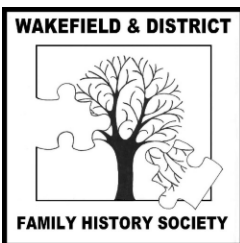


THE WAKEFIELD KINSMAN



**Summer Edition
2026**

Volume 29 No. 4

WAKEFIELD & DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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Front Cover: Lofthouse Old Cemetery Summer 2025

Credit to Carol Sklinar. - See page 17

Visit our Website www.wdfhs.co.uk

While the Society always uses its best endeavours to ensure that the information in its publications is complete, errors may from time to time occur. The Society will not be held responsible for the consequence for such errors but will make corrections in future editions.

Opinions and comments expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Society.

Chairman's Letter



By the time you read this the AGM will be nearly upon us. It's hard to believe we've already passed the halfway point of another year. This one I believe will live long in the memory for the dramatic news on the world stage of wars and political manoeuvrings coupled to our homegrown dramas. It is a great relief to be able to turn to our own family histories and local studies.

Over the last couple of months, I have made a conscious decision to get back into my own family history research. There is a lot to do just to pull together bits of work that were done when we have lived in different parts of the country. There were also specific expeditions my wife and I undertook to investigate different ancestors. I have made a start, but I do find it difficult to resist the temptation of chasing new hints and lines of investigation. We hear talk in the news about Artificial Intelligence (AI) and whichever way you turn it is becoming hard to avoid its impact on our family history research. The big companies offering help with our genealogical research use it behind the scenes to provide us with hints and tentative connections to extend our trees, but they do at least offer us the final decision to accept or reject their suggestions. Above and beyond this they are offering specific tools based upon AI to help us whether it is in colourising photographs or interpreting documents or pictures. My own reaction is that we should use the tools as a quick way to gain insights and leads that might otherwise be missed but it is always vital to go back to basics to check the information. There is a brief article in the journal demonstrating the use of one such tool. If other members have been using new research methods, we would love to hear of your experiences.

I have also spent time recently trying to track down work done by Society volunteers in recording memorial inscriptions in local churchyards. This was a major project headed up by **Gordon Mackenzie**, and he deserves great credit for the commitment shown over a long time. Some of this work was carried through to publication and these make interesting reading. However, some important sites were surveyed but not published. Some of this data has been located but I would be very interested to hear from any members who were involved in the fieldwork or subsequent data input to track down more.

I would also love to hear from any members who would like to volunteer to help with sorting out the data we have already located. Talking of volunteering of course brings me back to the AGM and of course we will be looking for keen members to keep the Society alive.

Paul Gaywood mem 1496

Editor's Ramblings

As summer approaches, do we pause our family history projects for gardening and holidays, or does our interest in genealogy remain year-round? For some, family history is a seasonal hobby, but I research year-round, whether for my own family or others, tracking down a headstone or exploring a new discovery.

As some of you may know, my first big project was to research the CWGC (Commonwealth War Graves Commission) headstone names in Sugar Lane Cemetery, as well as men and women mentioned on family headstones connected to The Great War - nearly 200 names.

One of my current projects is to add depth to the list of Allerton Bywater men from a book about WW1 casualties who worked in a local mine. What began as a small project—108 names—grew quickly as I discovered more men through records and local memorials. My database now includes nearly 400 men: some lost, some survived. A delve into the BNA (British Newspaper Archive) found an article where **Major G H Peake** of Bawtry Hall was presenting military awards, gold watches, chains and medallions to local men. He went on to say that of the 2400 men who worked at the colliery, 900 had enlisted, a number that shocked him. He was surprised to find large numbers of people under and over the enlistment age. There is still more to be done to find the men missing from the number Major Peake suggested. At a meeting last week, one of the members did give me the name of another young man, who was not on my list.

Continuing my research, I have found more men than usual earning medals beyond the standard 14/15 Star, British Medal, and Victory Medal. So far, 13 hold the Military Medal, two have a Bar, one has the Military Service Medal, and one received a St George Cross 4th Class, Russia – now he has an interesting tale. Every name reveals a story from civilian life, through service, and, for many, after service. There are one or two who, when the information is collated and written up, will have some years of their lives omitted. The reason is that, although the information is in the public domain, it is not for me to publicise those facts.

Most of the men served in regiments we are aware of, for example, KOYLI, West Riding Regiment and Yorks and Lancs, one man served in the Fort Gary Horse - I had to Google that one!

Moving to my latest undertaking, while still working on the Allerton Bywater project, I am researching a war memorial project in a small Scottish town for the local visitor centre. Last September, I delivered a write-up of the owners of two sets of medals, I think this project will be more than 11 pages. So far, there have been no deep rabbit holes in either project, but plenty of small diversions.

Carol Sklinar mem 664

Reports From Our Meetings

The Walmsleys of Robin Hood's Bay - Father, Son, Artist, Writer was our talk on **7th February 2026** given by **Jane Ellis** who told us about author **Leo Walmsley** and his father, artist **James Ulric Walmsley**.

Jane started by telling us about Leo who grew up in Robin Hood's Bay in the 1890s. As an author he always wrote about what he knew - his childhood in the Bay and his subsequent life adventures. The talk included passages which Jane quoted from his books and was illustrated with many interesting photographs.

James Ulric, Leo's father, was an artist who left city life in Liverpool and settled in Robin Hood's Bay in which he found inexhaustible inspiration. He had a studio and advertised himself as artist and photographer and also sold artist's materials. He partly earned his living by painting very good portraits and landscapes; he would set up his easel on local streets to paint and used this to advertise his wares to passers by. His wife Ginny was a bit of a snob, dressed the children in fancy clothes and fancied she was above the local fishermen. She gave the children elaborate names in case they were knighted.

We were told about Leo, christened Lionel, and his childhood with his brothers and sister and the beach being their playground. Leo founded the Whitby Nature Club in 1913. He got a job as a pupil teacher in various schools and worked in the marine laboratory with students. Leo knew the rock pools and their inhabitants well and was encouraged by friends to write an article for the Whitby Gazette which was accepted and he would eventually write a book on this subject.

On the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, Leo enlisted and was allocated to the Royal Army Medical Corps but he wanted more adventure and applied to join the Royal Flying Corps. Posted to East Africa he kept a diary of his time there, illustrated with photographs; he was one of the world's first aerial photographers. His experiences in the war left him with neurasthenia for the rest of his life after he survived fourteen crash landings. Out of the service, he continued to write about what he knew and went on lecture tours which also acted as recruitment drives, where he met his first wife Suzanne and they went camping together through the Pyrenees. Leo missed Robin Hood's Bay and temporarily came back with his wife but she did not like it so they moved to London where he knew **Henry Moore** and **Barbara Hepworth**. Eventually he would split from his first wife and met his second wife Margaret, but they caused something of a scandal when they lived together in an old WW1 Cornish hut on the coast. Leo made all the furniture and then children came along. He wrote a best seller called *The Three Fevers* and also a book about his invention of the collapsible lobster pot. They moved to a house on the outskirts of Whitby and Leo met **J Arthur Rank** who hated trashy American films and had an

ambition to make a film about working people; this had also long been an ambition of Leo's. A film was made of his bestselling book and called the Turn of the Tide and filmed at Boggle Hole and in the studio.

Leo built his own house in Boggle Hole, wanting his children to have a happy childhood, unlike his own. He wrote more books whilst living there but unfortunately the nearby moors were requisitioned for artillery practice which didn't help Leo's neurasthenia and the family moved to Pembrokeshire and he worked on a farm with a fellow writer. He found a derelict **John Nash** mansion and refurbished it and moved there. He then split with his second wife who left him and took the children with her. He was commissioned to write his autobiography 'So Many Loves' and eventually moved back to Cornwall but Margaret and the children never came back. He met his third wife Stephanie and moved into a house in Fowey which they rented from **Daphne de Maurier**.

Leo died in 1966 of throat cancer and his ashes were scattered at sea. His father Ulric was happy to live out his life in Robin Hood's Bay. He had always painted and his ambition was to have a painting accepted by the Royal Academy, an ambition which was eventually realised at the age of 93. He died in 1954.

Jane brought her talk to a close by telling us a little about the Walmsley Society and their centenary celebrations.

Anne Parkinson from **The Wilberforce Trust** was our speaker on **7 March 2026** and her talk was entitled '**The History of the Yorkshire School for the Blind**'.

Anne started her talk by explaining the connection between **William Wilberforce** and the Yorkshire School for the Blind, which was formed just after his death to commemorate him as a great Yorkshireman. He was born in Hull and was a sickly child who always had poor sight; he was an MP but had to give this up eventually as he could not read documents. A man of contradictions, he wanted to make sure the ordinary working man was emancipated but he was also a misogynist who regarded women as having no role in society.

The first meeting in forming the school was on 3rd October 1833 and by the following year it was decided that the boarding school would be run from Kings Manor in York. **Queen Victoria** was one of its first donors, despite the fact that she hated York. The school took in children from all over Yorkshire, helping the lot of those who were blind or partially sighted who were likely to grow up without an occupation; this was at a time when there was no welfare state.

The **Reverend William Taylor** was the first superintendent and among his achievements, he created a frame used for mathematical calculations which is still produced today in India to help blind children. In 1869 **Anthony Buckle** took over as superintendent and did a lot for the school's reputation. The school

was also an early adopter of Braille which wasn't a universal language for the blind in Britain until 1918.

Anne told us about what the children experienced as pupils of the school. They received a good education which was noted for its music and produced many talented musicians. The pupils were taught a trade alongside their lessons, learning how to make mats, mattresses, blankets and re-seating cane chairs. The aim of this was for the pupils to be able to earn a living for themselves later. The quality of their work was high and members of the public could purchase their wares. The school had a purpose-built gymnasium and employed a drill sergeant to improve posture; there were also a medical doctor and optician on site. Swimming was on the curriculum and pupils also played blind cricket, with a bell in the ball.

An Outmates Department was established where adults were employed in basket and brush making, usually people who had lost their sight. The school also had branches in other towns; Middlesborough, Whitby and Wakefield. An Industrial Home for Blind Women was formed in 1893 in Scarborough. This same year the Elementary Education Act made it compulsory for blind and deaf children to be educated. Typewriting was introduced as soon as possible into the school.

1957 brought change when the government of the time supported disabled children being moved into mainstream education which meant fewer blind children for the school. Training continued until 1963 when the local authority took over.

We were given some fascinating case studies by Anne who told us about how the school wanted to know if the prospective pupils were of good character, whether they could wash and dress themselves, where they were from and what age they were when they started and left the school. She told us about the causes of blindness on the documents which ranged from smallpox, inflammation, a genetic condition or the result of an accident. Sometimes it was the result of lack of knowledge of the midwives during childbirth. Anne followed one pupil in particular, Ellen Shepherd, who had two blind siblings also at the school. Ellen was a model pupil and was an expert knitter and basket maker. We learned about her husband who was also blind; how she went on to have children and 1939 found her working at the Blind Institute in Wakefield; there was a Workshop for the Blind on Queen Street.

The Wilberforce Trust continues to support blind children.

Our speaker on **4th April** was **Joanne Harrison** who gave us a talk entitled '**180 Years of Eastmoor - It's People and Their Houses.**' Joanne is a Director of Harrison Architectural Heritage. She began her talk by telling us what the aims of the project were: to find out what Victorian Eastmoor was like, about

the Eastmoor Council Estate from the 1930s and to find out about the changes in Eastmoor over the last 50 years.

She explained that the workshop sessions developed people's research skills and looked at house histories and Eastmoor in maps and drawings. The project looked at the architectural character and social history of Victorian Eastmoor. The sessions also included the marking up and location of the different house designs on a map of the estate and compared life in the early years of the estate to what the estate was like now.

We were told that the earlier Victorian housing on Eastmoor was built in an ad hoc fashion, with variable construction quality and poor sanitation. There were some improvements during 1866 to the 1890s when the housing improved and there was a more uniform approach to urban layouts, better facilities and thus the houses appealed to a wide range of working-class people.

Joanne showed us the location of Eastmoor on a map and what the area included and a closer look revealed a variety of housing from back-to-back through to larger terraced houses with bay windows. The map also showed the different yards in the Eastmoor area.

The talk then moved on to look at the Stanley Road area where there were lots of different types of housing and Joanne showed us some photographs and also plans of the larger terraced houses with bay windows. The Co-op was the main shop but there was a wide range of specialist shops. We were given a little of the history of the inns and public houses such as the Albion Inn, The Butchers Arms and the Fox and Grapes which was a place for inquests and auctions.

Joanne then moved on to the Jacob's Well Lane area and gave us a case study of the Smith Family who were on the estate for a long time, living on various streets depending on their circumstances. One family member was one of the founding members of the Eastmoor Working Men's Club and one of the descendants of this family, May, had lived in the family house for over 90 years.

The Warrengate area was much more mixed and we were given another case study of a family on Pincheon Street; census records, trade directories and electoral registers had been used which gave us a flavour of the people who lived there.

Council housing was built between the wars and after World War II and provided housing for those who could not afford to rent privately or own their own house; it also offered replacement housing for that which had been lost during the war and for those who had been moved through slum clearance. We were shown graphics and maps showing the phased construction of the housing. Joanne then went through the different types of housing and when they were built with images showing housing from the 1930s, brick built with Victorian features, through maisonettes, flats and bungalows.

Joanne explained that sometimes tenancies of the council houses lasted for generations, passed on from one to another; a family could upsize or downsize depending on need. Joanne brought her talk to a close by telling us about the key findings from the project: that the Victorian housing was varied and so was the community, that the estate was built in four phases and that the early Victorian houses were cleared in the 1930s. It was found that Eastmoor was a place people could live for their whole life.

The project gave the participants new knowledge and research skills and an opportunity to discuss their life experiences. A map showing the location of the different housing types has been added to the Wakefield Library Collection and there is a forthcoming potential publication. People can visit the website to find out more <https://bit.ly/180yearsofeastmoor>

Lorraine Simpson mem 1486

Membership News



A Welcome to New Members

June Place	1595
Andrea Fearnley	1596
Ella Holland	1597
Nadine Hartley	1598

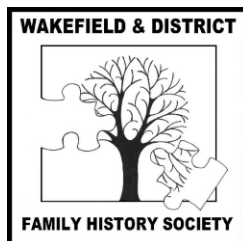
Thank you to all members who have renewed for 2025-2026.

If you haven't renewed for 2025-2026 yet there is still time.

The subscriptions for the year 2026-2027 will be due 1st June 2026

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Members Articles

What's in a Name

In the excitement and satisfaction of finding an ancestor in the records, or some aspect of their life that you hadn't previously known, have you ever taken the time to look at the other names around them? Local records that are chronological (e.g., baptisms, marriages, burials) or demographic (e.g., censuses) have the potential to reveal more about an ancestor through the people they shared their life and times with. Often much more, and not always in an immediately obvious way. In the May 2022 edition of *The Wakefield Kinsman* I had an article included entitled "Daughters of the Inn". I wrote it in the form of a series of lessons learned and reminders for myself about the potential pitfalls and trip hazards of family history research, even for the seasoned genealogical detective. It was shared in the hope that it may prove helpful for other members.

I hadn't thought much more about the article since it was published. It documented my efforts to trace the histories of my great, great grandmother – **Mary Shuttleworth** – and her five sisters, who were all born and raised at an inn in Wakefield. One of those sisters, **Maria**, proved to be more elusive than the rest. I still don't have a precise date of birth for her, only sometime between 1791 and 1793. And it took a lot of false leads before I eventually found when and where she died, during the 1849 Asiatic Cholera epidemic in Castleford. At the time of writing the original article I speculated (wrongly as it turned out) about why she ended her days in Castleford after a lifetime of living in Wakefield. That speculation was partly driven by the name of the informant on her death certificate, whom I'd never heard of before – one **Thomas England**. And there I let things rest, satisfied with myself for discovering the fate of the last of the "Daughters of the Inn", and moved on to other areas of research.

Then in January 2026 I happened to see again a reference in my notes to a website called "The Lagentian" documenting episodes from Castleford's history. I checked to see if the website was still current, and it is. I found again the page providing information about the 1849 Cholera outbreak and re-read it. The history of the event is sobering, it claimed around 50 people in just a few months, out of a population of no more than 2,000 at the time. It caused a scandal and resulted in a public inquiry in 1850. The report of the inspectors from that inquiry is available on the website, and even by the standards of the day it makes shocking reading about the dreadful sanitary conditions and squalor present in parts of the town. Included in the history is a list of names (adults and older children, but not infants) of those who died. It got me to thinking, that I had never bothered to look properly at the parish burial records to see who else died around the same time (October 1849) as my ancestor **Maria Wood**. So I looked again, and the most obvious entry, which I hadn't

even noticed in my original research, was the burial on the same day of a four-month-old infant called **Paul England**. England? That couldn't be a coincidence, could it?

When doing my original research I had found a Thomas England, a joiner of Pontefract in the 1851 census. As Maria's son **William Wood** was also a joiner I had speculated that perhaps he had been apprenticed to this Thomas England who may possibly have had premises in Castleford as well as Pontefract, the two towns being so close together. And from that assumption, that Maria may have been visiting or living with her son in 1849. See how one thing leads to another? Well, the whole theory was totally wrong, another lesson learned! Looking for the 1849 baptism of the unfortunate infant, Paul England, I found it in Castleford. And sure enough the father was Thomas England, a tailor, and his wife Elizabeth. But why had Thomas informed Maria Wood's death? Had she been working in Castleford (possibly as a teacher, that was her profession in 1841) and lodging with the Englands? I investigated more broadly and came across a marriage at St James church in Thornes, Wakefield in 1843 of a Thomas England. And the parish clerk, bless him, had included more details of the couple than many churches did at the time. Thomas England, tailor of Wakefield and son of **Paul England**, labourer, married **Elizabeth Wood**, spinster of Westgate Common and daughter of **Charles Wood**, butcher. A mystery solved – Elizabeth was Maria's daughter and I didn't even know she existed! I knew of Maria's other four children – a son by her first husband, **John Coldwell** (a butcher), and a son and two daughters from her second marriage to Charles Wood (also a butcher). But it appears that Elizabeth, the eldest of Charles and Maria, was never baptized as a child, hence she slipped through the net of my research. Maria obviously had a thing about butchers and baptisms, she didn't have her other three offspring by Charles Wood baptized as children either, and she eventually got them "done" as a job lot on the same day in 1846 (ten years after their father's death) when they were all teenagers. But not Elizabeth. The reasons, I shall never know.

From all this there is a tragedy, of course, particularly for poor Elizabeth who lost her mother and her infant son on the same day in October 1849. And her husband, Thomas, had to go through the formality of notifying their deaths to the Registrar. The fact that the young couple and their other child, Ellen born in 1846, survived the cholera outbreak is remarkable. But the experience may have been too much to bear to remain in Castleford (where Thomas was originally from), as by 1851 they had moved to Sheffield and remained there for the rest of their lives. They had three more children there, Matilda, Emma and **William**, and the family lived close to Elizabeth's younger brother, William, the joiner I mentioned earlier, and his family.

I've had several other incidents over the years of discovering more about my ancestors from looking at the people close to them, with whom they shared their lives and times. So, have a scan up and down the parish entries either side of

the record for your own ancestor. Take a little more time to “flip over” the pages before and after that census entry for your forebears. Be a little more circumspect and less immediately focussed when ploughing through records. You never know what you might find....

Neil Shuttleworth mem 614

The Next Generation – Two William Healds!

So far my Heald ancestors have been traced from their origins in Whitkirk and Leeds to the area around Adwick-le-Street. In another couple of generations they will arrive in Wakefield as wealthy merchants. This bit gets complicated because it deals with three William Healds and a couple of wives called Mary! There is also the bizarre case of a **William Heald** having two sons called William and both of them surviving. How can I be certain of this? The first record of a BMD in the group of villages around Adwick concerning a Heald is at the very end of the 17th century. There is a limited number of records that can be put into chronological order – in other words there isn't more than one family recording baptisms, at least not until the mid-18th century, and then the fathers have different names. Also the younger William (same father, different mother and born in a different village) is referred to as William Heald jnr. in his baptism record. That is very unusual – there was never a need to differentiate between father and son in this way. It is clear that the Healds moved into this group of villages to produce food (the family business back to Whitkirk) and expanded their businesses.

1. William Heald – the elder son (1692 – 1754)

In November 1721 William Heald of Carcroft married **Mary Dickenson** at St George's, Doncaster. Mary was 'of this town', i.e. Doncaster although she had been born in Campsall.

Little is known about this William, probably because his life seems to have been that of a farmer and was uneventful. So far his baptism hasn't been found but such is the nature of 17th century parish registers that some information might be missing or illegible due to damage. He was probably born in 1692, the first born of William and Mary (Cawthorne). This William and his wife Mary (Dickenson) had ten children between 1724 and 1740. All of them were baptised in the parish of Owston which indicates a settled existence as a farmer. One of the sons was called Roger which suggests a knowledge of the history of their ancestry in Leeds. Sadly Roger died in infancy as did at least three other of their children.

His son, also called William Heald (of course!), lived long enough to be recorded in the censuses of 1841 and 1851. He was also a farmer in Owston.

2. William Heald, jnr. (1707 – 1782) – my 6x great-grandfather

When the older William (the father) went to Wath upon Dearne with his new wife, **Elizabeth Gilling**, he started a new family. Elizabeth's father was also called William. And so their first boy was obviously called William! This William is the step-brother of the one above and 15 years his junior: in various parish entries he is referred to as William Heald, jnr. He was one of four siblings and the only one known to have survived infancy. He was born in 1707 and married **Ann Otley** in 1730 in the bride's home parish of Darfield. The marriage bond described him as a farmer. His burial entry in 1782 is particularly informative: "William Heald of Brampton son of William Heald of Brampton Bull's Head (pictured below), aged 75 years, Old Age." So like his father before him he combined farming with inn-keeping.

The Bull's Head is stone built and the building pre-dates the mining industry that dominated the surrounding area. Stylistically the building probably dates from the late 17th or early 18th century. It was built on the Rotherham to Barnsley Turnpike and while it wouldn't have been a coaching inn like the Red House and others on the Great North Road, it would have served passing coaches and carts.



THE NEXT GENERATION

William, jnr. and Ann had seven children with three known to have survived to maturity – all boys: George, John and Henry (William died!).

1. Henry Heald (born 1743)

Henry Heald is of interest in demonstrating the connection of the Healds of Wath to those at Adwick-le-Street. Henry married **Sarah Kay** in Wath in 1766 – both individuals are described as 'of Wath'. In the same year Henry took an apprentice and is described as a 'farmer & ca in Brampton'. His eldest son was called William (another one!) who was born in 1767. This William was the last to be married in Wath in 1796 to **Sarah Simpson**. Luckily their first son was christened **William Simpson Heald** and he was baptised in Adwick-le-Street in 1806, thereby giving us the first fully unique William Heald of the family. The family is recorded in the 1841 census with the, by now, old man being a farmer in Adwick. William Simpson Heald was one of four children to live to further their line. But times were changing. More children were surviving as the benefits of industrialisation took hold and the area around Wath and Adwick became more industrial, replacing farming. William Simpson Heald had moved out of farming and was a saddler. But a craft trade such as this must have had

a short life-expectancy. In about 1848 he migrated with his family to Manchester. He survived in that city for just two years and died there in 1850. But the other members of his family seem to have thrived with his wife living till 1896. Various trades of this family are butcher, domestic service and, of course, pub licensees.

2. John Heald (b. 1739)

John's son was called William (of course). John had married in Dewsbury and then moved to Wakefield. One of John's descendants, through William has a DNA match to me.

3. George Heald (1732 – 1787)

George is the next link in the line of Healds heading to Wakefield. He is the father of the rich Wakefield merchant, **Thomas Heald**. His story will be told in the next part.

Peter Holford mem 1568

William Elford and His Medals

Recently, while doing some de-cluttering amongst my local and family history paperwork, I came across a set of medals at the bottom of a box. Among the clasp of four medals were two awarded during World War One. The name engraved around the rim of each was **William Elford** of the Dorsetshire Regiment.

Intrigued, and having forgotten where I had acquired these medals, I started to do some research into William. Most importantly for me was the discovery that he had been born, brought up and died in Southampton, my own home town.

William Victor Elford (1885 – 1926) was a son of **Frederick Joseph Elford** (1855 – 1931) and his wife **Eliza Jane, nee Chambers** (1860 – 1932). Both parents seem to have lived their entire lives in Southampton. Frederick was born in Shirley, a district of the city I know well, and was christened at Millbrook Church, in whose cemetery my own grandparents are buried.

Eliza and Frederick were married in the Sep quarter of 1878, and over the next twenty years had eight children: Eliza Beatrice (b. Jun quarter 1879); Edward Joseph (bap. 6 Feb 1881); Susan Elizabeth (b. Dec quarter 1882); William Victor (b. Mar quarter 1885); Emily Catherine (b. Sep quarter 1892); George Bertrand (b. Jun quarter 1895); Ethelreda Margaret (b. Sep quarter 1897); and, finally, Frederick Charles, who was born in Sep quarter 1900, appeared, aged 10 months in the 1901 census, but died soon after the census was taken on 31 March 1901.

The family lived at a number of different addresses in the town, mainly on the eastern, River Itchen side. Frederick worked in the carpentry business and was described in the censuses as either a “joiner’s machinist” or “wood machinist”.

Although at age 19 William was working as a bricklayer, he obviously decided that he wanted a career change. On 19 October 1905 he joined the 3rd Dorsetshire Regiment, agreeing to serve for six years. His attestation document describes William with the following physical characteristics: Height - 5ft 3.25ins; Weight - 122 lbs; Complexion – fresh; Eyes – brown; Hair – black. The medical examination at Dorchester passed him as fit to serve in the Army.

William went to India with the 2nd Battalion, where he was listed in the 1911 census as a private in barracks in Poona, Western India. The regiment was recalled from India at the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914. The battalion served in Mesopotamia throughout the war, fighting the Turks. Then in April 1918, it moved to Egypt, and later Palestine and Syria.

In 1919 the battalion returned to India where William was involved in the suppression of the Malabar revolt in 1921-22. The rebellion, started as an uprising against the British Raj, involved the local population of the Malabar coastal region in south-west India. The riots led to 2300 executions.

Without William’s service record, the date at which his military service ended is unknown. He was, however, back in Southampton when he died, aged 41 years, on 29th May 1926. His death certificate records that William died in hospital suffering from cancer. He had found work since leaving the Army because the certificate described him as a “fitter’s mate”. As far as I can tell, William never married nor had direct descendants in the UK, and his death was registered by his sister Susan (now **Mrs Binstead**).

According to William’s WW1 Medal Rolls Index Card, he was awarded all three First World War medals – the 1914 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. In addition, he received the Indian General Service Medal, with the Malabar clasp.

However, the four medals given to me present a puzzle. Instead of the 1914 Star, the left-hand medal is a 1939-45 Star attached to the clasp by a roughly-sewn British War Medal ribbon (orange and blue). WW2 campaign medals were never engraved with names, so it is impossible to discover the original owner of this medal.

Despite the anomaly, I decided that these medals should return to William’s home town. I have been in contact with Southampton Museum Service, which is willing to take them into the collection. I shall return them when I am next in the city.

Dr Newbery, the Curator of Maritime and Local Collections, would like more provenance for the medals, so I would be happy to pass on information from anyone who remembers handling them.

Deborah Scriven mem 1320

Sources

Ancestry.co.uk – Findmypast.co.uk - National Army Museum. www.nam.ac.uk
Keep Military Museum, Dorchester. www.keepmilitarymuseum.org
Family Tree Magazine Jan 2026 p.32-37

A Yorkshire Family Treasure



I acquired this set of Victorian jewellery when my mother **Mary, nee Robinson**, died in 1987. It was always referred to as “the Robinson jewellery”. She had inherited it from *her* mother Hetty in 1959, who must have been given it by *her* husband, **William Gilbert Robinson**, some time after the death of his mother in 1928. This was Emma, the widow of **John Gilbert Robinson**, a manufacturer of fire clay goods from Elland. I used to think it was probably a wedding gift to Emma from her husband, but I did a bit of investigation and it dates from the 1880s, which is much too late. One of my regrets once I started my family history is that when it came to my mother the locket contained a pair of rather faded photos of Emma and John Gilbert which mum removed and didn’t keep, so that she could insert photos of herself and my father. As I had plenty of other photos of them, I removed these and instead inserted photos of the previous two women owners, ie mum and my grandmother.

Joy Joseph mem 972

Snippet: Re Drinking and Driving

In Norman Ellis’ book “Bygone Wakefield and District Volume 2” there is a section about temperance halls and teetotal establishments. It finishes with the following amusing anecdote.

Today, there are other constraints on imbibing, notably in connection with (not) drinking and driving. The problem has always been withus, as the following Wakefield City Police Court report (with a hint of bribery) shows:

William Henry Jowett, Motorman, of Leeds, had 8 – 6d to pay for being drunk in charge of a motor wagon at Wakefield on Monday night (1st January 1906).

Defendant drove the officer who charged him to the police station, and this induced the bench not to endorse his licence”

Do You Know Where the Editor Has Been?

A Walk Around Not Sugar Lane

Please see the cover picture for a clue to my recent travels. Have you ever passed a cemetery and promised yourself that, one day, you would take time to explore?

For years, I kept promising myself to stop at this small cemetery, and finally, in early September last year, I did and on that visit, I was mainly interested in the CWGC headstone—there was just the one.

The cemetery is divided into two sections: the modern one, neat and reasonably tidy, and the old, not so tidy, in fact, quite overgrown apart from a small mowed pathway through part of the cemetery. But, to me, that was the interesting section, apart from the CWGC headstone.

Last September, I visited Lofthouse Cemetery on Cemetery Lane. The older section is especially overgrown, but a few mowed paths reveal intriguing headstones—each hinting at a story for anyone willing to look beyond the surface.

One headstone to **Sarah Ann Bone** of Robin Hood, who died in 1910 in her 80th year, also mentions her grandson **George Edwin Harrod**, son of **Robert** and **Matilda Harrod**, who died on 14 October 1917 from wounds, aged 24.

Another memorial is to **Alfred Shaw**, Sarah Ann's husband. He was killed in action on 27 March 1918 in his 39th year, near Bucquoy Farm, France. **Alice** and **Jack Jackson** also remember their son, **Henry**, who was killed in action in France on 27 September 1918, aged 31. **John William Blackburn** and his wife, **Alice**, remember their son **Herbert Edwin Blackburn**, who was also killed in action on 15 November 1916, aged 22.

There are a few visible memorials that are rather elaborate. The first is to **William Langley**, whose tomb is surrounded by a decorated iron railing. **Rachel, James Eclon Harris's** wife, has a headstone that is decorated with what look like tree trunks.

Other family names include: **Taylor, Bussey, Sudders, Willguse, Marshall, Allinson, Hemingway, Booth** and a man named **Urban Scott**, to name a few of the visible stones. Urban Scott got the curiosity working, and it turns out on FreeBMD, there were six Urban Scotts recorded from 1848 to 1942 - some including the one from Wakefield, who has three entries, his birth, marriage and death. The others are from Cambridgeshire and Penzance. Do I want to venture down the Urban rabbit hole...No! But someone else might.

Carol Sklinar mem 664

Dad's Letters

Letter Dated 4th October 1942

(presumed written one week after Sept 27th letter)

No date and postmark blurred.

(October 1942)

2/LT T Staynes

No. 1 Group A.A.AP.C. (WA)

West Africa Forces.

My darling Vi,

Here begineth – no, here endeth my twentieth Sunday in this unmentionable place. Again, I've had a mixed week. It opened quietly; on Wednesday I had a terrific row with the I.P.C about an urgent job at ---- aerodrome. He said he had telephoned full particulars to my office. I was equally insistent that we'd never received any such message. He talked of Coasters' memory; I produced my telephone 'Messages received' book which always hangs by the 'phone. That shook him – it's part of the system I started when I took over here. All jobs are entered in this book as we receive notification. My Sgt. initials the book every morning to show he has read about them. I initial it as each job is completed. It is already proving valuable. Thursday the I.P.C came out here with my company commander; they visited the mess and had drinks in my name but never visited me in the office. Friday, I went to H.Q. and spoke my mind to my company commander. He blamed – rightly I think – the I.P.C. who dictated their movements. I should have drawn my labourers pay on Friday – I pay out each Saturday fortnight – but the bloke responsible for cashing the cheque had been "too busy" to go. Would I come back at 11.00 a.m. Saturday morning? I did the twenty miles into H.Q. on Saturday morning and kicked my heels until one o'clock (the banks close at twelve). He then turned up with my cheque; he'd cashed his own but "couldn't carry my cash as well, it was too heavy". So, I drove twenty miles back again with nothing but a scrap of paper to distribute amongst two hundred hungry men who had walked anything up to five miles to draw their pay. I drove into camp the back way and sent a runner down to my Lance – Corporal to get rid of them by hook or by crook. It's neither right nor proper. I'll have to make a third journey to-morrow. And besides, when their staple food is rice, and rice can only be bought in the black market two days makes a hell of a difference to them. I know they are a lot of lazy lying thieves, and completely stupid, but when they've been pushed around for a fortnight and made to dig away with picks at solid rock they are entitled to their copper – 1/5d a day – three ha'pence an hour and five pence a day cost of living bonus. Would you like to know how the Pyramids were built? I'll tell you when I get home. The cashier can't understand why I worry about the black b----s. I wonder what would happen if his pay was late.

There's a terrific storm brewing; the sky was a livid yellow a few minutes ago, and everything reflected the colour of this sky. Now it's turned black and the

'kwale-wali' is flickering over the hills on the horizon. The evening skies now are beyond description – enough cloud to make them interesting; and there is usually every depth of shade imaginable. Of course, everything here is on a grand scale and yet somehow, you can't call it beautiful. I think the effects are too exaggerating and over whelming to be beautiful. The rain is already bucketing down. I'm very much relieved – the thatch of my exchange is less likely to catch fire. It's devilish hot and steamy all day now – the heat brings the moisture out of the ground all day, and about five o'clock we get the terrific storms. Actually, there is a 'wastage' of moisture and each day it takes the sun a little longer to get enough moisture out of the ground for these storms and so the storms come later and later until eventually they die out altogether.

It's no joke now riding long distances in my truck. The heat of the engine spreads through the metal floor of the cab and literally roasts your feet. On Saturday I hobbled around like an old woman; and I'm not looking forward to to-morrow. I fear I've got fever. My head aches and my hands and feet are burning, although I've spent all afternoon in bed (and all morning except lunch-time) and yet the evening wind is going through me like a knife. After a mid-day temperature of 120°, you notice it when it drops to 85° in the evening rain. Blast the cashier and all his works. I've got to cash the cheque – I can't send my sergeant though at a pinch I'll take a chance and let him pay out.

Alpha has been marvellous to-day. Brought my breakfast to bed and sat outside the door all morning in case I wanted anything. All afternoon he poured hot tea into me to make me sweat and wanted to come back to-night and sleep in my room in case I 'be plenty sick' I told him I wasn't as bad as that and sent him home with my blessing. I bought him a new a shirt in town on Friday, really to quieten my conscience. On Thursday under great stress, I lost my temper completely with him and made all sorts of accusations (which I later found to be totally unjustified) and abused him roundly. I don't do that sort of thing very often, but you know how nasty I can be when I'm that way out. Poor Alpha took it very much to heart and on Friday morning he burst into tears and said I didn't trust him, so I gave him the key to my new box and told him to forget all I had said. I felt heartily ashamed of myself and since he's looking a bit threadbare, I dashed him a new shirt. A cheap Woolworth's affair but it cost me 6/6d. Anyway, we are reconciled now and he gave me my usual Mende lesson to-night. We take our Lilliput and look at the pictures and he names the objects. There's Hele (hay-lay) the elephant and ba-re the sheep and pompadingay the firefly. And lots of females showing their 'n'yini'. It puzzles Alpha – he can't understand why the women in the pictures 'no wear clothes' He also is very interested in the fact that European women's n'yini' don't hang down like those of native women, and brassieres are beyond his comprehension. The polar bear puzzled him too and the double-decker omnibus. He was tickled to death with the rear view of the fat lady contrasted with the elephant, but blonde bombshells puzzle him. I

think it is the variety of dresses which upsets him. That was a thunderbolt that was. Pray for my exchange. We had fresh lettuce and radishes for lunch today. I wish I could have tasted them. Also, sweet corn in the cob. Very nice it looked. We've got out my section's motor-bike. When I'm my usual happy self again I'll have a shot at it. I wish they'd hurry up with my Hillman car. I've also got a compressor which I'm studying – only it doesn't do my poor head any good. Do you think I'll ever settle down to teaching again?

I'm calling at the photographers in town to-morrow to see if the snaps taken last month are ready. If they are, I'll put them in this letter. Trouble is, developing & printing is at a premium here; you pay in advance & wait until they choose to do them. It's no use arguing.

Beer and cigarettes are scarce again. And I've had no mail this week. The others got their mail on Wednesday. I suppose more is still lying in the Pioneers' office. I quite see I'll have to go and have another row about it. Last Friday when I went into H.Q. I missed **Adcock** at the Dog & Lamp-post. He usually meets me there and we go up together for lunch. We're always last; and on Friday I lunched alone in the great long mess and gazed through the window at the sea and the white cloud. Just outside the horizon the waves were broken on the deserted sandy cover; and on the horizon a ship was moving slowly seaward. There was a wireless playing 'Rose Marie' and I suddenly felt very homesick. Just a passing mood but most unpleasant whilst it lasted. I've never felt quite like that before.

Parker has got his captaincy after a struggle; he's working very hard just now and didn't look too well when I called in on him yesterday. **Boase** goes steadily on – he's only got another six months to go; he should stay the course all right. He's comparatively normal and recites the 'Hunting of the Snark,' when pressed. Did you get any mushrooms this year? I haven't heard of any being grown in this part of the world. I don't see why they shouldn't – except that the heavy rains might wash the spawn away.

This really is going to be a short letter. My head is aching quite a lot now so I'm going to bed. I wish you were here to make a fuss of me. I'm sure it would cure me a lot better than quinine and aspirins. It's upsetting my plans about an excursion into the hills too. Never mind, will make up for it on old Cader and in the Lakes, if my blood's thick enough to stand the cold. I bet it will be cold too in England when this letter reaches you. And we'll be averaging over 100° a day. I don't like the heat at all at all. I don't think this letter sounds too cheerful; but if by chance my mail turns up to-morrow I'll be a different man. Maybe I'll write you a bit more to-morrow when the labourers are all paid. Meanwhile, look well after yourself and send me as much love as I want to send you.

Your own

Tommy.

Monday

Dear Vi,

I've done gone paid my labourers and hope for a comparatively quiet day tomorrow. It's been hot and sticky all day – I no agree for it – but apart from a headache I'm feeling fit again. We've just had our evening storm and the lightning is still flickering. I've got the photos – they are not very good but you may be able to recognise me in this one which was taken just before we set off back. The background is the virgin jungle through which we walk to reach the beach. Next to me is the owner of the camera; then the redoubtable **Corporal Herbert**. In the foreground are hatless **L/Cpl. Howard** (then my 2nd/ Command Petrol) and **Mess Marker Garrett** wearing a Helmet, universal. He has long since gone on leave and is probably drinking pints of London beer now. I forget the name of the other bloke. Anyway, they all belong to Ordnance.



The rest are a disappointing collection on the whole, but I hope to get some better ones (both in quality and subject matter). Meanwhile, this one will have to do. I hope it reaches you safely. All my love darling – I lunched at H.Q. today and the wireless played the slow movement from the 'Emperor'; I always run into things there. Do you ever have time to play now? I expect you have, . I'm going to bed now for a good night's sleep.

Your own

Tommy

Debbie Staynes mem 1059

Family Heirlooms Meet AI

Of late I have been exploring the potential of Scribe AI, a tool which is available as a part of the My Heritage package. It is a very addictive accessory which offers to create new insights into photographs and documents. You need to upload an image and then click on “view insights” and within a few minutes you have a report under various headings providing historical context, details of any text including transcription and where appropriate translation and a separate section with recommendations for further research. I uploaded the image opposite and it reported:

Historical Context:

This document is a highly decorative 'Family Register,' typically found bound within a 19th-century family Bible. These registers were used to officially record the vital events of a family, serving as both a personal keepsake and a vital record of births, marriages, and deaths. The intricate engravings surrounding the text, drawn by **W. B. Scott** and engraved by **J. Brain**, beautifully illustrate the cycle of life, depicting scenes from infancy and courtship to marriage, old age, and eventually death (symbolized by the figure entering a tomb on the bottom right).

Details Mentioned:

Principal Individuals:

Daniel Bretherton: Husband/Father. Born on April 23, 1814. Married Elizabeth Kearsley September 15, 1847, in Coates, Gloucestershire.

Elizabeth Kearsley: Wife/Mother. Born on March 25, 1821. Married Daniel Bretherton on September 15, 1847, in Coates, Gloucestershire.

Children:

William James Bretherton: Son. Born on Saturday, August 26, 1848, at about 9:00 PM.

Ellen Benedicta Bretherton: Daughter. Born on Saturday, February 2, 1850, at 8:00 AM.

Daniel Kearsley Bretherton: Son. Born on Good Friday, April 18, 1851, at 12:00 Noon. Died on October 15, 1851.

It correctly transcribed the handwriting and provided an explanation of the symbology of the engraving (in fact it also identified the artist and the engraver). I am hooked, do you have experience of similar tools?

Paul Gaywood mem 1496



FAMILY REGISTER.

Daniel Butcherston

Born 23rd April, 1844

Elizabeth Kearsey

Born 25th March 1821


Married at Coates, Gloucestershire,
September 15th, 1847

William James their Son born Saturday
2nd August 1848 about 9 o'clock P. M.

Ellen Benedicta their daughter born
Saturday, 2nd February, 1850, at 6 o'clock

Daniel Kearsey their son, born
Good Friday, April 12th 1851, at
Twelve o'clock at Noon

Died October 19th 1854.



Remembering Mary Fisher (1899-1983)

Mary's father was **George Fisher** of Crigglestone. Apparently he was a good businessman and prospered sufficiently to acquire a farm tenancy at Newmillerdam as well as the family Butcher's business there. One of the sons of George and his wife Margaret was **Marsden** (born 1889 and baptised with his grandmother's maiden name) who took the farm tenancy at Woodmoor, Newmillerdam. Mary was his younger sister and when Marsden took on the farm Mary helped him to run it. Marsden married **Mary Schofield** at Hemsworth in 1920 and anecdotal evidence from the family was that she found it difficult having our Mary around the house and when the relationship soured further Mary left the farm. She had an aunt Elizabeth formerly of Knowsley, Lancashire who offered help. It was a life-changing arrangement for Mary, as Elizabeth had married **John Biggar**, described on the marriage certificate as aged 45 and a shepherd and bachelor from the parish of Ettrick, Selkirkshire, Scotland. It was through the Biggar family link that Mary went to live in Scotland where she was to remain for the rest of her life, latterly living at Denholm, Hawick in Roxburghshire. For the rest of her working life she was employed at a Mill there. She never married.

As a child I recall Mary's annual visit to Yorkshire to see her relatives, travelling from Scotland on her motorbike. She had by then acquired a mildly Scottish accent. Another memory from those days was that my family at Lupset received an occasional gift from Mary in the form of a honeycomb sent through the post. I visited Mary twice in her latter years. In appearance she was of a stocky build, usually dressed in a short-sleeved blouse and a tweed skirt. My mother also visited and recalled a short bus-ride with Mary to the village of Newcastleton to call on Mary's relative James (Jimmy) Biggar, formerly a well-known athlete.

Eventually Mary's health declined,(she once remarked "In old age you don't just get the Pension Book!") and she spent the last part of her life in a care home in Hawick. She died there on 7th January 1983 and her affairs were settled by a local lawyer who was subsequently able to distribute Mary's net estate among her nephews and nieces. She was buried in the Hawick cemetery and shortly afterwards I was able to travel to Hawick and arrange with a local stonemason for a simple inscription on a gravestone.

During her many years in Scotland, estranged from her relatives in Yorkshire, Mary must have often reflected sadly on a life seemingly of no consequence, but perhaps she lives again through this article.

Chris Pearman mem 1253

Yours Affectionately: A Victorian Scandal

Denis Creighton Neary was appointed the first vicar of the parish of South Ossett by the bishop of Ripon in 1850. He had been born into a farming family in Northern Ireland thirty years before, educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and ordained deacon and then priest at Ripon. A man of remarkable energy, in his first seven years as incumbent he oversaw the construction of a parish church, Christ Church, a vicarage, a school and a master's house. He was an eloquent preacher and was able to fill Christ Church's 600 seats on Sunday evenings, even attracting worshippers from outside of his parish.

In 1845, while he was at Trinity College, Neary married **Jane Anna Owen**, the only surviving daughter of **Edward Pugh Owen** of Caerbellan and Egryn Abbey, Merioneth. Over the following twelve years they had six children, five daughters, Mary Jane, Ann Elizabeth, Sarah Emma, Fanny and Catherine Owen and one son, William Edward. Sarah Emma died in 1858 and was buried at Christ Church, but the other children lived to be adults.

It was expected that the vicar and his family would set an example of good behaviour to the parish, but in 1860 some parishioners began to suspect Neary of adultery with a **Miss Elizabeth Susannah Sharman**. She had opened a private school in Ossett in 1857 and among her pupils were three of the Neary girls. Her relationship with the Neary family was good until Mrs Neary read a letter to her husband from Miss Sharman which was signed, 'Yours affectionately.' This aroused the suspicions of Mrs Neary, suspicions she confided to her friends. The matter soon became the subject of local gossip and some parishioners began to take a close interest in the movements of the vicar and the teacher. Unable to ignore this situation, Neary asked the rural dean, the vicar of Dewsbury, to carry out an inquiry into the rumours. Held in November 1860, it took evidence from witnesses in a hearing lasting seven hours before concluding the rumours were baseless. This did not quell the gossip and the situation was inflamed in December 1860 by the circulation in Ossett and Dewsbury of an anonymous pamphlet and fliers accusing Neary of being a liar, an adulterer and of cruelly mistreating his wife.

Neary's position was made more difficult by the legal action taken against him by Middleton and Glover, drapers, of Cross Square, Wakefield, who sued him for a debt of £12 0s. 9d. When Neary appeared in the Wakefield County Court in November 1861, he claimed the debt was not his responsibility, as it had been incurred by his wife without his consent. As a result, the judge stopped the action and suggested Neary and the drapers should come to an agreement. Mrs Neary then took the extraordinary step of writing to the 'Leeds Mercury' to challenge the account her husband had given in court. Published on 16

November 1861, her letter claimed she had shopped with Middleton and Glover at her husband's request and she enclosed a copy of the drapers' bill which contradicted the evidence he had given in court. Encouraged by Mrs Neary's intervention, the drapers renewed their legal action and when in January 1862 the case again came before Wakefield County Court, the jury found for Middleton and Glover. Later in the same year Mrs Neary summoned her husband for assault and Miss Sharman lodged a charge of assault against Mrs Neary. Fortunately, for Reverend Neary, neither case came to trial.

The rumours and the legal cases damaged the reputations of both Neary and Miss Sharman, but they had supporters in Ossett. A 'Wakefield Express' correspondent reported in January 1862 that 'despite the villainous feats of scribbling blackguards,' Christ Church was again one of the best attended places of worship' in the village. In the following April, a supportive address signed by over 400 people, most of them Neary's parishioners, was presented to the vicar. Referring to his 'unhappy domestic affairs' and 'more especially' to the 'disgraceful anonymous attacks' on him, it expressed 'very cordial sympathy' with his 'very distressing position.' Although Miss Sharman did not receive such a public declaration of support, it was said in 1865 that her school was well filled.

The offer of a reward of £30 failed to reveal the names of the 'scribbling blackguards' who had attacked Neary and Miss Sharman, but by accident the vicar was eventually able to identify **Joseph Senior**, a Horbury maltster, as the author of the pamphlet and fliers. Neary began an action for libel against Senior which came to trial at the West Riding Spring Assizes held in Leeds town hall at the beginning of April 1865. The defendant was represented by **Mr Seymour QC** and **Mr Field QC**, while Neary's barrister was **Mr Overend**. Overend began by outlining Neary's successful clerical career, his family's friendship with Miss Sharman and the events which followed Mrs Neary's disclosure of her suspicions of her husband's adultery. Touching on Mrs Neary's charge of assault against her husband, Overend explained that in fact she had assaulted him, making it necessary for him to put her out of the room. He also stressed the support both Neary and Miss Sharman had in the parish and said all Neary wanted from the defendant was an apology to himself and Miss Sharman. Overend then called three witnesses to prove Senior's responsibility for the pamphlet and fliers: the printer, John Woodhead of Dewsbury, Mr Brierley, a former employee of Woodhead, and James Blackburn, the bill poster who had distributed the publications in Dewsbury and Ossett. Woodhead was reprimanded by the judge, **Mr Baron Martin**, for breaking the law by not putting his name on the pamphlets and fliers.

Following Overend's presentation of Neary's case, a brief conference was held between him, **Mr Seymour** and the judge in the latter's private room. When the hearing resumed, Seymour said that three years previously, his client had

believed his statements to be true, but he now felt they were unjustified and he withdrew them and apologised. In reply, Overend said Neary was satisfied with the apology, although he and Miss Sharman regretted not having the opportunity to go into the witness box. The jury gave a verdict for Neary of £5 5s damages and Miss Sharman agreed to take no further legal action in the matter.

After the trial, Neary remained the incumbent of South Ossett until his death at the age of 63 in March 1884. His funeral at Christ Church was well-attended, the church being crowded and over 1,000 mourners filling the churchyard. Whether Neary was reconciled with his wife is unclear. It was only four months after her death in August 1881 that he married a **Miss Charlotte Sykes**, but he was buried at Christ Church in the same grave as Jane Anna and their daughter, Sarah Emma. As for Miss Sharman, she moved from Ossett to Bradford before 1871 and carried on her career as a school teacher. She remained single and died in the West Riding Asylum at Menston in June 1916.

Sources:

Neary's obituary in the 'Ossett Observer,' 22.3.1884, outlines his career. J.P. Smith, editor, 'South Ossett Christ Church Extracts from the Vicar's Log Book 1851-1964, (Wakefield and District Family History, 2012), includes an account of Neary's incumbency written by his successor, Rev. J. H. Ward. The libel trial was widely reported in the press including in the 'Leeds Mercury,' 4.4.1865, and the 'Sheffield Daily Telegraph,' 4.4.1865. An oddity of the reporting is that Miss Sharman's letter to Neary is said to have been signed 'Caroline Sharman' when her given names were Elizabeth Susannah.

David Scriven mem 1320

Charles Frederick Tyrwhitt-Drake (1846-1874) **Explorer, archaeologist, naturalist, and linguist.**

Charles Frederick Tyrwhitt-Drake, my 1st cousin 4 x removed, was born on 2nd January 1846 in Amersham, Buckinghamshire, the third son of **Lt. Col. William Tyrwhitt-Drake** (1785-1848) and **Emma Thompson Halsey** (1806-1897) of Great Gaddesden, Herts. The Drake family had been lords of the manor of Amersham since the early 17th century and had adopted the name 'Tyrwhitt' in 1776 as a condition of inheriting the Tyrwhitt fortune of **Sir John de la Fontaine Tyrwhitt**.

Baptised at St Mary's the Virgin, Amersham parish church on 12th January 1846 Charles was educated at Rugby School and Wellington College.

He entered Rugby School in September 1859. The register entry shows that he was in Town House, which was a house for day pupils. He was a foundationer pupil, which meant that he got free education there because at the

time his widowed mother lived in Rugby. His elder brother **William Thomas Tyrwhitt-Drake** had entered the school in February 1849 as a boarder, when the family was living at Little Shardloes, Amersham, Buckinghamshire. I suspect their mother moved to Rugby after the death of their father in 1848 so that Charles would be eligible for a free education. The family are in Rugby on the 1851 census. The pupil list shows that he was in the upper middle form (in Middle School) and studied divinity, history, classics, mathematics, and modern languages (including French and German). In later years Rugby School went on to teach science and natural history but those subjects were not on the curriculum in Charles' time.

The headmaster of Wellington College **Dr Edward White Benson** (later archbishop of Canterbury, 1883-1896) noted Charles' *"resolute purpose and enthusiastic devotion to manly sports as well as to the study of natural history and botany."* Sadly for Charles he suffered from asthma, and from an early age this interfered with some of the school physical activities. He was however a good cricketer and played, unless prevented by asthma, in the school eleven. While at Wellington College he made himself a draughtsman, a botanist, and an ornithologist. Dr. Benson noted that Charles knew *"the flight and note of every species and found out the great variety of birds which inhabit the fir woods and the heaths, the Finchampstead Ridges and the rich Blackwater Valley"*. Apparently one of his favourite studies at school was the topography of Palestine; a relief map having been presented to the school by the Prince Consort.

In 1864 Charles matriculated to Trinity College, Cambridge but failed to complete his degree due to ill health. Such was his health that he could only spend the milder seasons at home in England and passed the winters of 1866-1867 in Morocco shooting, hunting, collecting natural history specimens and learning Arabic. One of the outcomes of these trips was the publications of 'Notes on the Birds of Tangier and Eastern Morocco', published in 1867 and 'Further Notes...' on the same in 1869.

The Morocco travelling stood him in good stead as preparation for the more serious business in future. It inured him to camp life, taught him the manners and language of the Middle East, showed him how to gain the admiration and trust of the people, and gave him the habit of close and careful observation. All of this was invaluable for his future work of the exploration of Palestine.

In the winter of 1868 he went to Egypt and the Nile having given up all hope of a university degree as his health required him to spend all future winters in the sunny south. In one of his letters, dated December 22, 1868 he writes: *"On the fourteenth I went to the Pyramids of Cheops. We left the hotel at 8 a.m., and down through Old Cairo to the banks of the Nile, which we crossed, and found our donkeys waiting for us on the other side; we then rode about six*

miles. At first it is utterly impossible to realise their enormous size (460 ft. high), but after a time, by comparison with the men at the foot and those on the top, one begins to realise what it really is. Of course we went up to the top, but nothing would ever induce me to do it again – it is a most awful path; the ascent is made as easy as possible, for two Arabs hold your hands, and another pushes when necessary, but as the blocks vary in height from three to four feet, it is no easy work to get to the top, but once there the view is fine; one sees the fertile land about the Nile for many miles each way, and the tints on the desert hills are most lovely.”

He goes on to comment on being pestered by Arabs trying to sell him cheap touristy relics which rather spoil the trip for him. He then writes: *“The Sphinx is also rather a delusion; all pictures that one sees represent it perched on a hill, while in reality it is in a hollow among the sand-heaps. The body is a shapeless mass; the head is certainly curious, but it has lost its nose, which gives it the most disagreeable expression, to say the least of it.”* *“Cairo is by far the most picturesque town I ever saw. It is dirty and dilapidated as a rule, but that rather adds to the effect. The number of mosques is wonderful. I counted more than 140 minarets from the roof of the hotel... There are a great many Copts here; I went to see several of their churches, which are curious, full of paintings like in the Greek Church. One has a vault where Mary is said to have hidden herself (why, I could not make out) during the stay in Egypt. I went to the service in one of their Churches. The ceremonial is partly Greek and partly Moslem. Candles and incense are used, the service is read first in Coptic (which nobody understood), then in Arabic; the congregation sit on the ground and take their shoes, not turbans, off, just as the Moslems do.”*

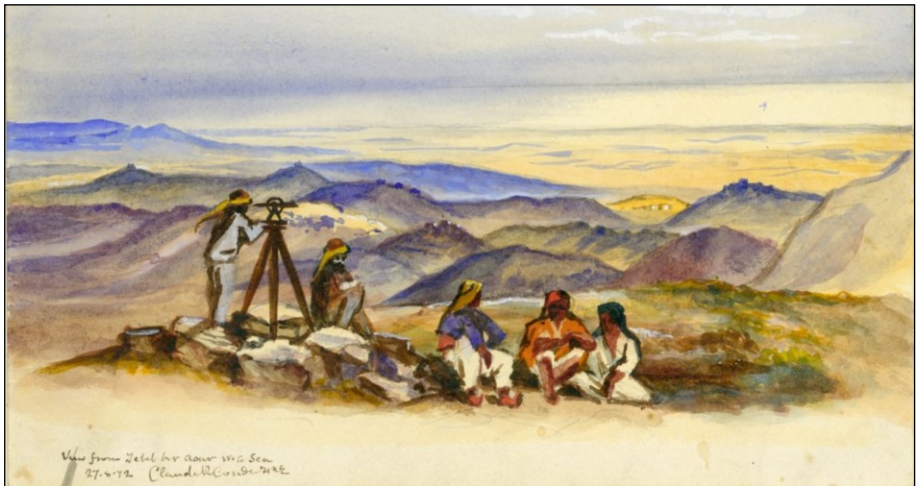
In the spring of 1869 he went to Sinai and met the Officers of the Sinai Ordnance Survey expedition. The survey was just completed and the party were on the point of leaving for home so Charles took their guide and visited for himself all the places of interest which they had discovered.



Palestine Exploration Fund's 1869 Sinai Survey Team. Prof. Edward Palmer seated at the back in white with turban. Charles Frederick Tyrwhitt-Drake seated centre.

He returned to England to make preparations and, at that time, received a grant from Cambridge University to enable him to join Professor E.H. Palmer of the Palestine Exploration Team on the exploration of the Holy Land that autumn. The two of them explored on foot, starting from Suez. They took the minimum baggage, often performing their own cooking, washing up etc. and were in constant danger from suspicious Arabs. Many new sites were discovered and much good geographical work performed, the scientific results of which were published in the quarterly statements of the Palestine Exploration Fund, and in the 'Desert of the Exodus' by Prof. E.H. Palmer. After visiting Palestine, Syria, Greece and Turkey Charles briefly returned to England.

In the winter of 1870 there came a report that inscribed stones had been found at Hamáh, in northern Syria. When Professor Palmer heard this he persuaded the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund to finance Charles to investigate. This he successfully did in June 1871. In the autumn of 1871 Charles explored the highlands of Syria in the company of **Captain R. Burton**, the consul at Damascus. They rode through the whole district to examine and sketch the ruined castles and fortresses of an ancient civilisation. Their journeys of that year were published in 'Unexplored Syria' in 1872.



Water colour view from Jebel bir Asur, Western Palestine by Claude Conder, lieutenant in the Corps of Royal Engineers, who was seconded to the Palestine Exploration Fund.

For the next two and half years Charles was engaged in the work of the Palestine Exploration Fund Society, with the exception of a short visit to England and Egypt in 1873. He copied inscriptions, mapped the country, measured the remains of antiquity, collected geological specimens, fauna and flora, and made sketches in pencil and water colour. In the spring of 1874 he caught a fever whilst camped in the rainy swamps of the low-lying plains of

Palestine. He was taken to Jerusalem and died on 23rd June 1874, aged only 28 yrs. He was buried in Jerusalem.

The inscription on his grave reads – Charles Frederick Tyrwhitt-Drake Born Jan 2 1846 Died June 23 1874. This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.

Charles Frederick Tyrwhitt-Drake earned a reputation as an explorer, naturalist, archaeologist, and linguist.

He was apparently well liked by his colleagues for his enthusiasm, hard work, and easy manner. In addition, he got on well with the local people.

His main published work was in reports for the Palestine Exploration Fund but he also wrote 'Notes on the Birds of Tangier and Eastern Morocco', 1867, 'Further Notes on the Birds of Tangier and Eastern Morocco', 1869 and co-wrote 'Unexplored Syria' 1872. In 1877 Richard Bentley and Son, published 'The Literary Remains of The Late Charles F. Tyrwhitt-Drake, F.R.G.S' edited with a memoir by Walter Besant, M.A.

Aside from the 'usual' sources used by family historians I have had invaluable help from St Mary's Church, Amersham, and the Buckinghamshire Family History Society. The archivist at Rugby School gave me the information about his school days. I have a copy of 'The Literary Remains' which makes very interesting and informative reading considering his travels took place in the 1860s and 1870s. And I have just heard from the Palestine Exploration Fund in London inviting me to view a collection of his letters and reports, and some of his drawings. Me excited? Definitely!

Denise Sanford mem 1326

Norman White

From The Kinsman Feb 2018

My father, **Norman White**, died 20 July 2016, aged 90, at his home in Scarborough, where he had lived for 30 years since he retired from work. Earlier this year, after his estate had been dealt with, I decided that I would like to make a few donations to organisations that I felt were relevant to Dad's life and interests, even though he might not have had a direct connection with them. Wakefield & District Family History Society was an obvious choice, because Dad was initially responsible for my interest in our family history.

There again, you could say the person who was really responsible was **Craig White**, the former Yorkshire and England cricketer. About 20 years ago, Dad came up with a half-serious theory that he and Craig might be related. Craig White had been born in Morley, but his family emigrated to Australia when he was a child. Dad reckoned that his cousin, **Gordon's** son, had gone to Australia

– maybe Craig was Gordon’s grandson? After hearing Dad bringing up this idea on many occasions over the next few years – the cricketer became known in the family as ‘Our Craig’ – and expanding it to cover more of his relatives, on one fateful day in 2001 I finally cracked. “Go on, Dad”, I said, “write down what you know and I’ll see what I can find out”. That was the start of the slippery slope!

Dad wrote out everything he could remember about his own family and my mother’s – she was still living at this time, but had suffered a series of strokes and was unable to speak. Unfortunately there were no family photos earlier than the mid 1930s to give me any clues, so the only other information I had was from a Baby Book that my mother had filled in after my birth, which provided a few more names from her side of the family on a basic family tree and a tantalising, surname-free, list of aunts and uncles who had sent cards or gifts.

At the time I had a friend who was a member of the LDS (Mormon) Church, so I asked her how to get started. She had a copy of the 1881 census on CDs, which she let me borrow. I still remember the first name I searched for: **Henry Hutchinson**, my maternal grandfather’s father, and there he was – a 21 year old stonemason, living in Lofthouse with his previously unknown parents and brother. I was hooked!

My father was born March 24 1926 in Lofthouse Gate, Wakefield, the third and youngest child of **Fred White**, a colliery deputy, and **Selina née Burton**. Dad knew that his father had been born in Walsall, Staffordshire, and had come to Wakefield with his family as an infant in the 1890s. I was soon to find out that the Whites had not been in Walsall for long. Fred’s father **Frederick** had been born in Dorset, and I was soon able to trace the White family there back to Frederick’s great-grandfather **Abraham White**, an agricultural labourer born in the 1770s.

Dad was quite tickled to find I had traced his family back to Abraham! He was also amused to see the marriage certificate I showed him for his great-grandparents, Frederick White’s mother and father, who married in Dorset in 1857. In the ‘Rank or Profession’ column, both bride and groom and their fathers were described simply as ‘Peasant’. Some years later, after my mother’s death, Dad went on a coach holiday to Bournemouth. I was able to put him in touch with a very distant cousin who lives in the area, who very kindly took him to visit the village of Osmington near Weymouth where the Whites came from.

Dad’s mother’s family, the Burtons, were not nearly as well-travelled as the Whites. I have traced a tentative line back as far as the late 1500s and got no further away than Rothwell. When I started out in family history, I told my husband that I did not intend to look into his large Catholic family as there were

too many of them. His grandmother was the eldest of 13, and seemed to be Auntie Mary to half of Liverpool. I very soon found that my grandmother, Selina Burton, was one of 14 children – and they were Methodists! To be fair, six of the Burton children did not survive infancy, including the youngest, the wonderfully named **William Ewart Gladstone Burton**.

Dad often used to tell us that he was, or had been, a Primitive Methodist. My brother and I had thought this was a joke, but now I began to find out about Primitive Methodism. As the different Methodist Churches in this country merged in 1932, I had to tell him that he was only Primitive until he was six. I discovered that there is a Museum of Primitive Methodism in Cheshire (the county I live in), in an old chapel, close to the area where the movement began. I took Dad there once when he was visiting us, and he said that he was afraid they would want to keep him as an exhibit!

Although he'd worked with computers in the 1960s and 70s, I could never get Dad to use one in later years, so he never got involved in my research, but he was always interested in what I had to tell him. He went with me once to a Family History Fair at the Spa at Scarborough, where I remember him having a long chat with **Chris Welch**. I think he would be pleased to have his name associated with a prize for writing, for telling stories about the past. I just wish I had managed to persuade him to write down more about his own life, all the stories he used to tell but I cannot now remember the details of.

There is one more of Dad's stories that I would particularly like to be able to confirm. He attended Lofthouse Gate Primary School, and passed the entrance exam for what was then Rothwell Grammar School in 1936. He always said that his name was on the school's honours board, along with that of **John Haigh**, the acid bath murderer. I believe the school is still in the same building in Canal Lane, and I did send them an email via their web site a few months ago, asking if by any chance this honours board still exists, but I never received an answer.

Dad did eventually meet Craig White, who was actually living in Scarborough at the time, and also had a conversation with his father. Unsurprisingly, there seems to be no connection after all, and Dad's cousin Gordon appears to have been childless anyway. However, I did find a Yorkshire cricketer in my family tree, but on my mother's side. My great-grandmother's cousin, **Edward Hawden**, played one game for the county against Cheshire in 1889. Not really up to Our Craig's standard!

Helen Cushion mem 665

Ed: this article was previously published in the Kinsman but is reproduced as the background to the Norman White Prize which will be awarded at our AGM

HELP WANTED

In this section of your Kinsman it is intended that we publicise appeals for help from members where we feel that our Committee members and Key Volunteers may not have provided the whole answer and where we wonder if our members may have relevant information. For many of these queries we may also detail our interest in the subject on our Facebook page to glean information from the general public.

I copy below a couple of examples that have come to us in recent times where we have open questions.

Example 1:

In Kinsman Volume 28.3 Page 16 (If you have recently joined or not saved your copies you can consult our back pages in the archive within the Members Area of our website) We carried a story entitled “A Series of Mysteries, and a Plea For Help” in which member **John Dogherty** was trying to find answers to questions about the lives of his mother and father. His father, also John Dogherty, was from Northern Ireland, staunchly protestant and from a long line of head teachers. John the son duly became head teacher of Sandal Magna Elementary School in 1924 but he resigned to rejoin the army in 1926 in the Irish Guards. As the Head of a C of E school it would have been mandatory to be a protestant but his attestation papers shows his religion as Roman Catholic.

John’s mother Annie Bothwell was born in Glasgow in 1901 a staunchly RC family and area. By 1921 she is living in Lincoln Street Wakefield and working at Sharphouses Wholesale Grocery. John’s parents married in 1928 at St Austins and went to live in Woolwich. In those days “mixed marriages were taboo to such an extent that his father’s family cut him off, even refusing to attend the wedding. John then posed questions to us:

How might his parents have met and socialised?

Might records of his conversion exist?

What is known about Sharphouses?

Can we find Bothwells in the Irish community in 1900 – 1925?

Example 2

Dave Scott a visitor to our meeting was trying to locate a relative, Derrick Scott and I was intrigued by this challenge as Derrick was born in Bolus Lane Outwood circa 1953 in a house situated behind mine and that house is I believe one of the oldest in Outwood. Derrick went to School in Outwood and on to Manchester University . He had a sister Pamela who died aged 12. His parents were Arnold Scott who had married Kathleen Giggle.

Any ideas or information please contact the Chairman or the Editor

HELP WANTED (continued)

In the following pages there are requests for help to support projects that the Society is initiating or trying to complete. You can help by providing information or even better you could volunteer to play a significant part in the project. **For more information please contact the Chairman.**

1940's Wakefield

We have a copy of photo of Class 3a at Thornes House Boys Secondary School in 1940. **Do you recognise any of the boys or members of staff?**



Also in 1940 a war was going on! Operation Dynamo – the mission to evacuate the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk began on the 26th May. On the first day 7,669 were brought home but by the 4th June a total of 338000 had been rescued. This led to Churchill's famous speech on that day in June "we shall fight them on the beaches"

The speaker at our September meeting was one of a very few civilian who by chance witnessed the roll call on the field behind St Helens church at Sandal mentioned on the plaque. He went back on the Sunday to witness the parade of the soldiers and the associated church service. We have also been told that on the evening of the 5th June that military authorities were going from door to door asking people if they could put up a soldier for the night. **Did you witness any of these events or hear of them from relatives?**

HELP WANTED (continued)

In the following pages there are requests for help to support projects that the Society is initiating or trying to complete. You can help by providing information or even better you could volunteer to play a significant part in the project. **For more information please contact the Chairman.**

Memorial Inscriptions St Peter's Stanley

As previously reported we are trying to complete publications of Memorial Inscriptions for churchyards which were surveyed by Society volunteers years ago. First of all we have to locate the information that was gathered. **If by any chance you were involved in the original project work or know who did either the reading of the stones or subsequent data handling please do make contact.** In case it prompts your memory, I have already made contact with Maureen Hopkinson and should be meeting her soon. She and her late husband recorded a large number of the stones.

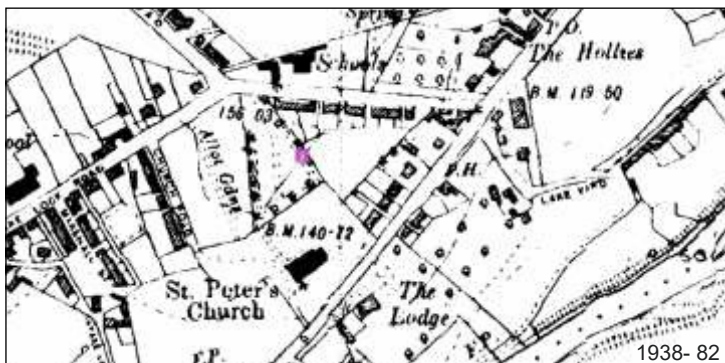
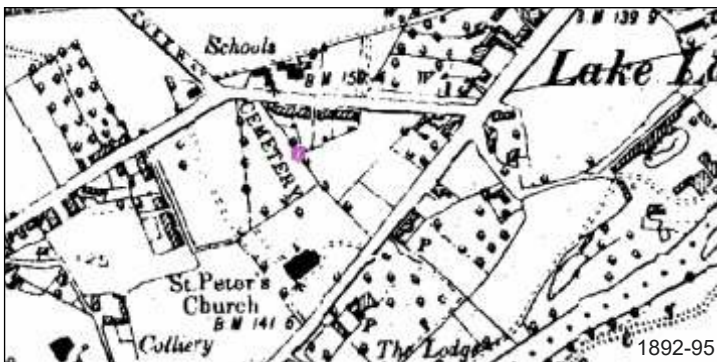
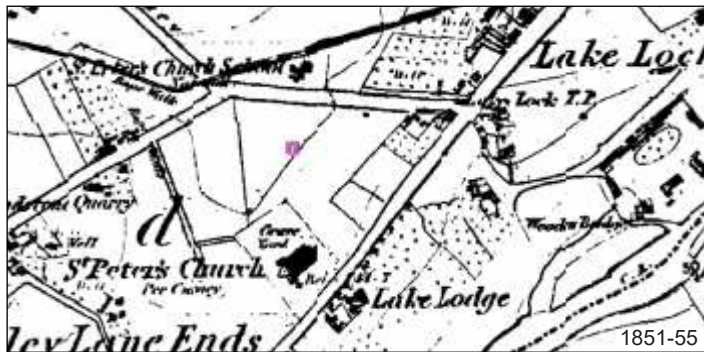
We now have a second reason to review the data. You may remember in the Kinsman dated May 2025 (Volume 28 No 3), we told the story of on page 31 onwards. He was a long serving cavalry man who was in the infamous charge of the light brigade and but he survived but the last few months of his life were spent at Stanley Royd Asylum, and he is buried in Stanley Churchyard. A gentleman called Edward Wilson who has retired after a long career in the regiment which is linked to the charge is trying to put up a memorial to any of the survivors of that action. We have an account from him of some of his successes and it will be included in the next Kinsman for your interest.

There seemed to be a faint hope that we might have linked him to a family grave but he has been warned now that the best he can hope for is an indication of the area of the churchyard which was being used for asylum burials at the time of his death. Some research has been done at the West Yorkshire Archive, Stanley Church, and with newspaper archives, to begin to try to map the way the churchyard has developed including the arrangements with the asylum for the burial of their dead.

There is real interest in this work being brought to a conclusion , apart from Edward Wilson, the Mental Health Museum at Fieldhead, The West Yorkshire History Centre, and Stanley Church are keen to have copies of our final conclusions as they all field questions from relatives trying to locate the last resting place of their ancestors. A very high proportion of the burials in this churchyard were patients from the Asylum!

The churchyard developed in stages and the maps on the following page provide a quick snapshot of how it developed with a major extension to the East and then later a smaller section to the West.

Memorial Inscriptions St Peter's Stanley (continued)



It would be great to have a team working on this to pull it together quickly!

HELP WANTED (continued)

In the following pages there are requests for help to support projects that the Society is initiating or trying to complete. You can help by providing information or even better you could volunteer to play a significant part in the project. **For more information please contact the Chairman.**

Memorial Inscriptions St Peter & St Leonards Horbury

This is another project which needs finishing off but the good news is that we have most of what we need to produce a publication. It was a joint project between Horbury Historical Society and ourselves following on from work we did together on Horbury cemetery.

A little while ago we started together with Peter Brown, the then Chairman of Horbury Historical Society to pull it together bearing in mind that this was old readings and that the positioning of churchyard and church memorials had been affected by subsequent modifications. Together with Mark Alderson, our printer we started to refine the drawings to make for a better publication. We then discovered that an earlier survey of the memorial inscriptions had been done in 1975 by Horbury Civic Society as a part of a programme of work under the European Architectural Heritage Year. Peter was trying to gain access and permission to reproduce some of that work from that Civic Society. Things stalled when Peter stood down from his role in the society.

Recently I managed to see a draft of the Horbury Civic Society work. It was never published but the vicar of St Peter and St Leonards had filed it at the archive. From this I found an appropriate contact in the Civic Society and a meeting is planned shortly to discuss their work.

One very interesting fact emerged as an inscription caught my eye when skimming their document and this was that of Matthew Tomlinson with a great deal of information on the stone. I later found that stone, a large ledger stone laid flat with others to make a pathway to the front door of the church. The 1975 survey shows a completely different location for the stone and one much more likely to be the final resting place of Mr Tomlinson. You may be aware that Wakefield Historical Society are about to publish a book about Matthew Tomlinson and his Journal and it helps to review my view that there would be a value to trying to produce a publication which lists the 1975 work, our survey work and to complete this perhaps with some digital photography of the church and key monuments.

I am conscious that this section on Help Wanted has been quite lengthy but this seemed to be a good time to kick start project work and hope that we inspire some members to volunteer to help so that we can regain some of the momentum that the Society had in its early years and pre covid.

Paul Gaywood *mem 1496*

NOTICE OF AGM

**The 27th AGM of Wakefield and District Family History Society
Will be Held at 10.30 am Saturday 4th July 2026
at Outwood Memorial Hall and by Zoom**

Nominations from members wishing to serve as an Officer or Member of the Committee should be made on a Nomination Form obtainable from the Chairman, who is acting as Secretary, or by downloading the form from the Members Area of our website, and signed by the proposer, a seconder and the nominee. These should be sent to the Chairman (for address see inside cover) to arrive no later than 14 days before the AGM.

The agenda, and the minutes of the previous AGM are now available to view or download from the Members Area in order to reduce the amount of paper used. The Financial Statement will be added to the website once the accounts have been independently examined. Members still wishing to receive a paper copy of the documents should write to the Chairman enclosing a SAE requesting the documents by post. They should apply as soon as possible and will receive copies as soon as the post allows. For members without internet access a few paper copies will be available at the AGM.

To access the Members Area you need to be registered as a user of the site and to log in using your username and password. If you're not already registered, please email a request to Debbie Staynes at: membership@wdfhs.co.uk to obtain the necessary details. The Constitution is also available within that area of the site.

Members who have previously joined by Zoom will be sent the joining instructions for the AGM. Other members wishing to join by Zoom should email: chairman@wdfhs.co.uk to be added to the list.

WAKEFIELD & DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD - 5th JULY 2025

1. **Present:** Lord St Oswald, Chris Welch, Paul Gaywood, Carol Sklinar, Sheelagh Jackson, Dave Bradley, George Scogings, Chris Welch, 28 further members were present in the hall. David Huddart and 22 other members joined by Zoom.

2. **Opening by Our Patron: Lord St Oswald** said that his family had great pride in Wakefield through the centuries and it was as close to his ancestors to his ancestors as it is today. He chose to tell us about one of his ancestors, Sabine Louise Winn, wife of Sir Rowland Winn, who was not a typical woman of her time.

Born in Switzerland in 1794 she met Rowland when he was on his Grand Tour. However, Sabine never fully integrated into English Society, and this affected her mental as well as her physical health, which was exacerbated by Rowland's death in 1785. He told us that Nostell was rich and diverse in its history and was pleased that the National Trust continues to do its work.

3. **Apologies for absence:** Shirley Frost, Vicky Furness, Mike Grantham, Peter & Christine Wadsworth, Geoff Wood, and Tricia Winfield had all made contact to offer their apologies

4. **Minutes** of the previous AGM held on the 6th July 2024 were agreed as a true record.

5. **Matters Arising:** There were none.

6. **Annual Reports:** The Chairman - Paul thanked Lord St Oswald for his contribution to the meeting and to our President Chris Welch who continues to make a very significant contribution to our operations. At every meeting he plays a very big part in setting up everything and to clearing up at the end. In between he runs the social network of the Zoom attendees which precedes the guest speaker's presentation. Paul drew attention to the good fortune of the Society in having the team of volunteers who do whatever is needed to provide our services to the membership and the

wider community. There was some discussion of the highlights of our programme over the past year. The chairman's talk was to be printed in full in the Kinsman edition that would follow the AGM The Treasurer – Sheelagh presented the income and expenditure statement on screen and with copies available in the hall. Income was down by about £600 compared to the previous year, largely due to a slight drop in membership subscriptions, and royalties and book sales being down. Expenditure was about £300 down in total. Higher spend on speakers was offset by only producing 3 Kinsman editions. On the year we showed a positive balance of income over expenditure of £1403. As a result, the Committee had concluded that our subscription rates would stay the same for the coming year. Thanks were due to Shirley Frost for carrying out the independent examination of the accounts and members were pleased to accept her offer to perform this task for the following year.

7. **Election of Officers for 2025 - 2026:** Nominations were: Chairman - Paul Gaywood. Vice Chair - Carol Sklinar. Treasurer - Sheelagh Jackson. Secretary - no nomination received. Members present voted unanimously to confirm each named candidate.

8. **Election of Committee Members 2025 - 2026:** Dave Bradley, Dave Huddart, Martin Jackson, Clare Pickering and George Scogings had all been nominated and were elected en bloc unanimously by the members present.

Chairman elect Paul Gaywood asked for additional nominations from the floor but none were forthcoming and it was concluded that the elected committee would proceed to co-opt members during the year.

9. **The meeting was closed at 11.15** Members were thanked for attending and the proceedings were followed by a presentation from George Scogings who talked about one of his ancestors: James Arthur White - A P.O.W.s life

TO AID YOUR RESEARCH

Our Library

It's possible that new members of the Society may not be aware of the Society's lending library. The Library is available to all members who attend our monthly meetings. Members may borrow books for free and return them on their next visit. Whilst we try to specialise in books about Wakefield and the surrounding area, we also have a wide range on books on specific topics, e.g. Military history, House history, DNA and Occupations. We have around 350 volumes in stock and display a selection each month. The full catalogue is available to any member who wishes to see it, either electronically or on paper. At our meetings the library display is outside the Des Moore Room, to the left of the stage. **Please come over and have a chat; we look forward to seeing you.**

Wakefield Library

The Central Library is in the building known as WF1 on Burton Street in the City centre which is easily reached on foot from either the bus station or Wakefield Westgate Station. It is a modern building which houses council offices as well as the library. The Library has the normal lending and reference sections, and on the lower level of the building there is an extensive Local and Family History area. This has a very good range of reference books, maps, directories and other hard copy resources. There are a good number of computer stations with a wide range of digital resources including of course the vital ones of Ancestry, The British Newspaper Archive. There is much more besides and you can consult the library website for more information:

<https://www.wakefield.gov.uk/libraries-and-local-history/your-local-library/wakefield-library>

Current opening hours:



Monday	9am – 7pm
Tuesday	9am – 5pm
Wednesday	9am – 7pm
Thursday	9am – 7pm
Friday	9am – 5pm
Saturday	9am – 4pm

TO AID YOUR RESEARCH

West Yorkshire History Centre

This is a very distinctive building at 127 Kirkgate, Wakefield WF1 1JG very close to Wakefield Kirkgate Station but also reachable on foot from either Wakefield Westgate Station **or West Yorkshire History Centre**, 127 Kirkgate, Wakefield, WF1 1JG.

The Centre took over the role of the Registry of Deeds for the West Riding and besides this it has a huge archive of historical documents and you really need to consult their online catalogue to see the full scope of their collections. The centre is one of the sites of the West Yorkshire Joint Services and the details of the History Centre can be found on their website:

<https://www.wyjs.org.uk/archive-service/contact-us-and-opening-times/west-yorkshire-history-centre-wakefield-archive-service-opening-times-and-information/>

The online catalogue can be found with this link:

<https://www.catalogue.wyjs.org.uk/>

You need to book to view any deeds or original documents Please email wakefield@wyjs.org.uk or call 0113 535 3040 to book

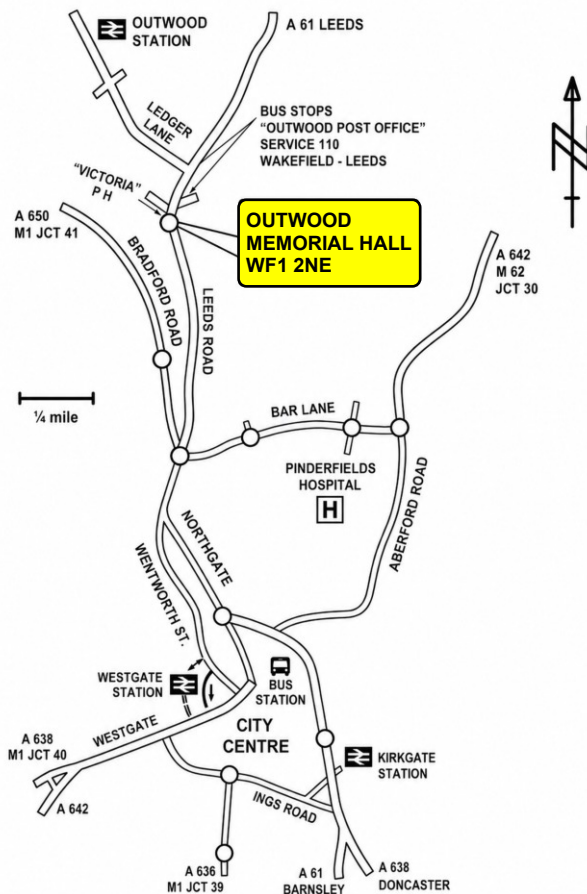
Be warned that the earliest available appointment is usually several weeks after you make contact. They will want to know when you book whether you want to view deeds, or other documents. They will also advise you that they need to know before you come what original deeds or other documents you want to see Due to staff shortages their present way of working is that the centre is closed on a Wednesday at which time they will draw from their storage areas the items that are required for the appointments following Thursday, Friday, Monday and Tuesday. You can visit the centre at any time during their opening hours to consult the register of deeds to identify any specific deed that you may want to view when you have an appointment to view original documents. There are also printed guides to their non deed collections but the easiest way to check their holdings is by an on line search (please note that the public computers in the registers area are not working at the moment and so you would have to check with your own device)

MONTHLY MEETINGS

All are welcome at our monthly meetings held on the first Saturday of each month (except January) at **Outwood Memorial Hall**. These feature a guest speaker and Doors open at 9.30 with the talk starting at 10.30am. We encourage people (visitors are welcome at no charge) to come to the live meeting to socialise with fellow members and to benefit from the expertise of Society volunteers and other benefits - At every meeting in the hall there are bookstalls, a library, help desk and information on computers. Tea and coffee are available. There is also a special display of artifacts and records, and each month has a different theme.

However, for those who cannot come to the hall it is possible to join the meeting over the internet using the Zoom platform. Please request access by emailing chairman@wdfhs.co.uk and you will receive a message with the necessary link. The Zoom broadcast begins at 10 am.

See over for a listing of forthcoming speakers.



KEY VOLUNTEERS

Membership Secretary:

Debbie Staynes
1 The Bungalows, Halifax Road, Dewsbury, WF13 4DJ
membership@wdfhs.co.uk

Publication Sales & Journal Distribution:

Chris Welch
101 Thornes Road, Wakefield, WF2 8QD
cdgwelch@aol.com

Bookstall Manager:

Eileen Marshall

Exchange Journals & Library Assistant:

June Jamieson

Help Desk:

Stella Robinson, Carol Sklinar, Dave Bradley,
Tony Banks & Debbie Staynes

Meeting Reporter:

Lorraine Simpson

Minutes Recorder & Assistant Librarian:

Jacqueline Ryder

Publications Stall:

Ros Bartle

Publications Stall Assistant:

Deborah Scriven

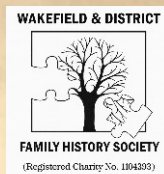
Refreshments Organiser:

Sue Vasis

Refreshments Assistant:

Mary Buttigieg

Wakefield & District Family History Society



Programme to December 2026

SATURDAY MEETINGS

at Outwood Memorial Hall

Doors open 9.30am - Talks begin 10.30am

- Jul 4th AGM** followed by
THE WAKEFIELD ADULT SCHOOL
Debbie Staynes
- Aug 1st DNA DEMYSTIFIED**
Penny Walters
- Sep 5th A SCHOOLBOY IN WARTIME WAKEFIELD**
Gerry Southworth
- Oct 3rd THE DENBY DALE WITCHCRAFT TRIALS**
David Hincliffe
- Nov 7th MATTHEW TOMLINSON'S JOURNAL**
David Scriven
- Dec 5th LIFE AND DEATH ON YORKSHIRE'S WATERWAYS**
David Scrimgeour

For further information about this event, please scan the QR code



wdfhs.co.uk

