tong Lane, Bradford)? Also, of course a new Chair Person from April 2028. It is only 18 months (approx.) before I resign the post. Having someone before that to look at what's involved and take over would be fantastic.

The Society will be involved in a Zoom meeting /workshop organised by the Society of Genealogists on Tuesday 17th November (2pm-4pm) this year. The theme will be on Bradford and district, with speakers from our Society (me) and West Yorkshire Archives. If anyone wants to be involved, please let me know, especially if you belong to one of the other history groups in our area. I am hoping this will be a good way to attract more members. Keep a look out for further details on our website under News.

(4097)

Crime



This issue's "Crime" theme inspired BFHS members to unearth fascinating stories from their family trees and historical archives. The articles explore both sides of the law—from the investigators and punishers who upheld justice, to the criminals themselves and the lives they led after the verdict.

Victorian Inquests – the story of Annie Oddy

Catherine Flynn

Recently, my research led me to this article in the Leeds Mercury, describing an inquest on the body of my two-year-old ancestor, Annie Oddy. Her death certificate reveals that she died from burning when her clothes caught fire and this press article provides a fascinating glimpse into her inquest:

SHOCKING DEATH FROM BURNING AT YEADON.—
On Wednesday an inquest was held by Mr. Barstow, at the Robin Hood Inn, Yeadon, touching the death of Annie Oddy, aged two years and eleven months, daughter of Ellis Brown Oddy, woollen mill hand, living in Otley-lane End, Yeadon. The father's evidence went to show that his wife had frequently deserted him and the family; that when she left eight months ago she took with her a child five or six weeks old; that a fortnight or so ago she returned home on a Sunday afternoon, said she had buried the baby, and the same evening went away. Since then the husband had not heard from or of her, and did not know where she was. A juror stated that he had casually met the wife in Bradford, informed her of the death of the child, and she replied that it was a pity it was not her husband instead of the child. There was no evidence to show that the husband had ill-used his wife. A verdict of "Death from burning" was returned, and the jury severely censured the wife for deserting her family.

Leeds Mercury, 7 February 1879

This short article raises so many questions about Annie and her family, and about the lives of our ancestors in Victorian times:

- How did this happen? What is Annie's story?
- Was this an isolated incident, or a common occurrence?
- How were inquests conducted in Victorian times?

First, the story of Annie and her family.

The story begins with Ellis Brown Oddy (1848 - 1895). For the first three years of his life Ellis lived an unremarkable life with his parents, John Oddy and Elizabeth (Brown), brother Charles (b1846) and sister Harriett (b1849) in Guiseley, where John worked as a clothier. But their happiness was short-lived

and in 1851, Elizabeth died in childbirth, along with baby Joseph. Young Ellis and Charles went to live with Elizabeth's parents, Ellis Brown and Sarah (Metcalf), at Town Street, Otley, and eventually he started work as a factory boy and then a willower¹ in one of the local mills.

In 1869 Ellis married Mary Jane Clough (1849 - 1886) and they settled at Kirk Lane, Walkers Row, Yeadon, where their first daughter, Sarah Elizabeth, was born later that year. Two more daughters followed: Annie in 1876 and Minnie in 1878 – the two girls mentioned in the press article. Annie, as we know, died from burning, and Minnie died from bronchitis aged six weeks at Rifle Court, Bradford – some way from Yeadon. Could it be that Mary had taken her sick daughter to a friend for help? According to the press cutting, she frequently deserted the family – was she suffering from some kind of mental illness? We will never know.

The article indicates that Ellis and Mary's marriage was not a happy one but, whatever their differences, they were together in 1881, lodging at Kirk Lane with Jeremiah and Sarah Brown (Jeremiah was a cousin of Ellis' mother, Elizabeth). But it seems that more tragedy was to befall the family. In 1883, a stillborn child was buried in Yeadon Cemetery, in the same grave as Annie. This child had the surname Clough – Mary's maiden name. Could this be Annie's sibling?

There was no happy ending for Mary and Ellis. She died of cancer of the uterus in Horton workhouse (now St Luke's hospital) at the age of 39; he died at the age of 45, from a strangulated hernia. They were buried separately.

But what of Sarah Elizabeth, Annie's sister? It seems she did live happily ever after. She married and moved to Low Moor and named her eldest child Ellis, after her father. He was my grandfather and lived with us when I was a child. I well remember him dozing in his rocking chair, in front of the open fire.

To return to my original questions:

How common were child deaths by burning?

In 1879 180 children under five died from burns and scalds in Yorkshire – around 1% of total deaths for under-fives². Dr Vicky Holmes, of the University of Essex, has conducted some research in this area³. She draws attention to a study by the Home Office in 1901, which found that inquests had been held on 1,684 young children who died from burning in 1899 and 1900. This resulted in a circular being distributed to shopkeepers and Police Stations, imploring parents to use fireguards.

¹ operating a machine which cleans and untangles wool

² Source: 42nd Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in England, 1879.
Primary reference: LSE Digital Library PDF

³ Holmes, Vicky (2012) "Absent Fireguards and Burnt Children: Coroners and the Development of Clause 15 of the Children Act 1908," SOLON Law, Crime and History (previously SOLON Crimes and Misdemeanours: Deviance and the Law in Historical Perspective): Vol. 2: Iss. 1, Article 2.

Holmes quotes specific examples of toddlers being left alone in a room with an open fire while their mother was out running errands, sometimes tied to a chair. In another example a nine-year-old girl was left in charge of younger children – maybe Annie was left in the charge of her older sister, after their mother left?

What were Victorian Inquests like?

The Victorians were famously fascinated with death and obsessed with systems and processes. It follows, then, that they would develop a systematic approach to inquests. In the early nineteenth century coroners were elected and generally unqualified; jurors were paid and could be required to attend multiple inquests in a single day. The whole event had become something of a social spectacle, especially as inquests (like Annie's) were often held in a pub – one of the few buildings large enough to accommodate the jury, witnesses and members of the public, and a table for the body.

However, in 1846 the system started to become more professional with the establishment of the Coroners' Society of England and Wales. Later, the Coroners' Act (1887) regulated the role of coroners, mandating that they summon a jury of 12 – 24 men (drawn from local voters) in cases of violent, unnatural or sudden deaths, and setting out the duties of the coroner:

- to view the body;
- to interview witnesses and gather evidence;
- to ensure that a proper verdict was reached; and
- to document their findings (accidental death, suicide or murder).

Eventually, mortuaries and dedicated coroner's courts were established in major cities, setting the scene for the processes we would recognise today⁴.

Resources

Sadly, I could not find a formal report of Annie's inquest so I must rely on the press cutting and death certificate, but you may be more fortunate. Try:

- The National Archives have produced a helpful Research Guide⁵ - they hold King's Bench Records 1487 – 1752 and Assize Court files 1554 – 1971
- West Yorkshire Archives have some records for Leeds and Wakefield, plus a set of notebooks compiled by Thomas Taylor (West Yorkshire County Coroner 1852-1900), available on Ancestry.
- Local coroner's office for inquests conducted in the last 75 years

(5292)

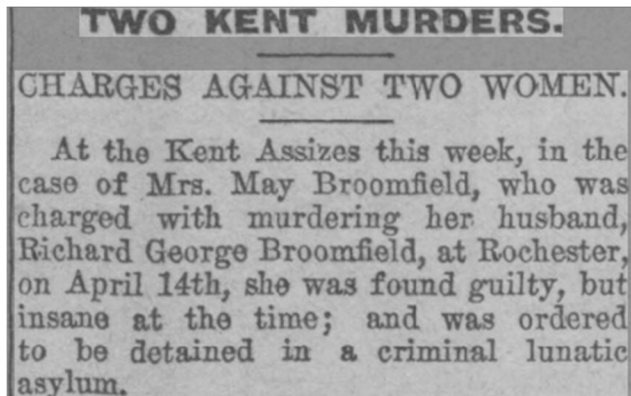
⁴ www.legalhistorymiscellany.com; https://www.coronersociety.org.uk/_img/pics/pdf_1700737837-907.pdf;

⁵ Coroners' inquests - The National Archives

The Baker Street Drama

David Broomfield

From the British Library Newspaper Collection, this press cutting from the Dover Express for 1st July 1927 was found:

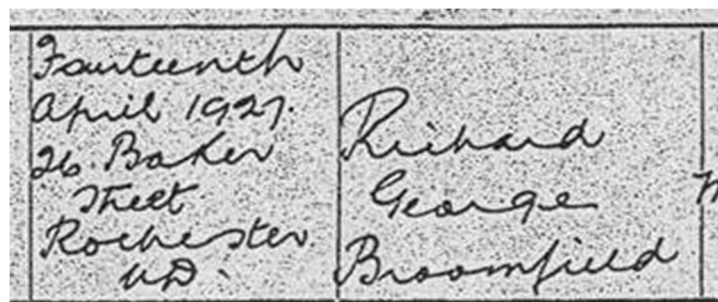


The marriage certificate for Richard George Broomfield to 'May' was obtained.

Now we know May's maiden name [Flogdell]— and later information showed that he was 43, not 33!

1912. Marriage solemnized at <i>The Parish Church</i> in the <i>Parish</i> of <i>S. Margaret, Rochester</i> in the County of <i>Kent</i>								
Column No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
148	<i>14th day of February 1912</i>	<i>Richard George Broomfield</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Shipwright (Retired)</i>	<i>43 Henry St. Rochester</i>	<i>James Broomfield</i>	<i>Shipwright (Retired)</i>
		<i>May Flogdell</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>Spinster</i>		<i>11 Baker St. Rochester</i>	<i>John Stokes Flogdell, Decd.</i>	<i>Carpenter</i>
Married in the <i>Parish Church</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <i>Established Church</i> by <i>George Edward Blackwell</i> Minister of the Gospel. This Marriage was solemnized between us, <i>Richard George Broomfield</i> and <i>May Flogdell</i> in the Presence of us, <i>John Flogdell</i> and <i>Albert Edward Mills</i> Witnesses.								

Richard's death certificate follows; but first the important part (the date and the place) enlarged:



4	Thirteenth April 1927 26 Baker Street Rochester U.D.	Richard George Broomfield	male	58 years	Electric wireman in H. M. Barkham Chesham	Haemorrhage from a deep wound in the throat caused by a sharp instrument Mr. Broomfield of May and Broomfield of murder but insane at the time He did the act	Ceraphe on wound in throat caused by a sharp instrument and not resumed received from Reginald Protheroe Steadman Barrow for Rochester	Thirteenth July 1927	BEJ Bellingham	1927 Registrar.
---	---	---------------------------------	------	-------------	---	---	--	-------------------------	-------------------	--------------------

Haemorrhage from a deep
wound in the throat caused
by a sharp instrument
Mr. Broomfield of May and
Broomfield of murder but
insane at the time
He did the act

The record below was found in the 'Crime, Prisons & Punishment 1770-1934'
section on FindMyPast: Record source: TNA ref: HO140/401

511042

Sentence.—2 days imprisonment.

4 Broomfield, May, 38, married woman.
Committed from Rochester, 30 April, 1927.
Received in Prison, 16 April, 1927 (on remand).
Offence.—Murdering Richard George Broomfield, at Rochester, on the 14 April, 1927.
Tried before Rowland, J., 27 June, 1927.
Verdict.—Guilty of the act, but insane at the time, etc.
Order of the Court.—To be kept in custody as a Criminal Lunatic, till His Majesty's pleasure shall be known.

D. of P.P.
be conducted this

First name: **May** Last name: **Broomfield** Age: **38** Year of birth: **1889**
Date court session started: **24 Jun 1927** Court: **Maidstone, Kent**
Victim: **Richard George Broomfield**

Broadmoor Hospital was the most likely place for May to be sent, after being branded a criminal lunatic. Contact was made with the Berkshire Record Office for access to her records and the forms filled in. The answer was no - we were too distant a relation, being only a first cousin twice removed. While this was going on, May's death certificate was obtained:

Ninth August 1935 Broadmoor Asylum Crowthorne Rd.	May Broomfield	female 47 years	26 Baker Street Rochester widow	Carcinoma of rectum natural cause P.M.	Certificate received from Robert S. Baynes Coroner for leading District of Berks Inquest held 12 August 1935	Southwicks August	1935 Registrar
--	-------------------	--------------------	---------------------------------------	--	---	----------------------	-------------------

And the important parts enlarged:

9th August 1935 Broadmoor Asylum Crowthorne Rd.	May	Broomfield Female	47	26 Baker Street Rochester Widow	Carcinoma of Rectum natural causes P.M.	Co fr Co Rd Ln 12
--	-----	-------------------	----	---------------------------------------	---	----------------------------------

This gave us when and where May died (9th August 1935, Broadmoor Asylum) and the cause of death, carcinoma of the rectum (bowel cancer). Where and when she was buried was obtained from the Burial Register for Broadmoor Hospital:

Lee Broomfield. No. 1346.	Broadmoor Asylum	12th August 1935	47	R.V. James Chaplain
---------------------------------	---------------------	------------------------	----	------------------------

These photos show the work being undertaken in the New Cemetery to uncover the grave markers and may be where May's grave is located:



First part of graveyard - stones revealed



Next part of graveyard with stones revealed



A Typical patient's grave marker-stone

A relation in Australia had been in touch with Elfra, wife of Royston B Craft, the son of Richard & May Broomfield's daughter Lillian Rose Broomfield. They provided us with the following information:

It was a very difficult time for the family then and for many years afterwards. It completely changed the lives of all the children; they had lost a father & their mother was locked up. In those days children were asked to give evidence in court which in itself is traumatic. Happily, the siblings all remained close during the rest of their lives. May was taken to Broadmoor and spent the next 9 years being a model patient. She was due for release and plans well advanced for her to live with one of her sisters along with her younger children, but she became ill and died of cancer shortly afterwards in Broadmoor where she is buried.

After making contact with Elfra, she provided this photograph of Richard and May's marriage.



*Richard Broomfield, May Broomfield
and John Obed Flogdell*

This photo is believed to be their official wedding photo, as they are all wearing flowers and she is 'displaying or showing' her wedding hand. May was brought from Holloway Prison to Broadmoor Hospital on 21 July 1927. Her mental state was tranquil, and she had visits from her sister Sarah Mills. At the time she committed the crime she had been subjected to great mental stress due to the almost incredible brutality of her husband. She was suffering from insomnia and depression (Post Natal Depression?) as May had only a year ago had a baby (Ronald Broomfield).

In the photograph, the person on the right is John Obed Flogdell (1864-1941), May's eldest brother, and he was also a witness to the marriage. The other witness was Albert Edward Mills who married May's sister Sarah and it was this couple that cared for May's children and to whom she was to be released into the care of if she hadn't sadly died.

Copies of local newspaper articles were provided by Elfra covering the case from 21 April 1927 (Richard's funeral) to 2 July 1927 when the final verdict was reported. From these it was revealed that he was murdered by having his throat cut from ear to ear using a bread knife fashioned from a bayonet and after her arrest May tried to hang herself with some tape from her undergarments. The

effect on their children in having to give evidence at the court hearing can only be imagined, as mentioned earlier.



Later we heard from Broadmoor saying that they had discovered that May is, in fact, buried in the **old** (original) cemetery, plot number 1346. Note that the plot number and the Burial Register entry number are identical. The wooden stake marks the location.

(2804)

Edward Robinson Starkey – Convict, Hero, General Dodgy Person

Sue Steel

Edward Robinson Starkey was my 2nd cousin 1x removed. He was born on 31st May 1852 in Yeadon to George and Amelia Starkey. In 1862 he and his parents and siblings emigrated to Australia and settled in Tingalpa, near Lytton, south of the Brisbane River, where they raised cattle.

George and Edward (his son) were not the best of people; at least to start with. In July 1870 both of them were charged with cattle stealing. The incident was reported in '*The Brisbane Courier*' on Tuesday 5th July. Constable J H Canning stated that he was patrolling near Lytton and passed the Starkey's premises. He had come across a dead bullock's remains. For whatever reason he then went to ask Mrs Starkey and Edward where the hide of the last beast they had slaughtered was being kept. They showed him 10 pieces of a hide that was hard and dry and looked at least 3 weeks old. Constable Canning also spotted a jaw bone with fresh flesh on it. Mrs Starkey explained that the dog had previously buried the bone and just dug it up. Suddenly another boy entered the house where the conversation was taking place, spoke to Edward, who immediately left. Edward was seen running away with a different cattle hide in his arms which he tried to hide in the pigsty. Constable Canning pulled it out and saw this was fresh and probably belonged to the remains he had seen earlier. It was branded CH.

Apparently, C H Hallett, another cattle farmer, had purchased a young bull of the same description as the found hide around a year before. The bull was often grazing with the cattle from the Starkey herd. He claimed that Edward and his father had taken the bull and slaughtered it for the hide. The police magistrate overlooking the case, dismissed it as there was not enough evidence for a committal. George and Edward Starkey were free.



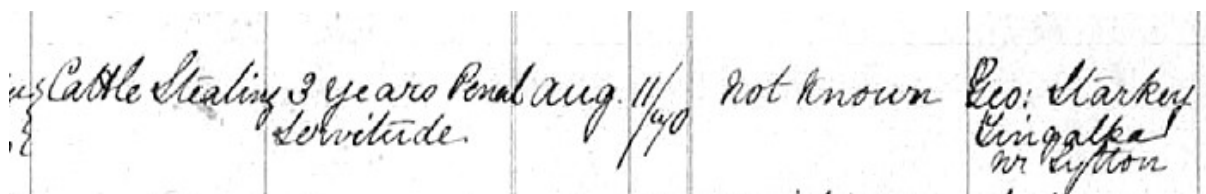
Taken from the book mentioned at the end of the article

Did they do wrong? Most definitely, in my opinion! Just a year later, on 17th April, Edward was once again before the courts for cattle stealing. He was 18 years old and this time convicted. His punishment was 3 years imprisonment.

He was sent to the Hulk '*Proserpine*' moored in Brisbane River which acted as a Reform School for boys. The ship had been used for transporting cattle and converted to a prison in 1864. By 1871 it was used to hold 100 juvenile offenders, to keep them away from any adult prisoners, to give them a better chance of

rehabilitaion. As part of their sentence, they were put out to service in various trades including farm work. But this really meant domestic and general maintenance chores aboard the ship. Whilst serving their sentences, the parents of the convicted boys were expected to contribute to the cost of their keep.

Edward was on the hulk until December 1872, being released 8 months early.



*Part of Edward's criminal record – Moreton Bay Reformatory School Records.
Original records held at Queensland Archives, Gold Coast, Australia (yes I did go there)*

On his release, Edward continued to work as a cattle farmer / waggoner and moved to Mudgeeraba, Queensland in 1882. He was declared insolvent in 1886 and in 1891, having to sell his assets to pay his debts. By 1899 he enlisted in the 1st Queensland Mounted Infantry as a Private. He fought in the Boer War and earned the Queen's South African Medal. How do we know this? Edward very kindly wrote letters home, that his family had printed in the local newspaper, '*The Brisbane Courier*'. Edward had gone from convict to hero.

But his dodgy activities continued after he returned home from the Boer War. In 2022 I was contacted by the great grandson of Edward's brother Walter Brook Starkey. His message was:

Upon Edward's return to Australia after the Boer war at the turn of the century, he had a relationship with his niece, Emily Joyce Starkey, his brother Walter's daughter from Walter's first marriage to Emma Rossiter. She was 16 at the time and Edward was 50. She became pregnant with Lillian May from the relationship and Edward absconded to England with Emily and baby Lillian. Apparently, Edward paid a sum of money to a French sailor, Peter De Cent, to marry Emily, according to her daughter, Doris, who I interviewed back in 1988, not long before she died.

After further research, the message contents are probably true. Lillian May Starkey was born on 1st June 1907, no father's name was given. Edward moved back to England on 24th March 1908 and there is a 'Mrs Brown' and infant travelling on the same ship. Their names appeared on the passenger list next to Edward. Also, there was a marriage on 4th June 1908 at St Luke's Church, Victoria Docks, Essex between Emily Joyce Starkey and Peter De Cent, a Frenchman, with Edward as one of the witnesses.

Edward moved back to Guiseley and became involved in the local Wesleyan Church. He married Elizabeth H Little nee Starkey on 6th January 1909, who may have been a distant cousin. They moved to Harrogate and he died there on 12th April 1922. But did he do anything else dodgy while he was in Yorkshire? He was certainly well thought of in Harrogate. His obituary in the *'Harrogate Advertiser & Weekly List of the Visitors'*, reports he used his leisure time for useful purposes. He acted as the financial secretary to the Harrogate Cricket Club and clerical matters at the Pannal Golf Links, being courteous and helpful. Another newspaper *'Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale Herald'*, claimed he was: *a man of quiet dignity and chivalrous spirit. He possessed the old-fashioned virtues of honour, manliness, and courage, and admired for his simple, straightforward, and tolerant attitude to life.* There was no mention of any criminal activity!

(4097)

Outlaws of Cannock Chase

Stefan Luciw

My granddad's family on my mum's side, the Bentleys, were Bradford people through and through. They lived around Manchester Road and worked in the local mills and factories. So, you can imagine my shock when I started looking into their history and discovered that our 'working-class ancestors' actually went all the way back to 1066.

I came across some research done by Richard Bentley of Upton Park in Slough in the late nineteenth century. It turns out we are descended from a Norman named Dreu, who came over with William the Conqueror's invading force.

As you'd expect, Dreu's descendants became part of the new ruling class. They were granted land in Cannock Chase, Staffordshire as Tenants in Chief. Their main duty was to manage the royal forest—a vast area set aside for the King and his guests to hunt game.

By the mid-1200s, my 20x great-grandfather, William de Bentley, was Lord of Bentley. Court records from 1262 describe him as the "forester-in-fee," which meant he was the official appointed to enforce the King's law across the forest. Royal forests were governed by strict Forest Law rather than standard common

law, and while we might assume the wealthy in the Middle Ages were above the law, the records prove otherwise.

Forest Law was strictly enforced. Anyone living within the forest boundary was forbidden from hunting game, even if a deer wandered into their own garden. Even gathering fallen firewood without permission was a crime.

The official court records, the “Pleas of the Forest”, show that local gentry like the Bentleys fell foul of these rules just as often as anyone else. My family appear in the court rolls both as the judges enforcing the law, and as the offenders breaking it.

In April 1262 William de Bentley presided over the trial of :

Richard de Loges, William de Sowe, and others unknown, who took a hind and her fecon (fawn) on the Wednesday after the close of Easter, 46 H. III ⁶, without warrant, and carried the venison to the house of the said William at Rodbaston. Richard de Loges appeared, and being convicted of it is committed to prison; and William de Sowe was not attached (arrested) and could not be found. He is therefore to be exigatur ⁷ and outlawed.

When William de Bentley died in 1269 aged fifty-four, his eldest son and heir, Thomas, was only fourteen. Because Thomas was still a minor, the estate was placed under the care of guardians, though they proved to be a pretty poor choice.

Thomas’s uncle Robert was appointed first, but he was sent to prison in 1283 for: *taking with others a number of bucks in the forest*. Young Thomas and his brother John were caught up in it too and ended up serving time alongside their uncle.

The King then appointed a new guardian for Thomas, one Adam de Botyndon, who would also serve as Bailiwick of Bentley-Haye and manage the estate. But in 1286, Adam was *also* imprisoned for illegal hunting in the forest!

By this time Thomas was of age and had completed his prison sentence. He was able to take on his role as tenant-in-chief and responsibility for the Bailiwick of Bentley-Haye. It seems my ancestors were certainly not above the law, but having a criminal record did not stand in the way of holding in high office!

(5233)

⁶ Dates were recorded in the Plea Rolls according to the year of reign of the monarch and religious festivals. In this case the 46th year of Henry III’s reign on the Wednesday after Easter was 26 April 1262 according to the liturgical and administrative calendar.

⁷ The local Sheriff was to publicly summon William de Sowe at five consecutive county court meetings to surrender . As he failed to appear he was banished as an outlaw, losing all his property and legal rights.

Wanted – Chairperson

Can you manage a team of 12 adults (although the term adults can be debateable at times); stand up in front of 30 people whilst being filmed (on Zoom so not sure that counts); chair a meeting (they rarely last over an hour); try and make sure any meeting actions are delegated to someone else (I never managed this); and above all have fun whilst being involved in Family History??

If so, we need you.

In April 2028, I will be stepping down as Chair. So, we need someone to take my place, ideally beforehand so that I can show you the ropes.

Contact me if you are interested in further details.

Sue Steel – Chairman@Bradfordfhs.org.uk



Bombing in Bradford, WWII

Sue Carson

I was interested to follow up on the article by Malcolm and John Cowburn about the bombing during WW2 in Bradford (*Bod-Kin March 2026*). My Grandparents lived in Cleckheaton and so I checked my grandfather's diaries, and his comment was this for August 31st, 1940: *Big Air Raid in Bradford. Extensive Damage. Up until 4.0 a.m.*

Then on September 2nd he wrote: *Went to Bradford in afternoon. Saw damage done by Air Raid.*

Below are some key points about the August 31st, 1940, bombing taken from Google.

The main bombing of Bradford in WW2 occurred on the night of August 31, 1940, when over 100 high-explosive bombs and incendiaries fell, causing extensive damage.

The raid lasted roughly four hours. Approximately 120 bombs were dropped, hitting areas from Thornton Road to Laisterdyke. The city centre saw significant damage, with 10,000 windows shattered.

The main buildings affected were:

- Lingard's Department Store, which was almost completely destroyed;
- The Odeon Cinema, where a bomb landed in the stalls, but patrons had recently left;
- St Peter's Church (Leeds Road) received a direct hit from an unexploded bomb that created a 9-foot deep, 20-foot-wide crater in the floor;
- Tyrrel Street, where bombs impacted the area, forcing the disruption of tramlines.

Despite the intensity, there was only one fatality during the 1940 raid, though about 100 people were injured.

During the war there were other nights when Grandfather recorded bombs falling on Bradford. Some damage was even done in Cleckheaton in 1941. Grandfather reported March 14th, 1941:

Sirens 9 p.m.

All Clear 3 a.m.

Several Incendiary bombs dropped on Cleckheaton.

Raid on Leeds where severe damage was done.

My Grandfather, Jack Holroyd, joined the Air Raid Patrol and was first out on Fire Watching Duty on April 26th, 1941. It seems he was on duty one night every fortnight. Although the bomb damage may not have been as severe in Bradford as in other major cities, I am sure that being that close was still very frightening for those involved.



(4127)

Have You Told Your Story?

Sue Steel

I know I've mentioned this before but have you written down your life story yet? Just think of what your descendants will say when they find the document, letter, book or booklet in the attic.

Well, I have – cue the halo that just popped up above my head – ping! However, it was thanks to my eldest granddaughter that I actually put pen to paper. She bought me (at least twice) a Journal I could just fill in with details of my life (halo just disappeared). The journal contained prompts in the form of questions such as 'What school did you attend?' and 'Where did you work?'. I did start this and became bored, as I knew I'd end up doing three copies (three grandchildren you see). Therefore, I tried something else and actually enjoyed writing the story.

I wrote the story in word on the laptop and added maps, photos and anything else I could to illustrate the story. By dividing my life into subjects and a rough timeline, I could write a bit at a time. The starting point was the story of my birth. Then my parents and grandparents and what they were like as people. You can't get that information from certificates and census records. How did they meet each other, what did my paternal grandmother think about meeting Princess Diana and did I have good parents?



*At home 1963 Derek Raistrick
and me (I was 5)*

Schools were the next theme with nursery, infants, junior and grammar school. What I did at school, who my friends were and how I got on. I followed this with my social life as a teenager. This will be so different from my granddaughter's teenage years. I walked everywhere on my own aged 13 years. It saved any bus fare I may have been given, so I could buy sweets. My teenage years were spent at church or with the Guiding Movement. My granddaughters do gymnastics, dance, ten-pin bowling and gaming on their phones (well the oldest anyway).

Writing about University was hard and my working life was hard. Especially the latter. How do you explain to children of today what it was like to work in Information Technology (computers) in the 1980's – paper tape and punched cards???? I kept having to stop and

explain things for them. Not sure I was successful, but they can always use 'Google'.

Places I've lived was a great section, complete with maps and photos of the houses. It's amazing how many houses you forget or live in for a short while. Then of course (having mentioned him in the various previous sections) I had to write about my marriage and of course the recipients grandad. Difficult since he died many years ago now and the granddaughters have only photos to go on. But if I hadn't, they would never have known who attended the wedding and where we had the reception. What is now Hughes Bakery at Hirst Wood, Saltaire in case you wondered. It was the Civil Service Sports Centre at the time (and cheap). Now the next section was really hard to write – all about my sons and their early life. I kept having to re-read in case I made any mistakes or made them feel unloved. The joys of writing about living people.

I added a section about my holidays and travels. Our home in France and yacht in Greece (it sounds so much grander than it was). But how would they know I've travelled to USA, Canada, Europe, India, Australia and New Zealand unless I write it down.

Finally, I briefly mentioned my hobbies (guess what they are?), health and what I consider my values. One thing I did take into account when writing my



*Wedding Day – April 1982
(Dorothy Steel, me, Brian Raistrick, James Mary Steel, Barbara Raistrick (with leg in a pot)).*

story were the questions I wanted to ask my parents; grandparents etc. and never did. Maybe any researchers in the future won't be as frustrated at not knowing.

Was it worthwhile? Definitely! Once printed and packaged, the story went to each granddaughter for Christmas presents. The two little ones were not interested as expected but the eldest broke into tears. I had finally finished what she wanted me to do. Very satisfying, well maybe not the tears but the thanks were.

So please think of writing your own stories – use my ideas if you want or make up your own. It doesn't matter. Just getting something onto paper for your great grandchildren, nephews and nieces or that cousin several times removed really does matter. Don't leave it too late and most of all enjoy doing it.

(4097)

Is This Your Family?

Sue Steel

I was given a while ago (and I'm sorry I cannot remember from whom), some documents from what seems to be one extended family. But I would like to give these back to a family member if possible. It seems that many of the individuals below are related in some way. So, if one is your ancestor, it is likely the rest are as well. Most are from the Bradford area. Or at least moved there during their lives.

They include birth, marriage and death certificates, some of which are the originals, whilst others GRO copies. Other documents include a will, cemetery records, military records and one photo. It is a rich and varied collection.

If any of these people are yours, please let me know so I can send you the relevant documents I have. Or contact me for more information.

Charles Airton	b.1901	Louisa Kirkby	b. 1881
George William Billing	d. 1944	John Marshall	m.1868
Mary Ann Briggs	b.1858	Thomas Marshall (two individuals)	d.1870 d. 1871
Eveline Dennis	d. 1962	James Horne Padgett	m. 1840
Herbert George Dennis	b. 1886, m. 1919	Joseph Pickles	m. 1845
Clara Diggle	d. 1941	Annie Pullan	d. 1972
Doris May Diggle	b. 1902	Audrey Pullan	b. 1924
Eric Goldsborough Diggle	b. 1912, m. 1939 d. 1944	George Pullan	m. 1885
Henry William Faux	m. 1896	Herbert Briggs Pullan	m. 1920 d. 1941
Jabez Goldsborough	b. 1838	Lousia Pullan	d. 1957
James Goldsborough	d. 1892	Rose Mary Pullan	b. 1915
Mary Goldsborough	d. 1840	William Pullan (two different people)	b. 1885 m. 1847 m.1912
Samuel Goldsborough	b. 1854	George William Smith	b. 1891
William Goldborough (two different people)	b. 1851 d 1851	Lily Spencer	b. 1895
George Greaves	m. 30 May 1843	Eliza Ann Thackray	b. 1840
Margaret Ann Greaves	b. 1877	Maria Walker	d. 1918
William Harrison	d. 1891	Herbert Wilman	m 1907
Beatrice Hirst – school report	1902	Eveline Wood	b. 1891
Annie Holmes	b. 1893	Grace Elizabeth Wood	b. 1879 d. 1909
John William Holmes	b. 1864		

(4097)

Family Links

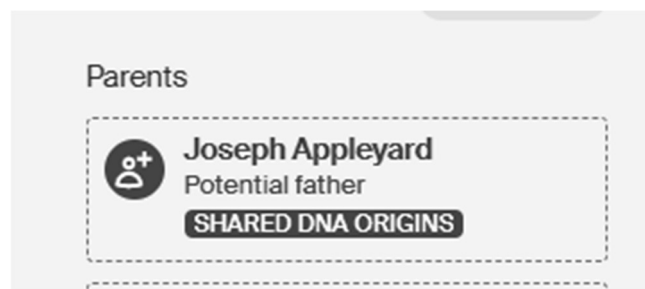
Sue Steel

Have you ever found something about your family tree, when you were actually looking for something else? Well, I did on a Sunday afternoon, a few weeks ago.

I was looking for my 3x great grandfather, the father of Henry Wright (b. 1855). Henry states quite clearly on his marriage record that his father was Thomas Wright, a boatman. But can I find a Thomas Wright of the correct age and place? No. I looked everywhere and tried Henry's baptism (not found) and birth certificate (also not found).

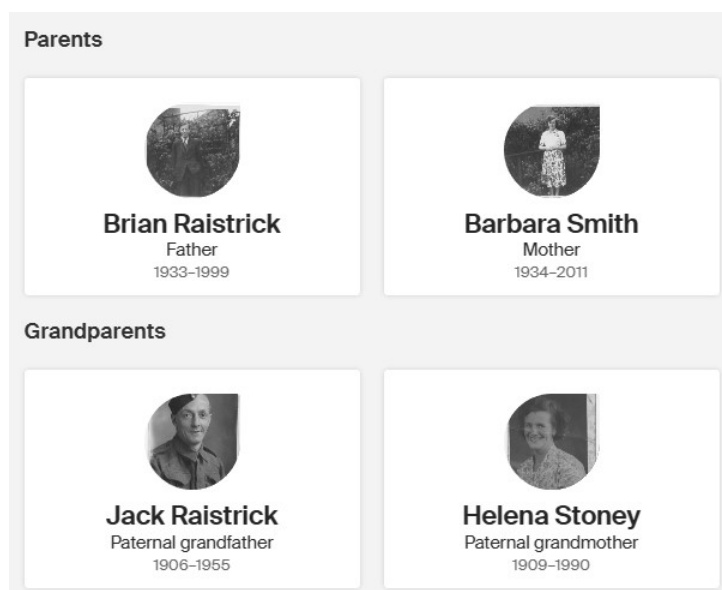
I then looked on Ancestry on public trees for Henry, hoping other trees would show me a clue I could follow. That didn't work either.

As I looked at Henry's record, I noticed that Ancestry had added a 'potential father' like the one below (but with the name David Wright).



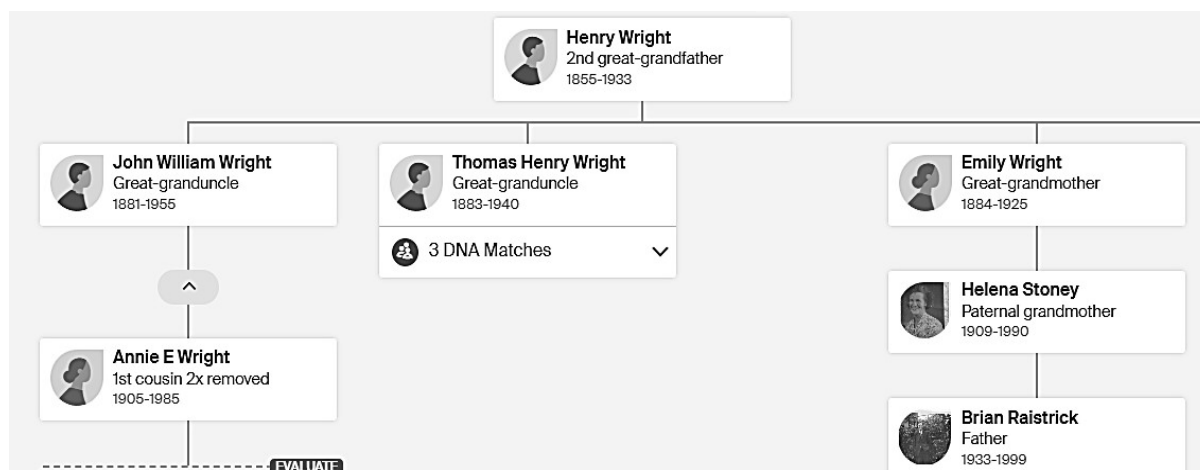
Screen shot taken from Ancestry.co.uk.

What was shared DNA origins? I looked under my DNA and found ThruLines. You get a list of your ancestors that looks like this:



Screen shot taken from Ancestry.co.uk.

I found Henry Wright and pressed on his name. You get Henry and his children that have been matched with other trees, complete with information of any DNA matches. There were 5 of Henry's 9 children mentioned.



Screen shot taken from Ancestry.co.uk.

I looked at all the DNA matches and the associated trees for Henry's father. No one had him on their trees. But when I looked at John William Wright's TruLine, I recognised the photo of the Ancestry member who was at the bottom of that line and who had added their DNA to the site (named Y in this article). After staring at this person who is my 3rd cousin 1x removed for some time, I decided to break the news very gently to my son, Andrew.

You see we have known Y and his brother Z for over 20 years. They were originally friends of my daughter-in-law and now Z is one of my son's best mates. They are my son's 4th cousins. "I'm very sorry, Andrew, but you can't see Z anymore or go on pool nights with him. He is your cousin". Andrew needed proof and then exclaimed "No, I can't be!". But DNA doesn't lie. To be fair I thought this was hilarious and when we told Z, he wasn't too bothered. Pool nights will continue - phew.

But you never know what you can turn up, do you? A person you have known for many years, and they turn out to be cousins (even if it is distant cousins).

Have you found out something similar – we'd love to know.

(4097)

My Sunderland Ancestors

John Parker

A recent post on the Facebook group 'I love Haworth and the Brontes' by Mike Sheffield about High Sunderland Hall sparked my interest because my grandmother was Sarah Sunderland and my mind raced to the possibility that she may be related to the family at the Hall.



High Sunderland Hall was a medieval manor house clad in stone c. 1600. It was located just outside Halifax and demolished in 1951 after falling into dereliction. The house is perhaps best known for having supposedly provided Emily Bronte with her description of Wuthering Heights, the house in her novel. The building stood just a few miles from Law Hill House, Southowram, where she spent some time as a school mistress. It was home to the Sunderland family from perhaps as early as the 12th century (Facebook, Mike Sheffield).

The Sunderland family were associated, through the marriage of his sister Elizabeth Langdale, to Marmaduke Langdale, 1st Baron Langdale of Holme. During the English Civil War, the Sunderlands along with the Langdales fought for the Royalist cause, with suspicious purchases of Catholic property, leading some historians to conclude that the family may have been recusants, like their openly Roman Catholic in-laws the Langdales.

The fortunes of the family waxed and waned, from the Elizabethan splendour of High Sunderland to the death of one late 19th century descendant's wife in the lunatic asylum, after fifteen years of confinement for "constant praying and singing". One branch of the patrilineal descent through John Sunderland, that remained resident in West Yorkshire, terminates currently in the Parker-Sunderland line. (Wikipedia).

Is this my Parker line? It has to be a possibility even though Sarah Sunderland came from Long Bennington, a long way from the Bradford - Halifax area.

My research into my family tree on Ancestry several years ago provides the following details:

- Isaac Sunderland married Mary Roberts in Leeds Parish Church 22 August 1797.
- Joseph Sunderland b 22 August 1800 from Ferry Fryston, Pontefract, married Mary Ann Bradford [1799-1874] 8 August 1819 in Leeds Parish Church, died 1874.
- Benjamin Bradford Sunderland b 25 Feb 1821 Leeds, married Jane Moynes [1827-1898] from Bennington, Lincoln in Leeds Parish Church 15 June 1857, died 28 June 1885, Bradford.
- Sarah Sunderland b 17 Dec 1884 Long Bennington, Lincs, married Fred Parker [b 19 Jan 1854 Leeds died 1929 Harrogate], 30 Jan 1883, Christ Church Bradford. Died 11 October 1949, Bradford.



Fred and Sarah.

Christ Church was at the top of Darley Street, built 1815, and demolished in 1879 to make way for Upper Piccadilly to join Rawson Square and Manor Row. Bradford Corporation paid £10k for the site. A replacement church was built in Eldon Place off Manningham Lane, where my grandparents Fred Parker and Sarah Sunderland were married in January 1883. This was demolished about 1940.

Alas my failing eyesight prevents me from following up this reference to the Parker-Sunderland line.

(4313)

Meeting Programme 2026

Please check the website in case meetings have been cancelled or changed.

Hybrid Meetings will be held by Zoom and in person on the 2nd Floor, Mechanics Institute, 76 Kirkgate, Bradford, BD1 1SZ

The venue is small wheelchair accessible.

Zoom Meetings may be charged at £2 and all face-face meetings at £1.50 per member.

Morning Hybrid meetings open at 10:00 am with the formal meeting from 10.30 am.

Evening Zoom meetings open at 7:00 pm with the formal meeting from 7.30 pm.

Month	Date	Time	Description	Speaker	Type of Meeting
Sep	3	AM	Life on the stage: the story of Sam Ranson and Blanche Slater who toured the country as music hall artistes.	Anne Mealia	Hybrid
Sep	21	PM	Buried deep but not lost forever: Discovering your Ancestor's final resting place	Linda Hammond	Zoom
Oct	1	AM	Looking Up in Bradford	Geoff Twentyman	Hybrid
Oct	19	PM	Researching 'before 'a novel - The Mourning Brooch - A novel based on true life ancestry from 1839 to WW2 - Part 3	Dianne Page	Zoom
Nov	5	AM	Lawless Ladies: a thousand years of female criminals	Trish Colton & Diane Holloway	Hybrid
Nov	16	PM	Open Evening – bring your queries, problems and discoveries to the Zoom meeting	Sue Steel	Zoom
Dec	3	AM	The History of the English Canal System: including the now closed Bradford Canal.	Eric Jackson	Hybrid
Dec	21	PM	No Meeting		

N.B. The Society holds liability, but not personal accident insurance. Members are therefore responsible for their own personal accident cover and attend meetings and are involved in Society activities at their own risk.

©Bradford Family History Society





Above the Broadmoor Asylum Cemetery, active between 1893 and 1934. Hundreds of deceased patients—mostly paupers whose bodies went unclaimed by relatives—were buried there, largely without permanent markers.

Below Broadmoor Old Cemetery where Mary Broomfield is buried in plot 1346 marked by the stake .

'The Baker Street Drama' (see page 6). © David Broomfield





A forest track near Cannock Wood which was part of Cannock Chase in Staffordshire, courtesy Wikimedia Commons . Outlaws of Cannock Chase (see p13)



*Bradford Law Courts © Anne Luciw
This issue's theme – Crime (see p2)*