

THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Vol. 24, No.1

Spring 1999

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NDFHS Web Page	http://www.geocities.com/Athens/6549/
Chairman	Mr. R. Hale, 88 Reading Road South Shields NE33 4SF
General Correspondence & Enquiries	The Secretary, Mrs M. Furness, 8 Shadfen Park Rd., Marden Farm, North Shields NE30 3JD
Accounts & Other Financial Matters	Mr P.R.G. Thirkell, 100 Stuart Court, Kingston Park, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 2SG
Articles for Journal (Other than 'Members Interests')	Mr M.A. Lincoln, 12 Cranleigh Place, Beaumont Park, Whitley Bay NE25 9UD
Members Interests and Queries	Mr P.R.G. Thirkell, 100 Stuart Court, Kingston Park, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 2SG
New Members, Applications for Membership, Changes of Address & Missing Journals	Mr J. Gordon, 7 Craneshaugh Close, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 2PG
Bolbec Hall Co-ordinator (Overall)	Mr G Langley, c/o NDFHS, 2nd Floor, Bolbec Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1SE
Bolbec Hall Co-ordinator (Volunteers)	Ms S. Senior, 30 The Drive, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4AH
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PLEASE ALWAYS ENCLOSE A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE FOR YOUR REPLY (TWO INTERNATIONAL REPLY COUPONS FROM OVERSEAS MEMBERS) AND QUOTE YOUR MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first NDFHS Journal of 1999, particularly those recently joined members who may be receiving their first copy.

Firstly, make a note in your diary for 15th January, 2000 -- a One-Day Conference is planned for Gosforth High School in Newcastle. More details, and booking arrangements, later.

That conference will be held only two weeks into the new Millennium. Is that really what it is? Is 1st January 2000 what it is claimed to be? Personally I don't believe it but I don't intend to go into the argument. I'm already fed up with all the commercialised hype!

However, I began to think about the family history ramifications of a period of 2000 years. Most of you will be familiar with the problem which arises when you "double up" in each generation of your ancestors -- 4 grandparents, 8 great grandparents, 16, 32, 64 and so on, speedily reaching incomprehensible numbers 1,045,576 after 20 generations and 1,089,911,000,000 give or take a few hundred thousand, after 40 generations. If you assume a thirty-year gap between generations, then 1000 years or 33 generations ago, before William and his Normans landed on our southern shore, the figure is a "mere" 8,589,934,592. The population of the entire world at that time is thought to have been under 100 million!

Take it a further thousand years back, roughly to when a certain Julius Caesar was making the first Roman incursion into our island. The figure is 16 digits long!

So, the arithmetic "proves" that we have more ancestors than there were people on the planet. Thus, the theory says, everyone on an island like ours must be related to everybody else, perhaps many times over. Even if you take into account "cousin marriages" (first cousins marrying each other have only six grandparents between them), the figures are still huge. Of course, there are all sorts of objections to the theoretical numbers and some fascinating articles on the topic have appeared in our pages in the past. See *Journals* Spring 1986, Spring 1988, Autumn 1991 and Spring 1992 for example.

Now all of this is a mere flight of fancy for most of us. I'd guess that only a minority of our members can name, with certainty, all of their 64 great -great -great -great-grandparents -- back to about 1800 -- and definitely will be unable to go back, even down only one of the myriad lines, to an ancestor who was around at the time Harold got an arrow in his eye. When I say "go back", I mean unable to put a name to any of the ancestors who were around at the time. In his very readable *Everyone Has Roots* (1978), Anthony Camp reports that 'Sir Anthony Wagner's view is that only two descents of pre-Conquest Englishmen have

been proved and there are no male descents from any of the Saxon kings.

There seems little doubt that you descend down a large number of lines from the same long-dead individual. Camp tells us that Prince Charles has 22 descents from Mary, Queen of Scots. You probably have just as many from some 15th century Durham peasant, although you possibly also have, unknown to you maybe, a "royal descent". A 1911 volume estimated that by then 100,000 people were descended from Edward III, and that half of them sprang from the King's eldest son, the Duke of Clarence. In the 1970's, Mary Queen of Scots had 10,534 living descendants.

So, if you have number problems going backwards, is it any easier going forward from a named individual? The textbooks warn us of the folly of this, but it is an interesting academic exercise. Brian Pears, in his *Journal* article twelve years ago, postulated that if there was a "present average" of 2.2 descendants per family, a typical citizen of 1300 A.D. would, over 23 generations, have 75,114,113 descendants. "In other words", he says, "all of us."

Whichever way you go, the figures are huge and almost certainly every one of us would have, if we could but prove it, descent not only from "British" whatever that means in this context, but also from "foreigners" via Danes and Saxons (or their descendants a generation or two on), or even from the polyglot southern Europeans from Mediterranean lands who made up the armies of Rome, as they intermingled with the local poulace in their spare time!

I have thought for some time that I would like to attempt to trace all the descendants of my ancestor Peter born in 1774. Yes, I know all about the problems but what would be interesting would be to know if any of our members have tried this, i.e. taken someone born about 1775 to 1800 and traced forward down all lines. If so, tell us about it. How far did you get, what problems did you face, how many did you find, and how many just vanished? And also, if any of you can name all your 64 g-g-g-g's, drop us a line as well! Now, there lies food for thought!

AGM NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the
Annual General Meeting
of the Northumberland and Durham
Family History Society will be held on
Tuesday 1st June 1999 at 7.30 pm
at Pelaw Social Club, Heworth, Gateshead.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mrs Eileen Barnes, Flat 5, Falconhurst, 111The Park, Sidcup, Kent DA14 6AN

In the Winter 1998 edition of the *Journal*, I made a request in the "Members' Interests" columns for information about Ann Reed, wife of William Smith of South Shields. I couldn't help but notice a certain amount of editorial disbelief that Ann Smith (nee Reed), my great grandmother, had been shot dead by the Army at Harton Butts in 1900. This was unfortunately true, but perhaps the word 'shot' should have been qualified by 'accidentally'.

The Northumberland Hussars were practising at the targets before going to the front in the Boer War. They were using Lee Enfield rifles with a range of 2,000 yards, firing at the Butts which were only 500 yards distant. There were no barriers behind the targets, only the fields where people were pulling turnips, unaware that they were within range of the new, more powerful guns. My great grandmother was shot through the back of the head and died instantly.

Ann was a very poor woman who had to support her large family and invalid husband in the best, and only, way she could. The affair was a local *cause célèbre* at the time, even involving the War Office, and was well covered by the *Shields Gazette* of 17th and 18th January 1900 under the headline "The Yeomanry at Practice. Melancholy Incident at Harton Range". Thanks to Miss Johnston of the Local Studies section of South Shields Library for her help.

Douglas J. Plank, Robin Hill, Green Lane East, Garstang, Preston, Lancashire PR3 1JS

As a former pupil of the Heaton Park Road School in Newcastle I am trying to research its history.

Both Tyne & Wear Archives Service and Newcastle City Library have been most helpful but unfortunately have themselves very little information. Can anyone tell me: (a) the school closure date? (b) Teachers' names between say 1920 and the closure date (my memory recalls a Mr Lawson as Head and a Mr Edwards). (c) When was the school demolished? (d) When were the high rise flats erected on the site of the school? Can anyone help with information?

Mrs Elizabeth Cookson, 72 Malmesbury Road, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN15 1QD

I noted your report of the fire that destroyed St Brandon's Church at Brancepeth in Winter 98 *Journal*. By the next post I received a newsletter from the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England which mentioned that they have over 90 photographs of the church, including a detailed record of the woodwork.

Editor's note: A report in the 31st December edition of the Northern Echo suggests that St Brandon's may be even older than was first thought. It has always been thought that the church was Norman, dating from 1089, but archaeologists, examining the ruins, have found evidence of a former Saxon building.

At the time of writing, it is thought that to fully repair the church could cost £4 million and take as long as five years to complete.

Mrs Jean Fryett, 22 Beech Close, Markfield, Leicestershire LE67 9RT

My husband and I had wanted to visit the war graves of our relatives who had died in World War I for a number of years and in early October of this year we achieved this.

At Bailleul, in an extension of the town's cemetery, are the graves of many soldiers of different regiments and different nationalities. Edward Shotton Bell of 6th Bn Durham Light Infantry died accidentally in December 1915. He was a brother of my paternal grandmother.

We also visited Ieper (Ypres) and the Menin Gate where my grandmother's eldest brother, Richard Boag Bell, a sergeant in 1st/6th Bn D.L.I., has his name on one of the panels. He was killed in April 1915.

A photograph taken of this panel shows these names.

Coy. Sjt. Major Dyson J.; Coy. Qmr. Serjt. Price T. J.; Serjeant Atkinson F.; Barratt H.T.; Bell E.; Bell R. B.; Bennison J.P.; Burnip A.G.; Coates T.; Elgie J.E.; Gilpin T.H.; Hanson J.W.

It is difficult to imagine how my grandmother coped at this time as her husband of two years, my grandfather, was also serving in France with the Royal Engineers in a Tunnelling Company (he was a miner), until he was wounded twice and finally invalided out in June 1917.

Should anyone wish for any further information on these memorials I would be happy to hear from them.

On a lighter note, whilst helping my husband with his research in Bedfordshire, we came across a stray from County Durham in the marriages of the Campton and Shefford Parish Registers:

1802 Jul 22 Wm Bousfield, Chicksands bach and Hannah Foster, Chicksands spin.

This entry is followed by a statement made 22 July 1805 that William Bousfield was baptised on 17 June 1759 at St Andrews, Auckland, Durham as William, son of Myles and Thamar BOWSER, but having been given the nickname Bousefield when young, and removed early from his place of birth, had mistakenly adopted the wrong surname.

'NEWS SNIPPETS'

Mr R.W. Rennison is at present working on several early civil engineers who lived in the North East for inclusion in a forthcoming *Biographical Dictionary of Civil Engineers*. One of these men is John Wooler about whom he has been able to find little regarding his birth, marriage or death. Mr Rennison writes:

John Wooler was a civil engineer who undertook a considerable amount of work between 1749 and 1780. Details of much of his professional work have been found but, so far, nothing concerning his family.

In 1749 and 1758 he worked at Whitby; in 1762 and 1778 he was at Whitehaven; between 1770 and 1780 he was in the North East at Durham, Newcastle and Hexham, working on the bridges then under construction; and in 1752 and 1773 he was in Hull, perhaps marrying there. It is possible that he originated in Weardale and he is thought to have died between 1780 and 1785.

If any member can help Mr Rennison with family details of John Wooler he can be contacted at: 25 Graham Park Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4BH (email: RWRennison@compuserve.com)

Do you have glassmakers in your family? *The Glassmakers and Allied Trades Index 1600-1900* includes all trades connected with the blowing of glass together with all trades which enhance glass. This includes stained glass artists and cutters and engravers of glass, plus any person working in a glass manufactory.

There is no charge; all that is asked for is that a stamped addressed envelope or two International Reply Coupons are enclosed with each enquiry. Enquiries should be addressed to: Brian J.M. Hardyman, 6 Beeforth Close, New Earswick, York YO32 4DF.

Mr Hardyman would be grateful for any details of your own glass working ancestors which could be added to his index enabling him to assist others in the future.

A conference to celebrate the life of William T. Stead has been organised by the W.T. Stead International Memorial Society in North Tyneside and Northumberland on the weekend of 2nd to 5th July and will include visits and lectures. Further details can be obtained from the Conference Director, John S. Stephenson, 1 Oakfield Gardens, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear NE28 8AR.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has listed on its web site 1.7 million names of Commonwealth servicemen who died during the First and Second World Wars as well as 60,000 civilians who died in WWII. Details include name, regiment or unit, service number, date of death, place of burial, etc. The web site may be searched at: <http://www.cwgc.org/>

As part of a celebration of the millennium the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies is inviting family historians to put the fruits of their researches into a narrative historical format.

A benefactor is offering £2,000 in prizes to be shared amongst the five family historians whose works satisfy the examiner appointed by the Trustees of the Institute. The first prize will be £1,000. For entry into the competition abstracts of not more than 500 words, including title, must be submitted by 30th June 1999. Each abstract clearly labelled with name, address and telephone number. Entrants then have until 30th September 2000 to send their completed work.

Although there is no set form or content requirement for the entry, each submission should be a well-written typed narrative account of the history of a family through at least five generations. Entries that are well illustrated and presented will be especially welcome.

Application forms are available from the Registrar, Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies, 79-82 Northgate, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1BA.

We have had an appeal for help from Robert Stephenson Roper, a descendent of George and Robert Stephenson, the railway engineers. Mr Roper writes:

Over the years I have corresponded with many people who also claim a relationship with George, but have found that there is rarely any confirmable connection. This is not surprising in view of the large numbers of Stephenson's in Northumberland and Durham. It seems likely that many of your members are researching the name Stephenson and wonder if it would be possible for them to pass on to me a brief outline of their researches so that I could build up a data base of the various Stephenson families and thus answer my correspondents more fully.

Mr Roper is a trustee of the Robert Stephenson Trust which is endeavouring to rescue and restore the remaining part of the Robert Stephenson & Co. locomotive works at South Street, Newcastle. If you are able to help, or would like more information about the Trust, Mr Roper's can be contacted at: 136 Buersil Avenue, Rochdale, Lancashire OL16 4TX

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st October 1998 which are set out on pages 2 - 4.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act
 have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Ribchester
Chartered Accountants
67 Sadler Street,
Durham DH1 3NP

20 January 1999

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST OCTOBER 1998

	Note	1998 £	1997 £
INCOME RESOURCES			
1. Subscriptions and Donations		30911	30271
Income Tax refunds on Covenants		2187	1531
2. Surplus on Journal and Publication sales		10003	9916
Donations		17	305
Bank Interest Received (Gross)		<u>2454</u>	<u>2247</u>
		45572	44270

RESOURCES EXPENDED

Direct Charitable Expenditure			
Printing and Distribution of Journals	15079		16391
Printing Postage and Stationery	3193		3540
Telephone and Travel	550		308
Meeting Expenses	803		1204
Deficit on conference	79		-
Professional Fees	(95)		-
FFHS Affiliation	413		428
Bolbec Hall Costs (Net)	14095		12138
Sundry	389		363
Bank Charges	626		400
Accountancy	740		802
Depreciation	<u>6774</u>		<u>6158</u>
		43646	41732
3. NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR		2926	2538
4. TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD FROM LAST YEAR'S BALANCE SHEET		53823	51285
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD TO THIS YEAR'S BALANCE SHEET		<u>£ 56749</u>	<u>£ 53823</u>

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST OCTOBER 1998

	Note	1998 £	1997 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Assets			
As at 1st November 1997			
Additions	4.	27541	17614
		8607	9927
		36148	27541
		17608	10834
		18540	16707
Less Depreciation			
Investments	5.		
At cost		18540	16707
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock			
Cash at Bank		8947	7643
Group Accounts		43025	42685
Officers Accounts		615	51
Bolbec Hall Account		477	525
Sundry Debtors		2435	498
		2507	1072
		58006	52474
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Subscriptions in Advance		14174	10188
Accruals		4703	5170
VAT		920	
		19797	15358
NET CURRENT ASSETS		38209	37116
NET ASSETS		£56749	£53823
Represented by:			
UNRESTRICTED INCOME FUND		£56749	£53823

In approving these financial statements as Officers of the Society we hereby confirm:

- a) that for the year in question the Society was entitled to exemption from audit under the Charities Act 1993;
- b) that we acknowledge our responsibilities for:
- (i) ensuring that the Society keeps accounting records which:-
- (a) disclose at any time, with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Society at that time, and
- (b) enable annual statements of accounts to be prepared under the requirements of the Charities Act 1993.

The accounts were approved by the Council of Officers and signed on its behalf by

Signature M. Funnell Date 11/2/99

NAME MORRIS FUNNELL
(BLOCK LETTERS)

The Notes on page 4 form part of these accounts.

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST OCTOBER 1998

1. Statement of Financial Activities

All incoming resources of the Society were unrestricted as to their use, subject to the charitable objects of the Society.

2. Surplus on Journals and Publication Sales

	1998 £	1997 £
Sale of publications	7643	6681
Opening stock	5680	9920
Cost of publications	13323	16601
	8947	7643
Less: closing stock	4376	8958
Surplus on publication sales	8659	8900
Sales of back journals	463	220
Journal advertising	461	782
Tape library receipts	60	14
Postal library receipts	360	
	£10003	£9916

3. Bolbec Hall Costs

	1998 £	1997 £
Rent, rates, water & service charge	9197	7687
Insurance	416	410
Telephone	198	236
Heat & light	400	399
Volunteers expenses	1645	1116
Postage and stationery	1652	1808
Maintenance	2979	2707
Sundries	643	712
	17130	15075
Less: sundry income raised	3035	2937
	£14095	£12138

4. Fixed Assets

	Equipment	Furnishings	Library	Total
Written down value b/fwd	4613	3152	8942	16707
Additions during year	1224	2125	5258	8607
Depreciation	(1459)	(1055)	(4260)	(6774)
	4378	4222	9940	18540

Depreciation policy:

- Equipment - 25% p.a. on reducing balance
- Furnishings - 20% p.a. on reducing balance
- Library - 30% p.a. on reducing balance

5. Investments

Quoted Investment

500 ordinary shares in Northern Rock plc issued without cost upon conversion of the Northern Rock Building Society. Market value at 31st October 1998 £2,625.

SOME "NEW" BISHOPS' TRANSCRIPTS FOUND

On 27th October 1998, among the Howe MSS in the Dean and Chapter Library at Durham, some Parish Register Transcripts ("Bishops' Transcripts") were found. They relate to five parishes in County Durham (Denton, Elwick Hall, Escomb, Esh and Greatham), one in Northumberland (Elsdon) and twelve in North Yorkshire.

John James Howe was the retired chief or principal clerk in the Durham Probate Registry, now no longer in existence. By his will, proved in 1937, he bequeathed to the Dean and Chapter Library all the volumes and manuscripts which had been bequeathed to him by the journalist, antiquarian and genealogist Cuthbert Mills Carlton, who had died in 1892.

The Bishops' Transcripts for the Diocese of Durham are held by the Archives and Special Collections department of Durham University Library, Palace Green, Durham. Until 1882, the diocese covered the whole of the two counties of Durham and Northumberland, except for a number of parishes in south west Northumberland (Hexham and Hexhamshire), and a detached part of County Durham, Crayke, until it was transferred to the diocese of York in 1837.

Details of all the transcripts discovered in 1998 are listed at the end of this article.

Genealogical textbooks will tell you that Bishops' Transcripts (copies of the original registers which were supposed to be sent every year from individual parishes to the Bishop) are an important source which can be used to trace baptisms, marriages or burials for any periods for which the original registers are missing or defective. Moreover, they often contain information additional to, or differing from, that in the registers. In our area, as elsewhere, there are instances where the BT's, as they have become known, are the prime source e.g. Kirknewton in Northumberland, whose registers were destroyed by fire in 1789. Local genealogists have, however, been at a disadvantage compared with those in other areas because, with only a handful of exceptions, the BT's for Northumberland and Durham do not survive for years before about 1760. So, you do not have the BT to go to when a pre-1760 register of your favourite local parish is "missing."

A glance at the list will show that, for each of the six Durham and Northumberland parishes, one transcript has been discovered — four are for 1709-10 (Elwick Hall, Escomb, Esh, Greatham), one for 1720 (Elsdon) and one for 1756-57 (Denton). The bulk of the pre-1760 transcripts disappeared before the transcripts were transferred from the Durham Diocesan Registry to Durham University from 1951 onwards. Their fate is unknown, but the discovery of the Howe strays, and the existence of the few known other

pre-1760 transcripts, raises hopes that some day more may turn up.

As stated, four of the Howe transcripts are from the same period, 1709-10, and it is interesting that all of them are from places beginning with D, E or G. The BT's were generally handed in to diocesan officials at visitations and were originally stored in the Diocesan Registry in separate annual sequences for the whole diocese, rather than in parish series. They were only rearranged alphabetically by parish, and then chronologically within each parish, after their deposit with Durham University.

The discovery of "new" records is always to be welcomed but it is just a little sad that these discoveries do not cover any periods, at least for the six Northumberland and Durham parishes, for which the original registers are missing. I am in no position to comment on the "Yorkshire" parishes maybe, there, "something new" might have surfaced.

The discoveries will be retained in the Dean and Chapter Library, but a set of photocopies of them will be kept in the Archives and Special Collections searchroom at Palace Green. These photocopies are not always easy to read, as the originals now located are so faded and stained.

The transcripts from the Howe MSS have been arranged and listed in one alphabetical sequence by parish, chapelry for the whole diocese and peculiars together, and within each parish/chapelry chronologically, following the present arrangement and listing of the main series of transcripts in Durham University Library. Because it is possible that other transcripts might yet turn up among the Howe MSS, the documents covered by the list below have not been numbered. When there is a run of documents of consecutive dates for a particular place, only the covering dates have been listed. The total number of documents involved is not noted, although this can be deduced because each of the transcripts covers only one year (often a year described as running from 25 March to 25 March [*sic*]).

Birkby (Yorkshire) November 1714 - March 1715

Brompton (Yorkshire) Lady [Day 25 March] 1710 - Lady [Day 25 March] 1711, 25 March 1714 - 25 March 1715, March 1716 - 25 March 1717, [25 March] 1724 - [25 March] 1725 (William Wood, curate), undated [25 March 1725 - 25 March 1726] (William Wood, curate), [25 March] 1727 - [25 March] 1728 (William Wood, curate), [25 March] 1729 - [25 March] 1731, [25 March] 1732 - [25 March] 1735 with churchwardens' presentment (nothing to present) submitted at the ordinary visitation of the Revd. Dr. [Thomas] Eden, official [of the officialty] of the Dean and Chapter of Durham, held at Northallerton, 22 April 1735 (Brompton transcript [25 March] 1727 - [25 March] 1728 is included with Northallerton transcripts.)

Crayke (Durham County until 1844; thereafter Yorkshire) 25 March 1716 - 25 March 1717, 25 March 1722 - 25 March 1728, 25 March 1729 - 25 March 1731, 25 March 1732 - 25 March 1735
Deighton (Yorkshire) 25 March 1714 - 25 March 1715, [25 March] 1727 - [25 March] 1728, [25 March] 1729 - [25 March] 1731 (Deighton transcript [25 March] 1727 - [25 March] 1728 is included with Northallerton transcripts.)
Denton (Durham County) January 1756 - March 1757
Elsdon (Northumberland) April 1720 - August 1720
Elwick Hall (Durham County) 25 March 1709 - 25 March 1710
Escomb (Durham County) 25 March 1709 - 25 March 1710
Esh (Durham County) 25 March 1709 - 25 March 1710
Greatham (Durham County) Lady Day [25 March] 1709 - Lady Day [25 March] 1710
High Worsall (Yorkshire) [25 March] 1727 - [25 March] 1729, [25 March] 1730 - [25 March] 1732
Kirby Sigston (Yorkshire) [25 March] 17[0]2 - [25 March] 17[0]3, [25 March] 1730 - [25 March] 1732
Leake (Yorkshire) [25 March] 1729 - [25 March] 1730
Northallerton (Yorkshire) [25 March] 1717 - [25 March] 1718, [25 March] 1727 - [25 March] 1728, [25 March] 1729 - [25 March] 1730, [25 March] 1732 - [25 March] 1734

including Brompton (Yorkshire) [25 March] 1727 - [25 March] 1728
 and including Deighton (Yorkshire) [25 March] 1727 - [25 March] 1728
 including Romanby (Yorkshire) [25 March] 1732 - [25 March] 1734
 See also: Brompton; Deighton
North Otterington (Yorkshire) [25 March] 1727 - [25 March] 1729
Romanby (Yorkshire) [25 March] 1732 - [25 March] 1734 (All Romanby transcripts [25 March] 1732 - [25 March] 1734 are included with Northallerton transcripts.)
Thornton-le-Street (Yorkshire) 25 March 1729 - 25 March 1730
West Rounton (Yorkshire) 1709, 25 March 1729 - 25 March 1732, 25 March 1733 - 25 March 1735

Editor's note: NDFHS is grateful to the Dean and Chapter Library, Durham and to Durham University Library for permission to publish the list above, and to Miss M.S. McCollum in particular for drawing our attention to the "find" and permitting us to freely plunder her notes on the subject in compiling this article.

WAS THERE AN OUTBREAK OF PLAGUE IN TYNEMOUTH IN 1665/6?

(Extracts from the Tynemouth Parish Registers)

ffeb 4 1665/6

- Eleanor d of William Bencks
 Robert s of Robert Hull, both buried,
 they died of ye Contagion (or sickness)
 and was ye first yt was taken Notice on.
 Robt Hull and John his son buried died of
 ye sicknesse
- 17 John s of Will: Bencks } all died
 John Sparrow Hulls apprentice } of ye
 A child of Richard Gilbertsons } sickness
- 20 A child of Robert Hulls buried
 died of ye Contagio(n)
- 21 Hester Hull: and a child of Richard Gilbertsons
 buried died of ye Contagion
- 25 Alexander Rowells man buried sicknesse
- 27 A child of Will: Bencks buried sicknesse
- March 3 Rich. Gilbertsons wifes mother buried sickness
- 4 A child of Rich. Gilbertsons ye forenone and
 Richard Gilbertson himself buried ye afternoon
 both died in ye sicknesse also.

Along the outer margin of this page is written:

The sicknesse was discovered ye 4th of ffebr. Onely 14 p.sons yt. died of it from yt time untill & with March ye 4th.

Only three families were involved: Robert Hull, his four children and his apprentice died; the three children of William Bencks; Richard Gilbertson, his three children and his mother-in-law. The three families mentioned had not lived in the parish very long and may have moved from London in order to have escaped the bubonic plague. The father of John Sparrow was buried at Tynemouth on 21 August 1663. The entry in the register reads: "John Sparrow of Northsheilds Carpenter buried. being kild ye 19th Instant with a Ship caled ye Nightingale of Linne Simond Amorie Master: & she found by ye Jurv a Deodand." [Deodand = Thing forfeited to Crown for religious or charitable use, as having caused a human death].

Editor's note: Sent in by Mr F.S. Hindmarsh, 12 Roy Street, Tawa, Wellington 1606, New Zealand

THE NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM MINERS PERMANENT RELIEF FUND

by Kath Rolph, Senior Archivist, Tyne & Wear Archives

At least 12,127 individuals have been killed in colliery accidents in the UK since the first documented death in an explosion at Gateshead Colliery on 16th October 1621 according to research by David Small and Bill Craddock carried out for the Washington and District Heritage Society⁽¹⁾. That is a lot of ancestors! Add in the injured and the number of our forbears affected by colliery accidents becomes very significant, particularly in major coal producing areas like the north-east of England. Therefore, it follows that records relating to colliery accidents can be very useful to family historians in our region.

Many of the sources useful in tracing information about colliery accidents are widely available and well known. They include newspaper reports, burial registers, hospitals admissions registers, coroners records, public enquiry transcripts, overseers accounts and workhouse records. These sources inevitably concentrate on the dead. However, for the period after 1862 another useful series of records is available which expands our knowledge of what happened to those affected by colliery accidents who are not usually well documented in the sources listed above, namely the dependents of the dead, and the injured. Newspaper reports frequently list the number of dependents left by each victim of an accident, and workhouse admissions registers, overseers accounts and settlement examinations may occasionally give some clue about what happened to a family following the death of the breadwinner, but these references are sporadic and sometimes difficult to track down, so a single source which systematically records both dependents and those permanently disabled as a result of an accident is a boon to the genealogist.

Why 1862? That is the date of the infamous New Hartley Pit disaster in which 204 men and boys were killed. The scale of this event had such an impact on public sentiment that it led directly to the establishment of the Northumberland and Durham Miners Permanent Relief Fund Friendly Society, a charity to provide relief to miners and their families in case of fatal accident or permanent disablement.

The records of this charity, dating from 1862 to 1995, are now preserved at Tyne & Wear Archives Service. The most useful series from the point of view of the genealogist are the fatal accidents registers (1862-1993) and the permanent disablement registers (1863-1994).

The fatal accidents registers are arranged chronologically by date of accident and include columns recording the name of the colliery where the accident took place, names and dates of birth of widows and children of victims, date relief commenced, date and cause when relief ceased, and

remarks. The remarks column includes a calculation of how long each claimant was supported by the fund. The names of the dead are not recorded, but these are usually available from other sources.

The permanent disablement registers are similarly organised, and include similar information: name of the colliery, name and date of birth of the member (i.e. the victim of the accident), dates relief commenced and ceased, and the reason, and remarks. Again the length of time the claimant was supported by the fund is included in remarks. From 1892 a description of the cause and nature of the injuries sustained by the claimant, and an estimate of the probable duration of their inability to work are also recorded.

Two further registers are preserved; a register of permanent disablement applications, 1923-1994, which includes information on members who applied for relief on the grounds of permanent disability but do not appear in the permanent disablement registers, presumably because their claims were disallowed; and a register of applications under Rule 38, relating to minor accidents, 1923-1994.

As an example let us look at the entries relating to the Usworth Colliery explosion of 2nd March 1885, which claimed 42 lives.

Firstly, the dependents of the dead. The Widows and Children's Department Deaths Register [TWAS reference CH/MPR/14/1] pages 130-133 refer to this disaster. Twenty nine widows are listed ranging in age from 22 to 77. Three of them were pregnant at the time their husbands were killed; 13 continued to receive relief until they died, and 13 until they remarried. One broke the rules and was struck off the register and the fate of the other two is stated to be unknown. There were also 54 dependent children. Most children were supported by the fund until they reached the age of 13 if they were boys, and 14 if girls. Perhaps surprisingly, only three of the children died before they came of age. This may indicate the relative generosity of the level of support the Fund gave, although actual sums are rarely recorded in the registers.

The information which may be gleaned about individuals is illustrated by the following sample cases:

1311 Mary Tumulty, widow, born 1808, died 10 May 1891, supported by the fund for 6.19 years [sic].

1317 Elizabeth Carr, widow, born 1852, and her 7 children, (5 girls and 2 boys). Her eldest daughter, Sarah was 13 when her father was killed and she was supported by the fund for only 21 days, until her 14th birthday. Elizabeth, the youngest child was not born until 19 May the same

year, so her mother was 7 months pregnant when she was widowed. Elizabeth was supported by the fund until she reached 14. The other children were Emma (12), Martha Jane (9), William (7), John Edward (4) and Isabella (2). Elizabeth Carr remarried on 29 October 1887, but the fund continued to support her children until each came of age.

1320 Jane Donnelly, widow, born 1843, and her 3 children, Margaret Ellen (10), Maria (6) and Elijah (2). Jane did not remarry, but continued to receive relief until her death on 30 July 1921 aged 78. Ellen and Maria were supported until they came of age, but Elijah unfortunately died on 30 January 1886 aged 3.

1323 Joseph Howarth, aged 10, was orphaned by the explosion, as a Guardian is mentioned in the register, although not named. Presumably his mother was already dead and his father had been a lone parent. Orphans seem to have received more money than other cases - 3/6d per week. Joseph was supported until he came of age on 17 February 1888.

Those permanently disabled in the accident are listed in the Permanent Disablement Register [TWAS reference CH/MPR/15/1] page 68. Only one case relating to this disaster is recorded:

1969 Robert Hunter, aged 63 came onto the fund on 24 May 1885, almost three months after the explosion. In fact, most disability cases did not begin to receive relief until some weeks after their accident, presumably to allow time for their condition to stabilise and be properly assessed. Robert Hunter continued to be supported until his death on 26 October 1892 "from natural causes" it states, so

apparently not as a result of his injuries. Those whose deaths were directly attributable to injuries sustained in an accident had £40 compensation paid to their family. However, a surprisingly large proportion of permanently disabled cases seem eventually to have recovered.

The detail the registers disclose about the lives of individuals is fascinating but they often make grim reading. They expose the true level of risk which miners routinely faced every working day, and reveal the extent and depth of suffering in coalfield communities directly attributable to mining accidents. The spectacular explosions and inundations have always received a great deal of attention and excited much public sympathy, but the accidents which perhaps killed one or two men or in which no one died but some were badly injured received little public notice, and it is the impact of these in particular which these records draw to our attention⁽²⁾.

Notes:

(1) The results of this research are presented in their pamphlet entitled "*Mining Disasters*".

(2) Details of these records and others relating to the coal industry are available in a new User Guide from Tyne and Wear Archives Service, *User Guide 19: Coal Industry*, which will be available from January 1999. To mark the launch of the User Guide the Archives Service is also staging an exhibition of coal industry archives to run from January to March at the Service headquarters in Blandford House, Newcastle.

NORTHUMBERLAND COAL OWNERS MUTUAL PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

A short article about the minute books of Northumberland Coal Owners Mutual Protection Association appeared in the *NDFHS Journal*, Winter 1994. As indicated then, the records cover the period 1st October 1898 to 19th December 1947 and include all claims for compensation following accidents, whether fatal or not, in the Northumberland collieries which had agreements with the Association.

As the article also demonstrated, there is much information of genealogical value to be found here. The example given of the death in 1918 of a woman labourer, gave details of her family, e.g. her own age and weekly earnings, the age and occupation of her father, brothers and sisters, where a brother lived and the fact that father was separated from mother, as well as outlining the circumstances of her own death.

The minute books are held at Morpeth Records Centre (reference NRO 263/N.C.O.M.P.A./1-9) and Northumberland Record Office has compiled an index to

the claimants and has very kindly permitted NDFHS to prepare microfiche copies of it for sale. The index is divided into three parts covering (a) 1st October 1898 to 14th December 1918; (b) 15th February 1919 to 10th December 1932, and; (c) 14th January 1933 to 15th July 1947. The indexes, in alphabetical order of the person killed or injured, show the date of the claim, the name of the individual involved, his colliery, whether fatal or not, and the volume and page number at which further information can be found.

The N.C.O.M.P.A. minute books are subject to a 75 year closure period, and only the books in (a) above are available for public search. Northumberland Record Office will be willing to send full details of claims etc. in the 1898-1914 period to anyone unable to examine the records in person.

They will also be willing to send similar details of claims in the later periods, i.e. those not available for public search, to anyone who can demonstrate a relationship with the claimant. Photocopies of certificates or other evidence will be required, proving the link. There would be the usual charges by NRO for searches.

Editor's note: The NDFHS microfiche of the index, containing approximately 5,400 names, is available from Neil Richardson - see price list and order form.

MISSING FROM THE 1851 CENSUS?

In the Summer 1998 edition of the *NDFHS Journal* we printed the information from three pages which had been omitted when the 1851 Census for Durham was filmed. As the project to transcribe and index the Census continues, two further pages have been identified as missing from the films held at Durham Record Office. Copies of the missing pages have been obtained from the Public Record Office by Cyril Jewitt, the NDFHS Project Co-ordinator, and the information is reproduced below.

1851 Census for New Cassop, Co.Durham (HO 107/2391/F560/P33)

Forster	John	Head	Mar	46	Coal miner	NBL Corbridge
do	Ann	Wife	Mar	34	do wife	do Long Benton
do	John	Son	U	18	do	do Bigs Main
do	Ralph	Son	U	16	do	do do
do	Ellen	Dau		15	do dau	do do
do	Isaac	Son		8	do son	do do
Hardy	William	Head	Mar	22	do	do Seghill
do	Mary	Wife	Mar	22	do wife	DUR Washington
Burdes	Joseph	Lodger	U	16	do	do do
McGrevey	Hugh	Head	Mar	28	do	IRL
do	Catherine	Wife	Mar	21	do wife	do
Lile	Joseph	Visitor	U	24	do	do
Cuslow	Patrick	do	U	23	do	do
Richardson	John	Head	Mar	40	Brewer and inn keeper	NBL
do	Jane	Wife	Mar	40	do do wife	DUR Shadforth
do	Mary Ann	Dau		12	do do dau	do Kelloe
do	John	Son		3	do do son	do Cassop
Ferguson	Robert	Servant	U	33	Ag lab	do N.K.
Dawson	Eleanor	Servant	U	21	House servant	do Wreckington

1851 Census for Westoe, South Shields (HO 107/2399/F603/P33)

7 Simons Street

Ferguson	Ann	Daur	U	16	Wife's daughter	DUR So. Shields
Meighan	John	Head	Mar	38	Laborer Jarrow Chemical works	IRL
do	Bridget	Wife	Mar	27	do wife	do
do	Patrick	Son		11		do
do	Owen	Son		9		do
do	John	Son		2		ENG
do	Cathrine	Sister		41	Labourers sister	IRL
Curtis	James	Head	Mar	35	Labourer	do
do	Agnes	Wife	Mar	26		SCT
do	Peter	Son		3		DUR So. Shields
do	Thos.	Son		1		do do
McMaffon	Edwd.	Lodger	U	36	Labourer	British Colonies [---?---]

8 Simons Street

Frates	John	Head	Mar	44	Labourer	NBL Wooler
do	Phillis	Wife	Mar	44		do do
do	Jane	Daur	U	23		America No British Colony
do	Thos.	Son	U	21	Labourer	do do do
do	Robert	Son	U	16	do	do do do
do	John	Son		12	do	DUR So. Shields
do	David	Son		9	Scolar [sic]	do do
do	Margaret	Daur		7	Scholar	do do

BEGINNERS GUIDE TO TRACING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY IN NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM

by Geoff Nicholson

Part 2: Discover Whether You Are The First, Then Exploit Civil Registration

Having exhausted sources within the family, you should next set out to find whether anyone else is, or has been, interested in the history of your family. One of the most galling things in family history is to spend a lot of effort to discover something, and just when you are feeling very proud of yourself to meet someone who says "I could have told you that - it's all in such and such a book". If anyone has written a book about the family then you are very lucky (or unlucky, if you consider they have spoilt your fun!), as all you will then have to do is the still-necessary task of verifying everything in it. That is simple if all references have been given in full but not if, as so often happens, they are all missing or given incorrectly; something to remember, and eventually apply to your own writings.

Usually, however, there will be no book specifically about your family but there may still be a mention of them in some collection of pedigrees compiled by an earlier genealogist. If there is any hint of the family having been land owners you should look at the list of pedigrees published in local County Histories. A combined list has been published by the Newcastle Records Committee (edited by C.H.H. Blair; vol. 9; 1930; *Miscellanea from the City Archives*). That volume also includes an alphabetical list of the hundreds of pedigrees in Hodgson's fifteen-volume *MS Northumberland Families*, an index which was serialised in this Journal from Winter 1990 to Autumn 1991. Again, the scope is mainly the more well-to-do and landed families, but such a large number of families must have many present-day descendants. Hodgson's original volumes are in Newcastle Library but even there you will now be expected to view microfilm copies of them. Northumberland County Record Office's Morpeth Record Centre also has a microfilm copy.

Newcastle Central Library also has smaller pedigree collections by Robert Surtees and by Herbert Maxwell Wood and if your family were important enough to have been Barons in mediaeval times, you might even find it worthwhile looking at W. Percy Hedley's *Northumberland Families* (2 volumes) published by the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne. However, most of us will find it more rewarding to look in other places for ready-made pedigrees.

Sunderland Public Library, for instance, is the home of the Corder MSS. J. C. Corder made it his business, not only to transcribe the registers of all Sunderland C of E churches and many of the earlier nonconformist ones, but among the 40+ manuscript volumes he produced are many of pedigrees of local families. Again, families of "ordinary"

workers are not likely to be represented but those in the professions or with businesses, even very small ones, are well covered. Warnings need to be given about using Corder's MSS, however. His handwriting is quite difficult to read at the best of times, and as the original volumes were beginning to show signs of wear what is now available is a collection of bound volumes of photocopies. As one might expect, the copying process has not improved the legibility of Corder's handwriting. Add to that Corder's habit of writing straight across two facing pages, treating them as one, whereas the photocopies treat them as two separate pages, and there is another hurdle to overcome. Anyone using the Corder MSS should also be warned that the open-mindedness which I mentioned last time may well be essential. Corder, who was writing up to the 1940s, always said exactly what he thought about people, so - be prepared to find out just what the character of your Sunderland ancestors was like!

Northumberland County Record Office's Morpeth Record Centre have other collections of pedigrees, the main ones being the microfilm of Hodgson's manuscript pedigrees in Newcastle Library, a complete set of the 15-volume *Northumberland County History* and of Hodgson's *History of Northumberland* and copies on microfilm of the pedigrees compiled by our past Secretary, J. Ken Brown.

This Society has, in the Bolbec Hall, a collection of pedigrees which is already well on its way to achieving its potential of becoming the major collection in the north east of England. Ever since the Society was founded in 1975 we have encouraged members to deposit with us the results of their researches. These are now building into a collection which can be used not only to see what has been done on your family but also to get in touch with those distant relatives, if they are still around, who have deposited their work with us. They range in format from pencilled notes to printed pedigrees and professionally-produced hardback books. Once you have produced a worthwhile amount of original work, then you should deposit it with us, for the benefit of family historians of the future. It is heartbreaking to think how many people must have expended a tremendous amount of effort only to have all their painstakingly-compiled notes thrown onto a bonfire by uncaring relatives as soon as they themselves have passed away. The NDFHS does not have bonfires! We intend to be around indefinitely, so by depositing your family history with us you can be as sure as anyone can be that it will be preserved for the future. Note that I said "as soon as you have produced a worthwhile amount of original work". Never fall into the trap of waiting until your family history

has been completed. It will never be complete, and never can be. Our librarians will be quite happy to accept up-dates from you from time to time if you want to update your original deposit. The NDFHS also has a set of photocopies of the same J. K. Brown pedigrees as are in the Morpeth Record Centre.

It could well be that, even if no complete pedigrees are publicly available, someone may currently be researching your family. There are tens of thousands of members of Family History Societies, living all over the world, and over 3,000 of them are members of the NDFHS at any one time. Various "Directories" have been published over the years; the best is undoubtedly the British Isles Genealogical Register, issue 2, known as the *BigR2*. This is compiled by the Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS) on a county by county basis, and all counties can be bought on microfiche from this Society (via Neil Richardson - address inside the front cover of this Journal). They are also available for reference in the NDFHS Library and Research Centre in Bolbec Hall, Newcastle. The *BigR2* and similar Directories, such as the *Genealogical Research Directory* (the GRD, a conventional book), will give you a very good summary of the surname "interests" of thousands of contributors, and should be checked by everyone researching any particular family. They have the potential to put you in contact with long-lost and very distant cousins from all over the world.

Well, now you have enquired in all the most likely places, and possibly found that no-one has researched your family before, there is nothing to it but to get going with it yourself. For reasons which will become apparent when I deal with censuses, one desirable early target is to find where your family were living in 1891. You may well know that already, but if you don't and you have no documentation in the family to tell you where, one way to work back to that date is to use civil registration certificates of birth, death and marriage.

Civil registration, or the issuing of official certificates for all births, deaths and marriages, was introduced into England and Wales on 1st July 1837. Most of those marrying in that year would have been born before 1820 and those dying in 1837 may have been born in the 1750s so the value of certificates reaches back well before 1837. Birth and death certificates are issued by local registrars; marriage certificates for church weddings are usually issued by the clergyman concerned but an identical certificate is sent to the local registrar. A copy of each certificate is sent by the local registrar to the Registrar General, in London and the Registrar General compiles three indexes each quarter, one of all births, one of all deaths and another of all marriages, indexed by bridegroom and by bride. The quarters are named after their last month, so the first quarter of the year, covering January, February and March, is the March Quarter. There are also June, September and December Quarters. As the Registrar General's Office is the General Registry Office (the GRO), these indexes are called the GRO indexes. You may hear them called the "St Catherine's House Indexes" but that term, never a good

one, is now quite obsolete, as they are no longer kept in St Catherine's House in London, where they used to be. Note that the GRO indexes do not cover Scotland, which has a similar system, though it differs in detail. Civil registration was introduced into Scotland on 1st January 1855.

You will find microfilm or microfiche copies of the GRO quarterly indexes in many major public libraries, and in some County Record Offices. This Society has them (fiche) in Bolbec Hall and other places where they are to be found in the north east of England include the Morpeth Records Centre (film), Newcastle Central Library (fiche) and South Shields Public Library (film). The quarterly indexes are, of course, huge and sometimes searchers are expected to use readers not designed for the job, which means risking eye-strain, unless you have remembered to bring with you a powerful lens or magnifying glass. The indexes are arranged in strict alphabetical order of the surname, as it is spelled on the certificate, then in order of the first name, again, strictly as on the certificate, so do try to avoid falling into the common trap of not finding an entry because you have not checked every possible spelling variation

This would seem a good time to make the point that spelling was not standardised until most people were literate - i.e. not until comparatively quite recently. Illiterate people could only give their details verbally to a clerk and could not correct him if he wrote it with a different spelling to that which they had in mind. The differences between the surnames Dodd and Dodds, for example, or Forster and Foster, Nicolson and Nicholson, Moffatt and Moffet, should be ignored and searches in the GRO, or any other, indexes made to cover ALL possible spellings of the surname.

A search in the GRO indexes may indicate beyond doubt in which quarter an event took place, but if you are researching a common name, as by definition most of us are, they could well confuse. Apart from the name, the only information in the early indexes is the name of the Registration District within which the event took place. In 1866 (Mar Quarter) ages at death began to be added to the death indexes and from 1911 the maiden surname of the mother has been added to the birth indexes (Sept Quarter) and the surname of the spouse to the marriage indexes (Dec Quarter). That helps searchers to distinguish between the various registrations for a particular name, but it is still not enough to cover every case. The GRO indexes will provide you with a reference number for each certificate but that number is meaningful only to the Registrar General's staff. It has no meaning to local registrars so there is no point in quoting it to them.

Remember that the quarterly indexes list the registrations of events that quarter, not the events themselves. The Law allows six weeks for the registration of a birth, so a child could be registered in the quarter after the one in which they were born. Weddings are always registered on the day and deaths must be registered within five days (eight days before 1875).

Certificates can be bought from local registrars or from the Registrar General. The local registrars charge less than the Registrar General but they hold certificates only for their own registration districts. Certificates may be ordered by post but that costs a lot more than when applying in person. Rates vary with time, being on an ever-upward spiral, so there is little point in quoting current ones here, except to say that the range at present is about £6.50 to £16.50, depending on which option you take. The charge for postal searches covers a five-year (20 quarters) search in the indexes. Details are available from all Registry Offices throughout the country.

A technique which is perhaps not as widely known as it should be is that of "testing" a range of certificates. Suppose you seek the certificate of Thomas Robson and find that in the correct quarter there are three such registrations, any of which could be the one you want. If you know that the Thomas you are researching was the son of, say, a Henry, then you could have the certificates "tested" against that information. This could be done one at a time, or instructions could be given to test them all in turn and stop at the first which fits. Unsuccessful tests cost about £3, but successful tests are FREE, providing they are followed by the purchase of the certificate.

Why bother to get certificates anyway? Although English (and Welsh) certificates do not contain all the details available on those of some overseas countries, they do include a wealth of useful information, some of which is not readily available elsewhere.

Birth certificates include columns headed: When and where born: Name, if any: Sex: Name, and surname of father: Name, surname, and maiden surname of mother: Occupation of father: Signature, description and residence of informant: When registered: Signature of registrar: Name entered after registration. By "description" is meant the relationship or other connection of the informant to the child.

Marriage certificates include columns headed: When married: Name and Surname: Age: Condition: Rank or profession: Residence at the time of marriage: Father's name and surname: Rank or profession of father. By "Rank or profession" is effectively meant simply "occupation". The details of the bridegroom and bride are given under the above columns, in two lines. Other information on a marriage certificate is the means of marriage - whether in the Registry Office or in a church of whatever denomination. If it was in the Church of England then the certificate will say whether the wedding was after the calling of Banns or by licence. On every marriage certificate, and indeed in every Church of England marriage register entry since 1754 there is the statement "This marriage was solemnized between us", followed by the signatures, or marks, of the bridegroom and bride, the "in the presence of us" followed by the signatures or marks of two witnesses.

Death certificates include columns headed: When and where died: Name and surname: Sex: Age: Occupation: Cause of death: Signature, description and residence of informant: When registered: Signature of registrar.

In general, those who use certificates to trace a family make most use of birth and marriage certificates. A marriage certificate will tell you the ages of both spouses and the names of their fathers. With that information it should be possible to get their birth certificate and so find their mother's maiden surname. Once that is known, the marriage certificate of the parents can be sought, and so on backwards. Death certificates, however, can still be very useful, not least in telling us where a person lived at the time of their death, their occupation and their recorded age. I say "recorded" age because the only person who really knew their age was themselves and, by definition, they were dead at the time! The informant may well have been taking a guess at the right age, and may have got it wrong. Remember what I have said earlier - information should not be believed solely because it is on an official certificate!

Using certificates to trace a family history has many limitations. To the writer, most of the fun and satisfaction of tracing a family comes from finding ways of avoiding having to buy certificates. Next time I shall deal with one of the most useful ways - obtaining and using census information.

Editor's note: Geoff Nicholson's address is 57 Manor Park, Concord, Washington, Tyne & Wear NE37 2BU

DIRECTORIES UPDATE

We have been asked by Newcastle Central Library to emphasise the need for prior checking with the Library, and also in the case of readers visiting the Library, to check the card index under Dewey Ref. L942.8, for the existence of any Directory. There are some discrepancies between Adam Bunting's lists and the Library's current holdings, which will be looked into before publication of the final Bibliography.

Our apologies to Mr. Douglas Harris of Chelmsford who very kindly copied and supplied the relevant sections of Bailey's Northern Directory of 1781. His name and address were misreported in the last Journal. (*mea culpa!* - A.B.)

Some members have kindly written with details of their private holdings of Directories. It is worth noting that many rarer directories now fetch three-figure prices, and for insurance purposes, it might well be worth any private collector ensuring that they have some proof of possession, for production in the event of a claim.

The final section of the Directories' list (1900-1940) will appear in the next Journal.

DISASTER AT THE GAS WORKS 1896

by Moira Furness

The inscription on a stone in Preston Cemetery reads:

*Erected by the employees of the
Tynemouth Gas Corp. to commemorate
The deaths of their fellow workmen
Charles English & Sean Mains*
Who whilst following their employment
Were asphyxiated by an escape
Of sulphuretted hydrogen gas
At the Tynemouth Gas Works on the 20th Jan 1890
Also William Vickers (Foreman)
William Venus McGuire*
David Laws*
Who lost their lives in a noble
Attempt to rescue the above
Also William Brown
One of the rescue party
Who succumbed to his injuries
At a later period
Greater love hath no man than this
That a man lay down his life for his friends
William Vickers
Died Jan 20th 1896 aged 50
Charles English
Died Jan 20th 1896 aged 25
David Laws*
Died 20th Jan 1896 aged 23
Sean Mains*
Died 20th Jan 1896 aged 42
William Venus McGuire*
Died 20th Jan 1896 aged 34
William Brown
Died 13th Mar 1896 aged 39
(Grave number 9058/59/60/62, Section F General)*

What is the story behind that inscription?

On Monday afternoon, January 20th 1896 a telephone message alerted the offices of the *Shields Daily News* that an accident had occurred at North Shields Gas Works in Howdon Road. The representative sent to report the matter could find out only that the foreman, Mr William Vickers, and four other men had been suffocated in an accident at about 3.30 in the afternoon and that the Secretary, Mr Davison, was making arrangements for the removal of the bodies. That information, plus the names of the dead men, appeared that evening in the newspaper. Dead: W. Vickers, J. Main*, W. McGuire*, C. English, J. Taws* and still in danger Jos. Foster. [* note the discrepancies in the names between the monumental inscription and the newspaper.]

At first it was thought the accident occurred in a purifier attached to the gas plant but the inquest reported on 11th February 1896 stated that the accident happened in an oxide box used at the sulphate of ammonia works for

absorbing sulphuretted hydrogen coming from the saturator. The box, which was about 30 feet wide and 3 feet deep, had been closed down for a fortnight and workmen were removing the spent oxide. Work had not been finished on Saturday 18th January and so on Monday afternoon, January 20th, two men, English and Main, were detailed to finish the work. The first to enter was immediately overcome by sulphuretted hydrogen gas and his work mate who tried to pull him out was also overcome

The alarm was immediately raised and a tale of heroism began. Without thought for their own safety, men who rushed to save their work mates were overcome themselves by the gas. At one point there were eight unconscious men lying in the chamber but eventually they were dragged out and taken to the offices close by. William Reay, a bricklayer, was particularly commended for his bravery. He had used cotton waste stuffed into his mouth to combat the gas, a trick he had learnt from earlier experiences and one he had tried to pass on that day. He had remained as long as possible and then, after recovering in the fresh air, he returned to drag four men from the box.

Dr Martin and his assistant were quickly on the spot and tried for more than an hour to revive the men by artificial respiration. Four of the men were past help and a fifth, although breathing, died shortly afterwards. Two men recovered but Joseph Foster was in bad condition for many hours. Dr F.C. Mears and his assistant Dr Frazer were also in attendance. Wives and relatives waited at the gates for news as the bodies were laid out on the office floor and the injured were provided with beds.

Dead

William Vickers, foreman of 43 Lawson Street, North Shields - married to Sarah and with a family.

Joseph (or Sean?) Mains *, labourer of 40 Appleby Street, North Shields - single.

William McGuire, fireman of 60 Little Bedford Street, North Shields - married to Mary Ann & with a family.

Charles English, labourer of Front St., Milburn Place, North Shields - married to Mary and with a large family.

David Taws (or Laws) *, labourer of (Bull Ring) Ropery Banks, North Shields - married but with no family.

Injured

John Patterson, Front Street, Milburn Place

Joseph Forster, Prudhoe St., North Shields

William Brown, North Street, Milburn Place (died later)

What had caused the accident? At the inquest it appeared that the inlet valve to the purifier, which was in proper working order, had not been completely closed. There was no evidence to show who had closed the valve when the box lid was off but it was presumed that Mr Vickers, the foreman, should have seen that the job was properly

performed. he was known to be a careful and trustworthy man who had worked for the company for 16 years but on this one occasion had not seen that the valve was fully closed - an act which was to cost him his life. It was also assumed that during the fortnight before the accident the almost spent oxide managed to decompose most of the gas but that during the time between Saturday afternoon and Monday afternoon the gas had built up in the closed box.

No blame was attached to anyone for the accident and the verdict of the jury was that the men died from asphyxia due to the gas. It was suggested that men engaged in this kind of work should be supplied with respirators, provided with a means of getting in and out easily and also that Reay's suggestion should be noted.

A letter of sympathy was placed in the newspaper by J. Blenkinsop stating that many letters of sympathy had been received and offers of assistance should a fund be opened for the widows and ten orphans who had lost their breadwinners. The workmen had decided to open a fund at once and subscriptions were invited to be sent to Mr Blenkinsop, as Honorary Secretary, or to Mr Philips, Messrs, Woods & Co. Bank, North Shields. A later letter from the Chairman of the Tynemouth Gas Company, Mr W.B. Williamson, and W. Hardie junr., engineer of the Gas Company, urged that a sum of at least £1,000 was needed to keep the families "beyond the reach of want". A Committee was to be formed consisting of the Directors of the Gas Company, Mr Hardie, the manager and an equal number of the company's workmen to see that the fund was "judiciously employed". The directors also voted the sum of

100 guineas out of the funds of the company and each also contributed 5 guineas to the fund. A list of all contributions appeared in the newspaper next day. The total of just over £100 was far short plus the money from the directors fell far short of the target. So far nothing has been found about how the money was distributed but part of it must have gone towards the grave stone.

On the 7th Feb 1896 it was reported that the Tynemouth Gas Company adopted a resolution "thanking the men who so gallantly risked their lives in the endeavour to save the lives of their fellows" and voted a sum of £15 to be divided amongst them to be sent together with a copy of the resolution. Those same men are mentioned in a report in the newspaper on 23rd March 1896 which gave a long account of the large gathering of officials and gentry who gathered at the Town Hall to see Lord Percy present awards for bravery from The Royal Humane Society. William Reay and James Cummings received bronze medals and John Johnson, John Patterson, Joseph Forster, Henry Harrison, Thomas Cook, Joseph Vickers and Charles Compson received certificates on vellum. We can only wonder what they thought of the long pompous speeches and large gathering of worthies. William Brown unfortunately had died before he could receive his award.

Perhaps somebody still has one of the medals or certificates among their family treasures?

Note: Written with the help of photocopies from the *Shields Daily News* at North Tyneside Library.

NEWS FROM NORTHUMBERLAND RECORD OFFICE

*from Sarah Davis, Assistant Archivist,
Northumberland Record Office*

Staff numbers at the Record Office have been swelled by a number of temporary and part-time posts. Rick Barker has joined us to work behind the scenes at Melton Park. He may already be familiar to you wearing his genealogical research and lecturing hat! Joan Rose, who has been working as a volunteer for several years now has official status as a member of staff at Morpeth. We welcome back Ann Jackson to help with modern records at Morpeth and also Diane Radcliffe. These appointments should contribute to the smooth running of our service. We are also furthering

our links with local schools (and encouraging a new generation of archivists!). Visitors to Morpeth may have seen Graham and Adele helping in the searchroom.

A number of recent accessions may be of interest as regards family history. Several non-conformist records have been deposited. These include a baptism register for Haydon Bridge United Reformed Church (formerly Congregational) dating back to 1883 (ref: UR/C.5/4) and a marriage register for the Presbyterian Church at Seaton Delaval 1849-1924 (ref: UR/P.36/1). Twentieth century marriage registers for the United Reformed Churches in Morpeth, Brompton and Newbiggin have also been deposited.

We have also received a large number of probate records and letters of administration from Gibson and Co., solicitors of Hexham. There are well over 500 of these documents and they may help you track down an elusive ancestor. The new year will see details available in our catalogues with an alphabetical list of individuals.

AN UNKNOWN TYNESIDER AT LA BOISSELLE

by John Sheen

On a wild November day in 1998, in the midst of a torrential rainstorm, an Englishman from Colchester was walking near the Lochnagar Crater. This huge crater was formed on 1st July 1916 when the British exploded a mine under the German front line and wiped out the defending German infantrymen of the 110th Bavarian Infantry Regiment. On the eastern side of the crater, sticking out, was what looked like a boot. After taking a closer look the man returned to Pozieres, and told the landlady of the Cafe where he was staying what he had seen. This lady in turn passed the news on to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Head Gardener who alerted the police and after an initial search it was confirmed that there was one body and possibly more. The area was cordoned off and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission was alerted. Before the exhumation team could get there, grave robbers managed to take some artefacts that had long been buried.

The first body uncovered was that of a soldier of the Tyneside Scottish Brigade, who had among his possessions a razor with his number, rank and name scratched into the handle. The remains of many pieces of equipment were also found. Two water bottles, one British the other Canadian, had been carried and a large amount of small arms ammunition also lay in the grave. This man had been posted as missing on 1st July 1916, confirmed as dead in 1917, and his name added to the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing when it was constructed after the First World War. The other bodies, about eight in number, were those of German soldiers. They were all wrapped in British Army blankets and had obviously received a decent, but hasty, battlefield burial.

The job now was to confirm that the casualty was indeed the man whose name was on the knife and, if possible, locate his surviving next of kin. Responsibility for the case now passed from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to the Ministry of Defence, PS4 (Army)(Casualty/Compassionate)(Coord).

MOD PS4 now faced a family history case in reverse, working from the soldier down to his relatives but where to start? Initially they tried Army Records MOD at Hayes Middlesex (we've all tried there!). Of course the usual answer was received, that the records they needed had been destroyed in during the Blitz in 1940.

Who knows about the Tyneside Scottish? Let's try a museum or Newcastle Library - they might know something. The reply went back that a history of the Brigade was in the process of being written and that the author may be able to help, which is how I came to be involved. Co-author Graham Stewart and myself have produced nominal rolls of the Tyneside Scottish Brigade similar to those I published in 'Tyneside Irish'. One day in

early December I received a telephone call from the Ministry and was asked several questions about the sources used and where information about individuals could be found. The following week, another telephone call was received and I was asked to go to a meeting at the Ministry of Defence, to show them how I went about the business of tracing the various pieces of information about individual soldiers. By this time I had unofficially been told the name, rank and number of the soldier. At this stage it is still strictly confidential, until the next of kin can be traced. But armed with these facts I was able to put together all the information that I had in order to brief the ministry.

The "men from the ministry" were the first to admit that their knowledge of First World War records and tracing military ancestors was almost non-existent. I therefore had to cover many of the records that I have previously written about in this journal. W0364, MH106, *The St George's Gazette*, absentee voters lists, newspaper lists of volunteers and casualties, Red Cross lists etc. From the above sources I was able to give the home address of the casualty, date of enlistment, section and company, death certificate reference, as well as the fact that he was reported as missing as late as December 1916 and that death was confirmed in June 1917.

I was asked a large number of questions relating to military records and family history and then much to my surprise I was shown a number of photographs. The first few were of the remains of the soldier. The next batch were of the artefacts found with the body - a rifle, minus woodwork, but with bayonet and barbed wire cutter still attached, a Tyneside Scottish shoulder title, shaving mirror, GS buttons, scissors, penknife, comb and a silver penholder. This last item bore an inscription to the effect that it had been won at a sports day in 1915. But the most poignant and interesting article was the cut throat razor with the name and number engraved into the handle. Another surprise lay in store when I was allowed to read the file of documents.

Many facts and theories came together. The section and company details I had brought with me added to the shoulder title and the number on the razor meant it was almost certainly the remains of 2./..... Private, Geordie..... of the Xth Tyneside Scottish.

I asked for and received permission to write this small article, and a lengthier article for 'Tyneside Scottish', and there has been a piece in the local papers. The interest locally will be tremendous once the soldier's name is released. The Ministry of Defence is trying to locate possible next of kin to enable this member of the Tyneside Scottish may be reburied in a marked grave. I shall let you know in due course who he was.

RECORDS OF PATIENTS AT ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL, MORPETH, FORMERLY NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY LUNATIC ASYLUM

by Sue Wood, Senior Archivist, Northumberland Record Office

The Northumberland County Lunatic Asylum was built on a site at Cottingwood, Morpeth in 1859. It was built to accommodate 130 patients. However, by 1890 - the number of patients had risen to about 600. Both male and female patients were admitted to the Hospital and there are instances of young children receiving treatment. Many of the early patients were transferred from other institutions, particularly Bensham Hospital, then in County Durham. Some of the older records of the Hospital are held at Morpeth Records Centre (ref. NRO 3680) and include much information of interest to the family historian. The records are subject to a 100 year closure rule and as a consequence only the following records containing information about patients are at present open to public inspection:

Female Patients

Registers of admissions, 1859-90

Registers of patients, 1890-97.

Male Patients

Register of admissions, 1870-90

Register of patients, 1890-97

Case books, 1890-97

Chronic case books, c. 1894-97.

'Mixed' Records (Male and Female)

Register of removals, discharges and transfers, 1890-97

Relatives' address book, 1859-1897

Patients' leave of absence book, 1861-97

Register of private patients, 1861-90.

The starting point for any researcher who believes that their ancestor may have been a patient at the Hospital is usually the admission registers. These provide the name of the patient, the patient's case number, date of last admission, age, marital status, occupation, previous place of abode, the county union or parish to whom the patient is chargeable, date of the medical certificate, form of disorder, supposed cause of illness, details of bodily condition, duration of attack, age of first attack and date of discharge, removal or death. The following example illustrates the information provided:

Richard Berkley - Case No. 677

Admitted: 4 June 1872

Age: 70

Marital Status: Widower

Occupation: Cartman and husbandman

Previous Abode: Seghill West Farm

Union To Whom Chargeable: Tynemouth

Form of Disorder: Mania

Supposed Cause: Fell from a cart -- fell on back of his head.

State of Health: Weak

Removed/Died/Discharged: 15 June 1872.

Not all patients were local. For example, William Lees of Saltier Street, Manchester, was admitted on 27 April 1870. Often non-local patients were admitted when their local asylums were unable to offer them a place. As a result, these patients may have been transferred to their own locality once a place became available and reference to this might be found in the registers of removals, discharges and transfers.

Once it has been possible to establish if an ancestor was a patient the next step is to locate reference to him or her in the casebooks. These provide detailed information about the patient, his family background, his illness and treatment administered. In addition, many of the casebooks include photographs of the patients. The following information has been extracted from one of the male casebooks (NRO 3680/185) to illustrate the kind of detail that it is possible to find within these records.

Robert Sadler Harbottle - Case No. 1781

Robert Sadler Harbottle was admitted on 30 November 1890. He was aged 27, a chimney sweep and previously resident at Oldgate Street, Morpeth. His religion was noted as Church of England. This was his first attack and there was no known cause for it. However, it was noted that both his mother and maternal aunt had also suffered from mental illness. The early stages of his illness are described - "*three or four weeks ago without apparent cause patient became desponding and gloomy. He complained that people tried to poison him and that everyone was plotting, talking against him. He has threatened to kill himself*". It was also reported that he "*ran up the street bare headed crying 'I'm going mad' then ran back to his house [and] seized a large knife...*". On 1 December 1890, the day after his admission, a report was made on his mental and bodily condition - "*He is quiet and rational although he appears slightly depressed. He says that people have annoyed him and talked about him so much that if he stayed amongst them much longer he would have gone mad*". He was described as "*well nourished; hair light. Irises light blue pupils large but equal*". Note was also made of circulatory, respiratory and alimentary symptoms. The patient was admitted to Ward 2 of the hospital. Within the first week of admission, daily notes of his symptoms were made. A typical entry is that for 4 December 1890 which states that "*He is idle, walks up and down the ward with an anxious*

expression on his face; he answers rationally any question put to him. He is quite clean and tidy". These reports continue to be made but on a weekly, then monthly basis until the death, discharge or removal of the patient. Reference is also made to the diagnosis given to the patient - in the case of Robert Harbottle it was reported that he is "labouring under mania".

The casebooks include an index of patients at the beginning of each volume. However, in order to help researchers the Northumberland Record Office has recently produced an index of male patients referred to in the casebooks of St. George's Hospital, 1890-97. This contains summary details of approximately 700 patients. The index records the patient's name and case number, his age, marital status, occupation, address, religion and date of admission. The index also indicates whether or not a photograph of the patient is located within the case notes. A copy of the index can be purchased from Northumberland Record Office, Melton Park, North Gosforth, Newcastle, NE3 5QX (tel: 0191-2362680) for a fee of £3 plus postage - 50p (UK) or £1 (overseas). Where a photograph of the patient exists it is possible to obtain a photographic copy - prices are available upon request. Record Office staff are also pleased to make a search of any of the records open to public inspection as part of the research service. Current charges are £8 per half hour. Application forms can be obtained from Melton Park.

Some patients spent several periods in the Hospital. In such cases, it is possible to trace the development of their illness and pinpoint dates of admission and discharge using a combination of the case books, admission registers, registers of patients and register of removals, discharges and transfers. A large number of patients were longstay patients, many of whom died within the Hospital. Some details of the circumstances of death are recorded in the casebooks. For example, Leslie Ord aged 44, a circus clown, was admitted on 8 July 1890. His previous place of abode is noted as Elgin County Asylum where he had resided for the previous four and a half years although it is noted that he was removed from there by order of the Sheriff of the County of Elgin and had been resident at Berwick Workhouse for two days before transfer to Morpeth. Leslie Ord was continuously resident in the hospital until his death on 7 January 1898. Cause of death was noted as pulmonary tuberculosis from which he had been suffering for several months. The burial records of Morpeth Parish Church contain many references to patients from the Hospital.

Until the establishment of The National Health Service in 1948 financial assistance was needed to support those patients in the Hospital. If patients were able to they were expected to support themselves. However, very few of these 'private' patients were admitted to St. George's. There is a register of private patients covering the period 1861-90 (ref. NRO 3680/184) but this includes reference to only a small number of patients. The vast majority of patients were supported by the local Board of Guardians. In the case of Robert Harbottle, he was supported by the Morpeth Board of Guardians. Unfortunately, very few records of the

Morpeth Guardians survive - none of them for the period prior to 1898.



Robert Sadler Harbottle
(NRO Ref. 3680/185 p150 no. 1781)

However, where these records do survive it is possible to find references to patients within them. For example, a search of the Hexham Board of Guardians minutes (ref. GHE 2) for the four month period January to April 1864 revealed two specific references to 'lunatics'. On 25 February it was recorded that "George Dickinson's expenses of removing Hannah Dodd from Ropehaugh near Allendale to the Lunatic Asylum at Morpeth" - a sum of £4 16s 7d was paid. On 5 April it was "resolved that proper steps be taken to have Joseph Carr - a lunatic- removed from the Union Workhouse to the Lunatic Asylum". At the same meeting, it was recorded that the Hexham Board of Guardians paid £144 15s 8d for "one quarters maintenance of lunatics in the County Asylum up to 31st March 1864". Such information might be particularly useful where there are gaps in hospital records. For example, there are no registers of male admissions prior to 1870. If it is possible to ascertain which Board of Guardians was responsible for the maintenance of an ancestor it may be possible to find reference to that individual within any surviving records. A significant proportion of patients of St. George's hospital in the early period were paupers whose stated address was a local workhouse. In such cases, these patients may have returned to the workhouse upon recovery. Again, reference to this might be located Board of Guardians records.

The St. George's Hospital records are a fascinating source and are not unique. Similar records exist for other County Asylums in local Record Offices. As has hopefully been illustrated, these records can provide vital information for family historians. For example, addresses may help locate other family members on census returns or details of age and religion may help locate the baptism of an ancestor in church records. The photographs are of particular interest - they may be the only surviving photograph of an ancestor.

A NORTHUMBRIAN MYSTERY:

The Poor Clares of Rouen

by Olive Trewick

The idea for this paper developed during the transcription of the Catholic Registers for Lowick, which parish had its origin in the Chapel of Haggerston Castle. Six burial entries, dated between 1805 and 1807, related to nuns, each described as "of the Poor Clares of Rouen". Why were French nuns buried so far from home? Inquiries locally produced no answers. The record showed they had been resident at Haggerston. In the same vicinity is the mediaeval church of Ancroft dedicated to St. Anne and a brief outline of its history is available in the porch. This directed me to a tombstone erected in memory of ten nuns who had found refuge at Haggerston from the French Revolution. The inscription gave the family names of the dead - all the names were English. The Register had given the names in religion so it was not certain that they were the same bodies.

Enquiries of the Catholic Central Library in London produced the key I needed - which turned out to be pure gold. It took the form of a two-part paper by Dr. Ann Forster: *"The Chronicles of the Poor Clares of Rouen"*. This was based on four manuscript volumes held at Clare Abbey, Darlington which give the history of the Rouen community from its foundation in 1644. At that time, the Poor Clares at Gravelines had to seek permission to found a new house in France due to their increased numbers coinciding with the problems arising from the wars in England and Flanders. The widow of King Louis XIII (Anne of Austria) permitted sixteen of the nuns to go to Rouen, deemed a suitable location because of the many English people there. During the difficult time which followed the beheading of King Charles I, Rouen became the focus for even more English visitors and their numbers grew as a result of Cromwell's activities, the so-called "Oates Plot" and the advent of the Hanoverians. Some were relatives of the sisters; others were more distinguished including King James II who fled England to live in St. Germain in 1689 and Catherine of Braganza, widow of Charles II on her way home to Portugal in 1692. Throughout the eighteenth century, especially after the 1745 rebellion, there were even more visitors, including girls to be educated in the safety of a convent and away from the restrictive atmosphere at home. Not surprisingly some became novices and eventually fully professed Poor Clares.

As a consequence of the French Revolution, in 1791 their security ended giving place to a time of severe harassment and very real danger. Some lower ranked revolutionaries - styled 'Sections' - made a regular sport of searching private houses for arms, priests prayer-books and religious objects. Several times the Rouen convent endured forced entry by about a dozen such intruders. The nuns were obliged to

open all doors and cupboards to aggressive searching on the grounds that they might be harbouring many "Emigrant Ladies". One such visit occurred at 10 o'clock at night in the hope of capturing such lucrative prey unawares. The search proved fruitless even though it had penetrated the "enclosed" part of the house.

Six months later, as the priest was vesting for Mass, forty armed men arrived and arrested him. Fifteen of the men entered the Convent, ordering Mother Abbess to assemble the whole community, nuns and lay residents, in the Refectory where they were detained under armed guard. They had been forced to hand over all the account books and to agree to change their religious habits for secular dress as soon as possible. The following day all the doors were sealed and a detailed inventory was taken - even including "the dirty dishcloths in the kitchen". Two weeks later, two commissioners arrived to inform the Abbess "she was no longer Superior, the house being no Convent but a prison and that all we had belonged to the nation....". Daily more English ladies arrived - their husbands having been sent to another prison. Every corner was filled with prisoners and the nuns did their best to give them comfort.

At the same time the nuns faced the heartbreaking task of devising secular dress for 42 sisters - without material or the money for its purchase. Curtains from eleven beds and many large windows were pressed into use. In addition the other lady prisoners and some benefactors in the town helped with cash, sewing thread and fabric. The nuns made the gowns and other garments themselves under the constant pressure of threats of being moved to more severe confinement elsewhere if they did not discard their religious dress at once.

The following year, at Easter 1794, they were moved to a larger Convent. Eventually the lay prisoners were moved back to the Rouen house, 700 of them being placed in a house which was too small to accommodate one hundred in reasonable conditions. The sisters were never to return to their Rouen home. Granted their liberty in January 1795, their petition to do so was rejected and they had to consider a different location. In England, the passing of the first Relief Act had slightly ameliorated the position of Catholics and it was decided they should return to their homeland. They were to travel in small groups to avoid the unwelcome attention of officials on both sides of the Channel. Four left on 1st July, followed by three more on 22nd; the second group included Sister Maria Magdalena (Chadwick) who was very ill and died in London four months later. Twenty sisters left on 6th August and the last 14 followed ten days later. This accounts for the 42 members of the original Rouen community - and indicates that 41 were to reach

Haggerston in due course. Eventually, the sisters were reunited in a house in Manchester Square, London, where they received great assistance from the local Catholics. They retained their secular dress, following their Rule as discreetly as possible. Not being allowed to say the Office in choir, they did so individually in their own rooms. As a way of helping to pay their way, they made and sold quantities of apple jelly for which they found a great demand. However, their position was far from ideal and some alternative had to be found. Sir Carnaby Haggerston offered to make his Northumberland castle available as his family were not in permanent residence but visited the estate each year. The offer was accepted gratefully and the nuns prepared to move again. Travelling in groups of six by public coach, they passed through York where they were made welcome at the Micklegate Bar Convent.

The total community was reunited at Haggerston on Christmas Eve 1795. The local population was mainly Catholic as it comprised the estate workers and tenants of the Haggerston family. All were ready to give whatever practical help they could. The nuns did not resume their religious habit but "all dressed alike in plain black gowns and white caps". They quickly began to serve the local people "opening a school for poor children and, in a large porch of the castle, attending to any poor people who sought their assistance". This exposed them to smallpox, from which two of the nuns died. As soon as practicable, they started a school for young ladies. Although the Roll never exceeded eleven, this activity raised useful funds towards the community's support.

In 1807, when the Castle was being rebuilt, the nuns were faced with yet another move. By this time, through intermediaries in France, the sale of the Rouen premises had been successfully arranged. This provided resources of £1,800 and they were able to buy Scorton Hall, near Catterick in Yorkshire; they had their new home.

Combining the information from the Chronicles, the Register and the tombstone the following family history information can be drawn:

Date of death

- 7 June 1805 Sr. Colette Clare [HELEN HOOLE] Aged 49 - 30 years in religion.
- 24 Sept 1805 Sr. Agnes Clare [ELIZABETH BLUNDELL] Aged c.50. Former pupil. Arrived Rouen July 1766. Parents: Richard and Ellen (nee CHADWICK) of Preston, Lancashire.
- 22 Feb 1806 Sr. Elizabeth Clare [ELIZABETH HAGAN] Arrived Rouen 20 Feb 1760 from Maryland with her two sisters (see Monica Hagan below) to enter religion. All were recovering from smallpox and the Rule was relaxed for them for a time.
- 12 Aug 1806 Sr. Martha Clare [JANE PHILLIPS] Aged 71 - 43 years in religion. Lay sister. Arrived Rouen June 1761.
- 23 Aug 1807 Sr. Elizabeth Joseph [ELIZABETH SMITH] Aged 73 - 45 years in religion. Lay sister.

2 Nov 1807 Sr. Monica Clare [MONICA HAGAN] - See Elizabeth Hagan above.

Interred at Ancroft with the above - not mentioned in Chapel Register but listed in the Ancroft Burial Register:

- 20 Jan 1797 Sr. Mary Catherine [CATHERINE SMITH] Charlotte Smith in B/Regtr. Mother Superior. Aged 65 - 44 years in religion. Former pupil. Arrived Rouen with her sister Julia Ann Smith 23 July 1749 from Lancashire. Abbess at Rouen during "the Terror" and brought the Community to Haggerston via London.
- 28 June 1796 Sr. Mary of the Holy Cross [MARY CASTEL] Cascelles in B/Regtr. Aged 77 - 59 years in religion.
- 17 Jan 1799 Sr. Mary Joseph HELEN CHADWICK] Eleanor in B/Regtr. Aged 51. Arrived Rouen 12 July 1766 aged 13 with father JOHN CHADWICK of Burgh Hall Chorley, Lancashire and her cousin, ELIZABETH BLUNDELL (see above). Probably entered Order soon after arrival. First Portress at Haggerston. On an errand for the dying Abbess, Mother Catherine Smith, she was stricken with apoplexy and died.
- 1 Sept 1802 Sr. Francis Joseph [ELIZABETH JACKSON] Aged 31 - 6 years in religion. A novice at Rouen; possible former pupil. Professed at Haggerston 1796.

An appendix gives details of many of the benefactors of the order. This shows that Sir Carnaby Haggerston was the son of Sir Thomas Haggerston and Mary Silvertop and that his wife Frances (nee Smythe) was a sister of Mrs. Herbert.

We are told that Mr. Robert Garvey, an English merchant in Rouen "in the early part of the Revolution....struck out of the deed of the house the naturalisation of the Community", displayed the tricolore, "joined the revolutionists who were guarding the gates of the convent and helped to guard some of the prisoners, including his mother and various friends". Later, after their move to England Mr. Garvey negotiated the sale of the Rouen property and recovered some of its contents now in the safe-keeping of the Darlington house. In the former convent church he erected at his own expense a memorial tablet to the last Abbess of Rouen, Mother Catherine Smith.

Clearly transcribing registers can lead one a long way from the parish concerned!

Note: I am grateful to the Editor of *Recusant History*, Dr. V.A. McClelland, for permission to use Dr. Forster's paper, first published in that journal in 1986.

Editor's note: This article has recently been published in the Catholic Ancestor, the journal of the Catholic Family History Society. We are grateful to the Editor of that journal for permission to publish. Ms Treweek's address is 12 Fenwick Village, Beal, Berwick upon Tweed TD15 2PQ

THE DURHAM AND NORTHUMBERLAND OATH OF ASSOCIATION ROLLS OF 1695/96

The Northumberland Roll

The Act of Association of 1695/6 was a consequence of a Jacobite plot against King William III and required all "men of importance" to combine with others for the "preservation of His Majesty's royal person and government".

In the *NDFHS Journal* for Spring 1996 (Vol. 21 no.1) Alex Glendinning gave a brief history and description of the Oath of Association Rolls with particular reference to those for Northumberland and Durham that have survived in the Public Record Office. In the same edition we printed a list of the names that appear on the Berwick Roll.

In subsequent Journals - Summer, Autumn and Winter 1996 (Vol. 21 nos. 2,3,4) - we printed the names appearing on the Rolls for the Master Pilots and Seamen of Newcastle, Officers of the Militia at Newcastle, City of Durham and Alnwick. We now list below the names for Northumberland.

We must thank Mrs Sue Wood, Senior Archivist at Northumberland Record Office, for the palaeographic assistance in transcribing the names. A photographic copy (very large!) of the Roll is in the NDFHS Library at Bolbec Hall. The original is, of course, in the Public Record Office.

N...	...BIGH	John	BIDE[?]	Cha.	COTESWORTH
John	...EALL[?]	John	BITLESTON	John	COTESWORTH
Fenwick	...TTS[?]	Isaac[?]	BLACKETT	Wm.	COX
Ralph	...OGEWELL?	Wm.	BLACKETT	Natn.	COX
Fran.	[Illegible]	Jno.	BLACKETT	Tho.	CRAISTER
Robert	[Illegible]	John	BLAKISTON	Wm.	CRISP
James	[Illegible]	T.	BLENKINSOPP	Matthew	D...[?]
William	[Illegible]	John	BOWES	Francis	DAVISON
Richard	[Illegible]	George	BRASLEY	Tho.	DOBSON
George	[Illegible]	James	BRATHWAIT	Robert	DOBSON
John	[Illegible]		Capt. of Granedear of	Joseph	DONKIN
Tho.	[Illegible]		Collnell Sandersons[?]	Robert	DONNALDSON
Geo.	[Illegible]		Ridgement of Futt	Tho.	DOVE
Tho.	[Illegible]	Wm.	BROUGH	John	DUNN
	Opfficer of the Garrison	Tho.	BROWN	James	ELLIOTT
Jon.	[Illegible]	Edward	BRUMELL	Robert	ELLIOTT[?]
Robt.	[Illegible]	Bart.	BULLOCK	Geo.	FENWICK
George	[Illegible]	Robt.	BULMAN	Robt.	FENWICK
Tho.	AIREY	Tho.	BURRELL	Joseph	FENWICK
George	ALLAN	Roger	BUSTON	Arthur	FENWICKE
Matt.	ALMDUKE[?]	Robert	C...	[Illegible]	FENWICKE
	Chamberlaine of Alnwick	Robert	CARR	Frederick	FLETCHER
John	ANDREWS	Storar	CARR	Ra.	FORSTER
Anthony[?]	APPLEBY[?]	Jon.	CARR	Hry.	FORSTER
Rowland	ARCHER	Nich.	CARR	John	FORSTER
John	ARMORER	John	CARR	John	FORSTER
John	ARMSTRONG	Wm.	CARR	John	FORSTER
Jo.	ARMSTRONG	John	CARR[?]	Marke	FORSTER
James	ATKINS	John	CHARLETON		Chamberlaine of Alnwick
Robert	AYDEN	Ralph	CLARKE	Reynold	FORSTRY
Cuthbert	AYDON	George	CLARKE	John	GAYE[?]
	Alderman & Serjeant	Franc.	CLARKE	Robert	GIBSON
T.A.	AYDON	Tho.[?]	CLAVERING	Joseph	GIBSON
William	BAINE[?]	Ro.	CLAXTON	Sam.	GIBSON
John	BARON		Chamberlaine of Alnwick		Officer of the Garrison
Mark	BATES	Edward	COLLINGWOOD	John	GIPSON
Edward	BEAUCHAMP	Tho.	COLLINGWOOD	Thomas	GREEN
John	BENSON	John	COLSON	Wm.	GREENE
Pl...[?]	BICKERSTAFF	John	COOK	Cha.	GRENEWOOD

Ralph	GRIEVE	C...[?]	MANNERS	Richard	SMAILES
Mark	GRUMWELL	George	MARR	Thomas	SMITH
Tho.	H...LEY	Robert	MIDFORD	John	SNAWDEN
Ralph	HA...[?]	Wm.	MILBOURNE	Robert	ST. CLAIR
	County Lieutenant	Daniel	MILLIKEN	Thomas	STEELE
Gabriell	HALL	[Illegible]	MILLS	Nich.	STEPHENSON
Robt.	HANCOCK	Robert	MITFORD	Richard	STOKOE
	Capt of HM Ship Sweep[?]	David	MOOR	Robert	STORY
	stationed at Tinmouth	Tho.	MORRISON	George	STROTHER
Geo.	HARBOTTLE	Andrew	NEILL	Richard	STROTHER
George	HARDY[?]	Thomas	NEWTON		Chamberlaine of Alnwick
Ralph	HARRISON	Mark	OGLE	Robert	STROTHER
Rob...[?]	HARRISON	Edward	OGLE	John	STROTHER
J.	HARRISON Jr.	Fran[?]	OGLE	Joseph	SWADDELL
Rich.	HARRISON[?]	John	ORDE	S.	SWINBURN
Robt.	HEBBURN[?]	Wm.	PARLESTON[?]	Henry	SWINHOE
Thomas	HEDLEY	Henry	PASTON[?]	Matthew	TAYLOR
Robert	HEDLY	Richard	PEARES	Ricd.	TAYLOR
W.	HERON	William	PEARSON	William	TAYLOR
Wm.	HIND	Gideon	POTTS	Richard	TAYLOR
Luke	HINDMARSH	William	POTTS	Will.	TAYLOR
Ro.	HOMBLETON	William	POTTS	Sam.	TEASDALE
Jno.	HORSELY	Edward	POTTS	Thomas	THOMPSON
Cha.	HOWARD	William	POTTS	Hen.	THOMPSON
John	HOWSON[?]	Bartholomew	POTTS	Natnael	THOMPSON
Thom.	HUBBOCKE	Robert	POTTS	Edward	THOMPSON
Thomas	HUDSON	John	PROCTER	Mark	THOMPSON
Henry Jnr.	HUDSON	Thomas	PROCTER	George	THOMPSON
Mich.	HUDSON	Edw.	PROCTOR	George	THUNER[?]
	Opfficer of the Garrison	Wm.	PUNSHON	John	TODD
John	HUMBLE	William	PYE	Tho.	TOLL[?]
Jo.	HUMBLE	Francis[?]	PYE	John	TRUEHITT[?]
John	HUNTER	Jno.	RAYNOLDSON	Tho.	TURNBULL
John	HUNTER	Gawen	READHEAD	[Illegible]	TURNER
Wm.	HUNTLEY	John	REED	John	USHER[?]
John	HUTCHINSON	Robert	REED	Tho.	VARDY
John	HUTSON	Ralph	RENNOLDSON		Chamberlaine of Alnwick
Ed.	HUTTON	William	RICHARDSON	Henry	VILLIERS
Joseph	JACKSON	George	RICHARDSON[?]		County Lieutenant
John	JAMISON	John	ROBESON	Robert	WALKER
Ra.	JENISON	Will.	ROBINSON	Tho.	WARDHAUGH
Edmund	JOBSON	Robert	ROBINSON	Cuth.	WATSON
John	JOHNSON	Edward	ROBSON	Ra.	WATSON
John	JONES	George	ROBSON	John	WATSON
John	KEENLY[?]	Edw.	RODDAM	John	WEDDELL
	Chamberlaine of Alnwick	Thomas	ROGERS	Will	WELLDON
Saml	KELL	Robert	ROGERS	Robert	WELTON
Thomas	KIDD	Wm	SANDERSON	Jno.	WHITE
Lancelot	L...[?]	Tho.	SANDERSON	William	WHITEHEAD
Matthew	LADLER	Tho.	SCOTT	John	WHITFIELD
Hen.	LAMBTON	James	SCOTT	John	WILKINSON
Geo.	LAWSON	Matt.	SCOTT	Ralph	WILLIMSON[?]
William	LIDDELL	Robert	SEDRON[?]	John	WILSON
Tho.	LINDSAY	Robert	SHAFTO	Roger	WILSON[?]
Wm.	LOCKE		High Shirrife	Andrew	WOOD
	Baliff of Alnwick	...m[?]	SHAFTOE	Tho.	WOODHOUSE
Jno.	LOMAX	Tho.	SHAFTOE[?]	Robert	WOODMAN
Wm.	LORAIN	Tho	SHARPE	John	WOODROFE
Jeremy	LOWD	Edw.	SHIDEY[?]	George	WOODRUFF
John	LUMLEY	Thomas	SINGLETON		Baliffe of Morpeth
William	MAJOR	Rob.	SISTERSON	John	WRETE[?]

JOSEPH SKIPSEY: THE PITMAN POET

by Jim Skipsey

At the outset I have to admit that there is only a tenuous link between me and the ancestor I am going to describe. His grandfather and my great-great-great-grandfather were brothers. Both were sons of William Skipsey and Mary Morris who married in Lamesley in 1756⁽¹⁾. Cuthbert, Joseph's grandfather, was baptised in Lamesley in 1769⁽²⁾ and my direct ancestor was baptised in Newburn in 1774⁽³⁾. Cuthbert was married in 1790⁽⁴⁾ to Hannah Wanless at Wallsend; the couple had three children, all boys, the second being Cuthbert, Joseph's father. To understand Joseph's background and development, it is necessary to say something of the life and times of his father.

Cuthbert was a coalminer, as were many of the male members of his family, and he worked in the mines from around 1800 until his death in 1832. This covers a period when conditions in the coalmines were appalling. For 14 to 16 hours a day children of six and seven years of age had to work in the dark and noisy mines. Women of all ages often worked with them in narrow seams, at times on their hands and knees, dragging small trucks of coal to which they were fastened by girdles and chains. Because of this situation there was great unrest in the coal fields. In 1825 an Act was passed repealing all the statutes then in force against combination, the term used when workmen formed Trade Unions and held peaceable meetings with the object of increasing wages. Up to that time Trade Unions were not legalised and a combination of workmen to bring about a strike was seriously punished as a criminal conspiracy. In 1826 the Act was repealed and partially re-enacted. The industrial war continued and large scale disputes and strikes broke out in the coalfields over the period 1831 to 1832 and again in 1844.

Things were probably at their worst when Joseph Skipsey was born in Percy Main on 17th March 1832. He was the youngest of eight children and was only four months old when his father was killed by a Special Constable, George Weddell. Special Constables were not policemen in the ordinary sense but were employed by the coal owners as the following extract from a newspaper article of the time (19th April 1832) explains: "*The Owners of Hetton Colliery have obtained from the Secretary of State for the Home Department, an efficient Police Force, for the protection of the persons and property of the well disposed workmen who may remain upon the colliery as well as of those who may be brought from other places. and also for the suppression of the riotous and disorderly proceedings which have recently so disgraced the township - Hetton Colliery Office*"⁽⁵⁾

The following extract⁽⁶⁾, published in the *Tyne Mercury* on 28th April 1832, puts forward the miners' case after the Coal Owners had refused to meet the miners' representatives: *Address from the Pitmen of Tyne and*

Wear. Our six requests are as follows: 1) Not to be turned out of our Houses at the Expiration of our Hiring, according to our Bond, but to let the Law have its regular process. 2) We wish to have Eleven Days per Fortnight, at 3 shillings per Day which will leave about 26 shillings after every deduction. 3) The Time of working to be henceforth 12 hours per Day. 4) Fines for laid-out corves to be only the Loss of the Price of the Corf; and corves deficient in Measure to be set out at the crane. 5) Corves to be adjusted when thought to be too large. 6) The annual binding to be at the usual time.

The Owners proposed ten days per fortnight and wanted the miners to forfeit the full price of a corf which contained more than 2 quarts of foul coal, flint or stone instead of a fine of threepence per corf which had been the previous practice. There had been reports during 1832 of 60 men who had been turned out of their homes and had their names circulated to all collieries because they were associated with the Pitmen's Union. On 18th May 1831 in an article in the *Tyne Mercury*⁽⁷⁾ the pitmen claimed that: "*the owners had 1) threatened to starve us, 2) sworn in Special Constables to intimidate us, 3) called in the Yeomanry Cavalry, troops both foot and horse from various parts of the kingdom and some Naval Force*". The same article describes Percy Main as: "*the Military station of the Owner's campaign where no less than eight families, with their furniture, have been turned to the door, and are there lying exposed to every intruder*"

Cuthbert Skipsey, Joseph's father, an overman at Percy Main Colliery, was said to have had much influence with the pitmen. On the evening of Sunday 8th July 1832, there was a disturbance outside the Pineapple Inn in Chirton. Cuthbert Skipsey was said to have stepped between George Weddell, the Constable, and the man he was bullying, and in the ensuing scuffle Cuthbert was shot dead.

At the Coroner's Inquest reported in the *Newcastle Courant*⁽⁸⁾ 14th July at the Rose Inn, Willington, a surgeon of Howdon, reported that Cuthbert had 21 wounds to the breast. George Weddell was tried at Northumberland Assizes on 3rd August 1832⁽⁹⁾, with many disturbances in the court. George Weddell was found guilty of manslaughter, the jury recommended mercy, and the judge imposed a sentence of 6 months imprisonment with hard labour.

The *Tyne Mercury* of 17th July 1832 reported⁽¹⁰⁾ Cuthbert's burial at North Shields: "*His funeral was attended by upwards of 1000 of his fellow workmen. We understand that Cuthbert Skipsey was an industrious, inoffensive man, working at Percy Main Colliery and was much respected in his situation. He has left a widow and 8 children to lament the unhappy catastrophe*"

Joseph started work at Percy Main in 1839 at the age of seven. In an interview given in the *Birmingham Weekly Mercury* on 20th July 1889⁽¹¹⁾ he described his introduction to coalmining: "At seven I became a trapper boy. I sat all day by a door used for the ventilation of one of the passages of the mine, opening it and closing it as the trams and trollies went through. That was when I taught myself to write. Mostly I sat in the darkness of the mine, but sometimes I had a piece of candle, which I struck against the wall with a bit of clay. At such happy seasons I amused myself by drawing figures upon the trapdoor and by trying to write words".

He had no schooling and spent 16 hours a day in the dark. Conditions improved after the 1844 miners strike, although at home "it was nettle broth for supper, with a slice of bread on lucky days". Joseph acquired his first books, the Bible, Pope's *Iliad* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, from an uncle when he was fifteen. He walked from Percy Main to Newcastle each Sunday, and made the acquaintance of a bookseller called Turner who introduced him to the works of Shakespeare, beginning with *The Tempest*.

In 1852, at the age of 20, Joseph left Percy Main and walked to London, where he got a job as a labourer on the construction of a railway line. He stayed in the East End of London in a boarding house where he became friendly with the landlady's daughter Sarah Ann Fendley who he was to marry later in 1868. In 1854 Joseph and Sarah travelled north to Coatbridge in Scotland where for six months he was a hewer in the colliery. They then travelled back to the north east of England where Joseph was employed at Pemberton Colliery, near Sunderland. They tried to set up a village school in the area during 1855, but they gave up after a few months. Joseph worked at Choppington Colliery, Northumberland in 1856 as a hewer and then moved on to Bedlington in 1858. During that year a Mr Proctor of Durham published a small book of poems by Joseph entitled "*Lyrics by J.S., a Coal Miner*". On the 17 July 1858 the following letter to the Editor appeared in the columns of the *Gateshead Observer*⁽¹²⁾: "Dear Sir, Since the publication, through Mr Proctor of Durham of my little book, entitled '*Lyrics by J.S., a Coal-Miner*', I have been blamed by certain gentlemen (yourself among the number) for not attaching my name in full to it, and fully convinced of the error of judgement I have committed, I embrace the first opportunity to make known to the public, by your kind indulgence, that the name of the '*Pitman Poet*' in full is Joseph Skipsey, son of Cuthbert Skipsey who was shot dead by a constable during the great pitmen's strike of 1832, at Chirton near North Shields, leaving a wife and eight little ones, the youngest of whom was, Your obliged servant, Joseph Skipsey, Gilesgate Moor, Durham, July 14th 1858"

As a result Joseph met the editor of the *Gateshead Observer*, James Clepham, and it was he who advised Joseph to apply for a job as under-storekeeper at Gateshead Iron Works, owned by Hawks Crawshaw and Sons⁽¹³⁾.

The 1861 Census⁽¹⁴⁾ shows that the Skipsey family was living at 3 Hawks Cottages, Saltmeadows, Gateshead East.

With Joseph and Sarah was their son Cuthbert, aged six, and their daughter Elizabeth, aged one. Another son, William, had been killed in the previous year.

In 1862 Joseph published a book of "*Poems, Songs and Ballads*". This was the year of the Hartley Pit Disaster, an event reported across the nation. Joseph wrote a poem called "*The Hartley Calamity*", and toured Miners' Institutes in Northumberland and Durham giving poetry readings in order to raise funds for the relatives of the victims. One of his readings was heard by Robert Spence Watson of Bensham, a young Newcastle solicitor and Quaker, who was in the habit of inviting famous people to dinner at his home, and he started to include Joseph on his guest list. At these dinners Joseph met, and became friendly with, Thomas Dixon a Sunderland artist, and through him met the poet John Ruskin. In 1864 Spence Watson was able to get Joseph a job as assistant librarian at the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society, but he spent more time reading the books than looking after the members, and as the salary was not large enough to bring up his growing family, he went back to the mines after a few months.

In 1864 Joseph produced another book, entitled "*The Collier Lad and other Lyrics*" which received national acclaim. The first verse and chorus gives an idea of Joseph's work: "My lad he is a Collier Lad, And ere the lark awakes, He's up and away to spend the day, Where daylight never breaks; But when at last the day has pass'd, Clean washed and cleanly clad, He courts his Nell who loveth well, Her handsome Collier Lad. Chorus: There's not his match in smoky Shields Newcastle never had A lad more tight, nor trim, nor bright Than is my Collier Lad."

Joseph married Sarah Fendley at Tynemouth, Christ Church on 21st December 1868⁽¹⁵⁾. By this time Sarah had given birth to six children. Cuthbert (who died in October 1868); William (who was killed), Elizabeth. Harriet (who died in October 1868), James Clepham (who died in 1866) and Emma (who died in October 1868). So when they married, five of their six children had died, three of them just two months before the marriage when they were living in Newsham, Blyth. Joseph seems to have made no mention of this personal tragedy in his writings or correspondence.

The 1871 Census⁽¹⁶⁾ shows Joseph and Sarah living in Brick Row, North Newsham, South Blyth with their daughter Elizabeth, aged 11, and Joseph, aged one. Their last child, Cuthbert, was born in 1872. During the next few years Joseph worked in Blyth, Ashington and Backworth Collieries as a hewer. He still found time to write, and in 1871 produced a small volume entitled "*Poems*". Another book "*A Book of Miscellaneous Lyrics*" appeared in 1878. In 1880 the Prime Minister Gladstone granted Joseph an annuity of £10 a year from the Royal Bounty and this was later raised to £25 in 1880. Joseph continued to work down the mines, although his friend Thomas Dixon did persuade him to visit London, where he was introduced to many of the literary giants of the time, including Rossetti who compared Joseph's poetry to that of William Blake, but before long he was back working at Backworth.

In the 1881 Census⁽¹⁷⁾ he is living at 20 Northumberland Terrace, Backworth with Sarah, Joseph (11) and Cuthbert (8). In that year he published "*A Book of Lyrics, including Songs, Ballads and Chants*". He finally left the pits in 1882 when he was appointed, with his wife, as caretaker of the Bentinck Board School in Mill Lane, Newcastle. The Log Book from the school is available⁽¹⁸⁾ but the only mention of Joseph is dated 16th June 1884 when he was invigilator at a drawing examination. In 1883 he delivered a lecture to the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society entitled "*The Poet as Seer and Singer*" and he was then given honorary membership, as a postcard held in Newcastle Central Library shows⁽¹⁹⁾: *Literary and Philosophical Society Newcastle upon Tyne, February 6th 1883, Mr Joseph Skipsey. Dear Sir, It affords us great pleasure to inform you that you were elected an honorary member of the above society with privilege, this evening. Yours very truly, Robert Spence Watson Hon. Sec.*

Throughout the early 1880's the publishing house of Walter Scott at Felling was producing edited selections of poems by Coleridge, Shelley, Burns, Blake, Poe and other poets. Joseph was appointed as Editor because of his reputation as an expert on English Literature. He wrote biographical and critical introductory notices for the editions concerning the five writers mentioned above. In 1888 he became a porter at the newly founded Armstrong College, now the University of Newcastle. In his book on Joseph Skipsey, Robert Spence Watson relates how he, Spence Watson, was showing Lord Carlisle around the new building: "*As we went along the great corridor, Skipsey, bending beneath the weight of two coalscuttles of considerable dimensions, met us. He at once pulled up, and Lord Carlisle, recognising him, took him by the hand. We had a long talk but I saw from that time that it was quite impossible to have a College where the scientific men came to see the principal and the artistic and literary men came to see the porter.*"

In 1889 Joseph was appointed to the post of Custodian of Shakespeare's house at Stratford upon Avon, letters of support being supplied by Browning, Tennyson, Burne Jones, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Lord Carlisle, Bram Stoker, Thomas Burt, William Morris, Oscar Wilde and many others. However, the Skipseys did not take root in Stratford. They missed their children and Joseph did not like having to conduct parties over the house many times a day, especially the American groups who could not understand his strong Northumbrian accent. After a few months he resigned and returned home to the North.

During their remaining years Joseph and Sarah lived with their children in Gateshead. Joseph had always been greatly interested in Spiritualism, and he now devoted considerable time to it. He even claimed to have clairvoyant powers. In 1886 he visited the Lake District with Spence Watson, his first real holiday, and wrote poems on the experiences and the beauties of nature. He returned again in 1892. Around this time he made friends with a young Australian couple, Mr and Mrs J.R. Wood. They owned a yacht and persuaded Joseph to make a voyage to Norway with them; another great experience which led him to produce more poems.

Otherwise he and his wife lived quietly and happily with their sons until August 1902 when Sarah died at 243 Eastbourne Avenue, Saltwell, Gateshead. Joseph then moved to live with his son Cuthbert at 5 Kells Gardens, Low Fell, Gateshead where he died 3rd September 1903 aged 71. He was buried in Gateshead East Cemetery.

The life of this serious and rather humourless man, who managed for many years to be a pitman and poet, is probably best summed up in an obituary produced by a J. Wight Duff in a publication produced by the Pen and Palette Club of Northumberland⁽²⁰⁾ in December 1903. "*Death has not only further invaded the club membership - it has carried off one of the most honoured of the honorary members. Joseph Skipsey was one of those men of whom Tyneside and Northumberland may well be proud. It was much to be "the Pitmen's Poet" and to sing, as no one else has done, of the pathos of much that is in the miner's life. Many of his lyrics of course must live with the language; but Skipsey was not simply and solely a poet. He was a really admirable literary critic and conversationalist. To engage him in talk on some literary topic was to learn the genuine depth of feeling and the absolute honesty of the man's heart. If one stated such a theme as Coleridge's poems, or his own experiences as custodian of Shakespeare's House at Stratford, one discovered a marvellous wealth of appreciative faculty and reminiscence. It was a grief to many members that weak health prevented Skipsey from coming often to the club to enliven its gatherings with his noble personality and gentle frankness; but all must agree that the club, when it enrolled his name in its list of Honorary Members, did itself as much honour as it did the poet.*"

So, a truly remarkable man, who started with nothing, who had little education and who eventually conversed with some of the most important men of art and literature in the country yet very little seems to be known about him in his native North East.

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Editor's note: Mr Skipsey's address is 97 Hampton Road, Marden, North Shields, Tyne & Wear NE30 3HQ

WHO ROBBED THE NESTS AT WITTON GILBERT? A Look At A Parish Magazine

This is a "book review" -- but one with a difference! For a start, you won't be able to stroll into a bookshop and buy it, because the publication was in the 1890's and early 1900's. -- and there has been no recent reprint!

I am talking about the *Witton Gilbert Monthly Magazine*, also known as the *Witton Gilbert and Kimblesworth Parish Magazine*. Yes, it is a church magazine and, like many of its kind, it was issued along with a national contemporary, variously called the *Church and Home Magazine*, *The Evangelists Monthly*, the *Illustrated Parish Magazine for Old and Young*, and so on

The multi-titled national monthlies had a surprisingly wide variety of articles. Naturally, there is a religious slant to many of them, but we also find titles like "A Talk with Cyclists", "Distant Suns", "The World of Snakes", "Frying" ("*The frying pan, in many a poverty stricken household, is the only cooking utensil, the only one suitable to the open range they possess.*") and "The Folly of Tight Lacing" ("*small waists are distinctly not beautiful. Beauty is incompatible with disproportion*").

However, it is the monthly addendum to this which is of most interest to us as local and family historians. It was small, usually only one or two pages, made into three or four by adding a cover with a picture and a page of advertisements. I am not going to claim it will solve many of your problems, even if your ancestors came from the village of Witton Gilbert, a few miles west of Durham. But it does give an insight into some aspects of the social and religious life of a typical Durham village at the turn of the century and, who knows, your forebear might have won a mention, even if only in a "name list", as hundreds did.

On 2nd February 1889, the Reverend Arthur Watts, Vice-Principal of Bede College, Durham, was elected Rector of

Witton Gilbert and Kimblesworth, and clearly he was the inspiration behind the publication of the magazine.

The first issue sets the pattern for the next fifteen years, the years I have looked at, with details of the services for March 1889, a list of the confirmation classes, and details of the baptisms, marriages, burials and churchings in the previous month. "*Our magazine is well and truly afloat. The 150 copies printed were all gone in a few days*" says Rev. Watts in the second issue and we are told that Mrs Bentley and Mr John Wilson distributed them in Witton and Mr David Wright, Mrs Bamlett and Miss Carr in Kimblesworth.

The third issue reported the untidy state of the churchyard; the fourth commiserated with the parents of 23 year old R.B. Turnbull, first officer of the *Altmore*, drowned in a wreck near Fiji, and lists 22 females and 36 males from the two villages who had been confirmed. We learn of the successes of the Church Cricket Club and that a Tennis Club had been formed, using the Vicarage lawn every Saturday. There were Flower Shows and a reminder of ever present danger, a death from a fall of stone in a mine.

In February 1890, the first in a lengthy series on "*Old Witton*" or "*A History Our Village*" was published. We learn that the "Gilbert" bit probably springs from a Norman count of Beamish and Witton, Gilbert de la Ley, and that "*the local pronunciation, Jilbert, is doubtless historic and therefore should be preserved*", as indeed it has been.

In June 1890, the Rector and 26 of his choir left Witton Station at 5.30 a.m. -- there was a railway in those days! -- reached Scarborough about 9.30 and got back to Witton about 10 p.m. "*tired but delighted after bathing, boating, riding and driving, the postilion driving being usually favoured.*" On the same day, 81 children sat down to tea at

the Kimblesworth Sunday School Treat, "depriving many of a share in the pleasures of the day at Scarborough."

And so it goes on, with the core being the Rector's Letter, with regular updates on the Choir, the Sunday School and the Band of Hope. On Royal Wedding Day in 1893 "1200 young and old enjoyed a good tea", and the Schools Inspector reported that "the teaching of numbers should be more systematic."

Occasionally, Mr Watts allows himself a note of pride, as when his youngest son won a scholarship to Cambridge, or rejoices at the wedding of a daughter to another clergyman in 1901.

Sometimes he chastises his flock. We are left to wonder "who is the wicked one who put in [to the Poor Box] three unused matches? A penny dropt in and falling on the red end of the match would be enough to fire the box ... then the pews ... then the church."



St Michael's & All Angels, Witton Gilbert

Whilst delighted to "welcome the rooks to the Dene", our Rector regretted that "three young men have gone to the trees with direct intent to despoil the nests." His strictures had little effect; 4 of the 5 nests were cruelly robbed. "There is reason to think that the actual theft was committed by boys from Bearpark, but the worst feature is that those in Witton who know the culprits are shielding them."

He rails against the children who missed Sunday School and in 1903 comments that "if the boy is not at Church in the afternoon, he is rarely at home, but is down by the River Browney, hearing bad talk, and looking on wickedness and being tempted into mischief."

He mourns the death of Queen Victoria, he rejoices at the Coronation of her son as King ("every child between 3 and 4, resident in the parish, was presented with a Coronation Mug"), and he lists the Witton lads "who have been to the Boer War", giving thanks for their return.

Among the advertisements, I noted that at one period, eleven firms appeared regularly, of which five, almost half, were for undertakers. John Lowes & Son of Gilesgate in Durham had ready for prompt delivery "One Hundred Headstones from £3 up to £60 each." No doubt they were kept busy -- the Rector comments that deaths usually averaged about three per month and a glance at the lists tends to suggest a very large proportion of infants and children among them. However, you will look in vain for comment on poverty, on the state of housing, on conditions of labour in the collieries or the social conditions of the miners who formed most of the working population of the area.

If you know that an ancestor lived in Witton or at Kimblesworth, it might be worth looking at these century-old pages. Births, marriages and deaths will probably be found more easily in the GRO Indexes than among the baptisms and burials printed here, but the many other lists of people involved in Church events or social activities are useful and might yield a clue about their lives.

The run is almost complete date from 1889 to the present and I managed to examine some 15 years of them. The volumes are shortly to be deposited in Durham County Record Office who will doubtless soon have them available for search. Photocopies of the 10 years from 1895 to 1905 have been made and are in the NDFHS Library at Bolbec Hall in Newcastle. Let us know of your successes!

Editor's note: We must thank John and Eileen Perkins for drawing our attention to this fascinating source of historical information. I'm sure that the Parish Magazine of Witton Gilbert is not unique. Do you know of others in our area that are available?

A Short Extract From Witton Gilbert Parish Magazine

The following are the Witton lads who have been to the Boer War:- Sergt. Wm. Sones, September, 1899, to September, 1902, mentioned in despatches, scratched; Pte. Jno. Turnbull, October, 1899, to September, 1902, down with fever, scratched; Pte. Robert Hardiman, 1899 to October, 1902, bullet wound in arm, fever; Trooper Jno. Andrew Beattie, volunteered twice, March, 1900 to June, 1901, April 1902 to present time, taken prisoner; Pte. Taylor Laidler, May, 1900, to present time; Pte. Harry Roberts, May, 1900, to present time, shot through helmet; Pte. Thos. Robson, Sudders, May, 1901, to present time, down with fever; Pte. Jos. Gott, May, 1901, now in, India,

MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND QUERIES

This section of the Journal is to allow members to advertise their interests and to seek help from other members with their problems and queries. We will also publish any offers of help from people with specialist knowledge or information, or who are prepared to do searches for fellow members in their local record offices, libraries, etc.

Items for the column can be sent to Phil Thirkell, 100 Stuart Court, Kingston Park, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 2SG, or via email address: 106146.2460@compuserve.com

If you wish to have your interests or any queries published, send a paragraph outlining your areas of research, problems etc. to Phil Thirkell at the above address by 31st March. Please include your membership number with any correspondence and print names to avoid errors.

There is no restriction on how often you may submit items but please try to be brief, as, the shorter the items, the more we can print.

Please note that it is hoped that, as a matter of courtesy, members will acknowledge any communication they receive as a result of their entry in this column.

0216 Mrs A. FAWCETT, Lakeside, Baumber, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 5NW

Researching the family name **GAIRE, GARE, GAYER**. Particularly interested in John Gare, collier in the Felling area who married Margaret; children: Matthew (1818), James (1819), George (1822), Robert (1826) and Elizabeth (1828) baptised at St Mary's, Gateshead. Seeking links with the family of George Gair born 1822 at Denwick who married Mary **COCKBURN**. Their children, born Alnwick: William (1844), Caroline Ann (1846), George (1849), Elizabeth (1850), Roger (1853) and Mary (1856). In the 1870s the family moved to Witton Gilbert, Co.Durham. Mary Cockburn's father was a Dragoon in the 3rd Kings Own Regiment and was married in Lincolnshire in 1806 but the family later settled in the Alnwick area. Another family member Richard **MELBORN**, or **MILBURN**, was a private in the Royal North Lincolnshire Militia stationed at Alnwick where he married Isabella **FISH**. They later had two sons, Richard and William baptised at Lesbury. Would welcome information on the two regiments.

0861 ELEANOR B. ROBINSON-DUFFY, 8314 La Riviera Drive, Sacramento, California 95826, U.S.A.
(email: ebeckrob@jps.net)

Searching for information on her **ROBINSON** line of Sunderland. Thomas Robinson of Monkwearmouth Shore, born 1787, married 1811 to Ann **LOWES**. One known son was Thomas, born 1811, married 1881 to Mary **TOLLINGTON**.

0924 Mrs W.J. HELLENS, 8 Westcroft Road, Forest Hall, Newcastle upon Tyne NE12 9JS

Seeking the birth of Adam **CARR** c1735. When he married at Longbenton, his parish was given as Woodhorn, father probably Andrew. Also the marriage of Caleb Carr to Mary **VARDY** c1795; birth of James **MOORHEAD** c1765 Newburn/Ryton area; birth of Thomas **HESLOP** c1816, given as North Shields on census; birth of John **SHIEL (SHEEL)** c1738 Embleton/Ellingham area; birth of Thomas **HUNTER** c1814, given as Heworth on census. Does anyone have information on William Edward **ROBSON**, clockmaker 1821-71(?). Information available on Carr, Marley, Moorhead, Heslop, Hellens, Sheel, Hunter and Welford.

1185 CAROL KNAPP, 3114 N. Peoria Avenue, Peoria, Illinois 61603, U.S.A.

Searching for John **WARDELL (WARDLE)** family of Wrekenton in 1845. His sister, Mary **COOK** nee Wardell (1769-1839) was buried with her husband William and two children at St Michael & All Angels, Esh. The father of John and Mary Wardell was Michael, a native of Tanfield living at Kyo near Lanchester.

1234 Mrs E. HARTMAN, 106 High Street, Hinderwell, North Yorkshire TS13 5ES

Seeking: 1) Parents of Mary **VEST** born c1782. She had an illegitimate son William, baptised 1825, to John - John who? Mary later married Robinson **MORPETH** at Newcastle 1827, children: Mary (1828), Sarah (1830), Tom (1832?), Jane (1832), Margaret (1834) and Nicholas (1837). 2) Marriage of Peter **LOCK** and Emily **PRESSLEY**, possibly in the north east, or Portsea Island area. Son Thomas Peter was born 1862 at Portsea.

1491 Mrs ANN BROOKER, 1 Westview, Embleton, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 2XZ

Information required about the ancestors and descendants of Thomas **SOCKETT**, son of Arthur, who married Ann **WAKE** 1889, aged 27, in Byker. Arthur was deceased by 1889. Also: 1) Birth of Ellen **BURNS** c1864 and her marriage to Robert **DAVIDSON** pre-1885. Ellen believed to have died 1899 in the Lanchester RD aged 35. 2) Birth c1863 of Robert Davidson, possibly South Moor, Stanley or Quaking Houses area. 3) Marriage of William **POTTS** to Ann **SPOORS** after c1787, and the births of three sons pre-1802.

2157 Mrs MARJORIE BALL, 24 Langford Drive, Cotswolds Estate, Boldon Colliery, Tyne & Wear NE35 9LJ
(email: Margeball@aol.com)

Researching: **ANDERSON** of Durham and **HANKING** of Haltwhistle. John Roland Anderson born Durham 1910 - son of John William Anderson born Brandon, Co.Durham. John Roland's grandfather John Coates Anderson (married Sarah Elizabeth **MIDDLETON** 1883 Durham) was born 1861 (possibly

Burnt Island, Fife, Scotland). Jane Hanking was born 1910 - daughter of Thomas William Hanking who was born 1865 Haltwhistle. Her grandfather Edward William Hanking was also born Haltwhistle 1837. Her mother Harriet **DENT** believed to have been born in Birmingham. I would like to hear from anyone who is interested in any of these names.

2931 ELIZABETH CAMPBELL, 118 New Road, Middlestown, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF4 4NU

Seeking the marriage of Thomas **BLENKINSOP** to Mary, known children: Mary (1777), Sarah (1779), Thomas (1782), Elizabeth (1784), Jane (1785) and George (1788), all baptised at Appleton Wiske, North Yorkshire. Mary died 1791 and Thomas married Anne **WOOD** in 1797, also at Appleton Wiske, and further children. Have searched several parishes in Yorkshire but believe my ancestors may be from Northumberland.

2964 Mrs D.C. WHITAKER (nee **JOHNSON**), 2 Chesterton Avenue, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 3RL

Seeking the marriage of Thomas **STORER** and Elizabeth **SLATER**. Thomas, son of Thomas and Isabel Storer, was a mariner, born 1757 Rothbury; Elizabeth was a native of Liverpool. Also siblings of their second son Jonathan, born 1783 and baptised at Gateshead in 1787. He was a master mariner and married Mary **COLLINS** in 1824 at Tynemouth. Their children were: Thomas Collins, Mary Elizabeth and Henrietta, all born North Shields.

3166 TOM HAYWARD, 26 Lilydale Grove, East Hawthorn, Victoria 3123, Australia

Interested in the **RIDLEY** family of the Acomb and Hexham areas. Thomas Ridley was born c1871 at Acomb Mill which the family is believed to have owned with a field at Acomb and property in Allendale. These holdings were sold in 1948 after the death of William Ridley in 1947. Would like to hear from anyone with knowledge of Acomb Mill. Is there a local history society in the Hexham area?

[Editor's note: Hexham LHS - Secretary, Mollie Telford, Dilstone, Burswell Villas, Hexham NE46 1SX. There is also an Acomb LHS. For the Secretary's address, contact the Association of Northumberland Local History Societies, c/c Centre for Continuing Education, University of Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU.]

3294 Mr M.J. MILLER, Sunnyside Cottage, Moorhouse, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 6LX

Seeking the parents of Ann **PRATT** born c1789 Lambton, Co.Durham; the parents of George **MILLER** and Jane **McLISH** who married at Gosforth and lived at Newburn. James **FORSTER** married Mary **CHARLTON** 1797 at Lanchester; who were their parents? John(?) **ROBINSON** married Mary **WARDELL** 1760 at Tanfield; nothing else is known about Mary.

3604 GORDON DAGLISH, 95 Hilda Park, Chester-le-Street, Co.Durham DH2 2JS

Seeking the birth of Joseph **DAGLISH** c1796 and his marriage to Ellen (Eleanor), both born Gateshead according to census. Their

son Nicholas, born 1821 has a Mary aged 5 with him on the 1841 Census but the only birth found was to Reuben Daglish and Jane **DAVISON** who married 1819 at St John's, Newcastle. Could Joseph and Reuben be brothers? Reuben and Jane used **TAYLOR** as a middle name for two of their children suggesting that Reuben could be the son of James and Susannah Taylor but no evidence has been found. The IGI records a Joseph born to James and Susannah, baptised 1797 Gateshead but there is another Joseph born to James and Susannah Taylor, baptised 1800. Would appreciate any comments.

4099 Miss YVONNE FENWICK, By the Wye, Aberedw, Nr. Builth Wells, Powys LD2 3UH

Looking for descendants of Margaret **FENWICK** born 1849, daughter of Robertson Fenwick. Margaret (Meg) married **SMITH** (Robert?), had three sons - Robert, Jim and George (no birth dates) - and died 1924 Ashington.

4519 Mrs F.A.EASSON, 4 Monkridge, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE26 3EQ

Seeking information on the **THOMPSON** families of Warkworth, especially descendants of Robert Thompson and Ann **VARDY**, married 1781; children included: Mary (1782), Robert (1785), Ralph (1787), Charles (1789), John (1791), George (1795) and Ann (1798). The children were born at Morwick but most lived in the Birling area of Warkworth. Also looking for descendants of Thomas **GRAY** and Isabella Thompson, married St John's, Newcastle 1850; children: Deborah (1854), Joseph B. (1856), Frances Jane (1859), Rachael A. (1861), Isabella (1863), Mary A. (1865), Ralph T. (1867) and Thomas (1869).

4903 PATRICIA SCOTT, 27 Shaftesbury Avenue, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE26 3TD

Seeking information on Charles William **BOWE(S)**, born Sutherland Street, Gateshead 1894 and married Elizabeth **BROOMFIELD** at Christ Church, Gateshead in 1914. His parents were Joseph William and Mary Elizabeth Bowe(s) nee **GIBSON**. Charles had two brothers, John and George and a sister Adelaide. Adelaide believed to have married and moved to Stanley, Co.Durham. Any information would be appreciated.

5844 Mrs MARGARET LIDDELL, 44 Inverewe Gardens, Deaconsbank, Glasgow G46 8TJ

Researching paternal forebears: Thomas **HASTINGS** believed to have arrived in Berwick upon Tweed from Ireland (part unknown) c1846/47 to work on Royal Border Bridge. Married Jane **TAIT** who was connected by marriage to **SHAW**. Son Anthony born 1851 married Mary Ann **YOUNGER**. My father John Younger Hastings, born 1882, son of Anthony had a sister Elizabeth who married: 1) William **RAILTON** 2) Thomas **MAXWELL**; there was also a cousin? Ernest **SHAW**. Would appreciate information on any connections to these names.

5854 SHEILA SMITH, 6 Manor Place, Benton, Newcastle upon Tyne NE7 7XR

Looking for any information regarding: 1) Thomas **PEARSON**, born c1746, died 1818 Belford, and his son, also Thomas, born

c1782, died 1840 Belford. 2) Robert **LAING** born 1750, died 1846 Henshaw, Haltwhistle, married Ann **SMITH** 1791 Haltwhistle. 3) Ann **DAVISON** born 1828 Haydon Bridge, daughter of Edward. 4) Edward **COSON** (**COXON**, **COULSON**), married Jane **LAWSON** 1720 at Chollerton. Their daughter Jane married 1751 at Chollerton to Robert **ROBSON**.

5905 Mrs SHEILA POTTS, 1 Osborne Avenue, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3JP

Searching for: 1) Parents of Elizabeth **SPARROW** born c1854, possibly Bishopwearmouth or Hartlepool; father John. She married Thomas **MELDRUM** 1874 Hartlepool. 2) Parents of Sarah **BROWN** born c1827 Sunderland; father Burton Brown, a master pilot. Sarah married Robert Meldrum 1847 Monkwearmouth. 3) Birth and parents of Elizabeth **ROBSON** who married Emmanuel **KELLY** 1873 All Saints, Newcastle; her parents were Joseph and Jane, possibly **REED**. 4) Births and marriage of Robert **SOULSBY** and Mary Ann **ROBINSON**. Their daughter Elizabeth married William **POTTS** 1866 at St John's, Newcastle. Also searching for the Soulsby family in the 1861 Census, possibly Byker.

5943 MARK DOCTOR, 1 Cloverland, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 9ED

Seeking information on John **FARGIE** shipwright of Monkwearmouth. His wife Elizabeth nee **COCKBURN** was buried at St Peter's, Monkwearmouth in 1827 aged 35. Where did John go? Did he remarry? The 1841 Census shows sons William and John living in Southwick and Bishopwearmouth. Also seeking ancestors of Edward **STOREY** of Commercial Road, Byker and Annie **CLARK** of Walker Road, Newcastle who married at Walker in 1917. Their fathers were given as Edward Thew Storey, master mariner, and John Thomas Clark, coal hewer. Also **MCGRAVEY** (Sunderland), **GILLEY** (Southwick) and **FORSTER** (Washington and Monkwearmouth). Offering to do research in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire Record Offices in exchange for research in the north east.

6151 and 6152 Mr I. and Mrs P. PATTERSON, 3 Pool Road, Hadwell, Shrewsbury SY4 4BG

Seeking information regarding William **GIBSON**, son a William, a carrier of Arther's Hill. William, the younger, was a quarryman at the time of his marriage in 1838 to Jane **DOUGLASS**, daughter of Mark Douglas(s), quarryman. The Gibsons had connections in the Farlam area of Cumberland and to the name **CHAPMAN**. Also, looking for information on Thomas Whitfield **ELLIOT(T)** born c1806-9, possibly at Killingworth, son of Thomas and Elizabeth Elliot. By 1851 the family were at Wingate Colliery, Co.Durham.

6181 Mr HUGH WALDIE, Northside Farmhouse, Bickley, Langdale End, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO13 0LL

Seeking descendants and forebears of: 1) Ellen **WALDIE** who married Robert Harry **WILSON**, clockmaker, at St Stephen's, Sunderland 1894. 2) Harriet Waldie married Joseph **GARR**, glass cutter, at the Register Office, Sunderland 1893. The electoral register shows Harriet and Joseph as being in Leeds 1915-1947.

6191 Mrs M.A.COLTMAN, 'Rocklea', 2 Abbotsford Grove, Sunderland SR2 7JS

Seeking information on the descendants of Solomon **EADES** and Jemima **JEAVONS**. Their children: Hannah (married Edward **JOPLING**), Phoebe (married William **STUBBS**), David and Solomon Samuel. Also Sarah Davis Eades, daughter of David and Leah Davis, living with Solomon and Jemima, her uncle and aunt, from c1881 after her parents died. Areas of interest Middlesbrough, West Hartlepool, Gateshead and Sunderland. Any information would be welcome.

6195 Mrs SUSAN HATHAWAY, 70 Stoneclose Avenue, Hexthorpe, Doncaster DN4 0BA

Seeking information on Frank and Ann **BARRASS** and their children Alexander, Edward, William, Christopher, Thomas and Mary, according to the 1891 Census for Old Row, Ashington. Unable to find marriage registration for Frank and Ann. Family sources indicate that Ann was a Red Indian and the census shows her as born in America. Frank was a miner but had connections with the sea when younger where he met Ann. Son Thomas was an active member of the Coal Unions in Northumberland during the 1940s.

6291 ALAN MIDDLEMASS, 11 Auton Stile, Bearpark, Durham, DH7 7AA
(e.mail: alananne@thisisthenortheast.co.uk)

Trying to find **MIDDLEMASS** (and variant spellings) in Northumberland and Durham with a view to identifying those who are not family members as well as claiming missing ancestors. Collecting as much information as possible on various spellings and willing to pass on and receive information about the name from anywhere in the United Kingdom or areas to which the name has been taken by migration.

6422 Mrs D. MILLBAND, 10 Abbey Drive, Abbey Grange, North Walbottle, Newcastle upon Tyne NE5 1QR

Seeking the baptism of William **BENNETT** who died at Winlaton, Co.Durham in 1902 aged 94. Other interests: **KIRSOP(P)** and **BAT(E)Y**, both Tyneside keelmen; **DAVISON** of Haydon Bridge and Shotley; **KNEEBONE**; and, **LOWERY** of Derwentside.

6574 Ms M. COATES, 14 Argyle Place, South Hetton, Co.Durham DH6 2UT

Looking for contacts with descendants of: Annie Sumner **PRENTICE**, born 1896, died Sunderland 1958; parents: Robert Prentice, born 1867, died at sea sometime before 1932, steam ship stoker who married Harriet Jane **NOBLE**, born 1874. Also: 1) Peggy Prentice married John **THIRLWELL**. 2) Annie Prentice married George Henry **SUMNER** 1885. 3) William Savage Prentice married Margaret Agnes **LEAVESLEY** 1895; daughter Mary Ann Stonehouse Prentice, born 1898. 4) William Prentice, born 1830 Ireland, married Mary **STONEHOUSE** 1859. 5) Mary Prentice married Charles **METCALF** 1895. 6) Eliza Prentice married George **WILKINSON** 1904.

6617 NEIL LEVER, "Overdale", Woodside Villas, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 1HX

Researching the name **BYRON**. Especially interested in William Byron, possibly born Stevenston near Ardrossan in Scotland 1822, settled in Hexham.

6678 Miss L. SEVERS, 18 Westwood Gardens, Kenton, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 3DA

Searching for James **CHARLTON** of Kirkwhelpington. He died in 1850 aged 84 years according to his gravestone. Where was he born? Who was his father? Robert **CARNABY**, butcher of Gallowgate, Newcastle, married Christian **ROBSON** 1765. Was his father John or Richard Carnaby, both butchers?

6817 JOHN O'KEEFE, 205 N.Franklin Avenue, Madison, WI 53705, U.S.A. (email: jkeefe@itis.com)

Would like to correspond with anyone with an interest in **PIGG**, **STANTON** or **BURDIS** in the Thockrington, Kirkwhelpington, Hexham or Hetton-le-Hole areas.

6866 DERRICK PARIS, 10 Richmond Place, Sheffield S13 8LP

Seeking information of ancestors who lived in Lemington, Newburn Hall. David **PARIS** married Isabella **COOPER** (**COWPER**) 1803; she died 1805. He then married Elspeth/Elizabeth **TODDERIC** in 1807 and their son David married Elizabeth **HALL** c1847 (no marriage record found). The 1871 Census shows them with four children: John, David, Isabella and Elizabeth A. Newburn Hall not found on the 1861 Census - can anyone help in finding out who lived there?

6990 ANN H. MacKAY, 9 Northfield Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 3UL

Researching Thomas **TURNBULL**, born 1807 Whickham, married Jane **MASON** 1829 at Bedlington, when he was described as an anchor smith. Their daughter Mary Ann, born Bedlington 1833, married James **CLARK**, engineer, born Sunderland 1837. Seeking information about Thomas and Jane between 1833 and 1881 when Thomas was living at James Clark's house in Ryehill, Newcastle. He was described as a widower and retired smith; he died there in 1884.

7008 Ms BETSY PHOENIX, 14411 Riverside Drive 11, Sherman Oaks, California 91423, U.S.A.

Hodgson's *Pedigrees of Families*, vol.5, records the pedigree of Ralph **FENWICK** of Ulgham in which he reports that Frances and Charlotte **DALE** kept up a correspondence with Miss Margaret Fenwick of Ulgham. His notes suggest that he saw these letters; where did he find them? Does anyone know where they might be now?

7068 JULIETTE VARTY nee **PEARSON**, 14 Singleton Avenue, Read, Burnley, Lancashire BB12 7PJ

Seeking information on **HAMILL/ HAMEL/ HAMMILL**, etc, **KERRIGAN**, **GANNON** and **GALLAGHER** of North

Shields/Tynemouth area; **PEARSON** of Corbridge, Hexham and Newcastle; **BAILES** and **BACON** of Bishopwearmouth, Monkwearmouth, Sunderland and Newcastle. Does anyone have information about the telegraphists from the Great Northern Telegraph Company, Newcastle, who were sent to London in WW2 to work for the SOE?

7206 ARTHUR E. WALL, 16 Marika Court, Salisbury East, South Australia 5109, Australia

Seeking information on Eliza **HOULT**, born c1816 South Shields area, married 1938 to Thomas **DOUGLASS**; her father was Robert Houlst, glass maker. Also any information on the **DISTON** family before 1820, stone masons in Durham and Northumberland.

7207 Mr R. HERON, 30 Leafield Crescent, South Shields, Tyne & Wear NE34 6JQ

Seeking information on **JEFFELS** of South Shields. James Jeffels married Sarah Dorothy 1853 at St Hilda's, South Shields. James died in 1864, Sarah in 1870, leaving three children: William (born 1854), Peter Stephen (1857) and James (1862). What happened to the children? James married Mary Jane **FIELD** in 1888 and they had a son George Field Jeffels who married Sarah **DIXON** in 1912.

7349 Mrs D.M. BELL, Hollybush, Laversdale, Irthington, Carlisle CA6 4PJ

Seeking information on William **HARLE**, ships engineer, living Newcastle 1870 and Grangetown 1912; wife Annie, formerly **DIXON**. Also Lily Harle his daughter who lived in Harrogate and at Appleton Hall where she died in 1952. She was a companion to Mrs Fanny **WILSON** of Beauchief Hall near Sheffield. Seeking relatives of William Dixon of Roachburn, Cumbria and later of Portobello, Haltwhistle; married Laure Harle, daughter of the above William, in 1912 and died 1914. William married someone from South Shields, had a daughter, and left for Canada in the 1920s on his own. Also seeking information about John Swan **BIDMEAD**, living in the Newcastle area c1910/12.

7351 Mr E. STOREY, 48 Holbeck Avenue, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO11 2WQ

Seeking information on Thomas **STOREY**, born c1830, mariner of Bishopwearmouth and Seaham Harbour who married Sarah Ann **BURN** 1855, daughter of John Burn, also a mariner. Thomas went to sea in 1845 as an apprentice on board the "Emsworth". Also Thomas Storey, born 1811, mariner of Seaham and/or Sunderland, married 1828 to Margaret **WILSON**, originally from Roxburghshire. Also researching **RITCHIE**, **BLACK** and **WALTON** of Newcastle; Catherine **MALLON** and Michael **McLOUGHLIN** of Bishop Auckland.

7362 PETER SUTHERLAND, 126 Wolviston Road, Billingham, Cleveland TS22 5JP

Seeking census information: 1841 Hannah **PROUD** born 1821 Stanhope; 1851 Dorothy Jane **KENT** born c1836 North Shields, James **HARDY** born c1836 Durham; 1861 James **MOORE** born 1813 Pateley Bridge, Yorkshire, John **SUTHERLAND** born 1845

Clifford, Yorkshire. Also any information on Daniel Sutherland born c1811 Ireland, died 1855 Knaresbro' and his wife, Sarah nee **WALTON** who remarried Joseph **MULVEY**. Does anyone know the whereabouts of the pre-1906 baptism records of the Rise Carr Primitive Methodist Church, Darlington?

7363 JOAN SUTHERLAND, 126 Wolviston Road, Billingham, Cleveland TS22 5JP

Any information on the whereabouts of Richard **LUMLEY** born 1813 Tanfield. His first marriage in 1837 at Bishopwearmouth was to Hannah **SEWILL**. His second marriage to Margaret **SOUTHREN** 1841 Pensher Chapel, Co.Durham. Recorded at daughter Margaret Jane's baptism at Lanchester in 1847 as joiner and then at son's wedding at Chester-le-Street in 1867 when Thomas Southren Lumley married Eleanor **HEDLEY** and Richard was described as a shipwright. Where was he in the intervening 20 years?

7405 Mrs JACKY KENNEDY, 22 West Lodge Crescent, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD2 2EH

Seeking photographs or copies of the Wallsend area c1920-40 especially Turners Terrace, Wanless Street, Crawley Road and High Street from Duke of York end. Also Ravensworth Street and Rosehill Terrace, Willington Quay. Also seeking the birth place of Peter **CUNNINGHAM** who lived Turners Terrace in 1920s and married Catherine **BURNS** at Barrow in Furness in 1896. He was killed in an accident at Wallsend in 1938.

7409 SANDRA TRAPP, 16W668 Marybeth Court, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521, USA.
(e-mail: SWT39@juno.com)

Seeking information regarding Jane **PAXTON** probably born between 1855 and 1880; lived in Sunderland and died there between 1929 and 1932. She had at least two children: James and Elizabeth. Her granddaughter would be Elsie **CARNEY** (nee **LONGCAKE**?) who lived in Sunderland with her mother during WW II.

7596 TOM JOHNSON, 5 Ruscombe Gardens, Datchet, Slough, Berkshire SL3 9BG
(email: tom@johnson89.freemove.co.uk)

Seeking information on the parents of James **McLEOD/McCLOUD** born c1775 at Unthank in the parish of Tweedmouth. He later married a Margaret **KYLE** and lived at Spittal where they had six children between 1802 and 1814. Also looking for further information on Michael **JOHNS(T)ON**, a white fisherman of Spittal born c1793 and Thomas **WHITE** born at Cheswick c1798.

7631 PETER JONES, 44 Rugby Road, Resolven, Neath, West Glamorgan SA11 4HH

Looking for any connections to the following families that married the **CROW** family of Gateshead/Newcastle. 1) Ralph Shedrick Crow married Mary Ann **SLACK** 1871 Gateshead. 2) John Crow and Celina **SMITH** 1851 Gateshead. 3) Ralph Smith Crow and Barbara **LINDSEY** 1825 Newcastle. 4) William Holiday Crow and Eleanor **WEIGHTMAN** 1795 Newcastle. 5) Benjamin Crow

and Agnes Smith - when, where? 6) Charles Crow and Elizabeth **COLE** 1730 Gateshead.

7729 WILLIAM T. BEAGAN, 11 "A" Redwood Drive, Parry Sound, Ontario P2A 2S3, Canada

Research has shown that grandfather's uncle had a daughter, Lily **WATSON** who married John **SPENCER** of Wallbottle who owned the Newburn Steel Works. It was John Spencer who gave grandfather the money to emigrate to Canada. A great great grandfather **STAGG** was supposed to have been born at Twizell Castle.

7904 JOHN H. HUITSON, 22 Cheviot Lodge, Longframlington, Morpeth, Northumberland NE65 8BG

John William, born 1855, Orlando, born 1858 and Oswald, born 1864, sons of William **HUITSON**, joiner of Ingleton/Langton, Co.Durham, appear in the 1871 Census but not found on any of the later ones. Orlando died in the Boer War, Does anyone know if they emigrated or enlisted in the Army?

7972 Mrs A. McMULLEN, 17 Beagle Ridge Drive, Acomb, York YO24 3JH

Researching the family and shipbuilding business of J.& D. **MORRIS**, 1847-1923, Pelaw Main, Hebburn on Tyne. Any information, photographs, etc. would be very welcome. Also connections with **CARTER** and **YOUNG** of Bill Quay c1800's, and **DAVIES** of Heworth c1880. Other interests include: **BARTLEMAN** of Tynemouth/North Shields and **WARDLE** of Bill Quay who lived at Haining Wood Farm in the late 1800's.

7981 Mr ALBERT J. HENDERSON, 3 Lindisfarne Close, Stobhill Grange, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 2UE

Seeking: 1) Birth and parents of Isabella **PEEL** (1849) who married Thomas **HENDERSON**, coal miner, at Bedlington in 1869. They had seven children: John, Mary, Thomas, Elizabeth, Dinah, Joseph and Albert James. 2) Birth and parents of Robert **PURVES**, blacksmith born c1860, married Mary **AGAR** at Chester-le-Street 1882. They lived in the Pelton Fell area and had four children: Henry, Robert (married Olive), Annie (married Jack **HUNTER**) and Margaret who married Joe **MILLER**, a past Chairman of Chester-le-Street Council.

8002 Miss L.M. HOWSTAN, 27 Carnforth Gardens, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear NE9 6YH

Looking for descendants of William and Barbara **HOWSTAN** nee **ELTRINGHAM** who married at Ryton in 1782 and lived at Bateshouses. Also seeking information on William Howstan who married Elizabeth **ROBSON** 1878 at Birtley Parish Church. On the 1881 Census they were living in Herbert Street, Elswick, Newcastle and had a son John William.

8059 M. MICHEL DORMOY, 11 bis rue Léon Bresset, 94880 Noisieu, France

Seeking information regarding Joseph Thomas **MOSDALE**, born Stockton 1873, son of William Thomas Mosdale and Jane nee **SCOTT**, living in Manchester in 1899.

8158 Mr T.S. WHITFIELD, "Ashleigh", Stothards Lane, Goxhill, North Lincolnshire DN19 7JL

Researching any **WHITFIELD** who have connections with the Whitfields of Alston in Cumbria. John Whitfield of Alston Moor married Mary **STOUT** of Allendale c1775/76 and they seem to have had 18 children. The youngest, Teasdale, born about July 1799 moved to Gorton in Nottinghamshire where he farmed.

8201 J.N. DAVISON, "Enfield", 100 Windy Nook Road, Gateshead NE10 9RH

Seeking any information of a John **DAVISON**. My 3 x great grandfather James Davison was born at Fenton c1800. The only baptism found of a James was at the Methodist Chapel, Wooler. This James seems unlikely as his father's name was given as Adam.

8210 Mrs P. THAKE, 25 Westfield, Clare, Suffolk CO10 8NU

The 1851 Census for St John's, Stanhope shows Jane **LONSDALE**, nee **WALTON**, miner's widow, living at Kitty Cragg with her nine children. The next entry was also a Lonsdale widow. What mine would her husband Ralph have worked at, and had there been an accident some years previously? Also researching **COULTHARD**, **THOMPSON**, **BELL**, **BRUMWELL**, **EGGLESTONE** and **FLEMING** from the Westgate/Stanhope area.

8239 GERALD PEARCE, 10 Kevin Grove, Overton, Morecambe, Lancashire LA3 3HA

Researching his **STEPHENSON** family of Durham and Northumberland. Would very much like to contact Elizabeth A.S. **WOOLEY**, Taylor H. Wooley and Gilpin S. Wooley who inputted Stephenson data to the IGI dating from 1888 to 1914.

8254 CAROL MERRICK, 39 First Avenue, Ashfield, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire DN17 2AS

Seeking information of John William Bruce **WOOD** and family, possibly in the Stanley/Kyo area. His wife was Georgina (or Bridget) nee **WILLIAMS**; their children Thomas, Ernest, Ella (born c1901), Nancy, Alice, Florence, Alfred and John William (born 1904). At his last son's marriage in 1925, John William Bruce Wood was described as a deceased butcher. He may have been of Irish descent, possibly from Kilkenny.

8259 VALERIE ANN KING, 3 Benett Gardens, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 1PW

Seeking information on Margaret Hannah **WILLOUGHBY** (1887-1923) who married John Emmanuel **BERTRAM** at St Hilda's, South Shields in 1907. They had two children: John William (1908-1911) and William Willoughby (1913-1997). I have some information on Margaret who was the youngest of 9 children including Wilfy, Esther, Robert, Ralph, Thomas, James, Elizabeth and George, but any information on the Willoughby family of Brinkburn Street, South Shields would be appreciated. John Emmanuel Bertram was a cartman born c1884, son of Joseph, a sailmaker. He and Margaret may have separated. What happened to John?

8340 ALAN HUGHES, 27 Haswell Road, Haleowen, West Midlands B63 1DA

Seeking any information on: 1) Sarah **CHRISHOP**, illegitimate daughter of Sarah Chrishop, born 1853 at Hett; baptism certificate give name as Taylor. 2) Birth and family of (Frederick) Charles **GIBSON**, married the above Sarah Chrishop 1873 at Durham Register Office. He was a miner of Boyne Colliery, son of Edward, a farm worker. It is believed that Charles had at least two sisters and had been previously married. Charles and Sarah had a daughter Alice Jane in 1874 and by 1879 the family had moved to Birmingham and calling themselves **GIBBS**.

8352 JACQUELINE FALCONER, 359 Huntington Road, York, North Yorkshire YO31 9HR

Would like to contact anyone researching, or with information about, the **DOOLEY** family of Newcastle, Tyneside and Whitley Bay areas.

8360 MRS DENISE RUSTON, Shephall, High Street, Horbling, Nr.Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 0PE
(email: denise.ruston@lineone.net)

Eager to find 1851 Census return for Thomas (33) and Jane **YOUNG** nee **HUTCHINSON** (29) and family living in Sunderland. They married in Bishopwearmouth in 1842 and both gave 'Millfield' as their place of residence. Their parents' names were Thomas and Mary Young and Edward Hutchinson. Any further information relating to them would be very helpful.

8382 Mrs SUE RUSKIN, 6 Tyrells Close, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 6BT

Seeking birth, or any information relating to Ellen **GLENDINNING**. Census returns say she was born c1816 at Learmouth, Cornhill on Tweed. She married John **DAVISON** in, or prior to, 1837, and their children were: Mary 1837, Jemima 1839, Jane 1841, John 1844, Margaret 1845, Henry 1849, Ellen 1851, Elizabeth 1854 and William 1858. Not able to find Ellen's birth or marriage and would be grateful for anything connected with this elusive Glendinning family.

8392 G.A. MARSH, 20 Shelduck Drive, Snettisham, Norfolk PE31 7RG

Looking for information and descendants of Robert **SHEFFIELD** born 1831 in Durham, worked as a clerk before joining the Army in 1854. He was discharged at Tynemouth Castle in 1875 and went to live in Sheffield with his wife Anne Margaret who was born in Canterbury in 1842, and daughter Mary Jane born Sheffield Barracks, Nether Hallam, Yorkshire in 1869. Any information would be much appreciated.

8410 HEATHER KIDD, 'Forestridge', 75A London Road, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2AN

Researching family lines of **NEVIN** of Hexham and **COX** of Cornforth. Paternal grandmother was illegitimate but took the name of **FORSTER**. Maternal grandmother's maiden name was **CLEASBY**.

8428 ROSALIND MOFFITT, 13 Rievaulx Close, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire HG5 8NG

Information sought on: 1) Robert **BURN**, born c1832 Thorngraston, married Ruth, born c1839 Allendale. Children: Henry Lloyd Martin (bapt.1865 Haltwhistle), Anna (c1867), Robert Bryan (c1865), Thomas William (c1872), Alfred (c1874), Minnie (c1878). On 1881 Census the family were at Mill House with several other families; what is/was Mill House? 2) Eleanor Annie **WHEATLEY**, born c1857 Newcastle, married John **GRAHAM**, born c1852. Unable to find Eleanor's birth or the marriage. Their first child, Mary Eleanor was born Newcastle 1881. Eleanor thought to be related to **WALTON** with connections to St Andrew's Church, Newcastle.

8433 EUGENE M. FRAZIER, Sr., 2800 19th Avenue, Lot 14, Gulfport, MS 39501, U.S.A.

Researching his **HEMSLEY** ancestors. William Hemsley, born Co.Durham, and his wife Jane **BRIGGS**, born Newcastle, married 1837 at Houghton-le-Spring. A daughter, Elizabeth Frances was born in 1847 and registered in the sub-district of Hamsterley. The family had emigrated to Virginia by 1850.

8441 Mr MARK BROOKS, "Arisiag", Blanshards Lane, North Cave, East Yorkshire HU15 2LN

Searching for information about the **BROOKS** family of Denton Burn who owned a boot and shoe factory at Howlett Hall Farm in the 1800s and early 1900s, and is now a public house. Also information on the mill at Netherwiton where William **CLARK** was a miller in the 1850s and 60s; and on the garrison at Tynemouth Castle where George **HOOD** served with the Royal Artillery in the 1850s.

8453 Dr. PETER ROBSON, 17 Thornlea, Hepscott, Morpeth, Northumberland. NE61 6NY

Looking for dates of birth and death of William Bowser **ROBSON** born c1830 at Bowsfield, Co.Durham, married 1851 and lived in Byers Green as a grocer/druggist. His father was James Robson who married Jane **BOWSER** in 1824 at St.Helens, Auckland and possibly a tenant farmer on Raby Castle estate.

8477 PAMELA FORSYTH, 11928-131 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5L 1M4, Canada

Would appreciate any information on the following: 1) Peter **ALLAN** (1823-190?), born Kyloe, married Sarah **SHORT** (1824/5-1902), born Wooler. Children: Thomas (b.1847), Leonard (1849), Mary (1851), Margaret (1853-1897), Sarah (1859), Isabella (1861), Elizabeth A. (1863), Georgina (1867). Georgina married John **BOLTON**, and one of the girls married a Mr **LOCKIE**. 2) Margaret Allan (1853-1897), born Thornton Park, Thornton, Norham, daughter of Peter Allan and Sarah Short, married William **BROWNLEE(S)** (1846-190?) of Cornhill in 1871. They moved to Gateshead and had several children: Sarah Jane (1873), Isabella (1874-1958), Alexander (1876), Mary (1878-1893), William (1879), Peter (1880), Leonard (1883), Margaret (1887), Phillis (1890). Margaret immigrated to the United States and married a Mr. **BIRCHOFF**.

8496 MARY CLARK, 5 Berwick Road, Greenock, Renfrewshire PA16 0HJ

Seeking any information on: 1) John **PATTERSON** / **PATTIESON**, blacksmith, (son of John Patterson, husbandman), married Jane **ROBSON** 1851 St Hilda's South Shields, (daughter of William, collier); children: Joseph born 1854, Robert 1855, Sarah Jane 1858, Ralph 1861, John Wm. (married Mary Smith), & Thomas D. - all born Ryhope. 2) The above Robert Patterson, blacksmith, married Elizabeth; children: Robert Robson 1884 (married Maria Watson **CAMPBELL** 1918 South Shields), Sarah A. 1885, Edward R. 1888, Norman 1890 and Ethel - all born Cleadon. 3) Andrew Dixon Campbell, married Margaret Ann **SLOAN**; children: John 1883, Ann Eliz 1884, Joseph Sloan 1886, Sarah Jane 1888 (married Hector **KIDD**), Maria Watson Campbell 1891- all born South Shields.

8533 Mrs L. HINSON, "The Smithy", Grinton, Richmond, North Yorkshire DL11 6HJ

Hoping to find a connection between the **HINSON** families of the north east with those of south Lincolnshire.

8601 Mrs SYLVIA DERRY, Long Meadows, 13 Village Street, Edwalton, Nottingham NG12 4AB

Currently researching her **YOUNG** family of Easington (1600+), Newcastle (c1650+), Preston, North Shields (19th century) and Wolviston, Stockton on Tees (c1870).

8610 DAVID BEATTIE, 4 Arlington Park Mansions, Sutton Lane North, Chiswick, London W4 4HE

Researching: William **BEATTIE** (c1796-1869), his wife Ann (c1799-1864) and their sons James, engineerwright, (born c1828), Alexander, engineerwright, (c1836-1923), and Robert, commercial clerk, (born c1838). All were born in Scotland but spent most of their lives in Elswick and died in Newcastle. Would like to find out where in Scotland they were born, and more about their work as engineers, probably at the Armstrong Whitworth works. Also interested in the related family of George **WARDHAUGH**, whitesmith, (c1810-1848); his wife Ann nee **DUNN**, born c1817; David **PERRY**, engineer, born 1847 North Shields, later lived at Tynemouth; and Benjamin **HOLLAND**, master mariner of South Shields, born c1822.

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From the Belford, Northumberland burial register:

May 29th 1791 Eleanor Mills age 66 of Belford.

This Eleanor Mills, tho' always reputed extremely poor, tho' she went in Rags & lay on Straw, nevertheless died possessed of £19 in Cash, 29 Gowns, 35 Aprons, 20 white handkerchiefs several of them Muslin, 2 Bed Ticks & 61 Bedgowns Cotton, linen & woollen, with various other articles, several of which were un-made up and as they had come from ye Shops.

Mrs Dianne Hughes writes: - "While undertaking research into local burials I found a number of people buried in a local cemetery who came from Northumberland. These burials were all at Smythesdale, Victoria in Australia.

9th July 1859 Elizabeth Johnson 35 yrs daughter of Robert Hannah Stephenson born Allendale Northumberland married aged 22 yrs at St. Peters to Anthony, she had four children Joseph, Robert, Barbary and Hannah.

9th July 1864, Edward Hall 26 yrs father Thomas, mother unknown, was accidentally killed when earth fell on him at the Reliance Claim at Scarsdale, he came from North Shields.

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5th June 1874 Burn Peart 38 yrs son of Joseph and Ann died at 'Time Will Tell' Sluicing Company when the ground fell in on him, born Weardale, Durham, married Elizabeth Hodgson".

The following entry appears in the Baptism Register of Bishopwearmouth:

March 27 1695. A person aged about twenty years, a Tawney, borne at the Bay of Bengall in the East Indies, and being taken captive by ye English, in his minoritie, was (after the examination of himself and witnesses) Baptiz'd and nam'd John Weremouth.

Late News From Durham County Record Office

As this edition goes to the printers, we have learned that the planned refurbishment of the search room at Durham Record Office is about to start. The search room will probably close on 26th February and could remain closed until early April.

Anyone intending to travel to Durham Record Office should check in advance.

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