

# THE YORKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORIAN



## LEEDS TOWN HALL Circa 2024

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**The photo on the front cover is a recent picture taken of**

### **LEEDS TOWN HALL**

(No copyright necessary):

In the light that the recent Local Elections taking place across the country,

On the 4th May 2024, I thought it rather apt to display this on the cover of the

### **Yorkshire Family Historian - EDITOR - YFH**

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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

There is no Chairman's Report this issue of the Journal owing to the fact that going to press I haven't heard anything from our Chairman Stephen Bennett. Hopefully all is well with you Stephen, perhaps we will receive something from you over the Summer

## MAN OF MYSTERY



Keeping up the theme of people who changed their name I'd like to share with you this story which was sent in by Tony, a regular correspondent:

I enjoyed the identity quest in the latest newsletter. A similar quest ignited my interest in Family research.

My father wrote a family history in 1973. His grandfather William Reynolds was much loved and left a trove of material, pics, letters and memorabilia. I still use his Turner's "Encore" scissors which he greatly valued. It was known that Reynolds was not his birth name, so about 25 years ago I determined to find his real identity and update my father's family history. The GRO card index revealed a likely name (his older brother) and I wrongly assumed I had found my man – but he appeared in subsequent records which ruled him out.

My big breakthrough was the now defunct Black Sheep Index which held copies of the Great Patriotic Fund records – his father was a Crimean War casualty and his dependents were supported by the Great Patriotic Fund for widows and orphans of the war. It listed the family and great grandfather was shown as **David Samuel Dowsett**, the name he was baptised with in Chester in 1852.

He enlisted as a boy entrant artificer in the Royal Navy in 1868, but deserted after striking an instructor and went on the run which took him all over the world serving in the merchant marine under his new assumed name for about 40 years. Being a merchant seaman was one of the most hazardous occupations – much more dangerous than, for example, mining. Many of the ships he served on were subsequently lost – in one case with all hands. I had assumed that he spent his life looking over his shoulder due to the desertion, but to my amazement he served in the Royal Navy Merchant Navy Volunteer Reserve for 20 years from 1882. According to his Volunteer record he was proficient in "big guns", Rifle and Cutlass. His travels – I have an almost complete record of all the ships he served on – and his life story are extraordinary – he went all over the world. His letters are very revealing about the dangers he faced. As the icing on the cake I found that I was a DNA match for Grandpa's brother's descendants in Canada. The research took a very long time but the results were extremely satisfying. It is amazing how many records are still out there waiting to be found.

**SOURCE: ARTICLE PETER CALVER re: TONY;  
LETTER FROM THE EDITOR**

Dear Members, this is indeed a memorable anniversary, the 50th Anniversary of the Yorkshire Family Historian. I have been privileged to attain almost 15 years of Editor, involved in the management, and publication of said Journal. There have been a few blips, mistakes along the way, but I have been encouraged by the many compliments and 'thank you's', received over the years.

Nothing much to report regarding any news of the Yorkshire Family Historian. I am in touch with David Brear who manages our parent Journal The Yorkshire Archaeological Society. He regularly requests me for updates which I supply him with.

As previously mentioned, I have put in a request for 'retirement' as **Editor of the YFH**, and would welcome to hear from any Volunteers that wish to take over (and perhaps even improve the quality of said publication), as Editor. I feel that at 72 years of age it is time for retirement! Easter has come and gone, with the usual inclement weather, which was miserable!

Unfortunately the world is in continual ferment, with The Ukraine - Russia continuing to grind on, whilst the Hamas - Israeli conflict is full of inhumanity towards one another, with the Israeli President more concerned with votes in an election year rather than resolving the conflict. With Hamas also being intransigent, it appears that the US will have to intervene to resolve said conflict!

Meanwhile in Africa, and Asia, populations continue to starve from famine owing to political considerations, and the onset of climate change. Appeals for help are conspicuous by their absence. The little aid there is, is inadequate to cope with the scale of human misery. When will people learn? We all live on the same planet which one day will run out of resources. Regarding status of the YFH Journal, the more things change, the more they stay the same! (Plus ça change.....); The usual crowd continues to provide a service which I hope is appreciated by our continually changing membership! Going to print, I haven't heard anything from our esteemed Chairman, Stephen Bennett, who I hope is in reasonably good health! We have a full lecture programme thanks to the efforts of our Lectures Secretary Sue Chell, Kathryn continues our membership figures, whilst John Korna quietly goes about his business behind the scenes. Jennifer Butler has included a piece for publication in this issue of the Journal.

**ALLAN DAWKINS - EDITOR**

## **CHANGES OF ADDRESS AND MISSING JOURNALS**

### **Saturday Lectures To Be Presented Online By Zoom**

Please note that all these lectures will take place on Saturday mornings on the dates listed and start at 11:00 a.m. unless otherwise indicated. Note some meeting dates may have to be moved owing to public holidays or other reasons such as **Covid imposed limitations**. Lectures will take place using the online Zoom meeting facility. Register your intention to join the lecture at FHS Lectures together with details of your name and YAHS Section at the latest two days before the lecture date. This will enable the organisers to issue your meeting entrance details.

### **SATURDAY MORNING LECTURES AT THE SWARTHMORE EDUCATION CENTRE**

#### **DIARY OF EVENTS 2023- 2024**

Please forward any change of address details to The Membership Secretary either by email to [membershipsecretary@yorkshireroots.org.uk](mailto:membershipsecretary@yorkshireroots.org.uk) **UPDATED May 2023;**

**May 11th**            **Family History from Seventeenth Century Woodhouse and the Manor of Leeds**            **Janice Heppenstall Genealogist**  
**June 8th**            **From Cradle to Grave - A Lifetime of Sources,**  
                         **How many have you used? Jackie Depelle Genealogy Tutor**  
                         **July & August 2024 is the Summer Break**

**SUE CHELL - LECTURES SECRETARY**

### **NEW MEMBERS LIST**

We extend a warm welcome to all new members who have joined the Section between **1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024.**

Ms J. Almond, 3 Shuttocks Fold, Kippax, Leeds, LS25 7RF  
Ms C. Barker, 182 Lynn Road, Wisbech, PE13 3EB  
Mr J. Bibby, 1 Straylands Grove, York, YO31 1EB  
Mr J. Crabtree, 1711 Sarah Lane, Jefferson City, Missouri, U S A, 65101  
Mr G. Harris, Windmill House, Ripon Road, Boroughbridge, YO51 9DP  
Ms T. Hingley, Brookside, Kirk Hammerton, York, YO26 8BX  
Mr P. Ingram, The Laurels, 282 The Common, Holt, Trowbridge, BA14 6QJ  
Ms E. Kujawa, 8 The Covert, Batley, WF17 8BG  
Ms H. Moffat, 28 All Hallowes Drive, Tickhill, Doncaster, DN11 9JS  
Ms J. Rhodes, 26 Wharfe View, Grassington, BD23 5NL  
Ms D. Stirk, 13 Edinburgh Road, Forrestfield, West Australia, 6058  
Mr S. Sykes, South View Farm, Dunford Bridge, Sheffield, S3 4TF  
Mrs T. Underwood, 34 Heathfield, Adel, Leeds, LS16 6AQ  
Mr P. Wynn, 27 Wordsworth Avenue, Malden, CM

We thank all members, existing and new, for their continued support to the Section.

**KATHRYN CHEETHAM**

**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

# A GREAT-GRANDFATHER FROM MERSEYSIDE HAS BECOME THE WORLD'S OLDEST LIVING MAN.

**John Tinniswood**, at 111 years and nearly 8 months, is the oldest man in the world – and just to prove it I've dug out his entry from the 1921 Census:

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.** Please read the Instructions and Examples shown on the back, and then fill up the Schedule carefully and in ink.

NAME and SURNAME—	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Household	AGE	SEX	MARRIAGE or CIVIL STATUS	BIRTHPLACE and NATURALITY	OCCUPATION and EMPLOYMENT		
						Particular Occupation	Employment	Place of Work
<i>Tinniswood</i>								
<i>John Howard</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Widchelsea</i>	<i>Police Constable</i>	<i>Washed Committee</i>	<i>At Home</i>
<i>Blodwen Tinniswood</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Widchelsea</i>			
<i>John Alfred Tinniswood</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Liverpool</i>			

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John Tinniswood, who is **111 years and 223 days old**, puts his longevity down to fish and chips on a Friday and having hiked regularly when he was young.

Mr Tinniswood, who now lives in a care home in Southport, advises "exercising the mind" and "moderation".

**The previous title-holder, Juan Vicente Pérez Mora of Venezuela, died aged 114 on Tuesday.**

Mr Tinniswood, a Liverpool FC fan, was born in the city on **26 August 1912**, and can recall standing on the terraces watching Billy Liddell and Everton's Dixie Dean..

He met his wife, Blodwen, during World War Two, and they married in 1942.

John Tinniswood married his wife Blodwen in 1942. Their daughter, Susan, was born in 1943. The couple were married for 44 years until Blodwen died in 1986.

He worked for Royal Mail, for Shell, and for BP until he retired in 1972.

He said his earliest memory was his first day at school at Lawrence Road and later The Holt Secondary School, now known as Childwall Comprehensive School.

He said he did not have a special diet but continues to enjoy his favourite meal, fish and chips, every Friday.

He also recommended to "never over-tax your system" for a healthy life, and to get along with people. "We are all different people," he said.

"It is up to us to make that difference work, otherwise everything fails."



## **MR AND MRS TINNISWOOD MARRIAGE 1942**

Mr Tinniswood was presented with the Guinness World Records certificate on 4 April. The world's oldest living woman, and oldest living person overall, is Spain's Maria Branyas Morera, who recently celebrated her 117th birthday. The evidence for the oldest man living was examined by Guinness World Records' Senior Consultant for Gerontology, Robert Young, and the Gerontology Research Group.

**SOURCE: BBC News article March 2024**



# HOW TO USE HISTORICAL MAPS TO RESEARCH YOUR ANCESTORS

**Jun 29, 2023**

Using historical maps to research your ancestors helps offer a unique and fascinating window into the past. These carefully crafted artefacts, capturing landscapes and territories of bygone eras, hold invaluable clues that can guide us on a captivating expedition of discovery.

In this article, we will embark on a voyage through time, exploring the power of using historical maps to research your ancestors. We will delve into the art of deciphering cartographic secrets, learn where to find these treasured maps, and uncover the hidden stories they tell. Each section will bring forth a different facet of historical map research, ensuring that you gain a comprehensive understanding of their significance and potential.

## Table of Contents

- locating and acquiring historical maps: unveiling the cartographic treasures
- analyzing and interpreting historical maps: decoding the cartographic symbols
- tracing ancestral migration patterns: unveiling the footsteps of the past
- land ownership and property research: unveiling ancestral estates
- exploring boundaries and historical context: unveiling ancestral interactions and geopolitical changes
- utilizing digital mapping tools: unleashing the power of modern technology

## LOCATING AND ACQUIRING HISTORICAL MAPS: UNVEILING THE CARTOGRAPHIC TREASURES

When it comes to delving into the world of historical maps, the first step is to locate and acquire these invaluable artifacts. Fortunately, the digital age has made it easier than ever before to access a wealth of historical maps from various sources around the globe. Let's explore some avenues for discovering and obtaining these cartographic treasures. Online Archives and Libraries: Numerous online archives and libraries house extensive collections of historical maps. The David Rumsey Map Collection ([davidrumsey.com](http://davidrumsey.com)) is a notable resource, offering a vast assortment of digitized maps from different periods and regions. The Library of Congress ([www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)) is another excellent repository, featuring a rich collection of maps spanning centuries.

ii. Historical Societies and Museums: Local historical societies and museums often possess their own collections of historical maps. These institutions can provide access to maps that specifically focus on the region or community of interest. Searching for the websites or contacting the historical societies and museums in your ancestral areas can yield fruitful results.



iii. **Map Collections and Specialized Websites:** Various websites and organizations specialize in curating and digitizing historical maps. The website Old Maps Online ([oldmapsonline.org](http://oldmapsonline.org)) serves as a portal to numerous map collections worldwide, allowing you to search for specific locations and time periods. The National Geographic Maps ([www.natgeomaps.com](http://www.natgeomaps.com)) website offers a wide range of historical maps for exploration and purchase.

iv. **University Libraries and Archives:** University libraries and archives often have comprehensive map collections available to researchers. Many institutions have digitized portions of their collections and made them accessible online. Check the websites of universities or contact their library departments to explore their map resources

v. **Government and Geographic Institutions:** National or regional government agencies, as well as geographic institutions, may provide access to historical maps. For example, the National Archives and Records Administration ([archives.gov](http://archives.gov)) in the United States offers an extensive collection of maps and records that can be explored online or accessed in person

vi. **Auctions and Antique Map Dealers:** Auction houses and antique map dealers can be excellent sources for acquiring original historical maps. Websites like Sotheby's ([sothebys.com](http://sothebys.com)) and Christie's ([www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)) regularly host map auctions, allowing collectors and enthusiasts to acquire unique pieces of cartographic history. Additionally, antique map dealers often offer a wide selection of maps for sale, both online and in physical stores.

## **ANALYZING AND INTERPRETING HISTORICAL MAPS: DECODING THE CARTOGRAPHIC SYMBOLS**

Once you have acquired a historical map relevant to your ancestral research, the next step is to delve into the art of analyzing and interpreting the rich array of symbols and features it contains. These symbols hold the key to unlocking the hidden stories and valuable information embedded within the map. Let's explore some common symbols you may encounter on historical maps and their potential interpretations:

i. **Compass Rose:** The compass rose, typically found in the corner of a map, indicates the orientation of the map—north, south, east, and west. Understanding the compass rose allows you to align the map correctly and navigate the depicted areas accurately.

ii.                   Legends and Key: Often located in a corner or along the map's edge, the legend or key provides explanations for the various symbols and markings used on the map. It helps decipher symbols such as rivers, roads, cities, boundaries, and topographic features. Consult the legend to understand the significance of specific symbols.

iii.                  Topographic Features: Different contours, hachures, or shading patterns on a historical map represent the terrain and topographic features of the depicted area. Mountains, hills, valleys, and bodies of water can be identified by examining these symbols. For instance, lines close together indicate steep slopes, while lines farther apart suggest gentle terrain.

iv.                   Settlements and Cities: Symbols representing settlements and cities can vary on different maps. Pay attention to different markers, such as circles, squares, or dots, to denote varying population sizes or levels of significance. Some maps may use different symbols to distinguish between towns, villages, or capital cities.

v.                    Transportation Networks: Historical maps often include symbols for roads, trails, railways, and waterways. These symbols provide insights into the transportation networks that connected different regions. Look for dashed or solid lines of varying thickness to identify different types of routes and their importance.

vi.                   Political Boundaries: Maps display political boundaries, such as national borders, state or province lines, or county divisions. These boundaries can change over time due to historical events or territorial shifts. Observe different line styles, colors, or shading patterns to discern the delineation of political entities.

vii.                  Cultural and Historical Sites: Some historical maps may feature symbols or labels representing cultural or historical landmarks, such as churches, forts, archaeological sites, or landmarks of importance. These markers can provide clues about the religious, military, or social aspects of the depicted area.

viii.                Cartographer's Annotations: Occasionally, historical maps may contain handwritten or printed annotations made by the cartographer. These notes can provide additional context or explanations about certain features on the map, adding depth to your interpretation.

## TRACING ANCESTRAL MIGRATION PATTERNS: UN-VEILING THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE PAST

One of the most captivating aspects of genealogical research is uncovering the migration patterns of our ancestors—the paths they traveled and the places they called home. Historical maps hold a wealth of information that can shed light on these ancestral journeys, allowing us to retrace their footsteps and understand the context of their migrations. In this section, we will explore how historical maps can be invaluable tools for unraveling the migration patterns of our forebearers.

i. **Identifying Significant Locations:** Historical maps can help identify significant locations associated with our ancestors. Begin by gathering information from family records, oral histories, or existing genealogical research to pinpoint the places where your ancestors lived or migrated from. Armed with this knowledge, carefully examine the maps of those regions and identify key towns, cities, landmarks, or geographical features that are relevant to your ancestral research.

ii. **Tracing Routes and Transportation Networks:** Historical maps often depict roads, trails, waterways, and railways, which were crucial transportation routes in the past. Follow these routes on the map and trace their connections to the significant locations associated with your ancestors. This can provide insights into the paths they may have taken during their migrations and the modes of transportation available to them.

iii. **Comparing Maps from Different Time Periods:** Migration patterns can change over time due to various factors such as economic opportunities, political events, or environmental conditions. By comparing historical maps from different time periods, you can observe shifts in population centers, the emergence of new settlements, or the impact of infrastructure development. This analysis can provide a broader understanding of how your ancestors' migration patterns evolved over generations.

iv. **Exploring Settled Areas and Frontier Expansion:** Historical maps can reveal the progression of settlement patterns and frontier expansion. Look for changes in the density of population centers, the establishment of new towns or colonies, and the gradual exploration of previously uninhabited or sparsely populated areas. These shifts can indicate the areas where your ancestors may have sought new opportunities or participated in westward expansion.

v. **Examining County and State Boundaries:** Political and administrative divisions, such as county or state boundaries, can play a significant role in tracing migration patterns. Analyze historical maps to identify changes in these boundaries over time, as they can influence the movement of populations and the formation of new settlements. Understanding these geopolitical changes can offer valuable insights into the context of your ancestors' migrations.

vi. **Connecting Ancestral Movements and Settlements:** By combining the information gathered from historical maps with your genealogical research, you can start connecting the dots and mapping out the migration routes and settled areas of your ancestors. Visualize their movements on the maps, create annotations or overlays to mark their significant locations, and document the timeline of their migrations. This holistic approach can bring their journeys to life and deepen your understanding of their experiences.

## **LAND OWNERSHIP AND PROPERTY RESEARCH: UNVEILING ANCESTRAL ESTATES**

Historical maps not only offer a glimpse into the geographical landscape of the past but also serve as invaluable resources for investigating land ownership and property records. By harnessing the power of these maps, we can delve into the realms of our ancestors' landholdings, gaining insights into their socio-economic status and the legacies they left behind. In this section, we will explore how historical maps can be utilized to uncover the hidden stories of ancestral estates.

i. **Tracing Land Parcels and Boundaries:** Historical maps often include detailed information about land parcels, boundaries, and ownership divisions. By examining these maps, you can trace the specific plots of land associated with your ancestors. Look for labeled or numbered parcels, survey markers, or property lines that indicate individual landholdings. This can provide a foundation for further research into deeds, property records, and other relevant documents.

ii. **Comparing Maps and Atlases:** Comparing different maps and atlases from various time periods can reveal the evolution of land ownership over time. By observing changes in land parcel sizes, shape, or boundaries, you can uncover details about land transactions, inheritance patterns, or divisions among family members. This analysis can shed light on the socio-economic dynamics of your ancestors and their connections to the land.

iii. **Examining Ownership Labels and Annotations:** Historical maps may contain ownership labels or annotations indicating the names of landowners. These labels can be invaluable in identifying specific individuals or families associated with particular parcels of land. By cross-referencing these names with genealogical records, such as wills, land deeds, or tax assessments, you can further solidify the link between your ancestors and their landholdings.

iv. **Overlaying Historical Maps with Modern Maps:** Overlaying historical maps with modern maps or satellite imagery can provide a fascinating perspective on changes in the landscape. This technique allows you to superimpose the historical boundaries and landmarks onto current geographical features, making it easier to locate and understand ancestral properties. Additionally, modern mapping technologies can help identify present-day names of places that correspond to historical names on the maps.

v. **Exploring Socio-Economic Context:** Historical maps can provide insights into the socio-economic context of ancestral landholdings. By examining the proximity of ancestral properties to natural resources, trade routes, or urban centers, you can gain a better understanding of the economic opportunities available to your ancestors. This information can shed light on their livelihoods, social standing, and interactions with the local community.

## EXPLORING BOUNDARIES AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT: UNVEILING ANCESTRAL INTERACTIONS AND GEOPOLITICAL CHANGES.

Historical maps not only depict the physical features of the past but also serve as windows into the dynamic nature of boundaries, political divisions, and geopolitical changes. Understanding these aspects and delving into the historical context they represent can provide valuable insights into our ancestors' lives, interactions, and the influences of different jurisdictions. In this section, we will explore the significance of comprehending historical boundaries and political divisions as we embark on the journey of researching our ancestors.i.

Investigating Jurisdictional Changes: Geopolitical changes, such as the formation or dissolution of empires, the creation of new nations, or the redrawing of boundaries, can greatly impact our ancestral research. Historical maps allow us to visualize these changes and their implications for our ancestors. By understanding the historical context surrounding these shifts, we can better interpret the records, documents, and stories from different jurisdictions that our ancestors encountered.

i. Tracing Political and Administrative Divisions: Historical maps often delineate political and administrative divisions such as national borders, state or provincial lines, and county boundaries. By studying these divisions, you can gain a deeper understanding of the jurisdictions under which your ancestors lived and moved. Tracking changes in these boundaries over time can unveil the impact of historical events, territorial shifts, and political decisions on their lives.

ii. Investigating Jurisdictional Changes: Geopolitical changes, such as the formation or dissolution of empires, the creation of new nations, or the redrawing of boundaries, can greatly impact our ancestral research. Historical maps allow us to visualize these changes and their implications for our ancestors. By understanding the historical context surrounding these shifts, we can better interpret the records, documents, and stories from different jurisdictions that our ancestors encountered.

iii. Analyzing Borderlands and Cultural Exchange: Borders and boundaries have historically been places of cultural exchange, trade, and interaction. Exploring historical maps can shed light on the borderlands where our ancestors may have resided, connecting different regions or even crossing political boundaries. These borderlands can hold valuable insights into cultural blending, migration patterns, and ancestral connections that spanned across geopolitical divisions.

iv. Contextualizing Socio-Political Factors: Historical maps provide a broader understanding of the socio-political factors that influenced our ancestors' lives. By examining the proximity of their residences to cities, trading hubs, or strategic locations, you can gauge the influence of economic opportunities, social networks, and political dynamics on their daily existence. This context can enrich our research and offer a deeper understanding of their societal roles and experiences.v. Researching Records and Archives: The knowledge of historical boundaries and geopolitical changes can guide us in navigating the vast landscape of records and archives. Understanding which jurisdictions held records at specific times can help identify relevant resources for our ancestral research.

By aligning our search with the historical context, we can locate and access records that illuminate the lives of our ancestors within the relevant administrative and governmental frameworks.

## **UTILIZING DIGITAL MAPPING TOOLS: UNLEASHING THE POWER OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY**

As we conclude our exploration of using historical maps to research our ancestors, it's essential to acknowledge the remarkable advancements in digital mapping tools and technologies. In the digital age, platforms like Geographic Information Systems (GIS) have revolutionized the way we interact with maps and visualize ancestral connections. In this final section, we will delve into the advantages of utilizing modern digital mapping tools and how they enhance our ability to uncover and share the stories of our ancestors

i. **Interactive and Customizable Maps:** Digital mapping tools offer the flexibility to create interactive and customizable maps tailored to our specific research needs. With a few clicks, we can overlay historical maps onto modern ones, add markers, annotate locations, and even include multimedia elements. This interactivity enables us to explore ancestral connections, trace migration routes, and visualize the historical context in a more engaging and dynamic manner.

ii. **Spatial Analysis and Data Integration:** Digital mapping platforms provide robust spatial analysis capabilities, allowing us to integrate diverse datasets and extract valuable insights. By combining historical records, census data, land surveys, and other relevant information, we can uncover patterns, relationships, and correlations that might have remained hidden otherwise. This integration of data empowers us to enrich our understanding of our ancestors' lives and the context in which they lived.

iii. **Remote Collaboration and Sharing:** Modern digital mapping tools facilitate remote collaboration and sharing of research findings. Whether it's collaborating with fellow researchers, connecting with distant relatives, or sharing discoveries with a wider audience, these platforms enable seamless sharing and access to interactive maps. This promotes collaboration, fosters a sense of community, and accelerates our collective understanding of our shared ancestral heritage.

iv. **Spatial-Temporal Visualization:** Digital mapping tools excel at visualizing spatial-temporal relationships, allowing us to explore the dynamic aspects of our ancestors' lives. Through animations, timelines, and layered maps, we can witness the evolution of boundaries, track migrations over generations, and uncover the ebb and flow of ancestral communities. This spatial-temporal visualization brings history to life, offering a profound appreciation for the journeys and experiences of our forebearers.

v. **Access to Vast Data Sources:** Digital mapping tools provide access to an extensive range of data sources, including historical maps, aerial imagery, satellite data, and geospatial databases. These resources enable us to tap into a wealth of information and enhance our research with contextual data. By harnessing the power of these data sources, we can gain deeper insights into our ancestors' lives and connect their stories to the broader historical narrative. Incorporating modern digital mapping tools into our ancestral research allows us to bridge the gap between the past and present, enabling us to navigate, analyze, and share our findings in exciting and impactful ways. As we embrace these technological advancements, we expand our ability to connect with our ancestors, preserve their legacies, and pass down their stories to future generations. So, let us embrace the possibilities that digital mapping tools offer, as we continue to unravel the rich tapestry of our ancestral heritage.

**SOURCE : FAMILY HISTORY ZONE 29th June 2023**

## MEMBERS' INTERESTS

1. Please remember to include return postage to the contributor if you are not using email.
2. If you wish to submit your surname interests please either use the online form or write clearly in block capitals on plain paper, including your membership number and contact details, and send to  
Members' Interests, 189, Green Hill Road, Bramley, Leeds LS13 4JY.  
Email: [interests@yorkshireroots.org.uk](mailto:interests@yorkshireroots.org.uk)

NAME PLACES LIVED COUNTY OR

DISTRICT CODE COUNTRY

CODE DATE

CODE

INGRAM	BAINBRIDGE & ASKRIGG	NRY	ENG	A-D
INGRAM	LEEDS WRY	ENG	B-E	
INGRAM	YORK ERY	ENG	A-E	
INGRAM	RIPON NRY	ENG	A-D	

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DATE CODES FOR MEMBERS' INTERESTS FORM

A Up to 1550    B 1550 – 1599    C 1600 – 1649    D 1650 – 1699

E 1700 – 1749    F 1750 – 1799

G 1800 – 1849    H 1850 – 1899    K 1900 – 1949

L 1950 – 1999    M 2000 – 2049

**JENNIFER BUTLER - MEMBERS INTERESTS:**



## **KILL OR CURE – UNDERSTANDING CAUSES OF DEATH**

### **BY LADY TEVIOT**

Many people are interested in the health and disease issues which confronted their ancestors and this also can raise questions on what illnesses we might inherit. Before the introduction of death certificates in England and Wales on 1 July 1837, the main sources of information on causes of death were the Bills of Mortality which date back to the sixteenth century and were published by the Worshipful Company of Parish Clerks for London. These are not, of course, always reliable.

The original Bill for the Registration of Births and Deaths in 1836 did not require the cause of death to be included on death certificates. The medical profession was anxious that the cause of death should be stated, and pressure also came from Edwin Chadwick, who was then Secretary for the Poor Law Commission. Support also came from other sources, particularly proponents of sanitary reform which was emerging as a significant issue given the rapid growth in the urban population. The House of Lords was persuaded to introduce an amendment to the Bill to have the cause of death added to the death certificate. Fortunately for family historians, the Bill was passed in this amended form.

In practice, it was rare for a doctor to be called to a dying person, and the person providing information for the registration of the death could only guess as to the cause. Some conditions, such as smallpox, cholera or typhoid, would have been fairly obvious but in many cases the informant could only guess. The registrar had no alternative but to accept the information as given.

This situation continued until the Birth and Death Act of 1874. This legislation was prompted in part by the practice known as baby farming with the trial and conviction of Margaret Waters and her sister Sarah Ellis. The change in the law required medical practitioners to furnish the cause of death to the informant who would then pass this information to the registrar. Medical practitioners were required to produce a certificate of the cause of death for the patients at whose death they were present. Even with this improvement, there were cases where the cause of death was difficult to determine. To assist with the specification of the cause of death, a revised list of diseases was introduced in 1881 and used by the registrar general until 1910. In 1911 the international classification of diseases was adopted for registration purposes. Some of the official causes of death which appeared on death certificates in the middle of the nineteenth century were more than a little strange. There was something called black thrush and also black jaundice (after a nasty personal experience of yellow jaundice – it is not hard to believe that something called black jaundice could kill someone). There was also stoppage (which sounds quite unpleasant) that leads to the question of its whereabouts, and also the vague visitation of God (it would be difficult to argue with that one). There are deaths which were labelled as decline or weakness. A man from Brighton was said to have died from indiscreet bathing, and a man in Cardiff was said to have suffered for four years and finally succumbed to the King's evil - long after Queen Victoria came to the throne. There were also large numbers deaths from the common childhood diseases of convulsions, measles, chickenpox, whooping cough, scarlet fever and diphtheria together with many incidents of children being scalded or burnt to death. There were periodic epidemics of smallpox and great pox, the latter presumably was more serious (not to be confused with syphilis).

A smallpox epidemic struck the city of Brighton in the winter of 1950-51. At this time, Brighton was very much dependent on holidaymakers for its economy and there was interest in downplaying the significance of this event so as not to discourage the summer visitors. There was a similar situation one hundred years earlier when cholera struck Brighton in 1849. Not wanting to draw unnecessary attention to the situation, the registrar used a small cross instead of the word “cholera” on death registrations.

The transmissible nature of diseases was recognised only late in the nineteenth century. A classic example of this was that of puerperal sepsis or fever following the birth of a child. Mothers were very vulnerable – washing and scrubbing-up were rarely employed and basic hygiene was poor so infection of the womb was usually contracted during or immediately after the birth. Acute leukaemia was not properly recognised because no connection was made between lumps and bumps and cancer. The causes of weakness and lethargy were not well understood because the nutritional disorders were not recognised, nor the importance of vitamins and minerals, lack of which could lead to rickets. The recognition of tumours and the existence of dementia had to await the arrival of more powerful microscopes and brain microscopy of the twentieth century. We know of Baker’s cyst, Huntington’s Chorea and Sydenham’s Chorea (also known as St Vitus’ Dance) a disease affecting children and characterised by jerky, uncontrollable movements.

The normal process would have been for the doctor to attach his name to a disorder he discovered, but some chose otherwise. *Bell’s Palsy* was named in 1829 after Sir Charles Bell, a Scottish surgeon, and *Parkinson’s* was named after James Parkinson, an English doctor who had published an essay as early as 1817 on *Shaking Palsy*. *Salmonella* was named after Daniel Elmer Salmon, a veterinary surgeon with the American Department of Agriculture. It was actually his assistant, Theobald Smith, who found the cause but it was named in Salmon’s honour.

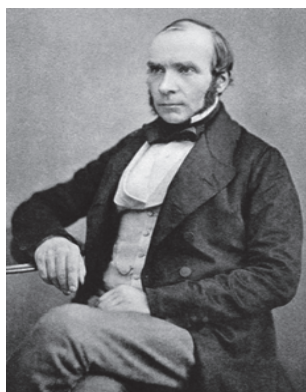
Another disorder which was very poorly recognised and defined was motor neuron disease. The mother of a friend of mine died of this disorder and my friend then examined the death certificates for a number of generations of her mother’s family. She found several references to forms of paralysis, thus confirming the influence of genetics in its distribution, and that this condition was a significant cause of death before it was officially identified and named. Interestingly, photographs of a great-grandmother, and of her grandchild in later life, showed both had twisted and deformed hands.

The profile of the causes of death today is different from a hundred or a hundred-and-fifty years ago because our ancestors did not live long enough to die from the diseases that we see today. Evidence of this comes from an examination of the nineteenth-century census returns for a common name such as William Smith or Mary Harris – not many over the age of sixty, with correspondingly less numbers over seventy or eighty. Thus, the diseases which affect us in the older age, like cancers and heart disease, were not so widespread in the earlier period. In the nineteenth century it was uncommon to have three generations of a family alive at the same time, whereas today it is relatively usual to have four generations living at the same time. As another reflection of this change, the expectation of life in 1841 was forty years for men and forty-two for women. Apart from smallpox, another major infectious disease of the nineteenth century was cholera. There were three very bad outbreaks of cholera in London in the 1830s.

These epidemics and resulting deaths put pressure on the existing cemeteries and led to the establishment of cemeteries such as Highgate, Kensal Green, Abney Park and others. It was not until the outbreak of 1854 that the origin and spread of cholera came to be better understood, and this was due to the work of Dr John Snow and Dr William Farr.



**Dr. WILLIAM FARR**



**Dr. JOHN SNOW**

These two men found the answer to the spread of the disease. They were working together when the cholera epidemic of 1854 occurred. As part of their work to understand the spread of cholera, these two doctors noted the occupations and residences of afflicted persons. One interesting death occurred on 2 September. Mrs Susannah Ealey was a resident of Hampstead, a community on the northern edge of the city of London, which was considered to be healthy because of its elevation. After closer investigation, the doctors discovered Mrs Ealey regularly sent her footman to fetch water from the Broad Street pump. Mrs Ealey died within two days of drinking the water, as did her niece who was visiting her from Islington, another community regarded as being healthy. With this information, the doctors discovered that the spring which supplied the Broad Street pump was severely contaminated with cholera. The water companies which supplied the water were also thought to be culprits in this affair. When cholera returned to London in 1866, the number of deaths was relatively low, except in the East End of London. Dr Farr suggested that the East London Water Company was responsible for supplying contaminated water. The company denied any culpability, however, it was later discovered that the company, in response to a summer drought, had transferred water from a condemned open reservoir near the heavily polluted river Lea. So Dr Farr was fully justified in his accusations. Upon the retirement of George Graham as Registrar General in 1879, Dr Farr was thought to be in the running to be the replacement. But much to his disappointment, the position went to someone else. Dr Farr continued his remarkable career promoting the use of statistics to establish the linkage between disease and social conditions. He worked with Florence Nightingale, and also went on to establish the connection between hydrophobia, as rabies was then called, and rabid dogs. All in all, an impressive career.

Vaccination against smallpox caused much controversy during the nineteenth century. The first Vaccination Act in 1840 allowed free vaccinations for poor people. In 1853 vaccination was made compulsory in the first three months of a baby's life, evasion by parents could lead to a fine or imprisonment and in 1867 the Act was applied more stringently and increased the age to fourteen years and this was followed by the 1871 Act. In 1898 the Act was amended to allow exemption to parents based on conscience. Many people were against vaccination and the Anti-vaccination League was formed. Apart from fines and imprisonment, houses and schools could be searched to find non-vaccinated children and when the parents were summoned before the Justices of the Peace, they were rarely given opportunity to justify themselves or give reasons why they had not complied. There was the case of Charles Nye from Kent who, having lost two children from, as he thought, vaccination, refused to allow his other children to be vaccinated. Between 1869 and 1881 he was served with no less than thirteen summonses; each time he was fined and these were always unpaid, and on five occasions he was sent to prison. During one of his incarcerations the authorities attempted to vaccinate him but such a row erupted and Mr Nye became so angry that the doctor took flight and the warders were called to return him to his cell. Prisoners had to be vaccinated if not previously done and after they were weighed, they would be taken to the infirmary to be vaccinated. and these were always unpaid, and on five occasions he was sent to prison.

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Then there was the introduction of chloroform, first used for childbirth in 1847 by Dr James Simpson, the well-known Edinburgh gynaecologist. It was initially used by sprinkling it on a handkerchief which was then placed over the patient's nose and mouth so that they could inhale the vapour. In 1853 it was used by Queen Victoria for the birth of her eighth child, Prince Leopold, and she was delighted with the experience. Two women seem to have been over grateful for the pain-free delivery as in the birth indexes of 1859 and 1902 list a child registered as Anesthesia.

Surname	First name(s)	District	Vol	Page
Births Dec 1859 (>9999)				
Fennell	Anesthesia Mary	St Giles	1b	386
Births Dec 1902 (>9999)				
LEECH	Anesthesia	Hartlepool	10a	163

Unfortunately, it was not always possible to administer an anaesthetic as is demonstrated in a hospital record of 1855 for William Welfare, a labourer from Wivelsfield. His clothes had been caught in a threshing machine. By the time he arrived at hospital some fifteen miles away he was nearly exhausted, and an amputation was needed without delay. When he was put on the operating table his circulation was so feeble that chloroform could not be used before the amputation. As surgery proceeded they dosed him with half a pint of brandy during which time it was observed he was almost moribund.




He survived fourteen days and then sadly he had another haemorrhage and died. There was an extensive post-mortem examination.

One of the most important social changes was related to the increase in the population. In 1800, it is reckoned that the population of England and Wales stood at nine million. By 1841, the population stood at almost sixteen million, and had reached thirty-six million by 1911. When one considers the task of building the public health infrastructure for this larger population, it must have been a formidable task. There was tremendous overcrowding and a lot of people died of diseases which are commonly prevented or cured today.

When one examines the death certificates, it is possible to see how the causes of death have changed over the last 150 or so years. One particular record shows the death of a woman in 1841. She lived for seventy-four years, quite a long time for that period. Her literal cause of death was *decay by nature*. There is a record of a man dying in 1841 of influenza. And then there was pneumonia, the disease known as “the friend who took people off”.

The other disease which is creeping back to a position of considerable importance, especially in the larger cities of Britain, is consumption or tuberculosis. I feel quite strongly about TB having lost so many great-uncles and great-aunts to this disease when eight out of eleven children died before they were eighteen years of age of this disease. They lived in the East End of London. The difference now is that there is effective treatment for this condition.

You may wonder why I have not mentioned syphilis. It is an affliction I have not examined, although the very sad birth and death certificate of little Not Wanted James Colvill, born in 1861 and died a few months later may have been caused by the disease being passed down

Births Mar 1861 <small>(&gt;99%)</small>				
COLVILL Elizabeth Ann	<u>Medway</u>	2a	340	<a href="#">info</a> 
COLVILL Not Wanted James	<u>Lambeth</u>	1d	312	<a href="#">info</a> 
COLVILL William	<u>Whitehaven</u>	10b	515	<a href="#">info</a> 

It was not always healthier by the seaside! In Brighton, fifty-nine deaths from whooping cough and eighty-six from smallpox in 1841; 130 from scarlet fever in 1842, 217 from consumption and 194 deaths from cholera - a fifth of total deaths in 1849 which was a larger proportion than that of Liverpool – regarded at the time as being the unhealthiest town in England.

Many second-hand teeth came from mortuaries, dissecting rooms, gallows or battlefields. Those supplying them were often Resurrectionists or body-snatchers - some only took teeth but some took bodies. Some of the most popular dentists in nineteenth century kept many people employed to provide a constant supply of teeth. Sir Humphrey Davy, born in 1778 and inventor of the miners’ safety lamp, discovered the properties of nitrous oxide so that when it was inhaled, it first produced euphoria leading to uncontrollable laughter and sobbing, and then effectively passing out. He immediately called it laughing gas.

But there was a problem with nitrous oxide in that the effects did not last long so was unsuitable for medical operations. In 1844 an American dentist, Horace Wells, attended a demonstration in Hartford, Connecticut about nitrous oxide and had the idea of using it for pain relief in dentistry.

Some afflictions were named by the work of those affected: *Scriveners' Palsy*; *Grocers' Itch* from mites found in the handling of flour or sugar; *Weavers' Bottom*; *Potters' Rot* – the dust caused the potters' lungs to rot. *Bagpiper's Fungus*, so called because the bagpipes were traditionally made from sheepskin coated inside with treacle or honey to keep them airtight, so they were a breeding ground for spores and fungus. *Railway Spine*, described as post-traumatic symptoms of passengers involved in railway accidents which led to claims for damages although there were no visible signs of injury; it became so controversial that a book was written by John Eric Erichsen and it was subsequently named *Erichsen's Disease*.

If you want to know more about the medical health of your ancestors there are many sources to use. Hospital records, asylum records, workhouse records and always worth thinking about are death certificates. And then, if you are fortunate, when you get into the parish registers, you may find an incumbent who is quite good about recording the causes of death such as for Martha Betton – *Rapid decease upon catching cold after being heated by walking, aged 33*. Another young lady, Maria aged twenty, married William Steadman on 25 February 1837 and was buried two days later having *caught cold on her wedding day*. Ann Dean, buried at Shipley in 1833 aged forty-four, cause of death *Leprosy and Dropsy*. At Shipley in 1828, John Feist aged seventy-six *an executioner*. At Hastings in March 1836 two brothers and a sister aged fourteen, three and just one, all dead within three days of each other after measles, all buried on the same day. Some parish register entries are disturbing. At Fletching in 1818 a pestilent typhus fever took almost the whole Chatfield family, a further two children were buried on the same day in the same grave.

And in 1878 in a small village in Derbyshire, Henry and Sarah Lovely buried six children within seven weeks. **The Historic Hospital Admissions Records Project** <https://hharp.org/> provides access to 140,213 admission records to three children's hospitals in London, (Great Ormond Street Hospital, the Evelina and the Alexandra Hip Hospital), and one from Scotland, the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Glasgow. Between them the databases cover a period from 1852 to 1921.

**Royal London Hospital Archives and Museum** – the archives date back to 1740. [www.museums.co.uk/details/royal-london-hospital-archives-and-museum/](http://www.museums.co.uk/details/royal-london-hospital-archives-and-museum/)  
**The London Museums of Health and Medicine** <http://medicalmuseums.org/> list all the relevant museums in London with links displaying what each has available. One of the most useful is the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries - click on the tab for family history. Interesting that although we think of Florence Nightingale as the pioneer in nursing standards, Elizabeth Fry, the prison reformer, set up a training college for nurses at Guy's Hospital in 1840. **The Wellcome Collection** <https://wellcomecollection.org/> has considerable information on vaccination plus a collection of over 160,000 images. It has a free-to-visit museum, archive and library at **183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE**. When visiting archives, be aware that some records can be closed for a hundred years.





Lady Teviot is a **life Vice-President of the Federation**, and a past president. She has been involved with family history for over thirty-five years and is a regular speaker on a number of family history topics. She has visited Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA and South Africa to present talks. She runs Census Searches Ltd., an international probate and genealogical research company based in Sussex.

There are details of her talks on her website: [www.ladyteviot.co.uk/](http://www.ladyteviot.co.uk/)

*Ed:* When struggling to work out those illnesses encountered in genealogy, try <https://rmhh.co.uk/illness.html> and also [www.disease.pricklytree.co.uk/](http://www.disease.pricklytree.co.uk/)

**Reproduced from an article 'Kill or Cure, Understanding causes of Death'**

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## **WILL FALLING BIRTH RATES LEAD TO OUR EXTINCTION?**

According to this BBC article, official figures released in 2022 showed that record numbers (50.1%) of women were reaching the age of 30 without having had any children.

None of us would be here if our parents hadn't had children. At the same time there is a limit to how many people the world can reasonably support, so it's good news that in many countries birth rates are falling, sometimes to the extent that the populations of some countries are falling, or are projected to fall in the coming decades. It has been estimated that by 2100 as many as 97% of the countries of the world will have below the 2.1 level sufficient to keep the population constant.

Research published last year used genetic analysis to calculate that the world population may have fallen to as few as 1300 humans at one point, nearly a million years ago. Other scientists disagree, but there is general agreement that the population in earlier times was far lower than it is today – a less controversial estimate is that there were 55,000 humans 1.2 million years ago, and that the global population might have reached 1 million humans between 50,000 and 20,000 years ago.

*Note: it is thought that the Neanderthal population never exceeded 10,000 – so it's perhaps not surprising that today we typically have just 1%-4% Neanderthal DNA today.*

Realistically, if the human race does die out, it's unlikely to be because families have been having fewer children – even if the population fell by 99.9% there would still be as many humans on the planet as there were in 5000BC.

**SOURCE: BBC Article 2022**



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