



March 2025

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Thoughts from the Chair

Dear Nana

For Christmas I had a wonderful present from Ed, my grandson - a book titled *Dear Nana - from you to me*. Most of the pages are almost blank, with the invitation to complete them in response to the questions on each page, such as *What are your earliest memories? What were your favourite childhood toys or games? Tell me what you know about your mother's/father's parents and family..., What interesting information do you know about other people in our family?* These prompts are to gather together information about my life, a family history, to be handed to Ed when it's finished for him to keep as 'my story'. A lovely idea, with lots to work on in coming weeks. I have a feeling I might need some spare pages for some of the sections! Grampy got one too, so Ed will have stories from both sides of his Dad's family and I guess his other grandparents probably got similar for them to add in theirs.

It also prompted him to ask if I knew who his 10x great grandparents were! I had to admit I haven't managed to get that far back yet but he was happy when I was able to tell him that some of his ancestors were blacksmiths - a vital role in his Minecraft games - so it was something he could relate to. At least it is a start to stories about his ancestors and fingers crossed it might spark an interest in him to learn more.

Wills consultation response

If you recall we submitted a response to the Ministry of Justice consultation on their plans to make changes to the way in which wills were held, including a proposal to destroy most original copies after 25 years and only hold them digitally. The formal Consultation outcome was published on 8 January 2025 and it is clear there were a significant number of responses to the proposals, almost 1600 in total. It is with relief that I can report they will not be proceeding with the plans to destroy the original copies although they do note that they will need to review the cost of accessing copies as the current cost (£1.50 per will) does not accurately reflect the actual cost of providing the service and is not comparable with the cost of obtaining birth, marriage and death certificates. So, if you were thinking of accessing some of your ancestors' wills, now might be a good time to do it, before the costs increase! If you are interested in reading the outcome

document is can be accessed here: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6780fd71d5422b88ec018416/will-storage-consultation-response.pdf>

Who painted the china?

In sorting through boxes in our loft (in an attempt to clear some of the accumulated 'stuff') we came across some hand-painted china with the name M Craig painted on the bottom. but who exactly was M Craig? Michael thought it was Mary Craig, a relative of his mother, to whom she had offered some assistance and tips on china painting, but could we find her on the family tree? Could we heck! So we contacted a Craig relative to see if they knew, assuming she would have been related to them. Unfortunately that hasn't been too successful so far but they will keep digging to see what might emerge. However, they like the china so, if it can be linked to them, we might well have found



a home for it and gives us a reason to meet up with some more distant relations when I am sure there will be lots of sharing of family stories. It has also provided a reminder that, wherever possible, make sure you gather information from the older generation while you can.

Tools to help our research

Hopefully 2025 has already rewarded you with some good 'finds' in your family history research. But I wonder how many of our members make use of Timelines, FAN charts, research logs, old maps etc. as part of their approach to research. I have been reading about each of these recently but have to admit that they are not, as yet, tools that I have employed to any significant degree. But perhaps you have, and have some hints or tips of how they can be used and examples of where they have really helped in your research endeavours. If so please share them so others can learn more.

Looking forward

Please let us know what you would like to see us doing in the coming months. We have some ideas but can always do with some more.

Karen Hunter, Chair chair@sfhs.org.uk

It's a Long Way to Tipperary

This song, that had begun as a music hall favourite, became a popular marching song of the First World War, and was identified with a particular Irish Regiment, the Connaught Rangers. One of the soldiers in this regiment, Corporal Philip Henry Chapple, whose name is on the memorial at the Castle in Bridgnorth, as well as on memorials in the village of Worfield, hardly had a chance to sing it very often as he led his men forward. Within a few weeks of the start of the war, he was reported missing, presumed dead. It was 19 September 1914, and every day for many years after receiving the dreaded telegram, his wife, Ethel, walked the few yards along the lane from her cottage in the hamlet of Wyken, near Worfield, to the bend in the road opposite *'The Wheel Inn'* to see if he was coming home down the road.

Philip Henry (always known as Harry to his friends and family) had only tenuous links to Ireland, but he signed up with an Irish regiment because he could do so 'under-age' and thus escape the tedium of the life of an errand boy and grocery apprentice in Ludlow for one of supposed adventure in foreign lands. He was 15 years old when he gladly succumbed to the sales pitch of an army recruiting officer who was out and about in Shropshire and put on the uniform of a British soldier.

Harry had been born in Manchester in 1886. His father was a police officer whose family came from Devon and his mother, Mary Hardwick, came from Ludlow. As a child, Harry spent many holidays in Shropshire visiting his mother's relatives and their friends – including the family of Ethel Elizabeth Fryer, who lived at Broad Lanes, near Tuck Hill.

Harry had two sisters. His older sister, Annie, died when he was 9 years old, and then his father died three years later. His mother was already unwell and so Harry and his younger sister, Margaret, were sent to Ludlow where Harry lived for a short time with his grandmother and Margaret was taken into the care of the local authority. Their mother died a few months after they had arrived in Shropshire. She was 43 years old.

By then, Harry was fifteen years old, had left school, and was apprenticed to a grocer in Ludlow – but he was persuaded to enlist as a soldier. He was recruited to the 2nd Battalion of the Connaught Rangers and soon found himself at the

Tilbury Docks outside London embarking on a ship for India. He served in India for the next several years, coming back to Shropshire when he had leave.

On one of those occasions, he was staying with his aunt and thought to go to visit Ethel Fryer at Broad Lanes. She wasn't at home, being employed in domestic service several miles away, but her parents were there and (according to Ethel, over seventy years later),

'thought him summat wonderful, 'cos he was all upright, as soldiers are, you know'

The following year, in early 1905, she made sure that she was at home when Harry called, and they spent the day together,

'a trip all around High Rock [near Bridgnorth] - those places where if you ever fell down, you broke your neck - and snow on the ground, and Dad was very amused to think that we should choose a place like that to go out for the day!'



Philip Henry Chapple, taken in the Punjab, India

From that day, when Harry was 19 years old and Ethel was 26, it was assumed that they would one day marry, but Harry had just signed on for another five-year tour of duty with the British Army. So, he returned to India and Ethel returned to her work as a housemaid to the gentry – at that time as a housemaid for the family of the botanist, Spencer Bickham, at 'Underdown' in Ledbury.

Five years turned into seven as Harry was obliged to extend his period of duty to be in Delhi for the Durbar in December 1911 when King George V and Queen Mary were celebrated as Emperor and Empress of India. That day, Harry was on duty at the Queen's Gate and picked up some pebbles to take back to Ethel as a souvenir.

Eventually, he arrived back in Britain and left the army. He and Ethel were married on 27 May 1912 at the church in Tuck Hill.

'It was a Monday, so no-one could come because it was washday.'

On their wedding day, it was Harry's 26th birthday and Ethel was 32 years old. Ethel's father had died a few months previously, and after their wedding Ethel and Harry lived at her old home in Broad Lanes with Ethel's mother. It was Ethel's

mother who found an advertisement for a job that might suit Harry in his new civilian state. It was in the grocery trade in Cardiff, so Harry set off for the day for an interview. He was successful, found lodgings for them all, and Ethel and her mother soon joined him in Cardiff where he began work with the grocers '*Stranaghan and Stephens*'.



Philip Henry Chapple,
as a civilian

They all had a happy time exploring Cardiff over the following summer. During that time, Ethel became pregnant with their first child and all three of them began to wonder about returning to Shropshire where they had friends and close family members who would support their growing family. Meanwhile, as summer turned into autumn, Harry announced that he hadn't had a proper Christmas for years, so they made plans for a special festival in December 1912, gathered fruits for the pudding, and prepared the celebrations. Then a letter arrived from the Post Office in Bridgnorth, offering Harry a job as a postman – but he had to be back in time for the Christmas post. So he left Cardiff, started work as a postman and began to look for lodgings for the family in or around Bridgnorth. Eventually, with help from relatives who kept *The Railway Tavern* at 68, Cartway, and from the local MP, William Foster, Harry found accommodation for them all in a house at *Severn View*, on the banks of the river in the Low Town of Bridgnorth. Back in Cardiff, Ethel and her mother enjoyed the Christmas pudding on their own.

By the summer of 1914, Harry and Ethel were living at *Severn View* with their two little daughters - Sybil (born in March 1913) and Phyllis (born in July 1914) – and with Ethel's mother. Harry was still working for the Post Office, but war was imminent and all veteran soldiers were recalled for duty. Harry was required to report to his regiment, and in her very old age Ethel still remembered him leaving at about 8 o'clock one evening in early August 1914. Sybil was then about 17 months old, and Phyllis had been born just four weeks previously.

'I said goodbye to him upstairs. Phyl was in her little bed there, and Syb was in her bed. He had to go to Ireland to join his regiment. And he said, "I shan't be away long."

[Long silence]

Anyway, it's been a long while, ain't it?'



Ethel, Sybil and Phyllis Chapple

After Ethel received the telegram informing her of Harry's presumed death, her mother encouraged her to move out of Bridgnorth to somewhere rural where they could be more self-sufficient. They went to live in a small cottage in Wyken, near to Worfield where some of their relatives lived and where the local Wilcox family gave them a great deal of support. They kept hens, grew vegetables in the garden, and attended church and school in Worfield.

Over the next twenty years, Ethel involved herself with the life of Wyken and Worfield – and never ever forgot Harry. When her mother died in 1916, Ethel had Harry's name added to her gravestone at Tuck Hill (at her mother's request). Over the next few years, she would often walk the six miles from her cottage in Wyken to the graveyard with her two young daughters to lay flowers at the graves of Harry and her parents, and share with her girls her memories of their father – whom they never knew. It wasn't always easy when the children were little:

'I used to walk from Wyken to Tuck Hill with the pushchair or pram. One walked a bit, and then the other walked a bit. We used to take flowers and all that sort of thing. They knew all about it even when they was little. They were two knowing things, and I used to tell them about these sort of things.'

Ethel Elizabeth Chapple was my grandmother, and she told us these stories about her life. Some of them we recorded (as quoted above) in 1978, when she was 99 years old and when her memory was still razor-sharp. I am working on writing her biography.

Philip Henry Chapple 27 May 1886 – 19 September 1914

Ethel Elizabeth Chapple (née Fryer) 13 October 1879 – 3 August 1983

Ainslie Hepburn 7609 ainslie_hepburn@hotmail.com

Editor: Alongside this article Ainslie has provided some further information as follows on the next page.

I am currently researching, comparing, and writing about the life stories of all four of my and my husband's grandmothers, including that of my beloved maternal grandmother, Ethel Elizabeth Chapple (née Fryer) who was born in Broad Lanes, near Tuck Hill. This remained her home until she married, although there were long periods during that time when she was living away in residential domestic service as a house or parlour maid.

Her husband was Philip Henry Chapple (Harry), who was killed in France at the very beginning of the First World War. His name is inscribed on the war memorial in Bridgnorth and also on memorials in Worfield, where Ethel became a devoted worshipper, member of the Mothers' Union, flower arranger, and brass cleaner. During the time after Harry's death - from about 1915 to 1936 - Ethel was living in the hamlet of Wyken, which neighbours the village of Worfield.

Ethel was my grandmother. My mother (Sybil) and her sister grew up with her in Wyken and attended the primary school within walking distance in Worfield before being offered scholarships (courtesy of the Post Office) at Bridgnorth Grammar School. In 1929, my mother left Shropshire for London, where she trained as a nurse, married, started a family, and set up her new home. Her sister (Phyllis) remained with her mother in Wyken until she married in 1935. She then went to live with her husband in Gloucester, where Ethel soon joined them. Ethel lived with Phyllis and her family for the rest of her long life.

I am grateful to everyone in Shropshire and the surrounding area who has shared their memories with me over the past few years – and I am always pleased to hear new stories. When I was growing up in the vast metropolis of London, it was a complete mystery to me that anyone had ever been able to address a letter simply to 'Mrs Chapple, Wyken' and expect it to arrive. And then I arrived in Wyken and I began to understand it all!

Ainslie is a writer, tutor, and social historian. Her first book 'A Jew who defeated Nazism: Herbert Sulzbach's Peace, Reconciliation, and a New Germany' was published in 2022, and her next book, 'In the Footsteps of the Holocaust: The Story and Letters of a German Jewish Family', was published in January 2025. This book describes the life story of her husband's grandparents, Henny (née Scheuer) and Hermann Hartog.

A Tragedy in Shrawardine

In the early afternoon of December 28, 1944 an American Liberator Bomber on its final practice mission out of Old Buckenham airbase in Norfolk was flying at 10,000 feet over Shropshire when both starboard engines failed [and were “feathered”]. It passed over Montford Bridge in a north-westerly direction at about 8,000 feet and then it was observed over Nesscliffe at about 2,000 feet. The pilot Elmer Mitchell decided to try to make an emergency landing at Montford Bridge RAF Aerodrome. There were no clouds and the wind calm but, as the plane descended, a layer of haze restricted visibility to between 1,000 and 2,000 feet. With the wheels retracted the pilot headed for Montford Bridge when on approach with the wheels down [according to an eye-witness on the ground] a third engine (on the port side) cut out causing the pilot to overshoot the runway and crash into a river bank. The aircraft disintegrated on impact with wreckage strewn 200 yards ahead of the rear part of the aircraft which remained intact on the bank of the river. During the descent the pilot ordered Flight Officer Walter Ernest PATSCHEIDER to the rear of the plane, an order which saved Walter’s life. The remaining five members of the crew were killed. They had only recently been awarded the Air Medal for the largest number of successive missions and were to be the lead plane in a forthcoming mission.

A memorial was dedicated to the crew on 20 September, 2003 by the “*Local Heritage Initiative Project*”. It is displayed at the village green in Shrawardine.

It reads:



733 Squadron

*In memory of the American Aircrew who crash
landed*

*in plane no. B24-J42-51361 Liberator Bomber
at the Clamp Farm, Shrawardine
on the 28th December 1944*

The following received fatal injuries

*2/LT James GILBERT, 2/LT Elmer MITCHELL, 2/
LT Paul PETERSON, S/SGT Roger BATCHELDER,
T/SGT Gwilym RICHARDS*

Survivor F/O Walter PATSCHEIDER

Walter Patscheider was born in Massachusetts in 1925 and attested at Boston in 1943. His paternal grandparents were immigrants from Germany. He graduated from Flying Training Command bombardier - navigator school in Texas and had been "overseas" for six months prior to the crash. He recovered quickly from the accident and now a "2nd Lieutenant, Bombardier" was flying again soon after which culminated in his being shot down at 22,000 feet over "North Holland" in March 1945 on a bombing mission to Brunswick in Germany. All the twelve man crew bailed out. Two were picked up by the Dutch underground and the ten remaining including Walter were captured. Walter spent the following two months until the end of the War as a POW. When the "Casualty Questionnaire" was compiled Walter was named as a 1st Lieutenant.

After the War, Walter married and had five daughters. He spent time in Japan and Germany before settling back in the USA where it appears he was involved with work linked to the Apollo Lunar Landing Project in 1970 as he received an official "appreciation certificate" which appears to have been actually signed by Buzz Aldrin, Neil Armstrong and Michael Collins.

Walter died in 1994 and is buried in Virginia.

References:

- AAF Station 342, War Department and US Army Air Forces - Report of Aircraft Accident; compiled 8 January 1945 [Ref: MB/62/1/P1] and 15 January 1945. This contains actually pictures of the wreckage.
- Missing Air Crew Report 13734 - War Dept. Headquarters, Army Air Forces, Washington [1945]
- NASA Apollo "appreciation" certificate dated 18 February 1970.
- Prisoner of War Medal information - American Museum, Bath.
- Carl Stanton, Countryside Ranger for Shrawardine area, is the person who researched Walter P for the plaque they put up.

Research by Ian Cripps 7541 and Stephen Mulloy.

Editor: This is a great example of how we can get drawn into research related to those who have no direct connection with us. They may not be our ancestors, but they still have their own stories to tell and it can often lead us down some interesting paths as we start exploring, often into areas we never knew about previously.

Two Unfortunate Young Girls

For some time now I have been a member of a team volunteering at Shropshire Archives on a project to digitise the Calendar of Prisoners. This involves putting on a spreadsheet a list of accused people along with the crimes they are charged with and, in most cases, the result of their trial at the Quarter Sessions or the Assizes. During this process, I have come across a couple of very interesting cases which I thought I would share with you. I have been working on the project for some time and have done several batches but, strangely, both these cases occurred in the same batch.

The first appeared in the General Quarter Sessions for the County of Shropshire held at the Shirehall in Shrewsbury on 30 December 1850. It is the case of Fanny Phillips, a labourer, aged ten (yes ten!), who is charged with stealing at the parish of Dawley, one bonnet, one shawl and other articles, the property of John Jones. She is found guilty and sentenced to transportation for seven years. I found this quite remarkable and so decided to investigate further. I found her in the 1851 census at Millbank Prison, along with dozens of other convicts, awaiting transportation. Further research by a criminal historian at Aberystwyth University uncovered the fact that she was, in fact, transported aboard the ship '*Anna Maria*' on 26 January 1852 to Van Dieman's Land, now known as Tasmania. I wonder what happened to her.

The second case appeared in the Oswestry Quarter Sessions on 26th December 1851. Susannah Friday Foundling was found guilty of stealing sundry items of wearing apparel in a dwelling house. She was sentenced to one month imprisonment with hard labour at the House of Correction in Shrewsbury. I thought that her name was very strange so I looked to see if I could find a baptism. I was surprised to find the following entry in the Whittington baptisms:

9 October 1835 Susan Foundling found in Daywell and taken to the House of Industry in Oswestry.

Just to be sure I looked up 9 October 1835 and - lo and behold - it was a Friday! How sad - what chance did she stand?

Christine Head 5373

'Temmer': A Sad Tale From Shrewsbury

Childhood in Bicton

I came across the name '*Temmer*' in the 1871 census while researching the life of my great-grandmother Charlotte TAYLOR (nee JONES, later LEWIS). Then aged 14, Charlotte had a younger sister aged 10, called, apparently '*Temmer*'. A Welsh name, perhaps, I thought: my mother had often suggested that her family had Welsh roots. However, my co-researcher put forward a much more obvious solution, that this was a transcription error and that the girl's name was Jemima JONES. I have since discovered that Jemima's life was turbulent and tragic; it also reveals a vivid and sometimes surprising picture of Shrewsbury and its rural hinterland in the later nineteenth century.

As described in my article '*Bicton and Berrington*' (September 2023), the Jones family lived near Bicton, in various tied cottages belonging to the country estates of Rosshall Grange or The Isle. In 1861, Edward JONES, an '*ag lab*' aged 65 and his wife Charlotte (40) were living at '*Down Rossall*' with their children Martha (19), Joseph (5) and Charlotte Junior (3). The census was taken on 7 April that year. The life of Jemima Jones was about to begin in typically troubled fashion.

The parish register of Bicton old church records Jemima's baptism on 19 May, 1861. Exactly one month later, we find the record of her father's burial. Edward's remains lie, presumably, in the ruins of the old churchyard described in my previous article; the present church of Holy Trinity replaced it twenty years later. On Christmas Day 1862, Jemima's mother married another labourer much older than herself, Richard LEWIS. Within 18 months, little Jemima had lost her father and gained a stepfather. The family's next appearance in the records is in the 1871 census, when Lewis (74) is living at '*Rosshall Cottages*' with his wife (47) and their younger daughters Charlotte (14) and '*Temmer*' – Jemima – aged 10.

After a gap of seven years, Jemima re-appears in a way that seems to bring her childhood to an end with something of a shock. On 17 April 1878, Eddowes's Shrewsbury Journal reported that she had been charged with theft at the County Police Court. While her mother was out, Jemima had gone to her house (now at 'Isle Cottages'), obtained the key from a neighbour and stolen clothes and three shillings in cash. Later a constable had arrested her in Shrewsbury, in '*a house of ill-fame*' in the Frankwell area; she was wearing the stolen clothes. She was

nearly seventeen and *'out of a situation'*, the court heard, but her actions seem brazen and spiteful rather than desperate – the acquiring of the key, the wearing of the stolen clothes, the fact that she was easily found in Shrewsbury's *'red light district'*. Jemima may have been alienated from her family by this time; the fact that her mother resorted so quickly to the police suggests that the split was deep. She pleaded guilty; judging by similar cases, she may have received a short prison sentence.

Jemima Higgins and her family

Events moved quickly in Jemima's life. In the census of 1881, at the age of 20, she appears as the wife of Michael HIGGINS, *'labourer in an ironworks'* (no marriage record yet found); they are living in Rainforth St, Bolton. In December of that year, Michael died of *'Tetanus Bronchitis'* at 8 Bridge St, Shrewsbury; he was 23. A month later, Jemima gave birth to their son in the workhouse at Cross Houses. She called him Michael, but at his baptism in Bicton in March 1882, his given name was Benjamin (perhaps at his grandmother's insistence) – and so it remained.

Where Jemima met Michael, whether they were actually married, whether they moved to Bolton or were just visiting – all of this will probably remain unknown. However, these records do establish the locations that were now the parameters of Jemima's life – the workhouse at Cross Houses, the Welsh Bridge area of Shrewsbury and the family home at Bicton, the latter implying some degree of reconciliation with her now widowed mother. In June 1885 she gave birth to a second child in the workhouse: three months later, her daughter Gertrude was baptised at St Chad's, Shrewsbury, with the register making no mention of a father. The address given looks like *'Billard's Passage'*; I haven't traced this place, but it was doubtless one of the *'shuts'* or alleyways off Mardol, near the Welsh Bridge.

Let us pause to consider the institution that played such a large part in Jemima's life. By the time that her children were born there, this was the main workhouse for the Shrewsbury area: known as the Atcham Union, it received paupers from 45 parishes, stretching to the Welsh border and beyond, and provided facilities for



550 inmates. New buildings including an infirmary, dining room and nurses home were added throughout the later nineteenth century. It is often referred to as the 'Berrington workhouse', but was actually in Cross Houses (for more information, see <https://workhouses.org.uk/>). From the 1870s, sick people and pregnant women were able to access some workhouse infirmaries without entering as inmates. It seems that this was the case with Jemima, as her children were born in the workhouse but baptised outside.

The Wholesale Clothes Robbery

Any idea that Jemima was getting her life back on track by 1885 were dispelled by Eddowes's Shrewsbury Journal on 23 December of that year: a complex story of crime was revealed under the title '*The Wholesale Clothes Robbery in Shrewsbury*' and Jemima was at the centre of it. Elizabeth HOGAN kept a shop in Princess St, where she employed women, including Jemima, Evelyn TEMPLE and the GROVE sisters, to '*repair and re-make clothing*'. Suspecting theft, Mrs Hogan had confronted Jemima, found goods that were allegedly stolen and sent for a detective. It is worth quoting Jemima's words when challenged:

'If I have taken another black dress, a hat, an old skirt, but Mrs Temple and Groves has taken twice as much as me. They have taken carpets, hearthrugs, besides clothing. Jones and Mansell have pledged things for me and they have the tickets.'

'Jones' refers to her elder sister Martha, now aged 43, and it turned out that the sisters were lodging with another accomplice, Amelia MANSELL, in Carnarvon Lane.

Jemima's defiance still rings out loud and clear today. It continued in court when Mrs Hogan was '*cross-examined by Higgins and Temple at some length*' and seemed confused about some of the allegedly stolen goods. Further evidence, though, (after the magistrates had lunched) made it clear that the accused were running a racket in which the stolen clothes were being '*laundered*' by Mansell and Martha Jones to obtain money from pawnbrokers in the neighbourhood. Jemima was charged with stealing clothes worth £25 and, like the other women, she pleaded guilty. She was sentenced to four months imprisonment.

Reflections on a Tragic Life

After Jemima's release, events rushed to a shocking conclusion. In August 1886, she was living in Mason's Passage, another of the alleyways off Mardol. There

on 7 August, her daughter Gertrude died of '*enteritis and convulsions*' at the age of thirteen months. Amid the tragedy there is further evidence of Jemima's forthright character. A month after the death of her daughter, she appeared in court once more, this time as '*prosecutrix*', accusing Esther BOWEN of stealing a petticoat worth 1/6d; Jemima had '*left it in her box at the defendant's house*' in Mason's Passage and later saw Bowen '*wearing it as a skirt*'. Bowen said she had taken the item because Jemima owed her money. The reference to '*her box*' suggests that Jemima was lodging with Bowen as she had lodged with Mansell in a nearby alleyway. The case was dismissed.

Jemima was fighting on, but defeat was at hand. Within another month (6 October) she died of peritonitis at the Cross Houses workhouse; she was 25. There is, perhaps, a danger of exaggerating the bleakness of her life and death. There had been some sort of reconciliation with her mother and her son Benjamin was living at the family cottage. Perhaps her mother and brother Joseph were able to provide some help in her troubles; maybe they visited at the end. In 1891, nine-year-old Benjamin was still living at Isle Cottages with his grandmother and uncle. In the 1901 census, Benjamin Higgins, farm labourer aged 19, is living with his Aunt Charlotte and eight of her children at Rudge, near Worfield. All efforts to trace him after that record have so far failed.

The story of Jemima's short and troubled life prompts many reflections. She was very typical of so many country girls who preferred to take their chances in a nearby town rather than settle for domestic service in a '*big house*'. Many, like Jemima, fell in with '*the wrong crowd*' and got involved in crime and prostitution – let's remember that, at sixteen, she was found in '*a house of ill-fame*'. The case of the '*Wholesale Clothes Robbery*' could be subject to different interpretations. Was Jemima a hardened criminal or an opportunist looking for much-needed cash for herself and her baby? Was she exploited by older accomplices such as Mansell and Martha Jones? It may well have been that her defiant attitude caused her to be regarded as the ringleader.

Most interesting to me is the comparison between Jemima and her sister Charlotte, my great-grandmother, whose life I have described elsewhere ('*On the Move*', March 2020). Charlotte married a wagoner, lived on many isolated farms, had thirteen children and became the revered '*Granny Taylor*' to 42 grandchildren, including my mother. I have a photo of her, surrounded by family, from 1932, six years before her death; her face is strong and kind. Maybe it was just the unkind twists of fate that prevented Jemima from having a life like Charlotte's.

Unlike her sister, it seems that Jemima left nothing behind: even her son Benjamin seems to have vanished from the records. Some of her Shrewsbury haunts can still be traced today, notably Carnarvon Lane, an alley behind the Shrewsbury Hotel (Wetherspoons). However, Jemima is almost unique among my ancestors in that her voice can still be heard, that defiant voice in which she confronted her accusers. She was certainly a strong character: she fought for survival in a world that gave her little but the hardest of knocks, and, as her great-great nephew, I have to admire that. I am glad that she is no longer the mysterious '*Temmer*' but a person with a story of her own who has taken her place on the family tree, along with her family, Michael, Benjamin and Gertrude.

With thanks to Sue Bentley for the use of her research and to Shropshire Archives staff for their help.

I would be glad to discuss any aspects of this article.

David Stokes, 7734 david.stokes7@tiscali.co.uk

Ancestry and the 1921 Census

I expect by now that many of you will be aware that Ancestry now have the 1921 Census among their records which, if you have an account with them, and not with Findmypast, will be a useful resource for discovering more about your more recent ancestors.

As you will most likely already know, but perhaps worth repeating, this is the last UK census that will be available until 2051 when the 1951 census will be published. However, a lot will probably have changed in the next 30 years, so who knows! Hopefully the research we do now, and the information we have learnt from our more recent ancestors, will already have given us a good or better understanding of our family and what they were up to in the last 100 years so we might not be quite so reliant on the census to help us.

If you don't have an account with either of these subscription sites you can view the records for free at Shropshire Archives (open on Thursdays, every morning from 10-1pm and the last Thursday afternoon of each month from 1-4pm) and at Shropshire Libraries across the county during their opening hours.

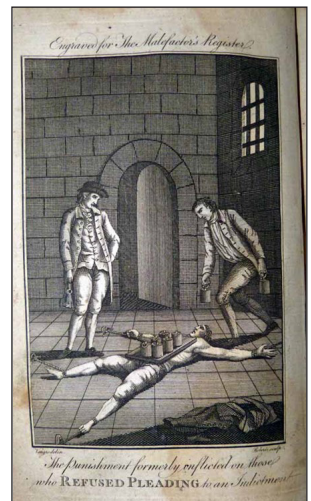
Crime and Punishment in Rural Shropshire, 1768-1898

Review of the talk by Dr Robert Hodge on 19 November 2024

The speaker said the unusual dates were determined by the availability of Assize Calendars. His research centred on a few places in South Shropshire, especially Halesowen (then in Shropshire, now in Worcestershire) and Cleobury Mortimer, where records cover more than 80 years.

He pointed out some generalities:

- Offences involving donkeys were common, but many were not prosecuted.
- The punishment of *Peine forte et dure* (French for hard and forceful punishment) involved placing heavier and heavier stones on the chest of defendants who refused to plead, until they either did plead or suffocated. It was abolished in 1772. Criminals could only be punished if they volunteered for it! [See image: *Peine forte et dure*, from the Malefactor's Register, 1780 (Wikipedia)]
- In 1790 the practice of burning women at the stake, was abolished.
- In 1898 defendants were allowed to give evidence on oath.
- Juries often took only minutes to reach a verdict.
- Groups formed mutual societies to prosecute criminals.
- When people were accused of a crime, a grand jury was selected to decide if it should go to court.



Although many thought crime was out of control and increasing, evidence suggests it was actually very low. Even for the whole country, the number of cases only reached about 20,000, though the populous believed it was rising inexorably. The speaker showed a graph with three large peaks when crime rose greatly. One of these was in 1817-1821, attributed to soldiers returning from the Napoleonic wars. Others were in the 1840s and 1860s, but reasons are unclear.

Poaching was a crime dealt with by magistrates unless it involved money. Offences relating to game were very few, though daytime poaching isn't shown in the statistics as it was tried by magistrates. Theft of fowl was perhaps driven by hunger. In Cleobury Mortimer, 24 of 32 found guilty of stealing fowl were sentenced to three months imprisonment, though in a few cases the penalty was transportation.

Illegitimate childbirth was an area where women came off badly. It wasn't the illegitimacy, which hadn't been punishable under the law since 1689, but that the child would be chargeable to the parish in which it was born. Between 1787-1801, 15% of people indicted were women who had bastard children. An alternative route for the women was infanticide (of a newborn), which only applied to women with illegitimate children. In 1803, a new offence of concealment was passed. Popular opinion deprecated infanticide but saw it as a lesser crime than murder. Infanticide attracted the death penalty until 1922.

Theft and burglary were common offences. The law differentiated between daytime break-ins and thefts at night. Theft of goods worth more than 1/- (shilling) in 1827, attracted the death penalty, as did stealing goods from a shop worth more than 5/- in 1869.

One of the most common crimes was theft of clothing, either due to want or to sell (witness the artful dodger and silk handkerchiefs in the Dickens novel 'Oliver Twist'). Punishment was usually 3-6 months in prison, but one person was transported for seven years for stealing a hat! Clothes were very easy to pass on.

Theft of food was common and hunger was often used as a defence, but it is hard to show how much was due to hunger and how much due to criminality. It was often seasonal, dropping in the summer when food was more available. In winter months thefts often doubled, and much involved alcohol.

Some crime was committed by groups, often family members. Sentences could differ considerably. He noted one case where a grandmother was given 'no bill' (being found guilty but without trial) but her grand-daughter was transported!

Another crime was burning hay-ricks. In 1865, five men each got five years penal servitude for it. It was often done as a protest to farmers for not supplying bread.

Crimes against animals were also treated harshly. Over 30% of those found guilty were transported.

Punishment

The most severe punishment was execution. Between 1800-1810 about 200-250 offences carried the death penalty. Between 1801-1837, there were 51 executions in Shropshire; in 1837 there were eight, all for murder. Until 1823 judges had no option but to impose the death penalty. Sometimes a convict was granted clemency, and this appears in the calendars as 'condemned and reprieved'. Reprieve was until the end of the Assize, and sometimes this was only granted as they were climbing the scaffold! If sentenced to transportation or death for a felony, there was no appeal. If the judge didn't grant clemency, the felon had to appeal to the King. The speaker related how Sir James Parke, an assize judge and thus not needing to know the law, sentenced many to death. Children were often sentenced to death, but few executions were carried out. Judges meted out the death sentence frequently often for trivial crimes, but could be loath to, not because of any dislike, but because if they could do an Assize hearing without executions they were presented with a pair of new white gloves!!!.

Transportation to Australia (mainly, although sometimes America) was the next worst. Answering a later question, he said prisoners transported to Australia (assuming they survived the voyage), were expected to find a job and pay for keep. It was 100 times better, but they had no way back until the penalty was served (it was the death penalty if they did), and they had to pay for it. It was better to start a sheep farm! No prisoners were taken to New Zealand (though some may have made their own way there).

Whipping followed by imprisonment was common but was said to have little effect, and whipping of women had been abolished. Whipping as a sentence was only abolished in 1948.

Penalties for theft of items belonging to others were dealt with more severely. Even violent assault may have resulted in a fine of as little as 6d – people were not considered property!

Being accused of an offence took away all rights. At court the accused was not allowed to speak in case they swayed the jury. It wasn't until the 1920s that grand juries were abolished and people allowed to speak in their defence. Women were not allowed to sit on juries unless the case was specific to women. Most cases lasted just 30 minutes in court, and lawyers may only have met their clients minutes before the case. Juries didn't leave the court and gathered in a huddle

for their deliberations, which lasted on average three minutes! It was a difficult time in court and also for those seeking justice.

Some sentences appear strange, e.g. being whipped twice, sentenced to prison then publicly whipped, and one case of a person sentenced to prison, then to death!

After the talk there were questions, including:

Were repeat offenders e.g. for drunk and disorderly treated more harshly if they were women?

- No, but cases were dealt with by magistrates, so evidence is harder to find. Women, tainted by the illegitimacy laws and the cost to the parish costs of bastard children, were treated more harshly in general. Men were never punished for having illegitimate children.

Could you define hard labour?

- Usually breaking rocks, into pieces small enough for road building as that was also an income generator. In workhouses women worked on 'oakum' (twisted tarred flax), which had to be unpicked, making fingers bleed.

How do Houses of Correction differ from prison?

- Slightly lower than prison, with conditions minimally less harsh. The parish may have paid for children incarcerated.

What about machine breaking in Shropshire? Were there riots?

- In Cleobury Mortimer the Riot Act was read once, and the dragoons dispatched from Worcester.

Were Assize sessions always the same length?

- Depended on the number of crimes but were usually about one month and occurred four times a year.

Do jail records give prisoner descriptions?

- No, just parish and age. Photos only came along in late 19th century.

Would an accused be held in jail?

- Yes, until the case was heard.

Peter Tandy 7709

Posted in the Past

Review of the talk by Helen Baggott on 17 December 2024

The speaker said she had a collection of postcards each of which had been sent to a named person, and then had researched the genealogy of the person, revealing some interesting histories.

The golden era for postcards was from the late Victorian period up to WW1. Many millions were sent, and as pointed out, at a cost of just ½d when a letter cost 1d. Messages were often very simple, and they were not always domestic, but also sometimes commercial. Often people arriving at a destination would send a postcard home to say they had arrived. Most postcards were produced in Germany, but the outbreak of war in 1914 curtailed that.

She started doing it after her father bought a postcard many years ago at a 'boot sale', because it was sent (in 1913) from the USA and had a stamp on it. The addressee was a member of the Coldstream Guards, stationed at Chelsea Barracks, London, and this inspired the speaker to investigate further. The speaker used this and two other examples to illustrate the talk.

The Guardsman turned out to be Private William Gilbert Freeman. She learned that he was sent to the Somme and sadly was killed there. Further research showed he was born at Freshford, near Bath, to a William Freeman and his wife. Although a small place, it did have some industry at the time including a brewery and a mill. Indeed, William (the father) was at some time manager of the mill. William was married twice and had a number of sons. One of them, William Jnr, moved to Saltash, Cornwall, and set up a vegetable shop business there. The war memorial in Saltash also shows a member of the Gilbert family who was killed. The speaker also discovered that a war memorial in the village of Shelford, Gloucestershire shows a William Freeman, but she has been unable to be sure it is the same one, nor say why he might have been there. Research and postings on social media have also put her in touch with members of the Freeman family in the USA.

The second example was a card sent from Dorking in Surrey to a Mr Leonard Whitford, who was living in Ontario, California. Leonard had been born in London, and his father, Samuel, was a first-generation silversmith. His grandfather, Leonard (II) was secretary to the children's hospital, now known as Great Ormond Street

hospital. He was heavily engaged in raising money by arranging talks for people to pay to listen to. One of those who donated was apparently Charles Dickens. In the time, about 460,000 children were treated and some £20m (at today's values) was raised. He is largely an unknown hero today and was especially pleasing for the speaker to have 'discovered' him. She also found and showed a number of postcards sent to children at the hospital while he was employed there.

The third example was a card sent from Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire, in 1906, to a Mrs Jones in Liverpool. The sender proved to be 'Will' (William), one of Mrs Jones' sons. She was born in 1851 near Bath, and was an agricultural labourer. In 1861 despite her age, she was working in a laundry in Bath, and 10 years later, still in Bath, was working as a cook. Many of her siblings had died. She moved to Liverpool by 1877, where she met a ship's carpenter. They got married, and, living in Burdett Street to where the card was addressed, decided to keep the children together and educate them. At 10 years of age, one of them ('Will') was sent to work in the docks.

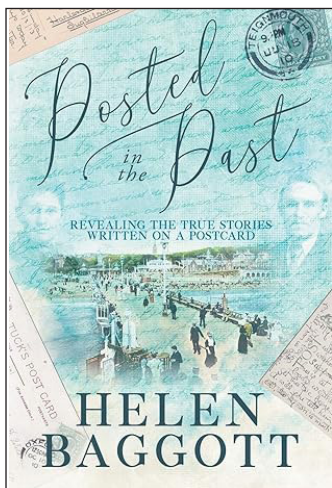
Regarding methodology to research a sender (or recipient), she said she searches for the name in an official document, e.g. a census return, and works from there. She often puts the name into a Google search engine, or posts it on an E-bay tip off site, so that when an object is put up for sale, she gets a notification. That way she has managed to accumulate a lot of relevant material at very low prices. She said she makes a point of not researching them further forwards than the postcard, as finding later people might also expose awkward family situations.

It was an interesting talk and showed what might be revealed by a simple postcard.

Anyone who wants to learn more of these examples and others could consult one of Helen's books on the subject including this one: *Posted in the Past: Revealing the true stories written on a postcard*.

After the talk members spoke of having cards from their ancestors written in curious ways, including in shorthand or even Morse code.

Peter Tandy 7709



Apprenticeship Records

Review of talk given by Richard Holt on 21 January 2025

As a tutor for Pharos, the speaker gave a tutorial lecture on Apprenticeship Records.

Apprenticeships are believed to have started in the 12th Century in London, and became known as the 'Custom of London'; they were adopted by other boroughs. By 1563 they were a natural model under the Statute of Artificers and Apprentices Act. The Poor Law Acts of 1597 and 1601 made provision for children of paupers and young beggars to be apprenticed by parish overseers. The Stamp Duty Act of 1709 imposed a tax on apprenticeship premiums, and registers of payments were kept. In 1802, the Registration of Pauper Apprentices Act meant parishes had to keep records (it was already done in London since 1766). The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, transferred responsibility to the Guardians of Poor Law Unions. In 1851 the Poor Law Apprentices Act sought better conditions for pauper apprentices, and stated Receiving Officers had to look at children every six months.

There were three types of apprenticeship:

- a. Private: where it was arranged between parents or guardian, and a master
- b. Charity: generally for deserving poor where a charity supported it and imposed their own criteria
- c. Pauper (or Parish) Apprenticeship: arranged by overseers of the poor or Guardians of the Poor Law Unions. Parents had no say in it if they wanted to claim poor relief.

The speaker listed the following records, all of which may contain useful information: Apprentice Indentures, Borough/City Registers, Parish Registers, Poor Law Unions, Guild Records, Registers of Freemen, Poll Books, Charity Records, Quarter Session or Court Records, Newspapers, and Settlement Examinations

Apprentice Indentures

Indentures are legal documents, which set out the obligations of both apprentice and master, as well as the trade to be learned and the time-period of the apprenticeship. They are so named because when drawn up, the pre-printed

forms were cut off at the top in a wavy or toothed line with each party keeping one portion to prevent fraud (dent = from Latin 'dens' for tooth, as in dentures, dentist etc). Forms were generally the same for private or parish indentures; Charity indentures were completed in triplicate. Many private indentures are lost as they were kept by the individuals concerned, while parish indentures were kept in the Parish Chest with a better survival rate, and charities kept copies of their indentures. Without Apprentice Indentures, there was no apprenticeship!

Borough and City Registers

As a Book Register (rather than loose sheets) these recorded at least the date of the indenture, the master's name, the apprentice's name, the term length, the trade to be learned...but often much more.

Parish Registers of Apprenticeships

These started in 1802 (a bit earlier in London) and contain more information than the indenture. They usually name the parents, information not usually given in paper indentures, and may state the fee (premium) paid to the Master.

Poor Law Union Registers

These are similar and contain similar information to the Parish Registers of Apprenticeships.

Relieving Officers' Reports

Relieving Officers worked for the Guardians of the poor and examined each relief case with a remit to visit each family and make a report. They also visited all paupers receiving relief.

Stamp Duty Registers

Stamp duty was introduced as a levy on a number of items, including apprenticeship indentures. Images can be found on Amazon, while the Society of Genealogists has an index on Findmypast, and they are downloadable on The National Archive website. They are useful but limited and pauper apprenticeships are not recorded.

Guild Records

These are records of the various Livery Companies and comprise a wide set of records including court books, registers of apprentices, registers of Freemen, and Quarterage books.

Freeman Registers

Many apprentices, having served their time, became Freeman of the City, and details can be found in their registers. Journeymen were those who had completed their apprenticeship, but not set up a business so could not take on workers.

Poll Books

These are indentures of people allowed to vote. The speaker illustrated these with copies of actual records. He also reminded people looking at Indentures to look in the margins and especially on the backs where much additional information is often written.

Case Study

At the end, the speaker showed an actual case study of the family of John and Jane Alders, originally from Long Sutton (Lincolnshire) but latterly of Wisbech (Cambs). The family word was that a son (Bartholomew) had emigrated to America in 1763. He first reviewed the evidence, including parish registers from Wisbech, noting all the Alders found. A search of Apprenticeship records for Wisbech found John Alders as a wheelwright. Then he assembled a timeline, and from this he was able to show that the son, Bartholomew, was not the same as a Bartholomew located in America by the family.

At the end of a fascinating talk there were a few questions:

Not much was said about girls. Did they normally go 'into service'?

- Being 'in service' was different from doing an apprenticeship. As a servant they may have had a contract, but that is not an indenture.

You said that Bartholomew Alders (or Aldis) was a member of the Cheesemongers guild, but surely there was no cheesemongers guild?

- Yes, though his indenture was to the Clothworkers' guild, but cheese making requires a lot of cloth.

An ancestor was a member of the Burgesses Roll in Shrewsbury. Is that the same as going through an apprenticeship?

- No, it's different, but linked. Burgesses were Freemen of the borough.

Peter Tandy 7709

From the Society's Journal - 40 Years On

'HELP!' entitled the opening paragraph of the March 1985 Journal. The new Editor for the Journal had been promoted to a post in the South of England and had to retire before he had barely begun. A volunteer was urgently sought! (Does the request for volunteers sound familiar? We have vacancies on our committee waiting for you today!) *[Editor: Déjà vu - please see my editorial on page 44!]*

The Committee had enthusiastically decided we should purchase the new International Genealogical Index (IGI) records (Wow!). They invited members to identify which Counties would be of most interest.

Members were reminded of the opportunity to attend the Annual Conference of the National Genealogical Society to be held in America. There was no mention of cost!

Members were also reminded that the Womens Institute would be holding an Exhibition at the Council Chamber in Shropshire's Shirehall displaying the finished transcripts of their Church Yard Survey competition. It is worth mentioning here that past co-operation with the Shropshire W.I. has been of great value to our members.

A further 39 members were enrolled in the previous three months. Those of you who are numbered between 678 and 717 were amongst this group!

This was truly a period during which people were seeking answers to so many questions about how to explore their family heritage. The January 1985 meeting provided a panel of people to answer questions about access to records.

A previous meeting had been entitled 'Who was grandma's grandma' during which Margaret and Trevor Hill reminded members to search through old books, miscellaneous papers, postcards, funeral expenses and family photographs for clues about their ancestors. They also gave advice about storing material and suggested that members should keep a ring binder with a page for each relative and a separate binder for the resource material. (Despite the value of computers, I think this is still good advice today!)

Janice Cox had provided a Genealogical Quiz for the 1984 Christmas Social and included it in the January Journal. Most of the questions were way above my pay grade but our editor might want to resurrect them? *[Editor: I don't have space to include the quiz in this edition but look out in the future!]*

Project Organiser, Roger Jones, wanted help with indexing the 1851 Census of Shropshire. The task would mean spending time at the Shrewsbury Local Studies Library. He suggested *'This task could be undertaken by those who feel they would like to help the Society with a project, but find transcribing monumental inscriptions a cold occupation, and prefer one where they can sit down in warmth and comfort!'*

16 pages were devoted to Members Interests.

Kay Charter (569) was grateful *'for help given to her concerning her Beacall heritage by a gentleman from Ilkley in Yorkshire and also an offer of information from a gentleman in Wolverhampton'*. Kay lived in Vancouver.

An interesting request came from Maureen Newport (615) asking *'if anyone had photographs of the Old Crown Street in Dawley'*. (I too, find old photos of where my ancestors lived quite fascinating!)

'Have you ever wondered why you could never find that marriage?' was the title of an article by Janice Capewell. She *'came across three references in the Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Rolls'*. Each example concerned marriages which had taken place in people's homes and were therefore not recorded in church registers. Janice records that a marriage could be regarded as legal before 1754 provided it was witnessed by two people.

One particular example *'appears in the statement of Elizabeth (nee Jones), the wife of Richard Leache,...who said that....she was married in the house of widow Poole, by John Powell, clerk.....to..Richard Leache before witnesses...according to the book of Common Prayer....All of this came to light because Richard Leache spent all his wife's money, then deserted her...and married again!'*

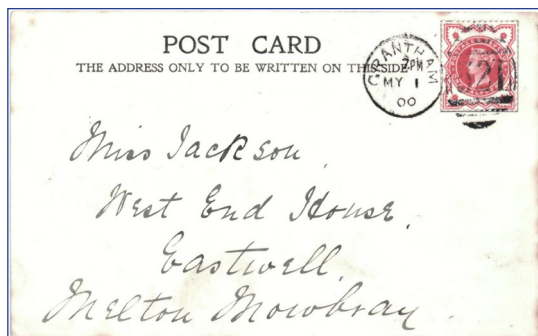
George Howell (617) reflected that much social history can be read into the tomb stones of people 'In Service'. He gave several examples but I thought this one particularly apposite. *'Jane Oakley, died at the citadel, Oct 24th 1869 after a service of 29 years in the family of Rev. John and Charlotte Hill. Their four sons erect this stone in grateful memory of their faithful and affectionate nurse'*.

A long article by Patrick Delafore was headed *'NOTES AND QUERIES'*. He was referring to a magazine formed in 1849 which took as its motto *'WHEN FOUND, MAKE A NOTE OF IT'*. So I looked it up on the internet and discovered it is still operating today and is responsible for many books and articles. I invite you to look it up for yourself!

Reg Wilford, 5564

Family Postcards

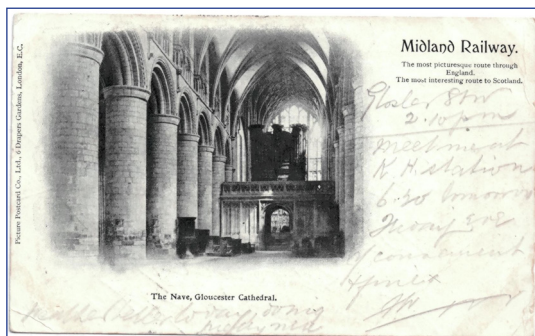
When we had the interesting talk by Helen Baggott it reminded me that I had a Postcard Album with over 100 hundred postcards which belonged to my grandmother Lucy Westwood, who died in 1941.



The first postcards were sent before 1901 so have Queen Victoria's stamp. One from Dresden is addressed to Miss Lucy Jackson at her home, West End House, Eastwell near Melton Mowbray. The postcard says "I arrived home safely, now surrounded by trunks and bonnet

boxes but alas no bicycles!! They have since put in an appearance. With love from Maud". Maud had obviously cycled around Dresden!

Lucy also received Postcards from her fiancé, Frank Westwood! Frank was a Commercial Traveller in Iron and Steel and travelled around the country. One postcard, to Miss Lucy Jackson, is from Cheltenham and Nailsworth on 21 May. 1900. Frank and Lucy married later that year at Eastwell Church, on 12 September 1900.



Lucy's father, William Jackson, a farmer, was named as the witness.

The next Postcard provided by the Midland Railway from Frank was addressed to Mrs Frank Westwood, posted at 3.15pm, 22 November 1900 in Gloucester and asks Lucy "To meet me at K.N.Station at 6.20 tomorrow". He obviously trusted that the postcard would arrive the next day, unlike post today! K.N. would have been Kings Norton station.

The next correspondence was rather sad. In January 1903, Lucy was staying at her parents farm (West End House) she receives a Postcard saying *"Hope your Mother is feeling better"* and again in July *"Sorry your Mother is so ill"*.

Sadly, Lucy's mother, Sarah Jackson, died of apoplexy on 27 November 1904. My mother, Mary, was born just before this on 16 November 1904. The postcard address shows Lucy is staying with her father to help on the farm and my Mum stayed at the farm too. Sadly Lucy's father died July 1905 of cancer.

Another card was addressed to Mrs Westwood in Moseley, which had been sent from Murren in Switzerland and was then forwarded on to Eastwell. There appears to have been no extra charge.

A couple of Postcards sent to my mother, Miss Mary Westwood, say *"with lots of love to the Sweet little Queen"* and the other says *"I hope you had a jolly time at Newquay"*. Presumably she went there on holiday!



A postcard, with a Paisley postmark, from Winnie O'Sullivan, says, *"Dear Auntie, Thank you very much for the letter and present. I am glad to hear that little Mary, (Ruth's Mother), can sing. Your loving niece, Winnie O'Sullivan"*. A real bit of a family connection!

As we heard in our talk by Helen Baggott, old postcards can tell us some interesting things about our ancestors' activities, their concerns and where they travelled and lived. My little perusal brought some of their lives alive for me.

Ruth Wilford 71

Editor: Although I don't have an album I do have a few postcards sent from Birmingham by my Grandmother to her family in Eyton upon the Weald Moors which I need to 'rediscover' to see if they might tell me more about why she was there. I wonder if other members have a postcard collection from their ancestors which might help to expand our knowledge of their lives and perhaps what was happening in the world at the time.

Onwards To Fifty

The SFHS Journal as we move forward

Editor: Contributions from our members is the lifeblood of the Journal – without them there would not be a Journal. However, I recognise that writing for a Journal can seem quite daunting. I know when I wrote my first article for a FHS Journal (not this one!) I was concerned that no-one would be interested; it might not 'fit', it might be too long; etc. However, after sending it off to the editor I had good feedback. It gave me the chance to share some of my family story with others, along with some hints and tips from my research, and I will admit that actually seeing it published was quite rewarding!

So, if you are not sure quite where to start, here are some suggested 'pegs' on which you might be able to hang your contributions. Bill Allison has drawn these together, and I share them here to hopefully help and encourage some of you to put pen to paper, or fingers to the keyboard. If we get a good response some of them could even become regular features.

Don't feel you have to write a long essay – contributions of all lengths are welcome, and having items of different lengths is good. And if you feel you would like some help or support to get you started, please get in touch with me.

One Photo

Everyone will have one photo from their FH they really love. The journal will publish the photo and you can describe what it is and how it fits into your FH and why you really like it.

A Favourite Object

Similarly everyone will have one object from their FH they really love. The journal will publish the photo and you can write what it is and how it fits into your FH and why you really like it.

Shropshire Lasses and Lads (Apologies to A.E.Houseman- one of our own)

The Shropshire diaspora is worldwide as we know. Articles often tell us of Salopians who have left the county and made a new life abroad. However more recently we have seen very few articles about people who have been born, bred and died in Shropshire. A photograph if possible and their story would do nicely.

Special Events

Shropshire has always been home to very special events. Do you have stories your family's involvement in special events in the county? For example "The Ludlow Festival" or "The Much Wenlock Olympics"?

[Image: A silver medal from the 1864 Wenlock Olympian Games from Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wenlock_Olympian_Games]

Books we might like bring to the attention of SFHS members

Although book reviews appear from time to time in the Journal, we would like to make this a regular feature. This could be books about FH in general or books that have a particular relevance to Shropshire. Perhaps members have books such as these in their own collection.



Worldwide FH Journals

SFHS receives journals, online and hard copy, from FHS all over the world. This isn't a writing idea, more a reading one. It would be great if some members could scan read some of these journals on a regular basis and if they found articles that may be of interest to us, we could seek permission to reprint them in our journal. Several years ago we published an article about how members could use family photographs from previous generations to make a family calendar. This article was taken up by the Botany Bay FHS and reprinted, with our permission, in their journal. So it could work both ways if our readers found articles of interest to us in other journals, we could seek permission and reprint them.

[All the digital copies will be available to view on the new website when it is launched, so reading them, and perhaps finding some interesting articles, will be much easier.]

Major Family Events

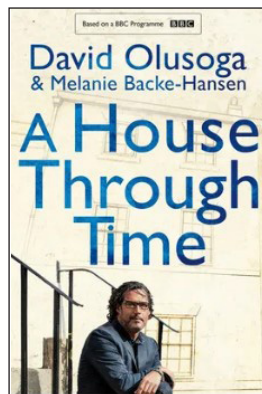
At Cross Houses in October 2024 Dave Annal gave a fascinating and important talk about how major family events are depicted in 19th century fiction by writers such as Dickens and Hardy amongst others. He used major family events such as baptism, marriage and death as broad outlines. There may well be other family events that members could trace in their family and write factual accounts rather than fiction ones.

One House Study/One Place Study

This could cover several generations of your family who have lived in one house, much like the BBC TV programme, *A House Through Time*. Or it could be about a street, village, or town that you are studying.

Talk Reviews

One set of articles that must always remain is reviews of talks to the Society. Peter Tandy does a sterling job with these and we must thank him greatly for the quality reviews that he always writes. *[Editor: If anyone can help Peter to share the load during the year please let me know. editor@sfhs.org.uk]*



Interviews

Another way of creating an article would be to arrange an interview where you interview someone who has a story to tell, or vice versa they interview you about some aspect of your FH. There is straightforward technology available on most mobile phones not only to record an interview but also a program/app that will instantly turn the questions and answers into text as you speak. This means that you won't have to transcribe the interview which as you might know is a very, very labourious task.

One Last 21st Century Thought

Did your grandparents or parents go and see the Beatles in Shropshire in the early sixties? They played here several times before they became famous. Or anyone else for that matter? They would have been young and impressionable and the event would be very memorable for them. Get them to talk about it and you write it down. Sometimes we might think that FH is all about the 19th century but we are now in the 21st century! So what happened to the 20th century? That's FH now for sure and there's plenty to write about.

Bill Allison

Editor: Bill has also submitted the following article, which loosely links in with the Books 'peg' as referenced in this item.

Your idea for an article doesn't need to fit in with these suggested categories, they are just suggestions - all items are welcomed.

More than a Book Review

I am delighted to be a member of SFHS. More recently it has helped me bring together several strands of my FH research and helped me move forward with them and in the process leading me to *Hannah* by Dinah Maria Craik which is the subject of my review.

Let me provide some background. My research concerns Samuel, an ancestor of mine who spent his life on the English/Welsh border working in and around the coalfields of Oswestry and Wrexham. The 1861 Census shows him to be married to Elizabeth. By December 1861 they have had their first child.

By 1873 the couple had had a further seven children, the last one being born in September 1873. The baby was not registered until over a month later on 25 October. By which time Elizabeth seems to have died. This must be the case, even though I can find no record of her death, since on 28 December 1873, my ancestor married his second wife in Manchester.

It was expected of a widower or a widow to remarry, as quickly as possible since families were more often than not large. People in these marriages were often members of an extended family or lived in the same small community. We should be cautious of approaching a situation such as this with our 21st Century sensibilities. Quite often as FH people it appears to me that we seem to wander around in what can perhaps be described as a Victorian Theme Park. A land where we apply our thinking about then as if it was now. Our norms were not theirs.

Without such remarriages, how could a widower or widow cope? How could a man who needed to scrape a living to put bread on the table, look after seven children as well? Furthermore how much more difficult would it be for a woman to keep her and her children off the breadline? This was not a society that offered benefit support or the minimum living wage.

Nevertheless to marry so quickly three months or less, after his first wife's death, seems a trifle hasty to say the least. This became even more interesting when I established that his new bride was his first wife's sister. However I thought no more of this liaison until I found something in a review of a talk written by Peter Tandy in SFHS Journal 44 - Part 2 which changed completely my perspective on the situation.

It was of *Was my ancestor a liar: ignorance, half-truths and wilful deceit?* given by Dave Annal. I might add that Peter's reviews and also those of Christine Head's, of the SFHS talks are wonderful, well written and incisive for someone like me who can't access the events themselves or the recordings of the talks. Furthermore I find it perhaps more helpful to read the written reviews as there is often, I would think, so much to take in as the talks happen.

In his review there was a casual remark that the speaker had pointed out that during the 19th Century, marriages of widowers to their dead widow's sister was illegal. This, of course, for me, changed everything. I would now need to go back to my original research and look again at Samuel's marriage to Mary in December 1873.

Trying to work out why the marriage could be considered to be illegal proved to be a nightmare and certainly caused headache. Forgive me as I am not a lawyer but I will try and summarise what my research offered to help my understanding.

The basic framework seems to be that a widower was forbidden to marry a close blood relative of his widow. These "marriages within prohibited degrees" were based on marriages forbidden in the Bible as laid out in "A Table of Kindred and Affinity" in the Book of Common Prayer" (1662). The 1835 Marriage Act made it illegal in Britain for a woman to marry the husband of her dead sister. Legally they were seen as brother and sister, making such marriages incestuous.

However the sister of a deceased wife was often the most suitable person to help look after the widower's children, but she could not live as a single woman in her brother-in-law's house without risk of scandal and she could not marry him because ecclesiastical law forbade it. Though forbidden by ecclesiastical law, if "a marriage within the prohibited degrees" took place, a vicar would have to be found who was willing to marry the couple. This must explain why the marriage of Samuel and Mary took place in Manchester for the vicar would not know them or their circumstances. Manchester was a long way from home where no one knew anyone else from afar.

The Marriage Act, 1835 forbade marriages between closely related individuals, in particular a man and his dead wife's sister. This was repeatedly raised in Parliament during the Victorian period but it was not until the 1907 *The Deceased Wife's Sister's Marriage Act* allowed a man to legally marry his dead wife's sister.

Even though I knew some general facts, the only one that seemed to fit the paradigm was that the couple had to go a long way from home to marry suggesting, as my research had shown, that in Manchester they found a vicar who would marry them, no questions asked, for he had none to ask about them or situation, save that they wanted to get married. All above board and ship shape or so it would seem.

So once again we find that our ancestral family members demonstrate that they are examples of the swing of history itself. They are fitting into patterns of socio-economic, religious and cultural history, in this circumstance, all of these together. They are history and of course, for us they are FH. This is one of the notions about FH that excites me.

However I felt that needed more proof to understand fully what was going on. SFHS to the rescue again. I had attended the Cross Houses Meeting in October 2024 and I recalled the talk that Dave Annal gave "*Fact from Fiction-What the Great 19th Century Novels can tell us about our Ancestors*".

As the review in the December 2024 Journal pointed out, this was a very important talk for all of us interested in Family History. The thinking behind the talk was that if we use 19th Century Fiction by major novelists, we cannot have any better background for our own research as these writers were there on the spot and therefore recorded in their own style what they saw and what they felt. In the short time that he had, Dave's talk covered all the major events of a person's life; birth, baptism, marriage and death. He offered examples of where we might find these events in literature of the time. These and where they could be found were listed in a table in the Journal in question.

It seemed to me that although major events were obviously covered in these novels, perhaps there were other situations that would be covered too. So I searched the Internet for novels that dealt with the ideas in question; *could a widower marry his wife's sister?* And, of course, if you search for long enough you find details that help. The trick is if you want the right answer you have to ask the right question.

The topic in question was the major theme of several novels, most notably of all, Dinah Craik's 1871 novel *Hannah*. Craik was a popular author of domestic fiction, focusing on the home life of women, written by and for women. Queen Victoria was intrigued by Craik's work and would often note inside her books the dates and locations she read them. What of course is fascinating for me is that the wedding

in my family took place in 1873 which means that Craik's novel and its comments on society could not be more relevant. Furthermore what becomes immediately apparent is that Dave Annal's thesis is perfectly correct and that if you want to know something about events in people's lives and the implications turn to fiction of the time.

The image to the right is Dinah Maria Craik (née Mulock), by Sir Hubert von Herkomer (died 1914), given to the National Portrait Gallery, London in 1946 Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6364010>



The plot concerns Hannah, a 30-year-old governess. She isn't particularly young or attractive and crucially, is not a typical romantic heroine. Her beautiful younger sister has just died in childbirth. Her sister's husband, now a widower, young clergyman Bernard Rivers, asks her to take charge of the family. The great inducement, however, is the baby. Hannah has always been aware of "*one great want in her nature — the need to be a mother to somebody or something*". Before Hannah leaves her post as governess, her employer, Lady Dunsmore, whose husband is backing the bill to legalize in-law marriages,

tells Hannah about the 1835 law and tactfully warns her of the gossip and the emotional complications that may arise when a single man and a single woman live in the same house. Two unmarried people of the opposite sex, living together was seen as scandalous in Victorian society. If this was not bad enough the situation, Rivers and Hannah are in, widower and sister of his departed wife living in the same house together was seen by some to be more than scandalous.

Hannah instantly becomes mother to the infant, and feels almost as motherly toward the grieving young father. She is older than him. He grieves for his departed wife. Hannah helps him bear sorrow, urges him to carry on with his parish duties, and aids him in writing his sermons. The book is dominated by the emotional tension of the situation. After long-drawn out agony and social ostracism, by the end of the novel, Hannah and Bernard have fallen in love, partly because of their shared love for the baby, it is a nurturing love rather than a sexual one. Ultimately Hannah and Bernard take their life into their own hands by refusing to obey their

country's laws. They move to France, where marriages such as this were legal. They take up French citizenship, marry, and live happily ever after.

Craik is said to be a forgotten author. This could be because she was a women writer and even now in the 21st Century we are still seeking to ensure that women are represented as fully and as richly as they deserve in all the Arts and Sciences. It could also be that the subject matter of her novels, *Hannah* being a case in point, are not as relevant to us as they were to the Victorians. It could also be that her writing is rather old fashioned and her novels are only of interest to illustrate the passage of literary style. The book is a romantic melodrama and we can predict where it is going as we read.

However I was looking for extracts and moments in the story that would illustrate issues that my ancestors were living through and were involved in. Rivers and Hannah can be said to represent the middle class. There is sub-plot running throughout the novel where Grace, Hannah's maid is also in a marriage situation somewhat similar to Hannah's. On page 87 of the book, Grace says,

"I had no idea I was doing wrong no that I hadn't moaned she. Two or three in our village had married their sister's husband. What can a poor working man do when he is left with a lot of children but get their aunt to come and look after them? And then if she's young, or, indeed anyhow, people are sure to begin talking. Isn't it better to stop their wicked tongues by marrying her at once and making all right and comfortable? For they are not comfortable - I wasn't. And they are not real brother and sister whatever master says. And I am sure that they can be married. For there was our old squire, he married two sisters and had two families. One all girls, the other boys and the eldest son by the second marriage - young Mr Melville - came in for the property and is the squire now and nobody ever said that his mother wasn't lawfully married."

In this passage the historical reality of what is happening is revealed. What has love got to do with it? The book highlights the class divide. What's good enough for them is unfortunately not good enough for us. My ancestors were poor working people and could only run away to Manchester and not France. Their situation would be that of Grace's, not Hannah's, I'm afraid. It's not about legality, morality or any such niceties, it's about survival.

So back to the SFHS and my joy in being a member. Without Peter Tandy and Dave Annal, I would have simply thought that my ancestor had married his widow's sister, albeit rather hastily, but that was that. Their understanding has helped me

come to terms rather more with what went on in my family nearly two hundred years ago and has taken me back to my own research with renewed vigour. Thank you Peter and Dave. I am , as I said at the beginning, delighted to be a member of SFHS and enjoy everything that it offers.

Bill Allison, 7760

<https://www.regencyhistory.net/blog/regency-marriage-could-widower-marry-his-wifes-sister>

https://theconversation.com/the-controversial-victorian-novel-that-argued-for-the-deceased-wifes-sisters-marriage-act-181121?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=bylinecopy_url_button

DNA Special Interest Group

The group has been running for over a year now. It started out as a request in the quarterly Journal for someone to help run a group and our first meeting was in October 2023.

At that first meeting we welcomed some who were considering taking a DNA test, others who had taken a test and didn't know what to do with their results, as well as those with varying amounts of experience and knowledge. We're a friendly group and no question is too simple as we all started out on our research knowing very little. Some members join us regularly, others as and when commitments allow.

We've celebrated great success with members finding family they were looking for and subsequently meeting up with them, to ones who came as a surprise! None of us are experts but we are all happy to share our knowledge and help each other to take the next steps forward and there's like a good mystery to help solve.

Whilst most of our members have taken Ancestry autosomal tests, there are those with My Heritage and other testing companies.

New members are always very welcome to join us. If you'd like to come along meetings are on the second Monday of the month at 7.30pm on Zoom email me at dnasig@sfhs.org.uk

Jane Wilcox, Host (but no expert) of the DNA SIG

Events at Cross Houses in 2025

We have booked Cross Houses for two live events this year so please put these dates in your diaries!

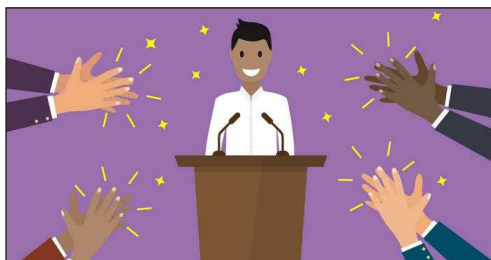
Saturday 10 May

Saturday 11 October

Both events will run from 11am-3.30pm, with talks, opportunity to chat with others, light refreshments available during the day and bring-your-own lunch.

We will be looking for help in setting up the rooms, sorting out the refreshments and other tasks so if you can offer your support please let us know.

Programmes for these events are still to be arranged. Details of the May event will be included in the Newsletter for April and May and those for October will follow in due course.



Could you give a talk?

It would be great if we can include some short talks from members as part of these events. So, would you like to be able to share a 15/20 minute talk about one of your family history stories, and if so will you step up and give a presentation? If so please let us know and if needed we can provide help, support, hints and tips in sorting out slides or giving the presentation.

I am delighted to say that Pauline Maguire has offered to assist in organising these events so if you can help in any way please let her know at events@sfhs.org.uk

Meet Our New Committee Members

Editor: At our AGM in January we welcomed two new members to the Committee, with Lorna Emms taking on the role of Treasurer from Paul Quartermaine and Steve Jones helping with some of the website development work. I invited them to tell us a little bit about themselves so please see below for their responses.

Steve Jones



So let me introduce myself. I'm Stephen (Steve) Jones, now retired after working in the broadcast industry as an audio/sound operator and lecturer for most of my working life. I was born in Cross Houses Hospital, so I have no possible excuse for not being a member of the SFHS. I now live near Cheltenham in Gloucestershire with my wife Sue (also born in Shrewsbury) and son Morgan.

I guess the walk on the way to school in Shrewsbury ignited my interest in local history as I used to pass so many of the timber framed buildings in the town centre. I think anyone living in Shrewsbury feels a connection with the past and there was always a daily reminder of the history of Shrewsbury and the Welsh borders. I remember that counting and identifying the many Fire Insurance Plaques on the front of the buildings was one of my first projects at school.

About 45 years ago a colleague asked me 'So, how much do you know about your family history?' I realised how little I knew for sure. I suspected my paternal side had lived in Shrewsbury for at least three generations and some may have come across the border from Wales. I also knew my mother and her family originated from Leicestershire, but that was all.

Finding any detail about family history at the time was both difficult and expensive, so things were put on the back burner. It wasn't until the advent of the Internet that I made progress as more material became available on-line. Then the quest started to find out as much information as possible and add in the family connections, the addiction had started!

For me this is an ideal hobby as it combines history and archeological research both through books and computer based technology, all of which I enjoy. If lucky, you learn something about the histories of your ancestors along the way. Of course, things don't stand still and I have added DNA research too as that

resource became available. It's hard to imagine that publicly accessible ancient DNA testing results for archaic populations has only been a science for 10 years or so.

You suddenly realise as you get older that each of us has a unique history to tell and that it should be, if at all possible, recorded for the future. Like most people I have an unexceptional family tree, but it's still an important personal and social history and the journey to get there is fun. I still have the possibility of finding an elusive 'famous' relative. SFHS plays an important role in making some of that journey possible.

Lorna Emms

Hi, I'm Lorna and originally from South East Kent. I became more interested in my family history about 20 years ago when there was a big effort by several generations to identify the father of an ancestor.

Rumours abounded and with my more technical skills got engrossed in seeing what was available online whilst others visited places and archives. In the last few years I have been able to spend much more time on genealogy research and studying towards IHGS Higher Certificate.



Also, I established the majority of my ancestral lines are in the same few mile radius of the place I was brought up in Kent with just a few exceptions. Having moved to Shropshire in 2018 had a breakthrough just several weeks after arriving here that meant the line I'd traced to Lancashire was actually coming from Shropshire. Found a 3x Great Grandfather in Shifnal in the 1841 Census and have been able to establish which part of the town the family were living at this time.

My employment background has always been finance and therefore when the role of Treasurer came up I thought this was ideal for combining my skills and interests along with getting to meet lots of people with local connections to my now home base in Telford.

Editor: I now need to encourage the others on the Committee to tell us a bit more about themselves for a future edition of the Journal!

Wem Millenium Green

Wem Millenium Green, which has been developed on the site of the old Cemetery in Aston Street, Wem has been open since December 2001. The project has recently been awarded £20,000 in National Lottery funding to support its work to rejuvenate Wem's Millennium Green, which will include the refurbishment of the old chapel (image below), removing old vegetation, replacing them with new shrubs and improve the paths, as well as replacing the old tables and chairs used for community events.



Tidying up of the space will be undertaken by volunteers, who will meet on the first weekend of each month for a bit of gardening, company and good cakes to be served in the Church opposite. If you are interested in joining them please go along.

Lucy Gilchrist, one of our members, is looking to collate stories and information about those people buried in the old cemetery, with the plan for the resource to be kept in the Chapel for future researchers. So if you have anything to share on this please send them in and we will pass them on.

Please note that we hold a copy of the Monumental Inscriptions for Aston Street Cemetery (1825-1905). See the catalogue and details for ordering here: <https://www.sfhs.org.uk/node/516>

Images taken from the Millennium Green Wem Facebook page, with permission



Committee Meetings Update

The AGM in January saw some changes to the Committee, with Paul Quartermaine and Cathy Matthews stepping down and joining us are Lorna Emms as Treasurer and Steve Jones who has already got involved in the website development work. Details of the full committee membership can be found on the inside of the front cover of the Journal.

We continue to meet on a monthly basis in order to manage the work and finances of the Society.

The topics we have been considering over the last few months include:

The approval of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023/24 which were presented to the members at our AGM in January.

Routine monitoring of the finances against budget.

Monitoring progress of the new website development. This has progressed well over the last couple of months, with the back office work in its final testing phase. The front facing part of the site is coming together well, with almost all of it functioning now. We do still have some work to complete on editing all the pages to ensure they are correct and up-to-date so that a final testing of the whole site can be implemented. We are also working on some information for members to help them get logged in and to navigate round the site once it is live. We don't have an exact date but be assured we will let you know as soon as that is confirmed.

We have confirmed the dates for two in-person events for 2025, both to be held at Cross Houses - more details on page 41.

The Committee are discussing possible ways in which we might use some of the existing funds held by the Society to promote our aims. The suggestions include digitisation of the back copies of the Journals so they can be included on the website, further development of the website, and potentially renting a physical space to provide easier access to the resources. These and any other suggestions will need careful consideration and the overall topic will remain on the agenda as an ongoing item.

From the Editor

I hope after reading the article on page 30 you are fired up to write and send in items for future editions of the Journal. I have already received some but not enough to fill all the pages for the June edition so please send in more!

Déjà vu

Reg's article (page 26) opens with a call in the March 1985 Journal for a new editor. Jump forward 40 years and please see the job advertisement below! I am not leaving and I enjoy doing this job but there are just not enough hours in the day for me to keep doing everything!

Karen Hunter, Editor



Shropshire Family History Society

is seeking an Editor

to succeed the present incumbent in **2025**

This voluntary post is open to any member of the Society and is not limited to those living in Shropshire.

The role provides an opportunity to play an important part in the life of the Society.

You will need enthusiasm, be computer literate, with some experience of using desktop publishing software (ideal but not essential), an eye for detail, an ability to spot the typos and write reasonable English.

Help and support will be available, if wanted.

If you are interested please contact Karen Hunter (editor@sfhs.org.uk) for more information about what the job entails.

Talks Programme 2024-2025

18 March	Just a Job - Revitalise your Family History with Occupational Research <i>Dr Kay makes the case for why occupations matter in family history research. The talk includes some general tips and tricks for research, and a section on occupational health and job-related deaths.</i>	<i>Dr Sophie Kay</i>
15 April	Bread, Gruel and Suet Dumplings – Workhouse Life <i>This talk looks at life in the Workhouse, what the alternatives were, what conditions were like and discusses the many records available to find information about either an inmate or a staff member.</i>	<i>Ian Waller</i>
20 May	Ethical Dilemmas in Genealogy <i>Dr Walters shows how modern internet research can uncover ethical dilemmas for the family historian including secrets, lies, bigamy, criminals, unexpected relatives and other upsetting things and hopefully how to deal with them.</i>	<i>Dr Penny Walters</i>
17 June	Leave No Stone Unturned <i>This talk looks at the burial places of the famous and infamous and uses gravestones as a starting point to investigate their lives. He uses portraits, houses, churches and objects to give an amusing presentation which explores the social as well as family history of the famous and some people who should be better known. Every one has a story to tell!</i>	<i>John Vigar</i>

Programme Secretary needed

We are still seeking a volunteer to manage our talks programme. This involves seeking out and booking our speakers, sharing the programme with the Committee and the Journal Editor, and checking in with the speakers before their allocated slot to make sure the arrangements are still OK with them. If you are interested and could offer your help with this important role please contact Dave Morris in the first instance on secretary@sfhs.org.uk

We also welcome suggestions and recommendations for topics and/or speakers that our members might have heard about elsewhere. If you have any ideas please let Dave know.

Please consider if you are able to help as this is such an important part of what we offer our members.

New Members

Welcome to the following new members who have joined us in the past few months.

- 7976 LLOYD Mr W B; Ruslip, Middlesex
- 7977 HAYNES Mrs W.H.; Ruyton X1 Towns, Shropshire
- 7978 HAYNES Mr P; as above
- 7979 HOPKINS Mr J E; Cardiff
- 7980 ELLIS Mr N; Galway, Co Galway,
- 7981 McVEY Mr T; Littleton, Colorado, U.S.A.
- 7982 McVEY Mrs A; as above
- 7983 CLEGG Mr R; Rochdale, Lancashire

We have been notified of the deaths of the following members and we offer our condolences to their families and friends.

OWEN Mr L G; Bournemouth

COLCLOUGH Mrs J; Great Barr, Birmingham

Notes for Contributors

- All contributions should be sent to the Editor at editor@sfhs.org.uk, or by post using the address inside the front cover if you don't have email.
- Include your name, membership number, e-mail and other relevant contact details in the same file as the text of your article and indicate which of them can be included. Otherwise, only your name and SFHS number (if appropriate) will be printed.
- Please note that articles will not be published under a pseudonym or anonymously unless there are legitimate reasons for doing so, which need to be discussed with the Editor in the first instance.
- Send pictures as separate image files (eg e-mail attachments), and only include them within the item or article as well, to give the editor an idea for suitable positioning. The relevant place could just be clearly referred to in the main body of the text.
- List the filenames of any pictures you are sending in the e-mail with relevant acknowledgements.
- It is assumed that place names, surnames etc will be spelt correctly and they will be printed as submitted unless otherwise informed.
- If possible, please CAPITALISE all family surnames within your submitted articles.
- Any pictures or other images should have a file size as large as possible. Most digital cameras and those in mobile phones are more than adequate but the higher the resolution, and therefore quality, the better.
- Scanned photographs etc should be at a minimum of 300dpi if at all possible. JPG (or JPEG) is the preferred file format but in certain circumstances, others could be considered. Please contact the Editor for clarification if necessary.
- Original pictures, documents etc, can be submitted and scanned by the Editor but this should preferably be a 'last resort'.
- All items (articles, images, photographs) submitted must have permission to print granted with the correct acknowledgement included when submitting them.
- Please note that items which essentially consist of full or significant transcriptions from Wikipedia or other websites will not be published.
- Any submitted articles may be edited by the Editor.

Useful Websites

Thanks to Dave Annal on BlueSky ([@davelifelines.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/@davelifelines)) for this suggestion:

I often use the wonderful Time and Date website www.timeanddate.com to work out what day of the week a particular event took place on, or to calculate exactly how old someone was on a given day.

Social Media

We now have an account on BlueSky at [@shropshirefhs.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/@shropshirefhs). A growing number of FHSs, genealogists and others have 'migrated' from Twitter to this platform so perhaps give it a try. Our Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) accounts are continuing at present.

We are still seeking a member to manage our Social Media accounts so if you can help us with this please get in touch with Karen Hunter (chair@sfhs.org.uk)

Copy Dates

Publication Date	Items to be submitted by
June 2025	1 April 2025
September 2025	1 July 2025
December 2025	1 October 2025
March 2026	1 January 2026

Advertisements

The Society welcomes adverts relevant to the interests of family historians. Prices are per issue.

Members	£20 full page	£10 half page
Non Members	£24 full page	£13 half page

Copy should be submitted to the Editor. The Society reserves the right to refuse any advert it considers inappropriate.

Other appointments

Membership

Gift Aid	Lorna Emms	treasurer@sfhs.org.uk
Subscription Renewals	David Burton	subs_renewals@sfhs.org.uk

Programme

Programme Secretary	Vacant	speakers@sfhs.org.uk
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Enquiries/Help

(Please note we do not undertake personal research but will assist if we can)

General Enquiries	to the Secretary	secretary@sfhs.org.uk
Research Queries (Members only)	Christine Abram	enquiries@sfhs.org.uk

Reference Material

	For look-ups or loan see Website for details	
Certificate Exchange	Christine Head	xchangecerts@sfhs.org.uk
Members' Interests	Dave Morris	members_interests@sfhs.org.uk

Library/Exchange Journals	Graham Moore	library@sfhs.org.uk
Parish Registers Books	Graham Moore	library@sfhs.org.uk

Sales

Microfiche	Ruth Wilford	fiche@sfhs.org.uk
Monumental inscriptions	Ruth Wilford	copies@sfhs.org.uk

Projects

Original P.R. and 1851 Census Microfiche (Shropshire)	Christine Abram	enquiries@sfhs.org.uk
Help Desk Volunteers at Shropshire Archives	Gill Lewis	archives_volunteers@sfhs.org.uk

Events	Pauline Maguire	events@sfhs.org.uk
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DNA Special Interest Group	Jane Wilcox	dnasig@sfhs.org.uk
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Talking Family History	Karen Hunter	tfh@sfhs.org.uk
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Back cover: Aston Street Chapel, Wem - see article on page 42 for more details



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