

Newsletter

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How Good is Your Memory?

Editorial

I hope everyone has had a good Christmas. The committee and myself wish all our fellow genealogists a Happy New Year and good hunting for that elusive ancestor.

In this edition of the Newsletter you will find an interesting item by our President, Mrs Beech. The second part of my search for the true Edward Booth and a terrific article about a family reunion by Bill Pollock. There is an unusual news paper report about a funeral in Cheddleton and items about the Fiche Club and the Monumental Inscription representatives.

At the November Committee Meeting it was decided to offer a £30 donation to Wesley Methodist Church Epworth St. (where our Monday meetings are held).

North Staffs Branch

Monday Meeting Programme

- Jan. 3rd. Open Evening.
 Feb. 7th. Talk by Mrs C. Walton
 "The French Connection"
 Mar. 7th. AGM followed by an
 Open Evening.

Can you name, in succession, all the kings and queens who have ruled England since the Norman Conquest of 1066? I can. How? Because I learned by heart a mnemonic (a memory aid) in the form of a rhyme. This was taught to schoolchildren in Victorian times so I have added a verse to bring it up to date. This is how it goes:

Willie, Willie, Harry, Ste.
 Harry, Dick, John, Harry three.
 One, two, three, Ned, Richard two.
 Henry four, five six then who?
 Mary, Lizzie, James the vain.
 Charlie, Charlie, James again.
 William and Mary, Anna Gloria.
 Four Georges, William, then Victoria.
 Edward, George, then same again.
 And now Elizabeth doth reign.

Here are the monarchs names according to the history books:

William I, William II, Henry I, Stephen (and Matilda), Henry II, Richard I, John, Henry III, Edward I, Edward II, Edward III, Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI, Edward IV, Edward V, Richard III, Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I, Elizabeth I, James I, Charles I, Charles II, James II, William III and Mary II, Anne, George I, George II, George III, George IV, William IV, Victoria, Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII, George VI, Elizabeth II.

Recently I have found the above rhyme useful while watching the series 'Monarchy' by David Starkey on T.V. It is especially useful in placing each forebear on my tree in the setting of his or her time. It could help you too.

Eva Beech

From the Chair

On Saturday 6th. November 2004 several members of the Committee, Eva Beech, David Salt and his wife Gwen, Bill Harrison, Derek Cliff and his wife Linda and myself attended a Reception at Northfield Birmingham, given by the BMSGH as a "thank you" for officers of all its Branches for all their services.

We were particularly honoured and gratified when the FRED MARKWELL AWARD was presented to our Hon. Secretary David Salt for all his diligent hard work for the Society, and very well deserved too. Our congratulation go to David from us all.

This is the second year in succession that our Branch has received this trophy as Mrs Beech won the Award last year.

We then had a lecture entitled "Friends of the Working Boats" by Vince Williams accompanied by a slide show of the working Birmingham Canals.

We then had a scrumptious Buffet Tea along with well over 100 guests.

So you see, its not all hard work being on the Committee, why not volunteer your help at the next AGM?

Betty Machin
 Chair

Edward Booth or Edward Boole?

Part Two.

What fun Family History is.

As you may remember from the last Newsletter, I had traced the family of Edward Booth only to find a change of name. To recap, Edward Booth, my grt grandfather was born somewhere in Shropshire to a father name Francis and a mother name Martha. I had found him in the 1871 census living in Hanley with his stepfather (James Sankey) and his mother (now Martha Sankey). In the census it stated that both Martha and Edward were born in Clunbury, Shropshire. Searching through the Clunbury Parish Records I could not find a single Booth so I looked for the marriage of Martha to James Sankey and discovered that Martha's name was Boole and not Booth.

The story carries on.

I looked in the Clunbury Parish Registers for an Edward Boole, born 1850, and he was there in the christenings, father Francis Boole, mother Martha Boole. Looking through the burials I found that Francis Boole died in 1857 and a Mary Sankey had died in 1855. Looking through the christenings for children of Francis and Martha Boole I found that Francis had a brother named Thomas and three sisters. Was this the Thomas, born Shropshire, in the 1881 Hanley census living two doors away from Edward in Crown Street?, his age corresponded with the Thomas Boole in the Clunbury registers and Kempton is a little village in the Clunbury Parish. I looked in the 1861 census for Clunbury/Kempton and could not find any Boole's at all. I looked in the 1851 census and there they were, Francis and Martha Boole living in a cottage in Kempton with their five children. I looked in the 1841 census and they were living in the same cottage.

Why did Edward and his brother change their names? Edward even signed Edward Booth on his marriage certificate in 1871 and called his

father Francis Booth on the same. After researching the wrong Booth family once before, I did not want to make the same mistake this time. I double checked all the written facts with written down dates and tried to leave nothing in doubt. I checked all my information with more experienced members of the society and came to the conclusion that I was researching my family history this time. The Boole family had always lived in the same parish so it was easy to go through the parish records and go back to 1558 when the records began. It bothered me why they changed their name. I realise that the census remunerators wrote down the name as it was pronounced but Edward had written down Booth and not Boole on the marriage certificate. I sent for Francis Boole's death certificate and it came back stating that he died on January 1st 1857, his 50th birthday and the cause of death as "Suddenly after a visitation from God". It seemed strange to me so I rang the Bishops Castle Coroner (who issued the certificate) and asked him what it meant. He told me that someone must have found Francis dead, either in bed one morning or in a field as he was employed as a farm labourer. I pointed out to the Coroner that three years after Francis died in 1860, his wife remarried and his whole family moved to Stoke on Trent and changed their name. I asked him if he could have been murdered by one of the family. He laughed and said that a sudden death with no apparent evidence of death was often put down to a "visitation from God" and he could not possibly comment on my theory. I bought a book called "The Gale of Life" written by the South West Shropshire Historical Society all about life in South West Shropshire from the Dark Ages to the present day. The book informed me that in the mid nineteenth century there was a farming depression due to a sequence of prolonged winters of heavy rain and deep snow falls attesting to a wretched working life for the farm labourer and the

community in general. The changes in farming enclosure rules and horrible working conditions plus stories of a better living in the large towns encouraged many families to leave working on the land. My ancestors left Kempton c1860 shortly after the marriage of Martha to James Sankey. I'm still trying to find them in the 1861 census.

In the 1881 census, James Sankey and Martha were living with Edward in Hanley but not in the 1891. I found that Martha died in 1884 while still living with Edward at the address in the 1881 census but the informant was one of James Sankey's son's. She was buried in a paupers grave in Hanley Cemetery. James Sankey died in 1900 in a Hanley lodging house and this death too was registered by the same son and buried in another paupers grave in Hanley Cemetery.

Here are the questions I still want answered as it still bothers me why they changed their name from Boole to Booth.

1. Why did all the Boole's leave Kempton c1860, including grand parents, uncles and anyone with the surname Boole who was there in the 1851 census and up to 1860 in the parish registers?
2. Why did James Sankey's son inform the death of Martha, Edwards mother, when she was living with Edward in Hanley at the time and he was living at Mow Cop?
3. Why was Martha buried in a paupers grave when Edward could afford to have his own wife buried later in what started to be the family grave?
4. Why have I found visitors name Boole from Shropshire with Thomas in the 1891 census?

I read somewhere that if you like detective stories you will love researching your family history.

John S. Booth

North Staffs Branch Fiche Club

Have you joined the Fiche Club Yet?

We have microfiche for the following:-

1861 North Staffs Census

1871 North Staffs Census

1881 North Staffs Census

1891 North Staffs Census

1901 North Staffs Census

For the 1881 Census we also have the whole county records for Cheshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Shropshire, Staffordshire,, Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

IGI (1984) England, Scotland, Ireland, and Channel Islands.

Monumental Inscriptions for Staffordshire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire.

1851 Census of Birmingham with Index.

1891 Census Surname Index for Dudley, Sedgley and Wolverhampton.

Also available in the Fiche Club are the following CD's:-

1851 Census with Surname Index.

Staffordshire Monumental Inscriptions.

1791 Universal British Directory

Graves in St. Michael and St. Wulfad of Stone.

Our collection is gradually increasing and any unwanted / duplicated fiche or CD's you may wish to donate would be most appreciated.

Membership of the Fiche Club is open to members of BMSGH on a one off payment of £6 upon which any fiche / CD may be borrowed for home use, BUT MUST BE RETURNED AT THE NEXT BRANCH MEETING.

Fiche readers (viewers) may also be loaned for a one off payment of and extra £2.50p.

Any offers of transcribing microfiche or typing to floppy disc is always welcome.

Mike Griffin

The following item is taken from "Old Leeke" Volume II by M.H.Miller.

Extraordinary Funeral at Cheddleton.

On Sunday 2nd January 1887, the remains of Adam Ratcliffe, Joiner, of Cheddleton were interred in the graveyard. The internment took place in accordance with the full directions of the deceased: -

"This is what I wish at my last days in this world. A good pitch pine coffin with a glass slide in it and black lace round the lid and round the top of the bottom ribs half the width of the lace: six common black handles, three on each side, common shroud and taken in Bradshaws van as she gave for that purpose, not the cover on it fine or wet, and with the slide down so as I can look round about as I go. The bearers to be the workmen about the yard and any neighbours round. The bearers and neighbours to have some bread and cheese, and plenty of ale, tobacco and whiskey if they like all of them. The children all of them in the house, and as it is small some others with tea and rum in it, some laughing and some crying, hoping this will be done.

A. Ratcliffe April 15th 1866

An entry from the Cheddleton Burial Register for 1887 states :

Adam Ratcliffe of Basford buried 2nd January age 67 years.

David Bourne

Written on the back of a 1918 postcard to a local Gas Company:-

"Will you please send at your earliest convenience to 102 Dazell Road the new meter as the old one is broken and we have no lights available"

Monumental Inscriptions

May I take this opportunity to thank all the people that are working so hard with the indexing of the Municipal Cemeteries of Stoke on Trent, and would like to ask for more volunteers to help with the indexing. You will need to have access to a computer, a CD ROM and the Microsoft Excel programme will be provided. You can choose a cemetery that your relatives may be buried in thus helping in your research.

If you have not got a computer then perhaps going to your local church / chapel and transcribing the internal monument inscriptions or photographing them with your digital camera. These can be done at your leisure as there are no deadlines to meet and remember that every little helps. For further information please see Rob Carter.

Helpful Information

Did you know that Hanley Library Archive in Bethesda Street Hanley not only has Census's and many local history books but they also have copies of the Sentinel from the early 1800's to the present day for you to look at. The old Sentinel's are a mine of information about local events plus the usual social events. There are columns about Court Prosecutions as well as Birth, Marriage and Death columns in the later editions. You have to book a reader to search the film rolls but one reader allows you to print from the picture on the screen if required. The staff at the Archive are most helpful and willing to assist you in gaining that important bit of information you require.

A FAMILY REUNION FOR HALL=COX FAMILIES

In December 2003 at the funeral of my wife's Aunt Janet HALL (nee PARKER) at the age of 96, and the ext to last of her generation, we met up with several cousins who had not seen each other for far too long. There was a suggestion made that we should make an effort to see each other on a more joyous occasion and the seeds were sown for a HALL-COX family reunion.

By mid-January my wife's elder sister Peggy Hanmore had sent out a letter of enquiry to all the available cousins suggesting a venue in the Oxford-Buckinghamshire region and a tentative date of 26th June requesting a reply by the end of the month.

The response was very encouraging and a search for a venue to accommodate upwards of fifty got under way. Peggy's younger son, living near Banbury, looked at various hotels, village halls, cricket & rugby clubs and had the village hall at Croughton near Brackley, Northants, recommended to him by a caterer at one of the cricket grounds. This was a very modern building adjacent to a spacious playing field with enclosed well equipped children's play area and adequate parking facilities.

Once seen this venue was decided on and, as the provisional date was available, the booking was confirmed with a deposit (and the helpful caterer booked). A second letter was circulated outlining the arrangements and requesting a deposit on behalf of each adult which was put into a separate Reunion Account at Peggy's local bank.

Arrangements were made for the facilities to be available from 11.00am to 5.00pm with tea & coffee on arrival and a buffet lunch from about 1.00pm. Although we didn't have the benefit of an occasional licence we

had made arrangements to provide our own strong tittle. One cousin, who could not attend with his family, thoughtfully sent half a dozen bottles of wine to help us celebrate. We also enjoyed a suitably decorated iced cake, cut with ceremony, and followed by a few well chosen words to mark the occasion and pay tribute to Peggy's organisation.

There were seven children in the HALL-COX family all born on the Surry-Hampshire border at Hawley, postal address Camberley, Surry but all registered at Hartley-Wintney, Hampshire (County of Southampton to be precise) although the parents had both originated in Staffordshire. Thomas HALL was born at Brewood an September 1st 1883 registered in Cannock and Edith COX born in Sedgley on 8th November 1882 registered in Dudley. They were married at the Wesleyan Chapel in Fafnborough on 5th July 1905 and produced seven children (Cyril died in 1914 age 6) over the next 15 years.

Bert 1906-64 married Janet PARKER 1907-2003 in 1932 had 3 sons & 3 daughters.

Phyllis Irene 1909-83 married Bernard HAWKINS 1902-87 in 1932 had 3 daughters.

Hilda May 1913-78 married Leslie GARNETT 1914-76 in 1937 had 2 sons & 1 daughter.

Ethel Annie 1915-99 married George TAYLOR 1914-2003 in 1938 had 2 sons & 1 daughter.

Tho. Stanley 1918-77 married Peggy SAMPSON 1911-2000 in 1943 had 1 son & 1 daughter.

Eric 1920-78 married Vera CHESHIRE 1923 in 1944 had 3 daughters.

Thus there were twenty cousins of this branch of the family and twelve were in attendance with some of their families, three had died previously, three were too remote in Durham, one in USA and one on holiday. In total there

were fifty-five adults and fourteen children and all picked up a pin on name tag of the appropriate colour. In addition to the main sports hall we had the use of a spacious committee room with a large central table on which we were able to display family photographs and tree-charts.

A large blanket draped over a notice board in the committee room was used to display half plate photographs of Thomas Hall with Edith Cox surrounded by their six children and their spouses together with photos of Hawley parish church and the family home "Draycott".

In addition to four generation family group charts for each of the six children listed above, each displayed on their colour card. There were two generation charts for each of the preceding four generations back to 1800.

Blank Family Group Sheets were available for any additions or amendments to be made to the information on the charts. A loose leaf binder held abstracted entries from the censuses 1841 to 1891 for all the HALL-COX-YOUNG-ALLEN-MARRIS-BROUGH and other families in the Brewood-Penkridge-Hatherton-Bliston-Tipton-Sedgley areas.

Numerous photographs were on display resulting in many requests for reprints between the cousins.

After lunch the twelve cousins were assembled for the start of a mammoth session of picture taking, this was followed by each of the family groups in turn before assembling the whole company for a wide angle group shot.

Although the day was showery, the younger element enjoyed the outdoor play facilities while the others pored over albums and amended family group sheets with the more recent additions.

A thoroughly enjoyable experience with a gratifying result for Peggy's organisational efforts.

Bill POLLOCK
BMSGH 13163