

NORTH STAFFS BRANCH

BMSGH

Newsletter

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Editorial

This is the final Newsletter for 2006 and may I and your committee take this opportunity of wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

When anyone asks me to start them off in researching their Family History I always warn them that they may find out family information that they may not like. They might find that 'Great Uncle Willie' was not a General but his manservant, that grandma had been married twice and no-one ever knew or there may have been a murder in the family. Betty Machin, our Chair found such a crime in her research and her story is on page two.

I don't think that there are many family historians who have not gone up the wrong path and researched the wrong family at one time or another. In this edition of your newsletter a lady wishes to pass on some unwanted certificates and I ask if you have anything you wish to pass on that may help a fellow researcher.

I went to the November meeting of the Friends of Bethesda and I am pleased to report that Phase One (making the building waterproof) is almost complete. The roof beams and supports have been repaired or replaced and the roof tiles replaced. Once the guttering has been repaired all the scaffolding on the outside will be removed. It is estimated that by May 2007 this lovely old chapel will be open to the public for a short time to allow everyone to see the progress of the repairs.

John S Booth

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Chartist Riots

Not many family history researchers whose ancestors lived in The Potteries during the first half of the 19th century could not have been influenced by the Chartist Riots which flared up in Stoke on Trent. What were the riots all about and why did they happen?

Chartism was a popular movement in Great Britain from 1838 to 1848 for electoral and social reform. The word is derived from the People's Charter, the name given to a programme of reform submitted to Parliament in 1837 by the London Working Men's Association, under the leadership of William Lovett and Francis Place. The Chartist movement, which the association sponsored, resulted from widespread dissatisfaction with the Reform Act of 1832 and the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, legislation that workingmen considered discriminatory.

In 1842 Chartists presented a second petition signed by three million supporters to Parliament, which again refused to listen to their demands. Although the Chartist movement gradually later faded into insignificance, all of its demands, except that for annual parliamentary elections, eventually became law.

Stoke-on-Trent potters and colliers were involved in the charter, resulting in riots, imprisonment & deportation in 1842.

The best factual account of the Potteries Riots was written at the time by John Ward and appear as part of an appendix to his book "The Borough of Stoke-upon-Trent" first printed in 1843. His very graphic account of this local uprising against authority contains the names of many of the people involved. Some 6000 plus people took part in the riots which resulted in one known death in Burslem when Capt. Powys ordered his troops to open fire on the mob. A special commission was appointed for the trial of the rioters concerned which resulted in 54 being transported (11 for life) and 146 imprisoned with hard labour. In total 274 people were sent for trial.

I am sure that Stafford Records Office has the names of many of the people involved in the Potteries Chartist Riots

One Chartist is buried in Shelton Church yard, he is Jeremiah Yates. His obituary in the Staffordshire Advertiser reads; "Jeremiah Yates. On Monday morning last (October 11 1852) after a short illness, aged 42, Mr. Jeremiah Yates Assistant Surveyor of Highways for the Township of Shelton a situation which he had filled for several years. The deceased was an early advocate of the total abstinence cause, and afterwards became a prominent actor in the Chartist agitation".

John S Booth

My 5X G.Aunt Edith

Every year the 'Midland Ancestor' has a competition for its readers. The December 1993 edition had the title "Have you found any in Infamous Ancestors-Particularly Women" Below is my entry and was published in the March 1994 edition of Midland Ancestor.

Edith Coomer's Story

I first learned about my infamous ancestress from Mrs Maureen Nield, authoress and journalist of Chester, who discovered the gruesome story in the archives of Chester County Records Office.

My 4Xgreat-grandfather was James COOMER, baptised at Wybunbury on 27th August 1775. He had a younger sister Edith, also baptised there on 7th June 1777. On 18th April 1797 Edith COOMER married George MORREY, a farmer at Wybunbury and they eventually settled down to farm at Hankelow near Audlem in Cheshire. They produced five children.

In 1812, at the age of 35, Edith became enamoured of a young farmer name John LOMAS, age 20 (They had toy boys in those days too!). The pair became lovers and Edith conceived the idea of murdering her husband George and setting John in his place. To this end she purchased an axe for one shilling and a cut-throat razor for three pence. On the night of Saturday 11th April 1812 George MORREY returned from a business trip to Middlewich and Northwich, having stopped to drink at one or two Inns on the way home. After supper he and Edith retired for the night and when George was heavily asleep, John LOMAS, urged on by Edith, crept up the stairs and attacked George with the axe. George staggered out of bed spurting blood everywhere so again, at Edith's instigation, LOMAS used the cut-throat razor and slit George's throat from ear to ear, leaving a 6 inch gap -3 inches deep. George died.

Edith then aroused the children's Nanny who was sleeping in the next room and begged her to get help, with the story that they had been burgled and set upon by robbers. Remember, there was only candlelight in those days, so the Nanny, Hannah EVANS did not see the gruesome sight as she hurried through the room to go and wake the neighbours. They came and were later joined by the Constable of Hankelow.

By dawn light it was seen that there were bloodstains and handprints all up the back stairs leading to LOMAS's room. They demanded to know why he had on a clean shirt at the end of the week's work. And he replied that his other shirt was blooded as he had been assisting at a calving that day!

The neighbours and the Constable became suspicious and eventually LOMAS and Edith were arrested on the charge of murder. They came to trial at Chester Castle and were found guilty and sentenced to death. LOMAS was hanged outside the Castle on 24th August 1812. Edith however, pleaded that she was four months pregnant (by LOMAS?) and her execution was delayed until after the birth of her child. This took place on 21st December 1812 when she delivered a son, Thomas. She was eventually hanged at Chester on 23rd April 1813.

Thomas grew up to be a thief and petty criminal and in 1833, at the age of 21 he was transported to Tasmania, but that's another story!

There is no doubt that my 5XGreat Aunt of Chester was the instigator, if not the actual perpetrator of this heinous crime.

That story did not win the competition, and I am indebted to Maureen Nield of Chester for her diligent research into my COOMER family tree back to 1725 and her present of it to me. I also recommend to you the book "Rope Dance" in which she tell Edith's story.

Now a word of warning, as you know I am a great believer in hereditary 'Genes' so watch out, I may have an axe in my handbag.

BETTY MACHIN

Member Barbara Smith has the following documents : -

Birth Cert. for **Hannah GOODWIN** July 1867 Father **Jesse GOODWIN** of Stanley-Mother **Jane BERISFORD** of Brown Edge who married at St Annes Church, Brown Edge in 1858.

Marriage Cert. for **Hannah GOODWIN** and **George SPROCEN** at Brown Edge in 1889.

Barbara also has lots of information regarding the **SIMCOCK** and **MAYER** families.

Contact Barbara Smith on 01782 637566

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I have a Marriage Cert. for **THOMAS ROBERTS** and **ANN JONES** at Etruria 1885, free to a good home. Contact me at any meeting or by my email at the base of the Editorial.

Additions to your Library

The following is a list of additional items deposited in your Branch Library as given to me by Mrs Evelyn Powell.

Staffordshire History Vol 41 2005	36 t
Staffordshire History Vol 42 2005	39 u
The Audley Historian No. 11	621 k
Fulford St Nicholas Bap 1813-1837 Mar 1800-1837 Bur 1815-1837	268
Oakamoor Holy Trinity M I's	269 a
Staffordshire Estate Maps Supplement	269 b
Dilhorn All Saints Church M I's	95 a
Ridware St Nicholas Mavesyn M I's	275
Ridware St Michael & All Angels Hamstall M I's & St James Pipe M I's	276
Newcastle Hassell School 1881-1891 "A Centenary History"	277
Broughton The Book of the Village	286
The Malbons 800 Years of Family History	288
Yoxall St Peter M I's	290
Audley Funeral Mr R Latham	640
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Stoke on Trent Population Growth

Many people who trace their family history find that their ancestors moved around a bit. Below is an article from an old book printed c1840 about the population growth in Stoke on Trent.

Population Growth:

The rapid advance of the local manufacturers, and the consequent increase of the population, reckoning from about the middle of the 18th Century, have, perhaps, not been surpassed relatively, during the same period, in any of the great trading and manufacturing towns and districts of England.

In the Petition presented to the House of Commons in 1762, the population of the whole of the Potteries was estimated at near seven thousand persons; which we have reason to think was below the real number, for Burslem parish alone contained near three thousand persons at that period, as may be collected from an examination of the Parish Registers; and if we suppose the population of the District generally to have merely doubled within the preceding twenty-five years (which has been about the ratio of its ordinary increase of late) we may venture to set down the number at four thousand a century ago.

The impulse given to the Trade, after the completion of the Grand Trunk Canal, in 1777, produced a rapid advance of the population. In the year 1785, the late Mr. Josiah Wedgwood estimated the population employed in, or depending upon, this Manufacture, at from fifteen to twenty thousand persons.

We will take the population within what is now the Borough of Stoke, at the lowest amount mentioned by Mr. Wedgwood at that period and set it down at fifteen thousand persons.

In the year 1801, when the first Parliamentary Census was taken, the population exhibited an increase more than three-fold within the preceding forty years; and a further period of less than forty years has produced almost an equal arithmetical progression, examination of the parochial returns sets the total population of the Borough, at the present time (1838) at about sixty-three thousand persons.

Townships	1738	1762	1785	1801	1811	1821	1831	1838
Tunstall	200	300	500	800	1,677	2,622	3,673	6,608
Burslem, Sneyd and Rushton Grange	1,800	2,800	4,800	6,486	8,478	9,815	12,572	14,486
Hanley and Shelton	1,000	2,000	4,600	7,940	9,568	12,956	16,408	18,249
Penkhull with Boothten, comprising Stoke Fenton Vivian, and Fenton Culvert	300	700	1,400	2,680	3,851	4,915	5,997	6,780
200 Longton and Lane End	400	700	1,800	2,506	3,000	3,710	4,890	
	500	1,300	3,000	4,000	4,930	7,100	9,608	11,987
Population:	4,000	7,500	15,000	23,626	31,010	40,408	51,968	63,000

In the recent 2001 census the UK National Statistics gave the population of Stoke on Trent as
240,636

John S Booth

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Staffordshire Old Parish Boundaries Vol 1; Pirehill	405

Evelyn Powell