

CHESHIRE ANCESTOR



The Journal of the
Family History Society of Cheshire



In this edition:

Malpas News ❖ *NTS: The Computer Section*
Frederick Jenkinson – Sole Survivor (Part 2)
“Pride of Edwin” ❖ *AGM Reports*
A Few Good Women (Wartime Nurses) and more...

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SOCIETY CONTACTS

TRUSTEES

CHAIR

Margaret Roberts, 4 Dunns Cottages, Butterton Lane, Oakhanger, Cheshire CW1 5UU

Tel: 07587 007217 chair@fhsc.uk

HONORARY SECRETARY

Sheila Jones, Broomhill, 11 Brancote Gardens, Bromborough, Wirral, CH62 6AH

Tel: 07799 510373 secretary@fhsc.uk

HONORARY TREASURER

Robert Brown Tel: 07952 971554 treasurer@fhsc.uk

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Margaret Spate crewe@fhsc.uk

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Kevin Dean, 7 Fields Drive, Sandbach, CW11 1YB membership@fhsc.uk

David Guyton fhsctrustee.3@fhsc.uk

Geoff Johnson fhsctrustee.4@fhsc.uk

Angela Moore fhsctrustee.1@fhsc.uk

Alan Turley fhsctrustee.2@fhsc.uk

Ian Worthington fhsctrustee.5@fhsc.uk

OFFICERS

HONORARY EDITOR

Mrs Rosie Rowley, 5 Davidson Avenue, Congleton, CW12 2EQ editor@fhsc.uk

JOURNAL DISTRIBUTION

Mrs Angela Moore, 6 Woodlands Close, Stalybridge, SK15 2SH Tel: 0161 338 3129

magazines@fhsc.uk

MOBBERLEY RESEARCH CENTRE

Rajar Building, Town Lane, Mobberley WA16 7ER Tel: 07712 103715 librarian@fhsc.uk

CREWE RESEARCH CENTRE

Margaret Spate, Units 3 & 4, Brierley Business Centre, Mirion Street, Crewe, CW1 2AP

Tel: 07352 454501 crewe@fhsc.uk

WEBMASTER

Alan Bennett, 8 Barford Drive, Lowton, Warrington, WA31DD webmaster@fhsc.uk

WEB ADMINISTRATION

Gay Oliver, 26 Woodville Drive, Stalybridge, SK15 3EA web.admin@fhsc.uk

ELECTRONIC PROJECTS

Peter Davenport electronic.projects@fhsc.uk

CHESHIREBMD & UKBMD

Ian Hartas webmaster@fhsc.uk



CHESHIRE ANCESTOR

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Correction: The back cover of the last (December 2025) edition of CHESHIRE ANCESTOR contained information about St Mary's Church, Sandbach, rather than St Peter's Church, Elworth. St Peter's Church was designed by John Matthews and was built in the 1840s. Apologies for the mix-up.

Cheshire Ancestor is published in March, June, September and December.

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Our society was founded in 1969—one of the first family history societies

Editor's Page

by Rosie Rowley



You may be surprised to read another editorial from me! Unfortunately, our proposed new editor is now unable to take over from me, so once again I am appealing for a replacement. If you have a good eye for detail and are a confident computer user, please ask for more information about the role, which could be split between two people. Please see page 23 for this and other roles for which the Society needs volunteers.

You are probably already aware that we have a new website with a new web address (fhsc.uk), along with new email addresses for the society officers which are printed inside the cover pages.

Thank you to all those who have recently submitted articles; some have been held back for a future issue but more articles are always welcome, especially short to medium length articles of 400 to 1000 words. These are perfect for filling up the journal when there are insufficient pages left for a long article. Letters about any family history topic, comments on articles in the latest issue, funny things you have found in the records, or requests for help are also very welcome. It's best if you can send items as soon as possible, rather than waiting until the next deadline, as this gives the editor plenty of time to prepare them for publication in the next issue. Guidelines for submissions are given below – I look forward to hearing from you.

ITEMS FOR THE CHESHIRE ANCESTOR

*Articles and letters about family history or Cheshire local history are very welcome. Deadline dates are the 10th of January, April, July or October, but please send items as early as possible. Publication is at the discretion of the editor and is subject to space being available. **Articles should preferably be sent by email in Microsoft Word, Open Office Writer, or plain text, to avoid having to retype them; or by post as a clearly-written manuscript.** Suggested length of articles is 300–2000 words. Please write all surnames in CAPITALS. **Illustrations must be your own images, not copied from another publication or website.** If using images of official records and documents, please check that you have publication permission. Please email images separately in a high quality (low compression) JPG format, minimum 300 dpi, and include the name of the copyright owner and source of the image. Please include your membership no. and say whether you want your email address to be published.*

View from the Chair

by Margaret Roberts



First, I would like to welcome our new Trustee Angela Moore, who is our Journal Distribution Officer. Angela was appointed to the Board of Trustees at the AGM in October. For a full report on the AGM please see page 15.

Many members will already be aware that the new Cheshire County Archive Centres are due to open in 2026. From the very earliest discussions, FHSC has been closely involved in this exciting development, with a shared long-term vision that BOTH our own research centres would ultimately be moved and integrated into the new, modern facilities at Chester and Crewe. Over time, visitor numbers at our research centres have gradually declined, and with the opening of two modern, purpose-built and easily accessible archive centres, the cost of maintaining our own separate premises has become increasingly difficult to justify. While this has not been an easy conclusion to reach, it is one that reflects the continually increasing availability and public use of online family history resources at Ancestry, Findmypast and elsewhere, the financial reality, and our commitment to safeguarding our collections for the future.

At Crewe, work is already well underway. Volunteers at the Crewe Research Centre (formerly the Family History Unit) have begun the careful process of pruning and digitising records to ensure that they are preserved and ready for their new home. The next stage of this journey, with regret but unavoidability, will be the closure of the Mobberley Research Centre to visitors this Easter, the last day of opening being Thursday 2nd April. This decision has been reached and agreed unanimously by the Trustees. Our lease at the Rajar Building runs until September, and the period between April and September will be devoted to the same thoughtful and meticulous work now taking place in Crewe; namely, digitising, rationalising, and preparing our records so that they can continue to support family historians for many years to come. This marks a significant moment in the Society's story, and while change is tinged with sadness, it also brings the reassurance that our shared heritage will continue to be cared for, protected, and positioned for a strong and accessible future for FHSC members and to fulfil our role as a public charity devoted to family history.

On behalf of all FHSC members, past and present, I would also like to take this opportunity to offer heartfelt thanks to the many volunteers who have supported the Society's Research Centres over the years. Their dedication, knowledge, and generosity of time have been the foundation on which these centres have thrived, often quietly and behind the scenes. Thanks to their care and commitment, countless records have been preserved, questions answered, and family histories brought to life. As we move through this important period of transition, we know that many hands and many small contributions of time can make a real difference. We are pleased that many of our current volunteers will be continuing this valued work within the new Cheshire Archive Centres, carrying their experience and enthusiasm into this next chapter. If you would like to join them, or are able to offer help with transcription or digitisation, your support would be very warmly welcomed. Whether you can spare a little time or a lot, please do feel free to contact me.

I hope you are all beginning to feel at home with the Society's new website and finding it easy to navigate. Enormous thanks are due to our webmaster, Alan, who has devoted countless hours to its development and refinement. The result is a site that feels fresh, modern and colourful, with improved accessibility features that make it easier for everyone to use. Work is still ongoing, and as small issues are identified and resolved you may notice the occasional change along the way, but these refinements will only continue to enhance the experience for members.

Turning now to life at FHSC during the final quarter of 2025, our Local Groups once again offered a rich and varied programme designed to both inform and entertain. From mapping in the Victorian age and the construction of the first Mersey Tunnel, to Jules Verne, conscientious objectors, the clockmakers of Chester and Cheshire's salt-making heritage, the breadth of topics was impressive. Members also explored Cheshire language and surnames, Paradise Mill, the breweries of Macclesfield, military medals, the Swinging Sixties, the Egertons of Tatton, brick walls, and the airfields of Manchester, truly something to appeal to every interest. Alongside this, our Seminar Series, Discussion Groups, Zooming in on Family History, Computer Club and Research Buddies continued to provide advice, support and friendly collaboration. Taken together, these activities demonstrate just how much is included in FHSC membership and why your subscription represents such excellent value.

Seminar wise, October marked our fifth Annual Dorothy Flude Memorial Lecture, where we were delighted to welcome Hilary Blanford with her engaging presentation *Twisters, Slashers and Spinners*. Drawing on her own family history,

Hilary brought the story of the cotton industry vividly to life through the experiences of her cotton-working ancestors who lived around Hyde, Romiley and Stockport. We were joined in November by Mark Bayley, Head of Content at *The Genealogist* website, who guided us through ways of overcoming common stumbling blocks in family history research using the site's newer and more distinctive search tools. His talk explored a range of innovative approaches, including searching by forenames alone, keyword searching, using non-name criteria, and making use of maps and advanced search techniques. Mark also highlighted several unique datasets, such as Tithe Records, the 1910 Land Survey, Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial records, Fleet marriages, will images, parish records, directories, newspapers and more. Very generously, he also offered FHSC members a special lifetime subscription offer, which many were pleased to take up.

Finally, we rounded off 2025 with an excellent talk on nursing ancestors from genealogist and registered nurse Jude Rhodes. Jude explained why tracing nursing ancestors can be particularly challenging, given the broad historical use of the term 'nurse' and the late introduction of formal qualifications in the 20th century. She explored the development of nurse registration and training, workhouse nursing, military nursing and much more. Her comprehensive handout, packed with useful links and information, is available to download from the FHSC website. It was a fitting and thoroughly informative way to conclude our programme for 2025.

Our range of online Discussion Groups continues to thrive, offering members the opportunity to explore topics such as DNA, publishing, MAC software, Family Tree Maker, Family Historian and historical newspapers in a supportive and friendly setting. These sessions are further complemented by our virtual Research Buddies helpdesks and the ever-popular Zooming in on Family History, where recent conversations have included Christmas traditions and the new FreeBMD website as well as the normal wide-ranging chat about all things family history, all done with plenty of shared experience and good humour along the way. Full details on how to join any, or indeed all, of our Discussion Groups can be found on page 10.

The Society accounts have been approved by the Trustees and submitted to the Charity Commission. They are available on the Governance section of the website under AGM 2025. The Trustees are holding an open Zoom meeting at 7.30pm on Thursday 12th March for any questions to be asked on the accounts, the new website and the move to the new archives. Details are on the website under Events; please register for the meeting at <https://fhsc.uk/events/events-by-organising-group/fhsc-seminars/1434-fhsc-open-meeting>

Looking ahead, the months to come promise an exciting period for FHSC, with momentous changes as we move into the new County Archive buildings. This transition will bring with it a considerable amount of work, planning and adjustment, but it is a challenge that I know many of us, including myself, are approaching with enthusiasm. It represents another important phase in the life of the Society. Members can be justly proud of all that FHSC has achieved since its founding in 1969, and this year marks yet another step in ensuring the Society remains modern, vibrant and responsive to developments in research methods and technology. Finally, thank you to everyone for your continued support, goodwill and involvement, there is much to appreciate and much to look forward to as the year continues.

Malpas News (1)

from the Chester Chronicle, 3 April 1926

On Sunday evening, in the Congregational Church, Malpas, a very interesting address on "What an English Nazareth has done?" was given by the **Rev Arthur Wakelin**, of Tattenhall. Taking as his text the question of Nathaniel, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John I, 46), the preacher proceeded to remark that the worth of a community was not measured by its size, but by its moral contribution to human life.... the preacher brought to the minds of the large congregation the great plague of 1665... during which time there lived in Malpas a man named **Richard Dawson**, who had a son living in London when the plague was at its worst stage. The son came home to Malpas. A short time afterwards he was struck with the plague and died. Soon after the father, **Richard Dawson**, was struck with the terrible plague. **Richard Dawson**, being a very powerfully built man, pictured his people having to carry his big body down the old winding staircase and thus become infected, so he resolved to save them this trouble, and asked his younger brother to prepare an isolated grave and place some straw in the bottom of the grave. When this was done, he walked from his residence unaided to the grave and there buried himself to save others from infection after his death....

The preacher mentioned **Canon Ellerton's** centenary would be observed this year. His well-known hymn "Saviour again to Thy dear name we raise," was written in 1866... for the tune "St Agnes" (Longran). It was specially written for the Malpas, Middlewich and Nantwich Choral Association, and first sung in Malpas 60 years ago.... April 3rd this year would be... the hundredth anniversary of **Bishop Heber's** death. Many of his hymns had become famous, such as "From Greenland's icy mountains," "Brightest and best of the sons of the morning," "The Son of God goes forth to war" and "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." This great hymn writer... was born in Malpas 143 years ago. "Does not all this look," said the preacher, "as if you in Malpas were of some importance in the world?" ... Do not despise your work, for you can never tell how far its influence may reach...

Society News and Notices

For the Society's Latest News

Keep up-to-date between journals by reading the society's email newsletters, or follow the FHSC on:

Facebook www.facebook.com/CheshireFamilyHistory
Blue Sky <https://bsky.app/profile/fhsofcheshire.bsky.social>

Provided that you have given us your correct email address and permission to contact you, you should receive society news by email. Log in to the FHSC website to choose which emails you wish to receive.

Society Diary Dates

Below is a list of events and meetings planned at the time of going to press; for full details, or for changes to seminars and group meetings, please see the FHSC website or contact your local group (contact details inside back cover). To join a Zoom meeting, please see the instructions in the Group News and Information pages which follow this Diary Dates section. **Please note, these dates do not include the dates of all the "Discussion Groups" – see page 10 or the FHSC website for details of these.**

Note: meetings are in one of three formats – online using Zoom (Z), face-to-face at a local venue (F), or hybrid, using both face-to-face and Zoom (H). If no format is stated please check on the Group News and Information pages which follow, or see the FHSC website fhsc.uk

Date	Group	Subject
3-Mar	Northwich	F2F: My Journey Into Historical Fiction by James Bryan
4-Mar	Runcorn	Research
10-Mar	Crewe & Nantwich	Z: Researching and Writing <i>The Mourning Brooch</i> Trilogy by Jean Renwick. Registration required. (7.30pm)
11-Mar	Macclesfield	2pm – 4pm Helpdesk at Macclesfield Library – booking required (01625 374000)

11-Mar	Sale	Cheshire Historic Houses by Tony Bostock
16-Mar	Alsager	Mary Fitton of Gawsorth by Tony Bostock
17-Mar	Congleton	TBA
23-Mar	Bebington	Housing the Workforce by Elizabeth Davey (10.30am)
24-Mar	Macclesfield	Researching the Women in your Family Tree by Margret Roberts
25-Mar	Society Seminar	Z: Tracing Postal Workers by Susannah Coster
26-Mar	Chester	Adventures in DNA testing by Sue Foy
28-Mar	Research Buddies	Z: Runcorn area
April	Research Buddies	No Meeting
1-Apr	Runcorn	Using Maps and Locations to Inform and Enhance Your Research by Tony Cox
9-Apr	Sale	Grave Matters - using MIs and Burials in Family History by Liz de Mercado
13-Apr	Northwich	F2F: Sail West, Young Man! by David Shaw
14-Apr	Crewe & Nantwich	F2F: Country Seats and Sporting Feats by Margaret Roberts (7.30pm)
15-Apr	Society Seminar	Z: Inconvenient People and How to Find Them: Tales from the Victorian 'Lunacy Panics' by Sarah Wise
20-Apr	Alsager	A History of Theatre, with reference to Nantwich by Graham Dodd
21-Apr	Congleton	TBA
28-Apr	Macclesfield	Memories of Parkside Hospital by Dennis Whyte
30-Apr	Chester	Tales from Chester Asylum by Claire Chatterton
6-May	Runcorn	Research
11-May	Northwich	F2F: TBA

12-May	Crewe & Nantwich	F2F: Informal social meeting at Crewe Research Centre CW12AP (7.30pm)
13-May	Sale	Open Forum. Recording your Family History. How to Pass On your Research
18-May	Alsager	Members' Cameos - ancestors or events of interest
19-May	Congleton	TBA
20-May	Society Seminar	Z: Tracing your WW2 Airforce Ancestors by Clare Wilson
28-May	Chester	Cheshire Women Photographers During the Infancy of Victorian Studio Photography by Linda Clarke
30-May	Research Buddies	Z: Wirral
3-Jun	Runcorn	Tracing Your Irish Ancestors by Tony Cox
8-Jun	Northwich	F2F: TBA
9-Jun	Crewe & Nantwich	F2F: Progress report on 'Cheshire Archives Crewe' with Paul Newman (7.30pm)
10-Jun	Sale	History of these Islands by Brian Groom
15-Jun	Alsager	Pills Potions and Poisons, a Nantwich Apothecary's tale by Helen Cooke
16-Jun	Congleton	TBA
17-Jun	Society Seminar	Z: Evidence Analysis: Proving What You Think You Know by Linda Hammond
22-Jun	Discussion Grp	Z: Cheshire Brick Walls
23-Jun	Discussion Grp	Z: Shropshire Brick Walls
25-Jun	Chester	Old News - a Press Guide to Old Chester by Chris Fozzard
27-Jun	Research Buddies	Z: Malpas area

Group News and Information



For the latest news from the Society's groups, please see the FHSC website or contact the Group. You can receive emails from any group; log in to the FHSC website to choose which emails you wish to receive.

Contact details for all groups are inside the back cover.

FHSC Seminars

By Margaret Spate, Jean Laidlaw and Margaret Roberts

These Zoom talks take place at 7.30pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. An email is sent out on the first day of each month with details of the talk and how to register.

PLEASE NOTE - we are unable to record Seminar talks for later viewing.

Cheshire Research Buddies

By Margaret Roberts

Our online helpdesk takes place via Zoom at 2pm on the last Saturday of the month (except October). This is the ideal opportunity for members with research queries, photograph requests or 'brick wall' questions to talk to other members with local knowledge.

Please check the topic each month and join us if you have local knowledge or a query.

Register for Seminars and Buddies meetings on the FHSC website. Log in, click on *Events* on the left-hand menu, find the event you want, then click the *Register [Individual]* button at the bottom left of the event details. You will receive a confirmation email and Zoom access links will be sent out shortly before the meeting.

Discussion Groups

By Margaret Roberts

The Discussion Groups are open to all members to 'dip in and out'. The title of each group is self-explanatory, while *Zooming in on Family History* is a wide-ranging chat session which

members can attend for help with research, share success stories or just generally chat about family history. To join the mailing list for any of these Discussion Groups, simply log in to the FHSC website and click on *Discussion Groups* in the left-hand menu. In the window that opens click on *Subscribe* alongside the group you are interested in; you will then receive the Zoom links for each meeting and any news from that group.

2pm, 1st Friday: *Historical Online Newspapers*, led by Margaret Roberts

2pm, 3rd Monday: *Mac computers*, led by John Reed

7.30pm, 3rd Thursday: *Family Historian*, led by Geoff Johnson

2pm, 4th Monday: *Publishing & Disseminating our Family History*, led by Victoria Doran

7.30pm, 4th Monday: *DNA*, led by Diane Kuster

7.30pm, 4th Wednesday: *Zooming in on Family History*, led by Sheila Jones and Margaret Roberts

7.30pm, 4th Thursday of alternate months: *Family Tree Maker*, led by Tony Cox

Alsager Group

By Hazel Rugman

All meetings, unless otherwise indicated, take place at 7.30pm in Alsager Library (postcode ST7 2AF) and admission is £2 for FHSC members and £3 for visitors. Car parking behind the library is currently free of charge.

Bebington Group

By Bob Wright

NOTE: from January 2026, meetings will be held at 10.30am (instead of 7.30pm) on the 4th Monday of the month (excluding Bank Holidays) at St. Barnabas Village Institute (Church Hall), Church Square, Bromborough, CH62 7AB. Admission is £2.

In mid-March we will make a decision on whether to continue with daytime meetings or revert to evening meetings. Because of this we have not yet booked speakers for meetings from April onwards. Local members who have registered for emails will receive a reminder email before each meeting giving notification of the meeting with details of the speaker and topic.

Chester Group

By Helen Elliott

Meetings are held on the last Thursday of the month in the Pavilion, Wealstone Lane, Upton by Chester, Chester CH2 1HD. Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. Admission is £2 for members and £3 for visitors, including refreshments. On site car parking is available.

Chester Helpdesk

A helpdesk is available in Storyhouse, Hunter St, Chester CH1 2AR on Tuesday mornings 10am – 12noon.

Computer Club

Meetings are held online via Zoom at 7.30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, and are open to all members.

The subject of each meeting is usually announced the week before, by email or on the Club's Events page on the FHSC website.

For information or to join, please email computerclub@fhsc.org.uk.

Congleton Group

By David Smetham

Meetings are usually held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Congleton Library. Doors open at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. Entry is through the lower door facing the bus station. Updates about meetings are emailed to subscribers on our newsletter list. Please sign up to the Congleton group newsletters on the FHSC website, or check the Congleton group pages.

Crewe & Nantwich Group

By Margaret Spate

There will be a mix of F2F and Zoom meetings this year. Crewe & Nantwich F2F meetings are usually held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at Jubilee House, St Paul's St, Crewe CW1 2QA. Doors open at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. Admission is £2 for members and £3 for visitors, including refreshments. Nearby parking at the adjacent Victoria Centre Car Park, Crewe CW1 2PT (**NB charges now apply after 6pm**). To join a Zoom meeting, please email crewe@fhsc.uk.

Crewe Research Centre

Please see the FHSC website or elsewhere in this issue for information about the Society's research facilities.

Nantwich Helpdesk

A helpdesk is available at Nantwich Library 2pm-4pm on the fourth Monday of the month. See the FHSC website for details.

Macclesfield Group

By Dennis Whyte

Meetings are usually held 7.30pm-9.00pm on the 4th Tuesday of the month at The Salvation Army Church, Roe Street, Macclesfield, SK11 6UT, opposite Churchill Way car park in the centre of Macclesfield. Admission is £2 for members and £3 for visitors. We usually visit a place of interest in July, and there is no meeting in December.

Northwich Group

By Dave Thomas

Meetings are usually held on the 2nd Monday of the month at Hartford Methodist Church Hall, Beach Road, Hartford, Northwich CW8 3AB. Doors open at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. Admission is £2, and visitors are most welcome. Car park available.

Runcorn Group

By Sue Bowden

Meetings are usually held on the 1st Wednesday of the month (except January), from 7pm until 9pm, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Clifton Road West, Runcorn WA7 4TE. Visitors are most welcome.

Our Research nights are fast becoming group discussion nights with advice from our advanced members. We are also engaging in one-to-one help

between new and more advanced researchers.

Sale Group

By Marion Hall

Our open forums allow members and visitors to share their research with the whole group, and they have proved extremely informative for everyone.

Meetings are usually held at 7.30pm, for the talk at 7.45pm, on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at Sale Moor Community Centre, Norris Road, Sale M33 2TN. Visitors are always welcome. Admission is £2 for members and £2.50 for visitors.

Tameside Helpdesk

A helpdesk is available at Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre 2pm-4pm on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. Please ring the Centre on 01613 424242 or check the FHSC website for details and to book.

Wallasey Helpdesk

A helpdesk is available 10am-1pm every Friday at the Wallasey Central Reference Library, Earlston Road, Wallasey CH45 5DX. Step-free access to the library is available via a ramp and internal lift. Everyone is welcome to come along.

Obituaries

Peter Johnson

It is with great sadness and regret that I have to inform members of the passing of Peter Johnson, a much-valued member of the FHSC, particularly the Runcorn Group.

Peter was a long-standing member of the FHSC, having joined the society about forty years ago. He was dedicated to the survival of the Runcorn Group and as such Peter stepped up to the Group Leader position many times. He was involved in various Group and Committee activities over the years and made many friends within the FHSC. His dedication to promoting the Society also placed him into the position of Publicity Officer both at the Runcorn and Tarporley Groups. Many members will also remember Peter for his work in the days of the South Cheshire group of FHSC.

Our deepest condolences, thoughts and prayers go to Peter's wife Sue and family at this very sad and difficult time. There is no doubt that Peter will be sadly missed.

Margaret Roberts

Peter Calver (Lost Cousins website)

I must sadly report that Peter Calver, the mastermind behind the Lost Cousins website, died on 19th of January. He was a most approachable person, who would never fail to respond to queries or cries for help.

I registered with Lost Cousins in November 2005; I recall obtaining the link from my predecessor, the late Graham Fidler. I now realise that the Lost Cousins site had only been formed a year or so before that. Like me, Peter was increasingly fed-up with the level of false information being created by amateurish people on some websites. He wanted factual stuff, and so did I. After taking over the Computer Club and Net that Serf in 2008, I continually pressed members to sign up with Lost Cousins.

In recent years, like our Society, Peter adopted use of Zoom. This enabled him to present talks to Societies such as ours, which were too far away to give talks in person. He had been more active of late in helping family history societies to promote their activities through presentation on his website.

Peter presented to our AGM in 2021 and has become an increasingly known personality.

This recent comprehensive Newsletter, generated by his wife Siân, will give you more information: <https://www.lostcousins.com/newsletters2/Jan26deathnews.htm>
There is an increasing number of posts on the Lost Cousins forum if you are a registered user there.

Thank you for your contribution to genealogy Peter, and may you rest in peace.

Geoff Johnson

Malpas News (2)

from the Crewe Chronicle, 25 March 1876

TEMPERANCE MEETING AT NOMAN'S HEATH - On Monday last, a temperance meeting was held in the Wesleyan chapel, Noman's Heath. There was not a large attendance. Mr W Bevin presided, and Mr James Wright addressed the meeting. Recitations, dialogues, readings, and songs and glees formed the other portion of the proceedings, being performed by the friends at Noman's Heath and from Malpas.

2025 Annual General Meeting

The following report was presented at the 56th Annual General Meeting of the Family History Society of Cheshire, held online on Saturday 25th October 2025 via Zoom. Full reports and minutes are available on the FHSC website at <https://fhsc.uk/library-heading-3/governance-documents/517-agm-2025>

Honorary Secretary's Report by Sheila Jones

At last year's AGM, following the changes approved to the Constitution earlier that year, the Society elected new Officers and Trustees (albeit that some of these had previously served in similar roles under the old Constitution). This last year has therefore been one of transition as the new governance systems have started to bed in.

The new Board of Trustees has met formally on four occasions over the last year, plus an additional training session for all Trustees. Attendance at these meetings has been:

	Dec 2024 (Training)	Feb 2025	Apr 2025	July 2025	Aug 2025
Margaret Roberts (Chair)	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Sheila Jones (Hon Secretary)	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Rob Brown (Hon Treasurer)	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Kevin Dean (Membership Officer)	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Margaret Spate (Communications Officer)	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Peter Davenport (Elected Trustee)	Present	Present	Absent	Apologies	Absent
David Guyton (Elected Trustee)	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Geoff Johnson (Elected Trustee)	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Alan Turley (Elected Trustee)	Present	Present	Present	Apologies	Apologies
Ian Worthington (Elected Trustee)	Present	Present	Present	Present	Apologies

The business considered by the Board of Trustees has included:

- Benefits to Trustees
- Approval of the Annual Report to the Charity Commission for 2023-24, and the Accounts for 2023-24
- The initial membership and terms of reference for guidance of the new Operational Teams
- Approval of a Code of Conduct for Trustees

- Policies and Procedures to be developed for the Society, including approval of a new Social Media Policy and revised Regulations for the Running of Local Groups
- Accounting and other financial arrangements for the Society, including an externally-conducted Financial Controls and Governance Review of the Society
- Financial arrangements of the Local Groups
- Research Centre attendance
- Society engagement with external events
- Costs of production of the Cheshire Ancestor
- Subscription fees
- Closure of the Tameside Local Group
- Newsletters
- Voting procedures at the AGM

The Management Committee, consisting of the five Officers of the Society, met in February, March, May, June, August and October. These meetings are more informal than the Board of Trustees and are concerned with the day-to-day management of the operations of the Society, receiving reports from the Operational Teams and making recommendations to the Board of Trustees as necessary.

The five Operational Teams (Communications, Education and Research, Financial, Local Groups and Membership) have been a little slower to become established. These have been established to allow broader discussion of issues which impact on both the direction of the Society towards achievement of its stated objectives and on the members of the Society as a whole. Whilst a few new faces from the broader membership have stepped forward to offer their services to these Operational Teams, there is definitely scope for more to become involved. This would allow the Society to benefit from more input from the grassroots whilst allowing individual members to have a direct say in those aspects of the Society which most interest them. We would therefore warmly welcome approaches from anyone interested in finding out more about the Operational Teams with a view to potentially volunteering to join their online meetings. Discussions during the year by the Operational Teams have led to a review of the communications sent to new members and renewing members, proposed changes to the nature of the monthly emailed newsletters and the creation of new monthly online discussion groups.

Visitor numbers to both the Mobberley Research Centre and the Crewe Family History Unit continue to be notably lower than pre-pandemic and the Society

particularly welcomes the commitment of the volunteers who continue to run those services. The Crewe Family History Unit had to move to a new location at fairly short notice and this caused considerable additional work for those involved, for which the Society is very appreciative. The new location, which is temporary until Cheshire Archives and Local Studies' Crewe History Centre opens in 2026, is more accessible than the previous location, including dedicated free parking.

The Alsager, Bebington, Chester, Congleton, Crewe & Nantwich, Macclesfield, Northwich, Runcorn and Sale Local Groups continue to offer a programme of speakers, workshops and discussions either face-to-face or through Zoom. The Society was saddened to see the closure of the Tameside Local Group in June, although delighted that a monthly FHSC helpdesk continues to be operated at Tameside Local Studies and Archives Library, in addition to the weekly helpdesk operated at Wallasey Central Library by members from the defunct Wallasey Local Group. The Trustees would like to support the development of similar helpdesks at other local libraries throughout the county and would welcome contact from anyone interested in assisting with this.

The monthly online Seminar Series continues to be very well supported and it is always good to see members from more far-flung locations being able to join in. Topics in the last year have been photogenealogy, ancestors on the margins, the role of the census enumerator, transportation to Tasmania, Charles Booth's London poverty maps, Welsh ancestry, ancestors in the police, wills, adoption history and records, Elizabeth Gaskell and the cotton industry – surely something for everyone! The Research Buddies Zoom meetings have continued, These offer an opportunity on a monthly basis to focus on a specific area of the historic county of Cheshire, allowing an informal get-together of both members living in the area and those further afield researching family in the area. Additionally, in the last four months, new online Discussion Groups have been opened up as an extension of the previous sub-groups run by the Computer Club, together with the Zooming in on Family History chat session on a monthly basis.

The CHESHIRE ANCESTOR continues to be one of the Society's offerings which members most frequently cite as a real benefit of membership, with its superbly crafted mixture of articles by members, Society news and dates and wider information about family history records and sources. The Society owes a real debt of gratitude to Rosie Rowley for her ten years of work as Editor (by the time she 'retires' at the end of the year) and wishes her well as she relinquishes that role after the next edition.

As previously mentioned, the Communications Operational Team reviewed the format and nature of the monthly newsletter a few months ago and suspended it for a few months to undertake a revamp, following comments and suggestions made by members. The 'new' newsletter will be launched shortly, taking the form of a single 'article of the month' plus a reminder of the events/talks due to take place the following month as well as general family history news and short reports from Local Groups, Discussion Groups or Seminars and additions of interest to the major databases.

The Trustees are also very conscious that the object of the Society, as stated in its Constitution, is *to advance the education of the public in the study of Family History in all its many aspects*. To this end, the Society has been represented this year at the Wirral History and Heritage Fair, the Manchester Family History Fair, the Guild of One-Name Studies' Mini Family History Fair in Liverpool, the Family History Show at Aintree Racecourse and the Crewe Heritage Centre's Fair. As the Chair has mentioned in her opening remarks, the Society is hoping to expand on this over the next year by presenting a number of Family History Days with partners at a number of venues. Membership numbers continue to decline slightly (1195 members compared with 1255 at the same point last year), reflecting a continued annual 5% drop in membership over the past few years, so anything which increases the visibility of the Society is to be welcomed. The Trustees consider that the activities and resources offered by the Society remain very good value, particularly in comparison with other similar Societies.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has made a contribution to the Society this year – to my fellow Officers and Trustees, those who fulfil other direct administrative roles (those cited at the front and back of each edition of the *CHESHIRE ANCESTOR*), the volunteers at the Research Centres and everyone who has supported the seminars and other online groups or who has contributed to the *CHESHIRE ANCESTOR*. I have now completed three years of service to the Society as Honorary Secretary with this AGM and have seen wonderful commitment to, and development of, the Society in that time, building on its past strengths and, I am sure, continuing to nurture the interests of its members in the years to come.

Brief Report of AGM Proceedings

Sheila Jones, Honorary Secretary.

The Annual General Meeting was preceded by a talk from Dave Annal on *Bringing it up to date: Research in the 20th Century*. Dave suggested that it was worth starting with what we already have – family documents and the recollections of

living relatives. He went on to cover Civil Registration records – births, marriages and deaths – and what information can be gleaned from these. Online parish records tend to stop around 1910 -1920, but churches may still hold more recent ones and these should be free to access in person. Cemeteries and gravestones can be useful, although not all burials had memorials and not all names on memorials are necessarily buried in that place. The 1911 and 1921 censuses are now easily accessible online. The 1911 census includes information about the number of children born to a marriage and the numbers of those that were still living. The 1921 census does include address information, but we need to remember that this is on the reverse of the form not on the main details page. It also includes details of who people worked for and where.

As no 1931 census records have survived and a census was not taken in 1941 because of the war, the 1939 National Register (compiled for the issuing of ID cards and ration books) provides a useful alternative. It was not covered by the Census Act and therefore is not subject to the full 100 year rule, although details of persons potentially still living are redacted. The entries include the full date of birth, although Dave warned that these should be taken with ‘a pinch of salt’ with regard to the year of birth (the day and month do tend to be correct, however). The occupations in entries are not always as precise as those in censuses e.g. some are simply recorded as ‘heavy work’ given that this entitled the individuals to a larger meat ration. On the plus side, however, entries are normally quite accurate – if you were not on the Register then you did not get a ration book!

Dave also reminded members that anyone can order a will, using probate records. Electoral Registers can be useful, particularly after 1918 when suffrage was extended to all men and some women. It can be useful to look at a run of them for a picture of family changes. The Absent Voter lists during World War I and immediately after give the army service number of those on active service, but the survival rate for these lists is patchy. Passenger Lists can be used to look for family groups travelling together. Dave ended his talk with a list of other online sources which may be useful, including: the Valuation Office Survey (also known as Lloyd George’s Domesday Survey), overseas records such as the US Census up to 1950 and Australian Trade Directories, workhouse records up to the 1930s, military service records (noting that Army records post-1920 are being transferred to the National Archives and will be transcribed in due course for Ancestry), school admission registers (which usually recorded date of birth), trade directories and phone directories, criminal trial records, maps and newspapers.

Other Business at the AGM

Elections were not required as the number of applicants equalled the number of vacancies; the following were therefore deemed elected unopposed, all for a period of three years:

Honorary Secretary: Sheila Jones (re-election)

Elected Trustees: Geoff Johnson (re-election) and Angela Moore

In order to streamline business at the AGM, it was proposed that, with effect from the 57th AGM in 2026, elections to the posts of Officers and Trustees should be carried out prior to the date of the AGM and the results declared at the AGM. The following amendments (in italics) to the Constitution were therefore approved by a majority vote:

First sentence of Clause 6 (D): All members of the Board of Trustees shall be elected by the members of the Society for a period of three years, normally *with effect from an Annual General Meeting* but, exceptionally, also at an Extraordinary General Meeting.

Clause 11 (D): The Annual General Meeting shall elect Trustees to any vacancy. Those standing for election shall be required to declare their intention to stand in advance of the Annual General Meeting. Their declarations should then be made available to the membership in advance of the Annual General Meeting to enable *all members to vote in advance of the Annual General Meeting by electronic or postal ballot, the results being declared at the Annual General Meeting.*

The accountancy firm which the Society has been using for several years was taken over at the start of the year and their Macclesfield office has effectively closed, leaving them with staffing difficulties. The annual accounts for the financial year 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025 have therefore not yet been finalised, meaning that it is also not sensible, at this point, for the Honorary Treasurer to present an annual report to the members at the AGM. The Trustees had already, prior to this point, agreed that new financial arrangements should be put in place for the 2025-26 financial year and these involve bringing the maintenance of accounts wholly within the Society using proprietary software designed for charities. Consequently, whilst the Trustees regretted the necessity to have to wait for the 2024-25 accounts to be finalised and independently examined, the new arrangements mean that this risk is unlikely to be repeated in future years. The Honorary Treasurer has been piloting the proprietary software since the start of 2025 and therefore has been able to use this to monitor

unofficially the shape of the Society's accounts and thus remained confident that, had the annual accounts been available to this AGM, there would have been no concerns over and above general trends noted in recent years. It was noted that the approval of the accounts is technically a matter for the Trustees rather than the membership and the Society has until April 2026 to submit its accounts to the Charity Commission. Accordingly, the annual accounts were only finalised after the AGM and are now available on the Society's website at <https://fhsc.uk/library-heading-3/governance-documents/517-agm-2025>; the Treasurer's report follows this article. A proposal which had been included in the Agenda for the AGM concerning subscription fees was withdrawn at the AGM because of the lack of finalised accounts and the Trustees have since taken the decision that there is no need, at this stage to increase fees. A new Independent Examiner will need to be appointed once the new accounting software system is bedded in and a proposal relating to this will be made to the membership in the June edition of the Ancestor.

As there was no opportunity at the AGM for members to view the accounts and ask any questions about them, an open meeting will be held on Thursday 12th March 2026 via Zoom at 7:30pm. Those wishing to attend should register via the website in advance of the meeting. Anyone who cannot access the accounts online who wishes to receive a postal copy may request one from the Honorary Secretary (see contact details at the front of this journal).

Honorary Treasurer's Report by Rob Brown

Our books have been prepared and independently examined by Bright Partnership.

Financial Position

Our on-line delivery of benefits to members has continued. Financial commitments, including delivery of four issues of the CHESHIRE ANCESTOR magazine, rental of the Rajar Building in Mobberley and the Brierley Business Centre in Crewe, continue.

Our investments summary at the end of June 2025:

Hampshire Trust Bank

Account #1: £30,655.40 invested 5 December 2022 for 2 years at 4.15%, matured in December 2024 with a closing balance of £33,256.23 (interest accrued December 2023 £1272.20, December 2024 £1328.63). £25,000 was reinvested for a further 1 year at 4.55%, the balance (£8256.23) transferred to the Santander Business Savings account as working capital.

Account #2: £52,277.64 invested 26 May 2023 for 2 years at 4.2%, matured in May 2025 with a closing balance of £56,773.97 (interest accrued May 2024 £2201.67, May 2025 £2294.66)

£56,773.97 was reinvested for a further year at 4.22%.

Our bank account balances as at 30 June 2025:

Santander Current account £2749.10

Santander Business Savings £23,734.08

PayPal Payment processor £3157.69

SumUp Card Payment processor £270.75

Consolidated Accounts

The consolidated accounts (Income and Expenditure) for the year ending 30 June 2025 show a deficit for the year of £9,779 plus an Historical Asset Write Off of £32,920 (£42970). Last year we had a deficit of £8059 plus an Historical Asset Write Off of £48,886 (£56,945). This year's Historical Asset Write Off is to reflect a more realistic value of the library books held in our Mobberley and Crewe Research Centres.

Cash in the bank and invested for the Society and Groups consolidated accounts at the end of June 2025 was £150,800. Sales income from our on-line shop via PayPal for the year ending 30 June 2025 was £809.55 (last year £1620). Publication sales via Genfair generated an income of £59.50 (last year £102.35). The Genfair shop has now been closed due to falling book and CD sales and with the availability of digital on-line sales.

Local Groups. Sadly, several groups have made the difficult decision to cease face to face meetings at the end of the 2024/25 financial year; Wallasey and Tameside groups have disbanded, Nantwich has joined forces with Crewe to become the Crewe & Nantwich Group, and the Computer Group is now the Computer Club. The finances of these groups have been finalised and closing balances have been transferred to the Society's Santander accounts.

The remaining nine groups are financially viable, total funds held is approximately £40,000. There was no Group Allocation for 2024-2025 year.

The remainder of this report applies only to the 'central' funds.

Central Funds

Income for the year is £31,000. Expenditure is £30,952 compared to £40,423 last year. Expenditure also includes writing down the value of our stock of the book and CD shop, £200, £1200 in 2021-22.

A change in membership fee is not appropriate at this time; however, the option should remain open for discussion next year.

The independently examined accounts are available by request to the Treasurer; they have been deposited online and can be accessed on our website.

I would like to thank our accountants Bright Partnership for their work on behalf of the Society. I would also like to thank our Group Treasurers for their work in delivering the Group accounts.

Volunteers Wanted

The Society is run entirely by volunteers, without which it could not function. Please consider whether you might be able to offer your help in some way.

CHESHIRE ANCESTOR Editor and/or Editorial Assistant

One person could carry out both of these roles, as at present.

Unfortunately the person who was going to take over as editor is no longer able to do so, so a new volunteer is needed for the role of journal editor. A good eye for detail is needed, along with an aptitude for word-processing on a computer. The DTP program we use is Quarkxpress; training will be given.

A volunteer is also needed to help the journal editor with tasks such as resizing images and converting them to greyscale, and collating meetings information into a spreadsheet. Again, training will be given, if needed.

For more information, please contact Rosie Rowley (editor@fhsc.uk)

Crewe Research Centre

More volunteers would be very welcome, to work either in the Research Centre at Crewe or at home working on projects. **For more information, please contact Margaret Spate, Crewe Group Leader (crewe@fhsc.uk)**

FHSC Governance Team Members

There are still vacancies on all of the Teams, except the Local Groups Operational Team, and details and an application form are available on the Society's website at <https://fhsc.uk/library-heading/governance-documents/486-operational-teams>

Members' FREE Research Lookup Service

Note that this is a free service for members only, and is subject to the time available to volunteers.

We will search our research resources held at the Crewe Research Centre for specific information about one named person. For example: a search for a marriage, baptism or burial record or a search for a memorial inscription. We will also check other indexes that we hold.

We will respond as quickly as possible but please remember that the Research Centre is staffed by volunteers who also have other duties.

Lists of the resources held at Crewe can be found on the FHSC website at <https://fhsc.uk/library-heading/library-public/32-crewe-library-holdings>

Please note we cannot undertake in-depth family history research. Members wanting that sort of service should engage a professional genealogist.

Requests can be submitted:

- **Online at *fhsc.uk***
Sorry, this option is not available at present.
- **By post**
Please include your name, membership number, contact details and a correctly stamped, addressed envelope (at least C5 size – 162mm x 229mm).
Send to: FHSC Research Centre, Units 3 & 4, Brierley Business Centre, Mirion Street, Crewe, CW1 2AP

Malpas News (3)

from the Chester Courant, 21 June 1876

LONGEVITY IN CHESHIRE – Notwithstanding the fact that serious complaints have been made by sanitary inspectors as to the unhealthy condition of dwellings in various parts of Cheshire, notably in the West Cheshire district, certain cases occasionally come to light of a good old age being attained by persons in parts of the county. Some conversations recently took place on the subject at Malpas, when reference was made to the healthy condition of the members of a sick club in that vicinity, and it was found that the benefits which are annually given to members above a certain age would this year have to be divided amongst no less than twelve who had attained over the age of 70 years each. Such an instance can perhaps not be pointed to by any club in the county. – Four persons have died in the parish of Neston within the last three weeks, whose united ages amounted to 320 years.

Research Centre News

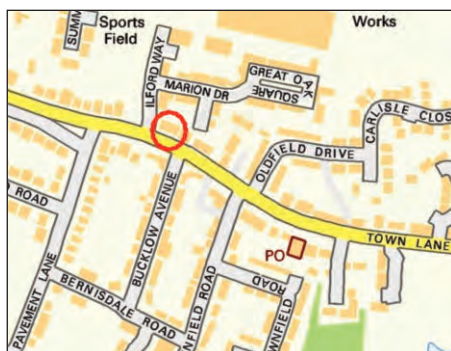
Manned by experienced volunteers, visitors can obtain help and advice on family and local history research. Please see the FHSC website for holdings and up-to-date news about changes to opening hours, etc. If in doubt, please phone before visiting to ensure the centre is open and a computer/film reader is available.

MOBBERLEY RESEARCH CENTRE

NOTE: To prepare for the move to the new Cheshire Archives, the Mobberley Research Centre will close to visitors at 4pm on Thursday 2nd April. Please see *View from the Chair* on page 3 for full details.

Rajar Building, Town Lane, Mobberley, WA16 7ER. Tel: 07712 103715

For non-urgent enquiries you can email us on researchcentre@fhsc.uk



The Rajar Building is on the corner of Town Lane (A5085) and Ilford Way. The entrance is at the front on Town Lane, and the Research Centre is on the first floor (stairs only, sorry, no lift). Parking is on nearby streets. There is a bus stop nearby (Bucklow Avenue) for D&G Bus No. 87/88. See www.dgbus.co.uk

FREE access to *FindMyPast*, *Ancestry* and *The Genealogist*

Extensive library of books and films/fiche for many areas, not just Cheshire

Searchable computer archives * Small charge for printing/copying

Fiche/film scanning available

**Usual opening hours: 10am–4pm Monday, Thursday
and 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month.**

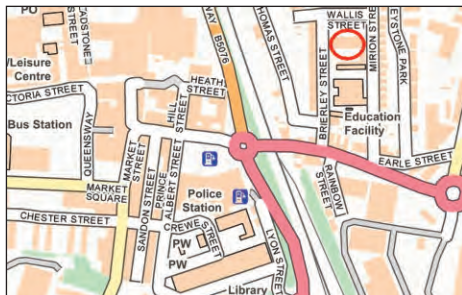
Daily admission charge £3 for members, £5 for non-members (refundable on joining the Society on day of visit), including FREE tea or coffee.

Non-members should please contact us in advance to book a place.

CREWE RESEARCH CENTRE

Units 3 & 4, Brierley Business Centre, Mirion Street, Crewe, CW1 2AP

Tel 07352 454501



The Business Centre is situated on Mirion Street, about six hundred yards from our previous location in Crewe Municipal Buildings.

The Business Centre has free parking with disabled parking spaces.

We occupy units 3 and 4 on the ground floor. Press the doorbell button for FHSC and one of our volunteers will come to the door and let you in.

FREE access to *Ancestry*, *FindMyPast*, *British Newspaper Archive*
and *The Genealogist*

Local parish registers on film – extensive library of books
Crewe Collection (formerly Crewe and District Local History Archives)

For full details of our holdings, please see
the Crewe FHU Library Holdings lists on the FHSC website

***Usual opening hours: 10am–4pm Monday and Tuesday
plus one Saturday morning each month (see website for date)***

We recommend arriving no later than 3pm. For Saturday dates and changes to usual opening hours, please see the FHSC website.

N.B. Anyone wishing to visit on a Saturday morning (between 10 am and 12 noon) **must email crewe@fhsc.uk at least 2 days in advance** to confirm their attendance. If no notification is received, the FHU will not open on that Saturday.

Non-members visiting for the first time will be offered (for a small donation) time with a volunteer to explain the facilities available and advice on family history research. Membership of the Society is encouraged for further visits.

Crewe Research Centre News

by Margaret Spate
crewe@fhsc.uk

The Crewe Research Centre in Brierley Business Centre continues to open for the usual times as advertised. Volunteers are always happy to help if it is needed.

Thanks for all your support as we work in our temporary home during 2026.

Work is ongoing as we progress towards our move into 'Cheshire Archives Crewe', including the sale of books which are duplicates in our collection. The sale of books is ongoing but does not detract from the help that is available.

Please contact me if you are travelling any distance or need to check resources which we hold before you visit.

Help Wanted

Re. CHESHIRE ANCESTOR, Dec 2025, Help Wanted (1882 Burial Register)

From Liz de Mercado
Membership no 8063

In response to Peter Rowley's Help Wanted request in the December journal, the margin entry refers to the Burial Laws Amendment Act 1880.

Until this Act came into force all burials in an Anglican churchyard had to take place with the Rites of the Church of England, regardless of the denomination of the deceased. This generally applied to Non-Conformist burials as the Catholics, Jews and Quakers had their own burial grounds. The 1880 Act allowed the use of other faith's rites with the permission of the Vicar and this would be noted in the Burial Register.

Malpas News (4)

from the Northwich Guardian, 8 January 1876

LAUNDRESS - Wanted, a good Laundress, to take a family's washing, cottage and all requisites provided. A married woman preferred, whose husband would take a wagoner's or labourer's place. Good wages. - Apply to E. B., Cherry Hill, Malpas, Cheshire.

Letters to the Editor

Re. the BLACKBURN family, Nantwich

From Nick Blackburn

Membership no 11011

Thank you for publishing my letter about the death in 1892 of Ben BLACKBURN and especially for the additional research that was done on the story.

I have another item that might interest members. I have recently established contact with a previously unknown branch of my father's Nantwich family and they have sent me a school photograph dating from (I would guess) the 1910s. It includes three of my great aunts, Hilda, Doris and Olive BLACKBURN (b. 1898, 1900 and 1903), who are three of the late Ben BLACKBURN's many sisters. Olive listed the names of most of the girls on the photograph and I include a copy of her list, and a transcription. The photograph has been processed through MyHeritage enhancement which seems to have done a very good job, clarifying the detail without altering it.

I have sent a copy to Nantwich Museum - given that most school photographs are (in my experience) taken in roughly the same location every year, I thought they might have others for comparison which might shed light on this one. The museum has acknowledged receipt, but no outcome as yet.

If any member has any information on the BLACKBURN family, the school or any of the other girls shown, I would be delighted to know.

Back row: Lily MYFORD, May ORMES, Gertie BULLOCK, Connie FARRINGTON, Alice? EDWARDS, May FRANCE, May WORRALL, F? RIDGWEY, Alice OWEN.

Next to back row: Elsie JUSTICE, (Annie EDWARDS), (Hilda BLACKBURN), Flossie HARRISON, Nellie HAMPSON, (Nellie HALLEY), (May WOOLEY), Nettie SMITH, Edith CLARKE. Those four in brackets are the oldest girls.

2nd row (seated): Gladys EDWARDS, Lizzie LATHAM, Doris BLACKBURN, Maggie LLOYD, Cora GRIFFITHS, Florrie HINDE, Queenie LEWIS.

Front row (kneeling): Alice HEATH, Olive BLACKBURN, Maggie FRANCE, Hilda OWEN, Beattie MYFORD, Lilla GRIFFITHS, Alice BLAGG.



Surname Interests

Are you researching any of these names? If so, log in to the FHSC website and click on *Research Tools*, then *Search Surnames*, to contact the person or people who registered the name as one of their surname interests.

If you haven't already registered your surname interests on the FHSC website, why not do it today? You may make contact with someone who holds the key to your brick wall!

These names were added between 20 October 2025 and 12 February 2026:

Appleton, Baskervyle, Bracegirdle, Brocklehurst

Calveley, Carr, Croxton, Dingle, Dutton

Hatton, Higginson, Holmes, Jones, Lawton

Malkin, Osborne, Pownall, Purcell

Rayson, Redwood

Stellfox/Stelfox/Steelfox, Swift

Thompson, Thorley, Tidd, Whitelegg, Youds

Malpas News (5)

from the Chester Courant, 29 March 1876

MASTER AND SERVANT - William Barlow, journeyman painter, Malpas, was summoned for leaving the service of his master without due and proper notice. It appeared that the defendant neglected to go to his work on Monday week, and on the following morning was about three quarters of an hour late. His employer said, "You have had a day for your pleasure, and now you shall have a day for mine. Come again tomorrow morning." The defendant did not return on the following day, but procured employment elsewhere. The defendant was ordered to pay £1 damages and expenses.

INEBRIATES - William Parker, Joseph Reeves, and Ellis Davies, three respectable-looking young men, were charged with being drunk at Malpas on the 4th March. A police officer said he met the defendants in the street about twelve o'clock at night. They had been raffling in a private house, and had drunk heavily. They were each fined 5s and costs. - Charles Ravenscroft, for being drunk and riotous on the highway on the 3rd March, was fined 5s and costs. - John Hough, employed at Eaton Hall, for being drunk on the 12th March last, was fined 20s and costs, this being his second offence.

Family History Events

For news of family history events, see these online calendars

<http://geneva.weald.org.uk/doku.php>

www.familyhistoryfederation.com/events

www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/genealogy/

<https://conferencekeeper.org/>

Rootstech 2026

Thursday 5th – Saturday 7th March 2026 at Salt Lake City, USA and online
The world's largest family discovery event. Join in-person in Salt Lake City, Utah (passes from US\$69) or online world-wide (free of charge).

Online event includes 200+ new online sessions in over 26 languages, many available after the event. Plus chat online with other attendees worldwide.

www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/registration

The Family History Show (Midlands)

10am – 4pm, Saturday 14th March 2026

at Severn Hall, Three Counties Showground, Malvern, WR13 6NW

Talks – Exhibitors – Ask the Experts

Ample free parking – closest railway station is Great Malvern

Advance tickets £8 each with free £15 goody bag (£12 on the day)

<https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com/midlands/>

The Family History Federation: The Really Useful Family History Show

Saturday 18th April 2026

at the Burgess Hall, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, PE27 6WU

Talks – Exhibitors – Cambridgeshire Archives Service

Car parking adjacent to the venue, or take the train to Cambridge or Huntingdon and the guided busway to St Ives bus station, about one mile from the venue. Timetable at www.thebusway.info/routes-times.shtml

www.facebook.com/groups/rufhsstives2026/

The Guild of One-Name Studies 2026 Conference: Navigating the Future

Friday 24th – Sunday 26th April 2026 at the Marriott Hotel, Portsmouth
The conference, showcasing tools, techniques and data sources underpinned by AI to boost our studies, is open to members and non-members. Booking essential – see <https://one-name.org/guild-conference/>

Register of Qualified Genealogists Conference: Exploring the Past, Embracing the Future

9am – 5pm, Saturday 25 April 2026

at Birmingham & Midland Institute, 9 Margaret St, Birmingham B3 3BS
There will be a wide range of talks and presentations on genealogical and family history research. The conference is open to both members and non-members. Booking essential. Tickets include a light lunch and refreshments.

<https://www.qualifiedgenealogists.org/2026-conference>

The Family History Show (Liverpool)

10am – 4pm on Saturday 9th May 2026

at Aintree Racecourse, Ormskirk Rd, Aintree, Liverpool L9 5AS.

Talks – Exhibitors – Ask the Experts – Refreshments

Aintree railway station just across the road,

with Merseyrail trains from Liverpool Central every 15 minutes.

Bus services 300, 310 and 345 to and from Liverpool – Ample free parking

Advance tickets £9 or two for £15, with free £15 goody bag (£13 on the day)

<https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com/liverpool/>

The Guild of One-Name Studies Seminar: Hops, Pubs and People

10am – 4.45pm on 13th June 2026

at Fradley Village Hall, Hay End Lane, Fradley, Lichfield WS13 8NL

A Celebration of our Brewing Heritage ...and where to find the names

The seminar is open to both members and non-members. Booking essential. Further information may be obtained by telephoning the Guild HelpDesk on 0800 011 2182, or by email from seminar-booking@one-name.org

<https://one-name.org/mc-events/hops-pubs-and-people/>

Family History News

A selection of recent updates to websites, and other family history news. Remember, if you don't have a subscription to *Ancestry*, *Find My Past* or *The Genealogist*, our Research Centres have free access to these sites. You may also be able to access *Ancestry* or *Find My Past* through your public library – and look out for offers of free access on special occasions such as Remembrance Day.

Bear in mind that record collections on the Internet may be incomplete.

Ancestry

Go to <http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/cardcatalog.aspx> for a list of all record sets, and click on Sort by > Date Updated to find the latest additions.

Go to www.ancestry.co.uk/cs/recent-collections for Ancestry news.

University College London Student Records, 1828–1954

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62530/

Records of home and international students who attended University College London and the Institute of Education between 1828 and 1954. The records comprise registers, personal files and index cards, with typed and handwritten information. Some records include a photograph of the student.

Royal Mail Pension and Gratuity Records, 1834–1970

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62542/

Pension records from the Royal Mail service in the United Kingdom between 1860 and 1970. Pensions were available after ten years of service, upon reaching retirement age or if retiring for medical reasons. Gratuities were benefits paid prior to retirement. Most records are handwritten onto pre-printed forms but older records may be handwritten in ledgers.

East Yorkshire Records

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62139

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62140

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62141

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62142

www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/63149

Anglican Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538–1812

Anglican Baptisms, 1813–1925

Anglican Marriages and Banns, 1754–1950

Anglican Burials, 1813–2000

School Admission Registers, 1846–1924

Find My Past (FMP)

Go to <http://search.findmypast.co.uk/historical-records> to see a list of all record sets. Go to www.findmypast.co.uk/blog/new for FindMyPast news.

British Women's Royal Naval Service Enrolment, 1917-1919

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/british-womens-royal-naval-service-enrolment-1917-1919>

Women did not serve in combat roles, but still played an important role. These 4,838 Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) enrolment records are from WWI.

Royal Naval Division Service Records, 1914-1920

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/royal-naval-division-service-records-1914-1920>

Spanning the First World War and beyond, these 4,730 records can help you to chart your naval ancestors' experiences, from enlistment to retirement.

British Royal Navy Casualty Logs 1939-1945

www.findmypast.co.uk/discover/military-armed-forces-and-conflict/second-world-war/british-royal-navy-casualty-logs-1939-1945

If your WWII relative's ship was lost, damaged or involved in a serious incident, it may appear within these 36,338 Second World War casualty log records.

Merchant Seamen's Campaign Medal Records 1939-1945

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/merchant-seamens-campaign-medal-records-1939-1945>

These records list men and women who kept Britain supplied across dangerous wartime seas, giving name, birth information, rank, and medal entitlement.

Britain, Institution Of Electrical Engineers, 1899-1968

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/britain-institution-of-electrical-engineers>

This brand new set consists of 2,511 obituary and membership list records.

The Genealogist

Go to www.thegenealogist.co.uk/news/ for *The Genealogist* news.

Complete WWI War Office Casualty Lists Now Available

The Genealogist has released new Casualty List Records from WWI, covering the period 8th April 1918 to 4th March 1919, completing their coverage of the War Office Casualty Lists. This significant addition helps researchers trace those who were killed, wounded, reported missing, or taken prisoner in the later part of the First World War.

Pride of Edwin

by Brian Lea

Membership no. 10305

I was most interested to see the photograph of the Foden steam wagon *Pride of Edwin*, pictured with the Foden family, in the December magazine.

Pride of Edwin was built in the boom years of steam wagon production at Elworth and is an example of their first really successful lorry: the 5-tonner. This particular machine left the Elworth works in July 1916 with the works number 6368 and was fitted with a tipping body. It was supplied by the local Foden agent, Mr. John KILN of Cosham, Hants., to the Portsea Island Gas Company at their Hilsea Gas Works near Portsmouth.¹ I have no figures for 1916, but the same model, with tipping gear, had a list price of £575 in 1914.²

Foden commercial vehicles have long had a reputation for ruggedness and long-lasting reliability. These early steamers were no exception. Nominally for carrying five tons, they were often used for loads far in excess of this, and kept going - many into preservation, like *Pride of Edwin*.³ Number 6368 ended its years of commercial use at Lytham Shipyard in Lancashire. The shipyard went into liquidation in 1955 and at the end of July, in the subsequent sale of machinery and equipment, Fodens bought wagon No. 6368 for £40, to be reconditioned for their centenary celebrations.⁴

Restored to parade condition by the following July, *Pride of Edwin* featured in the centenary procession celebrating one hundred years of Foden manufacturing.⁵ Appropriately six years later, it was one of the fifteen or so traction engines and steam wagons which took part in the first Traction Engine Rally held in Cheshire on 6th and 7th October 1962 on one of Teddy MOSTON's fields at Old Hall Farm, adjoining the A535 at Lower Withington.⁶ "*Mighty oaks from little acorns grow.*" It was from such a small beginning that this first steam rally moved to Astle Park in the mid-60s and became over the next sixty years one of the most popular annual outdoor events in Cheshire. The photograph I took at that first rally shows the wagon on display with Jodrell Bank Telescope in the background - and someone looking very like William FODEN in the foreground? Two years later, at William's funeral in June 1964, *Pride of Edwin* headed a mile-long procession through crowd-lined streets, carrying the coffin.⁷



The wagon attended many rallies in and around Cheshire in the 1960s, sometimes travelling under its own steam and usually accompanied by veteran Foden employees Tom COOKE and Albert BOURNE.⁸ In 1967 it won the Best Steam Wagon award at the Bellamour Hall Traction Engine Rally in Staffordshire, and was seen at other events up and down the country in the sixties and early seventies. In 1962 it won second prize in the London to Brighton Historic Commercial Vehicle Run and later appeared at rallies as far afield as Cheddar in Somerset and Ben Accord near Aberdeen.⁹

Sadly, along with *Pride of Leven*, its 1906 Foden Traction Engine stablemate in the Foden collection, it is no longer a frequent visitor to steam rallies and is now held in long term storage at the Science Museum, Wroughton, Wiltshire.¹⁰

References

- 1 *The Traction Engine Register*. Brian Johnson. Southern Counties HVPT 2020; *Portsmouth Times & Naval Gazette* 23rd April 1915.
- 2 *The Foden Story*. Pat Kennett. Patrick Stephens 1978.
- 3 *The Traction Engine Register* lists over 50 preserved Foden steam wagons dating from 1904 to 1931.

- 4 *Lytham Times* 12th August 1955. N.B. It's always a single "g" for Foden wagons, unlike Sentinel, their Shrewsbury rivals, who always spelt their waggons with a double "gg".
- 5 *Crewe Chronicle* 14th July 1956.
- 6 *Jodrell Bank Steam Traction Engine Rally Programme* 6th/7th October 1962.
- 7 *Nantwich Chronicle* 13th June 1964.
- 8 *Manchester Evening News* 6th August 1968; *Cheddar Valley Gazette* 29th August 1969; various contemporary Traction Engine Rally Programmes.
- 9 *Cheddar Valley Gazette*; *Aberdeen Press & Journal* 28th June 1971.
- 10 *The Traction Engine Register*.

Cryptic Cheshire

by Sheila Jones
Hon. Secretary

Identify these places in (historic) Cheshire by solving the anagrams and associated clues.

Answers are on the last page of this issue.

1. You can find a male deer in the nearby forest.
2. Come to a hurtling stop here to make soap.
3. Where George Booth might have heard mad Esau's hymn.
4. Can you buy a muckle at Clifford Market?
5. Blimey! Socks get very muddy this close to the Shropshire border.
6. Etchers can capture an historic view of the walls here.
7. In olden days, drunks oft offended and ended in gaol here.
8. Where bawdy rulers dined at the Pheasant.
9. Bridgwater Canal mirth stirs up a Manchester storm here.
10. What grows here might have inspired a Shakespeare sonnet.

Frederick Jenkinson - Sole Survivor (Part 2)

by Michael Watts
Membership no. 2794

971969 Warrant Officer Frederick JENKINSON (1915–2001)

“My father was the only survivor of six crew whose Wellington Bomber was shot down following a raid on Germany in November 1941.”

When my friend, Paul JENKINSON, told me this, my family history research nose smelt a good story to explore! Paul already had some interesting items but had never followed up using modern resources. He had a tape recording made by his father, recalling what he could of the crash landing, and also had copies of some German newspaper reports published in 2000 and 2001. The first part of my research was printed in the December 2025 issue of the *CHESHIRE ANCESTOR* – the RAF service papers were obtained and interpreted with assistance from Graham Caldwell in an article published in the August 2024 issue of *Family Tree Magazine*. Read on to discover the rest of the story!

Personal memories recorded by Frederick Jenkinson

Frederick JENKINSON made a cassette tape recording in about 1999 of his memories of the Wellington flight in November 1941. This is a rough transcript.

Frederick recalled that he had been on (home) leave but was called back to his base at Mildenhall. There was a delay at Crewe station and the Red Caps (military police) were waiting at the station in a lorry to return him to camp. He had been expecting a posting to the Middle East but suddenly there was an urgent requirement to attack Berlin. Everyone showered, changed and met in the canteen for supper before their flight at around 1730 hours.

The whole squadron got ready for dispersal, gear and parachutes were checked, guns set, before making for the coast at sunset. Guns were test-fired over the sea and all worked well. Blenheims were there too. Deadly silence all the way there. They circled the target and dropped bombs, cloud was 8/10 to 9/10, fires could be seen on the ground. On the way home, the observer checked and found that some bombs were left, so a secondary target was looked for. Flak was encountered but all chatted about breakfast and the proposed posting of 149 squadron to the Middle East.

After a couple of hours, the observer searched for an S bend in a large river (over Holland?) and the plane circled twice to check before bombs were dropped. Then *the skies opened up* with a “square” of four searchlights aimed at them, so they flew at and targeted the main beam – but *they hit us first*. The plane was out of control and they *baled out* (meaning perhaps that they had to abandon operations, as no-one actually used their parachutes). Fred was hit in the leg by shrapnel, all was dead quiet, and he lost consciousness. On waking, he could smell fire forward. On crawling forward from the rear gun, he could see that *Dave’s arm* had been hit (maybe this was the Observer, Albert Charles Arthur DAVIS, as there was no-one named David on board.) Crawling back to the tail of the plane, he managed to open a rear escape door, fell out but was trapped by a boot, which came off before he fell into the snow and blacked out. His coat was smouldering and so he rolled in the snow to put out any threat of fire!

He was next aware of lying under some lights on a table in a farmhouse, where a doctor had been called for, to tend to his leg. An escort from a nearby Luftwaffe camp was also summoned, and they treated him like *a gentleman*, before forwarding him to a hospital near Cologne. There was an air raid at the station there, so his stretcher bearers *dropped me and scarpered*. He was rescued from a slightly abusive crowd by two officers in civvies and taken to a shelter. The final references are about meeting Lord Haw-Haw (William Joyce, the British collaborator) who gave him coffee and cigarettes, and offered to broadcast his name so his family would know he had survived; this has not been confirmed.

A second recording by Frederick JENKINSON then follows and is addressed to a man named Stefan. It largely disputes some German newspaper reports about details of the crash and of the fate of the personnel.



Research into the Crash and Reports in German Newspapers in 2000/2001

Paul JENKINSON has copies of two German newspaper reports from 2000 and 2001 of research carried out into the plane crash by Fritz STEGE, who as a 13-year-old living nearby took photos of the crashed plane. Here is a very brief summary of these two articles.

Fritz STEGE lived in Isselburg in north-west Germany, near where the plane crashed on 7/8 November 1941. As a thirteen-year-old boy he was able to take photos of the scene, but later in life he became determined to find out what had happened to the single survivor. Research with local historians and also an aircraft enthusiast in nearby Holland – and then a former Scottish soldier (part of the Allied force in the area in 1945) – eventually led to contact with Fred JENKINSON in 1999. Fritz STEGE sent his photos to Fred, and they exchanged letters, followed by a promise from Fred that he would record his memories of the crash on a cassette recorder. He did as promised, sent a tape to Fritz STEGE and also kept a copy for the family.

Some interesting information can be gleaned from the comments by Fritz STEGE in these two newspaper articles. On the night of the return flight from Berlin, STEGE assumed that the plane had been brought down by German anti-aircraft flak in the area west of the Ruhr. It appeared that the pilot then attempted an emergency landing on a section of the nearby Autobahn then under construction (between Vierarm and Lamers), but a wingtip had touched a mound of earth and the plane *flipped over*. This probably killed five of the crew but Fred JENKINSON, as rear gunner, would have been pressed into his seat. STEGE mentions that Fred may have sought help nearby at Bellenhorst (a large house) before the farming family ELTING of Heelden found a seriously shocked Fred and cared for him until he was handed to the military – Luftwaffe personnel from the nearby base at Wesel.

Fritz STEGE reported further from his written exchanges with Fred JENKINSON that his four years as prisoner of war included many hard times. He had spent about three years at Stalag 383 in Lambsdorf, quite near to Auschwitz. When the Russians advanced near the end of the war, prisoners were brought to central Germany on a *death march*. Those who couldn't make it were left to die or shot. Fred JENKINSON escaped to the Russian lines.

Fritz STEGE referred to other major points of interest. Firstly, Fred was doubtful about the genuineness of the crash photographs on first sight – while of course Fritz stoutly asserted their true origin. Secondly, Fred always remained very troubled about the actual fates of his comrades, but Fritz had managed to reassure him that they had been given a proper burial and commemoration not

far away at the Reichswald cemetery – this is one of many maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Finally, however, Fred had expressed great appreciation of his reception by the ELTING farming family.

Wellington Bomber actually shot down by a German Night-Fighter Pilot

Recent online research has unearthed yet another detail in this story. Fred JENKINSON's own account implied that his plane had been spotted by searchlights and shot down by anti-aircraft fire. The website of the Aviation Safety Network gives the full details of the Wellington bomber X9878 as noted above. However, it adds: *homeward bound, the aircraft was shot down by night fighter pilot Oberfeldwebel (=flight sergeant) Wilhelm ENGEL of the 7/NJG 1 based at Twente airfield in the Netherlands, who was flying a Bf 110. The Bf 110 is better known to the British as a Messerschmidt.*

General Questionnaire for British/American Ex-Prisoners of War

Frederick Jenkinson completed a three-page questionnaire on 8 March 1945. He gave the usual personal details, with his trade stated as millwright and date of enlistment as 10 September 1939, with date of capture 7/8 November 1941, and wounded when captured.

The main camps he listed were Stalag 6J at Dusseldorf from 10 November 1941 to 22 December 1941; Dulag Luft at Frankfurt from 22 December 1941 to 2 February 1942; Stalag 7A at Mooseburg from 2 February 1942 to 19 October 1942; Stalag 383 at Regensburg from 25 October 1942 to 12 December 1944 and finally Luft 7 from 19 December 1944 to 19 January 1945.

He then answered *no* to all the following questions. In a working camp? Serious illness while a POW? Given lectures before capture on how to behave, and on escape and evasion? Interrogation after capture? Did you attempt any sabotage? However, he did answer *yes* when asked about adequate medical treatment.

On the question about whether any British or American personnel collaborated with the enemy or in any way helped against other Allied Prisoners of War?, Fred JENKINSON was quite detailed and specific. He referred to *confiscation of Red Cross food by the permanent staff of Dulag Luft resident between 22 December 1941 and 2 February 1942 for their own use*, and named a squadron leader who was in charge. He added, *this may seem a petty offence but to a PoW it is the worst crime, any price may be obtained with certain food stuffs and the men concerned used them to obtain comforts for themselves at the men's expense.* Later on, after the bombing of Luft 7 (in 1944), he learned that the same staff had indulged in similar behaviour at another camp, but on a grander scale, *for no other purpose than trading with the Germans.* This, he felt, amounted to collaboration.

Asked whether he made any escape attempts, Fred JENKINSON referred to his luck in escaping during the death march in 1945: *escape from Germans while on transit from Luft 7 with 23 companions at Lossen in Ober Schl (Oberschlesien or Upper Silesia) and met the Russians on 4 February 1945.*

Jenkinson family in the Altrincham area

To conclude this account, it may be useful to give some brief information about the Jenkinson family in Altrincham, in case any readers may be linked to them.

Frederick JENKINSON was born on 1 May 1915 to William Hugh JENKINSON (1887–1927) and Letitia née BRIERLEY (1882–1964) who had married in 1911, having other children Vincent Hugh (1912–1958), William Thomas (1918–1982), Patricia Mary (1921–2004) and Noreen (1923–1925). At the 1921 census, William was a bricklayer at Hulse & Co, Trafford Park and the family lived at 8 Russell St, Altrincham. William JENKINSON's older brother, Richard J JENKINSON (1882–1933) of Peter Street, Altrincham, was a successful builder, as evidenced by the 1933 press cuttings kept by the family.

Frederick JENKINSON's paternal grandparents were Richard JENKINSON (1856–1930?) and Mary GARNER, who married at St John's Church, Altrincham in December 1877.

Frederick JENKINSON's mother, Letitia BRIERLEY, was born in Dublin, according to the 1911 census for England. The 1901 census for Ireland shows her as a 17-year-old living at 23 Avondale Avenue, Arran Quay, Dublin with her parents George BRIERLEY (born 1855), a plumber and Letitia BRIERLEY (née CONROY, born 1857) and family.

The 1939 Register, taken on the outbreak of World War II, shows Frederick JENKINSON, maintenance fitter, living at 34 Barlow Rd, Altrincham with his first wife, Alice née FAWCETT, and their son David, born in 1935 and redacted from the Register.

Later in life, the JENKINSON family lived at Pickmere, where Fred was the landlord of *The Elms*, the site of which has now been redeveloped.

In Memoriam

Fred JENKINSON was always deeply concerned about the fate of the five other Wellington bomber crew members who lost their lives in the crash of November 1941. They are all resting now in the Reichswald cemetery in north-west Germany, where about 7,500 Allied personnel are buried. These five extracts are from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website www.cwgc.org

CROWE, Pilot Offr. (W. Op./Air Gnr.) Herbert Roy, J/15857. R.C.A.F. 149 (RAF) Sqdn. 8th November, 1941. Son of William T. and Mary F Crowe, of Toronto, Canada. Burial plot 11.B.5.

DANE, Sgt (Pilot) Stanley William, 1255075. RAF (V.R.). 149 Sqdn. 8th November, 1941. Age 23. Son of George William and Ethel Isabel Dane, of Sheerness, Kent. Burial plot 11.A.17.

DAVIS, Sgt (Obs) Albert Charles Arthur, 924914. RAF (V.R.). 149 Sqdn. 8th November, 1941. Age 21. Son of Charles Augustus and Emma Davis, of Walthamstow, Essex. Burial plot 11.B.6.

LEEMAN, Sgt. (Pilot) Patrick Ian, 1196622. RAF (V.R.). 149 Sqdn. 8th November, 1941. Joint burial plot 11.B.7-8.

PENGELLY, Sgt. (Air Gnr) John Charles, 1378703. RAF (V.R.). 149 Sqdn. 8th November, 1941. Age 32. Son of John Pengelly, and of Beatrice Mary Pengelly, of Ellacombe, Torquay, Devon. Joint burial plot 11.B.7-8.

Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to Paul JENKINSON for his permission and encouragement to carry out this research into his father's wartime experiences.

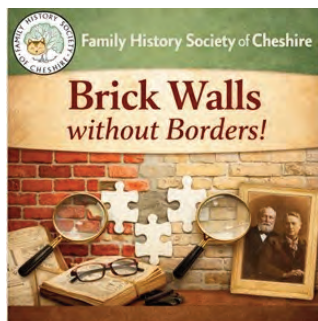
Many thanks are due to Graham CALDWELL, who interpreted the RAF service record of Frederick JENKINSON for the Q&A Pages of the August 2024 issue of *Family Tree Magazine*. A digital version of this magazine may be read by Cheshire Library members (and members of many other public libraries) using the Libby website or app (<https://libbyapp.com/>), or the magazine app specified by your library service.

Many thanks also to the late Fritz STEGE of Isselburg, who recently supplied new copies of the photos he took of the crashed Wellington in 1941, and who passed away in November 2025 at the age of 98 after having seen and approved this article. Thanks also to his son Frank STEGE for extensive email correspondence; and to their colleague, Andreas STAUBACH, for making and sending digital copies from the original photographs.

Copyright of most material used or reproduced in the two articles rests with the National Archives, Kew.

Brick Walls Without Borders!

by Margaret Roberts
FHSC Chair



Ever feel that your family history research has hit a dead end? Those stubborn ancestors who refuse to be found? Then this pair of special Brick Wall Busting sessions could be just what you need.

The Family History Society of Cheshire is delighted to be working in collaboration with the Shropshire Family History Society to offer two joint Zoom evenings, each focusing on brick walls from a different county.

- Cheshire Brick Walls – Wednesday 22 April, 7.30pm (via Zoom)
- Shropshire Brick Walls – Thursday 23 April, 7.30pm (via Zoom)

You are very welcome to send in details of your own brick walls in advance, so we can take a closer look during the session, but there's no obligation to do so. If you'd rather simply drop in, listen, and pick up ideas, techniques, and inspiration, you'll be just as welcome.

These sessions are all about shared experience, fresh perspectives, and learning from one another's research challenges and successes.

We very much hope this will be the first of many collaborative brick-wall-busting events with other Family History Societies, bringing expertise together across county boundaries.

Come along, bring your puzzles (or just your curiosity), and help us knock down a few walls together.

For full details and to register, please go to the FHSC website:

Cheshire: <https://fhsc.uk/events/upcoming-events/discussion-groups/1428-brick-walls-without-borders-cheshire>

Shropshire: <https://fhsc.uk/events/upcoming-events/discussion-groups/1427-brick-walls-without-borders-shropshire>

John Norbury, 1762 – 1828

by Val Kennewell
Membership no. 10161

In December 1984, Manchester International Airport Authority gave notice of an intended removal of bodies from a small graveyard to make way for a new car park at the airport. The grave was described as that of John NORBURY (died June 17th 1828) and Ann WALKDEN (died May 23rd 1832). Family members came forward and the remains were reinterred in a WALKDEN family grave in Flixton. Images of the gravestone and brass coffin plates, where the dates are clear, can be seen online, attached to several family trees.

It was not the first time the grave had been mentioned in the newspapers. Ninety years before in a *Stockport Advertiser* of 1894, CEDRIC (a pseudonym for local history writer William NORBURY) describes a visit to Hey Head:

We put up our horse at a substantial homestead once belonging to a somewhat peculiar man named John NORBURY. He took a fancy to being buried in his own garden and there is to this day a well-kept gravestone, bearing the following inscription:

*Here resteth the body of John Norbury yeoman
who departed this life June 17 1828, aged 66*

This was a change to a previous article by CEDRIC in 1885, which gave John's year of death as 1821.

Recently, in an attempt to extend my family tree, I looked at the siblings of my four times great grandmother Mary NORBURY, who married Isaac WHITTAKER in 1785. I was fortunate to find that her mother Mary NORBURY (nee HENSHALL) who died in 1816 had left a will. Mary seemed to be taking care of inheritance matters neglected by her late husband, John, and left a very detailed will. In this will she names her three daughters, their husbands and her son John NORBURY. The children of John and Mary NORBURY were all baptised at Dean Row Unitarian Meeting House: Mary in 1761, John in 1762 (of Warford), Sarah 1766 and Jane 1768 (of Alderley). Mary married Isaac WHITTAKER, Sarah married William BARLOW and Jane married Thomas EARLAM.

Having found that he was not buried in Alderley with his parents, I guessed that John NORBURY junior had died sometime around 1830 and in the absence of a burial record I embarked on reading John NORBURY wills from around that period. I found that John NORBURY who died at Hey Head in 1828 mentions a lease for property in Nether Alderley with his sister, the widowed Sarah BARLOW, also named on the lease. Furthermore, in 1814, Thomas HENSHALL, Mary's brother, left a will leaving land in Hey Head, Northen Etchells to his nephew John NORBURY. Isaac WHITTAKER, Thomas EARLAM and William BARLOW are shown as owners on the Land Tax records for Northen Etchells in 1820 suggesting further evidence of a connection with this family. The grave described by CEDRIC in 1894 and Manchester Airport in 1984 imply a birth date of 1762 as do the images shared online. All this confirmed to me that the John NORBURY buried in the orchard at Hey Head was the son of John NORBURY and his wife Mary (nee HENSHALL) - i.e. the brother of my 4x great-grandmother.

John NORBURY married Ann WORTHINGTON in 1788. Their two daughters Ann and Mary married brothers Peter and John WALKDEN. In his book *Cheshire Tales* Alan DALE describes their son John as the last male heir to live at Norbury Houses. Although his parents were not Quakers, he was buried in the Quaker burial ground at Mobberley in 1799 aged 5, having, according to Alan DALE, fallen from a runaway horse.

CEDRIC's interest in John NORBURY was taken up by another local historian CEDRICII (Herbert HULME). CEDRICII wrote a series of newspaper articles, copies of which he had mounted in a scrapbook given to Alan DALE, a local and family historian, in 1929. This scrapbook is now in the DALE archive at John Rylands library in Manchester.¹ The material in it also forms part of Herbert HULME's book *Old Mobberley*. HULME describes NORBURY's orchard burial and repeats the error of giving a death date of 1821. This led to many family trees, including that of Alan DALE, giving a birth date of 1755.

Alan DALE's version of the WALKDEN/NORBURY pedigree held in the City of Manchester archive is a most confused and confusing document. It includes both 'our' John NORBURY born in 1762 (my 5x great-uncle and DALE's 3x great-uncle) and the John NORBURY born in 1755 buried in the orchard at Hey Head. The two Johns appear to be connected as half-brothers! Maybe I had been too long in the archives! The CEDRICs' joint misinformation has spread further than just the DALE archives in John Rylands Library and the Manchester Central Library. The local Women's Institute retold the story in a booklet *Looking Back* and John NORBURY's dates are repeated there as having died in 1821, aged 66.

In his columns as CEDRICII, Herbert HULME discussed John NORBURY's accounts as Parish Constable, his private notebook, and his ledger. HULME had had access to these documents and published extracts from them. In *Old Mobberley*, HULME describes John NORBURY as a *Jack of All Trades*. Before he went to Hey Head, in addition to being a tenant of the Stanleys at Norbury Houses, Great Warford, he was also at Butts Farm, Alderley and *carried on the business of a tanner, contractor, shopkeeper and dealt in many kinds of articles*. The published extracts from his private papers suggest an ongoing battle from about 1790 onwards over the collection of tithes with his neighbour, Thomas NORBURY, who was responsible for collecting tithes on behalf of the rector Ralph CARR. This issue seemed to be one that had been already settled in 1782 when counsel's opinion had been sought by the farmers of Nether Alderley regarding Ralph CARR's unreasonable behaviour.

Apparently, John NORBURY's decision to be buried in his orchard was prompted by his refusal to go to any place of worship. This antipathy is not explained by HULME. In *Looking Back*, HULME is quoted as saying that NORBURY was a *nothingarian*. He clearly had problems with Ralph CARR and St Mary's Anglican church in Nether Alderley but he was baptised in a nonconformist, Unitarian Meeting house. No issue with the Unitarians is mentioned.

His wife Ann was not buried with him. She continued to live at Hey Head as the guardian of her grandson Peter John WALKDEN, the orphaned son of her daughter Ann WALKDEN (buried in 1832 at Hey Head with her father). She died in Great Warford in 1838 at the age of eighty, her death being registered by her son-in-law John WALKDEN (Mary's husband). HULME records that John and Mary WALKDEN were interred at Knowle Green Chapel but does not mention Ann NORBURY's burial.

Notes

1. In retrospect, the Dale Papers were probably not the best starting point for my research but he was my first cousin twice removed and 'comparing notes' would always be worthwhile. There is a Herbert Hulme Archive at John Rylands Library and copies of his newspaper articles are held in Knutsford Library. I had hoped to find original documents relating to the diaries of John Norbury, but nothing has come to light.

A Few Good Women (Wartime Nurses)

by Tony Sant
Membership no. 9314

The references are mostly from the *Macclesfield Courier* and *Macclesfield Advertiser*, and their associated titles. Many nurses served with Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (QAIMNS).

Over 15,000 WWI nurses' records are held at the National Archives and can be downloaded free of charge after registration: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-nurses/ Some information about former hospitals can be found at <https://historic-hospitals.com>. Photos of some Cheshire hospitals can be found at www.cheshireimagebank.org.uk.

Surname	Forename	Reference	Notes
ARMSTRONG	Ellen	1919	Sister QAIMNS. Killed in Action
ASTELL	Miss Ethel F	1917	Sister Territorial Nursing Service
BAKER	Mary	18/MAR/1942	Nurse at a Hospital in KUALA LUMPUR
BARBER	Miss H	26/OCT/1917	Staff Nurse at LINDEN LEA Hospital BROOKLANDS, SALE
BEAUMONT	Miss A.S.	26/OCT/1917	Nurse at an Auxiliary Hospital WILMSLOW, STYAL
BOND	?	02/DEC/1899	Nursing Sister at LADYSMITH, SOUTH AFRICA
BORLASE	E	02/DEC/1899	Nursing Sister at LADYSMITH, SOUTH AFRICA
BOURCHIER	?	02/DEC/1899	Nursing Sister at LADYSMITH, SOUTH AFRICA
BROADY	Miss L	02/NOV/1917	Sister, Haigh Lawn Auxiliary Hospital, St Margaret's Road, ALTRINCHAM, CHESHIRE
BUTLER	Miss R	26/OCT/1917	Nurse at BROOKLANDS Military Hospital, SALE
CARRLY	Bessie	26/APR/1920	Assistant Matron (T) Nursing Service BADINGHAM, SUFFOLK

CARRUTHERS	Kate	27/JAN/1917	Staff Nurse (MM) (TFNS) [NOTE: (MM) Military Medal, (TFNS) Territorial Force Nursing Service]
CHARSTAN	?	02/DEC/1899	Nursing Sister at LADYSMITH, SOUTH AFRICA
CLOUGH	Miss ?	24/SEP/1855	Nurse died on board ship ORINOCO at SCUTARI after being evacuated from BALAKLAVA
COOKE	?	1916	Sister at 58/Casualty Station
CORBUTT	Martha	28/JUL/1920	Sister 2/Reserve/G/54 HMHS NEVASA from CAISTOR, LINCS
DAVIDSON	Theodora	28/DEC/1918	Army Nurse in France
DAY (née MORRIS?)	Emma	05/JAN/1934	French Red Cross Sister, CHESTER Hospital, of SCOTTER, LINCS
DODD	?	08/JAN/1916	Nurse mentioned in dispatches from hospital in FLANDERS. Originally from CREWE, whose mother was a survivor from RMS TITANIC
DOWSE	E.A.	02/DEC/1899	Nurse (Superintendent Sister) at LADYSMITH, SOUTH AFRICA
FATHERS	Lucy	06/MAY/1900	Nurse/Sister ANS died at PEITERMARITZBURG. Originally from SLEAFORD, Lincs
FIELD	D Anyta	07/AUG/44	Senior Sister QAIMNS Died in AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS
FLETCHER	Miss D	29/DEC/1900	Nurse originally from ALDERSHOT, HAMPSHIRE. Died at RUSTENBURG SOUTH AFRICA
GARDNER	Edith Manley	1899	Sister Army Nursing Service LONDON
GIBB	Miss A.M.	26/OCT/1917	Nurse at an Auxiliary Hospital TIMPERLEY that existed until the 1950s off HEYES LANE behind the Congregational Church. Originally from HEYES, LEIGH

GLEAVE	Mrs F	02/NOV/1917	Sister in Charge, BROOKDALE Auxiliary Hospital, OLD TRAFFORD, LANCS
GODBER	Mrs G	02/NOV/1917	Sister, Haigh Lawn Auxiliary Hospital, St Margaret's Road, ALTRINCHAM, CHESHIRE
HARDY	C.M.	18/MAR/1942	Nurse at a hospital in the FAR EAST
HASNIP	Mary	18/DEC/1919	Nurse with V.A.D. from WELL, LINCS. Died in ITALY
HILL	?	02/DEC/1899	Nursing Sister at LADYSMITH, SOUTH AFRICA
HODGKINSON	Edith Louise	02/NOV/1917	Sister at Auxiliary Hospital TIMPERLEY that existed until the 1950s off HEYES LANE behind the Congregational Church. Originally from HEYES, LEIGH
IVANOFF	Mira Miksavorich	18/DEC/1915	Russian Nurse
KEPPEL	Lady Elizabeth	28/DEC/1918	Army Nurse in FRANCE (dau. of Arnold KEPPEL, 8th Earl of Albemarle)
LEES	?	02/DEC/1899	Nursing Sister at LADYSMITH, SOUTH AFRICA
LINGARD	Louisa Eleanor	Will/1914	QAIMNS. Died at Sisters' Quarters, Wellington Barracks, INDIA
LUDLOW	Margaret	02/DEC/1899	Nursing Sister at LADYSMITH, SOUTH AFRICA
McDONALD	Miss ?	18/MAR/1942	Nurse at a Hospital in KUALA LUMPUR
MOREAU	Émilienne	SEP/1915	French civilian, aged 17, awarded Military Medal for her actions including killing 5 enemy soldiers at Loos
MURRAY	Miss ?	26/OCT/1917	Sister at Auxiliary Hospital HEYES LEIGH, TIMPERLEY

NOBLE	?	02/DEC/1899	Nursing Sister at LADYSMITH, SOUTH AFRICA
OLIPHANT	Miss K	26/OCT/1917	Sister at Haigh Lawn Auxiliary Hospital, St Margaret's Road, ALTRINCHAM, CHESHIRE
PEARCE	Josephine	1939 FRANCE	Nurse, 282 Ambulance (Service) Unit
PRIOR	Ellen	Memorial 1939-45	Sister, Army Medical Corps of WINSFORD, CHESHIRE
PROWTING	Miss A	26/OCT/1917	Sister at Haigh Lawn Auxiliary Hospital, St Margaret's Road, ALTRINCHAM, CHESHIRE. Originally from MACCLESFIELD?
REED	Margaret Ellen	12/DEC/1942	Sister 286419 QAIMNS Died in Egypt
ROSS	Ada Janet	12/JUL/1918	Nurse CANADIAN Medical Corps from BUXTON
RYLANCE	Margaret Olive Mary	14/AUG/1918	V.A.D. Nurse from ASHTON-UPON-MERSEY. Died in the UK age 26
SAMUEL	Mildred	1939+	Sister INDIAN Military Nursing Service
SANDES	Miss ?	23/OCT/1915	British Nurse in SERBIA
SCOTT	A.A.	1939-45	Nurse from DUNOON, Scotland
SIMONS	Elsie	02/NOV/1917	Nurse of CECIL ROAD HALE Auxiliary Hospital
SISTERS OF MERCY	Winifreda	17/NOV/1855	Sister died 20 October at BALAKLAVA. Originally from LIVERPOOL
SMITH	Miss M.E.	1917	Staff Sister at LINDEN LEA Hospital BROOKLANDS, SALE
STOBART	St Clair	18/DEC/1915	British Nurse in the BALKANS
TAYLOR	Catherine	1881 Census	Nurse born LIMERICK, IRELAND. Age 42 wife of an Army Pensioner
TAYLOR	William	1881 Census	Nurse born in BLACKBURN, LANCASHIRE. Age 49

TODHUNTER	H.E.	26/OCT/1917	Sister in Charge NORTHENDEN Auxiliary Hospital
TOWNSEND	Martha	18/SEP/1918	Staff Nurse QAIMNS. Born WRITTLE, ESSEX
WATT	Elsa J.M.	QAIMNS Memorial 1914-1919	Also known as Mrs SCHLUTER. Sister at HM Army of DUNOON/COWAL SCOTLAND. QAIMNS.
WEBSTER	Miss I.W.	26/OCT/1917	Principal Sister INGESTRE Auxiliary Hospital, ASHTON-UPON-MERSEY
WEST	Miss M.J.	29/OCT/1900	Nurse originally from ALDERSHOT, HAMPSHIRE. Died at RUSTENBURG SOUTH AFRICA

Malpas News (6)

from the Chester Chronicle, 24 June 1876

MALPAS – ANNIVERSARY OF THE “ROSE CLUB” – On Wednesday, the anniversary of the Malpas United Friendly Society, better known as the “Rose Club,” took place at the Lion Inn, Malpas. The members met shortly before twelve o’clock, in front of the Inn, and, headed by the officers of the club, and led by the strains of the Nantwich Band, walked in processional order along the streets, afterwards proceeding to the parish church for divine worship.... The members, including the juveniles, mustered about 300 strong. Sermon over at the church, they returned to the Lion Inn, where dinner was provided by **Mr Hope**, in a tent on the green adjoining. The **Hon and Rev W T Kenyon** presided, supported by the **Rev A F Heaton, J H Lee, Esq, Dr Jordison, Dr Parker, &c.** The dishes being removed, the Chairman gave “The Church and Queen,” and “The Royal Family.” **Dr Jordison** next proposed “The army, navy and auxiliary forces,” and in alluding to the navy said it had just saved a war of the most serious kind, while the army, in the hands of the present government, was never more strong or more reliable. He coupled with the toast the names of **Mr Evan Langley** and **Mr Birch**, members of the Yeomanry cavalry. – **Mr Langley** returned thanks in a few earnest words, recapitulating some of the recent deeds of the army in the Crimea ... – The Chairman then gave the toast of the evening, and in doing so said he had warmly at heart the comfort and happiness of all persons in the parish, and especially the welfare of the poorer portion... Sickness and sorrow bore upon all, and what tended more to alleviate them than a great benefit club...? The club was in a flourishing and satisfactory condition, having a capital of £3,425 and members, 465.... There had been paid during the year £326 14s to sick members and pensioners, and he hoped they would consider what trouble and sorrow had been alleviated by this amount...

Chance Good Fortune

by David Railton
Membership no. 1806

A rowing boat slowly glided westwards from the Old Harbour at Holyhead towards the far side of Trinity House. The oarsman was heading for an assignation with the girl who he was certain was the one, and only one, for him. She would be waiting, watching anxiously for a sight of the rowing boat from her bedroom window at 49, Porth y Felin. Once in view she rushed down to the water's edge to greet the rower. It had to be done surreptitiously. She must not be seen by her aunt, her guardian, who did not approve of the relationship.

The year was 1912. The girl was Winnie, Lucy Winifred HARMAN, a 17-year-old in the care of her uncle and aunt, Walter and Elizabeth EMMERSON. Walter worked for Trinity House, based at Holyhead. He was the Master of the *Bahama Bank* lightship positioned off the coast of the Isle of Man. The rower was Fred, Frederick CLARKE, age 18. He lived in the town of Holyhead with his father and mother, Frederick and Mary Ann CLARKE and his brother and sister. Frederick senior was a projectionist at the local cinema. Neither of the families were native to North Wales. Walter, Elizabeth and Winnie were from Kent. Frederick and Mary Ann and their family were from Wallasey in Cheshire. Walter's work took him to Holyhead. Frederick was escaping debts incurred in Liverpool where he was a team owner who had unfortunately drunk all of his profits and more.

Within a short space of time everything was to change for both families. Walter retired, and he and Elizabeth went back to his home town of Ramsgate; Walter died very soon afterwards. Elizabeth then decided to emigrate to Niagara on the Lake in Canada to join other relatives; she wanted Winnie to go with her. Winnie refused to leave England as she had already decided that she was going to marry Fred - but she was below the age of consent and her aunt would not give her permission. So, Winnie found herself a job as a child's nanny with a family of coal importers on the banks of the Thames, at Thames Ditton.

Around the same time, Fred realised his ambition of joining the merchant navy, a career common to many members of the family; his first voyage was on the SS *Laomedon* to China and Japan. Fred's family moved back to Seacombe, Cheshire. Winnie's new employers were very accommodating, providing a room for Fred when he was back from the sea so he and Winnie could spend time together.

Shortly after her 21st birthday Winnie left her job in Thames Ditton and moved to Fred's parents' home in Seacombe. This was in preparation for her marriage to Fred which took place on 7th February 1917 at St Paul's Church, Seacombe.

In the meantime, Fred had continued his life at sea, mainly on the White Star Line SS *Afric*, bringing troops from Australia to Europe to fight in the First World War. On his last voyage before his marriage, he left England in July 1915 and did not return until January 1917, just a few weeks before the wedding.

Two days after the wedding, Fred was called back to his ship, the *Afric*, for the next trooping voyage to Australia. He had only just got married. He dallied with his new bride and as a result he missed his ship. What a serendipitous event that was. Two days after leaving port, the *Afric* was off the Eddystone Lighthouse waiting for a pilot to take her into Plymouth for a last call before starting the main voyage. The ship's Chief Officer noticed a torpedo approaching. It was too late to



*Lucy Winifred Harman and Frederick Clarke,
at the time of their marriage in 1917*

take evasive action. The submarine, the UC-54, attacked again the following morning and the *Afric* was sunk. Although many of the crew survived there was loss of a number of lives.

Winnie was very fearful of Fred returning to sea so persuaded him that the lesson should be learnt and he should not go back. Life in wartime Britain was not as simple as that. The merchant navy was a reserved occupation but he was no longer in the merchant navy. There was only one choice for him. On 5th March 1917 Fred left home, heading for the recruiting office to join the army and telling his wife that he would be home for tea. He joined the Liverpool Regiment and did not have the chance to go back home, even just for a brief goodbye – he was immediately shipped off to France.

Eighteen months later he returned for his tea!

At the end of the war, on demobilisation, the sea was all that Fred knew of so despite his wife's misgivings, a month later he sailed again, taking returning US troops back to the States on the SS *Belgic*. His seagoing career continued until 1938 on White Star Line passenger vessels on the North Atlantic run when war stopped his travels again.

He took up land-based employment, firstly with the Auxiliary Fire Service during WWII fighting fires resulting from bombing of Birkenhead docks and later as a security officer on board ships while in dock in Liverpool and Birkenhead. He did get one more chance to go to sea. In 1951 he was selected to be Master of Arms for six months aboard the Festival of Britain exhibition ship *Campania* as it toured the ports of the United Kingdom.¹

Fred was a very gentle man and it is hard now to think of him as a ship's security officer. I think that the army were probably of the same opinion and could not envisage him as a front line rifleman which is probably why they transferred him to the Labour Corps whose work included digging trenches and graves and guarding prisoners of war.



Frederick Clarke, Master at Arms, Festival of Britain Exhibition Ship HMS Campana

Fred and Winnie had a happy life together until Winnie died in 1976 and Fred a year later. Fred and Winnie were my maternal grandparents.

1. Between 4 May and 6 October 1951, the ship visited Southampton, Dundee, Newcastle, Hull, Plymouth, Bristol, Cardiff, Belfast, Birkenhead and Glasgow, staying at each port for 10–14 days. The exhibits reflected the main London Exhibition, with three sections: *Land of Britain*, *Discovery* and *The People at Home*.

References

Reminiscences of Fred and Winnie Clarke
Fred Clarke's merchant navy records
1901 and 1911 Census for Porth y Felin, Holyhead
Neil Maw, *World War I Channel Wrecks*
GRO Records

Net That Serf

The Computer Section

Compiled by Geoff Johnson

Email: nts@fhsc.uk Tel: 01829 760422

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From the Desktop



This issue carries over a couple of good member issues from September. I really need more input from the membership!

That situation led me to have to produce three articles of my own, focusing on Windows 11, the much-loved landline telephone connections, and ending with a plug on the advantages of Microsoft's Office Suite.

Thanks to Gren for a reminder about the need for improving your backup systems. Thanks also to Michael Hodgkinson for the treatise on his success transcribing difficult to read wills.

Please let us have some response or comment on the topics we've included here.

The Pleasures of Windows 11

I moaned about Windows 10 when it was introduced, and to the best of my recollection I similarly whinged when we switched from Windows 7, 8 and good old XP! There were numerous iterations in between, but my principal point here is that we, or certainly I, moaned about significant parts of every one of the changes! In truth I'm not alone in just objecting to change.

Pressures to battle with Windows 11 from Microsoft and Windows 10's demise, along with the fact that my kit was, like its owner, getting old. All caused me, during 2025, to purchase a selection of new devices. The simple one was a 15-inch ASUS laptop. More complicated was a major move to replace my desktop in

the form of an NUC mini-PC. This is to be accompanied by a second monitor and various other accoutrements.

An NUC mini is a small, very compact box 4½ inches square and 2½ inches high. I had it built by a small firm called Quiet PC to my specification – worth a look if you’re interested.

Both of these devices are driven by the Windows 11 operating system.

Both seem to be working well, and I’m very impressed with the build quality of both – but the Windows 11 user interface is “doin’ my ‘ead in”!

Having ongoing health problems, with combinations of consultant and hospital visits, not feeling well on many days, and the need to manage my FHSC involvements – along with a large garden – has proved trying when it comes to setting up and replacing computer equipment. Time spent on family history research has been more or less zero.

My first move was to try and resurrect some of the comparative functions with the way I’ve grown to operate Windows from 7 through to 10. I use the software product Start 11. I’ve used this product in its Start 7, 8, and 10 formats very effectively. It essentially puts the Start button in the right place; at the bottom left, and enables you to make the screen look like its predecessor version.

I’m now installing the basic programs that I need for my day-to-day work and have taken the plunge to sign up for Microsoft Office 365. That takes care of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.

I’ve added Irfanview, Norton 360, KeePass, SynchBak Pro, Family Historian, Printer and Scanner drivers; the time taken to retrieve the licence details and find the most appropriate version to install is extensive. I’m not there yet and I’ll keep you appraised of progress and learning points in future NTS editions.

A New Year Resolution- Take Care of Your Data

By Holmes Chapel member, Gren Dix

Many of us have spent years or even decades collecting our (genealogical) data. Yet we do not always take sufficient care of it. My new year resolution is to take better care of my data.

In the past I have had computers that have died and a hard disk that became corrupted. Files that I thought that I had saved were missing from all my regular backups, and I accidentally deleted parts of text documents.

The Computer Club has had numerous discussions about backup. The landscape has changed a little in the interim. *(I'll never stop banging on about it! GJ)*

Whether you use backup software, use Microsoft file history, or just copy files, you have to decide:

- WHAT to backup/save/secure
- WHEN to do it; not just the time but how often, e.g. the last Saturday in the month
- WHERE to save it

With my Windows machine I used to copy all but photos, videos, and music, only rarely copying the non-data files.

In my own case I have now started taking, as a minimum, monthly copies (or after adding a lot of data).

In the past I tended to copy folders/directories to memory sticks. Even with USB 3.2 sticks and computer USB3 sockets this could take hours. More recently I have used SSDs. These have cut the dump time down. More recently I have decided to alternate between SSDs in case one SSD becomes unreadable. As a Christmas gift to myself I bought a ruggedised SSD that can stand being dropped from a height of 3 metres (a Samsung T7 Shield Portable). This is lightning-fast; copying everything in a few minutes.

This covers what data to copy, but not where to keep the resulting copy. On occasion you should move a copy off site (in case of burglary, house fire, or a malicious cup of coffee).

My brother-in-law recently contacted me, saying that his computer had a major failure; he had lost all contact details. This made me think of some other items that need backups. Depending on the email system you use, your email contact lists may not be on your computer but 'out there' somewhere. In my case I exported a csv contacts file from one of my email suppliers and this is now added to my backups. I haven't saved my emails. Have any of you got thoughts in the subject? Similarly, I haven't a separate copy of my phone contacts. The network company backs these up.

A final thought is - where do you keep your passwords, etc? I use KeePass to store user names, URLs, passwords etc; all in its own database. This database is backed up with my other files.

Broadband and the Domestic Telephone

By Geoff Johnson

You learn something new every day!

I manage the broadband service in our village hall on behalf of my wife; she is the hall's Treasurer. Because of its general use – principally hall users connecting to the Wi-Fi – and a connection to an overhead projection system, there is no need for a telephone. I know what the phone number is, but we don't use it, and there is no phone connected.

Broadband in our village is supplied on a Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) basis. In the case of the village hall, and similarly my own installation, we are served by a broadband cabinet sitting outside the village exchange. That connects to both of us using the good old copper wires.

Since the renewal is shortly due, I spoke to our supplier PlusNet in order to beat down the monthly cost. Most years I've managed to get it reduced, and then as the months progress various technical reasons cause it to trundle back up again.

I was surprised this time to find that, because we definitely don't use or need a telephone at the village hall, there is now a method of combining both the unwanted bandwidth allocated in the copper wire for provision of the telephone, along with that for the broadband bandwidth. The resultant monthly charge turns out to be 32% cheaper than the current cost. Inevitably that will slowly increase, but it's a useful downward step!

The change involves a new router and a tweak in the local exchange, the net result being significantly increased broadband download and upload speeds. The contract renewed in late January so I'll let you know how it performs.

This has now set me thinking about our own domestic service. I'm further away from the exchange than the hall. Can I drop use of our domestic phone line? I think I'll have a fight with domestic management!

It looks as if it'll be another year before we are provided on a Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) basis. It's a common factor that most domestic users are very reluctant to lose their good old phone number. It's a major change, but it's soon going to be forced upon us with the introduction of Fibre to the Premises. We'll still be able to have a phone number and 'landline', but that will be subject to connection loss in the event of a power cut because it will only work if the broadband router is working, as we've (hopefully) all learned from the press over recent years.

Beyond the Parish Records – using Transkribus

From Runcorn member Mike Hodgkinson

Using *Transkribus.org* to transcribe family history documents up to 500 years old.

We all hit brick walls when parish records end but, as experienced family history researchers know, there are other sources of information. One source is Burke's – *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain*. You need to find a branch of gentry in your family tree. However, the reliability of BURKE's information varies and women are under-represented. I only rely on this information in my tree if I can verify it from another source. One source is wills.

My male BULKELEY ancestors from North Staffordshire left wills but I found their 16th century wills difficult to transcribe. At a Computer Club meeting, we were discussing AI and I asked if there were websites which would help with the transcription of old writing.

Margaret Roberts suggested that I try Transkribus – www.transkribus.org

I took up her suggestion and gave it a try.

First you need to download a will or a probate in a suitable format, such as jpg, from Findmypast or other source. These documents may need to be trimmed or straightened on the computer.

Once you have registered, Transkribus.org offers fifty free credits each month. English documents are transcribed using English Eagle. Each page has to be downloaded separately but it usually only takes a few minutes for the result. You must choose an English translation, but up to fifty translations are available free each month. My results still needed more work but they gave me a template and helped with some words.

Results inevitably have many errors, and must certainly be edited. Although this can be done on the Transkribus website, I found it quicker to copy and paste the results from each page into a Word document and use Microsoft Word's spelling review.

The text in most wills has similar formats, and it is not difficult to edit the document after Transkribus has done the spade work. If necessary, I then examine the original magnified text on an adjacent computer screen and attempt to transcribe any 'nonsense' in the Transkribus results.

As it is much quicker to read transcribed wills, I have been looking at those of

male siblings. The eldest is most likely to inherit and leave a will. A brother who has no living descendants will leave property or money to siblings. These wills can identify several people. My 5th great uncle John HODGKINSON who died in 1794 with no descendants named in his will nearly twenty people and their relationship to him.

In the will of Thomas BULKELEY who died in 1573, he named his brother-in-law Edward HOLLINSHEAD as one of two men to support his widow Catherine until his eldest male child reached the age of 21. BURKE said Catherine was the daughter of Hugh HOLLINSHEAD of Bosley, Cheshire. On the HOLLINSHEAD family tree in George ORMEROD's History of Cheshire, I found Edward of Bosley was the youngest of Hugh HOLLINSHEAD's five sons and fitted the timeframe. There was no room to include Hugh's daughters.

I then looked for the will of Thomas' father, William BULKELEY, in the Findmypast Staffordshire wills. The only match was a William BULKELEY who died in 1557 in Stoke upon Tern in Shropshire. I thought that it was unlikely, but I noticed that his children's names were Thomas, Rowland and Alice which matched those in BURKE. Furthermore, BURKE describes him as William BULKELEY Esq of Stanlow and Stoke upon Tern. It is easy to make a mistake on the basis of proximity and I assumed that this was really Stoke on Trent, which is near Stanlow: Stoke upon Tern is not nearby; it is in the middle of Shropshire but is the correct place. This shows how careful we family historians need to be, and not jump to conclusions.

Wired

By Gren Dix

I had a look round our home office the other day. There was a plethora of plugs and cables. We had about fifteen things plugged in. I thought that I had better do an inventory and see if any could be removed. This is the list:

- 3 lamps, two as computer lights and one reading light for non-computer activities
- 2 extension leads for socket blocks
- 3 power leads, two for laptops and one for the desktop computer
- 1 for the sound system
- 1 for the printer
- 1 for the desktop screen
- 1 for the shredder
- 1 for powerline Wi-Fi

1 for phone base station

1 for phone charger

Then there are the cables between things (e.g. monitor to desktop)

The printer can be wired or Wi-Fi. I usually leave it plugged in to my wife's laptop.

There are wired and Bluetooth mice.

There is an Ethernet cable to the desktop.

Problems have led to yet more wires. A Windows update meant that my desktop didn't recognize the Ethernet connection, or the Bluetooth keyboard. So, out came an emergency wired keyboard.

I feel that I am trapped in a gigantic spider's web of wires. Am I alone in feeling like this? Should I write to a newspaper agony aunt?

Microsoft Office 365 Family

By Geoff Johnson

If you have programs from Microsoft Office on your computer, a big attraction is that more or less anything using MS Office products gives you access to cloud storage in the form of OneDrive. How much storage they offer you is dependent on the size/value of the software you have purchased.

My use of a fixed version of Microsoft Office 2016 has, for a long time, given me 5 GB of OneDrive storage access. I've been using that to drive my use of OneNote, enabling me to share the data on both my computers and mobile phone. That was more than adequate for my needs until now. But, with new systems looming, and my greater use of mobile phone for reference to stuff I've created on my PCs, I consider that I have a need for more cloud storage.

There are, of course, other cloud storage systems such as Dropbox, Google Drive or Apple iCloud.

A key factor to consider, and specifically for me, is your general usage of applications in your system. In my case I've used Microsoft Office for a long time, having focused heavily in the last couple of years on the use of OneNote. I now want to use cloud storage to a much greater extent than my 'Doubting Thomas' thoughts had allowed in recent years.

My greatest interest lies with Microsoft, and therefore OneDrive is the cloud system I ought to go for.

I could rent extra OneDrive storage from Microsoft, but they charge £2 a month for 100 GB. Not practical!

An increasing number of computer club members have indicated to me that they have started operating with MS Office 365.

365 requires an annual payment for access to all items in the package

Undoubtedly the most lucrative package is that of 'Microsoft Office 365 Family'. The Family version provides you, AND five other domestic users (who do not need to be in the same property, or have the same name). Each will have access to the full Office suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Publisher, Access, (and Defender – whatever that is!). Each allocated user can operate the Office suite on up to five devices. All the programs are constantly updated.

But the big part of the deal is that each allocated user gets 1 TB of OneDrive storage to use as they wish.

If you buy the package from Microsoft, it will cost you £105 per year. However, the likes of Amazon and several other suppliers offer the package at lower rates.

I managed to buy my copy from Amazon in the height of the Black Friday madness. It cost me £76.99. I installed it soon afterwards, and now realise that Black Friday time would be a good time to renew it next year!

I've now got a safe place to back up my backups, away from my own system. Storage galore!

From the Inbox

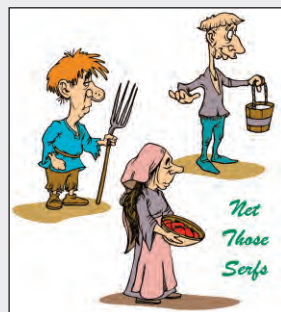
Peter Rowley received this message from another FHS that he belongs to.

Wills such as Purcell's, dated before 1858 and proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, can be downloaded from The National Archives for £3.50 each, or free if you sign in to the site.

Here's the link to search them:

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/wills-1384-1858/

I rely on your input to keep this forum active, so keep the responses coming please – GJ



Answers to the Cryptic Quiz from page 37.

Cryptic Quiz Answers

1. You can find a male deer in the nearby forest.
DELAMERE (anagram of 'male deer', Delamere Forest)
2. Come to a hurtling stop here to make soap.
PORT SUNLIGHT (anagram of 'hurtling stop', Lever soapworks)
3. Where George Booth might have heard mad Esau's hymn.
DUNHAM MASSEY (anagram of 'mad Esau's hymn', 1st and 2nd Baronets of Dunham Massey)
4. Can you buy a muckle at Clifford Market?
MICKLE TRAFFORD (anagram of 'Clifford Market', many a mickle makes a muckle)
5. Blimey! Socks get very muddy this close to the Shropshire border.
BICKLEY MOSS (anagram of 'blimey socks' 3 miles north of border)
6. Etchers can capture an historic view of the walls here.
CHESTER (anagram of 'etchers', town walls)
7. In olden days, drunks oft offended and ended in gaol here.
KNUTSFORD (anagram of 'drunks oft', site of county gaol)
8. Where bawdy rulers dined at the Pheasant.
BURWARDSLEY (anagram of 'bawdy rulers', Pheasant Inn)
9. Bridgwater Canal mirth stirs up a Manchester storm here.
ALTRINCHAM (anagram of 'canal mirth', Manchester Storm ice hockey club)
10. What grows here might have inspired a Shakespeare sonnet.
GAWSWORTH (anagram of 'what grows', Mary Fitton of Gawsworth Hall thought to be Shakespeare's 'Dark Lady')

GROUP CONTACTS

ALSAGER GROUP

GC: Hazel & Peter Rugman
157 Sandbach Road North
Alsager
Cheshire ST7 2AX
Tel: 01270 876386
alsager@fhsc.uk

BEBINGTON GROUP

GL: Bob Wright
9 Lough Green
Bebington
Wirral CH63 9NH
Tel: 0151 334 6345
bebington@fhsc.uk

CHESTER GROUP

GL: David Guyton
Springfield
22 Lache Lane
Chester CH4 7LR
Tel: 01244 675978
chester@fhsc.uk

NOTE:

GL: Group Leader
AGL: Acting Group Leader
GC: Group Contact

COMPUTER CLUB

GL: Geoff Johnson
Garth Nook, Well Lane
Little Budworth
Tarporeley CW6 9DA
Tel: 01829 760422
computerclub@fhsc.uk

CONGLETON GROUP

GL: David Smetham
Little Trees, Gawsworth Rd
Gawsworth
Macclesfield SK11 9RA
Tel: 01625 426173
congleton@fhsc.uk

CREWE & NANTWICH GROUP

GL: Margaret Spate
FHSC Crewe & Nantwich
Group
Units 3 & 4, Brierley
Business Centre
Mirion Street
Crewe CW1 2AP
crewe@fhsc.uk

MACCLESFIELD GROUP

GL: Dennis Whyte
29 Thirlmere
Macclesfield
SK11 7XY
Tel: 01625 617557
macclesfield@fhsc.uk

NORTHWICH GROUP

GL: Dave Thomas
1 Arley Court
Wrenbury Drive
Northwich CW9 8RX
Tel: 01606 46938
northwich@fhsc.uk

RUNCORN GROUP

GL: Sue Bowden
runcorn@fhsc.uk

SALE GROUP

GL: Angela Jenkinson
41 Keswick Road
Timperley WA15 7DU
Tel: 07970 174388
sale@fhsc.uk

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Front cover photo: Clock Tower at former Parkside Hospital, Macclesfield, now converted to apartments. Macclesfield Group talk by Dennis Whyte in April, details on page 8. Photo (cropped) © Colin Park (cc-by-sa/2.0) geograph.org.uk/p/5218420
Back cover photo: Tithe barn, Church Street, Malpas. Photo © Jim Osley (cc-by-sa/2.0) geograph.org.uk/p/2358457

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Malpas



Tithe Barn, Church Street, Malpas

Malpas is an ancient market town in the south-west of Cheshire, whose strategic hilltop position has shaped its long history. The name Malpas derives from the Old French *mau pas*, meaning *bad passage*, a reference to the difficult terrain and river crossings that once challenged travellers moving between England and Wales. Evidence of early settlement dates back to the Roman period, with nearby roads linking the area to the legionary fortress at Chester. After the Norman Conquest, Malpas became an important defensive centre within the Welsh Marches.

A castle once stood at Malpas, guarding routes into Wales and reinforcing its military importance, although little survives above ground today. By the medieval period, Malpas had developed into a thriving market town serving the surrounding agricultural hinterland. Its prosperity is reflected in the impressive parish church of St Oswald, parts of which date from the 14th and 15th centuries and dominate the skyline.

During the early modern period, Malpas remained a centre for farming and local trade, particularly cattle and dairy produce. While bypassed by large-scale industrialisation, the town retained its role as a rural hub, preserving much of its historic character. Today, Malpas is valued for its strong sense of community, historic buildings, and landscape setting, offering a living link to Cheshire's borderland past while continuing to serve the surrounding countryside.