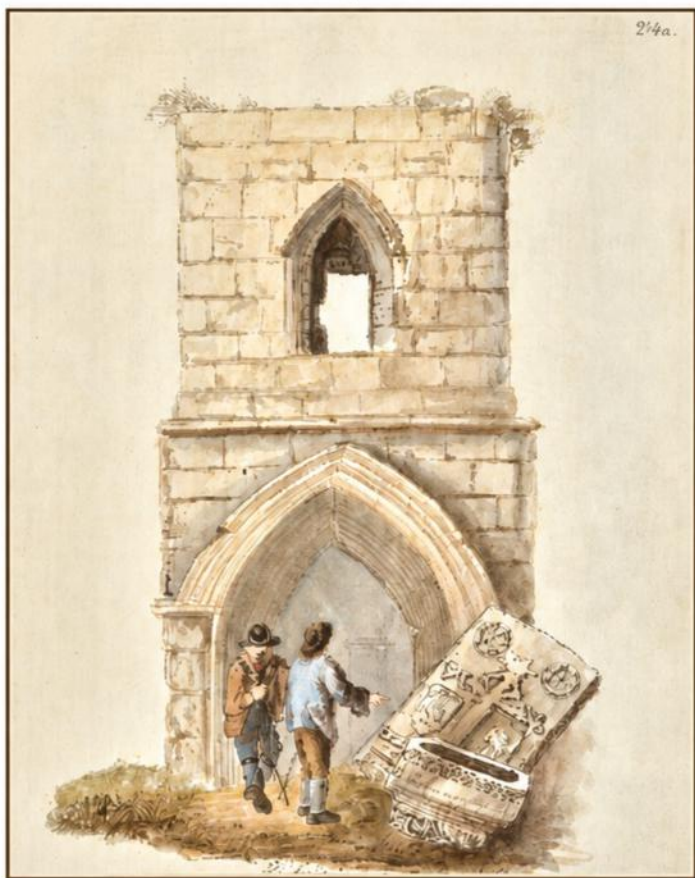
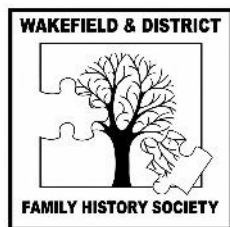


THE WAKEFIELD KINSMAN



Autumn Edition
2026

Volume 30 No. 1

WAKEFIELD & DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

(Registered Charity 1104393)

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THE WAKEFIELD KINSMAN

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Front Cover: Illustration from George Fox publication

Credit: Wakefield Council

Visit our Website www.wdfhs.co.uk

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

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

Chairman's Letter



Another AGM completed and now we move into the 30th year of the Society and I look forward to interacting with as many of our members as possible as the months go by.

In a very positive development since the meeting James Hayes, a new member, volunteered to be our Treasurer and has been co-opted by the committee. James is well qualified for the task having worked in financial roles for significant local businesses. As a history graduate with a particular interest in the Victorian era he will be a great addition to our team. Besides this Martin Jackson who joined our committee last year had agreed to become our Secretary. Thus for the first time in recent years we have a full team of officers and this will support a determined effort for the Society to host events and execute research and education projects to more fully meet the charitable objectives of our Society.

At our AGM there was also some discussion about the Society doing more for its members and the idea of arranging some visits to places of interest relating to Family History. Jackie Depelle was very enthusiastic about the idea and recommended a visit to The British Library at Boston Spa and this I believe will be a very good way to begin. An initial contact has been made and once possible dates have been identified we will communicate more on this. We have a volunteer to coordinate these extracurricular activities and we are keen to progress this with something at least done this autumn to test the level of interest within our membership. Initially we would like to focus upon trips that are relatively local which could be reached either by car sharing or public transport.

Bearing this constraint in mind we would love to hear suggestions of destinations that you would either recommend based on a personal visit or else places that you think would be a good experience for yourself and a group of fellow members.

Lastly I failed to mention Heritage Open Days at our last meeting and now we are in the midst of the period and it will have finished by the time you read this.

I do hope you have taken advantage of the opportunities to visit new places for free. Earlier in the year I resolved not to get involved but due to local contacts and requests for help I have ended up as the organiser of two events. Fingers crossed for a good attendance I will tell you more in the next Kinsman.

Paul Gaywood *mem 1496*

Editor's Preface

Carol has done a great job keeping the Kinsman going and I thought it was time I took a turn at the role again to share the load. This time around I am in a good position to fill the journal with articles that I hope you will find interesting and enjoyable. There are two reasons for the change in the position firstly that we have been seeing more members writing articles for us to share. The second reason is that the Society is becoming active in new projects and this creates news to share about progress and things we have learnt along the way.

Peter Holford has contributed many articles to the journal in recent years and has volunteered to assist with the Kinsman in the same way that he helps the East of London FHS and their journal "The Cockney Ancestor". Before retirement Peter had experience in teaching and examining students to A level for 30 plus years with students from the age of 11 up to 19

I have had a one place study registered for a while but have done little with it until now but the Society of One Place Studies offered a 4 week course by Zoom to its members about the potential application of AI to such studies and with some trepidation I signed up. I will report in the next Kinsman about the experience. In the first week I found it quite intimidating to be told to be ready to recruit a squad of AI helpers. I certainly won't be giving them good data.

Tool	Its role in your AI Squad	What it does for a genealogy project	Your first job to try
Gemini Chat	Research Strategist	Thinks with you before you search. Give it what you already hold and it will map which records are worth chasing and in what order.	Describe one brick wall and ask for a prioritised list of records to search next.
Claude Chat	Data Specialist	Detail work: transcription, structuring messy information into tables, and checking a set of records against one another. Strong with long documents.	Upload one census page image and ask for a verbatim transcription in a table.
Perplexity	Contextual Researcher	Searches the live web and cites what it finds. Use it for the world your ancestors lived in and to test a claim made elsewhere.	Ask what is documented about a trade or district in a given decade, with sources named.
Gemini Notebook	Knowledge Keeper	Also known as NotebookLM. Answers only from the sources you upload. Nothing wanders in from the wider internet, which makes it the safest place to ask questions of your own evidence.	Upload three transcripts and ask what they agree and disagree about.
ChatGPT	Brainstorming partner	Good for thinking out loud: shaping a research question, testing an idea, or working out what you are actually asking. Also the strongest of the five for illustration work.	Talk through a stuck line and ask it to sharpen your research question.

Paul Gaywood *mem 1496*

Reports From Our Meetings

The speaker at our May meeting was **Tim Lynch** who gave us a talk entitled '**The Enemy Within - Germans in Britain 1914-1918**'.

Tim started his talk by putting this in context; about how immigrants from Germany as Angles and Saxons started arriving in this country around 410 after the Romans and left c1066. Tim also gave us some European history and how the First Reich, the first German empire, lasted until 1806 when Napoleon took over. He told us how Britain borrowed some of their monarchs from abroad such as George II and George III. Prince Albert was from Saxe-Coburg and he and Queen Victoria had over 40 grandchildren, one of whom was Wilhelm II, Kaiser Bill. His father had fought wars against his neighbours to create a unified Germany in 1871 which was known as the Second Reich. The Kaiser hated the British and was a bully and was the latest in a long line of mad German rulers.

Towards the end of the 19th century, things in Europe were chaotic and many people wanted to leave for America and many came to Britain which resulted in bad feeling being stirred up here against immigrants. It became obvious that Germany was wanting to expand and there was a feeling that Britain needed to build up her military strength. Books were being published about German invasions of Britain, sponsored by the Daily Mail and perpetuated by film; Germany was the enemy.

Tim told us that in 1914 there were around 73,000 Germans living in Britain. They were not necessarily born German but on the outbreak of war they became German and had an obligation to serve in the German army. They had to leave to join their country which resulted in the strange situation of German and British servicemen leaving Bradford on the same train, to fight. The Germans had to leave Britain by August 10th and after this date they were taken into custody. Tim related how the public would believe anything of these people, how they were enemy agents, ready with weapons to help their country when the day came. Everyone was a suspect and the rumour mills went mad. It resulted in the Government having to step in and quell the rumours. Spies were real though and we were told the story of **Carl Hans Lody** who was caught and shot in the Tower of London, one of a total of 41 shot during the war.

Tim informed us of the riots and looting of German owned shops in 1914 which spilled over into British owned shops. Anti German feeling swelled and this resulted in all non British men of military age being rounded up and interned. A lot of these men had settled here and had families but a woman who married a German became German herself - a Hunwife - and without the support of their husbands, some ended up in the workhouse.

Lofthouse Internment Camp was a Privilege Camp, people paid to be interned there rather than other camps; many were employed in jobs that were vital to the war effort, going out during the day and coming back to the camp at night. Tim told us about the different groups in the camp and how good the conditions were. Once the Lusitania was sunk public feeling against the Germans once again was heightened, riots and attacks on people followed and innocent people were often caught up in this.

Some internees did not know where they stood and found this difficult to deal with. They had been sentenced to prison without an end in sight and this led to suicides. Sons of men who were interned were called up to fight and there was a spate of name changing.

We were told the stories of different people who had escaped from the camp such as **Richard Wiener** who had walked out of the camp and made it to Sweden, writing an article that was published in Britain. There were more stories, such as that of **Heinz Justus**, who escaped disguised as a woman and after several recaptures was brought back to Lofthouse. The last attempted breakout from Lofthouse was in November 1919. Mass panic at the start of the war had to some extent changed to empathy.

Tim closed his talk by leaving us with an interesting question: Who gets to decide which side you would be on in a conflict?

Our **June** talk was delivered by **Jane Roberts** who spoke to us about

‘The Irish and Batley St Mary’s’.

Jane started her talk by showing us an image of the first Catholic procession in Batley and told us about her website where we could find more information pasttopresentgeneology.co.uk

She told us about her One Place Study on Batley St Mary of the Angels and how these studies provide context; they can be centred on locations, buildings or even cemeteries. They give a broader understanding of our communities and we were advised to find out whether our particular areas of interest had already been the subject of a One Place Study (info@one-place-studies.org).

Jane has been interested in the parish as long as she can remember and her family appear in parish records going back to around 1860. She started by researching the stories of the men who appear on the war memorial and then moved onto the men who fought during the First World War;

In the interests of gender balance, Jane then started to research the May Queens and dramatic societies in the area.

We were then told about the growth of Batley's Irish population and she gave us some context about how the Irish famine affected the lives of so many and proved to be a driver for people leaving Ireland but how Batley was also a pull with jobs and later, family networks. Jane informed us that Batley's Irish population grew from 9.5% of the whole population in 1841 to 20% during the following ten years. She used the 1871 census to illustrate that the Batley Irish population came from all areas of Ireland but mainly from Mayo. They were originally brought to Batley in 1832 to replace striking workers and were viewed as cheap labour and were employed in the lowliest jobs in the textile mills. Coal mines were another employer.

The Irish people tended to live in certain areas of Batley and Jane reported that initial relations between them and the Batley residents were not good; they were viewed as dirty in their habits and a simmering resentment developed. The Irish population suffered most during outbreaks of typhus and cholera. In addition to health problems, they were also blamed for social problems too and Jane told us of violent attacks and riots and it took until around 1860 for the community to be partly reconciled.

Jane went on to tell us about how Father James Wells arrived in 1853 when a Catholic mission was established; prior to this, Catholics had been travelling to Leeds or Wakefield to worship. She compared the congregation of 600 - 700 in 1859 to 3000 - 4000 by 1870. In 1853 countrywide, and in Ireland appeals were made for money to build a church, presbytery and school. **Father Patrick Lynch** was the driver for this but unfortunately did not live to see the church being built. We were shown the plans for the church and it finally opened its doors to parishioners on 15th December 1870.

Two striking funerals were conducted at the Church attended by many people. The first was **Father Thomas Rigby** who was killed in an accident in 1872; we were given details of how he fell from the platform of Lancaster Railway Station after trying to board the train. There were large numbers at his funeral with thousands lining the route and the church was full.

The second funeral of note was that of **Private William Doogan** of the 13th Light Dragoons who had enlisted in 1831 and was involved in the Charge of the Light Brigade and gave twenty four years service. He was a Dublin born power loom weaver who had settled in Batley and on his death in 1878 his funeral was attended by 70 members of the Batley Rifle Corps who fired volleys over his grave. It was a very large funeral with not less than fifteen to twenty thousand people there. Jane brought her talk to a close by reminding us how much information can be gained by completing a One Place Study.

It was our **AGM on 4th July** which was followed by member Debbie Staynes giving us a talk entitled '**Tales from a Photograph**'.

Debbie started her talk by showing us a group photograph with the names of the people in the image alongside. She believed the Adult School was held in the Quaker Meeting House in Thornhill Street, Wakefield but said it was difficult to determine which people in the photograph were members of the Adult School and which were Conscientious Objectors; possibly the men were Conscientious Objectors and the women members of the Adult School.

We were then given some information about the Adult School Movement. This was started by Joseph Rowntree Senior who was a Quaker, philanthropist and businessman from York. Almost every member of the Rowntree family were involved as teachers and in other roles. The Adult School used the scriptures to teach reading and writing and had a real interest in the daily lives of the attendees; they were concerned with the well being of the whole person and there were various groups such as a social club, allotment society, a temperance society and a savings bank among others. The Adult School encouraged leisure activities which helped to develop the whole person - spiritual, moral and physical. Debbie then went on to tell us about Cober Hill Guest House near Scarborough. It was purchased by Arnold Rowntree in 1920 and he hoped it would be a centre of inspiration for people. Debbie then showed us an image of a group enjoying a Whitsuntide holiday in 1955 at Cober Hill and she pointed out the various members of her family.

The Conscientious Objectors in the photograph, Debbie told us, were residing in the Work Centre in Wakefield Prison and some of them were frequent visitors to Debbie's grandma's home in Quebec Street. She told us that Conscientious Objectors fell into two categories; they objected on political grounds or on religious grounds. Debbie showed us a newspaper cutting from 1916 showing Fred and Arthur Watson being charged with being absentees from the Army; they were exempt from combatant service only. Fred Watson was imprisoned in several jails, including Wakefield. Debbie also showed us later cuttings from 1947 when Fred was denying adultery with a friend's wife and details of this from her father's exercise books. Debbie then told us about a siege which occurred in Quebec Street in 1918 when some people in Wakefield turned against the Conscientious Objectors and decided to attack them. She gave us the details of the siege and told us how her aunts, Nellie and Emily were militant suffragettes and had befriended some of the Conscientious Objectors and how they hid in the cellar of the house in Quebec Street; the sisters wanted to protect their friends, including **Fred Watson** and **Sidney Hines**, from the mob. Debbie showed us a plan of the street to illustrate her story. The mob finally fled in confusion after Grandma

Staynes had run at the mob with her broomstick when she could no longer bear the fact that her newly cleaned flags and bit of garden were being trampled on.

She also showed us a letter which was printed in the Wakefield Express in 1918 from **Joe Leonard Staynes** who was doing Red Cross work in France, commenting on the 'fiendish act of the Wakefield citizens'.

After this event, the Conscientious Objectors were sent, unescorted, by train to Dartmoor and locked in the carriages. Arriving at the station at Dartmoor, no-one was there to greet them; Fred called the prison and they were told to make their own way there! Debbie went on to tell us about Nellie and Emily, how they married Fred Watson and Sidney Hines and what happened to them.

Debbie brought her talk to a close by showing us an image of the blue plaque to **Nellie and Emily Staynes** at the end of Quebec Street.

Lorraine Simpson mem 1486

Membership News June, July & August 2026

We welcome **our** new members:



1599	Guy Hirst
1600	John Glynn
1601	Jan Samuel
1602	Oliver Gaywood
1603	Nicholas Gaywood
1604	Alex Gaywood
1605	Richard Sorenson
1606	Troy Peverall
1607	James Hayes
1608	Philip Dobson

Thank you to all member who have renewed their Membership for 2026-2027.

If you haven't renewed your membership for 2026-2027 yet I would like to remind you of the several methods available.

By Parish Chest via the Society's website, by Standing Order Payment or Bank Transfer into the Society's Virgin Money account, by cheque or cash at the monthly meeting at Outwood or by mailing a cheque to myself. My address can be found on the renewal form or in The Wakefield Kinsman.

Debbie Staynes Mem 1059

MEMBERS ARTICLES

Black Sheep Mary

My name is Mary yet, to some, I'm known as something else. I'm pleased you've taken time to read a little about me - details which have never been kept secret, yet they remained unknown to many.

Albeit some accounts are contradictory of each other, and some are downright inaccurate, there's so much to read about me. Yes, mention must be made of what can be found in the *Complete Newgate Calendar*, and in the second volume of Sabine Baring Gould's *Yorkshire Oddities and Incidents*. There's so much, though, that it's so difficult, if not impossible, to really give credit to those who deserve it.

The strange chap, who's told me he is somehow able to tell you about me so long after my death, has tried hard to bring the records together. I was born in Asenby, Topcliffe, Yorkshire in 1768, where my dad was a farmer. I was well educated, being taught to read, write and cypher.

Although my parents were well respected, I grew up as a bit of a pest and a rebel, being attracted to stealing and the like. Indeed, I gained a reputation as a liar and a thief. As an example - after a fire killed several workers at a large factory, I went door to door asking for donations to help the families who had suffered in the fire, then sold what I'd received, and kept the money.

In an attempt to check my ways, from as young as twelve or thirteen, I was sent to work as a domestic servant, both locally and in Thirsk, but I was sacked from so many posts that I moved to Leeds, and set myself up as a dressmaker. Yes, I'm sure you'll know that being described as a dressmaker on census returns was often a cover for something much less wholesome.

Yet, in my case, to infer that I was a lady of the night would be unfair, for I genuinely carried on the profession of making women's clothes, and was quite successful at it. It's said that a wheelwright called **John Bateman** fell under my spell, although I would call it true love, and we married when I was 24, in 1792, after a three weeks' courtship.

John and marriage didn't really change me, and we moved frequently to escape the numerous accusations of theft being made against me. In 1799, I took up residence in Marsh Lane, near Timble Bridge, Leeds, and there established myself as a fortune-teller, and also supplied young women with nostrums to bring about abortion. I revelled in the thrill of thievery and deceit, and to increase my income, I began to make it known that I was able to predict

the future and dabble in the 'unknown'. Around 1805, I developed my most profitable project - my 'Prophet Hen of Leeds'. The hen laid eggs inscribed with the message 'Crist is coming', thus prophesying the end of the world. Despite the fact that this suggested that spelling was not the hen's strongest point, it encouraged crowds of people to flock to my home to see the miracle, at a charge of a penny a time. Taking further advantage of their vehement belief that the apocalypse was close, I was able to sell these visitors tokens marked 'JC', which guaranteed their entrance into heaven. It was all a con, of course. I was writing on the eggs with vinegar before reinserting them in the hen. Some called me a soothsayer, or even a sorcerer or diviner - being someone able to use their powers to curse another, or to manipulate such forces to provide healing or lift the curses of others. It was the latter two where my good intentions rested. With time, I became possessed of an oracle - a **Mrs Blythe** - who often directed my activities.

In the spring of 1806, **William and Rebecca Perigo**, living in Bramley, Leeds, were convinced that a neighbour had cast a spell on Rebecca, who developed a heart flutter, and they asked me to remove the curse. I was only too pleased to help, with guidance from Mrs Blythe, who first instructed me to sew four monetary notes into the Perigos' bed in exchange for them giving me four golden guineas. The Perigos were grateful, and parted with their money. In April 1806, I showed the Perigos a letter from Mrs Blythe in which she advised them to give me half a pound of honey, to which I would add 'stuff', for them to eat the mixture for several days and, thereby, cure their ills. I added the 'stuff', and the Perigos started to eat the pudding and they both became sick, which is not surprising as the 'stuff' was mercuric oxide. I then gave them an 'antidote', yet, in truth, that was arsenic. Although William ate very little of either the mixture pudding or the antidote, he was ill for days, and his lips turned black. Rebecca, though, forced herself to eat everything, and she died an agonising death. I continued to help William for another couple of years, and by the end of that spell - perhaps, not a good choice of word in this context - I'd defrauded the Perigos of almost £70 in cash, along with a considerable amount of clothes and furniture. Eventually, William's suspicions pushed him to remove the notes I'd sewn into the bed and found them to be pieces of ordinary paper.

That didn't go down well. He informed the local constable, and I was arrested, with a search of my house revealing a collection of poisons and a lot of the Perigos' property. I was charged with murder. At my trial in York, dozens testified about my criminal activities, including fraud, extortion and abortion. I told the truth. Mrs Blythe was to blame, not me. Yet, the jury saw otherwise and returned a Guilty verdict, and I was sentenced to death. I told the Court I was pregnant, as 'pleading the belly' would delay my execution until after the birth of

the child, if I was at least four and half months gone at the time of being sentenced. The judge ordered the courtroom doors to be locked, and in another room, twelve women decided that my claim was unfounded. I was hanged at the York New Drop gallows at 5am on 20 March 1809, before an estimated crowd of twenty thousand people. Meanwhile, 23 miles away in Leeds, some two and a half thousand residents had paid three pence each to view my corpse on its return to the town.

The crowds, entertained by jugglers and balladeers, supplied with food and drink by itinerant purveyors of pies and ale, waited more or less patiently. At midnight the hearse finally arrived - the queues then lining up to file past my dead body, after which it was taken to Leeds General Hospital for dissection. Not only did that medical institution benefit surgically by the invasive examination of my anatomy, but also financially, for its coffers were enhanced by the proceeds from those who had viewed my external torso. As was customary, following dissection my corpse was skinned and after being scraped and tanned, was sold in small pieces as souvenirs to ghoulish-minded collectors - some believing that such charms would ward off evil. My skeleton went on display at the Thackery Medical Museum in Leeds until 2015, when it was removed to private storage in Leeds University.

I was born as **Mary Harker**, and later became **Mary Bateman**

. To many, many more people, though, I was known as The Yorkshire Witch. To the person, the strange chap who's been telling you my story, I'm his 3x great grandma - his Black Sheep in the Family. I hope you've enjoyed reading a little about me.

David Simmonds Mem 1439

David's article deservedly won the Norman White prize. The other strong entries will appear in future editions of The Kinsman. Ed.

The Green Howards Museum

Regime change is, we think, a recent term used to describe a change of regime forced out by another but, as we know, there is nothing new in history! The Green Howards Museum in Richmond tells the 300-year-old story from its origins during the *Glorious Revolution* of 1688 when the Catholic James II was ousted from the throne of England by a union of English Parliamentarians and William of Orange, the Stadtholder of Holland. See? What goes around comes around!

For the good folk of Yorkshire to learn that their beloved regiment, so intractably linked to the county, was initially raised in Somerset by **Francis Luttrell** of Dunster Castle, MP for Minehead, is something of a surprise but; so it was. Luttrell, seeing which way the political winds were blowing, raised a regiment in support of the new King William.

The regiment has been through many titles since 1688 and formally became The Green Howards in 1920, though it had been informally known as such since the 1740s when regiments were named after their Colonel, in order to distinguish one Howard regiment from another. One regiment had green facings to their uniforms and became The Green Howards. The other had yellow facings and became the Buff Howards (in lineage The Buffs (Royal East Kent) Regiment).

The regiment has seen service in all theatres and all campaigns (except the Napoleonic Wars when it was stationed in the Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), though there is a connection to the French Imperial Emperor (see below). The museum boasts 14 of the 18 Victoria Crosses awarded to the regiment, including the only VC awarded during the D-Day landings, that to Company **Sergeant-Major Stanley Elton Hollis** of Acklam, Middlesbrough. These are housed in the Museum's Harrison Gallery, along with over 4000 other awards.

Other highlights include one of only 5 snuff boxes commissioned by Napoleon for his favourite Field Marshals, that given to **Marshall Ney** and taken from his baggage carriage on the field of Waterloo by a Guards officer, who willed it to his son, a member of the Green Howards, who left it to the museum.

A fragment from Hitler's map table and a piece of carpet from his office are also on display, as is the first poppy laid at the first national service held at the Cenotaph in 1921, placed by **Field Marshal the Earl Haig**.

The museum also holds an extensive archive of records that have allowed it to do everything from fill out family connections to the regiment, to help identify human remains found on the Somme in 2017. Because of a distinctive badge the museum were able to help the MoD *Battlefield Detectives* identify the remains of 3183 **Private Henry Parker** from Wansford and Henry now lies in



Warlencourt British Cemetery and his name has been removed from the Thiepval Memorial to the missing.

In 2006 The Green Howards merged with the East Yorkshire and Duke of Wellington (West Riding) regiments to become The Yorkshire Regiment. Since the accession of King Charles the regiment now proudly bears the title The Royal Yorkshire Regiment.

Whatever the name, the Collection, spread over three floors of a converted medieval church, tells the story of 300 years of service and sacrifice.

Steve Erskine *Researcher, The Green Howards Museum*

“One of the best captains we ever had.”

This is an account of my great uncle's life and military service with the Suffolk Regiment.

Francis Tyrwhitt Drake Wilson (1876-1964) was born 9 April 1876 in Guilsborough, Northamptonshire to **Richard Langford Wilson**, a physician and surgeon, and **Emily Barbara Tyrwhitt-Drake**. Richard and Emily had six other children: **John Tyrwhitt Drake Wilson** (1873-1888), Agnes Louisa **Wilson** (1875-1945), **Charles Spencer Wilson** (1878-1965), **Herbert Langford Wilson** (1881-1937), **George Micklethwaite Wilson** (1883-1951), and **Emily Maud Frederica Wilson** (1886-1978). Charles and George also served in the Suffolk Regiment.

According to the archives of Dean Close School, Cheltenham, Francis entered the school in January 1891 and left in December 1894 aged 18. He had quite a distinguished career in sport. By the time he left he had been the captain of both football and cricket teams, and had received his colours in both. The school magazine, the 'Decanian' April 1894 p 269 says of him” *One of the best captains we ever had. A very useful half(back) and works hard. Had also shot well when playing forward”*

On the cricket field he was described as ” *a good captain. A very good bat and an excellent bowler*”.(Decanian, August 1893 p 201). In his final season he was top of the boys' batting averages table with a top score of 38, having contributed 22 innings with an average of 16.16 runs. He was also top of the bowling averages table, bowling twice as many overs as anyone else at 293.4 that season with an average of 5.54 runs per wicket. His haul of 91 wickets was almost 3 times that of any of his team mates.

He was a school prefect but does not appear to have won any academic prizes.

In 1895 he entered the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst coming 39th in the entrance exam and was gazetted as a Second Lieutenant on 5 September 1896, joining the 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment in Malta. According to Hart's Annual Army List 1908 he was promoted to Lieutenant on 13 December 1897 and went with the Battalion to South Africa in November 1899.



*Francis and his 3 brothers at home in Kirkby Cane, Norfolk in 1898. Left to right – **Frank, Charles, Herbert and George** (my grandfather)*

He served with the Battalion during the ill-fated attack on 'Suffolk' Hill at Colesberg, and was still with them when Pretoria was taken in June 1900. He was afterwards promoted to Adjutant and kept this position until December 1900 when he returned home.

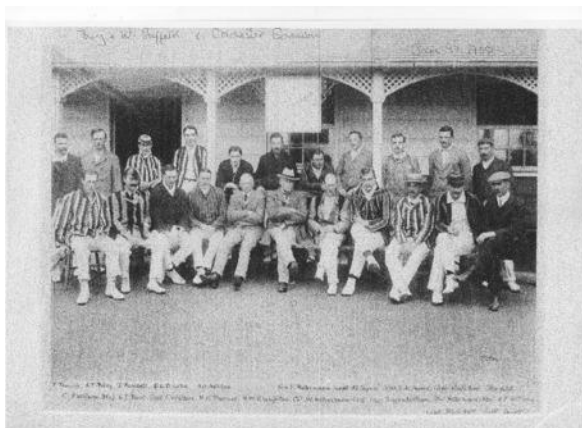
On the 1901 census he was at home with his family in

Kirkby Cane, Norfolk, but returned with the Battalion to South Africa and was promoted to Captain on 14th October 1900.

Back from the war in June 1902, he became the District Signalling Officer, Eastern District, having obtained a 'Special Certificate for Signalling' at Aldershot. In November 1904 he left his posting and returned to the 2nd Battalion, stationed in India. Before he left, he married **Dorothy Gladys Merriman** in Colchester, Essex, on 21st November 1904.

Returning home in 1907, he left the 2nd Battalion at Aden to join the 3rd Battalion at home becoming its Adjutant; he held this position for five years until he rejoined the 2nd Battalion in June 1912. He was promoted Major in February 1914.

During his time on Home Service, he played cricket for both the County and the army team.



*The Gentlemen of West Suffolk versus the Garrison, Colchester, 1908. Francis - 3rd from left, front row; his brother Charles front row 1st left. The gentleman in the middle of the front row wearing a hat is **Col. W. Merriman**, Francis' father-in-law.*

The Army team competed annually against the Navy and it was his captaincy of

the 1914 team that led to his being selected to play for the M.C.C. in a match against Cambridge University at Lords.

At the outbreak of WW1 Francis was with the 2nd Suffolks at Curragh, and was shortly afterwards to command 'A' Company in action at Mons, then at Le Cateau. On 26th August, whilst in command of the two leading companies, Majors Wilson and Barnardiston ('B' Company) were taken prisoner whilst holding their positions on the forward crest of a hill southwest of the town. Their gallant stand allowed the remainder of their brigade to retire and to fight another day. His Medal Rolls Index Card mentions his capture at the Battle of Mons. The Times 5th September 1914 published a list of officers missing. Francis was on that list, but then on 10th October 1914 he was traced as being alive. Francis was



on a list published by The Times of officers traced through their cheques being cashed in Germany!

He was taken briefly to the prison camp at Torgau before being moved to an 'Offizer Gefangenenlager' at Clausthal where, barring a short interlude at a camp at Osnabrück, he remained until January 1918.

Francis in the cane chair at Clausthal PoW Camp near Hanover.

Under an agreement with the British he was then moved to a camp in neutral Holland as the strain of keeping PoWs had begun to tell on an already strained Germany. He was repatriated to England on

the SS *Stockport* which sailed from Rotterdam, docking at Hull on 17th November 1918.

After a brief recuperation, which included his participation in the 1920 Army-Navy cricket match, during which he achieved his best bowling figures to date (despite being 44 years old), he returned to service with the 2nd Battalion. He had been promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel on 12th September 1920 and with it came command of the 1st Battalion which he took over the following February in India.

The census that year recorded him as being stationed with the Regiment at Ridge Barracks, Jubbelpore. It was his leadership of the Battalion throughout the Moplah Rebellion, and the exceptionally high number of sporting trophies that the Battalion won throughout his tenure in command, that led before his retirement, to him being awarded the O.B.E. in the King's Birthday Honours List.

Upon leaving the Battalion in August 1924, the following appreciation of him was published in the 'Suffolk Regimental Gazette' showing the affection and respect that the Battalion had for him: During his command of the 1st Battalion, he has seen it rise from the mediocre standards of immediately after the war, to a very high level. How much



of this was due to only himself only those who have known and watched him can really estimate. An ardent advocate of loyalty, co-operation and unselfishness, he was the first to set an example in the best of all those qualities. Nothing which was for the good of the Regiment was too much trouble for him, no call upon his time or services was ever made in vain, and no detail was too insignificant to demand his attention. Almost unconsciously his whole time was devoted to the study of how any improvement could be affected in the Battalion and by his example he instituted in all of us that desire to excel, not for the mere sake of excelling, but to maintain the best traditions of the past and to lay a sure foundation for the future, on which the good name of the Battalion must depend.

He retired from the Army on 4 April 1925. By the time of the 1939 Register he was living in Colchester, a retired army officer, and Deputy Head Warden A.R.P. He had been the President of the Colchester Branch of the Old Comrades Association for many years and remained so until the late 1950s. His brother, my maternal grandfather,

George Micklethwaite

Wilson had died suddenly in May 1951; and with my father, also in the Suffolk Regiment and serving



abroad, Francis was the main paternal influence and support for my mother and stood in as for both father and grandfather at my sister's christening in 1951. *Francis extreme right of photo.*

He died on 19th March 1964 at home in Great Horkesley, Essex. The Decanian Magazine said of him: *"F.T.D. Wilson, 1891-1894, Lt-Col in the Suffolk Regiment. At Sandhurst he was captain of the cricket and soccer teams, and well known on the cricket fields of Essex".*

The Regimental Newsletter, the 'Britannia and Castle' also wrote: Colonel Wilson had an eye for all ball games and took an active part in cricket, hockey and tennis and soon had a Battalion that was second to none in these and other sports. He played for the Army versus the Navy in 1910, 1911, 1914 and 1920. Under his leadership the Battalion soon settled down to be a happy family and fit for any emergency".

Sources

- Ancestry UK
- Find My Past
- The Family Bible and photo archive
- Dean Close School Archives
- The Friends of the Suffolk Regiment

Denise Sanford Mem 1325

Another Walk Around Sugar Lane

Stories on headstones. Snippets of a family history. Names included from well before a cemetery opened. All add to a resource that a family historian should include.

I have so many photographs of Sugar Lane, and I plan to take more soon. As with the military research undertaken a few years ago and the file of headstone photographs, so much information should be shared. What did I do? I registered a One-Place-Study for Sugar Lane Cemetery, Wakefield. Why, I don't know. Probably a fit of madness, as I can't blame drink! But I did. So, you, the readers of Kinsman, have been among the first to see a small part of the work done so far and to be done - non-military, of course; that is for later.

As I said earlier, names from before the cemetery began are truly a bonus. Let's see who the focus of this issue is and why the names of interest are the Lindley family of Wakefield.



The darkened headstone to the Lindleys is simple in its shape but striking in other ways. Firstly, the top section includes a carved multi-sailed seagoing vessel, probably a clipper, above a carved sea. Secondly, the carved font is unusual and striking. Plus, there are commas and full stops; how many headstones miss commas, and you may get full stops.

*'In memory of **John, son of Robert and Mary Lindley**, of Wakefield, who died January 8th 1841. Aged 2 Years. And was interred at the Parish Church'.* Sugar Lane Cemetery was a long way from being opened (1859). The alternatives to the Parish Church were St John's, St James and St Helen's. For someone

living in a busy city, the Parish Church of All Saints and its burial ground were the choice.

Robert died on January 20th 1876, aged 70, and Mary, his wife, died on August 14th 1884, aged 69.

Robert, a waterman in 1841, was with Mary, his wife, and 1-year-old George at the time of the census; by then, 2-year-old John had died.

Ten years later, in 1851, the Lindley family, now including four children, are still lodging with Mrs **Mary Holgate**, a widow, with a widow's pay, in Cock and Swan Yard.

The 1861 census was taken, and Robert is now the Captain of a vessel. The house must be quieter now, as only two girls, aged 12 and 14, are still at home.

Mary, still in Cock and Swan Yard, was on her own in 1871. 55-year-old Mary told the enumerator she was a boatman's wife. Her girls might have left home, and one of the boys could be on a vessel with their father.

George, whom I mentioned earlier when he was one in 1841, went to sea. The family headstone reads: *'Also of George, Son of the above, who was lost at Sea in the Ship Royal Albert, January 16th 1866, aged 25 Years'*.

Wow, an interesting family find.

HMS Royal Albert, built in Woolwich Dockyard, was a 121-gun steamship of the line, some 220 ft in length and 60ft 10in wide. She had a 25ft hold and a complement of 1000. She was launched in 1854 and served in the Black Sea and the Channel Fleets. But by 1861, she was declared unfit for any active front line service. The Royal Albert, through the mid 1860s, sat idle in reserve and was sold for breaking up in 1884.



During her service, Royal Albert had been the flagship of **Rear Admiral Edmund Lyons**, who commanded the Mediterranean fleet, which was at the time mainly concerned with the Crimean War. While on her way to Malta, she sprang a leak and

beached at San Nicholas, Kea, Greece. Following minor repairs, she was refloated and continued to Malta for a full inspection and further repairs. I am always curious why boats in any form are always 'she'. Well, apparently, ancient sailors viewed boats in any form as maternal protectors, hence 'she'. On the other hand, Google refers powerful machinery, trains and large engine can be called 'he', even though the English language, unlike the French language, does not change the gender of the noun.

During her service, she had seen time in the Forth when a photograph in the Royal Collection was taken of her from the deck of HMS Trafalgar. That image, dated 1860-1861, taken by **George Washington Wilson**, is counted as one of the earliest photographs taken on board a ship whilst at sea.

Question: If the Royal Albert was laid up and in reserve by 1861, how did George drown in 1866? Was he on the ship as a reserve, or was it another 'Albert'? The



'Prince Albert', launched in 1864, was a shallow-draught coastal defence ship and the first British warship to carry her main armament in turrets. Named after the late husband of Queen Victoria, it remained on the 'active' list for 33 years until 1899, long past any military use.

Sadly, I feel that with searching documents online and various family trees for a hint of where George drowned, I have

to call it a day and hope that someone out there knows of George. My one other option was to visit the Greenwich museum, and I'm certain that is not going to happen. I am afraid to say that the family trees I checked have George living long past his death date recorded on the family headstone. It just goes to show that with one missing piece of evidence, you can go well and truly down the wrong rabbit hole.

Another Question: Should I inform the owners of the trees that have George living a long life, in the hope that they would correct the information? I know my answer. What would yours be?

Carol Sklinar Mem 664

Work is Good for Your Health!

This article deals with the role of Work at West Riding Pauper Lunatic Asylum. In November member David Scriven will treat the Society to a talk on the Journals of Matthew Tomlinson of Doghouse Farm, Lupset, written in the early 19th Century. Extracts from the Journals can be found on Wakefield Historical Society's weekly blog. In one extract Matthew comments on the importance of imployment [sic] to happiness and health, and his thoughts resonate with the founding principles of the West Riding Pauper Lunatic Asylum, later Stanley Royd Hospital.

The Asylum was opened in 1818 and was designed to provide safety and comfort for patients, medical treatment and rehabilitation in the form of work. The Admissions Registers are cared for by the West Yorkshire Archive Service at the History Centre, Wakefield. On admission a patient's occupation is recorded second only to the name. The notes also often record how long it is since the patient last worked, and sometimes whether the cause of illness was the employment, for example an accident at work or loss of business. The registers also record what work the patient undertakes while in the asylum. One unusual

occupation was noted as 'helping with the mosaics' but most work was more domestic, ranging from light dusting, work in the ward, in the kitchen, brewhouse, laundry or boiler room. Some patients went to work in the skilled workshops such as weaving, tailoring and shoe making. Others worked in the garden or on the farm growing produce for use in the kitchen. The tasks contributed to the running of the asylum; this is not surprising when it is considered that it had a capacity of nearly 1,000 patients and probably nearly as many staff. The asylum was almost a self sufficient village.

Some patients were able to follow their occupations while in the asylum, although there were cases where they refused, stating that they would not work for nothing when their labour would earn them wages outside. Working in the fresh air was not only productive but also seen as part of the treatment for improving physical and mental health, an idea that is all around us today. Other patients were unable to work through conditions such as dementia. Some refused to do any work and were considered rather a nuisance. 'Working well' was seen as an indication of recovery and is often cited as a reason, among others, for discharge.

When it opened the asylum covered all of West Yorkshire, and it is notable that the occupations recorded were linked closely to geography. Patients from the metal trades, for example, lived mainly in the Sheffield area, while textile workers came from the north and west of the Riding. As the century progressed these ties were loosened, and in addition new occupations began to appear, such as bookkeeping, warehousing and clerical work.

The Admissions Registers are a treasury of information, not only for the care of mentally ill patients, but also so much else that reflects life both inside and outside the asylum.

Jacqueline Ryder *Mem 1475*

Snippet: Not everyone loves Wakefield

I've just been reading Alan Bennet's *Enough Said*, a collection of diary entries for his 9th decade. Entry for April 9, 2016:

I'm waiting at the lights...when a family – father, son and grandfather – cross. The grandfather says he's been trying to explain to his grandson what a Loiner is (i.e. someone from Leeds). I say I'm a Loiner, but a bad example. "That's all right," says the grandfather. "We're from Wakefield." I say I don't know what they call people from Wakefield. "Desperate," says the son.

Joy Joseph, *Mem 972*

The Pedigree of Mrs Walker of Boyne Hill

No antiquary or historian of the first half of the twentieth century worked harder to raise the status of Wakefield in historical studies than **Dr J. W. Walker** (1859-1953). His *Wakefield Its History and People*, published in the 1930s, ran to three editions (despite being a hefty 735 pages) and was being reprinted until 1972. However from the 1980s onwards, many of Walker's claims, including those about the Battle of Wakefield, the Wakefield Mystery Plays and, of course, Robin Hood have been challenged by academic historians. In 2003 the Wakefield Express published a piece by **John Goodchild** to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Walker's death. After a summary of Walker's long life and achievements John Goodchild felt obliged to add:

He was somewhat given to adding the occasional piece of information which had no historical basis whatsoever – was pure invention

Not a great deal of scrutiny has yet been applied to Walker's genealogical work, which was itself very considerable. In the 1930s and 40s he edited and published many of the pedigrees collected a century earlier by the great Yorkshire antiquary **Rev. Joseph Hunter** which had not already appeared in his very important collection *Familiae Minorum Gentium*. These Walker blithely doctored at will and published in 1936 as *Hunter's Pedigrees*, implying a status on a par with the *Familiae* and sub-titling the work as '*A Continuation of Familiae Minorum Gentium*.' This article looks at genealogy published in *Hunter's Pedigrees*, and which appears three years later in *Wakefield Its History and People*. It relates to the Rayner, Blacker and Boyne families who lived in Sandal Parish in the early modern period and interestingly claims to be the pedigree of the author's wife **Mrs Constance Walker**.

Blacker Hall and Boyne Hill

Boyne Hill House in Chapelthorpe had been built in 1623 by **Thomas Boyne**, a yeoman whose family had lived at Boyne Hill for many generations. Walker's wife Constance seems to have inherited Boyne Hill from her mother to whom it had descended from the Rayner family who had lived there in the early 18th century. In 1903 Walker rebuilt it, living there with his wife, children and domestic staff until 1920. He was proud of Boyne Hill and sought to show that his wife had inherited it through descent from the old Boyne family its original owners.

Anyone lucky enough to own a rare copy of 'The History of Blacker Hall' by **Jean M. Garthwaite** can read how the ancient family of Blacker of Blacker Hall in Crigglestone sold their estate to **Thomas Rhodes** of Flockton for £900 and how Rhodes in 1629 leased the estate to Mrs Walker's ancestor Henry Rayner (died c.1648) for 16 years at £50 per year. All this is perfectly true and borne out

by contemporary evidence. What is not true is what we learn next (and which comes from the pedigrees produced by Dr Walker) namely:

Now **Henry Reyner** had married **Elizabeth Blacker**, the elder daughter of George Blacker. She had also inherited Boyne Hill through her mother Ann Boyne.

Walker was keen for his wife to descend from the Blackers and particularly the Boynes who had held Boyne Hill for hundreds of years. A mere commercial transaction by her ancestor **Henry Rayner** in 1629 was not enough. To devise a connection, Henry must be provided with a wife. That wife needed to be the mother of Henry's eldest child and heir **John Rayner** of Blacker Hall (1622-1688) through whom **Constance Walker** claimed descent. All the better if she could be an heir to Boyne Hill and the last scion of the Boyne lineage.

As a hook to hang all this on Walker found the burial on 20 December 1653 in Sandal parish register of '**Elizabeth Reaner** of Blacker Hall'. This lady Walker has placed on the pedigree as Elizabeth, elder daughter of George Blacker. If this Elizabeth was Henry Rayner's widow she was not married to him when he made his will on 1 August 1642 as no wife is mentioned, clearly implying he was a widower at that date. His children are however mentioned in order of birth as: **John, Elizabeth, Martha, Robert, Mary, Judith, Margaret, Richard and Grace**.

We know that Henry came to Blacker Hall in 1629 and Sandal bishop's transcripts which survive for 1629-1639 record the baptisms of Mary (1630), Judith (1632), Margaret (1635) and Richard (1638). Grace was probably born in 1640 when the records are missing.

A really useful piece of corroborating evidence comes from the York Cause Papers. A deposition by Henry's son John Rayner in a tithe case in 1679 contains vital confirmation as to when Henry and family arrived in Sandal Parish and when Henry died. John gives his age as 57 and says:

that for fifty yeares last past this ex[amin]nte hath dwelt in the p[ar]ish of Sandall magna and saith that for thirty two yeares last past this ex[aminan]te hath been a possessor or occupyer of lands and grounds within the parish of Sandall magna

So John was born about 1622 but not in Sandal Parish. Using modern databases which Dr Walker could not have foreseen, I searched for a series of baptisms of children of a Henry Rayner, beginning in 1622 and ending in 1628 in this order: John, Elizabeth, Martha, Robert. I found exactly that in the registers of Birstall St Peter. At the time Henry was of Spen near Gomersall. He had married at Birstall in 1620 to Martha Batte an orphan whose uncle Richard Batte

lived at Spen. The unbroken and regular series of births over 18 years suggests that Martha was the mother of all the Rayner children. She almost certainly died between the birth of Grace in about 1640 and when Henry made his will in 1642. Since there was no Sandal parish register or bishop's transcript for those years, there would have been no burial record of Martha wife of Henry Rayner of Blacker Hall to contradict Walker's 'Elizabeth' hypothesis.

Furthermore George Blacker (who unlike his 'wife' and 'elder daughter' as given by Walker) was a real person who could not have married Ann Boyne or have had a daughter Elizabeth born early enough to give birth herself to John Rayner in 1622. His marriage bond and wills of relations show that he married in 1606 from Thornhill where his mother and stepfather (who was the vicar) lived. His wife was Ann daughter of John Siddall (d.1588), a clothier of Kirkgate, Wakefield. Their eldest two children were almost certainly Mary, who is mentioned in the will of her mother's stepfather John Bradley in 1617 and then Jane who was baptised at Sandal in 1608. Bradley's will mentions other unnamed daughters of George Blacker and one could have been Elizabeth Blacker, but she would not have been born until about 1610 at the earliest. More seriously for Walker, Bradley's will mentioned George Blacker had two sons. As a younger daughter of a couple with sons 'Elizabeth' if she existed, could not have been her mother's heir.

And so we come to the Boynes. Ironically Walker missed a genuine Blacker descent from the Boynes of Boyne Hill. He tells us of Margery, mother of the George Blacker discussed above, that she was the daughter of John Allott of Crigglestone. Amazingly there are no less than five surviving wills mentioning Margery. These are those of both her parents, maternal grandfather and first and second husbands. These prove beyond any doubt that she was the daughter of Thomas Boyne of Boyne Hill (d.1588) and his wife Jane (d.1605) daughter by his first wife of Richard Matthewman of Nether Shitlington.

Of course Margery was not an heiress of Boyne Hill. Her brother Thomas Boyne (d.1640) is the man who Walker makes into the father of 'Ann Boyne' from whom Boyne Hill passes to Elizabeth Rayner née Blacker. Unfortunately for Walker's tale, Thomas Boyne left a will in which he names his heirs as his son John Boyne and grandson Thomas Boyne. The son John Boyne of Boyne Hill died there in 1654 (i.e. after the death of Walker's Elizabeth) and Thomas Boyne jr was still at Boyne Hill when he died in 1670.

The Rayners did eventually take over Boyne Hill, but as with Blacker Hall, it was almost certainly a purely an unromantic commercial transaction.

Other clues – religion

The lack of strong puritan credentials amongst the Blackers and Boynes should have made Dr Walker wary of making them marry puritans like the Allotts and Rayners who only seem to have married people of the ‘godly’ sort at this period. By contrast, Margery Blacker (née Boyne) mentioned above married into the Whittaker family which included leading Anglican Royalist clergy.

I have in the past foolishly trusted Walker’s pedigrees and was at the time delighted to find that, like Mrs Walker’s, my Rayner forebears were apparently descended from the Allotts, Blackers and Boynes living in the very parish where I was born. Now, like Mrs Walker’s descendants, I must say goodbye to them. Working out the mistakes and correcting them has taken a great deal of work and one can only hope that Dr Walker was less tempted to add ‘the occasional piece of information which had no historical basis whatsoever’ to pedigrees which didn’t concern his own family. In the meantime all his ‘facts’ need to be thoroughly checked.

A corrected Pedigree of Blacker and Boyne of Sandal Magna is reproduced on page 27.

It is interesting to note that Marjory’s second husband was the Rev Edward Whittaker (d.1612) who was the Vicar of Thornhill. Margery was his second wife, and they had three sons together. He also had children by his first wife including Rev Gamaliel Whittaker (d.1644) who, along with his wife, died in the Royalist cause.

The Pedigree of Mrs Walker’s ancestor John Rayner of Blacker Hall (1622-1688) is also reproduced on page 27.

The mystery of Ann Foxcroft

I have been able to show above that Dr Walker invented identities for three generations of his wife’s ancestors, There may be a fourth – that of the wife of John Rayner of Blacker Hall (1622-1688) but the jury is out and unlike the others I have been unable to disprove it.

In the pedigree discussed above Walker tells us that John married on 23 August 1649 to Ann daughter of John Foxcroft of Cotham, Notts and that their eldest child Henry (later of Blacker Hall and Boyne Hill) was born on 17 August 1650. Unfortunately no location is given for the 1649 marriage, and I have been unable to find it. There could be no entry in Sandal parish registers to support young Henry’s birth date since neither register nor bishop’s transcripts have survived for that year.

Despite my misgivings, I am inclined to give credit to at least some of this information for various reasons:

The eldest son Henry was a real person who inherited Blacker Hall. His sister Martha (probably named after John's mother) was baptised at Sandal in August 1651 and younger siblings in the following years. So the person is real, the birth date plausible and so also the year of John's marriage.

Also the real wife of John Rayner was called Ann. She is mentioned alongside her husband in a surrender from Wakefield Manor Court on 4 June 1652. We seem however to be entirely dependent upon Walker for her surname, as we are for the date of her marriage.

The potential father of Ann identified by Walker was the most prominent Foxcroft of his time. John Foxcroft was a member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, tasked by parliament in the 1640 and 1650s with reforming church order and liturgy. He did indeed have a daughter Ann, baptised at Gotham (not Cotham) in 1630, but she is probably the Ann Foxcroft buried there 6 years later. Although born in Sowerby near Halifax, Foxcroft's later career was spent away from Yorkshire.

Given the lack of a need to fabricate on this occasion, it seems quite possible that Walker had access to a record, perhaps in private papers, which confirms the surname. If so, there is a much more credible candidate for Ann Foxcroft, from a different branch of that family with existing connections to the Rayners and to Sandal Magna.

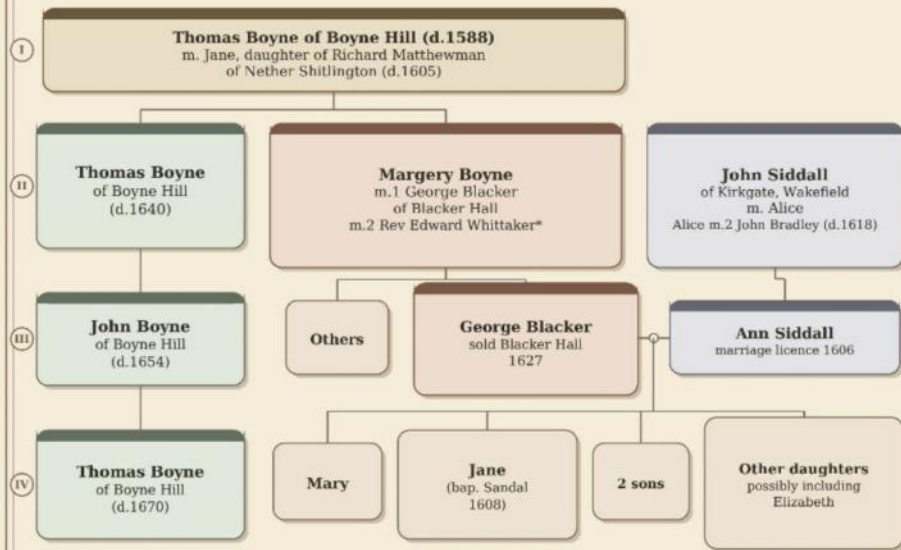
In 1612 Henry Foxcroft Esq. of Batley had a grant from the King of a corn mill and a fishery in Newmillerdam in Sandal parish. This Henry Foxcroft's sister Elizabeth had married as her second husband John Rayner's paternal grandfather Robert. Henry Foxcroft mentions Henry Rayner in his will and a much more likely candidate for the wife of John Rayner (if indeed she was a Foxcroft) is Ann Foxcroft, born at Batley in 1625, the granddaughter of old Henry Foxcroft's brother and heir John Foxcroft (see pedigree above).

I should really write corrections over the beautifully printed and laid out pedigree of Blacker of Blacker Hall on pages 644-5 of my copy of *Wakefield Its History and People*.

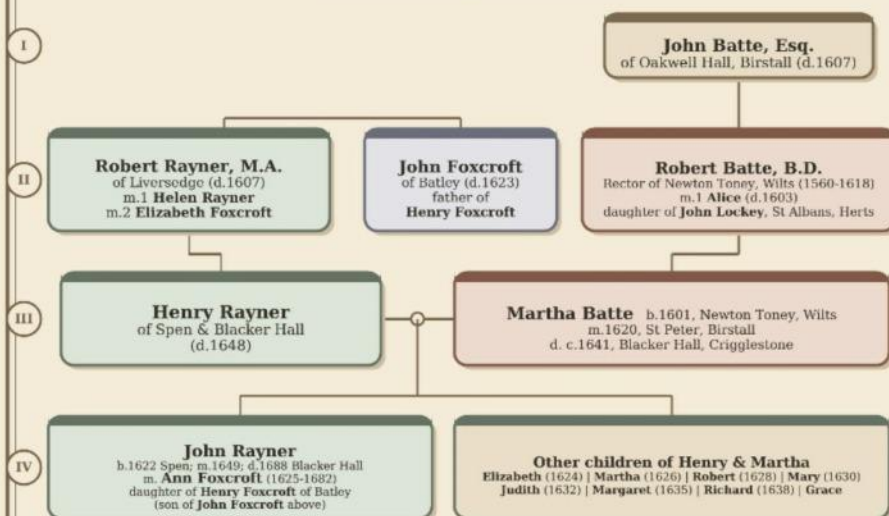
Far better however if fellow genealogists take warning and treat any pedigrees associated with Dr Walker with extreme caution.

Guy Hirst Mem 159

Corrected Pedigree of Blacker and Boyne of Sandal Magna

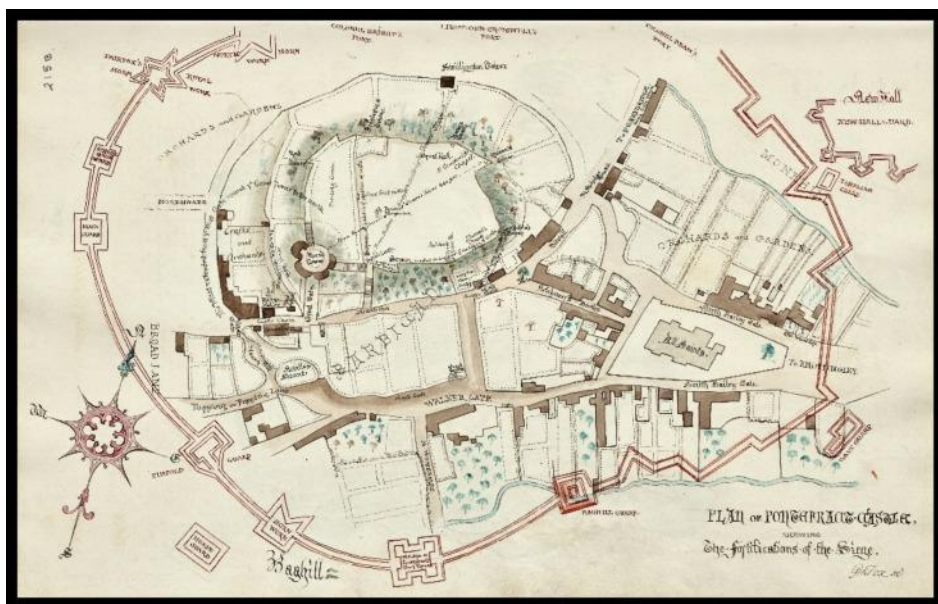


Pedigree of Mrs Walker's ancestor John Rayner of Blacker Hall (1622-1688)



Pontefract Antiquarian George Fox in Cyberspace

Thanks to funding secured from Arts Council England, local studies library staff at Pontefract have been able to unlock rarely seen gems from their collections to share with researchers online and on three large touch screens at Wakefield Library, Pontefract Library and Pontefract Museum via the freely available www.twixtaireandcalder.org.uk website. The latest part of the collection to be unlocked launches in September at Pontefract Library for Heritage Open Days celebrating the painstaking work of George Fox to uncover and document the history of his home town and its inhabitants across four handwritten and illustrated volumes, totalling 1726 pages and containing over a million searchable words.



Siege plan of Pontefract Castle reconstructed by George Fox from the Drake diaries over the Victorian layout of Pontefract.

George Fox c.1802-1871 was a businessman and alderman of Pontefract. He lived at 1 Marketplace, where a blue plaque has been erected to him. Fox was a printer and stationer, and history was his hobby which he passionately pursued until his final days. The manuscripts he has left behind contain some unfinished sections which he evidently planned to complete but never had a chance to – his life's work. The books he has left us feature beautiful hand drawn coloured illustrations and notes, as well as his written account of Pontefract and the

founding Pomfretian families. Although he did publish some of his work in 1827, he still worked on these volumes up to his death and they contain much additional work which has never been published until now. The originals are currently kept at Pontefract Library as part of the local studies collection but George Fox's life's work is now available for all to see.

The four books are organised into different aspects of Pontefract's history with the first volume concentrating on Fox's particular interest in the civil war period. He bases much of his Civil war work on the original diaries of Nathan Drake

which then widen out into a two volume history of the wider town and proceed to a final volume featuring the lineages and possessions of Pontefract's founding families and their role in developing the town. Crucially this is a history not just of streets and buildings, but of the people of Pontefract. It's a must for anyone who can trace lineages back to the founding families such as the De Lacy's, or who have any links to Pontefract in their family trees, as Fox includes the names of medieval and modern era officials of the town, from bailiffs to aldermen and MPs as well as noble families.

Find it online on the Twix Aire and Calder website see link above.



Illustrated page from vol 3.

Claire Pickering Wakefield Libraries

Dad's Letters

Letter Dated 11th October 1942

2/LT T Staynes

No 1 Group AAPC (WA)

West African Forces

11/10/42

My dear Vi,

I've stuck a date on this letter, though I haven't the slightest idea if it's the right one. However, as you probably guess it's Sunday once more. And what a week. Your one and only has been at it again. This time I've managed to get myself into the General Hospital – don't worry, they are throwing me out on my ear tomorrow morning with a little discharge certificate saying N.A.D. (alias 'no apparent disease') The sort of thing that makes a sgt major go red with apoplexy. Howsoever I'll tell you the whole sordid story. As you may remember I wasn't feeling too good last week-end and though I didn't say so, the third journey into town to get my labourers' pay was a real burden to the flesh.

Tuesday morning, I had a splitting headache; my orderly room corporal went into hospital, my sergeant was up to the eyes in work, and my other NCO was still excused duties recovering from malaria. It was a hectic morning. Then at 11 o'clock my sgt rang me up from a point on the cable route about six miles away, to be an eye witness of what he had found. I went down and spent a couple of hours tramping about with him, returned to camp, told the sergeant to write his report, the cook what to do with my lunch, and took to my bed. I had a bowl of soup about seven and countersigned my sergeant's report, acquired a bottle of aspirins and piled odd garments on the bed and indulged in a first class sweat. Wednesday morning, I was still sweating and headachy and being, my own master I decided to have a couple of days in bed. My Sgt. came along and I issued my lawful commands from a prone position. He departed and left me (as I thought) in peace. But alas no! The witless Boase, under the impression he was doing me a good turn, had rung up the M.O. – normally would not have arrived until late afternoon; and the M.O. took my temperature. Hundred and one, says he, got a headache? Yes says I. Sorry old man, says he. You've got malaria. Good says I, I'll have a couple of days Att B (mystic words – ask Rex) You'll go straight to hospital says he. I pointed out that I dislike hospitals, that I was perfectly comfortable where I was; I showed him my bottle of aspirins; I reminded him that the nearest hospital was over twenty miles away and we had no transport – at which point, the egregious Boase, said he had a lorry which was in fact being loaded up at that very moment with a consignment of latrine buckets for the hospital. I entreated them not to inflict upon me the crowning ignominy of

dying on a pile of latrine buckets. It was all in vain; the M.O. was adamant. He painted a horrible picture of malaria cases who developed blackwater – “almost invariably fatal” – through lack of proper treatment; he told me to think of my wife and children; (I fear I said something unjustifiable about you at this point, but you will understand the strain under which I was labouring.) And so, at length I was driven off in a lorry with latrine buckets rattling behind me.

They put me to bed and gave me a large plate of tinned chicken; I told the sister to go away and leave me to die; she went away and I went to sleep. They woke me up to take my temperature, feel my pulse, prick me with a needle to make a blood test, and give me more tinned chicken. I slept again and on Thursday I felt a different man. I told them I felt perfectly fit, but they only laughed and kept taking my temperature at intervals and pricking my fingers in a vain attempt to get a positive test. By Friday mid-day my temperature was down to normal and stolidly refused to budge; eight blood tests failed to produce a ‘positive’ – but my thumbs were beginning to feel like pincushions. In fact, I told Sister Evans that if she couldn’t get enough blood with one jab, instead of prodding me two or three times, she ought to retire and turn herself into a sewing machine or a porcupine or something. She replied that she didn’t know why I was there at all and I said how surprised I was, didn’t her mother never tell her, and her a nurse too. She always sails up to my bed with a nasty look in her eye now and jabs the needle in most unmercifully. To-day she relented and asked me to go for a swim with her (me being passed for discharge to-morrow) but I begged to be excused as the salt water might pain my thumbs too much. Well, well, what times we do have. Anyway, this morning the M.O. sent for me and said that since they hadn’t enough evidence to convict me, he was going to turn me out; however the bugs might be lying dormant; so if they would re-appear when I returned to a more active life in which case I’d have to return and be dosed with quinine in large quantities.

It has been quite pleasant in here – as good as a holiday. There were seven of us in the ward; one was really ill – broken leg or something but the rest of us, well one was convalescing from malaria, one was a ship-wrecked mariner under observation just in case, he is going out on Monday, and three re-graded for home service & simply waiting for a ship to take them home. Never seen a ward like it, nor sisters. I mean to say, just imagine me lying in a nice comfortable bed being fed on chicken and a fair damsel (or brunette, we had both) coming along and saying (at lunch time) ‘would you like beer or stout?’ and at six o’clock ‘Do you want a whiskey to-night?’ And when you get to know your way about you can acquire the beer and whiskey rations of the patients who can’t have it or don’t want it. There wasn’t much scope in our ward, but the others were doing pretty well out of the two adjacent huts. Still, I’m a persistent sort of bloke when

roused and I spoke charmingly and courteously to a couple of sisters a bit further afield – it's wonderful what a few kind words and a pathetic look can do.

Of course, there isn't much news for you this week; me being stretched on the so-called bed of pain with nothing to do but admire the scenery and read books. The view is pretty good because we're perched on the top of a hill and we look across the town to a ridge beyond which falls suddenly to the sea and there's nothing but blue Atlantic then right away to Brazil (except in the evening when the sun makes the blue all sorts of reds and purples and gold) As for books, I read two or three murders and re-read 'I Claudius', 'Cloister & the Hearth', Saki. And the 'Broad Highway' – a mixed bag but quite entertaining. Also, of course, I had my Robert Burton with me. We've a gramophone too, with a lot of old records – 'I won't dance' and 'Only a Rose' and things like that. Of course, there's been the odd spot of censoring to do, and I came across a Gunner Wadsworth who lived in Crackenedge Lane – first one I've had to censor so near to home since I left the transit camp.

It struck me the other day as I read your last two letters (22 & 23) that I shall have to borrow all my old correspondence back from you so that I can refresh my memory about my dissolute youth. It's funny to forget all the little things you've said and done and then be reminded of them by someone else quoting your own words. Then you have me at a disadvantage because I returned all your letters to your own safe keeping. But things have come to a pretty pass when you have to go to seven year old letters for comfort. Was I so much better as a correspondent then? Or did I forget my grandmother's advice never to put it in writing? Ah well, And now I think I'll go to sleep and finish this letter tomorrow. Cuddle me.

Monday

Transport broken down as usual so I'm going for a swim and shan't get back to L—until late; the colonel says I've to take things easy for a couple of days, and who am I to disobey orders.

Tuesday

Richards himself again (Shakespeare). I'm back in my little room once more, but I've been at it again. I got back last night about seven o'clock; Alpha had gone away to 'pray' – it being Mohammedan New Year's Eve – but everything in my room was just so, pyjamas out, lamp lit and turned low, ash tray, box of matches and a packet of cigarettes on the chair by my bed, fresh bottle of iced water on the table and my evening clothes all nicely laid out. I was greeted in the mess with a double whiskey – I thought there was a catch in it, and there was too. The mess secretary explained that the beer ration had been cut to six bottles per head this month, and at a little party on Saturday night the last bottle had

been consumed. As I am now the only consistent beer instead of whiskey drinker in the mess, I took a dim view of this and said so; and eventually the secretary agreed to go on the black market and try and exchange some whiskey for beer. I know of only two places which have all the beer they want – the hospital and the men's canteen here which, under my management built up a reserve of 1200 bottles. Boase, I am glad to say, adopted my policy of "no sales to other messes" and so even if I go thirsty, I have the satisfaction of seeing the men drink beer to their heart's content.

Bless me, now we do digress. To return to the story. After chop we – at least the three officers commanding the various units here, to wit Muckle, Moxon and Myself decided to go into the neighbouring village – a sizeable place – and see how the Moslems celebrate New Year. They pray all day, but after sunset – well we thought we might see something worth-while. There is a longish village green sort of space in the village and we expected to find some kind of dance – you know torches round the cooking pot, tom-toms and blood curdling shrieks. We drove down to the green, but all was quiet and deserted. We found a youth and said "Where is the dance?" he said that there were three dances, but the biggest and best was undoubtedly in Black Hall Rd. Off we went and gradually reach a place where the street was thronged with natives. Music too – but not a barbaric tom-tom. No, from a large brilliantly lit barn-like building all decorated with flags and bunting came the strains of "Let's all be happy together". "I'm going in" says Moxon. Went in. Oh, my dear sweet Vi, my Palais di Danse on any Saturday night never saw anything like it. I gathered from the ticket I acquired as a souvenir that it was fancy dress; but I couldn't tell which were in fancy dress and which weren't. One M.C. wore faultless evening dress and black tie; the other was magnificently sheik like in long flowing white robes and a black gown on top; a superb figure of a man. And so right through the scale of clothing, European and African, from dinner jackets to flannels, luxurious robes to shirts and shorts. And the ladies from evening gowns to short muslin frocks, not to mention the native shawls and blanket-round-the-waist style of clothing. Scent, paint, powder, - my hat! There was enough of it to keep Woolworths going for years. Real powerful cheap stuff it was.

We had scarcely recovered from the shock when things happened. The floor cleared and one M.C. bore down on us with words of welcome, whilst the other addressed the assembled multitude on a little speech of appreciation that 'three captains had come specially to honour them with our presence and cement the bonds of friendship in the Empire etc. etc.' I didn't like the sound of it at all at all; I felt what was going to happen. It did. Three black beauties were produced, the M.C. announced that we would honour them with starting off the dance and the band struck up "Bye Bye Blackbird". 'To hell with this' said I. "Don't keep the

ladies waiting” said Moxon, “besides you’ve got to cement the bonds of Empire”. There being no bar in which to take refuge, there was nothing to be done about it, and your poor dear husband found himself in the clutches of a local belle dressed (solely, I believe) in a flame-coloured evening gown with a bright green bandana affair thrown over her shoulders, hair beautifully waved and set in native fashion, lips heavily rouged and a coal black face going grey with face powder (oh how I adore painted ladies!) and smelling like sixty – five cheap scent counters. Far be it from me to pass any opinion on her abilities as a dancer, but dancing here is somewhat different from the accepted styles. You lift your feet up and down to the music and progress slowly round the floor but the great thing here is to waggle your bottom and swing your shoulders – the more violently you do it the greater the appreciation of your efforts. I won’t bore you with an introspective account of my feelings whilst we were the sole occupants of the floor. I vaguely remember seeing Muckle propelling a large lump of a negress around, and I tried to make polite conversation but my partner was very Mendi and my knowledge of Mendi falls into two sections – what to say to a labourer asleep on the job and a collection of nouns, so that wasn’t very helpful. Eventually inscrutable Providence made the band stop and I deposited my partner on a seat and made my escape; despite the united efforts of the M.C.’s I declined to cement any more bonds of Empire and found myself a quiet corner where I was joined by the other two.

The band consisted of a cornet, a euphonium, a clarinet, a tenor horn, four banjos and a big drum. The second of these instruments had the time of its life and was a treat to hear. I’m sure the entire band donned red jerseys on Sundays and played for the Salvation Army. About eleven o’clock things began to warm up – in every sense of the word. Men removed their shirts and women whatever corresponding garment they wore. Sweat was pouring out of everybody but their enthusiasm grew greater as their clothes grew wetter. At this stage they started a rumba which lasted a good twenty minutes and reduce the euphonium player to a state of collapse. A West African rumba is a memorable spectacle; but I will spare your blushes; the general idea seems to be one of independence; it’s a free for all in which male and female wriggle about indiscriminately; you grab a female for a few fleeting seconds and then move on, and wriggle at someone else at a distance of three or four feet; if the fancy takes you, you do a pas seul or a pirouette right down or round the floor taking no notice of anybody. The rumba was followed by the lancers; nobody seemed to bother about the particular figure; and all the members of one set might be doing different movements at the same time. And if, of course, you didn’t like the partner fate threw up at you, well you just left that movement out or joined the next party. Waltzes & tangoes weren’t very popular; but about one o’clock another rumba

turned up in which one bloke rumba'd so vigorously that his trousers came unstuck and he had to retire hastily. By this time the heat was really appalling and the smell of native was definitely over-coming the smell of cheap scent. We said good-night to the sheik-like M.C and retired, much to the disappointment of the three languorous females who were hanging about hopefully in the middle distance. Ah, my dear Vi, the things we philosophers endure in the interests of knowledge. But I shall pass that way but once----- I have no use for a dance with no bar ---- I send you the ticket as a souvenir.

There was one final episode – as we made our way to the car in the darkness Muckle stumbled into a couple clasped in a loving embrace. He flashed his torch on – and off again out of decency, but not before I had recognised my second-best driver who should have been in barracks at half-past eight. However, I have connived at the felony – he's going on 28 days leave to-morrow to his wife and family up country. And he did bring me back safely in the storm the other week. To salve my conscience, I told my sgt to-day to drop a hint to the African troops that one of these nights I'll be on the prowl with the orderly sgt and heaven help anybody absent from their quarters without a pass. I am a firm believer in prevention being better than cure; but I certainly can't have these blighters out of barracks all night – Warminster or no Warminster! Do you remember my little racket there? Mea culpa – my heart is on the wrong side of the fence still; all velvet glove and no iron hand.

And now I really must close. I ought to tell you I've received letters no's, 24 & 25, three bundles of papers & the third consignment of cigarettes; also letters from Aunt C in Morecambe and Sally. But I'll write about those next time. Meanwhile I've written to George Francis pointing out that I never hear from him. All my love to my little Vi; don't over work yourself and treat all official forms with the contempt they deserve. And when you get really oppressed by them, write something dam' silly on them. It always shakes the official mind and does it good. And it helps to preserve your own sanity. When all the world is mad, a bit of lunacy is the best tonic.

Your own infatuated husband

Tommy.

Debbie Staynes *Mem 1059*

The Burial Question at Stanley

The following report of a "Lively Vestry Meeting" was printed in The Herald on Saturday 11 December 1880. It was discovered in the course of our research into Stanley churchyard and underlines the challenges faced in trying to locate specific graves.

On Monday evening a vestry meeting of the ratepayers of the parish of Stanley was held in St. Peter's School, Lake Lock, for the purpose of taking into consideration the desirability of forming a Burial Board for the parish. The room was densely crowded, and the proceedings were of a very lively and noisy character. The VICAR (the Rev. H. C. Innes) having read the notice convening the gathering, declared the meeting open, and said he should be glad if anyone would bring forward a resolution. Mr. M. Hall was about to speak, when he was interrupted by loud shouts of "He has no right to be in it," "We haven't appointed a chairman yet," &c., from all parts of the building. Someone in the body of the building proposed that Mr. John Sugden be the chairman, but he respectfully declined the honour. After some little time vainly spent in endeavouring to procure silence, the VICAR read the clause from the Parish Act which states that the incumbent of the parish, if present, has the right to preside at any vestry meeting. (A voice: "Are you the incumbent?") The VICAR: I am the incumbent of the ecclesiastical district of Stanley, so he sat down amid a counter protest from Outwood and Wrenthorpe. - The VICAR (in the chair): Yes, it is; and only the people of Stanley have the right to vote. - Dr. MATTERSON: Then no one out of the ecclesiastical district can speak or vote? - Mr. W. H. B. TOMLINSON said there was a word about ecclesiastical district in the notice. - The Rev. S. V. INNES (Vicar of Outwood): It says the parish of Stanley. - Mr. M. HALL: Stanley is not a parish of itself. - The CHAIRMAN again read the requisition, pointing out that it affected only the hamlet of Stanley. - A VOICE: What are you going to do with Wrenthorpe? - (Laughter and confusion.) Mr. J. Taylor next essayed to speak, but subsided without any audible remarks, amidst loud cries of "Sit down you there," &c. - Mr. CORSER said as there appeared to be some little misunderstanding, arising probably through the application made by the Vicar and churchwardens to the Home Secretary in reference to Martin's Act, it would be as well to have it set right, and let the meeting know where they were, or at present they were at sea. If this was a meeting of the ecclesiastical district, then they had nothing to do with Martin's Act at it at all. - Dr. MATTERSON said the terms of the notice were sufficiently clear. It was confined to the district of Stanley, and the meeting was called for the purpose of taking into consideration the formation of a Burial Board. They had nothing

to do with Martin's Act. - Mr. W. H. B. TOMLINSON said if the Churchwardens would give him a guarantee that he, as a resident at Outwood, would not be called upon to contribute to any scheme which might be decided upon, he would not take any part in the meeting. - Mr. M. HALL was proceeding to read the definition of a parish as dictated under the Burials Act, from this, when another interruption occurred, and amidst cries of "Shut it up," he was compelled to close the book. - Mr. MARSHALL thought they had come on a one-sided question, and no one appeared to understand what they had met about. - Dr. MATTERSON pressed for a reply to the question he had put. - The CHAIRMAN said he believed only the parishioners of the ecclesiastical district had a right to vote. - (Uproar and confusion.) - The Rev. C. NORMAN wished to know whether the question of Martin's Act was understood to be quashed or not, as if there was a reservation that it was to be applied for he would object to anyone leaving the room until the whole matter was settled. He then proceeded to enter into a detailed history of the Burial question in Stanley, pointing out that the parishioners had only the Vicar's ipse dixit that the churchyard would soon be filled, and stating that from what he could gather, a considerable portion of the ground would soon be available under the new scheme. His reason why the Vicar wanted additional burial ground to be provided was that it would give him free use of the churchyard. They had offered to enlarge the churchyard, and there was nothing in the Burials Acts to prevent it. - (Applause.) - And he did not know what Mr. Merrick had behind that he refused the offer. - (Hear, hear.) If the Vicar could, 10 or 15 years ago, obtain an order in Council, to enlarge the churchyard, he wished to know what would prevent him doing so now? - The CHAIRMAN said he did not obtain the order, and he and the churchwardens had no voice whatever in the matter. They had no intention to send for an Inspector, but one having been sent to Wakefield, came over to Stanley, which he was in the district, and the Order in Council was the result of his visit. He wished Mr. Norman to get the matter fairly, and not mislead the meeting. - Mr. BOWNAS said he believed the Vicar at that time objected to the Burial Board. - The CHAIRMAN said a Burial Board was never thought of then. Mr. Bownas ought to make correct statements, or else not speak upon such things, unless he knew perfectly well what he was talking about. - (Applause.) - Mr. BOWNAS: All I can say is, that my informant is in the room. - (Uproar.) - The CHAIRMAN: Will you name him? - Mr. BOWNAS: He is present - (renewed disturbance, and cries of "Name, name.") - Mr. BOWNAS: John Marshall - (loud cheering.) - Mr. MARSHALL, in an excited manner, asked to be allowed to speak? - The CHAIRMAN: Let us hear Mr. Bownas. Let us be good tempered. - Mr. BOWNAS said he wished to know why another piece of ground could not now be purchased, as was done 14 years ago. The reason why

they proposed to enlarge the churchyard was to save the parish expense. - (Applause, and laughter.) He did not see why they should be saddled with £2,000 or £3,000 debt. Perhaps, the churchwardens would also give a reason why no portion of the ground purchased 15 years ago was available for burials. - (Applause.) - The CHAIRMAN said when about 30 new graves had been made the available space would be filled up. There were a number of deep family graves with only one or two bodies in them, but it had always been his wish that the family graves should not be interfered with, and he was not disposed to let any odds and ends be put in them whilst he was Vicar of Stanley. - (Loud applause.) The back part of the churchyard would be available, but not for 10 or 12 years. He did not think anyone would like the sexton to dig into it at present, and throw up the half-decayed remains of those who had been buried there. - (Hear, hear.) He did not think it was right to do so. - (Applause.) - A Ratepayer asked why the oven end had been used over again. - The CHAIRMAN said that bodies totally decayed there in about ten years, owing to the porous nature of the soil, whilst in other parts of the graveyard they would not decay in 30 years. - Mr. MARSHALL wished to know if the Vicar would accept a piece of land as an addition to the churchyard, if it was subscribed for by the parishioners. - (A Voice: Yes, that's it.) There had been a great deal said about the Dissenters wishing a wall down to be laid round the parish's neck, but the Dissenters neither asked for a Burial Board or cemetery; they only asked for an extension of the existing graveyard. - (Applause.) - Dr. MATTERSON: How are you going to raise the money, except by a Burial Board? - Mr. MARSHALL said they could form a Burial Board, buy the necessary land, and, after it was enclosed and handed over to the Vicar, allow the Board and the rate to die a natural death. - (Loud applause.) - Dr. MATTERSON: That is very like clap-trap. Mr. Marshall ought to know very well that once a Burial Board is formed it cannot lapse. - The CHAIRMAN, in answer to Mr. Marshall, said he would candidly inform the meeting that the reason why he did not care to have the churchyard extended was because he thought the time had now come when the parish itself ought to have charge of the burial ground of its people, and the Vicar ought to be divested of all cares of that sort. There was no reason why a piece of land should not be purchased adjoining the churchyard, and a gate put in the churchyard wall communicating with it, and what more could they desire? - Mr. W. H. HALL: And by that means you keep the Dissenters out. - The CHAIRMAN: We cannot keep them out, we have no power. - Mr. HALL: There will be a lock and key. - Mr. NORMAN said the scheme was very plausible and nice, but it was not an extension of the churchyard. Mr. Burrell said it was time the parish took the management of its own graveyard, and he thoroughly agreed with him. From time immemorial the parish churchyard

had been a parish fixture. It had been the freehold and absolute right of the clergy and churchwardens. - Mr. M. HALL: According to law, I believe. - Mr. NORMAN: I say it is a fixture. - Mr. M. HALL (excitedly): I say it is a lie. - (Uproar.) - Mr. NORMAN: I thank you. He calls me a liar. - Mr. HALL: I did not say so. - Mr. NORMAN: You said it was a lie. - Mr. HALL: I said it was a false-hood. - (Renewed uproar and disturbance.) - Mr. NORMAN: Mr. Chairman, words have used the word. I'm not afraid of the law either. Don't treat him so. I'm the wrong sort of man for that. - (Disturbance.) - Mr. HALL: Your own uncle is calling a man a liar. - A Voice: He didn't call him a liar. - Mr. INNES: I say he is not worthy to be in the place, when he calls a man a liar. - (Hooting and uproar.) Mr. NORMAN repeated that the parish burial ground was a fixture, because every man buried in it was compelled to have the Church service read over him, no matter how distasteful it might be to him. - Mr. M. HALL was sorry so much acrimony had crept into the meeting, and said that if he had made use of any offensive expression he was ready to withdraw it, but when Mr. Norman came in and commenced knocking the Vicar and churchwardens right and left - (A Voice: He has been doing it all through) - they could not wonder if some of them lost their temper a little. He believed a rate over the entire township would be an injustice to Outwood, although they paid for the education of 10 or 12 children. - (Uproar and cries of "Sit down," and "Question.") - Mr. CORSER said he was glad to hear the proposition, and that the matter be left in the hands of the Burial Sanitary Authority, who would manage it better than a local Burial Board. The School Board had shown them what Boards would do for them. - (Cheers and dissent.) - Mr. MARSHALL: Let's have no more about School Boards. They had failed as horribly in the management of their own affairs in the School Board - (A Voice: "Question," and renewed disturbance.) - Mr. BOWNAS: Question, question. I shall demand the right of reply, if anything more is said about the School Board. - A Voice: You have said too much already; sadly too much. - Mr. MARSHALL (mildly waving his stick): You have no right to allow such like men to speak on a matter that has not been brought on at all. - Mr. MATTERSON again essayed to speak, asking if the ratepayers of the ecclesiastical district of Stanley were aware how much had been spent of their money in attending the children of Outwood, and without a penny benefit to themselves; when another interruption, lasting several minutes, occurred. - The CHAIRMAN: I hope you are not afraid to hear what Mr. Matterson has to say. - Voices: Let him keep to the question. We would be very much obliged if he would sit down, &c. - Mr. BOWNAS and Mr. CORSER claimed the right to reply, if Mr. Matterson was allowed to proceed. - A Ratepayer: Let none of them go on; stick to the - (Laughter.) - At the request of the

Chairman, Mr. MATTERSON contented himself with moving a formal resolution to the effect that a Burial Board be formed for the ecclesiastical district of Stanley. - Dr. MATTERSON seconded. - Mr. W. BOWNAS moved an amendment to the effect that the ratepayers of Outwood and Wrenthorpe declare their intention to fight the matter to the bitter end, if Martin's Act was insisted upon. - A Voice: Are you a rate-payer? - Mr. BALDWIN: I have a voice, although I have no vote. - (Cries of "Sit down," "Turn him out," and uproar, during which Mr. Baldwin sat down.) - Mr. BOWNAS pointed out that all present could vote on the question, and asked if the Outwood and Wrenthorpe people had gone away, as suggested, what would have become of the negative? - Mr. HALL: It would have been carried. - Dr. MATTERSON: Without the slightest fear. - (Great uproar.) - Mr. MARSHALL: Another "hole-and-corner" job. - (Renewed disturbance.) - Mr. BOWNAS said he was extremely sorry for the Church party that such a resolution had been moved, because he felt that the Dissenters had been materially taken in. - (Cheers.) - Mr. Hall here withdrew his seconding of the motion, Mr. Shaw taking his place. - The CHAIRMAN denied that there had been any trap set. Had that been his desire, he would have asked the Outwood and Wrenthorpe ratepayers to leave. - The amendment and motion were then put, the latter being carried by a large majority. - Dr. MATTERSON demanded a poll, which the CHAIRMAN fixed to be taken on Saturday (to-day), adjourning the meeting to 6 p.m. on that day to hear the result.

Transcribed by the Editor

Fochabers Gingerbread (Ena Baxter's Recipe)



At our last meeting Peter Brears was a special guest. Some of our members were present at a meeting of the Historical Society in the Town Hall when Peter spoke about Wakefield Gingerbread which was a speciality product. There were a number shops dedicated to this product amongst them was Gosnay's on Westgate which specialised in Wakefield Gingerbread, Pork Pies and Cheshire Cheese and we were presented with many samples of local recipes to taste. In his honour my wife baked gingerbread to the following recipe which we knew from the north of Scotland. **He rated it** "very good".

Ingredients:

8 oz butter
8 oz sugar
8 oz treacle
2 eggs
½ pint of beer
1 lb flour
4 oz sultanas
4 oz currants
3 oz ground almonds
3 oz finely chopped candied peel
2 level tsp mixed spices
4 level tsp ground ginger
2 level tsp ground cinnamon
1 level tsp ground cloves
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

Method:

Beat together the butter and sugar to a cream. Warm the treacle slightly and add. Break the eggs in one at a time, beating well. Mix together the flour, fruit and ground almonds and spices. Add to the butter mixture. Dissolve the bicarbonate of soda in the beer and add to the mixture. Mix thoroughly put into cake tins and bake in the centre of a slow oven (300F Gas 3) for about 2 hours. Remove from tin and cool. Store in a tightly covered tin.



Ena Baxter, well-known personality in the world of Scottish food and a director of Baxters of Speyside (renowned for their fine soups, jams and Scottish specialities), here reveals the secrets of her Scottish kitchen. Mrs Baxter's favourite recipes are put together in her own personal way, and presented against a background of the Highland life of herself and her family.

'A fascinating and delightfully written book in which Ena Baxter gives us the real traditional and country cooking of Scotland from first-hand knowledge' Katie Stewart

'Mrs Ena Baxter's exciting cookery book will delight the hearts of all those at home and abroad who love Scottish fare' Elizabeth Craig

Johnston & Bacon Publishers, Tanfield House, Tanfield Lane, Edinburgh EH3 5LL. A division of Cassell Ltd., 35 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4SG.

ISBN 0 7179 4860 X © Johnston & Bacon Publishers £1.35

We hope you enjoy this recipe

SOCIETY NOTICES

Wakefield & District Family History Society

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 4 July 2026

Present: Paul Gaywood, Chris Welch, Carol Sklinar and a further 18 members plus 2 non-voting visitors. David Huddart and Martin Jackson and 11 other members joined on zoom.

1. Opening by our President: Chris Welch noted a few significant world events that had happened on this day, 4th July, in the past. He went on to highlight the significant achievements of this Society and that these were something to be proud of, something to cherish and something to help to maintain. He highlighted the many publications, regular meetings, the Society's website, publication of the Kinsman, the library, bookstalls and displays. He said that he was grateful to all those that gave their time freely for the benefit of others. He concluded with a thank you.

2. Apologies for Absence: Lord St Oswald (Patron, who would dearly like to to have attended but had a formal engagement on this date), Sheelagh Jackson, Claire Pickering, Dave Bradley, David and Deborah Scriven, Ros Bartle, Denise Sanford, Joy Joseph, Shirley Levon, Geoff Wood.

3. Minutes of the 26th AGM on the 5th July 2025 (as presented in Kinsman 29.4). They were agreed as a true record.

4. Matters arising from the minutes. There were none

5. Annual Reports:

a. Chairman's Report – The Chairman commenced his report with a reading of a poem entitled – The Genealogist's Prayer, and commented that it gave a recognisable description of what the society's members experienced.

The Chairman then wished to thank those people who had assisted over the past year with the running of the society (item 8 on the published agenda) : Chris Welch, for all his work, Carol Sklinar for her notable work on the Kinsman, Sheelagh Jackson for assisting with the untangling of the finances, Shirley Frost helping with the finances, David Huddart for work as Webmaster, Dave Bradley, Claire Pickering, George Scogings for their work, Debbie as Membership Secretary, Eileen Marshall on the bookstall, June as assistant Librarian, Stella on the Help Desk along with Dave and Debbie, Loraine Simpson with meeting reports, Ros and Deborah with publications and Sue and Mary with the catering.

The Chairman looked forward to expected developments. He hoped for four editions of The Kinsman this coming year. The up-and-coming meeting programme was outlined with a request to hear from members on their meeting requirements – what they liked, what they wanted more of. The Chairman highlighted the September meeting where a gentleman who grew up in

Wakefield will give his first-hand recollections of his life as a schoolboy in the city during WW II.

The Chairman emphasised the need for more volunteers to develop the Society's work.

In response to a question from an attendee on zoom the Chairman said that the membership was like last year, at about 230 – 250.

b. Finance Report (given by the Chairman) - The Finance report for the year ending 31st March 2026 was shown on the screen and the key figures highlighted - Income was down due to a reduction in royalties; sale of publications was down, membership subscriptions were about the same.

The Chairman stated that he was keen to investigate the reasons for the drop in royalties and to seek to make more of the Society's data (project work started in the past but not published). The Chairman was keen to follow the Society's charity status aims of promoting Family History.

With the finances in mind the Chairman sought more feedback from members on, for example, preferences on digital or hard copy journals and data collection projects that are needed. A zoom attendee referenced the reported success of a "give away day" event at a nearby society where hard copy publications were sold at a discount.

6. To elect / re-elect officers of the Society:

Nominations were received for the following:

a. Chairman - Paul Gaywood

b. Vice Chair – Carol Sklinar

c. Secretary – Martin Jackson

Members present voted unanimously to confirm each named candidate.

There were no nominations for the following:

d. Treasurer – not filled

7. To elect / re-elect members of the committee

Dave Bradley, Dave Huddart, Claire Pickering, George Scogings had all been nominated and were elected en-bloc unanimously by the members present.

8. Vote of thanks to our volunteers, to those standing down from roles in the Society and to those who have accepted nominations to be on the new committee. (Covered by item 5a above.)

9. Closure of the AGM The meeting was formally closed after a period of 44 minutes.

Post meeting announcement - The result of the Norman White essay competition

This year's competition, announced by Carol Sklinar, was won by David Simmonds for his essay on the topic of "Black Sheep of the Family" – The subject matter was "Mary"

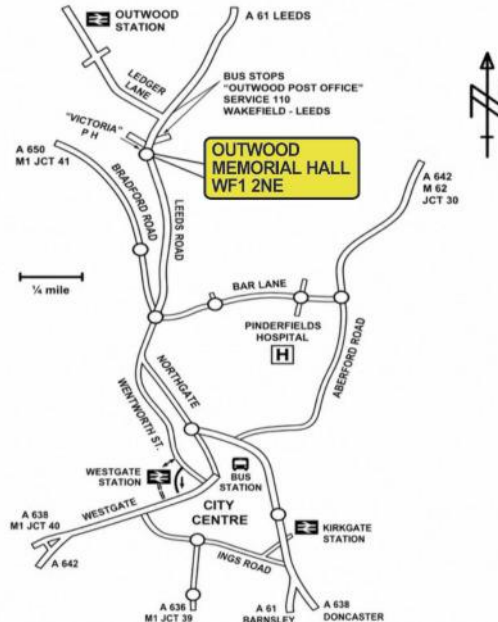
Martin Jackson *Secretary*

MONTHLY MEETINGS

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

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

See over for a listing of forthcoming speakers.



KEY VOLUNTEERS

Membership Secretary:

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

Publication Sales & Journal Distribution:

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

Bookstall Manager:

Eileen Marshall

Exchange Journals & Library Assistant:

June Jamieson

Help Desk:

Stella Robinson, Carol Sklinar, Dave Bradley & Debbie Staynes

Meetings Assistants:

Colin Lunn & Patricia Winfield

Refreshments Organiser:

Sue Vasis

Refreshments Assistant:

Mary Buttigieg

Meetings Reporter:

Lorraine Simpson

Minutes Recorder & Assistant Librarian:

Jacqueline Ryder

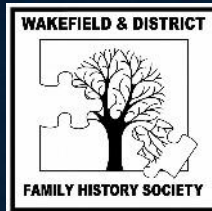
Publications Stall:

Ros Bartle

Publications Stall Assistant:

Deborah Scriven

Wakefield & District Family History Society



Programme to March 2027

◆ SATURDAY MEETINGS ◆
at Outwood Memorial Hall
Doors open 9.30am - Talks begin 10.30am

Meetings open to all

2026

Oct 3rd

THE DENBY DALE WITCHCRAFT TRIALS
David Hinchliffe

Nov 7th

MATTHEW TOMLINSON'S JOURNAL
David Scriven

Dec 5th

LIFE AND DEATH ON YORKSHIRE'S WATERWAYS
David Scrimgeour

2027

Jan 2nd

1937 CORONATION CELEBRATIONS WAKEFIELD
Paul Gaywood ~ Zoom Meeting Only

Feb 6th

ST AUSTIN'S CHURCH
Dom Gilroy

Mar 6th

**THE QUIRKS AND PITFALLS OF GREAT WAR
FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH**
Steve Erskine



Refreshments will be available,
while a bookstall and WDFHS
members will be on hand for
help and advice.

For information about our upcoming
society meetings, please scan the QR code



wdfhs.co.uk

