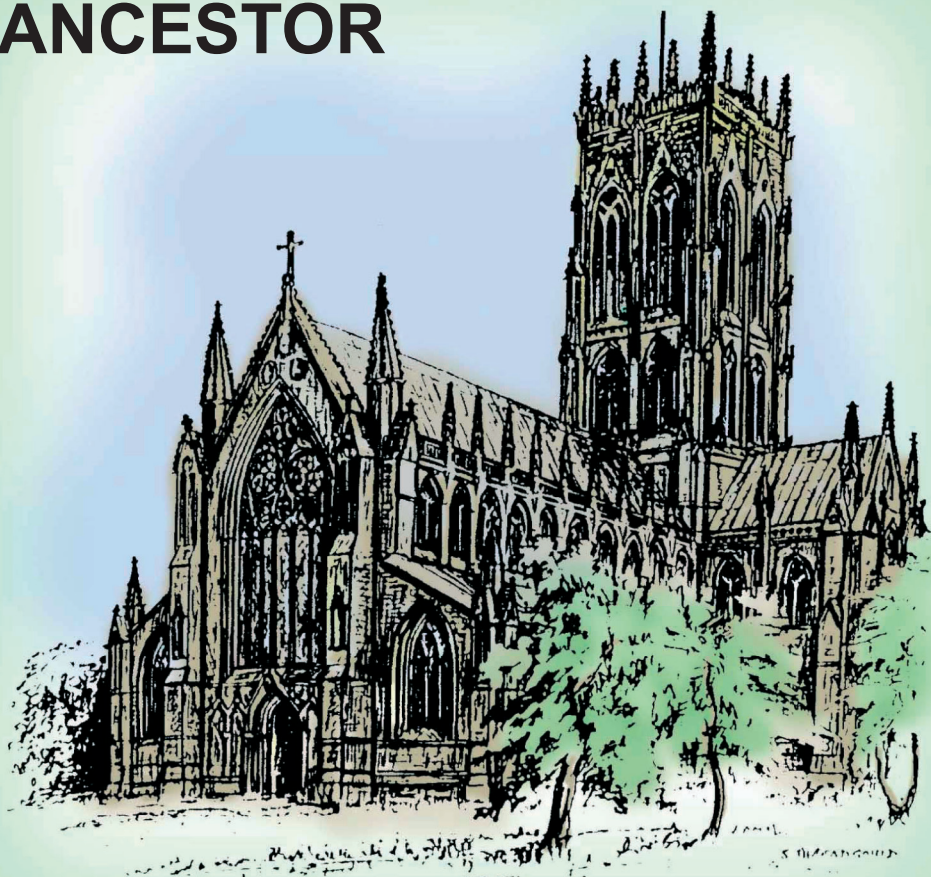


# THE DONCASTER ANCESTOR

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Doncaster Minster

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**The Journal of the Doncaster and District  
Family History Society 1980 - 2021**

**Volume 31 No 1 Spring 2021**

# DONCASTER AND DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

[www.doncasterfhs.co.uk](http://www.doncasterfhs.co.uk)

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*Doncaster Ancestor – Spring 2021*

# THE DONCASTER ANCESTOR

Journal of the Doncaster and District Family History Society

Free to Members

Volume 31 No 1

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## CONTENTS

### Regular Features

Annual General Meeting	2
From the Editor	3
Programme of Talks 2021 via ZOOM	4
New Members	32
Members' Interests	33
Recent Publications by D&DFHS	27

### Articles

From the Postbag/via email	5
Help Wanted	6
Book Reviews	7
Doncaster's Open Air School	10
Discovering the Old Man of the Common	12
Gold Fischili Part Two	16
Talk on the Railways	18
Finding George	19
The Sand House Part One	21
The Sand House Legacy	23
A Doncaster Tea Salesman	28
Who Would Have Thought It	32
Obituaries	34
Demolition of Doncaster Archives & Palgrave Research Centre	34

### Notices

Dates For Your Diary	35
D&DFHS Subscription Rates	36
D&DFHS Research Service	36
Transcription Service	36

Editor: Jenny Ellis  
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# D&DFHS Annual General Meeting 2021

The 2021 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Doncaster and District Family History Society will take place via ZOOM on **Wednesday, 28 April 2021 at 7.30 pm.**

## Agenda

The main business of the meeting will be to receive the Annual Reports and Accounts for 2019 and 2020 and to elect the members of the Society's Executive Committee:

- Chairman
- \*Vice-Chairman (not more than two)
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Editor
- \*Project Organiser
- at least two others but not more than five

\*Either the post is vacant or the postholder has indicated they will not be standing for re-election.

## Nominations

Nominations for any of the Executive Committee posts should be sent to the Secretary by **Wednesday 14 April 2021.**

A Nomination Form is available in the members' area of the Society's website or from the Secretary.

## Questions

Members wishing to raise questions at the AGM should submit them, either by post or email, to the Secretary by **Wednesday, 31 March 2021.**

***See the inside front cover for the Secretary's contact details.***

## Registration

Registration for the AGM Meeting will open on the Society's website **Friday 2 April 2021.**

**Deadline for the next edition is 8th Apr 2021 at the latest.**

Please send in any articles, preferably as a Word Document.

The journal is published in February, May, August and November.

**Vol 31 No 2 Edition will be published in May 2021.**

# From the Editor

I am writing this with ice and snow outside, even though this is the Spring edition of Doncaster Ancestor. I am sure things will have improved by the time it is sent out to you, our members.

Thank you to everyone who sent in articles and please keep them coming. We have a wide variety of articles this time, with hints to help you in your family history search.

For people that missed the Sand House talks, we have two very interesting articles, one written by Sheila Cave and the other by Richard Bell, who gave the talks. My Gran lived in Elsworth Street, and the area over the back wall was called the "sand hole". It was just a piece of waste ground where we were told not to play as it was dangerous. Lots of kids played there though! In those days, we didn't question why it was called the sand hole. Richard said that lots of people remembered it as that, but didn't realise what had been there.

A few people answered my request for book reviews, so please keep them coming, as I am sure a lot of people are reading more, especially with the current lockdown due to the Pandemic.

Also, if like Karen Walker you have found things in your research that might be helpful to other members, then please let me know and we can share it.

As I write this we have heard the very sad news about Captain Sir Tom Moore, who passed away yesterday. He was an inspiration to us all and someone that we could relate to, a figure we all needed in such difficult times.

**Rest in Peace Sir Tom and Thank You.**

**Jenny Ellis**  
**doncasterancestor@doncasterfhs.co.uk**

## Disclaimer

The Editor reserves the right to edit and defer items sent for inclusion in this journal. It is the contributor's responsibility to ensure that items submitted do not breach copyright laws. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of their author and not necessarily those of the Society.

# Monthly Meetings via ZOOM

**Wednesday 24th February 2021**

## **Birth & Death – Discover the Hidden Secrets of Registration**

**Bio:** Antony Marr is a professional genealogist and currently the Chair of AGRA ( Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives). After retiring from a 30 year career in the Metropolitan Police he worked as a Deputy Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages and has a special interest in the records of civil registration.

Why can the same birth be registered more than once and in different years ? Why does a single death registration involve three different certificates ? This talk will look at the complex rules of registering birth and death events, uncovering the complexities and hidden information these essential records of civil registration can contain.

**Wednesday 31st March 2021**

## **The 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the *Mayflower*; and Family History**

George English is Director of Family History service Research Through People. He has many years of experience of genealogical research; and has published genealogical and historical work in UK, USA and other parts of the world.

2020 was the 400th Anniversary of *Mayflower*, the voyage that changed the world. George is a descendant of Richard Warren, who was a passenger on the *Mayflower* in 1620; and Philippe de Lannoy, who was on the *Fortune* in 1621. His talk covers the events during the Reformation which led to the Pilgrims leaving for the New World; the voyage itself; and the impact the *Mayflower* has had on Western civilisation since. It will include family history; and the joys of researching such ancestors from so long ago.

**Wednesday 28 April 2021**

## **AGM followed by**

### **Revisiting My Family History by Karen Walker**

When Karen was amalgamating her research into a book she made some more exciting discoveries about her family. Hear about what she found and how she found them. Karen will give some suggestions for taking your own research further using different sources and ideas for adding background information to your own research.

**All meetings will start at 7.30pm, although you will be able to use the link that you will be sent via email from 7.15pm**

**Any queries please contact June Staniforth on 07901 523529**

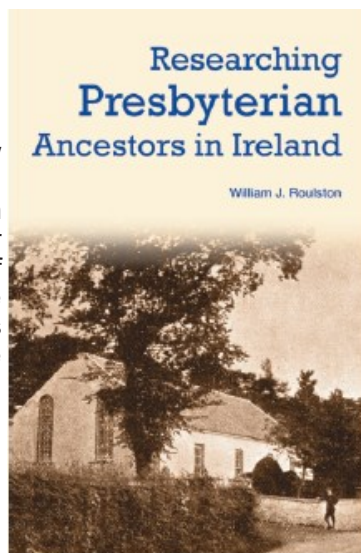
## From the postbag / via e-mail

Dear sir/madam

I hope this email finds you well in these strange times but hopefully a little bit of normality isn't too far around the corner!

The Foundation has a recently published a new book, *Researching Presbyterian Ancestors*. The aim of this book is to help those with Irish Presbyterian roots find out more about their forebears. It considers the different strands of Presbyterianism in Ireland and explores the range of records generated by these religious denominations and where this material can be accessed by researchers.

This thoroughly researched book isn't just a research guide. It also offers the reader a window into the lives of their Presbyterian ancestors by providing an engaging and concise history of the development of Presbyterianism on the island of Ireland.



ISBN13: 978-1-909556-85-0 Price: £9.99/€11.99/\$13.99

**<https://www.booksireland.org.uk/store/all-departments/presbyterian-ancestors>**

Conleth Mullan, New Ulster Historical Foundation

**[Conleth.mullan@uhf.org.uk](mailto:Conleth.mullan@uhf.org.uk)**

Hi George,

Just a big thank you to yourself and Richard Bell for his two amazing presentations - All that research.

To all the committee for their hard work keeping D&DFHS going. No mean feat in these trying times.

It was so nice to be able to put faces to the names, as for my shame, I have not been to Doncaster for many years and never attended a meeting.

I have to admit living in Nottingham I was not aware of the Sand House but can only wish it existed today.

As I am sure you know we have more than our fair share of sand caves in Nottingham. Most have suffered the same fate but we had nothing to compare with the Sand House complex. At least now with modern legislation they should be investigated and recorded before they are filled and lost forever.

Best wishes

**Clyde Pennington, Member 1959**

## Help Wanted

Hi, I am hoping that someone can help me tracing my cousins. I live in Australia & due to the COVID-19 situation am unable to come to Doncaster & do any research & I have exhausted all of the resources that I know about online. Any help that you can give will be greatly appreciated.

My cousins are **Jeannette Taylor** born 15 Jul 1947, **David Taylor** born 6 Aug 1950 (David was killed in a car accident sometime in the 1970's), **Robert Taylor** born 21 Feb 1956 and **Susan Taylor** born 21 Feb 1956. They were all born in Doncaster. Their parents were **James Gibbon Taylor & Annie (AKA Nancy) Taylor nee Nelson**. They were all probably christened at St Mary's Church, Wheatley Hills as I was.

They lived at 250 Beckett Road, Wheatley Hills, up until the early 1970's. I know that they lived there in February 1965 when I came to Australia. I know that the family moved to South Africa sometime in the 1970's but whether any of my cousins went with them or moved back to England I cannot prove. Also, David's car accident may have been in South Africa. My last contact with the family was in the 1990's in South Africa, where my Aunt & Uncle were living. However, my Uncle's health was not the best & he probably died in South Africa shortly afterwards.

Whether my Auntie moved back to England after his death I cannot prove. On Ancestry, in a few family trees, my auntie (**Annie Taylor nee Nelson**) is shown as dying on the 13th January 2009 in Milton Keynes but again there are no citations to verify whether this is correct & I cannot work out why it should be Milton Keynes as the family, to my knowledge, had no connection to this part of the country.

I was last in Doncaster in 2018 where I located my Uncle, **Donald Taylor**, who was in his 80's. He told me that my cousin Jeanette was living in Doncaster, but I could not locate her from the information that he gave me. My uncle's memory was not the best. He intimated that Robert & Susan were also there but again no concrete leads. Any information that you can give me would be greatly appreciated. Thank You.

**Brian Taylor via our Facebook page**

Enquiries to: [researchenquiries@doncasterfhs.co.uk](mailto:researchenquiries@doncasterfhs.co.uk)

# Book Reviews

## Life after Adoption by June Horbury

June went through some papers after her adoptive father had died and found her adoption papers. She always knew that she was adopted but as soon as she saw her birth mother's name she knew that she had to try and find her.

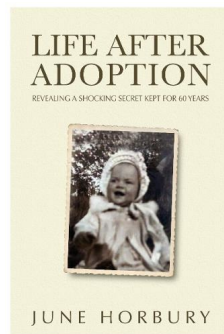
When she did find her, she discovered a dreadful secret which left her devastated. But it didn't end there, as following her birth mother's death some years later, another secret was revealed. This is an easy read of June's life and her search for her birth mother. She was born in Doncaster and a lot of the book is based in the area.

**Publisher: Brown Dog Books**

**ISBN: 9781839521829**

**£8.99**

**Jenny Ellis**



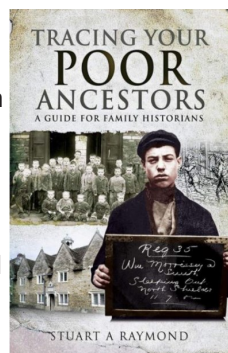
## Tracing Your Poor Ancestors – A Guide for Family Historians

**By Stuart A Raymond**

**£14.99 Pen and Sword**

Most family historians soon discover that many of our ancestors were poor for part or all of their lives. However, finding out how they were treated by the authorities and whether any records about them survive is a topic that can be difficult to untangle. The subject this book attempts to cover is vast but this author has managed to do justice to it. He examines how the poorest in society managed to survive and the charitable individuals and institutions that supported them. The role of the authorities is also covered by describing the evolution of support from discretionary payments that supported people to stay at home into the system of Poor Laws and Workhouses. As help and support for the poor came from so many different places, the sources the book suggests you may consider for your research is also more extensive.

The chapters in the book cover most of the main subjects you would expect it



to consider such as paupers, debtors and bankrupts, vagrants and criminals. The main focus is on understanding what records were kept and where surviving records can be found. I found this book particularly useful for providing background material and putting my ancestors lives in context, even if no specific records about them survive. It also points us in the direction of Archives and Local Record Offices to find details of individuals in the less well-known areas of their record collections.

The book is well written and easy to read and I found it very useful for my own research. After being pointed in the direction of Churchwarden's Accounts, I found ancestors who had been paid to provide goods or services for the poor as well as ancestors who had received the help. This is a very useful reference book to keep and refer to in the future.

**Karen Walker, Member 2062**

## **Kiss Myself Goodbye, The Many Lives of Aunt Munca**

**By Hilary Mantel**

For anyone who has faced challenges in tracing their ancestors, Ferdinand Mount's investigations into the truth about his aunt will inspire a determination to keep going. It took Ferdinand ten years to piece together his aunt's background in the face of her repeated fabrications about her name, age and family relationships in a multitude of official documents. Ferdinand knew her as Patricia Elizabeth Mount née Baring who asked to be called 'Aunt Munca',

hence the book's title: 'Kiss myself goodbye: The many lives of Aunt Munca'. She went through a Church of England marriage ceremony to Ferdinand's uncle, but not one of the pieces of information she gave at the time was true. She did though have access to considerable wealth enabling her to keep a permanent suite at Claridge's and live in a variety of homes in Sussex and Surrey.

Through a mixture of persistence and luck Ferdinand eventually traced her origins to Sheffield's Brightside where her father was a scrap metal dealer, John Willie Macduff. Her original name was Eileen Constance Sylvia Macduff. Ferdinand skilfully reveals how his aunt progressed through several marriages, at least two bigamously, leaving her son, born when she was 17, to be brought up by her mother but always referred to as her brother.

Discovering the source of her eventual wealth was down to his aunt loaning him an old suitcase with the initials WF painted on the side. Identifying WF,



one of the richest men in Yorkshire, and his connection to Ferdinand's aunt is just one of many surprising revelations in the book.

His aunt's behaviour had profound repercussions not least for her adopted daughter who only learned she was adopted in her fifties after both parents died. Ferdinand also considers the impact on her seven times married son.

The final photograph in this well-illustrated book is of a factory built near where Ferdinand's aunt was born. Called 'Yorkshire Fabrications Ltd' the name sums up his aunt's life 'only without the limited liability'. Extraordinary though his aunt's approach to life was, Ferdinand's account is a completely absorbing read and a triumph of dogged research.

Published by Bloomsbury, 2020, ISBN:HB: 978-1-4729-7942-1.

**Hazel Moffat, Member 1790**

### **"Great Sacrifice by Jane Ainsworth**

Giving details of the old boys of Barnsley Holgate Grammar school who were killed in the First World War.

Jane starts the book with a potted history of the school from its inception in Church Street until it was moved to a new location in Shaw Lane. The original building is still standing and is the Cooper Art Gallery. There were 76 old boys of the school who made the great sacrifice and Jane sets out their time not only at the school but where they came from and who they married before being killed, some of them with honours bestowed upon them.

As you read through their brief history it gives the history of who they married so it gives an insight not only to them but also who their spouse was and where they came from. So in that sense it can put a bit more flesh on basic information gleaned from other sources.

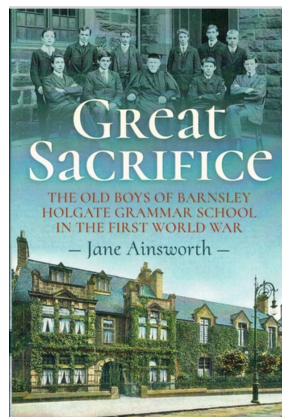
In the book Jane states that each November there was a roll call of all those who lost their lives which I do not remember during my six years as a pupil, but that was a long time ago! But there again I probably wasn't in the right place at the right time to hear it! Well worth a read.

Published by Hellion, ISBN : 9781911096085

**Trevor Stenton, Member 3126**

If anyone would like to review a book that they have read, then please feel free to send the review to me.

**Jenny Ellis [doncasterancestor@doncasterfhs.co.uk](mailto:doncasterancestor@doncasterfhs.co.uk)**



## Doncaster's Open Air School

This day school was built on land at the western edge of Doncaster near the junction of St Peter's Road, Balby, and Church Lane on a 3½ acre plot of land bounded by two railway cuttings, Church Lane and the churchyard of the original St Peter's Church. The building, named Melrose Open Air School, was completed in the spring of 1927 and officially opened on Tuesday, 25 October 1927 by Sir George Newman, Chief Medical Officer to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education.

The *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 14 February 1927, described the school as one of the finest in the country for delicate children, 240 of whom



could be accommodated in its seven classrooms. (Later records say the maximum number of pupils was 175.) Each classroom, facing onto the playing field, had windows in folding screens which could be pushed back to give 'open air'. Opposite walls with screens of windows opening on to a glass covered veranda could also be folded as an optional opening depending on the weather. Additional buildings included two rooms with gymnastic appliances for exercise and curative treatments, a dining room and offices. Near the entrance to the site was a detached house for the caretaker (on the right-hand edge of the photograph).

The school catered for children with a range of health issues. As the photograph shows a good number of children were able to stand around for the opening ceremony. The school employed an orthopaedic nurse who was expected to have experience of orthopaedic gymnastics and massage among other orthopaedic treatments. For a time the school acted as an orthopaedic centre for Doncaster.

Access to the admission register for Melrose Open Air School held at Doncaster Archives is restricted due to the requirements of the Data Protection Act. An archivist copied out my entry for me. I was admitted to the school aged 5 because I had 'knock knees'. A year later I left 'cured' thanks to small wedges being fitted to the side of my shoe heels and regular physiotherapy at the school. One activity I remember is sitting in a circle on the floor with three other children facing a large, round tin into which we had to drop a range of cotton reels, pencils and other small pieces of wood which we had picked up with our toes, an activity I enjoyed and all supervised by a nurse in a white uniform. During part of the afternoons we had a sleep on

small camp beds raised just a few inches above the floor. I also remember eating raw vegetable portions as part of school dinners. When the school first opened pupils were also given hot milk cocoa drinks on arrival and before they went home but I don't remember having these drinks.

I lived less than ten minutes' walk from the school but many children were bussed there. This would have applied to some of the children listed in the admission registers of other schools. Thanks to DDFHS volunteers, some 28 School Admission Registers from the Doncaster area have been transcribed. One column explains why pupils left particular schools. In 38 cases pupils left three schools: Beechfield Infants School, Doncaster C of E National School and Oswin Avenue School, Balby, so that they could attend the Open Air School. Among the first to join this school between 1927 and 1930 were: John Leonard **Axon** b. 1921, George **Beardsley** b. 1915, James George **Booth** b. 1920, Edith Margaret **Carr** b. 1922, George **Drayton** b. 1919, Nora **Duncan** b. 1924, William Ronald **Horsman** b. 1921, Austin **Kershaw** b. 1919, Ernest **Letten** b. 1915, Jean **McCaw** b. 1923, Richard **Pavier** b. 1919, Stanley **Price** b. 1913, Cissie Iris **Rix** b. 1924, and David William **Tyler** b. 1916. In a few cases the children returned to their mainstream schools to complete their education after several months at the Open Air School.

Some pupils may be followed up in the 1939 Register which shows that they went into a variety of jobs when they left school including being a butcher's assistant, joiner, milk transport driver, domestic servant, shop assistant and sweet factory worker. Whatever their health issues had been, at least for these pupils, they were sufficiently well to find full time work on leaving school.

The first open air school in England was opened in London in 1907 (three years after the first one opened in Berlin) and was intended to help delicate children. Many other local authorities especially in industrial areas followed suit. By 1937 there were ninety six open air day schools in the UK and a further fifty three residential ones. However, by the 1950s open air schools were deemed less necessary, as a government report at the beginning of the decade said 'with a rising standard of living, the provision of meals and milk in schools and with a fuller appreciation in the ordinary school of the varying needs of individual children it may be that the need for special schools for delicate children will diminish with the years'.

In spite of suffering from subsidence in 1948 when repairs had to be carried out to ceilings said to be in a dangerous condition, Melrose Open Air School continued for several more years but with steadily declining numbers of pupils: in 1951 there were eighty four 'delicate' pupils and fifty seven who were deemed 'physically handicapped', by the end of 1955 there were eighty three 'delicate' pupils, twenty eight 'physically handicapped' pupils, two 'educationally sub normal' pupils and five suffering from epilepsy. The pupils were aged from rising three to fifteen - sixteen years old. These records, which do not name individual pupils, are held in The National Archives

reference ED32/2193.

The school was demolished in the 1960s. I remember visiting the site (but not the year) and seeing a small amount of rubble left behind. Houses were eventually built where the school had been and on its playing field. The railway cutting to the west was infilled and houses built on that too. All that remains is part of the tall hedge which separated the playing field from Church Lane. The land, once part of Warmsworth, had been farmed by my ancestors who were tenants of the Wrightson family and who were buried in the adjoining churchyard.

**Hazel Moffat Member 1790**

## Discovering “The Old Man of The Common”

**Joseph Allen Ashmore 1822 - 1915**

Each of us will have spent lockdown in different ways but I decided that it was the perfect time to get to work on writing my family history. At the beginning of the year I had sought help from my colleagues at the D&DFHS Computer Group on how to tackle this task. I had done the research but now I wanted to create two readable books that could be passed down through the family; one about my dad's family and the other about my mum's. I want the end product to contain facts, charts, photos, stories and some historical context for each of the main characters in my family tree. After much deliberation I decided the book would start with the person who was the earliest in my tree (Charles **Ashmore** born in 1572) and work my way forward. I have concentrated on the male line but branched off to tell stories about interesting characters or events that affected the wider family. In other words, I have written the book in the opposite way to doing the research. It has been challenging to do and although I have only done one of the four main lines in my tree, I am pleased with the result so far.

I have made the bold statement that I had already done the research but it turned out I had not done it as well as I thought I had! I found a few errors and thought I should check every fact before adding it to my publication. It wasn't just a case of checking facts. There is so much more information online than there was just a year ago and I found sources that I had not checked before and ones where the online collections are so much more extensive than they used to be. I made use of free access to documents at the National Archives and also tried the Staffordshire Archives online services to get copies of seventeenth century wills, complete with inventories. The quality of these digital documents was excellent and it was so easy to read them on my PC by increasing the size. The information they contained was invaluable and they added so much detail about the individuals mentioned in them. I thought these wills were going to be the “find of the year” for me as they joined up all the dots and provided concrete links between the generations.

Little did I know that the best was yet to come when I reached my great, great grandfather Joseph Allen **Ashmore** born in 1822.

As far as Joseph is concerned, I had written up what I know about him but for a long time I was unable to find out exactly when he died. It is difficult to find a record of a death for some members of the Ashmore clan because there were so many of them with the same name living in and around Brimington Common in Derbyshire. Researching in the 19th and 20th centuries is helped by looking at census returns but they are ten years apart. If someone fails to appear in a census it is a reasonable supposition to make that they passed away some time after the last census but before the next was taken. This is what happened with my original research into Joseph. I failed to find him on the 1881 census and assumed he had passed away between the 1871 and 1881 returns. That would have made him in his 50's when he died, so it was feasible. A man called Joseph **Ashmore** who lived in the same area died during that period and I assumed it was him but did not buy the death certificate to be certain. I am sorry to say that I ignored my own advice and did not check the original sources.

I was double-checking my research to write my book when I had a “eureka” moment. This time I found a record of Joseph in the 1881 census returns, but only by chance. The enumerator has abbreviated everything and it is not really surprising that the modern-day transcribers mistook his “Josp” to say Josh. His age is a badly written 59 and the transcriber thought it said 69, so the search engine failed to identify it as a match for the person I was looking for. I know this entry is for Joseph as the address, occupations and place of birth are all correct for him and the details about all his family members are also correct.

No one was more surprised than me when I went on to find Joseph in the 1891, 1901 and even the 1911 census returns, but could he really have lived to be 90 or more? When I finally located his actual death record I discovered that he lived until 1915, making him 93 years old when he died. I decided to try looking through the historical newspapers collection for that year in case there was a notice for his death and was stunned by what I found. I have had some very sad moments discovering tragedy, poverty and criminality in my family history but this was just the opposite. My husband was summoned to see my “find” and a few more finds followed in quick succession.

In his later years Joseph became a bit of a local celebrity and when he was 88 years old a local reporter interviewed him about his life. Parts of this interview were repeated and used as an obituary when Joseph died, so they appear again some years later. Apart from describing Brimington Common through the decades, he strayed into talking about his own family history. This was thrilling but the icing on the cake was the face of my great, great grandfather staring out at me from the pages of these ancient newspapers. I can even see the family resemblance. Here are a few snippets of family history information taken from the articles. The bold words were used as paragraph headings.

## **“The Old Man of The Common: Vegetarian, Teetotaler and Non- Smoker**

### **Chat with Mr J Ashmore of Brimington**

Time rushes on and sweeps most of us with it, but a few - a very few - escape the wild tornado and are left living emblems of a dead past.

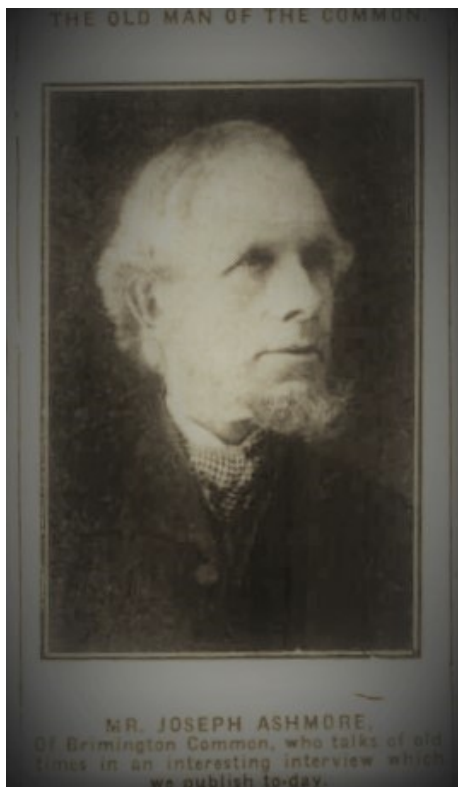
We who are thinking of mono-rails and airships, and speculating on the possibilities of radium and polonium, to whom railroads, and even motor-cars, are old fashioned things, ridicule those who have not yet accustomed themselves to trains, and who regard road hogs as diabolical inventions of a corrupt age.

Such a man is old Joseph **Ashmore**, who is living his eighty-eighth year, out yonder on Brimington Common. The world would call him an old fogey because he has not reconciled himself to rushing over the country instead of walking, and because he declines to believe that **Men Were Meant to Fly**. Old Joseph is a Quaker, with an old

Quaker's views on life, narrow and circumscribed, perhaps, but straight and honest. It is a pleasure to talk to the old gentleman as he sits by the fireside in the back kitchen of the little greengrocer's shop which he looked after for many years, and which is now carried on by his son-in-law. A “Courier” representative found him the other morning peeling potatoes and tending the fire. As he talked of old times, he seemed like a Puritan Forefather come back to life, surprised that the world had moved on”.....

..... “Joseph was born on the Common and was “one of a biggish family, and times were hard”, and so he had to commence work early in life. “Gin-driving” for his father, and bird scaring for farmer Dixon were amongst his youthful pursuits. But he was an industrious lad, and he learned to read and write “fairish” and took charge of all the family correspondence.” .....

..... “Mr Ashmore also numbered amongst his early avocations that of work at Whittington Moor Pottery for 5d a day. Half a crown a week was not a large wage, even in those days, but, as he explained, he had to do it “what with father being troubled with rheumatics, and there being a good few mouths to fill”. Joseph used to get **A little Pocket Money** by selling baskets of sand at Brimington Common for a penny a basket, and he considers that he earned



the humble coin by carrying the sand all the way from Whittington.

Early in life he became a miner, and he was not out of his teens when he narrowly escaped death. He was working in a pit, when a portion of the roof fell on him and buried him, but he was rescued just in time by his father, not, however, without suffering the agony of broken ribs.”.....

..... “For over forty years this strange, yet loveable old man has not tasted meat of any kind - on principle. If he could live without flesh he did not see why animals should be cruelly slaughtered for him. And it must be said that he thrives very well on **A Vegetarian Diet**, but to return to his interesting history. At the age of 22 he married a Miss Sarah **Redfern**, who gave birth to two children, and who died six years after her marriage. It was a sad time for Mr. Ashmore, for both of the children, one of whom was named after a companion of Martin Luther, passed away during the same year. His first wedding was a runaway one, “not because they had anything to runaway for, but because they wanted it to be quite (quiet), thee knows”. For the sake of his wife’s health they went to Sunderland, where he became a hawker of pots, but the bracing northern atmosphere was too strong for his delicate wife.

His second wife was Miss Annie **Brown**, a daughter of John **Brown**, the village blacksmith of Unstone. Four children of the marriage still live.”.....

What a find and if that wasn’t enough, I made another amazing discovery in the newspaper collection. This time the only match to my search criteria was the surname Ashmore. I wasn’t going to consider it as the newspaper in question was dated 1935, well after Joseph’s death, but I had a look. The piece was about a lady called Mary Ann **Neale** and I could not understand why it had been linked to Ashmore until I read it all. This lady had been interviewed the day before her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and buried in the long article was a mention that she was the last of the Ashmore family. She was Joseph’s sister and apart from telling her life story there was a photograph of her too.

Her life was fascinating enough for me to write a chapter about her in my book. She said she was the youngest of thirteen children, even though Joseph thought that theirs was only “a biggish family”. I had only found eight children but was able to find a couple more now. Mary claimed she had a sister who lived into her nineties and their grandfather lived to be 93. I hope they have passed their longevity genes down the line.

If, like me, you thought you had researched your family history, think again. Try searching new collections and make use of the free services on offer in lockdown. Even trying familiar websites is worth another go as the search engines have also improved. Family Search has grown beyond recognition and is free to use, so well worth a try. You really can teach an old dog new tricks after all.

**Karen Walker, Member 2062**

## Gold Fischili Part Two

This is the continuation of the story that was in Doncaster Ancestor, Winter edition.

Late in the afternoon we reached 'Hotel Ibis Volga'. It interested me to note, as I waited for its descent, that the lift was manufactured by 'Schindler'. During the afternoon I sat with 'Our Patient' whilst the others toured the city. The next day she was admitted to hospital and we teachers took it in turns to sit with her there. As I had been allocated the night shift, I accompanied the rest of the students to visit The Parliament Building with our guide, Maria.

Maria's English, although better than our Hungarian, took some getting used to. It was rather like playing charades in a foreign language as she desperately groped for words leaving us equally desperately trying to complete her sentences which were punctuated by 'erms'.

'And now, we will look at the lovely er, the er, the lovely.....'

'Ceiling?' (gilt embossed)

'No, no, the er...'

'Floor?' (intricate parquet)

'No! No, the er, the er, the lovely guards!'

Indeed, they were 'lovely'! We watched the changing of the very handsome guards and then were quickly escorted through various chambers and out.

Later we visited the fairy-tale village of Szentendre, which was clearly a favourite with our 'erming' guide. She must have been on commission with some of the shops we were directed to as they were enthusiastically recommended to us, whereas others were ignored, despite their identical wares. We had a rather unappetising meal of gnocchi and meat (?), arranged for us at a restaurant on Maria's 'nice list'. Clearly our guide was on a 'percentage'. We visited the decorated churches, restored in full after the Russian occupation and strolled by the picturesque river. Then it was back to the hotel.



Szentendre

Following another meal of gnocchi, it was my turn for the 'hospital shift'. I boarded a taxi with a 'Taras Bulba' lookalike in the driving seat and set off for Szent Laslo's Hospital in the evening. The hospital was a rather bleak and gloomy looking building. There was a little drama when I arrived, and the doctor turned to me rather ominously with these words, 'with your help, ve vill sedate her'. Fortunately for me, our poorly student took her medication meekly and slept soundly for the night. When I was relieved of my post in the morning,

my return taxi driver was a professional football player who had visited Newcastle with his team, Ferencvaros. He launched into a diatribe about the beauties of English and Italian football which put me to sleep until, as we left the hospital, the taxi was checked by the guards at the gate. The boot was inspected. What were they searching for, dead bodies, drugs, unvalidated metro tickets? Regarding the later, therein lies a tale: when traveling on the Budapest Metro, in the 1990s, you had to be sure your tickets were 'validated'. Otherwise you may be arrested! Unless of course, you agreed to pay an extortionate on the spot fine, as we found out to our cost! The 24000 forints question: How do you know whether your ticket is 'valid' or not when all the signs are in Hungarian, and you can't read Hungarian? 'Tuffshitski' as we Russian speakers say!

'Budapest is a very beautiful city, yes?' chatted my driver

'I haven't seen much of it', I complained, feeling sorry for myself, 'I have only seen The Parliament Building'.

'the Parliament Building!' he exclaimed with delight, and to my dismay set off in that direction.

'No, no, I have seen The Parliament Building!' I hurriedly interjected, 'Tomorrow we visit the Danube'

'The Danube!' He exclaimed and to my dismay set off in that direction. He then proceeded to give me a tour of the river in the early hours of the morning, pointing out all the places of interest that our party had seen whilst I was on 'hospital watch'. The city and the river certainly were very beautiful by night, but I began to worry about the taxi fare when the driver turned to me and very purposefully announced these words: 'Deutsch Mark and Dollar is no good!' As Hungarian money is all in thousands, (all notes bearing the likenesses of very ugly men), I was anticipating '000000s' – actually he charged me only the cheapest fare for a single trip from the hospital. I was exhausted and starving and my driver had pointed out many restaurants along the way. I had been sorely tempted to take him up on the offer of a meal, (gnocchi and something?), but I was also wary, weary, worn and sad and so staggered up to bed and made do with a packet of 'gold fischli' - buy some for Christmas, you have to try them!

On our last day in Budapest we staff all felt the worse for wear after our 'hospital shifts'. At two o'clock in the afternoon we embarked upon our return journey, driving past shops that sold 'szendvics' and rather worryingly a lorry carrying, 'bohm transport'. We stopped at an Austrian service station to go to the loo and found ourselves halted by the guard who demanded coins we did not possess. The water should have been ass's milk to justify the fuss he made. Fearing we would be shot from a nearby watchtower, we scurried back on the coach. The Austrian Border Guards, or rather 'bored guards', were very different from their Slovakian counterparts. Hardly bothering to stir from their hut, they made a token gesture and then hurried back to the warmth.

Night merged into day at some point in Germany. We alighted the coach into the land of the living dead and stood like hunched angry birds, perched miserably aboard the ferry awaiting our final drive back to dear old Doncaster in the snow! After a winter in a strange land of snow and ice it was good to be back in a familiar land of snow and ice and just in time for Christmas!

**Ruth Scott-Chambers, Member 4292**

Did anyone try the gold fischili?

## **Gift Aid Reminder**

As we are now getting round to subscription renewal time, can I ask that if you have previously allowed us to claim Gift Aid on your subscriptions and you are no longer a UK tax payer you inform Philip Langford, our membership secretary. Similarly, if you are unsure whether you have allowed us to claim on your behalf, please contact Philip to find out.

**[ddfhsmemberships@doncasterfhs.co.uk](mailto:ddfhsmemberships@doncasterfhs.co.uk)**

Thanking you for your cooperation.

**Sheila Cave, Treasurer**

## **STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS**

### **Calling all Railway Enthusiasts**

We have just been informed that the talk in May will be given by Chris Barron, who is the Project Co-ordinator of the Doncaster Grammar School Railway Society.

The talk will be on 26th May 2021 7.30pm – 9.00pm and you will receive an invitation to the ZOOM meeting as usual.

Further information will be available on our website shortly.

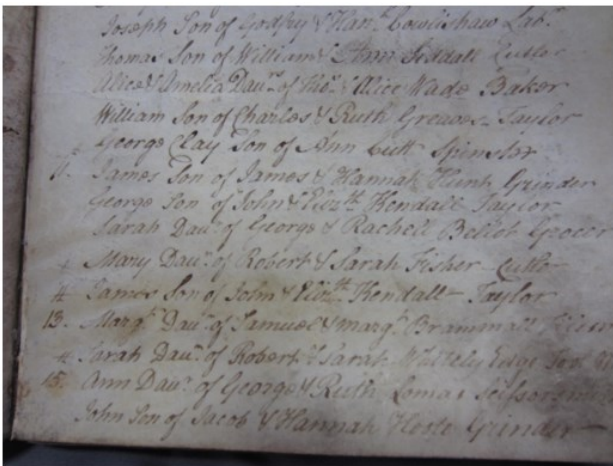
# Finding George

When my father passed responsibility of maintaining the family tree to me in 2003, the main roadblock in the Kendall line was at my 3 times great grandfather, George **Kendall**. While we knew that George, his wife and 7 children (including 2 married daughters with their respective husbands George **Wilkinson** and William **Stones**) settled in Reach Township outside of Port Perry, Ontario and had come from somewhere in England; we were stumped on where the family was from, where George was born, when he was born, and even when he died.

My father's original research had George and family from Grinton. We were thrilled when we found the line went back to royalty. That excitement turned to disappointment when Dad took a trip to Grinton and found George's grave. Canada census records only show "England" as the birthplace, so the search was on. Luckily, records were rapidly being digitised and put online, so the question of George's residence was answered when I found the 1841 England Census. (The Kendalls did not leave Thorne, Yorkshire until 1842, shortly after this first census, or our search may have been more arduous.)

On my first trip to the Doncaster Archives I found a marriage record from Thorne for George and his wife, Elizabeth **Barrett** (of Fishlake), but there was no age mentioned. And there was no baptism record for George in Thorne or the surrounding area. So the question of birthplace and age remained.

It took another 7 years to find that George was baptised in Sheffield (35 miles from Thorne) in January of 1792. Not only is it unknown why George was baptised there, but upon examining the original Bishop's Transcript of the baptism records, there was a SECOND Kendall child baptised on the same day (who was not listed on the index in the Archives, nor on the typed



transcription). (A good lesson to check back to the original document whenever possible.) Questions still remain. Were George and James twins? How old were the 2 boys when they were baptised? Why were

they in Sheffield?

Now the biggest mystery – when did George die? The other reason we don't know George's exact age is we don't know when he died. According to family stories, George bought a farm in Reach Township with the intention of building a Methodist church and family cemetery on one part of the property. The Kendall Cemetery does exist (the church was never built), but George is the only one of the family NOT buried there.

Another family story was related to me. "After George's wife died in 1857, the old man spent his time going from one of his children's homes to another, as the spirit moved him. One day he took his old dog and walked out to visit his daughter. Neither he nor his dog was ever seen again."

The last Canada census that George appears in is the 1861 census in Reach Township (performed on January 14, 1861), where he is listed as age 72 on his next birthday, and he was staying with one of his daughters and her family.

Another family member contributed his part of the story, "William **Park**, told his wife (Eliza, George's youngest daughter) that he had killed George and his dog and dropped them down an abandoned well on the property and partly filled it in. George **Kendall** is still in the bottom of that well. They had a family gathering on the farm about 1908 and no one could remember where the old well was, as they were going to dig him up and put him in the cemetery, but gave up on that idea. The murder happened somewhere around 1861."

I decided to examine the Port Perry area newspapers from 1857 onwards. Perhaps there will be a mention of "old man George **Kendall**" being missing?

Coincidentally, the first issue of the local newspaper, The Ontario Observer, was published on December 12, 1857, just one day after George's wife, Elizabeth, died. It contains her death notice which reads, "At Prince Albert, on the 11<sup>th</sup> instant, at the residence of Mr. **Park**, Mrs. **Kendall** of Utica, aged 67 years."

So, not only did Elizabeth Barrett Kendall die at the home of her son-in-law, but George apparently died at the hands of the same son-in-law! It is interesting to note that in the years following Elizabeth's and George's deaths, William **Park** advertised his business in the local newspaper as a cabinet maker, then a cabinet and coffin maker, and finally as



Elizabeth Kendall's Repaired  
Headstone, Kendall Cemetery

an undertaker.

William and Eliza **Park** eventually moved to southern Ontario, Eliza died in 1902, and William **Park** left for parts unknown after that. The Park monument and family gravesite in Pine Grove Cemetery in Port Perry, Ontario contains the remains of Mrs. William **Park** (Eliza Kendall) and 3 of their 5 children, but not her husband and the suspected killer of George **Kendall** and possibly of his wife Elizabeth **Barrett**.

**Robyn Kendall, Member 4230**

## The Sand House

### A Victorian Marvel (Part 1)

Our talk on 25<sup>th</sup> November was given by Richard Bell a direct descendant of the Sand House creator William Senior. It was the 3<sup>rd</sup> talk Richard had given to the Society but the 1<sup>st</sup> using Zoom, which for the time being has become the new normal. In this the first of two talks Richard gave a resume of the history of the Sand House followed by a slide show of photographs of the development of the house and Catacombs.

Richard had become interested in researching his family history in the 1980's and on asking questions of his maternal grand mother he discovered she was the grand daughter of the builder of the Sand House. His interest started as a hobby but after meeting Peter Tuffrey who was also interested in the story of the Sand House they started their research together and published their 1<sup>st</sup> book in 1988 which consisted of 36 pages. On retirement, they started to update their research and a second book was published. Richard started giving talks on the Sand House in 1993, his 1<sup>st</sup> talk to the Society was in 1995.

William Senior was born in 1802 in Pontefract and moved to Doncaster in 1822, with his son Henry Senior. In 1832 he bought a rectangular piece of land on Balby Lane Close that was nearly 2 acres and included a Sandstone Quarry. It was near Green Dyke Lane. By the 1850's Doncaster was growing due to the arrival of the railway and the start of the Plant Works in 1853. In 1853 work started on the new drain along Horse Fair and down St James Street then through William Seniors land to the Carr drain. By the time it reached the sand pit the drain was 20 feet deep. In order to work on the drain a tunnel was dug through the sand pit to assist in the laying of the drain below.

At this point William and his son Henry started to dig the Catacombs to the left of the tunnel to give the visitors who came to look at the tunnel work something to look at. A block of sandstone was left and Henry built a two up two down house by hollowing out the sandstone. In 1857 this land was sold to

Henry by William. Over the following years the house was extended and a pitched slate roof was added. In 1859 land on Thief Lane came up for sale and was bought for £1705. The two pieces of land were linked through Burden Lane which in later years became Victoria Street.

Richard showed the group a collection of photos he has put together of the inside of the house which had sandstone walls between 3 and 9 feet thick. Upstairs there were 2 bedrooms and a bathroom. At the back of the house there was a stables downstairs and upstairs a ballroom which had a staircase and access onto Victoria Street. A photograph of the house c.1900 showed the houses behind the Sand House on Victoria Street were level with the roof of the Sand House. People attending functions in the ballroom would arrive via the access from Victoria Street. The ballroom could hold about 200 people.



Inside the Sand House early 1900s



The Cloisters

The tunnels known as Cloisters tunnels were 14 feet at their highest point and it is in there that the most famous carving the Elephant and Mahoot (Indian for elephant keeper) was found approximately 9 foot high. Other carvings included an 8-foot-wide cherub, Pat the Irishman 8-foot-high, a 9-foot-tall Lady, Pope and frieze, Kings head and carvings of a young and mature Queen Victoria. It is believed that many of the carvings were done by men who originally arrived in Doncaster to do the carvings on Doncaster Minster. In 1897 a Diamond Jubilee Celebration for Queen Victoria was held in the grounds of the house. By the 1900's ivy covered the walls and roof of the house.

Richard was asked by Jenny Ellis if the house was damp and at risk of flooding. Richard said that it was possible it was damp as he had met a man who had lived in the house from the

age of seven, and he remembered there was always a fire burning in one of the rooms. There was however no evidence of flooding as the sandstone drained.

John Fingold remarked he had enjoyed the presentation and the photos Richard had shown helped him understand the layout of the House and Tunnels better. He wanted to know what the words under the carving of the Pope said, but Richard was unable to shed any light. He added that in later years children had played in the tunnels and it was possibly a remnant from those days.

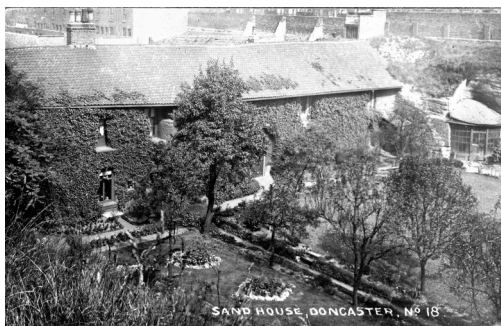
The 2<sup>nd</sup> Part of Richards talk will be on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December at 10.30am. George Hiley confirmed he would send a registration e mail out to members. He confirmed monthly talks would continue on-line through to April 2021'

**Sheila Cave, Member 4018**

## **The Sand House Legacy**

***by Richard Bell, Chair of Trustees of The Sand House Charity***

Doncaster can boast of having been the location of one of the most unusual dwellings imaginable. Elsewhere in the UK there are houses carved out of



rocky outcrops and, at a more basic level, caves that once were homes of a sort. However, the Sand House was truly unique in its scale and design.

Back in 1995, I was thrilled to be able to present an illustrated talk to D&DFHS members about this remarkable Victorian creation. I was equally delighted to return in 2011, but it was a rare privilege to receive a third invitation, to deliver what turned into a two-part, online

The Front of the Sand House

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presentation of the story, in late-2020.

In this article I shall concentrate on the contents on the part two talk. Not only has part one already been reported upon elsewhere, but the second part included aspects of the Sand House story that I feel are especially noteworthy. They are the activities and projects that *The Sand House Charity* has been carrying out in recent years, to provide a fitting legacy for the sadly lost Victorian marvel.

The Sand House's heyday was, undoubtedly, the last decade of the nineteenth century. Its creator, sand merchant and property developer Henry Senior, had made an impressive and fashionable mansion for himself and his



The back of the Sand House

family. His house, which he had carved from a huge block of sandstone within his quarry, even boasted its own ballroom and stables, as well as generous living accommodation.

Surrounding the house, the former quarry floor had become a lush and mature garden. Even more impressive was the tunnel network that ran under the adjacent land. It was decorated extensively with a wide range of

sculptures, carved into the sandstone. In the 1890s, Henry was not only able to enjoy the benefits of his hard work, but he also invited local residents to visit the garden and tunnels, too... albeit in return for a small admission charge! But things were about to change.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 1900, Henry Senior died, at the age of 74. In his will, written five years earlier, he had left instructions that, upon his death, the Sand House and its contents should be sold. The proceeds arising from the sale were to be divided among the surviving members of his family. And so it was that, on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June 1900, an auction took place at the premises. The furnishings and other contents of the house were sold. In addition, a large quantity of building materials and equipment was auctioned, as were some livestock. A brown, 7-year-old horse named Tommy had his own mention in the newspaper advert!

At about the same time as the contents were disposed of, so the Sand House itself was sold. It was purchased by Doncaster Corporation, for a sum of £1,000. One can imagine a number of ways in which a fine and unique dwelling such as this could have been utilised. One would be unlikely to guess at the actual use to which it was put. The house was placed in the hands of the Sanitary & Cleansing Department. A foreman and his family were installed. The foreman managed the operations of collecting both refuse and night-soil, using horses and carts.

By 1934, the Corporation's requirements were changing, with night-soil becoming a thing of the past and with the introduction of lorries to replace horse-drawn carts. Also, in spite of a degree of modernisation of the Sand House around 1920 (e.g. installing hot water) the place was becoming less attractive for habitation. During the twentieth century, the Sand House had been home, successively, to the Lumby, Hague and Briggs families. Harry and Alice Briggs vacated the house in 1934 and, in November of that year, instructions were given to board it up.

At that stage, the tunnels were still intact. Discussions took place in the Town Council and various committees as to what should be done with the site, but it was viewed as a liability rather than an asset. Voices spoke in support of retaining the house and tunnels as a visitor attraction, but they failed to convince the naysayers. As early as 1935, permission was granted for land-fill operations to begin inside the former quarry. The roof of the house was removed around 1938/39 and, over the course of the next few years, whatever remained of the house became submerged in fill material.

The tunnels were not so easily obliterated! Through the 1940s and 50s local children used them as an unofficial playground. From the 1960s onwards, access was gained from time to time in connection with redeveloping the neighbourhood. However, in the late-1970s and early-80s a number of tunnel collapses caused great concern. They led to Doncaster Council locating and filling in most of the remaining tunnels, in 1984. So that is where the story could have ended... but it did not.

As a result of working with a colleague who was researching his family history, I had begun a similar enterprise in 1983. I already had a vague knowledge of a family connection with the Sand House, but my maternal grandmother set me on the right path to establishing the true link. Being a chartered civil engineer and with my family connection, it was not long before my research began to focus on Henry Senior's unique feat of engineering.

In May 1983 I had the good fortune to track down and meet Thomas Hague. His father had been the Corporation foreman from 1917 until 1932, so Thomas had grown up living at the Sand House. He was very generous with his time and knowledge, enabling me to start building a clear picture of the place that he had once called home. A visit underground in February 1984, just before the tunnels were filled in, was all it then took to turn my interest in the Sand House into a passion that grows stronger to this day.

Two co-authored books (1988 and 2010) went a long way to setting straight what had hitherto been a sparse and muddled history. The latter edition "*The Sand House: A Victorian Marvel Revisited*" attracted a good deal of attention, aided by an increasing online following. There was clearly an appetite for this unusual story. And so thoughts began to turn to other ways that could be used to share the tale with a wider audience. I was reminded of an idea that someone had suggested, to recreate one of the sandstone carvings in the form of a sand sculpture. And thus, our first major project was born.

"*Sand House – The Elephant in the Room*" took place in the spring of 2012. Based at The Point, South Parade, Doncaster, the project core was a sand sculpture exhibition. The centrepiece of the display was a full-size replica of the most famous of the sandstone sculptures, namely, the Elephant & Mahout. It was carved by Jamie Wardley of Sand In Your Eye

([www.sandinyoureye.co.uk](http://www.sandinyoureye.co.uk)). Jamie also led a 5-day course, teaching local artists how to sculpt in sand. Children's sand art sessions, an oral history day and a documentary film accompanied the exhibition.

My illustrated talks continued and, by 2016, I had presented well over 200. Several ideas for new projects were crystallising and we felt that a more formal organisation was needed to deliver them, rather than an unconstituted group of enthusiastic volunteers. As a result, much time was spent that year in preparing to establish *The Sand House Charity*. The preparations were successful and the charity was registered on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017 (Reg. No.1171875).

The first significant activity run by the charity was to stage an exhibition and pop-up sand art sessions in Doncaster's Frenchgate Shopping Centre. At that time, planning was already underway for our largest project so far: a specially-written stage play, by Peter Spafford. "*Sand House*" played to sell-out audiences at Cast theatre in June 2018 and received wonderful reviews. Outreach workshops, guided walks, talks, more sand art and another documentary video were all part of the overall project.

Later that year, local song-writing partnership, Mick Jenkinson and Ian Parks wrote and recorded two songs for the Sand House. The CD now sits alongside books, key-rings, postcards, picture poem cards, figurines and a card model kit in the range of merchandise supporting the charity's aims. Recently, a romantic suspense novel, "*Keeper of Secrets*", by local author, Lynda Stacey, has been added to the range. The Sand House tunnels feature strongly in its storyline.

Our educational aims have been furthered by collaborating with Doncaster College. Their computer games development students have been modelling parts of the Sand House as they develop their skills. And our desire to reach a wider audience is being helped greatly by having a significant display in the Danum Gallery, Library and Museum, opening in 2021.

In 1900, the following words appeared in Henry Senior's obituary.

*"It is in association with that unique dwelling and its passages that the name of Mr Henry Senior will go down to posterity, if that honour should befall him, for the changes in time in such a rapidly developing neighbourhood may clear the whole thing away".*

There is a long list of proposed projects to be added to the current achievements of *The Sand House Charity*. We hope and believe that, while the Sand House may have been physically 'cleared away' it is, nevertheless, on the point of being assured of the legacy that it so richly deserves.

*For more information please visit **[www.thesandhouse](http://www.thesandhouse)***

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Happy New Year to you all. Stay safe.

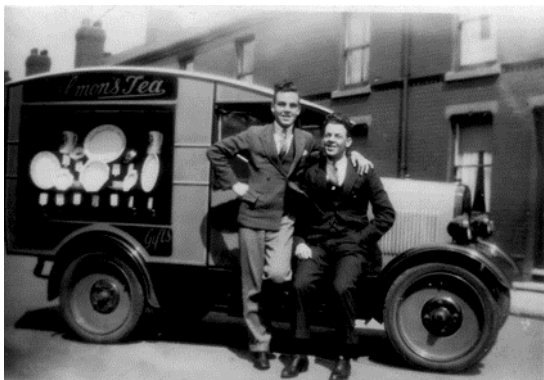
**Lynn Snowden Project Co-ordinator.**

## A Doncaster Tea Salesman

These pictures feature my maternal grandfather after whom I was named, John Roberts (1880-1950). I thought members of the Doncaster Family History Society would be interested in seeing these and learn a bit about his background. He worked as a representative for Brooke Bond who were well known for using Trojan vans which these are.

The 1911 census has him living in Bury and working in the tea business. In 1914 his family had moved to Doncaster and this could be when he started working for Brooke Bond. It is known he fought in the First

World War. Initially after the War he delivered tea by horse and cart in the villages around Doncaster as one of my aunts recalls going out with him as a child on these trips. We do not know at what time he "became mechanised". These pictures are snapshots from the family "archives".



I have found a website referring to Salmon's Tea whose name appears on the side of the first van. Joseph Smith Salmon (1821-1907) started a grocery and wine merchant's business in Reading in the 1840s. In the mid-1870s he brought his son, Joseph Smith Salmon Junior (1846-1896) into the business and from then on the company evolved to become tea merchants. Joseph Junior had been deaf from childhood as a result of scarlet fever, but nevertheless managed to run the business successfully. However, after suffering a severe bout of tinnitus he apparently ended his life, drowning in the Thames.

The company then had two sites and the business was split into two based on the two sites; one continuing as the tea business and one becoming a printers and paper merchants. The latter was taken over by Brooke Bond in 1902 and the premises were then used for tea packing and label printing. Though Salmon's business was wound up in 1917, according to the website Brooke Bond continued to produce Salmon's Tea "into the 1930s and beyond". The Salmon's Tea



van appears to have a window display on the side with a tea service on show. I would guess this could be acquired by collecting tokens off tea packets.

Though it probably will not be legible, the cross symbol on the door of the van on the right has “Edgelets Tea” written on it. I have not managed to find out much about “Edgelets Tea” on the web, but it seems to have been a brand of Brooke Bond’s something like PG Tips is today. One website suggests it might still have been available in the 1950s. With help from the “family network” I have been able to work out that this photo was taken at the Brooke Bond depot at the rear of 148 Shady Side Hexthorpe, Doncaster. A first-floor extension (which you will not be surprised to know has now been completed!) can be seen under construction.



The premises have recently changed hands. After being occupied by somebody making shoe insoles (apparently on his own in these large premises) for 35 years, it has now been acquired by a company called Doncaster Van Conversions who change panel vans into campers. It is possible they were occupied by Brooke Bond until the “insole man” took it over, but this is speculation.

**John Harrison**

## **The Old Gaol, Factory Lane**

It was the mayor’s duty to make arrests by his sergeants of the mace, and to consign such prisoners over to the jailor; but until towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it would appear as if no adequate prison accommodation had been provided, but on extraordinary occasions the old bar, or tower of stone, was supplemented by some room of an inn, and even the outhouse attached to the mayor’s official residence.

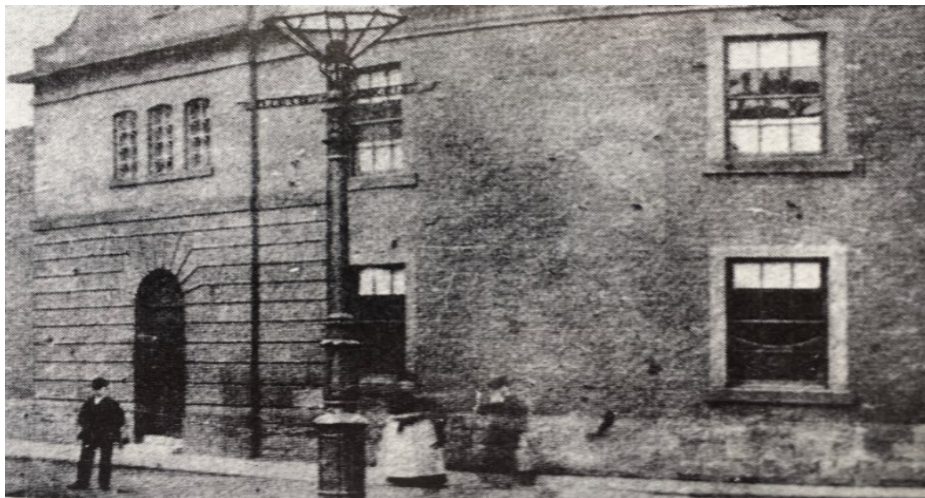
On 4<sup>th</sup> April 1768, “Mr Peter Cave and others be a committee appointed for the erection of a new gaol, to be built in the shoe market, and that they have full powers to proceed to build the same according to the plan laid out before the corporation.

It was not a very imposing structure as may be inferred by the following account “Received 26<sup>th</sup> September 1769, of Corporation of Doncaster the sum of £81.3.6d being in full for building and completing the new gaol – John

Mosley” – for labour only.

The building, however, was so inadequate, that ten years later appeared the following resolution: - The mayor and others are hereby appointed a committee to take down the gaol and house adjoining and to contact proper workmen to cause a new gaol to be built” This too had temporary existence.

On October 5<sup>th</sup> 1825 – Observations were addressed to the Recorder from his place on the bench to the Grand Jury at the late sessions on the present state of the gaol.



**The Old Gaol, Factory Lane**

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On 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1828, the Mayor was informed that ‘Magistrates of the West Riding at the last Pontefract Sessions were for removing the West Riding Sessions from Doncaster.’

The Doncaster Borough Gaol was evidently one of so many such inadequate buildings throughout the country. After considerable pressure had been brought to bear on the Corporation, a site for a new gaol, situated at the corner of West Laithe Gate and Factory lane (then occupied as a coach builders shop) was purchased for £700. Plans were prepared by Messrs Woodhead & Hurst, and in April 1829 (William Hurst, partner in the firm) laid the foundation stone. The entire cost of buildings, including site amounted to £3,000, the materials of the old gaol and coach makers premises being also utilised. This was the third gaol erected in the space of sixty years.

For several centuries the Sergeants-at-mace, who were the body servants of the mayor, acted as jailers, made arrests and were responsible for the custody of prisoners. The prison of 1779 contained a house for the jailor. The internal layout of the new premises consisted of three 'yards' – one for each male and female felons, and one for debtors. Either side of the main entrance were the various offices connected with the administration of the establishment. The centre, surrounded by high walls, was the Head Constable's or Gaoler's house.

The Gaoler (with an assistant) was in charge, being Head Police Officer and Constable. Appointed under the Charters were two Sergeants-at-Mace who, besides dealing with their administrative and judicial duties, also acted as police officers. Together with the Street-keeper and the Market Policeman, this comprised the entire Police Force. Additionally there were twenty one constables for the seventeen wards, and this was considered adequate for peace-keeping purposes.

**Sources:** John Tomlinson's "Doncaster from the Roman Occupation to the present time (1887)" & Colin Walton's 'The Changing Face of Doncaster' – reproduced from a series of articles from the Doncaster Free Press.

**Keith Crouter, Member 1623**

## Finding Those Illusive Marriages

Have you ever wondered why your ancestors married in a church some distance from their own or appeared to have been living in a different place at the time of their wedding? They could well have been trying to hide something. This piece found in the Derbyshire Courier of 14<sup>th</sup> April 1849 may explain some of the reasons why.

### **"Caution to Runaway Wedding parties**

On Monday last, a wedding party went from the district of St Thomas's Brampton to North Wingfield, with the intention of having the wedding knot tied, but on their arrival at the church, they saw to their utmost surprise the clerk of St Thomas Church. When the officiating minister asked them what parish they belonged to, they could not say Claycross, which they had given in to the clerk at the time of publication of the banns; therefore, they were obliged to return in single blessedness."

It just goes to show that you cannot believe everything you see on a record of marriage. The clerk recorded the information he was given and there was only a slim chance of being found out if you were economical with the truth, especially if you went outside the area where you were well known.

**Karen Walker, Member 2062**

## Who would have thought it?

When John Thomas Harris **Webster** married Sarah Ann **Starkey** in Bentley on 19<sup>th</sup> January 1918 she gave the occupation of her father Charles Thomas **Harris** as **gold miner!!** The 1911 census gave his occupation as publican and he was living in Norton, Nottingham. Now that's a big leap! Perhaps the vicar was a bit deaf and she actually said coalminer. Or maybe there was something the rest of us haven't heard about.

Moral of the story – don't believe everything you read in the records.

**Pattie Birch, Member 3232**

### New Members

Listed below are the names, and membership numbers of members who have recently joined the Society. We extend a warm welcome to them and wish them good luck in their personal research.

Mem ID	Title	Initial	Last Name
4448	Mrs	S	Rawson
4449	Miss	K	Little
4450	Mr	J	Ogle
4451	Mr & Mrs	D & J	Reasbeck
4452	Ms	L	Gamston
4453	Mr	G	Haigh
4454	Dr	A P	Oates
4455	Dr	D	Fisher

# Members' Interests

Detailed are new or revised "Members' Interests". At the end of each line is the membership number of the person researching that name. The names and contact details for each member are available from:

Members' Interest Enquiries (see inside back page).

Please note that Chapman codes have been used for counties. Full details of the Chapman Codes can be found on our website, If you do not have access to the internet, please contact a committee member to obtain a written copy.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Member</b>
Brears	WRY	Sheffield	1750-1900	4448
Cartledge	WRY	Rotherham	1750-1850	4448
Mason	WRY	Doncaster	1750-1850	4448
Pashley	WRY	Rotherham	1750-1850	4448
Rowbotham	DBY	Curbar	1700-1850	4448
Rowbotham	DBY	Eyam	1700-1850	4448
Rowbotham	WRY	Sheffield	1850-1930	4448
South	WRY	Doncaster	1650-1880	4448
Duckels	ERY	Adlingfleet	1600-1850	4449
Duckels	ERY	Goole	1600-1850	4449
Duckels	ERY	Hook	1600-1850	4449
Duckels	ERY	Howden	1600-1850	4449
Lowther	ERY	Howden	1815-1878	4450
Lowther	NRY	York	1790	4450
Ogle	WRY	Campsall	1791-1872	4450
Reasbeck	YKS	Doncaster	Pre 1850	4451
Haigh	WRY	Doncaster	1750-1900	4453
Smith	DBY	Any	1750-1900	4453

## Obituaries

We have been informed by her daughter, that **Vera Smith**, who had been a member since 2004, has sadly passed away. We send our condolences to her family.

They said they knew how much Vera got from her membership of the society and how she looked forward to reading the Ancestor, and that she felt able to contribute to it herself. It enabled her to feel connected with people at a time when she was less able to get out and about.

Vera had an article in the "Help Wanted" in the Winter Ancestor and her family asked that we keep it in there. I was contacted by a member about the article and passed the contact on to Vera's daughter.

Vera's daughter Sally, was pleased that someone could give her information, and said,

*"Thank you again for passing on this information. I have received an email from a member, offering to send us some information, which is exciting, although also disappointing that Mum won't know the outcome. We will reply to Barbara as it seems as though her aunt's diaries have mention of our Grandma and Grandad. We will have to check in Mum's files to be sure what she was hoping to find out, but it is definitely very interesting.*

*We are very grateful for your assistance and will keep you posted'.*

## Doncaster Archives & Palgrave Research Centre Demolished

I thought that members who had visited the Palgrave Research Centre would like to see this picture of it all being demolished. Houses are going to be built on the plot.



"Work has got underway on demolishing the building used to store thousands of historic documents and artefacts relating to Doncaster's history."

More information is available on Doncaster Free Press website

## **Dates For Your Diary**

### **Family History Show 2021 Online**

**February 20th 10.00-5.00**

“Our online events have all the features of our physical shows, from the comfort of your own home! Put your research questions to an expert, watch a free talk, speak to a local society, archive or genealogical supplier.”

**<https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com/online/>**

### **Roots Tech Connect**

**25 - 27 February**

#### **A Free Online Conference Experience**

For the first time ever, the world's largest family celebration event will be entirely virtual and completely free. Get ready to celebrate shared connections with people from around the world. Connect with friends, your family, your past, and your heritage and homelands—all from the comfort of your home and in your browser.”

**Visit the RootsTech Connect website**

**June 2021**

**The Family History Show, York**

**19 June 10.00 - 16.30**

**The Knavesmire Exhibition Centre,**

**York, YO23 1EX**

**DN2 6AY**

**Remember to check with the organisers before you travel**

## D&DFHS Subscription Rates 01 Apr 2020 - 31 Mar 2021

Please make all cheques/postal orders  
etc. payable to:

**Doncaster & District Family**

**History Society**

Send to Membership Secretary

- see back page

or **www.genfair.com**

Individuals £10.00

Family in same house £12.00

Institutions UK £12.00

**Overseas**

Electronic journal £12.00

Paper journal £15.00

**New Members who join January - March can receive  
up to 3 months membership free**

## DDFHS Research Enquiry Service

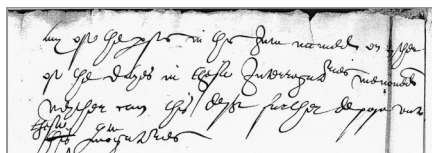
Due to the closure of the **HELP DESK** & to celebrate the Society's 40th Anniversary we are offering a limited free email Research Service.

The Research Service is primarily a "look-up" service and is limited to one surname search of the Society's 1.5 million transcriptions database. Any additional research will be at the discretion of the Society's Research Enquiries Coordinator, Trevor Betterton. **research.enquiries@doncasterfhs.co.uk**

If you are not a member we will endeavour to assist, but ask you to consider joining the Society as an appreciation of the time spent by our volunteers.

## Transcription Service

**That will you have ordered or downloaded  
Can you read it? We can!**



The Old Documents Reading Group are offering a Transcription Service of wills, inventories, deeds, indentures and other old documents, including ones that you have part-transcribed but just cannot make out that last bit.

Competitive charges. Send a photocopy of your documents (NOT the original) for an estimate of the cost to:

**Philip Langford, 45 The Avenue, Bessacarr, Doncaster, DN4 5JZ**  
**Tel: 01302 539194 or email [readolddocs@aol.com](mailto:readolddocs@aol.com)**

## Officers and Executive Committee Cont'd

Vacant sales@doncasterfhs.co.uk

### **Committee Member**

John Humberston

### **Programme Secretary/ Publicity Officer**

Mrs June Staniforth 07901523529 events@doncasterfhs.co.uk

### **Exchange Journals/ Society Library/ Assistant Editor**

Keith Crouter 21 Sandall Park Drive, Wheatley Hills  
Doncaster, South Yorks, DN2 5RP  
01302 342301

### **Membership Secretary**

Philip Langford 45 The Avenue, Bessacarr,  
Doncaster, South Yorks DN4 5JZ  
01302 539194  
ddfsmemberships@doncasterfhs.co.uk

### **Members' Interests Enquiries/ Unwanted Certificates Co-ordinator**

George W Hiley c/o 45 The Avenue, Bessacarr,  
Doncaster, South Yorks DN4 5JZ  
membersinterests@doncasterfhs.co.uk/  
unwantedcertificates@doncasterfhs.co.uk

### **Website Co-ordinator**

George W Hiley webadmin@doncasterfhs.co.uk

***Please do not telephone Committee Members  
and Volunteers after 9.00pm***

## Parishes and Townships in the Archdeaconry of Doncaster 1914



If undelivered please return to:  
**Mr K Crouter**  
**21 Sandall Park Drive**  
**Wheatley Hills**  
**Doncaster DN2 5RP**