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Society Headquarters
NDFHS Library & Research Centre
Percy House
Percy Street
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NE1 4PW

Telephone
0191 261 2159
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Website
www.ndfhs.org.uk

Opening times
Monday to Friday:
10 am. – 4 pm.

Directions
Percy House is located on the west side of Percy Street, between Gallowgate and Leazes Park Road and is opposite Eldon Square Shopping Centre.

Chairman
JOHN WARD
136 Mount Road Sunderland
SR4 7QD
Tel: 0191 522 7445
chairman@ndfhs.org

Vice-chairman
VALERIE ROBSON
24 Shaws Park Hexham
Northumberland NE46 3BJ
vicechairman@ndfhs.org

Secretary
RICHARD CALASCA
secretary@ndfhs.org

Treasurer
DOUGLAS BURDON
treasurer@ndfhs.org

Sales Officer
GERRY LANGLEY
sales@ndfhs.org

Publicity Officer
PATRICIA PIERPOINT
publicity@ndfhs.org

Journal Editor
Position vacant – articles and correspondence to:
editor@ndfhs.org

Events
BILL LUMSDEN
events@ndfhs.org

Librarian
JOYCE JACKMAN
librarian@ndfhs.org

Membership Secretary & Missing Journals
PATRICIA FRANKLIN
membership@ndfhs.org

Members' Interests & Queries
PHIL THIRKELL
100 Stuart Court, Kingston Park,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 2SG
interests@ndfhs.org

Volunteers Coordinator
WENDY STAFFORD
volunteers@ndfhs.org

Research requests
researchcentre@ndfhs.org
The Research Requests form should be used. It can alternatively be sent by post to "Research" at the Society Headquarters.

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Front cover:
vignette,
Thomas
Bewick



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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

WEBSITE

Our website has been undergoing significant changes, a lengthy and continuing process. Access to the Members section will be:

login: **memberNdfhs**

password: **Aberdeen**

The password will change every three months. This password will change 15th September to a new one to be published in the Autumn Journal.

RESEARCH REQUESTS

Please remember to include your membership number with research requests, especially if you email them or send them by post.

2012 INDEX

The 2012 Index will appear in the Autumn Journal. It will also be available in the Members section of the website.

AGM

We look forward to seeing many of you at the AGM and hope you will join the informal gathering at Percy House afterwards.

PRIZE WINNER – best Journal article 2012

Congratulations to Susan Carlisle for her contributions to the Journal,

in particular for her article entitled 'Ralph Wheatley and the Newton Fortune'.

MEMBERSHIP – late renewals

We would like to apologise to members who had paid their 2013 subscriptions, particularly to those paying by bank transfer in October 2012, for the reminders we sent out. This was unfortunately due to a slip-up in the transfer of information by email. Thank you for your forbearance.

DEADLINE FOR THE AUTUMN JOURNAL - JULY 30TH

CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR JOURNAL

For conditions for submission of articles, please consult an earlier Journal or contact editor@ndfhs.org

NDFHS 2013 AGM

The 2013 Annual General Meeting will take place on Saturday 20th July at 10.30 am at the Labour Club, Leazes Park Road, Newcastle, immediately behind Percy House.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I have some papers from my stepmother's family, the earliest 1874, about 8 documents in all, that my brother was about to burn on a bonfire and I rescued! They are mostly mortgage agreements of the 1880s to do with property in Jarrow. I kept them, because they are so beautifully written on parchment, with stamps and seals etc.

The names mentioned are James Hodgeman, Dame Sarah Caroline James, John Fenwick, Samuel Thompson and then Alexander Maddison from 3 Edward Street, Jarrow who died 18th January 1902. He was the grandfather of my stepmother, Joan Eleanor Maddison, who trained as a doctor in Newcastle.

I don't really want to keep these documents but wondered if they would be of any use to anyone who is interested in the history of the Jarrow area. I would happily post them on, although there must be millions of documents like these!

Mrs Sheena Howarth
sevenpines@hotmail.co.uk

Dear Editor,

The item in the Spring Journal on the North Northumberland Branch contains a small error. July 2013 will see our 15th anniversary – how time flies. We met in Fenwick Village Hall and five committee members were present, together with Linda Bankier from Berwick Archives. Alan Readdie had provided address of members in this area and I sent out preliminary letters. This was backed up by references in our "Village News" and the local press. The result was a very good meeting with some twenty-five people present. The programme for the following three months was agreed and the Group has continued successfully ever since.

Olive Trewick
(member 4132)
c/o editor@ndfhs.org

Dear Editor,

Although not a member of your FHS I am a keen supporter of 4 other societies.

I have an old photo which means nothing to me and I have no connection with the area. It shows 3 young gardeners at an obviously large and lovely house/garden and I believe it must be local to you as the photographer is Allan F. Hayden, 8 Queen Street Durham.



I just wondered if you would like a copy for your journal - someone might care to identify the setting and a young man may belong to one of your members.

Jenny Meer

jennymeer@btinternet.com

Dear Editor,

The reference dated 17 October 1805 concerning Edward Ferguson "collector of tolls north end of Tyne Bridge" set me thinking. (Spring Journal 2013, p. 22.)

Where was the Tyne Bridge in 1805? This was long before the present Tyne Bridge of course. And I would have thought before the Swing Bridge too. The rest are railway bridges, and also later than 1805. It surely must have been a low level bridge?

Does any member know where it was?

Jean Wright

(member 14415)

jay@jdwright.myzen.co.uk

Dear Editor,

Many thanks for publishing my notes on Bob Atkinson in the NDFHS Journal. I am delighted to be able to tell you that the papers have now been reunited with the family.



Within 24 hours of receiving the journal I had my first e-mail. After a few e-mail exchanges and a phone call I met up with Bob's granddaughter Claire Lewis, her husband and her Aunt Lily in the John Lewis coffee shop in Newcastle. Claire's husband had already produced a fascinating book on Bob's life and we spent a wonderful hour or two exchanging family history stories and looking through the papers. It was most satisfying to see the papers back where they belong and this would never have been possible without the help of NDFHS. I thought you might like to see a snapshot I took of the "reunion" showing Claire, Tom and Lily, together with the book and the boxes of papers.

Wendy Mayfield

(member 18177)

Wendy@mayfield.fsbusiness.co.uk

IMAGINE FINDING YOU ARE RELATED TO A LUX FILM STAR ...

As a young boy, Don Staddon of Marketing Division at Unilever House was told an enchanting story of a famous relative who was a star of the London stage. From time to time he was determined to find out if this star, renowned for her beauty, really existed. Using skills more suited to a detective than a marketing manager, he attempted to track her down and fill in one of the missing links in his family tree. Little did he know that it would take him years to do and that a vital clue to this mystery star's identity was not to be found in family records but at his office in Unilever House.

Despite endless enquiries about the elusive lady amongst his family, Don was unable to discover any information about her whereabouts or her career as an actress. All he had managed to find out over a period of years was a set of rather confusing dates relating to a woman called Victoria Hopper.

The during a trip to Oregon in the US in 1981, while visiting relations, Don got his first big clue and discovered information that was to lead him close to the star who was stamped so indelibly on his childhood memory. He told his American cousins of his activities in tracing the family history and in particular his hunt for Victoria Hopper. They were able to show him some newspaper cuttings they had collected on their branch of the family and from these Don learnt that there were in fact two women in the family who coincidentally had the

same name and had achieved success in the theatrical world, one had toured in the US, the other worked mostly in London.



The information made matters more complicated but at least felt he had some actual proof that the stories told him as a child were true. He says, "It was

heartening to discover that Victoria Hopper really did exist. When I found out two women in my family had the same name it explained the discrepancy in dates I had been given."

A half-cousin of Don's who lives in the north-east of England also shares his interest in the family history so he passed on the new information to her. "She was in the process of tracing the family tree and between us we established that the women were related as aunt and niece." Unfortunately for Don however this is where the trail turned cold once more.

Don put the hunt for Victoria Hopper to the back of his mind with the intention of pursuing it at a later date when he had more time to find relatives who might know of her.

Then, one day while at work he found the very evidence he was looking for. "I was going through our press archives in the Marketing Department with the intention of removing material that was no longer relevant. I was going through a section which dealt with the Lux beauty stars of the past when suddenly I discovered the name Victoria Hopper was among them. I could hardly believe my eyes. I thought that maybe this was yet another person with the same name but I decided this was too much of a coincidence. Obviously I did not recognise her from the photograph as I had never seen her before, but somehow I was sure it was her", says Don Staddon. And so it was.



Don quickly established, after referring to the publication that the advertisement was in, that Victoria Hopper was a Lux soap star of 1935. "The dates seemed to match

up with all the things I learnt about her. After all the years I could not believe that I found her through the very office I worked in and through Lux soap.

"My branch of the family originated in Durham and before that in Ireland, although many are further afield now, but I would never in my wildest dreams have thought that I would have traced Victoria Hopper through Unilever."

Since Victoria was chosen as a Lux beauty star, Don believed that

she must have been a well-known national actress. "At the time, Lux testimonials were only given by those who were either famous or showed considerable promise of becoming famous."

He realised that Victoria must have been born around 1910 and set about trying to find her. With the invaluable help of his half-cousin he located an address in Kent. Don then sent a letter explaining who he was and his quest to find Victoria Hopper. It was just a matter of days before Don received a reply. Victoria Hopper confirmed that she was the same person in the Lux advertisement. She also told Don of her career on the stage, filling in some of the missing links in the Staddon and Hopper family tree.

She was born in Vancouver, the daughter of an architect who emigrated to Canada from Newcastle. When her family moved back to England after some years, she went to school in Newcastle and then to the Webber Douglas School of Drama in London. During this period she actually went to live with her aunt, Victoria Hopper. Her aunt was a high soprano singer who performed as Polly Peacham in *The Beggar's Opera* in Vancouver. Coincidentally the young Victoria went to see the production at the age of four.

"My aunt gave me considerable support as a young actress. She was aware of my aspirations and encouraged me in my profession. We were very close." Victoria's debut performance on the London stage was almost like a Hollywood film. "My drama school was in the process of putting on a student production of the play *Martine*. They approached

me because as a young actress I had long blond hair and was very slim. On the opening night two theatrical producers Sydney Carroll and Carol Reed came to see the show and liked to so much that they immediately transferred it to the West End and the Ambassador Theatre where it was a great success." Victoria became an overnight star and offers for films, plays and commercials came flooding in. She then married Basil Dean, the film producer who became the director of ENSA during the War – the troupe that entertained the armed forces abroad. "Throughout the War I travelled extensively in North Africa, the Middle East, France, Belgium and Germany. This took me away from my work in the theatre and I turned down an invitation to go to Hollywood."



Victoria was one of many Lux stars of the time who has managed to keep her good complexion by still using the soap each day.

Victoria says she was very surprised when Don first contacted her. "I was most surprised to hear a relative of mine had put so much effort into finding me. I no longer work as an actress. I retired in the 1960s when I remarried. But it was wonderful to hear that I was found through a Lux soap advertisement and that Don is involved with the business."

Meanwhile Don was delighted that yet another piece in the puzzle of the

family tree had been found and he is hoping that he will one day meet in person the lady he has spent so many years trying to find.

He is still keen to trace more of his family tree, especially in Northern Ireland. "There are still a couple of blank names to be filled in yet and I would like to one day, with the help of my family, complete the entire tree. To date, it has been a very interesting exercise. It is easy to say you know all about your family history, but it is not until you examine it in detail that you begin to discover some very exciting things. You are led into an area that you would never have dreamed of looking and you discover things that you would never have imagined, like being related to a West End actress and Lux beauty star!"

Don Staddon
(member 237)
c/o editor@ndfhs.org

This article by Linda Conway is reprinted with kind permission of Unilever and first appeared in the Unilever House Magazine "Uniview" issue 60 Dec 1988/Jan 1989

Don Staddon, originally from Rowlands Gill, joined the Merchant Navy as a deck officer apprentice in late 1941. He served at sea until 1954 when he moved to the Domestos business in Newcastle. After Unilever bought Domestos Ltd its sales and marketing executive was transferred to London where Don stayed until his retirement.

Victoria died in 2009.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? EXHIBITION OLYMPIA 22ND – 24TH FEBRUARY 2013



Taking part in a major exhibition the best part of 300 miles from Newcastle is a time-consuming, tiring and expensive affair.

However, in response to a desire from members from other parts of the country to see the Society represented, a heavily laden car headed southwards.

Our thanks go especially to those members from the London Branch who did much to answer the many questions from the public and from visiting NDFHS members. It was a useful exercise in assessing how much interest in the Society's activities our presence would generate.

We'll think about next year!

TYNE PILOTS IN THE OLDEN DAYS BY THE EDITOR

Dot Mornington (member 10088) has kindly brought to our attention an article first printed in 'The Banks of Tyne', a Christmas Annual for 1899 edited by George B Hodgson, author of 'The Borough of South Shields'. Here is Part 1.

*When the sea is running high,
And the tempest sweeps the sky,
And the night is closing in so dark and dreary, O!
When the world is all asleep,
Then a sharp look-out we keep
For the mariner with watching worn and weary, O!
When there is danger is to brave
Or human life to save,
The South Shields pilots are the dandy, O!*

So runs the opening verse of an old song, published many years ago by Brockie & Co., of South Shields. Its author is unknown. Whoever he was, that he possessed an intimate knowledge of the pilots and their profession is evident from the very clever "*spokens*" with which the song is interlarded, in which the whole business of working a vessel into port amid a press of shipping is very cleverly illustrated. The pilots, who for generations have inhabited the neighbourhood of the Lawe, form unquestionably the most characteristic section of the inhabitants of South Shields. Sturdy, independent and self-reliant, they might well adopt as their addition to the Borough motto of "*Always Ready*", which they so well exemplify, that of "*One and All*", for nowhere is that spirit of clansmanship, which probably originated the proverb of "*altogether like the folk of Shields*", more apparent than in this little

coterie. Living amongst their own folk, bred up to an inherited profession, almost invariably marrying in their own class, and jealous in the extreme of outside interference or dictation, they form a race apart, exhibiting many traits of their Viking ancestry and preserving in all its purity the distinctive dialect of South Shields, which elsewhere is being rapidly lost. Their skill and courage are proverbial amongst seafarers, and have been tried and proved in many a midnight battle with the storm. Their patriotism is equally above question. Whenever, for centuries, Britannia has been called upon to defend her title as the mistress of the sea, Shields pilots have borne a hand in the navigation of her fleet. A Sunderland seafarer, who certainly would not be likely to err in excessive praise of Shieldsmen, declared many years ago, that a Shields pilot navigating a ship into the Tyne, or a Shields skipper working his collier up the Swin were distinct

masters in their profession.

The genesis of the Tyne pilotage system is lost in the mists of antiquity. Surtees, writing in the early part of this century, refers to the pilots as having resided in the east end of South Shields *"from time immemorial."* If we should place upon this phrase what Mr John Clayton, the then Town Clerk of Newcastle, declared, during the Conservancy fight of fifty years ago, to be its legal interpretation, the residence of the South Shields pilots on the Lawe would date back at least seven centuries - to the return of Richard of the Lionheart from the Crusades. This interpretation may not be so far-fetched after all. The remarkable development of the commerce of the Tyne under the Plantagenets would undoubtedly render necessary some system by which the foreign captains, who then commenced to visit the port, could command the assistance of men with special local knowledge of the navigation and of its dangers, while the constantly shifting shoals and frequent changes in the bar would render such assistance essential even to a local master mariner, after the long absence entailed by a voyage in those days. In all probability, therefore, some of the Shieldsmen of those early days found profitable occupation in the pilotage service.



Trinity House courtyard

The earliest mention of a pilotage service occurs in connection with the Corporation of the Trinity House of Newcastle. This body was a very ancient foundation and certainly existed prior to 1492, when it acquired the site of its present hall, etc., in Trinity Chare, Newcastle, from Robert Hebborne. Its original object was practically to discharge the function of a Seaman's Friendly Society by providing *"that master mariners, governors (a word frequently employed in the sense of pilot and probably having that signification), and other officers of ships who hath consumed their whole lives in the exercise of navigation, being mutilated or by any other misfortune impoverished, may have some relief, whereby not only they may be refreshed, but also other of the youths may be moved and provoked to the exercise of the art (of navigation), whereof there may be more cunning masters to govern ships."* There seems good ground for the belief that Trinity House received primage - originally an acknowledgment for pilotage services - and was in receipt of dues called "Trinity money" before the date of its first charter. The oldest existing Order Book of the Brethren, commencing in 1539, not only makes several references to pilotage - the pilot dues being called *"loadmannage"* - but also refers to still older entries in the *"owyld loadmannage bouke"* now lost.

The first specific mention of *"pilots"* is found, however, in the charter granted by Henry VIII on October 5th 1536 to the Trinity House. That Corporation is by this charter empowered to *"establish,*

ordain, and erect such liege acts, laws, and ordinances as to them shall seem necessary, as well as for the maintenance of our shipping in the Haven of Tyne Mouth as for the good continuance of order between the masters, pilots, governors of ships, and mariners." The charter of Edward VI (October 20th 1548) also provides for making regulations for order amongst the masters, pilots and other officers in the port. Mary's confirmation (May 21st 1553) calls them *"masters and pilots."* From an early date Trinity House appears to have considered pilotage as compulsory on foreign vessels, a claim which was disputed by Newcastle Corporation. An action was brought in the early part of 1584, when two judges ordered the custom to continue until the case was fully heard. Newcastle, however, set the order at defiance and imprisoned one of the Brethren for enforcing it. Trinity House petitioned the Privy Council and the Corporation, in their reply dated March 22nd 1584 stated that pilotage had always been voluntary on all ships. The question seems to have been settled by the charter granted that year by Elizabeth, which founded the Trinity House Corporation anew under the style of the Masters, Pilots, and Seamen of the Trinity House of Newcastle.

The charter of her successor, the British Solomon, which is dated January 18th 1606, formally extended the jurisdiction of Trinity House to *"Blyth, Sonderland, Hartelpoole, Whitby and Staithes, commonly called Steays"* (a pronunciation still preserved amongst seafaring folk), granted the Corporation additional lightage and primage dues and also authorised the master, an elder and a

younger warden (or, in their absence, three of the most ancient members of the Brotherhood) *"to nominate or appoint sufficient and skilful pylot or pylotts for bringing up and down the river of Tyne, and in and out of any creeks and members thereof, belonging to the port of Newcastle, all ships or vessels whereof the owner or part owner, master or purser shall be desirous or willing to having a pylot."* The *"loadmannage"* or pilot fees were fixed at 12d per foot draught on laden and 8d per foot on light vessels.

Immediately after the grant of this charter, the Brethren, under date February 1606 ordained rules, or by-laws as we should now call them, for piloting ships into and out of the river. Apparently Trinity House still claimed that only members of their body were entitled to act as pilots, at all events of strange (that is foreign) vessels, for we find Ralph Gardner in his *"Grievance,"* published during the Commonwealth in 1655, complaining that *"no stranger's ship, though she be in distress and sinking, must be pylotted into the river by anyone who is not a freeman of Newcastle,"* and, he adds, that as there were only two freemen resident at Shields, a pilot had usually to be sought from Newcastle when required. Ralph's remonstrance was apparently unavailing, the foreign pilotage being still confined to Brethren. The puritanical spirit of the Protectorate is discernible in an order dated 1657 providing that *"if any brother take upon himself to pilot any ship whatsoever on the Lord's day, he shall pay every time of offending the sum of 20s,"* a pious provision which totally ignored the consequences to storm-tossed mariners, should

they chance to make the port on a Sunday and be unable to obtain a pilot. Charles II, amid his merry-making and debauchery, found time to grant a new charter dated October 21st 1664 increasing the pilotage dues on strangers' vessels by 6d per foot on laden and 4d on light ships. He also relieved the pilots from all land services in trained bands or on juries.

The great charter, however, under which Trinity House wielded absolute sway over the whole coast from Whitby to Holy Island until just past the middle of the present century, was that granted by James II on July 1st 1687. By it the office of "pylott" was not specifically confined to members of Trinity House. Probably the increase in traffic and the restrictions on freemen had combined to throw open the pilotage to non-freemen, that is, to the men of Shields. Pilotage was not compulsory except in the case of foreign vessels, the charter providing that all masters of stranger ships must take pilots or pay the pilot dues should they refuse, but that English shipmasters might take a pilot or not, as they desired. Once a pilot was accepted, however, his power was to be as absolute as it is today. "*Such pylott or pylotts,*" says the Charter, "*shall have the pylottship in and out of all such ships or vessels as aforesaid, and no other person or persons whatsoever shall deal or intermeddle therein.*" Trinity Brethren and pilots were relieved of the duty of bearing arms or serving on juries, except at Admiralty Sessions, when the judges might require the assistance of their nautical skill. Exemption from impressment for service in the Navy was also accorded to pilots.

No one but a freeman of Newcastle however could become a member of Trinity House and no one but an elder brother of that body was eligible for election or appointment to any of the offices in the gift of the house. This is probably the reason why we find numerous instances of shipmasters choosing the freedom of Newcastle as the greatest boon which Royal or other distinguished passengers could obtain for them in return for their services. This, under date December 17th 1672, James II directed the Corporation of Newcastle to elect James Aire (a name still borne by a family of South Shields pilots) the pilot of his good ship the *St Michael* a free burgess of Newcastle; and the Marquis of Newcastle had obtained a like privilege for Captain Oswald Rogers who landed him in England in 1663.



In 1724, the House appointed Joseph Reed, an Elder Brother "*to have the ordering of the pilots.*" He was styled "*the captain of the pilots,*" a title borne by his successors down to the beginning of this century. Reed was succeeded in 1738 by Loftus Danby who appears to have held the office for many years, as in August 1754, Mathias Giles is appointed "*to look after the pilots, that they keep regular turns, the pilots paying no regard to Thomas Medley, who is the orderer under Loftus Danby who is almost blind.*" At that time the pilots paid 1s per ship as turn money, which appears to have gone entirely to the pilot master. Danby seems to have been succeeded by Captain William Errington, a man of prodigious strength, who was an Elder Brother of Trinity House at the time of the Pretender's Rebellion in 1745 and with several other Elder Brethren went to Carlisle to help to work the guns in the Royal Army during the siege of that town – a service they would be fully qualified to perform, since in those days every merchant ship was furnished with guns which she frequently found it necessary to use for defence against privateers and pirates. Captain Errington, who also appears to have been river surveyor to Newcastle Corporation, died in 1773 whilst holding the pilot captaincy.

There were, from very early times, three classes of pilots appointed by Trinity House and receiving from it licences, or, in the formal language of the orders "*branches of the charter*", (down to this day the pilot's licence is still familiarly referred to as his "branch".) These were, first, the sea pilots, corresponding to the present

North Sea pilots, who took charge of ships not only up and down the East Coast, but also to the Orkneys and North of Scotland, the Firth of Forth, down Channel, and into the Mediterranean, to Continental ports, Norway, and up the Baltic, the latter even then the seat of an important trade with the Tyne. Trinity House had a representative as Pilot Ruler so far north as the Orkneys during last century. The earliest sea licence issued by the House of which there is any record bears date May 14th 1734 and empowered by John Wright "*to take charge of any King's ship or others anywhere upon the Coast of England or Norway or in any part of the Baltic.*" A fortnight later, Robert Hudson was licensed to take charge of any King's ship or others "*from Tynemouth Bar to London, Norway, the Sound or Baltic.*" A still wider range was taken when, on May 18th 1739 Launcelot Errington (probably identical with the master mariner who, with the assistance of his nephew Mark only, captured Holy Island for the Pretender in 1746) was licensed to take charge of any ship from Tynemouth Haven to the Scaw, Copenhagen, Riga, up the East Sea, down Channel, and up the Mediterranean. Trinity House appears to have unduly stretched its powers in this respect as Counsel's opinion "*from Lawyer Fawcett*" in 1772, advised the brethren that their charter did not authorise them to appoint sea pilots (as they claimed to have done from time immemorial) except for vessels which happened to be in the port of Newcastle or its creeks and members, and did not authorise such pilots going aboard vessels in Yarmouth Roads.

The Admiralty authorities frequently availed themselves of the service of the Trinity House sea pilots. As early as July 1742, pilot Ralph Burfield was ordered to attend as a pilot on board the *Tartar*, man of war. The demand for their service seems to have been especially active during the time of the Pretender's Rebellion. In September 1745 in response to a letter from Thomas Corbett, secretary to the Admiralty, requesting two pilots who were acquainted with the North Coast of England and the North Seas to be sent to Admiral Vernon in the Downs, John Wright and George Brown were "sent up post," having twenty guineas given them for that purpose. In December of the same year two pilots were ordered on board the *Tavistock* sloop, Captain G MacKenzie. R Shotton, North Sea pilot, was sent on board the *Racer* sloop, William Gibson to the *Winchelsea* off Tynemouth Bar, and G Shipley to the *Trial* sloop at Holy Island. Again during the Napoleonic wars in March 1795 the sea-branch pilots were ordered to proceed immediately to the Downs on board Admiral Peyton's ship and wait the Admiral's orders. Six guineas each was paid to seven of them a conduct money. In July 1807 letters from the Commissioners of the Navy stated that 25 pilots were wanted. Three were at once ordered to join the *Roebuck* in Yarmouth Roads, £5 each being given them as conduct money, and several others followed. These are only isolated instances out of the many which might be quoted in which the services of Tyne pilots were requisitioned in time of war to navigate the fleet. So late as the Crimean war a large number

were requisitioned to take charge of the ships in the Baltic fleet, one at least (and probably many more) Mr Cuthbert, a South Shields pilot, receiving a silver medal from the Government in June 1857 for his services as pilot during the war.

The sea pilotage appears to have been restricted to Brethren of the Trinity House as in January 1782 as order appears "that no branches be granted to any person as sea pilots but to free brethren of the House for such navigation as they may be deemed capable of, and that on no pretence whatever shall any person applying to be appointed pilot be appointed in preference to a brother of the House." This claim to the licensing of North Sea pilots was maintained until after the middle of the present century when Trinity House was worsted in an action brought by them against one Le Pellez, who had acted as a North Sea pilot without holding their licence. Counsel for the Brethren stated that their claim of jurisdiction was based on prescription not on the charters. The case, however, went against them, on the hearing before the North Shields magistrates. The Court of Appeal, consisting of Lord Justice Cockburn and three other judges on April 29th 1863 dismissed the appeal of the Brethren against the decision on the ground that Trinity House had established no proof of any exclusive right to license pilots for the North Sea and East Coast of England.

The second class, known as the "Barr Pilots" – the sea pilots of the period anterior to the establishment of the Pilotage Board – were licensed to bring ships into and out of the harbour and over the "Barr," as it is

always called in the old records, but not to take any vessel above Whitehill Point. From time immemorial the Bar pilots appear to have made use of the peculiar craft still affected by their class, the coble, one of the staunchest and most seaworthy of boats; which is mentioned in records as early as the fourteenth century. They also appear from the earliest account obtainable of their method of service to have pursued their calling in much the same fashion as at present, two men and an apprentice, or occasionally three men, going to sea in the same coble. The survival of this custom is an example of the innate conservatism of the pilots. Old John Hutchinson was wont to tell a story on this head. One of their number boarded an American ship coming into the harbour, was pestered by the captain with an infinity of questions, winding up with an inquiry as to "what was his religion." "Ma religion? Why just the reglor thing, Captain." "And what's the regular thing?" "Oh, just the reglor Shields pilots' religion." "Yes, but what is their religion?" "Oh, just the reglor thing, twee men an' a lad in a boat and sometimes three men an' a lad in a boat an' a good foy a piece ivery day." One factor which has contributed not a little to the maintenance intact of old customs and old traditions, is the hereditary nature of the profession, legalised over a century ago by Trinity House, which so long ago as October 1796 resolved "that in future, persons applying for branches to pilot ships in or out of Sunderland or Shields harbour, unless they are of families of Trinity House, be refused, it being thought right to confine the list of

pilots for those places entirely to the relatives of those who have always followed that occupation." This resolution was soon rescinded in the case of the Wear, but upon the Tyne was acted upon up to the transfer of the pilotage in 1865, the Trinity Brethren, in a report to the Committee of Council on Trade in 1834, stating that the practice had been found to work better than an apprentice system, the pilots' sons going in the cobbles with their fathers or relatives until they were thoroughly competent.

The third were the town or river pilots, who were subdivided into the up-river and down-river men, whose functions are sufficiently indicated by their names, one class taking vessels from the harbour up to their berths, the other piloting the laden vessels down to the harbour. Thus, to quote one example of many, Thomas Pringle, of "St Antons" obtained in July 1748 a branch from "Felton Steath" down the river. They were not however allowed to move vessels in the harbour or to take them to sea. The river pilots appear to have been largely members of Trinity House but although originally highly paid and prosperous, the increasing practice of loading and discharging vessels in Shields Harbour considerably decreased their work, and at the beginning of 1787 it was ordained that "there shall not be more than 12 down-river and 14 up-river pilots," while in 1801 it was decided "that not further river pilots be made except as vacancies arise."

Images by kind permission of
Newcastle upon Tyne Trinity House

ST MARY'S TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE



The mailing list has been discussing Fenham recently, which prompted me to dig out my old photograph taken at St Mary's during World War I. The girl in the middle of the front row is my grandmother Margaret Ann Smith (1896-1974). If you have a relation who was a student there at the time, I would be happy to send them a copy.

The college occupied Fenham Hall, built in 1745 for the Ord family (later the Blackett-Ords) and had a succession of owners in the 19th century. In 1905 it was sold to the Society of the Sacred Heart, an order of nuns whose mission was female education. They started up a school for girls and then the teacher training college. Their ethos is illustrated by the Madonna and Child surrounded by flowers at the back of the classroom. In 1908 a fire destroyed the residential area of the Convent, which at the time housed about

50 females. A newspaper report said that: *'The nuns headed by the Mother Superior, lowered all the girls and the children out of the windows by knotted sheets, behaving in the pluckiest manner, and then escaped the same way themselves, the Mother Superior being the last to leave the burning building by the improvised escape. No one was burned or in any way injured, but some firemen had narrow escapes'*. The damage must have been a major setback for the institution.

The school is still going, now a comprehensive in a modern building. The training college closed in 1985, and the building is now a hall of residence for Newcastle University. There are offices and possibly houses elsewhere on the substantial site.

Susan Carlisle
(member 17175)
s.carlisle@blueyonder.co.uk

WELL, AM I RELATED TO GEORGE STEPHENSON?

My great-grandmother, Eunice Ann Stephenson, who was born in Melbourne in 1862, believed that her family could be traced back to George Stephenson, the man who was called Father of the Railways.



I decided to try to establish if her story had substance. In other words, was it true? The more I investigated, the more people I discovered confidently laying claim to being direct descendants of George Stephenson.

But as I did my genealogical digging, I came across a serious challenge to all these claims: George, it seems, had no descendants. He married three times, but his only children were from his marriage to his first wife, Frances

Henderson, in 1802. Their only son, Robert, married but had no children and Frances, their only daughter, died in infancy. So, unless Robert had illegitimate children, which is possible but difficult to establish, the line from Railway George ended here. There was no obvious link to Railway George's siblings either, or to his mother's family, the Carrs. If there were a connection to the railway Stepbensons it would most likely have had to be through George's father, Robert, best known as "Old Bob".

I have established that my Stepbensons were from the North-East of England. Great-great-great-grandfather, also named George, was a stonemason, born in Haltwhistle, Northumberland in 1799. He married Ann Robson in Haltwhistle in 1822 and they had a son Henry and a daughter Elizabeth. I have been unable to find out what happened to Ann.

My descent is through George's second marriage to another Ann -- Ann Medcalf -- in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1834. Altogether they had seven sons, two of them born to Ann in Alston, Cumberland when she was single. Their son Edwin, who was born in 1840, was my great-great grandfather.

In 1852, as gold fever gripped Australia, George and Ann (Medcalf), their seven sons, two daughters-in-law and George's brother, Henry, set sail as immigrants for Melbourne. The children of George's first marriage

stayed behind. But tragedy struck the family just three months after arriving in the colony when George died on the Central Victorian goldfields near Castlemaine, the circumstances unknown. His family lived in Melbourne before finally settling on a farm at Modewarre, near Geelong. My great-great-grandfather, Edwin, earned his living there as a fisherman, fowler and market gardener.

Three generations of my Stephensons had married in Holy Cross parish church in Haltwhistle: George “the stonemason” in 1822, his parents, William Stevenson and Elizabeth Atkinson in 1799, and his grandparents, William Stevenson and Christina Trumbull in 1767. The fact that all of their children were christened at Presbyterian meetings suggested the family had Scottish origins.

Some 30 years ago, a genealogist employed by an Australian cousin found that George’s grandfather was the William Stevensone who was christened in Oxnam, Roxburghshire, Scotland in 1740, the son of Henry Stevensone, shepherd of Riccalton. Henry had married Isobell Olipher in Oxnam in 1735. The Australian cousin has since died, but in any case, when I contacted him some years ago, he was unable to find the original information that had been supplied to him.

Having established that much, the next task was to try to find a link between my family and Old Bob Stephenson.

I knew that Old Bob was a colliery fireman, that he married Mabel Carr

in Ovingham in 1778 and that they had six children: James, George, Eleanor, Robert, John and Ann. But no-one seemed to know where and when Old Bob was born. The biographer Samuel Smiles wrote in *The Life of George Stephenson* that the parents of Old Bob ‘*came across the border from Scotland on the loss of considerable property*’. George Stephenson’s son Robert, the renowned civil engineer, was also unsure of his grandfather’s origins. While Robert was granted a heraldic bearing taking in some aspects of the Stephensons of Mount Grenan, Ayrshire, his descent from this family was never proved by the College of Arms.

Later, however, Jean Stephenson, an American, claimed a link to Old Bob. Her book *Scotch-Irish Migration to South Carolina, 1772* is full of interesting background material about Old Bob. She says that Ballymoney in County Antrim, Ireland was his birth place.

Jean’s story begins with the birth in 1723 of a Robert Stinson in Riccalton, a rural outpost in Oxnam parish, Roxburghshire, Scotland, just over the border from England. In 1740 Robert moved across the Irish Sea to Ballymoney, County Antrim where he married – Agnes McClelland it is thought -- and raised five children: William, James, Elizabeth, Nancy and Robert. The family attended the Covenanter Presbyterian Church. In 1772, when Lord Donegal raised the rents, the Stephensons elected to migrate with most of the parishioners to South Carolina where land grants were on offer. However, the youngest son, Robert, then aged about 20,

was chosen to stay behind and take his ailing father, Robert, back to his birthplace in Scotland. The plan was that the young Robert would join his brothers and sisters in America after the death of their father, but the American Revolution of 1776 intervened and by the time it was over the younger Robert had moved south to Northumberland. This Robert, the author claims, was the father of George Stephenson, Father of the Railways.

Jean’s grandfather, John Calvin Stephenson, was born in Alabama in 1824 and, as his mother had died, he was reared by his grandparents. They were first cousins, Hugh, son of William Stephenson, and Margaret, daughter of James Stephenson. Hugh and Margaret were born in Ballymoney in 1765 and 1770 respectively. Their descendant, Daniel Green Stinson, was a prolific writer who recorded the early events of the family. The South Carolina Records Office holds some of his original letters.

Jean’s family in America kept in touch with a branch of the Stephensons “*on the other side of the ocean*” until 1936, when they received news of the death of Thomas St. Lawrence Stephenson from his stepson. Thomas, born in 1859, was the son of George Robert Stephenson who was the nephew of George Stephenson and the eventual inheritor of the Stephenson engineering works in Newcastle upon Tyne.

An interesting account, with Riccalton in Oxnam parish appearing in Jean’s history and mine, but sadly it does not help me prove a link to Old Bob Stephenson. Nor do Oxnam parochial records help either, as they were poorly kept in the crucial period of the early 1700s. So the mystery of whether my Stephenson forebears and George Stephenson’s merged in Oxnam or anywhere else remains unsolved.

Rosemary Richardson
(member 8665)
genes@btinternet.com

‘MINING THE INSTITUTE’ AND FAMILY HISTORY

The North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineering has been awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to raise awareness of the Institute, particularly its headquarters building, Neville Hall, in Westgate Road, Newcastle, an often overlooked architectural gem with its magnificent library and lecture theatre.

The project is called ‘Mining the Institute’ and it is structured around a number of topics, exhibitions and day schools. One of our central themes concerns the making of mining communities and what happened to people when the industry declined. Questions such as where did the miners and their families come from? Where did they go when they chose, or were forced to move on,

and did the relatives and friends they left behind remain in contact? One aspect of this theme is called 'Whatever Happened to Aunt Bella and Uncle Geordie?' and will explore the personal stories of the region's mining diaspora. This area will largely focus upon the 20th century decline of the Great Northern Coalfield and the disruption to families and communities.

Miners will naturally figure large in this area but we are anxious to track the movement of women out of the area. Government-sponsored schemes during the 1930s to encourage the unemployed or underemployed women of the coalfield to migrate to the South and the Midlands are an important but neglected aspect of our recent history. The routes and timetables of the United and Hall Brothers coach companies offer clues to the destinations of migrants, but the personal dimension is lacking. The contribution of family historians would be most welcome in this area. We want to know the individual stories of migration and emigration and importantly we want to know of instances where contact was quickly lost. We are also interested in the histories of lead and ironstone communities and would welcome contributions from members with a background in this area.

The Institute is a society of professional mining engineers and one of our aims is to highlight their contribution to the development of mining elsewhere in Britain and overseas. Their role in mining in South Africa, Canada and Australia

will be explored and any information from family members and friends will be invaluable. Miners often followed the engineers and we have evidence of their cultural legacy ranging from quoits and Tyneside-style rowing on Vancouver Island to Primitive Methodism in South Africa. But we need more information on this fascinating dimension to our population and social history. Family history I am sure has a major role to play in this cultural detective work.

'Mining the Institute' begins in June 2013 and will continue until August 2014. There will be lectures and talks in the Lecture Theatre free and open to all. We will also stage small exhibitions, mini festivals and shows featuring miners and visual art, song and music, film archive footage, and the poetry, writing and drama of the region's mining communities.

Bill Lancaster

'Mining the Institute' can be contacted at Dr Bill Lancaster, NEIMME, Neville Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1SE

email:
williamlancaster@btinternet.com

SEARCHING FOR EMMERSON HERON

As any family researcher knows, a second christian name is not uncommon. In fact, to the recipient, it can sometimes feel just as personal as a first christian name because it has usually been added for a specific reason. My second christian name is Emmerson and I've had it for more than 78 years; proud of it, happy to own it ever since I can remember.

I wasn't fully aware of its significance until I was lured into family history about five years ago. I was a late starter but like most of us bitten by the 'where did I come from' bug, I started to dig and my perception of my ancestors and their family life changed dramatically.

My mother was Gladys Heron, born in Bishop Auckland in 1909 and her father, my grandfather, was Emmerson Heron, born in the St Giles district of Durham City in 1875. He died in Darlington some 16 years before I was born so he was a complete stranger before I started my research. For many years I was under the impression I had been given my second name Emmerson in remembrance of my mother's older brother, also named Emmerson Heron, who had been killed in an accident at the age of 26, six months before I was born.

However, as I began to absorb the culture of ancestor hunting it didn't take long for me to realise that the name Emmerson Heron had been around in my family for a long time.

The combination of those two names wasn't unique but neither was it very common. I was aware that the same name combination had occurred in other Heron families, particularly in County Durham.

The consequence was that, whatever research I undertook regarding the wider family picture, I would always have a soft spot for any 'Heron' who had Emmerson as a christian name.

Emmerson, the grandfather I never knew, was a Linotype operator and had received injuries during the First World War but that was where the information ran out. He died in Darlington in 1918. However, he still managed to have an enormous influence on my life because his death meant that my grandmother, Mary Heron, (nee McGurk) with three children under the age of 12, married again and her new husband moved his new family from Darlington to Liverpool. The subsequent marriage of my County Durham-born mother and my father (who was 100% Scottish) meant that I was born in Liverpool rather than Durham. In fact I was the first Liverpool-born child of this particular family of a Durham mother and a Scottish father.

The vast majority of my maternal ancestors were born in County Durham with only an occasional contribution from the few who were born elsewhere, and Grandfather Emmerson had been brought up in

the city of Durham in what seems to have been a normal and reasonably happy family.

His father, my great-grandfather, was also called Emmerson Heron, and was christened in May 1849 at St Margaret's Durham, so continuing a long tradition of the Heron family's association with this well-known Durham church in Crossgate. He is recorded in my tree as Emmerson the master baker because that was how he made his living. He was in business for more than 30 years but died prematurely following an accident at the comparatively early age of 48 in 1898. His death certificate reveals that there was an inquest on 19th April 1898 and he had died of "Shock – Concussion of brain - accidental fall down a staircase on 16 April 1898."

Interestingly, it was not only the son of Emmerson the master baker who perpetuated Emmerson as a christian name. One of the baker's daughters, Edith Annie, married Isaac Arckles in 1897 and perpetuated her father's name with the birth of her first son who was christened Emmerson Heron Arckles just two years after the death of his grandfather.

The previous generation of my family had also spawned its Emmerson Heron, although it was not my 2x great-grandfather, who was called George, but his younger brother and my 2nd great-grand-uncle, Emmerson Heron. By now the only way to differentiate between the Emmersons in my family was to give them nicknames and my grand-uncle became Emmerson Heron the

plumber for obvious reasons. He too was born, and spent his life, in the St Nicholas district of Durham and appears to have been at least as successful a tradesman as his older brother, my 2x great grandfather George, who was a master mason.

Emmerson the plumber lived in and worked out of that well known thoroughfare in the city of Durham, Claypath, although his premises have long since disappeared after the numerous redevelopment schemes in that part of the city over the last 150 years. He conducted a very successful plumbing and brass founding business from the 1840s until his death in 1874. It was very much a family business and over a period of years his three sons joined him as partners. They were his eldest son Henry, his youngest son John, and a middle son, who just happened to be called Emmerson.

Sadly for Emerson the plumber's family, this was the second son to bear that name because the Plumber and his wife Mary had lost their first-named Emmerson as a three-year-old in 1845 when he had died of croup, but the family had followed the often-used practice of using the same christian name for a later child. This second Emmerson eventually left the family plumbing business in 1881 and had a spell as a journalist before he became a licensed victualler. He spent some years as the licensee of the Market Hotel in Durham City's market place before he died in 1897, leaving a widow and three daughters. Sadly, there was to be no Emmerson in his family, but the Market Hotel is still there.

Emmerson the plumber fathered nine children, the eldest of whom was Henry who in turn had four daughters and one son. Henry's son was called Emmerson Heron and in spite of spending his formative years being the only boy in family dominated by women, he seems to have loved his home life. He followed the plumbing trade of his father and his grandfather and the 1911 census showed that Henry, Elizabeth his wife and all four girls and one son were still living together in Claypath. Emmerson was 40 at that time and his sisters, two younger, two older than him were all single, three of them teachers and the other working in her father's business. This Emmerson Heron never married and died, in Durham, at the age of 83 in 1953.

The second son of Emmerson the plumber, John, also went into the plumbing business and he also had a large family and one of those sons was called Emmerson Percival Heron. The 1911 census, showed him as being a law clerk, still living at home with his father, mother and seven siblings. He died in Durham in 1935.

The father of Emmerson the plumber, and George his brother, was my 3x great-grandfather Ralph Heron who was the man who established the family in Durham City at the beginning of the 20th century. Ralph was a country boy initially having been born and brought up in Wolsingham. As a young man he worked as a wool-comber. Like many of his contemporaries he probably found that work in a small country town was sometimes restricted and the lure of the bigger city, even a small city like Durham must have been hard

to ignore. However his early travels took him to Tanfield before he settled into city life in Durham.

Ralph had two families because in 1780 he married a Sarah Short in Tanfield. He might have headed north looking for work but he was only 18 at the time while she was 28. They married in Durham City (at St Margaret's) and subsequently had four children; two girls, two boys. It will come as no surprise that one of them was called Emmerson and, like his three siblings from this marriage, Emmerson was baptised at St Margaret's. He was christened on the 19th August 1787.

Ralph's first marriage lasted for only 12 short years as Sarah died in 1792, leaving him with four young children all of who were under 12 years old. His second marriage to Ann Hammond of Streatlam, Barnard Castle took place in 1798 and they moved to Durham City to start their family, which included my 2x great-grandfather George and his younger brother Emmerson the plumber.

However, the mystery of the origin of Emmerson as a Christian name in my family was finally solved when my researches went back to the Wolsingham marriages of the 1760s and the generation that produced my 4x great-grandfather Ralph Heron. Anyone who has researched pre-19th century families in Weardale will be aware that Heron was not too uncommon a name. Heron/Herrin/Herron/Herring appear regularly on the IGI and in the Bishop's Transcripts, particularly in the Wolsingham, Thornley and Hamsterley areas. However as we travel deeper into

Weardale, through Frosterley and Stanhope and beyond, the name of Heron becomes less popular while the name of Emmerson/Emerson, as a surname, proliferates with an intensity that could make ancestor-seeking a potential nightmare.

Curiously, in spite of an apparent Emmerson stronghold in this part of the Dale, and irrespective of what their numbers might suggest, the Emmersons did not originate in Stanhope. In his significant work *The English Emersons*, published in 1898, Dr P H Emerson suggested, that *“Stanhope is not the cradle of the Emersons as some have thought.”* He went on to state that *“The Emersons migrated to Weardale from other parts of the county, and the Weardale family was probably founded by Robert Emeryson [sic].”* *“Robert was in good position, holding Gibbs Close, in Weardale, and South Bedburn Hall, in Wolsingham Parish. He had two sons, John and William.”* Emerson went on to say *“The family came hither from Wolsingham Parish. They at first held small holdings, but as they increased and became High Foresters, Parkers and Bailiffs to the Bishops their holdings became larger and more numerous. They held by military tenure as we have said in a previous chapter, and evidently divided later on into three sets—the chief or High Forester set, the mining families, and the purely agricultural families: the foresters living at Eastgate, Westgate, Northgate and Gate Castle, the four entrances to the park; the miners living about Lynn Bigg and Easter Blackdean, etc.; and the pure farmers at Horsley and Ludwell, etc. Doubtless Weardale*

forest was a training ground for many of the family who went as foresters elsewhere.”

It was from the descendants of one of these groups that the mother of my 3x great-grandfather Ralph Heron emerged. Her name was Margery Emmerson, born in 1738. She married my 4x great-grandfather, George Heron in Wolsingham in 1758 and it appears that they spent their lives in Wolsingham. Their sixth child, Ralph’s younger brother, was christened Emmerson and was possibly the earliest of my family’s Emmerson Herons. He was born in Wolsingham in 1777 and about 30 years later he created a re-connection with the Emmerson family when, in 1808 he married a Catherine Emerson who had been baptised in Darlington, and that is a line ripe for further exploration.

So that is the first part of my research into my family’s Emmerson Herons and the story is far from over. Work is ongoing, not only on the family research but also on the Emmerson Heron research.

I am aware that there was a large family of Herons over in the St Hilda district of South Shields and Emmerson is a recurring christian name in that family. In fact, there might be a connection with my Herons because I know that a Thomas Heron born in Wolsingham in 1754 might be connected with that family. Was Thomas a brother or cousin of one of my Wolsingham Herons?

Four years ago my early research uncovered my first Emmerson Heron. The 1841 census showed him living

in Bishop Auckland, working in the woollen manufacture industry. He was born about 1786 and subsequent research suggests that he was the Emmerson Heron born in Lanchester in 1784. His son was born in Weather

Hill – another Weardale connection - in 1821. There just has to be more to this story in the future.

Jim (Emmerson) Muil
(member 17769)
fuschiajim@talktalk.net

USE A PARISH REGISTER!

<p>When looking (oft in vain) for ancestors many of us search only for birth and marriage entries and in many instances only in indexes. Burial entries, dependent upon the vicar, can often include an overlooked wealth of information which can add ‘flesh to the bones’ of our ancestors. These entries from the Parish of Whitfield illustrate such a wealth of additional information which would enliven any family tree.</p>	<p>23 July 1738</p> <p>George Lowes of Grandess Know buried at the same place</p> <p><i>(not everyone was buried in the churchyard)</i></p> <p>11 January 1745</p> <p>Mary wife of William Marten the smiddee in Allendaile</p> <p>2 February 1749</p> <p>Rev Utrick Lowthian Rector of this parish died on Thursday 2nd February 1749 about 2 in the morning and was buried at the north end of the altar table on Sunday</p> <p><i>(a bit of favouritism, I think)</i></p> <p>31 May 1761</p> <p>Matthew Martin the elder of White Ouston aged 105 as informed</p>	<p>1 January 1785</p> <p>Francis Routlege of North Dyke Row by intoxication perished among the snow</p> <p><i>(this is not the only example of death through the consumption of alcohol)</i></p> <p>17 June 1793</p> <p>Hugh Bell of the Monk in the parish of Allendale perished by accident in the mine</p> <p>19 January 1799</p> <p>Joseph Martin of Laws who co-habited with and was maintained by the respective farmers of this parish for 60 years and wrought husbandry at intervals 90 years old died of gradual decay</p> <p><i>(must have been a local character)</i></p>
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3 April 1799

Jane Shield of Low Houses in the parish of Allendale late Parker relict of Jno Shield farmer there formerly a weaver 65 years old Dropsy She had been tapped 12 times

(a specific cause of death, not just gradual decay or decline)

22 October 1802

Mary Forster of Stoney Law in the Parish of Allendale widow of George Forster 78 years old suddenly dropped down dead when kindling the fire – nobody present

28 October 1806

Thomas Robson of Monk Woodfoot in the Parish of Allendale son of John Robson labourer 5 years old burnt to death being left alone in the house

31 May 1807

Robert Dickinson of Bulls Hill in the Parish of Allendale son of Joseph Dickinson formerly of Dews Green 28 years old shot himself with an old musket barrel by putting the butt end

into the fire in the presence of his mother and wife

26 February 1808

Jane Hymers wife of Leonard Hymers late of Steel Haltwhistle who left her with four children about 3 years ago being ashamed by reason of his incontinency

4 April 1808

Thomas Johnson of Tow Green refiner (lead) suddenly while preparing his breakfast and purposing to go forth to his labour leaving a small family to lament his loss and to be a burden upon the parish

(sounds as though the Vicar was more worried about the effect upon the Parish Rate)

23 July 1808

Isabella Mandeville relict of Rev Richard Mandeville formerly Curate of this parish of Tow Green New House who had been for some time both blind and speechless supposed to be above 100 years old

27 November 1810

John White son of John and Ann White of Mains Rigg farmer who only survived a few days after an accident having pitched upon his head damaged his spine and was supposed to have ruptured the marrow 26 years old

23 May 1812

Nicholas Armstrong of Dinglebell Hill smelter Accidental death having slipped his foot when passing a bridge over a small burn near Laws and was drowned or killed by the fall 73 years old

I wish that some of these had enlivened my family tree but we are certainly indebted to clergymen who took the time to elaborate such events.

William Veitch
(member 20)
billveitch@virginmail.com

THE UNFORTUNATE WILLIAM JOBLING - THE LAST MAN TO BE GIBBETED IN ENGLAND

The rebellious mood of the miners in the North-East in 1832 is well documented as newly-formed trade unions attempted to improve pay and working conditions which were inadequate and dangerous. The coal owners were completely unsympathetic and resorted to bringing in outside workers and evicting miners and their families from their homes.

Much has been written about Thomas Hepburn and his efforts to achieve these improvements by peaceful and legal means but, alas, inevitably violence broke out during disturbances and eventually the authorities felt an example needed to be made by punishing an involved miner. William Jobling a “*poor and illiterate pitman*” became the unfortunate scapegoat.

Nicholas Fairless, a magistrate, was the victim of an attack by a small group of miners which included Jobling. He, however, had nothing to do with causing the injuries which proved fatal to Fairless within a few days. Protesting his innocence to the end, and without any legal assistance, Jobling was convicted of murder, in spite of the victim, prior to his death, exonerating the innocent man. The magistrate had actually seen his attacker who escaped by running away.

Jobling was hanged outside Durham Assize Courts a few days later. His body was covered in tar, re clothed, strapped in a cage of iron bars which

was taken to Jarrow Slake where it was hung on a gibbet. Feelings were running high and the authorities, fearing that friends would try to steal the body, set a guard of soldiers at the gibbet for the following weeks.

The guard was withdrawn at the beginning of September 1832 and within hours the body of William Jobling and the gibbet disappeared. Many rumours grew about what had happened to his body, one of which suggested that his family had given him a christian burial.

The attached article was found with others on the same subject, amongst the papers of the father (after his death) of a close friend of mine. My friend has been unable to find any connection between his family (Jobling) and the executed William Jobling. Ancestors of the current Mr Jobling came from Stockton on Tees but he has no idea why these papers were kept by his father. Was it indeed just a matter of interest in the surname or did the family have anecdotal tales from the past?

Can anyone help with further details of the pitman or his descendants? Any information at all would be of great interest. All we have found so far is the death of William’s wife Isabella (the 1881 census shows her in the Poor House in Jarrow) in 1891 aged 96!

Ann Sanderson
(member 18027)
bsanderson246@btinternet.com

The Particulars of the GIBBET Being stole away from Jarrow Slake

Late on Friday night or early Saturday Morning September 1st 1832
by some Persons yet unknown

It appears that the friends of the unfortunate man, Jobling, who was hung in chains on Jarrow Slake, pursuant to his sentence at Durham Assizes, have not adhered to the strict notice that was issued on his body being hung up, that according to an act of Parliament, passed in the Reign of William IV, ordering the bodies of murderers to be hung in Chains, there is a Clause, that any person or persons found steeling the bodies from the Gibbet are liable to transportation for seven years.

Even at the time he was hung up it was publicly rumoured that the pitmen, being a spirited set of men, would never allow a comrade and fellow workman long to hang in such a degraded situation, even before the doors of his intimate friends and relatives.

The time passed over for the guard watching the body, and still it was allowed to hang, when a great many gave up all hopes of the task being ever accomplished, in consequence of the smell arising from the putrid state of his body; but to our great surprise late last Night (Friday August 31, 1832) or early this Morning (Saturday) both the body and the Gibbet have totally disappeared, to the utmost relief of the inhabitants of this surrounding neighbourhood. By what means it was taken down, and by whom, is not yet ascertained; but it is strongly surmised that he has been carried out to sea and there sunk for the waters of the deep to secure him from again appearing on the Slake at Jarrow.

Jobling had just hung three weeks and four days.

Douglas and Kent, Printer, Newcastle

GEORGE BIRD PRIMITIVE METHODIST PREACHER OF SOUTH SHIELDS

I was searching the internet like many of us do, looking for nothing in particular and I came across the following magazine in Google Books "The Primitive Methodist Magazine 1871". Curiosity got the better of me and I decided to do a search of the names in the book. I typed in 'Shields' in the search box on the left of the page and I came up with the following obituary on a local Methodist called George Bird. I read the first paragraph and it caught my interest. The article below includes my research and extracts from the magazine and other sources.

George Bird was born in South Shields on December 2nd 1809 to John Bird and Margaret Lindsley. John was a Greenland whaler, a hazardous occupation. Sadly, when George was about fourteen he lost his father, who died in Greenland. "This event, no doubt, tended to make the son, although then steady, even more thoughtful and discreet. He afterwards laboured with great assiduity to support his widowed mother and family as well as himself".

His mother on the 1841 census was residing on the Military Road, Jarrow with Mrs Renwick and Mrs Ainsley and their children. George was living with his wife in Thames Street in South Shields having married Mary Ann Newham at Christ Church Tynemouth on the 10th November 1838. Mary was the daughter of Robert and Martha Newham, her father residing in Commercial Road on the 1841

census. George in the 1851 census was living at 18 Wapping Street. His occupation was a sail maker. The above information came from the census, FreeBMD and Family Search.org. The following is from various sources that often we never read or pass by as being of very little use either to a family or local historian. The language is rather quaint, but reflects to some extent the religious mindset of many people of the day, although I must hasten to add that many people had a lack of morals, especially in seaports.

The Moral Man

George spent the whole of his life in his native town, and took a lively interest in its welfare. Being of a retiring disposition his early life was not stained by gross irregularities; even while in his sinful state those who were found "measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves," would have said that "he was a good moral man."

Marriage & Family Life

In 1839 he was united in marriage to her who is now left, after the peaceable and pleasant enjoyment of thirty years of married life to mourn the loss of one whose household was ever rendered more tranquil and happy by his presence, one who was not only beloved by his wife, but one whom even his domestics came to respect and confide in as a father.

About twenty-eight years ago Councillor Bird became a local preacher, the duties of which office at first occasioned him many mental conflicts; but he performed them not so much because it pleased him to do so as from a solemn sense of duty. He received his first ticket on trial, in May 1840. (George would have to spend a period, generally six months, 'on trial' before being fully accredited as a preacher.) George remained a preacher till the time of his death in 1869 he kept up his connection with the church of his early choice as a preacher. During the earlier period of his local preachership he frequently had to travel thirty miles on a Sabbath, and preach twice, but felt compensated for his physical exhaustion, if he could but believe that in the discharge of his duty God had been glorified, and souls bettered and saved. His last sermon was preached on the Sabbath morning before his sudden death at South Shields, from the words, "Behold the Lamb of God," etc., and it was observed that he preached with more than common liberty and unction.

The Office of Class Leader

He also long sustained the office of class-leader and was very punctual in attending to his duties and most anxious to promote, to the best of his ability, the spiritual welfare of those placed under his care. His members think of him with affectionate esteem and some of them have felt as much bereaved by his death as if he had been one of their relatives.

Mr Bird was a teetotaller of many years' standing and took a great interest in the Temperance movement

and was indefatigable in his exertions to save men from the ruinous habit of imbibing intoxicating drinks. He was a staunch advocate for the prohibition of the liquor traffic and was ever ready to aid any scheme which was calculated to curtail the mischief arising from our drinking usages. The closing of public houses on Sundays, the organization of Bands of Hope, Sons of Temperance and all prudent movements having for their object the present limitation and ultimate and total suppression of the doings of drink, at once secured his ardent sympathy and hearty co-operation.

In 1857 he became a guardian of the poor, an office which he filled for the last twelve years of his life and the duties of which he discharged with punctuality, conscientiousness, and efficiency.

At a meeting of the Board of Guardians of the South Shields Union, held the day after his death, it was unanimously resolved: "That the Guardians feel with unfeigned regret the loss which this Board has sustained by the sudden and very melancholy death of Mr George Bird, a respected and valued member of the Board."

Elected to Town Council

On November 1st 1858, Mr Bird was elected a member of the Town Council of South Shields, a position which he held for the last eleven years. He took an intelligent and deep interest in all the questions which related to the prosperity of the borough. He was not a great orator, but a good worker and was more useful in committee than if he had

talked himself hoarse in the Council. At the first meeting of the Town Council after the death of Mr Bird, it was unanimously resolved "That the sudden death of the late Councillor George Bird, under circumstances so sad and melancholy, calls for an expression of condolence from this Council to his bereaved widow on the irreparable loss which she has so unhappily sustained; and that the same, under the signature of the Mayor, be officially communicated to Mrs Bird by the Town Clerk.

Religious Life

Mr Bird was a Christian in all the walks of life, not merely in doctrine and experience, but in practice. The Rev. T. Smith, Governor of York School, says "Mr Bird was a man for whom I have entertained the highest regard ever since I knew him, for his kindly disposition and Christian bearing endeared him to all who possessed the favour of his friendship." And the Rev. W. Nation says "Mr Bird was one whom to know was to honour, respect, and love. I know of no man for whom I had more respect. Numerous as his public virtues were, his private character was equal to them all. He was peaceable, kind, truthful, benevolent, unassuming, zealously affected in the cause of temperance and religion, the friend of all and the enemy of none."

Mr Bird was much engaged with private and public business, but no man was more faithful to his church and more regular in his attendance on its weeknight and Sabbath services or more sincere in his endeavours to promote its peace and prosperity. Men will long remember his simple,

natural and unobtrusive piety"

Accidental Death

His death was very sudden and unexpected. He went as usual to look into his sail loft about ten o'clock in the morning on December 29th, 1869. He directed that some large sails which were ready to be sent out from the loft, on the third storey, should be lowered into a wherry below. In order to accomplish this, the door of the loft overlooking the Tyne and which opens inward, had to be opened and it seems it was placed at a dangerous angle. Mr Bird took his stand before the open door and, as the sail was being brought out, it caught the door and shut it with such suddenness and force, as to leave Mr Bird nothing to stand on. Tragically, he was thrown out towards the river and after striking several projections in his fall, he rebounded into the wherry. Medical aid was soon in attendance, but it was unavailing, for he never spoke more, but about an hour after the accident breathed his last. "Many fall as sudden, not as safe;" teaching us that there is uncertainty in our worldly prospects and instability in our worldly possessions.

The Funeral

On Monday, January 4th, Mr Bird's remains were interred in the Westoe Lane Cemetery. The ceremony was conducted by the Rev W Fenwick, who delivered a solemn address to the crowded and attentive congregation assembled in the chapel and the Rev P Clarke read the service at the grave. The funeral cortege was very numerously attended, among those present being J C Stevenson Esq, M

P, the Mayor (Alderman Strachan), Alderman John Williamson, T Glover, W James, Drs Armstrong and Callender, W Anderson, Esq, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, several ministers of our own and other denominations, many local preachers, a division of the Sons of Temperance, and a large concourse of people also followed in the mournful procession.

Genealogy, tracing a person's pedigree, is seen by many as family history, while in fact family history is greater than this. It is an overarching term that includes telling the story of a family's place in society or economic achievements using oral and written records or inferring information about lives from wider historical sources. The growth of the internet often derided by some genealogists because of its many inaccuracies and modern researchers' reliance on databases, rather than the original documents and record offices, can in many ways be extremely useful in building a historical picture of your ancestors. It does however mean using a different approach to research. Also bear in mind that many Councils now host historical images of the area which your ancestor lived and these will help in creating a picture of your family.

John Stobbs
(member 14287)
c/o editor@ndfhs.org

Based on an article previously published in the South Shields Local History Group Newsletter issue 58 November 2012

A FAULTY GENE?

Mary Veatch was christened at Simonburn on the 28th March 1762, the daughter of Robert and Mary (nee Waugh) Veatch of Wark.

On the 13th February 1780 when she was just 17 years of age her first Banns of Marriage were called at Simonburn with 24 year-old Thomas Peal. The Banns were duly called for the second time on Sunday the 22nd February. However, on Saturday the 26th February, the day before the final calling of the Banns, came a bombshell. *"The marriage was forbidden by the father of the said Mary Veatch and are so void by the father's dissent declared and in writing"*. So why did he object? What could be the reason? Well, Mary had an illegitimate daughter buried on the 8th December 1780, so had Robert found them 'anticipating the marriage' or that she was pregnant. If either was the situation then one would think that he would most likely want the marriage to go ahead – particularly if he thought she was pregnant.

However, the probable real reason became apparent when, on the 5th March, Thomas Peal had Banns called with Elizabeth Dodds – just one week after his Banns with Mary Veatch had been nullified. This time the marriage went ahead on the 26th March and their first child was christened on the 29th April 1781. So it was a fairly eventful twelve months

for Thomas Peal – a Simonburn Lothario who had a reserve ready and willing – or did he have yet another irate father behind him? All was not lost for Mary as, six years later, she married John Wiley. Father Robert must have approved this time as he signed a witness to the marriage. Sadly this marriage appears to have been short-lived as on the 20th May 1791 Mary, the wife of John Wiley, was buried at Simonburn.

Now Mary had a younger sister Margery who was christened at Simonburn on the 2nd August 1767 and who appears to have been blessed (cursed) with a common gene. She was witness to Mary's marriage to John Wiley despite being only 19 years old. She didn't waste any time as on the 18th August 1787 she married George Elrington at Simonburn. None of the family witnessed this marriage which might be significant (could Robert be having misgivings again but keeping quiet this time?) They had a son George christened on the 17th February 1789 so it was presumably not a 'shot-gun' wedding. Although no record has been found, George must have died as, in January 1793, she had Banns called with John Hemsley. True to form, nothing came of this and on the 14th December 1794 he married Eleanor Little.

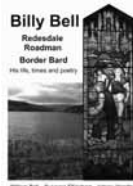
However, Margery had beaten him to the altar because on the 18th

May 1793, just four months after those Banns with John Hemsley, she married John Elliott at Simonburn. He was a shoemaker and the son of John and Ann Elliott of Haydon Bridge. Their first child was christened in the 23rd March 1794, so it was another 'close call'. They had children: John, Robert, Mary, Michael and Ann. At the christenings she was said to be *"the relict of George Elrington"*. True to form, wedding bliss was not to last. On the 11th June 1808 Margery died leaving John with four young children. This proved too much for him as he died on the 5th February 1809 leaving them as orphans.

These sisters could certainly be said to have lived full lives.

William Veitch
(member 20)
billveitch@virginmedia.com

BOOK REVIEWS



Billy Bell, Redesdale Roadman, Border Bard
William Bell, Susanne Ellingham, Johnny Handle

If you like poetry with a ring of honest authenticity which readily evokes a bygone age and a way of life, you will get great pleasure from this book and the story of Billy Bell's life. The authors are to be congratulated on making these poetic descriptions of Borderland life in the early 20th century and its people available.

www.bellingham-heritage.org.uk £8.99
 e-book £2.50 Amazon



Family History on the NET (2013/14)
Colin Waters

Pursuing sources of information on the net to further family history search can be a frustrating and disorganised business. This book, with a wealth of websites, clearly classified under numerous headings, will greatly assist researchers to direct their attention to appropriate sites on, for example, occupations, religious denominations and ancestors from abroad.

www.countrysidebooks.co.uk £9.95



Almost forgotten, the search for aviation accidents in Northumberland
Chris R Davies

This is much more than a carefully documented gazetteer of aviation accidents in Northumberland. The entries include a diary of the excursions to identify the site, eye-witness recollections and accounts of the crash. With its plentiful illustrations, this is far more than a reference book. It is also a memorial to those who died, many during World War II.

www.amberleybooks.com £16.99

LESSONS LEARNED FROM A CIRCUITOUS TRIP AROUND THE MOUNTAINS OF NORFOLK

I was lucky enough to inherit two family bibles (ROBSON/JOICEY and DAVI(D)SON/FORD) which gave me a head-start on my maternal family trees which flourished either side of the Tyne. As I learned to my cost, even the dates there were not all correct. Various pieces of paper comprised the treasure held between the beautifully illustrated pages: a receipt dated 1862 for dressing the grave of two Davidson infants, Margaret & Joseph who died of *scarlatina maligna*, August 1856, at Heugh Terrace, South Shields, duly stamped 'Inland Revenue' and oversigned across a Victorian one-penny lilac, a rather fragile hand-size paper Union Jack (was it waved at Victoria's coronation?), sentimental Victorian scraps and sanctimonious biblical texts, a faded photograph of a Joicey family tombstone miraculously found to be still standing in St Peter's Churchyard Harton (*sincere thanks to the staff of the South Tyneside Cemeteries and Crematoria Dept. for their invaluable help*) leading to a whole new line of information, even an astrological reading by a medium named Ernestine all added to the interest and excitement. I only wish Ernestine had named the intended recipient!

Most puzzling of all was a christening card in respect of Arthur Ford MOUNTAIN dated April 5th 1899 St Mary's Church Tyne Dock, sponsors Sarah Ford, John and William Mountain. Arthur Ford, born South Shields 1882, was the youngest child of my great-grandparents, Sarah and Benjamin Ford. He had five brothers

and only one sister, Margaret Ellen Ford, so it seemed likely that Margaret Ellen had married someone named Mountain and called the first child after her favourite younger brother.

I had a great-uncle Arthur Ford born South Shields 1882, youngest child of the seven born to my great-grandparents, Benjamin Ford, born London 1831, and his wife Sarah Davison, born 1845 in South Shields and daughter of keelman James Davison and his wife Mary Curr(e)y. Of the seven children only one was a girl, Margaret Ellen, born 1875. As she was one of the sponsors at the baptism, it occurred to me that Margaret Ellen may have married a Mountain and named her child after her favourite younger brother.

The surname immediately struck a misplaced chord as I moved to Norfolk many years ago and recognised Mountain as a name indigenous to that county. What was one of my family doing married to someone from 'foreign parts'? I guessed there would be a marine connection as most of the family was involved in keels, coal and related river or seagoing trades.

I searched everywhere for a family unit incorporating Margaret Ellen and young Arthur Ford Mountain. I was unable to find a compatible marriage but the 1901 census showed me a John Mountain with wife Margaret and daughter Elizabeth Ann, aged 10, living at 28 Livingstone Street South Shields. As BMD shows the death of an Arthur Ford Mountain in the third

quarter of 1900 the other information fitted quite nicely. I had totally convinced myself that Margaret had married a Mountain and it seriously affected my ability to keep an open mind.

In the interests of peaceful nights I should have left it there but now fired by curiosity, I wished to establish, absolutely, the facts about Margaret Ellen. Lateral thinking and hours of abortive research led me through many possible scenarios including my great-uncle Arthur having been a very naughty boy with a young lady called Mountain and his mother, Sarah, feeling ashamed or guilty enough to sponsor the child. I then shifted the blame to Margaret Ellen. Had she ignored the dire warnings of what happened to young ladies who did not listen to their elders and betters? Had Margaret given birth to an illegitimate child, then named and shamed the errant father?

By this time I had caught enough red herrings to fill a trawl but 'the lure of the chase' and all that ... Of course it could all have been resolved earlier had I sent for official documentation but having purchased so many main line certificates the purse strings squeaked very hard at the prospect of going out on a limb for details of a mere 'twig'. *We've all been there!*

Three years down the line and still beset by brain-teasing over little Arthur, I released the moths and sent for the record of his birth. *Another lesson learned – he has no familial connection whatever!* Born at 262 South Eldon Street South Shields 12th March 1899 he was the son of William Mountain, coal trimmer and Susan Mountain formerly Gifford. Census

information shows William to be from coastal Norfolk although Susan was born in Shields. By 1899 she had not learned to write and on registering her son's birth just made her mark.

Why was little Arthur named after my great-uncle? Heaven knows. I wondered if perhaps a young, unmarried Susan had 'got into trouble', and the Fords had been supportive until William 'came up to scratch' but records show Susan and William married in South Shields in the first quarter of 1880 and at the time of young Arthur's birth already had 3 other children, Jane c.1880, John c.1882 Hannah c.1890. So it seems that although Sarah sponsored this late arrival, no salacious story lies behind this anomaly. Perhaps Sarah and family had shown the Mountains some kindness and they named him in gratitude, or perhaps they were simply very good friends as the menfolk most likely worked together.

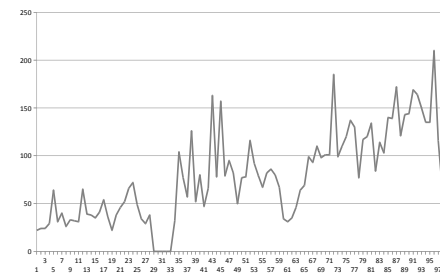
Curiosity partially satisfied I have now shelved the search on the Mountains, which leaves me with young Arthur's birth certificate and his beautiful baptism card. It is very sad that the poor little chap did not make it onto any census return but, because of the card, at least his existence has not gone unnoticed down the generations. In order that he may achieve his rightful place in family history, I will be only too delighted to gift the documents to his proven descendants.

Judi Lawton
(member17763)
myra.lawton@homecall.co.uk

BISHOPWEARMOUTH BURIALS A FEW SPECULATIVE THOUGHTS

The 17th century burial records of Bishopwearmouth give some indication of the steadily increasing population of the townships of Barnes, the Ford, Sunderland, the Pallion, Burdon, Silksworth and others, even if there are some inevitable irregularities caused perhaps by missing records, turbulent times, the absence of a priest or outbreaks of disease.

What is noticeable is that the clear majority of burials of those not from the two counties of Durham and Northumberland can be associated with coastal shipping or seafaring, as is indicated by their origin, their occupation and the nature of their death. There are at least 150 over the century, including 14 mariners, 8 sailors, 4 seamen, 1 shipboy, 1 merchant, 1 captain, 1 master of a ship and 1 master and mariner. It is clear that these were hazardous occupations, not only at sea but also in port.



Burials at Bishopwearmouth 1600-1699

5.7.1627 Roger BUNTING
Thorneham [near Kings Lynn] slaine
at Sunderland with an anker

4.7.1639 Deodatus HUNTINGTON
Lincolnshire ship boy aquis obrutus
[drowned]

Yorkshire is well represented. Among the 8 men from Whitby is

24.3.1698 Adam NEWTON master and mariner
One entry gives the impression that Staithes was an unfamiliar place.

25.8.1695 William WETHERLY of ye town call'd Steyth on ye coast of Yorkshire

The highest numbers are from Scarborough and Hinderwell (20)

9.8.1671 Christopher POSTGATE Scarborough slain

and Bridlington [Burlington], Hunaby and Hornsea (18)

14.9.1636 Samuel ANDERSON Bridlington obrutus [drowned]

The Humber provided men from [Kingston upon] Hull, Kirkley and Aldbrough.

8.12.1699 Robert HARRYSON from Hull seaman drowned

Inland ports figure also:

13.8.1664 George VIOLET York master of a ship drowned

1.4.1658 John SHIPHARDE Selby mariner

[Kings] Lynn [Linn Regis] and Yarmouth entries indicate much trade with Norfolk.

29.4.1644 John GAMBLE Great Yarmouth merchant

Place-names in Suffolk are not immediately recognisable, Lestoff

or Loust [Lowestoft], Dunnage [Dunwich], Weevney [Waveney], Soul, Sole or Sowell [Southwold].

24.8.1658 John BUFIELD Goulston? drowned in Sunderland river

As for the South-East, there is a modest number of seafarers from the Thames. London, Greenwich, Barking and Wapping are mentioned. More numerous are those from Kent.

20.6.1672 John EMMS Dover of the Dover Castle frigate of Dover

One notorious entry is

5.7.1665 Jeremy READ Gillingham bringer of the plague of which dyed about 30 persons out of Sunderland

North Kent and the Medway are frequently to be found, in particular Ramsgate.

25.10.1657 James HOLLEN Romansgate [Ramsgate] Isle of Tenet [Thanet] St Laurence son of William HOLLEN and Elizabeth SPENSER

It can be suggested that family members travelled with the crew or that there were passengers.

16.3.1675 Grace HARRYSON London base daughter of Thomas HARRYSON

If those from further away weren't buried at sea, was the preferred practice to give them a decent burial on land ... or had they met an untimely death ashore?

21.5.1608 Jacob WILSON Middlebrook Zealand

8.3.1619 Simon PETERS Dutchman mariner

8.3.1648 Frederick FLOWERS Hamburg a Dutchman

6.8.1673 John DEACON Lubeck Holland

24.10.1677 John de MILLENER North Bergen

14.3.1678 James BUTCHER Calice

4.11.1689 Antonio FULGIESS Bruges

13.10.1695 Joseph BURDEAX Cottenbrough Swedeland

The 17th century rendering of place names can be puzzling, as well as the apparent anglicising of personal names.

What evidence might there be for settlement of people from the South? Did sailors find wives in the port of Sunderland? The family name Skarbrough can be found in the earliest extant parish records and there are some 25 marriages which also lend support to the idea. On the other hand, the brides, once married in their home parish, may have left with their husbands.

20.11.1614 Richard DANE Scarborough & Isabell WATSON Wearmouth

26.8.1648 George OWMER Sandwich & Barbara WICKCLIFFE Bishopwearmouth

23.12.1648 James BENSON Saltburn Beck Redcar & Alice BELLY Wearmouth

9.6.1653 William BROOKE Margate & Mary HARRISON Bishopwearmouth

8.1.1657 William TOOT Grimsby & Isable THOMPSON Saltpans Bishopwearmouth

18.10.1657 John HILL York mariner & Elizabeth CARTER Bishopwearmouth daughter of John CARTER of Akiston in the parish of Stillingfleete Yorkshire

Do any of the family names of these grooms, particularly the more unusual ones, figure in the present-

day phone book for the area? Some certainly will! Does this indicate the distant origin of your ancestors? Just possibly ... but don't jump to any conclusions!

John Ward
(member 9113)
c/o editor@ndfhs.org

MCMURROUGH BRICK WALL

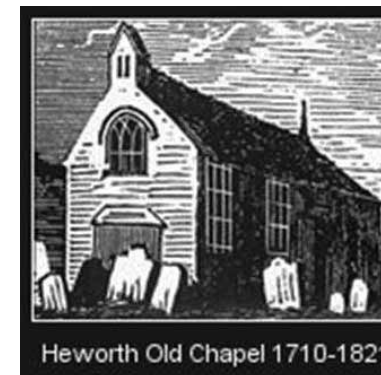
I was talking to a distant cousin, Susan, from Vancouver Island in Canada, about our family history. She was bemoaning the fact that she had hit a brick wall that she could not break down. I offered to have a quick look to see if anything came up. It became a lengthy but interesting process in which some surprising historical facts came to light.

Her great-great-grandfather was Duncan McMurrough (the 1871 census has McMarrough) a shipwright born in Ireland, living in Sunderland with his wife, Mary Ann, one son and three daughters. The census stated that the eldest child, John McMurrough, was born in Felling, the next two girls in Hull in 1866 and 1867 and the third in Jarrow in 1870. Their last child was born in Sunderland in 1874.

Susan had bought the death certificate for Duncan which showed he died in Sunderland in 1878, aged 46 years. The descendants of the McMurroughs are easily located, some still in the Sunderland area.

Using the above information as a starting point I began my search. I first looked for the marriage of Duncan and

Mary Ann and found nothing, then for the birth of John McMurrough, their eldest child, in the Felling area – nothing. Using FreeBMD I managed to trace the birth of the two girls in the Sculcoates district of Hull. One was registered as McMurrough and the other as McMurray. So I went back to see if a John McMurray had been registered in the Gateshead area at the appropriate time. There was a John Wood McMurray born in the first quarter of 1864. Susan obtained his birth certificate and from it I found he was born 1.3.1864 at High Felling, Heworth. His mother was Mary Ann McMurray, formerly Wood, his father Duncan McMurray, iron shipwright. I tried once again to locate a marriage for his parents with no success.



Heworth Old Chapel 1710-1821

Mary Ann McMurrugh recorded her age consistently in the 1871, 1881 and 1891 census returns, and her birth place – Felling. After searching the birth registers for County Durham over the likely years nothing was forthcoming. The 1851 census gave one possible lead. A Mary Ann Wood aged 9 was living in Felling with her father and grandmother. Her father was John, pitman, born c 1813 in Heworth and her grandmother was Mary, widow, born c. 1791 also in Heworth. However, Mary Ann's birth place was given as Tanfield.

Ancestry threw up a baptism of a Mary Ann Wood, daughter of John and Ann at All Saints Newcastle in 1842 but I could see no link to my girl.

I posted the problem on the NDFHS Forum and had great help from Geoff and Ken. Among other things Ken looked at the Tanfield records and found a baptism of a Mary Ann Wood, daughter of Hugh and Hannah. She was ruled out as she was still in Tanfield with her parents in later censuses. Geoff cautioned me about simply deducting 9 from her age in the 1851 census to find her birth year – he was right to do this. Ken also told me that registration was not compulsory until the mid-1870s. I have since found out that many people believed that if you had your child baptised and entered in the parish records then there was no need to register with the civil authorities.

The focus now moved to find a marriage for John and a mother for Mary Ann. There were surprisingly few marriages for men of this name in the area, the best match being one in Gateshead in the December quarter of 1840. The certificate showed John

Wood, pitman of full age, marrying Ann Burn, also of full age, at St Mary's Gateshead 21.11.1840. Both gave their address as Jackson Street, Gateshead. I found a couple of records for baptisms of girls named Ann Burn within the likely age range. I was able to eliminate the one in Morpeth using later census records. It left me with Ann Burn born 1815 in Newcastle All Saints Parish. This set me thinking, perhaps the Ancestry hint re the baptism of Mary Ann Wood was not a red herring. Could her mother have returned to her birth parish for her daughter's baptism?

I do not live near to the appropriate archives, so using the Bishop's Transcripts online I was able to check out the details. Most of the information fitted: baptism 21.11.1842, father - John, pitman, mother - Ann, abode Andrews House. I had no idea where this was and spent serious time searching through historical directories and looking at old maps of Newcastle to try to locate Andrews House – all to no avail. I resorted to using a search engine and typing in Andrews House, Newcastle. All that appeared was information about a 1930s building of that name. Then a breakthrough! I removed Newcastle from the search and found a mine named Andrew's House Colliery, which was sunk in 1840, about 5 miles to the south-west of Newcastle. I reckoned that it would be in County Durham so out came my very old map of the county and I eventually found it – just outside Tanfield. So the 1851 census information was probably correct. I think that Felling must have been the first place Mary Ann Wood remembered living in rather than her birth place.

I decided to look at John Wood's birth, which was about 1813. The Jarrow with Heworth Bishop's Transcripts for that time are online so I was able to go through them. I found the baptism record: birth date – 16.6.1812, baptism – 23.7.1812, his father - John Wood of Newburn, collier, and his mother Mary, daughter of Thomas Anderson of Felling. To my surprise the record stated that his father was deceased. The marriage of Mary Anderson to John Wood of Newburn 22.2.1811 was also in the Transcripts. The death of their first son, Thomas, was recorded on 23.8.1811 at Low Felling, aged 10 weeks. These events recorded John as a coal miner.

I carried on reading and came across pages and pages of burials of men and boys on 22.7.1812. When I looked closely it revealed that all had died on 25.5.1812 and all were colliers. I had stumbled across a mine disaster and John Wood was one of the victims.

The Durham Mining Museum had an excellent account of the happenings at Felling or Brandling Main Colliery. At 11.30am on the morning of May 25th, just as shifts were changing, there was a huge explosion which killed 91 men and boys of the 125 who were in the mine at the time. The town of Heworth was covered in a layer of dust so thick that footprints were left in it.

Tom Wood (no relation) who is researching the families involved in the disaster gave me the following information.

"First of all, the Felling colliery disaster was the biggest, in terms of

those killed, in the British coal field at that time. Felling was also one of the safest pits; it had two mine shafts, the ventilation was good, which kept the mine gases to a minimum. At the time of the disaster the shifts were changing over, so there were twice the numbers of men and boys underground. There were some survivors, some of whom perished in another explosion on Christmas Eve 1813 in the same pit.

I had an idea to follow up on the victim's families to see how they fared after the explosion. It is both interesting and saddening but enjoyable. At the time we started we were looking to get as many descendants to the 200th commemoration in 2012 as possible. For one family, the Greeners, it was the onset of tragic episodes. They lost family in 1812, 1813 and 1847 and again at New Hartley in 1862, in which 204 lives could have been saved had the mine had a second shaft.

In other families all male members were wiped out. George Sanderson's wife was one of those pregnant at the time of the disaster. She gave birth in October, the child died the next day, the wife four days later, leaving an orphaned daughter.

It was at the time when there was a pact between the coal owners, magistrates and the press, not to publicize reports of accidents in coal mines. This disaster was the beginning of some sort of safety in coal mines, thanks to Rev John Hodgson (Vicar of Heworth). His was the first report of a mine disaster. He brought together men to form

a society to improve safety in coal mines.



The Sunderland Society was formed, which led to the invention of the miners' safety lamp. This caused controversy for the society employed the eminent scientist Sir Humphrey Davy to invent such a method of testing for gas. Whilst George Stephenson a local colliery engineer was already in the advanced stages of his lamp invention, Humphrey took the accolade."

The date on the memorial is incorrect. It should read 25th May 1812

A memorial to those killed stands in the parish church of St Mary at Heworth with plaques listing the names of those who lost their lives.

Mary Wood, nee Anderson, never remarried. As we have read, her son followed in his father's footsteps, working all his life as a miner. He died in the Gateshead district in 1876 aged

about 64.

As to the McMurrrough's – I managed to find Duncan in the 1861 census enumerated as McMurray, living in Ormonde Street, Jarrow, single, a shipyard labourer born in Ireland and a boarder with the family of Andrew Wilson, bottle maker, and his family. The household carried on to the next page where a general servant by the name of Mary Ann Wood, single, aged 19, born Sunderland, is to be found. I presume that Andrew Wilson was responsible for passing her details to the enumerator and that he gave an incorrect place of birth or just guessed at it. I suspect this may have happened a lot with servants.

It would seem that Duncan and Mary Ann were acquainted! I am quite sure that this is the Mary Ann Wood who was Duncan McMurrrough's wife or partner.

The McMurrrough brick wall stands firm I still haven't found a marriage record or birthplace for Duncan.

I know that a large number of Irish families came to work in local industries but I cannot find any other with the same surname, which seems to originate in County Carlow. Can anyone out there enlighten me?

Sources
www.stmaryschurchheworth.com – illustration of the Chapelry
www.dmm.org.uk Durham Mining Museum – photo of plaque and information

Meg Hartford
 (member 17262)
mandm.hartford@ntlworld.com

VISITATION OF GOD

An important piece of information in family history research is the date an ancestor died.

Websites can provide browse options to give an indication of which quarter of year from mid-1837 to 2006 the death was registered with the appropriate reference of place, volume and page number. A certified copy of the actual certificate can be obtained, at a price, from the GRO if necessary. For some researchers the year date is sufficient but the actual certificate has a wealth of information – provided you have the correct person! Personal experience and having a common Northumberland surname, leads me to say that this is not always successful ... and the NDFHS has received 'wrong person certificates' for its collection from time to time!

The certificate usually contains a photocopy of the original entry in the register which was handwritten by the Registrar varying from beautiful copperplate script to almost indecipherable scrawl (one ancestor's occupation which looked like Forge man turned out to be Surgeon!). For those who have not used death certificates before, the information is in a standard sequence, namely date of death, name, age, occupation, cause of death, signature, description and residence of informant, when registered, signature of registrar. Modern certificates have this information arranged differently. The details in old certificates may produce surprises, for example, age

may be over- or under-estimated if the informant is not a direct relative. Occupation may be unexpected. Cause of death probably will be in archaic medical terms. Signature of informant may be X and may be husband, wife, child, close relative or friend, neighbour, employer or deputy coroner. Residence may give further research leads.

I have 40 certificates of direct ancestors, many from Northumberland, from 1839 to 1989 which have provided interesting details and some surprises. Although some may find interest in death to be morbid, I believe that we learn much from the causes in what were generally hard and testing times. One surprise was that 60% of the sample lived beyond 70 years and 15 people died at 80+ years. The range of causes was, as anticipated, fairly wide. These have been grouped in general terms as they affected various parts of the body. Some old medical terms have been retained. Where several causes are given, the first is used. The results are expressed as a percentage of the sample population with the age range in brackets. Brain 17.5% (50-84); heart 15% (66-88); lungs/airways 15% (59-88); liver 5% (69-81); stomach 5% (54-80); intestine 5% (37-70); urinary tract 5% (77-81); diabetes 2.5% (65); senility 7.5% (75-83); old age 12.5% (74-88); natural decay 5% (65-73); other 5% (73-81). There was only one case of consumption (TB) reported which may reflect the rural rather than the urban living conditions of most of the sample population.

As a Type 1 (insulin dependent) diabetic for almost 40 years, it was interesting for me to note the connection to my great - grandmother who died long before the discovery of life-saving insulin. Genetics are thought to play a role in Type 1 diabetes – an uncle from the same link and I developed the condition at the same age. The certificate of one person in the group designated ‘other’ gave the cause of death as ‘hydrophobia 49 days after being bitten by a dog.’ Aware that rabies in Britain is extremely rare as a result of strict quarantine rules in place, I checked websites for historical information about the disease. Apparently rabies was relatively common in the late 19th century with occasional outbreaks of near-epidemic proportions which resulted in the adoption of quarantine laws. Oh, the ‘Visitation of God’ of the title is the cause of death recorded on the 1861 certificate of a North Yorkshire male ancestor. The informant was a deputy coroner. I had read previously that this verdict was applied to events such as ‘struck by lightning or ‘blown off rooftop whilst repairing’ so I was intrigued to find out more. I obtained information from the Whitby Gazette about the inquest held a few days after the death. He was ‘found dead in bed’. I guess he retired the night before without any signs of illness but he was 81 years old after all which was a good innings for someone born about 1780. I have paid my respects when I visited his last resting place some years ago.

To illustrate causes of death in early 19th century parish records, here are some examples from Auckland St Helen:

- 18 August 1807
Margaret Lawns, servant, aged 18, died by poison
- 14 January 1809
Sally Eales, daughter of Matthew, parish clerk, aged 9 months, died of the smallpox
- 3 April 1810
Elizabeth Herron of West Auckland, widow of Thomas Herron, molecatcher, aged 74, died in an apoplectic fit
- 26 Jun 1810
Mary Longstaff of West Auckland, wife of Michael, banksman, aged 41 years, died of consumption
- 2 July 1810
Elizabeth Natt, widow of Mr Natt, officer of excise, aged 86, died of a cancer of the breast.
- 1 April 1811
Peter Spencer of Bishop Auckland, carpenter, dropt dead in a moment
- 17 November 1811
Rebecca Potter of West Auckland, wife of William, joiner, aged 54, died of a dropsy
- 20 January 1812
Robert Dennison, common beggar, aged 75, dropt from his ass quite dead.

Denis Robson
(member 14558)
denis.robson@ntlworld.com

MEMBERS’ INTERESTS AND QUERIES

interests@ndfhs.org.uk

This section of the Journal allows 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: interests@ndfhs.org

If you wish to have your interests or queries published, send a paragraph outlining your areas of research, problems, etc. to Phil Thirkell at the above address. 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 that they receive as a result of their entry in this column.

370 Kenneth L Bocock, 2 Jedwell Close, New Earswick, York YO32 4DQ

email: kenbocock@talktalk.net

My grandfather’s brother, Walter **BOCOCK** (1866ff.), husband of Ann, formerly **STOCKS**, lived at Hetton le Hole. 27.7.1885, he informed the registrar of the birth of son, George William, 29.6.1885. His occupation was given as insurance agent. George William’s baptism 18.8.1885 was listed in the Hetton le Hole Primitive Methodist Circuit Register. Walter was described then as a miner aged 19. I have found no further record of Walter. His widow married James **CALVERT** at South Hetton in 1891, less than the statutory 7 years’ gap between disappearance and remarriage. Any information about Walter’s death and burial would be greatly appreciated.

1336 John Robson, 9 Lacey Drive,

Naphill, Buckinghamshire HP14 4RR

email: rieverjohn@yahoo.co.uk

Trying to find the birth and parents of Thomas Sprott **NICHOLSON** on the 1911 Newcastle Census living at 80 Mary St with wife, 4 children, an elderly boarder and visitor George **CESSFORD**, aged 6. I need to find a relationship between Thomas and George’s parents Emily, formerly **ROBSON**, and George Cessford. Can anyone help please?

8117 Joy Johnson, PO Box 950, Wahroonga, New South Wales 2076, Australia

email: joy.i.johnson@bigpond.com

Seeking information on ancestors and descendants of Christopher **GRAHAM** and Sarah **BAINBRIDGE**, married in 1820 at Penrith, Cumberland.

Christopher was a miner, b. c.1794 at Haltwhistle, Northumberland.

9145 Carol Knight, 3 Prior Terrace, Corbridge, Northumberland NE45 5HN

email: carol@knight33.plus.com

Looking for information about Samuel **SIMPSON** mar. Martha Ellen **KNIGHT** of Wharton St, Coundon Co. Durham at the Parish Church in 1901. His occupation is shown as "groom (domestic)" and age 33. After 3rd son, Obadiah, was born at Wharton St in 1905 Samuel disappears from the records. I can't find a birth or death for him in Co. Durham. Family rumour is that he went to Australia. Martha Ellen remarried in 1919 stating she was a widow but there is nothing to indicate that he died in WW1. Can anyone help please?

15102 Denise Gozin, 10 The Avenue, Carr, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S668PP

email: denise.gozin@yahoo.co.uk

Desperately looking for help in finding any information regarding whereabouts of William **CROSIER**, b. 1854 at Burleigh St, Sunderland, son of William Crosier, merchant seaman, and Ann née HULL. William married Margaret **GIBSON**, b. 1859, daughter of Andrew Gibson and Mary née **FLYNN**. In the 1881 Census the family are all living together in Newbottle. In 1887 William and Mary, with their 3 children, moved to Moss St, Sunderland and the 1891 Census shows their 3 children split up and living with relatives. I can find no census records from then on relating

to William or Margareth. In 1905 William is recorded on the death certificate of his daughter as a farm labourer living at Hawthorn Village. His death certificate in 1909 was at the Union Workhouse. After 1881 these are the only two addresses referring to William that I can find. Margareth died in 1919 at Back 52 Norman St. No other reference to her in has been found. The family name of Crosier is often misspelled as Grozier or Groyzer.

17408 Betty Rowland, 20 St Michael's Close, Skidby, Cottingham, East Yorkshire HU16 5TY

Looking for information regarding the business and staff of compass makers trading in Church St, Monkwearmouth under the name of Cuthbert **HUTCHINSON**. The firm was there from 1844 to 1888 then moved to Norfolk St, Bishopwearmouth under the name of Hutchinson and Jackson which closed in 1899.

17638 Judith Johnstone, Stoneraise Cottage, Westward, Wigton, Cumbria CA7 8LY

My great-grandmother, Mary Ann **CURD** is recorded as being a lady's maid at the home of John Anthony **WOODS**, banker, of Benton Hall, Northumberland, on the 1881 Census. She was then 21. Does anyone know of archives which might tell me more about when she joined the household and when she left?

18512 Mrs Susan Sharp, 46 Station Road, Collingham, Newark on Trent, Nottinghamshire NG23 7RA

email: sue.alan.hylton.house@talktalk.net

Having trouble finding the birth certificate for my grandad. The only real record I have is a marriage certificate of a man I believe to be him. He married my grandma in 1919 (my own father was born in 1917). On this certificate he gave his occupation as drayman. I believe he worked for the Newcastle Brewery. Are there any employment records for this company and if so how I can access them, if at all? His name was James William **NICHOLSON**, or William James Nicholson, b. either 1878 or 1880.

18536 Peter Barker, Flat 6 Millstream House, 6 Millhams Street, Christchurch BH23 1DW

email: weybarkers@aol.com

Would be grateful to hear from anyone researching the **OGLE** and **GRAY** families. My ancestor Thomas Ogle, master mariner, d. c.1836 at North Shields. I cannot trace his parents but possible candidates are William Gray and Isabella Ogle who had son, Thomas Ogle, bp. 1787 at Tynemouth. I am wondering whether William Gray was related to Earl Grey's family and who was Isabella? Any help welcomed.

18803 Miss Doreen Irlam, 3a Ashkirk Street, Gorton, Manchester M18 8LS

email: irlam@mypostoffice.co.uk

Researching Elizabeth **SANDERSON** b. 1897 at Easington, Co. Durham. She appears on the 1911 Census at Tholnbeck (House) Collegiate School, Woodlands Rd, Darlington but I can't find any information about this establishment. Her family are on the 1901 Census at Easington Village:

parents James and Mary Eleanor Sanderson and several children. She must have been sent away to the school and I would like to find out why and what subjects would have been taught. Any information about the school, or where I might find out, would be most welcome.

18829 Sheila Armstrong, 85 Brackenbury Road, London N2 0SS

email: sheilaarmstrong@aol.com

Trying to trace more information about 2 great-grandparents: Robert **DODD**, master mariner by 1909, according to daughter Mary Hay Dodd's marriage certificate. She married Calvert **ARMSTRONG** in 1909 and later had 4 children. Robert was b. c.1845-50 at Sunderland. It would be interesting to know about the ships he sailed on, or indeed any information about him as I am at a very early stage in researching my family history. Also great-grandmother Isabella **WIDDRINGTON**, b. 1864, mar. John **LINDSLEY** in 1882, had 5 children. Her marriage certificate shows her father was John **WIDDRINGTON**, shoemaker of 145 High St, Sunderland in the 1880s. Any information would be gratefully received.

18911 Margaret Tait, 25 Broadlee Bank, Tweedbank, Galashiels, TD1 3RF

email: mgt.t@hotmail.com

Trying to find information on George **HOWIE** or **HOWEY** b. in England, Northumberland presumably, in 1775, mar. at Eccles, Berwickshire in 1820 to Margaret **STEVENSON**. They had a daughter and a son from whom quite an extensive family has been formed.

RESEARCH REQUESTS

The Society is able to accept requests for research subject to the following conditions:

1. Only records held by the Society can be searched (a catalogue is available on fiche or on the website www.ndfhs.org.uk).
2. Requests should be straightforward and concise – no long and detailed queries please. The event to be searched for and the year must be specified.
3. The exact record to be searched must also be specified. In the case of church registers this must include the name of the parish. (We only hold transcripts of the registers)
4. Searches will cover two years either side of the year specified, except for GRO BMD searches which will cover eight consecutive quarters.
5. This service is only available to Society members who should quote their **membership number** on the application.
6. Research requests may be sent by email to researchcentre@ndfhs.org.

Cost: **The first four searches per annum are free.** For subsequent searches, the standard search fee, which should accompany the request, is £4 (or the equivalent in dollars) per event searched. Cheques (sterling only) should be made payable to 'NDFHS' & sent to NDFHS (research) 7th Floor Percy House Percy St Newcastle NE1 4PW. Payment may also be made through Paypal.

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~ RESEARCH TO BE DONE ~

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FORENAME(S)

NAMES TO HELP SEARCH (eg father, bride)

EVENT (eg baptism, marriage, birth, death, census)

YEAR

Please copy this form and use it for your future research requests.

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Situated close to Sunderland's Local Studies Library with easy access to public transport for Newcastle, Durham and South Shields research centres.

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Contact Pam Tate on 0191 567 2438, or email pamela.tate@googlemail.com, or visit our website at www.bedeguesthouse.com

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Many people with ancestors in Northumberland & Durham also have ancestors in Cumberland.

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For further details please see our website cumberland-ancestor-trackers.moonfruit.com

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Longtown, Carlisle CA6 5NW

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A5	Full page	1 issue £40	4 issues £140
A6	½ page landscape	1 issue £25	4 issues £80
A7	¼ page portrait	1 issue £15	4 issues £55



editor@ndfhs.org

BRANCH MEETINGS DIARY

Members of the Northumberland & Durham Family History Society are welcome to attend the meetings of any of the branches

BLYTH BRANCH

The Constitutional Club
Croft Road
Blyth NE24 2JL
3rd Tuesday in the month
7.30pm
18 JUN AGM and general discussion
Contact: Carol Trinder
blythbranch@ndfhs.org

BELMONT BRANCH (DURHAM)

Belmont Community Centre
Sunderland Road
Gilesgate
Durham DH1 2LL
3rd Wednesday in the month
1pm
19 JUN *Durham Cathedral: J Thackeray*
17 JUL *Durham Bishops in the Middle Ages: J A Balmer*
Contact: John Balmer
durham-belmontbranch@ndfhs.org

GATESHEAD BRANCH

Pelaw Social Club
Kirkstone Road
Pelaw
Gateshead NE10 0XQ
1st Tuesday in the month
7.30pm
JUN 4 *Primitive Methodism in the North-East: John Stobbs*
Contact: Bill Lumsden
gatesheadbranch@ndfhs.org

LONDON BRANCH

Society of Genealogists
14 Charterhouse Buildings
Goswell Road
London EC1M 7BA
(times vary)
13 JUL 2.30pm *Chester le Street in the 17th & 18th C: John Banham*
23 NOV 10.30am *Durham in the Civil War: David Butler*
Contact: David Brown
londonbranch@ndfhs.org

NEWCASTLE BRANCH

Room 3
Brunswick Chapel
Northumberland Court
Newcastle NE1 7BJ
1st Wednesday in the month
2pm
5 JUN *Bolam Church & Robert Raynes: Geoffrey Bridges*
3 JUL *Be amazed at Belsay: Geoff Hughes*
4 SEP *Wandering the New World: Lawrence Jones*
Contact: Kevin Riley
newcastlebranch@ndfhs.org

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND BRANCH

Bell View Resource Centre
33 West Street
Belford NE70 7QF
3rd Saturday in the month 10am
21 SEP *In Search of Emily Wilding Davison, Northumbrian Suffragette: Sorting the facts from the fiction: Andy Griffin*
19 OCT *Members' Forum*
16 NOV *Making Sense of the Census: Anthea Lang*
Contact: Valerie Glass
north.northumberlandbranch@ndfhs.org

SOUTH TYNESIDE BRANCH

St Hilda's Visitor Centre
Market Place
South Shields NE33 1AN
3rd Wednesday in the month
7pm
JUN 19 nb 2pm *Visit to Percy House*
Contact: Geoff Nicholson
southtynesidebranch@ndfhs.org

TYNEDALE BRANCH

Community Centre
Gilesgate
Hexham NE46 3NP
2nd Thursday in the month 7pm
JUN 13 *Death, Diseases & Dastardly Deeds: Anthea Lang*
JUL 11 *The Parish Chest: Wendy Stafford*
SEP 12 *History of Medicine in Newcastle: Jo Bath*
Contact: Susanne Ellingham
tynedalebranch@ndfhs.org

WANSBECK & DISTRICT BRANCH

Community Project Centre
Longhurst Road
Pegswood
Morpeth NE61 6XG
1st Wednesday in the month
1.30pm
5 JUN *Newspapers 1770: Maureen Dyer*
3 JUL *Secret Bases of North Tynedale & Redesdale: Dr Ian Roberts*
Contact: Wendy Stafford
wansbeckbranch@ndfhs.org