

SWINNERTON Family History



*Interior of St.Mary's Church, Swynnerton where we shall be holding our
AGM and Service on June 3rd 1995.*

THE JOURNAL OF THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY

VOLUME 10. No.1

MARCH 1995

The Swinnerton Society

was founded in 1973 as a non-profit making organisation devoted to the research and publication of Swinnerton family records and the welfare of St.Mary's Church, Swynnerton, Staffordshire. Research into the history of the Swinnerton family had been started by the Reverend Charles Swynnerton FSA. in the 1870s and over the years he wrote a number of articles and papers about the family and gathered together many Swinnertons from all over the world. Interest became dormant after his death in 1928 until the present archivist resumed research in 1952 and re-founded the society in 1973. Today it has a world-wide membership and holds a 'Gathering' at Swynnerton every 3 years. It is registered as a charity in the United Kingdom No. 518184.

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SWINNERTON FAMILY HISTORY

Volume 10 No.1

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FOREWORD

The Chairman

Preparations are well in hand for the Family Gathering at the village of Swynnerton on Saturday June 3rd next and all indications point to it being a very successful occasion. Members from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the U.S.A. have already indicated their intention of visiting "The Old Country". There will be a happy party on the Saturday evening at the Stakis Hotel (a ten minute drive from our Village) where arrangements to stay are being made for those who will be joining the visit to Butterton Church on Sunday the 4th followed by Brian Swynnerton's "Steeplechase" round Swinnerton Country. Most of the overseas members who will be there have already reserved their flights and sent in their booking forms **but those residing in the U.K., are, as usual, very slow in responding.** PLEASE assist Iain Swinnerton, who is collating all the information on numbers and doing the bookings. There are a hundred and one things to be done to prepare for such an event and he needs your help. For those who have mislaid the form sent with the December Journal, another is enclosed with this issue.

There is also **another Order Form for the China Anniversary Plate** which is being produced to commemorate the 21st Birthday of the formation of the Swinnerton Family Society. Orders have been steadily arriving, and, to those who are saying, "I am working on the wording and will send it off soon" - or words to that effect - I would urge **"don't procrastinate - do it now"**. By the time you receive this Journal - **THE DAY - JUNE 3RD** - will be but ten weeks away and time flies so quickly these days - as those over fifty years of age are often heard to say. The making of the plates is a simple job but the wording has to be produced by the artist, transfers made, and the operation of firing cannot be done in a hurry - it takes several days.

Procrastinate is a favourite word of mine and my Dictionary contains 69 (yes, sixty nine) variations, or definitions. Whilst on the subject it makes me wonder how many times we have procrastinated and put off a visit to someone - a friend or member of the family perhaps - and been too late? I am reminded of this because a very old friend of

mine has been very ill for several months - I telephoned him occasionally and promised I would visit him. I was going to-day, but now, alas, it is too late - he died last night. Too late, too late, will be the cry! - so it tells us in the Bible - and there are many other quotations urging us to do it now!. I have missed the boat with visiting people on several occasions and I am sure everyone who reads this Journal will have done the same. My new month's resolution, I now declare is, "don't dilly-dally - do it now". I expect, however, I will say exactly the same the next time it happens.

'Putting it off' has been the cause of losing much of our family history. Should you have an elderly aunt, uncle or other member of the family - visit them very soon - get them talking - and persuade them to tell their stories of "the old days" - they probably won't need much encouragement - and make a note of them. Better still have a tape recorder handy and record their stories and voices. They will have all the information about the family stored in their heads and will take it all with them when they depart unless you get it now. How great it would be in 50 or 100 years time for your great-grandchildren to listen to the voices of their ancestors who are no longer with us. Here endeth the lesson on Procrastination!.

See you at the Gathering

J. E. (Joe) Swinnerton.

21st ANNIVERSARY COMPETITION

The chairman has asked me to remind you of the competition he initiated in 1992. This is for the member of the family (with the obvious exception of myself!) who submits the best write-up of the history of their particular branch of the family. It was to be done during 1993 and 1994 and the results would be judged for our 21st Anniversary Gathering. The winner will receive a handsome trophy. Time is running out and so far I have only heard of one entry being prepared. I do hope there will be more, please get down to it because entries have to be submitted to him by Saturday 20th May to allow time for the judges to read the entries before the Gathering.

It is the time of the year when most people look forward to the Spring and the promise of new life. Already we can see the period of daylight increasing day by day and evidence of new growth coming from the earth.

The wise and dedicated gardener will, by now, have prepared his or her garden during the winter. Even the less enthusiastic of us will have acquired the annual interest in garden centres with their attractive offerings of seeds, plants and garden equipment,

Perhaps Spring reminds many of us that we are all part of God's creation and that true satisfaction and fulfilment comes when we share in it. *'My soul is restless until it finds its rest in Thee'*. Whenever I become absorbed in gardening (which I admit is often a love/hate relationship) or in any other activity which draws on my creative gifts, I find a deep sense of purpose and accomplishment. It is as though one enters a Sanctuary in which all the contentious issues of our time are put into their true perspective.

I do believe that whatever our age and condition; our status and natural ability, there is an inborn need in each of us to find fulfilment and purpose. In exercising our God-given talents, whatever they may be, we co-operate with Him in bringing his Kingdom.

'O life, awakening life in cell and tissue
from flower to bird, from beast to brain of man;
help us to trace, from birth to final issue,
the sure unfolding of your age-long plan.'

(Festival of Faith & Environment
Canterbury Cathedral)

May God bless you in the coming year.

Edward Swinnerton

PUBLISHED IN NUNEATON, WARWICKSHIRE - FOR NUNEATON PEOPLE.

NEWS - HERITAGE SCENE

THE SWINNERTONS OF OLD NUNEATON

By Peter Lee

OVER the years thousands of Chilvers Coton and Attleborough children have attended Swinnerton Middle School probably without being aware of the history of the family which gave the school its name

Today there are few reminders of the family locally, who were in their time one of the area's most illustrious people.

The Swinnertons came from the village of Swynnerton in the neighbouring county of Staffordshire. The Nuneaton group, derive from Aelen, Lord of Swynnerton who was recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086. He had a son, Robert Fitzaelen, Lord of Swynnerton, who is recorded between the dates 1122-1154. For several centuries the family remained close to their ancestral village, and between the 14th century and the 18th were known to be living at Whitmore in Staffordshire. The Nuneaton man descends from a Thomas Swinnerton who was baptised at Newcastle under Lyme on 4th August 1709 and must have moved to Fillongley sometime between then and the birth of his first child in 1735. His first wife, Mary, died in early life, and was buried at Fillongley on 10th February 1746. Thomas also died in Fillongley and was buried there on 1st August 1779.

Children

Thomas, in fact, was married three times and fathered a total of nine children. These in turn had thirteen children, one of whom was the progenitor of the Nuneaton family. Thomas's son, John was christened at Fillongley Church on 20th December 1735, married Sarah Price 11th November 1755, and was buried at Astley on 21st December 1802. They had seven children, the youngest of which, Isaac, was christened on 21st July 1771.

He married Ann Watson at Astley on 7th March 1805. They had issue three boys, George (1809-1814), Robert (1812-1873) and Isaac

(? - 1863); and three daughters, Ann (1805-1806), Sarah (1811-1811) and Elizabeth (?-1829).

As you will see this family was marked with tragedy, four of their children died very young, so it devolved upon the two remaining boys to seek their way in the world and make the best of their family's hopes and ambitions. Other branches of the family also had large families, so there were a fair few cousins to add to the Swinnerton name.

However, for our story we must look to Robert and Isaac to take us forward. The parents of these two had moved from Astley to Weddington sometime after 1812 to take up farming there. By 1819 we know that Isaac Swinnerton built some tall three-storey weaving shops in Derby Lane, Nuneaton. He is listed as a timber merchant in Pigot's Directory for 1828.

Sometime between 1835 and 1841, Isaac retired from the timber business and his son, Robert, took over. There are a number of documents in Warwick County Record Office detailing transactions that Robert made of land purchases around the years 1843/4.

Robert also benefited from the construction of the Trent Valley railway which passed through his property. His timber yard was rented to the contractors for the Trent Valley Railway (Brassey McKenzie & Stephenson) for two years (1845-1847) to enable them to manufacture the many timber items which went into the construction of the railway.

According to the Nuneaton Diarist (John Astley) they purchased, as part of the agreement: "A couple of thousand pounds worth of timber". The yard is now, literally speaking, covered over with workmen, workshops and saw pits making waggons, barrows etc., for the earthwork.

In 1850 Robert Swinnerton is described as the proprietor of The Steam Saw Mills at Nuneaton, also at the Old Wharf, Chilvers Coton. His brother, Isaac was also farming at Chilvers Coton. The father is living in retirement in Hinckley Road and died on 25th December 1857. Robert died 15th April 1873, at which time he is listed as a timber merchant and farmer of two hundred and thirty acres.

There is also mention at Warwick of other properties he owned being sold by Auction on 1st October 1873 at Weddington Terrace and Regent Street (as Derby Lane was now known).

The business now passed to his son Robert William. Robert senior had married Sarah (?) (1815-1897) and had two girls and a son. One of these girls christened Sarah Emily Ann (?-9.2.1983) produced a splendid book entitled "George Eliot, her early home". It was a

beautiful work, illustrated with water colour paintings and pencil drawings by the famous local artist, Patty Townsend (1845-1907) together with contributions by Lillian Russel and G. G. Kilburne. It was published by the nationally known producer of fine art books: Raphael Tuck and Sons in the year 1890. Sadly, Emily Swinnerton died in 1893 and a stained glass window was put into St. Nicholas Parish Church to her memory on September 26th 1895.

The other daughter was Charlotte Elizabeth, about which your writer knows little at present. It was to Robert William, therefore, that the family responsibility passed.

Swinnerton Middle School is named after Alderman Robert William Swinnerton M.B.E. Alderman Swinnerton was born on April 7th 1848. He was sent to Atherstone Grammar School and after leaving school assisted his father in his farming and timber business. They had very extensive farming operations occupying at one time 500 acres of land. His work for the greater good of the local community started as early as 1875 when he became correspondent to the Managers of the National Schools.

Mr Swinnerton was a staunch churchgoer and took a prominent part in the everyday affairs of Nuneaton Parish Church. He was a Churchwarden for twenty one years between 1880 and 1901. He became a J.P. in 1900.

He was elected a member of the Nuneaton Board of Guardians in 1877 and became chairman in 1899. In 1902 he was elected as the first chairman of the Nuneaton Education Committee, a position he held until 1938. He was Governor of the Nuneaton Grammar School and High School for Girls and elected onto the County Council in 1902. When he died on September 16th 1939, in the 91st year of his life, he was buried at Nuneaton Parish Church and the great and good of Nuneaton turned out to see this grand old man into the next world.

He had died a bachelor, but the Swinnerton name lives on in the school he founded and opened in 1932.

With regard to the timber yard that his family owned, this traded as Swinnerton & Son until 1919, when it became the Nuneaton Timber Company Ltd.

The company had two sides to the business, They sold a wide range of wood and timber products. Established alongside the merchants business was a joinery shop where such things as window frames, bar furniture, stairs and doors were manufactured. The principal people associated with the company after 1919 were Mr. G.

Harry Cleaver, Mr Walter Jeffcoat and Mr. G. A. Pallett. Latterly Harry Cleaver became main shareholder and Managing Director.

For many years timber was received by rail, being delivered direct into the yard by way of a private siding leased from the railway company. By the mid-fifties however, this method of transporting timber was in decline and road transport became the favoured method. *(Editor's note: a map of this private siding was published in this Journal - Volume 9 No.7 March 1994 p.129. What a marvellous project for a Swinnerton railway modeller that would be - do we have one?)*

IMPROVED

The yard was modernised and improved. A feature of Nuneaton for many years was a magnificent "Spider" crane built by Butters of Glasgow. This dominated the station area of the town and most Nuneatonians knew that they were home when they spotted this landmark from the train windows, or trundling over Leicester Road bridge in a venerable Midland Red bus.

The crane was 100 feet high and originally cost £3,000 when new. For many years it was operated by Mr Joe Marston of No 19, Regent Street. The Nuneaton Timber Company had branches at Kettlebrook, Tamworth and Atherstone.

In 1966 it became part of Rudders and Payne Timber Group who have since then been swallowed up by the Harcos Group and the yard has closed.

(A thought! - could the Mr. G.A.Pallett mentioned above be the man whom timber "palletts" are named after - perhaps he designed or invented them and made them? J.E.S.)

* * * * *

THE NUNEATON CHRONICLE Friday September 22nd, 1939

DEATH OF ALD. R. W. SWINNERTON
LONG LIFE DEVOTED TO PUBLIC SERVICE
FORMER MAYOR AND FREEMAN OF NUNEATON
A LEADING AUTHORITY ON EDUCATION

We deeply regret to record the death of Alderman Robert William Swinnerton, M.B.E. of Lindon Lodge, Leicester Road, Nuneaton, who passed away on Saturday morning at the age of ninety-one years. For well over half a century Mr. Swinnerton was one of the town's leading

public men, indeed, up to his retirement about twelve months ago owing to ill health, his whole life was one of devoted service, and there was hardly a sphere of Local Government in which he did not take a leading part. Possessed of a great natural gift for public work, it is true to say that no one played a greater part in the growth and development of the town.

Not only Nuneaton, but the County also, has sustained a great loss by his death, for he was an authority on matters of education and Poor Law administration. He was a former Mayor of Nuneaton, and one of the four men to be admitted a Freeman of the Borough. He was an Alderman of the Borough for seventeen years, retiring last October, and a County Alderman up to the time of his death.

Alderman Swinnerton was born on April 7th 1848, son of Mr. Robert Swinnerton, a farmer and timber merchant, who owned Weddington Grove. He received part of his education at the Atherstone Grammer School, which in those days was held in the chancel of St. Mary's Church, Atherstone, and after leaving school he assisted his father in the work of the timber trade and in very extensive farming operations, the family owning and occupying about five hundred acres. On his father's death in 1873 he left Weddington and took sole charge of the business of timber and slate merchants which he carried on until 1919, when the business was transferred to the Nuneaton Timber Company.

Helped to make modern Nuneaton

Mr. Swinnerton was a prominent figure in public life for well over half a century. He was originally a member of the old Local Board, and then of the Urban District Council. Nuneaton was incorporated in 1907, and in 1919 the Borough Council was enlarged and several new Aldermen were elected, including Mr. Swinnerton. As Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Corporation for many years, he played a conspicuous part in the great and rapid development of Nuneaton's municipal housing schemes. Indeed he has seen, to use his own words, "Nuneaton improve and progress as much as, if not more than, most towns of its size in the United Kingdom". Alderman Swinnerton played no small part in those improvements, in fact, it can be truly said that he was one of the makers of modern Nuneaton. During his period

of service as a member of the Nuneaton Board of Health, Nuneaton Urban Council and Nuneaton Borough Council the town doubled its size, and trebled its population.

A fitting reward was conferred on him in 1923 when in recognition of his long and valuable service to the town, he was elected Mayor of Nuneaton, an office he held for three successive years.

Work for Education

Mr. Swinnerton will always be remembered for his work on behalf of education and Poor Law administration. His work for education dated back to 1875, when he was appointed correspondent to the managers of the Nuneaton National School and later became a member of the School Board. He was elected a member of the Nuneaton Technical College Committee in 1898, and became vice chairman. On the passing of the Education Act in 1902 he was elected the first Chairman of the Nuneaton Education Committee, a position he held until 1938. His services were recognised, and his name perpetuated by naming one of the town's latest and most up-to-date schools after him - the Swinnerton Senior Council School, which was opened in 1932.

Not only in local affairs has his life been devoted to education, but also in the county. He did valuable work in this connection as a vice-chairman of the Warwickshire County Education Committee, and he was a member of nearly all the sub-committees of the Further Education branch. He was first elected a member of the County Council in 1905 and he was made a County Alderman on February 9th 1927.

As a Governor of King Edward V1 School, Nuneaton, of which he was once a pupil, later as vice-chairman for some years and Chairman since the death of the Reverend Canon Deed, Mr. Swinnerton rendered further service to the educational life of the town. He was one of the first Governors of the Nuneaton High School for Girls, and was vice-chairman for some years until the death of Alderman Bourne, when he was elected Chairman, an office he held up to the time of his death. He took a prominent part in the selection of the site for the school, and in the provision of the original buildings, as well as in the extensive enlargements which have been made to the premises.

Poor Law Administration

His record in Poor-Law work extended over a similar long period. He was first elected a member of the Nuneaton Board of Guardians in 1877, and was appointed on the Assessment and Finance Committees a few years later. He was first appointed Chairman of the Board in 1899, but for some time his chairmanship was not continuous. In 1902 the late Mr. Coape-Arnold was made Chairman, and continued so during the next two years. At that period there was some political rivalry in the matter, great interest being taken amongst members in the matter of chairmanship and some of the meetings were of a lively nature. In 1905 Mr. Swinnerton was again elected chairman and in 1906 the members reverted to Mr. Coape-Arnold as their choice. The voting was very close on some of these occasions, but good feeling prevailed despite the rivalry of opposing groups. In 1907 the mantle of chairmanship again fell on Mr. Swinnerton. In 1908 a change was made by the appointment of Mr. W. Farr, then manager of the Nuneaton Co-operative Society, who was proposed by Mr. Swinnerton himself, and unanimously elected. Mr. Farr was chairman again in 1909, but Mr. Swinnerton returned to the chairmanship in 1910 and continued so for a number of years. Since the war his chairmanship of the Board was uninterrupted. The Board of Guardians came to an end in 1930, when a change was made in the administration of the Poor Law, and the duties were taken over by the County Council. This resulted in a County Public Assistance Committee being formed and a Nuneaton Guardians' Committee appointed, Mr. Swinnerton being elected Chairman. He was also appointed Chairman of the Sites and Buildings Committee of the County Public Assistance Committee.

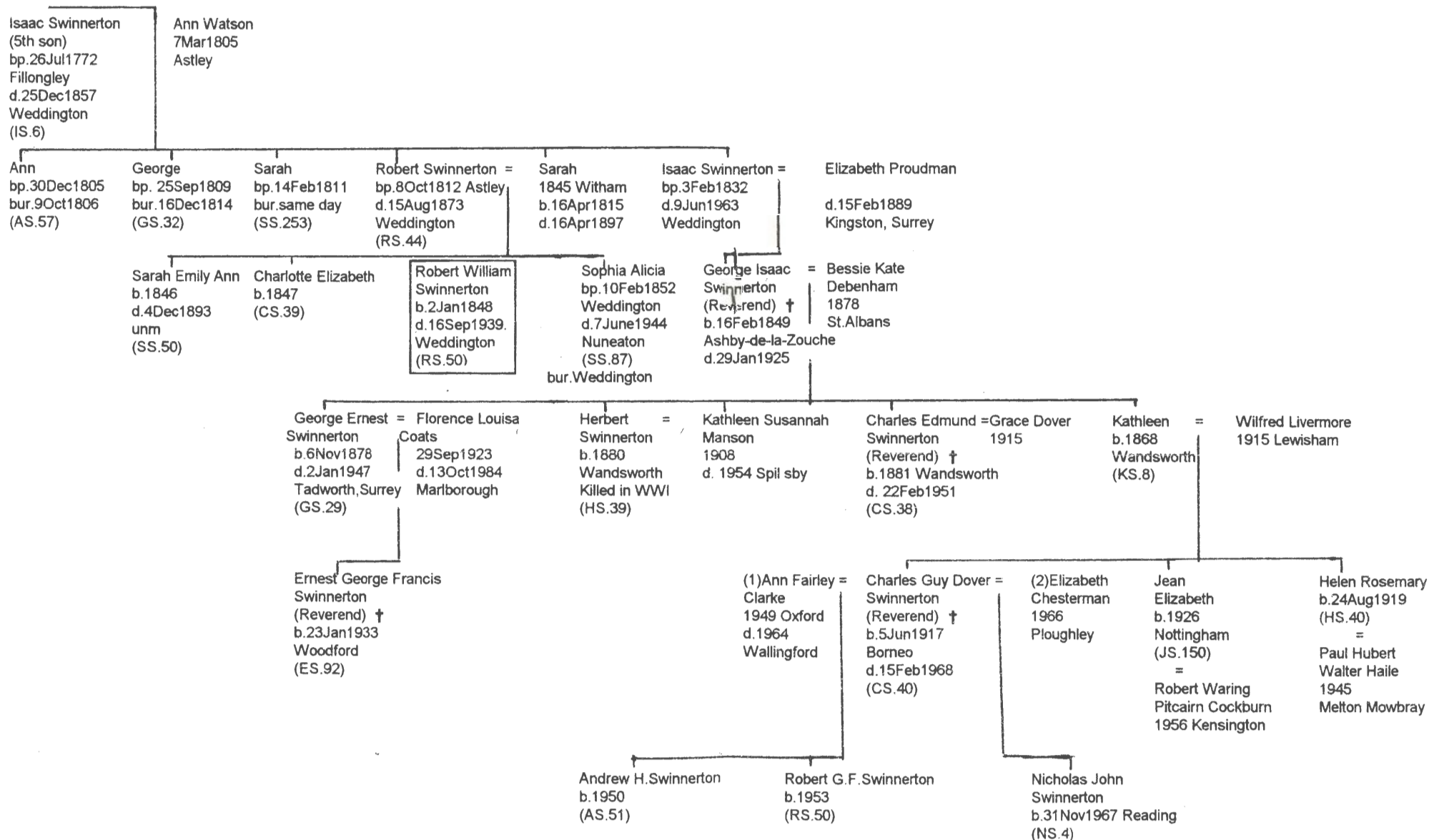
For some years prior to 1930 he was Chairman of the Warwickshire Vagrancy Committee, and in 1930 he became Chairman of the South Midland Joint Vagrancy Committee, whose area included Warwickshire and other parts of the South Midlands.

A Staunch Churchman

Mr. Swinnerton was a staunch Churchman and took a prominent part on the affairs of Nuneaton Parish Church. He was a Churchwarden for twenty-one years - 1880-1901, during which time great alterations were made to the interior of the church, the chief of which was the removal of the pulpit from the centre of the nave to the position it now occupies, the removal of the organ from the west end, the opening out

Thomas Swinnerton = (2)Ann Stephens
 bp.4Aug1709 10Feb1747/8
 Newcastle, Staffs Fillongley, Warks
 (ts.53)

The family of Robert William Swinnerton MBE.JP.CA.



of the west door under the tower, the placing of the choir stalls in the chancel, and considerable alterations to the Sanctuary.

He took a deep interest in the work of the Sunday School, and was Superintendent for sixty years. He was a member of the Diocesan Conference, first of all of the Worcester Diocese, and then of the Coventry Diocese on its formation. He was also one of the oldest representatives of the Atherstone Rural Deanery in the House of Laymen.

Generous Gifts

The new Parish Hall at Weddington was the generous gift of Mr. Swinnerton. His family had been connected with the Parish of Weddington for many generations and a year or two ago he gave a spacious hall and half the field - about two acres - in which it stands. This was his personal gift to the Bishop of Coventry's special appeal for funds for church extensions and the provision of parish halls in new districts. Another gift was the sports pavilion for the King Edward VI School, which was opened on May 31st, 1934.

Justice of the Peace

Mr. Swinnerton was appointed a Justice of the Peace for the County of Warwick in April 1900, and he retired in July of last year after thirty-eight years service.

During the War Mr. Swinnerton was a member of the Tribunals and Chairman of the Nuneaton War Pensions Committee. When the latter body was dissolved and the Coventry Committee was formed, he was appointed as representative for this district. His services towards recruiting and in other ways were recognised by the conferment on him in June 1918 of the Membership of the Order of the British Empire.

Freeman of the Borough

At a gathering held at the St. George's Hall Nuneaton, on March 3rd, 1924, Mr. Swinnerton, who was then Mayor of the town, was made a Freeman of the Borough, he being the first citizen to receive this honour in respect to public work, though previously two others had received the Freedom in Lieut. Knox, V.C., and Corporal Beesley, V.C., for their heroic deeds during the Great War. The resolution of the Borough Council, conferring the Freedom on Mr. Swinnerton, then

Alderman, read as follows: *"That Alderman Robert William Swinnerton, M.B.E., J.P., Mayor of Nuneaton, be admitted an honorary freeman of the borough in consideration and recognition of the eminent services rendered by him to the borough, more especially in connection with education, local government, and Poor Law administration."* The resolution was moved by Alderman J. Randle, and seconded by the late Alderman T. Horton, and the silver casket containing the scroll of Freedom of the Borough, was presented by the late Alderman W. French, who was at that time Deputy Mayor.

Mr. Swinnerton took a great part in the establishment of the Nuneaton General Hospital, and for many years was President of the Hospital Committee. At one time he was honorary auditor of the North Warwickshire Conservative Association. He was a former President of the Nuneaton Historical Association and an honorary member of the Nuneaton Rotary Club. For many years he was prominently connected with the Nuneaton Gas Company, being vice-chairman for a long time and afterwards chairman.

The Funeral

The public life of the town and county was fully represented at the funeral which took place at Nuneaton Parish Church on Tuesday afternoon. There was a large congregation, and the service was conducted by the Bishop of Coventry (Dr. Mervyn Haigh), assisted by the Rev. Canon J. L. White (Vicar of Nuneaton). Other clergy present were Rev. Canon Stuart Blofeld (Edgbaston), Canon A. J. G. Tetley (Barwell), Rev F. W. Moyle (Chilvers Coton), Rev. J. B. Sinker (Abbey Church, Nuneaton), Rev. E. J. Bastion (Keresley), Rev. Bracebridge Hall (Weddington and Caldicote), Rev F. J. Pratt (Stockinford), Rev. F. R. Mackley, (Nuneaton), Rev. L. W. Blount (Galley Common), Rev. T. B. Purves, Rev Stanley Morris (Bilton, Rugby) who also represented the Diocesan Education Committee.

The family mourners were Miss Alice Swinnerton, sister; Mr. Bertie Swinnerton, cousin (London); Miss B. Hawker and Miss Wardall (members of the staff at Linden Lodge).

The coffin was met at the gates by the Churchwardens (Mr. W. E. Lester and Mr. G. W. Woods) and joined at the church door by the Bishop, clergy and choir. The choral service included Psalm 23, "The Lord Is My Shepherd" and the hymns "The King of Love My Shepherd

Is" and "Abide With Me". As the cortage left the church the "Nunc Dimittis" was sung. Mr. F. A. Mills presided at the Organ.

(Here follows the list of mourners, totalling around 200, which includes all the local dignitaries and representatives from the organisations, schools, hospitals etc., with which Alderman Robert Swinnerton was connected. The list is headed by Sir William Dugdale, Bart, the Chairman of the Warwickshire County Council.)

The interment at Nuneaton Cemetery took place in a grave next to that of Alderman Swinnerton's sister, Miss E. Swinnerton. There were no flowers by request, but the coffin of unpolished oak with brass fittings was surmounted by a wreath of mixed flowers from the deceased's only surviving sister, Miss Alice Swinnerton. The coffin bore the inscription "Robert William Swinnerton, born April 7th 1848, died September 16th 1939".

* * * * *

THE NUNEATON CHRONICLE Friday, September 22nd, 1939

THE LATE MR. R. W. SWINNERTON

Nuneaton Police Court References

At Nuneaton Police Court, on Monday, the Chairman, Mr. H. C. Jones, referring to the death of Mr. R. W. Swinnerton, J. P., C.A., said Mr. Swinnerton sat regularly on the Bench there for over 35 years and they all knew he brought to the Court the same conscientiousness and sense of duty that he showed in other spheres. He had a very long life of public work. When his health failed and he could not come to Court the Bench was very much poorer for his absence. They wished to condole with his surviving sister and hoped the blow would not be too hard upon her.

Alderman J. Randle said that Mr. Swinnerton was most sympathetic in his decisions, and a more kindly, genial gentleman he had never met. Nuneaton would be all the poorer for his death.

Alderman E. F. Melley said Mr. Swinnerton was his oldest friend and was almost the last of those who welcomed him when he came there in 1882. Mr. Swinnerton had set them an example of a well-spent life and of how to be a really true citizen.

Mr. Walter Lester, Magistrates Clerk, associated himself with the remarks that had been made and said he had always had assistance and kindly help from Mr. Swinnerton. They felt he was master of any subject he approached and it was remarkable how he seemed to have a happy knack of helping everybody in difficulties.

Extracts from Deeds deposited by Messrs Clay & Cocks, Solicitors of Nuneaton at Warwick Record Office

Ref 185/201 Property in Bond End, Nuneaton, 1762-1844

Leavesley, widow of Thomas Leavesley, late of Nuneaton, minister of a congregation of protestant dissenters, an additional £100 to be paid to Sarah Leavesley, and an additional £50 to be paid to William Johnson of Nuneaton and Pheabe his wife a month after the death of Sarah Leavesley, 23-4 November 1762 (attested copy) (/185-7). Henry Richard Harper of Coton House, Chilvers Coton, esq., sold a messuage etc. in Bond End or Bond Street, Nuneaton, to John Beet of Weddington, farmer and grazier, for £250, 25-6 April 1828. The Land Tax and a chief rent were not included in the transaction (188-192). Beet secured a mortgage of £250 on the property from Starkey Marler, 26 December 1825, and his widow, Elizabeth, 24 August 1843 (/193-6). Beet conveyed the property to Robert Swinnerton of Weddington, timbermerchant, for £295, 1 May 1844 (/97). H. R. Harper sold more land in Bond End (3r. 20p. and 1a.36p) for £375 to Isaac Swinnerton of Weddington, timbermerchant, 13-14 February 1835 Abstracts of title from 1772.

Ref 202-24 Sparrow Hall, Nuneaton 1732-1873

Marriage settlement of William Ellis of Nuneaton, butcher, and Elizabeth, daughter of John Wagstaff of Nuneaton, weaver, 13 June 1732. The settlement included a cottage and land in Bond End, Nuneaton. Endorsed "Sparrow Hall", (/202). Will and probate (copy) of William Ellis, 6 April and 21 August 1749 (/203). (copy) letters of administration for John Ellis of Nuneaton of Nuneaton, publican, 29 July 1809. His sister, Sarah, wife of Richard Wagstaff, was appointed

administratrix (/204). Sarah Wagstaff of Nuneaton, widow, daughter of the late William Ellis of Nuneaton, butcher, conveyed property in Nuneaton to her eldest son, Richard Wagstaff of Nuneaton, yeoman, 30-31 March 1831 (copy). The property included land and messuages in Bond End, Sparrow Hall, and Wash Lane (/205). Probate grant (copy) for Richard Wagstaff of Nuneaton, gent., 17 February and 20 April 1827 (/206). He bequeathed property to his natural son by his wife before they were married, Richard Moon. His wife was first married to a Mr. Moon. Included a messuage in Wash Lane, two cottages in Bond End, and the cottage known as Sparrow Hall (adjoining the Hinkley Turnpike), all in Nuneaton. Extracts from parish registers concerning the Ellis/Wagstaff/Moon families, 1761-1843 (207-16). Mary Wagstaff of Nuneaton, widow of Richard Wagstaff (as above), and Richard Moon of Nuneaton, grocer, sold Sparrow Hall for £140 to Robert Swinnerton of Weddington, farmer, 15 September 1843. Includes an affidavit by William Wagstaff of Hurley, sawyer, re his late father. Agreement (copy) between Robert Swinnerton of Weddington, timber merchant, and Francis Sandars of Leamington Priors, agent for the Trent Valley Railway, for the sale of land in Nuneaton for £431.16s to make a public road, 14 May 1847. The property included Sparrow Hall, which was to be demolished (/222). Swinnerton's devisees sold his property by auction, 1 October 1873 (/223-4). Property in Weddington Terrace and Regent Street, Nuneaton, was included. Plan. Probate grant for Isaac Swinnerton of Weddington, gent., 28 April 1847, codicil 17 March 1852, and 8 March 1858 (/225).

Swinnerton family papers, 1882-1894 Ref 226-9.

Certificate for redemption of land tax on a timber yard and saw mill in Regent Street, Nuneaton, belonging to Sarah Swinnerton and Robert William Swinnerton of Nuneaton, 9 February 1882. Plan. (/226-8)

Dissolution of partnership as farmers and timber merchants between Sarah Swinnerton of Nuneaton, widow, and her son, Richard William Swinnerton of Nuneaton, timber merchant, 4 May 1894. An annuity of £100 is to be paid to Mrs Swinnerton for her share of the goodwill. The business no longer included farming but had extended to include corn merchandise and flour dealing. (/229)

CORRESPONDENCE

I have received a great deal of correspondence this quarter which means that I only just have my head above water again! However, I am ploughing through it but replying to it has been slow as I have been finishing two small books in a series called 'Basic facts about...' which are due to be published next month. One is on *Sources in the Home for Family History* and the other on *Heraldry for Family Historians*.

I can only summarise the letters here but they include a letter giving lots of family information from Robert Gordon Bellaire of Massachusetts who is a great-grandson of Mark Swinnerton, eldest son of William of Betley who emigrated to America and whose diary we have published extracts from in this journal. I have had quite a lot of correspondence following my lecture tour of Australia and New Zealand last year including several from people I actually met. Mrs Janet Robinson of Wahroonga has been writing about the 'Rum Corps' - the New South Wales Regiment and has given me a few more details on Thomas Swinerton, our Marine who sailed on the First Fleet to Australia in 1788. Mrs Pamela Andre of Canberra has written with details of Alfred Swinnerton who appeared as a witness on her great-grandparents' marriage certificate. Mrs Linley Stehn of Coopers Plains sent me a family record form giving details of her descent from George Elias Swinnerton who was born in Shropshire in 1854 and emigrated with his parents to Australia about 1878. She is in the process of joining the society. Mr Alan West of Dubbo has written with details of his descent from Mary Frances Swinnerton, his maternal great-grandmother and, as a result of an article I wrote in *Family Tree Magazine* on One-Name Studies, Mr C.Lowton has written to tell me of his wife's connection with Jesse Swinnerton who was born in Middlewich in 1832.

Perhaps the most remarkable was from our Canadian Vice-President, Bill Swinarton, which was handed to me at a meeting of the Council of Family Societies in Birmingham by the organiser of the Cree Family Society, he having received it by electronic mail from Bill's computer via a telephone line! The marvels of modern technology. That is the next technique I must master.

FAMILY NOTES

We are very sorry to have to tell you of the deaths of two of our members: Mrs Marion Houlston on the 5th October 1993, a cousin of mine and a member of the Adbaston Branch and Mr Joe Evanson on the 18th December 1994. Joe had done computer work for us and was a regular correspondent until his leukemia made writing impossible. We send our sympathy to both families.

Changes of Address:

Mr Kevin Bowers to

Mrs Alice Cloherty to

Mrs F.C.Wood to

Miss N.Wykes to

New Members

We welcome Mr C.W./Swinerton of
: Mr E.N.Swinerton of
: Mr G.Swinerton of
and Mr

L.C.Swinerton of

At the moment I cannot tell you how any of these fit into the family because I have not yet received any details of their families but I believe some are proposing to attend the Gathering in June.

Some very belated family news.

Susanne Swinerton, the daughter of our member Geoffrey Swinerton of Liverpool married Ian Parsons on the 24 April 1993 so our very late congratulations. In the course of the correspondence which revealed this, I also discovered that Geoffrey is the Honorary Assistant Secretary of the Liverpool County Football Association, something we had not previously known.

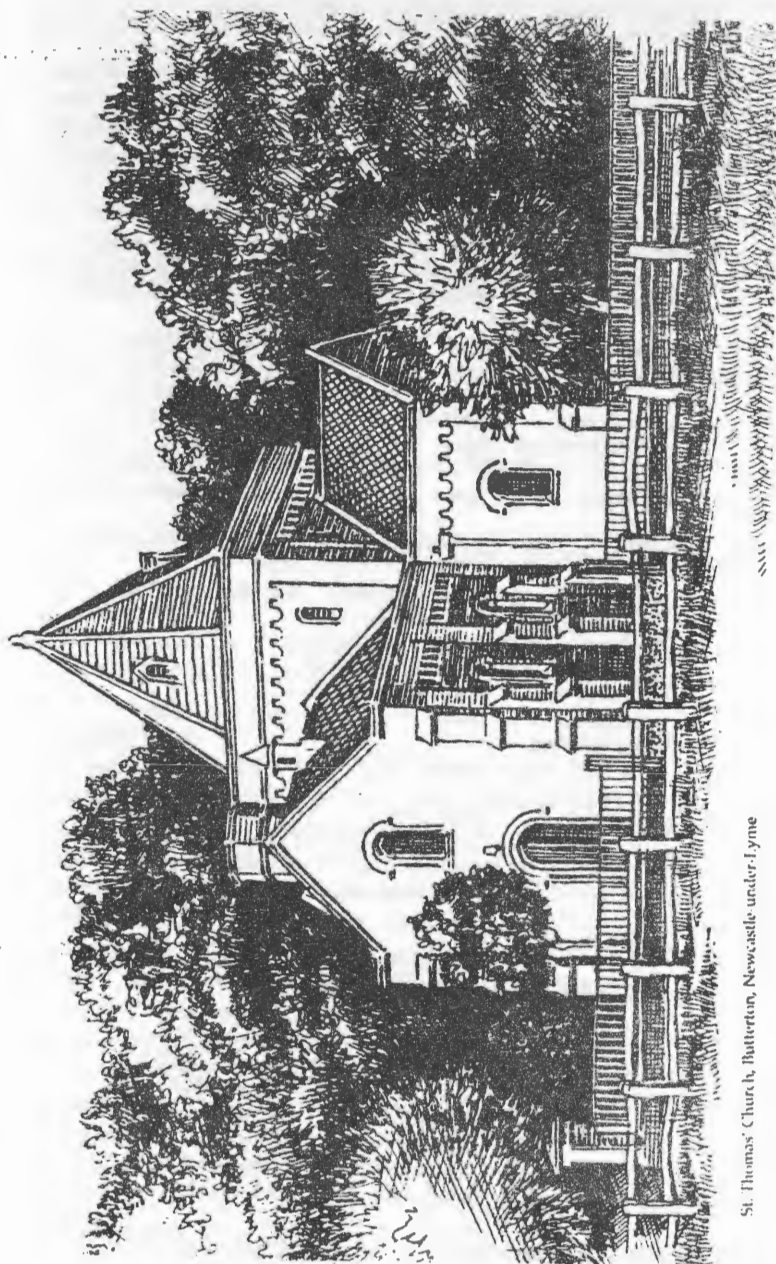
Do please all of you keep me posted with your family events so that I can keep the trees up to date.

COMPUTERISATION OF OUR RECORDS

We continue to make good progress thanks to our small but dedicated band of volunteers. Nearly all our trees are now on computer: at the moment they only include details of birth, marriage and death but when they are complete we shall go back and input all the sources so that we have a complete record. Here is a list of the trees that we now have on computer:

Family	Location	Members	Starts with
America	USA	Many	Job emigrated 1628
Australia		Marjorie Nightingale	John b. c.1760 & Ann Suff
Betley	Everywhere!	lots incl. President	William b. 1740 & Hannah Hilditch
Bridgnorth 1	to S.Wales	None	Thomas b.c.1780
Bridgnorth 2	still in area	None	John b.c.1790 & Isabella Wellings
Bury	Bilston to Bury	DR/GJ/RF	William b.c.1790 & Sarah
Dudley	to Middlesborough	None	William Swinton b.c.1800 & Sarah (? part.of Bury)
Essex	Lord Mayor	None	John of Oswestry oc.1588 & Mary Fawnte
Glos	to USA	Diana Cunningham	George b.c.1692 & Anne Suff
London1		Frank the author/ Alan James/ Mrs Morgan	Samuel b.circa 1800
London2		Mesdames Martin & M.R.Swinerton	
Oswestry	(poss.still in Bridgnorth area)	None	Thomas c. 1660
Sedgley		Derek	George b.c.1800 & Sarah Nock
Shropshire Stoke1	to Liverpool	Rev.E./PR/ Cycling Swinertons	Thomas b.c.1811 & Ann
Stoke2		Roy & Douglas David Raymond	Thomas b.c.1788 & Mary Bedson
Swin1	Original family		William b.c.1800 & Mary Blood
Walsall 1		Charles W (decd.)	Alan 1086
Walsall 2	Stafford/Penkridge	Mrs Davis	(now tied in to Sedgley)
Warks	1st main branch	Chairman/sec	Joseph b.c.1813 & Sarah Baker
West Brom		Frank Swinington	Thomas 1709
Wrexham		AE/DKS/Mrs Stocks	Thomas 1800 & Sarah Martin
Yorks		David/Jack Barker Mrs Firmin	Edward b.c.1770 & Elizabeth
			John b.c.1630 & Margaret

The last major tree still to be entered is Adbaston which Keith and Elizabeth Livesey are working on now.



St. Thomas' Church, Butterton, Newcastle-under-Lyme

THE PASTONS AND THEIR ENGLAND by H.S. Bennett

The Paston letters have long exercised a tremendous fascination for their capacity to re-create in vivid detail the lives of an ordinary well-to-do fifteenth-century family. H.S. Bennett's classic study recreates beautifully their historical context and offers the additional perspectives provided by the letters of their correspondents: bishops and serving men, prisoners and dukes, priests and ribald companions. Among the intriguing areas of late medieval life which are explored are marriage, women's lives, education, travelling, the law and lawlessness, the clergy and the changing face of the English countryside. This account of the Pastons' England reveals an age of historical transition as it was played out in the daily challenges of individual lives.

p.191 MURDER

Many instances are recorded in these pages, and some of them in words so graphic that they must be given in full. The first case concerns the murder of Sir Humphrey Stafford's son, and illustrated the murderous hatred that could arise from quarrels over property.

"Touching the sudden adventure that fell lately at Coventry, please it your Lordship to hear that, on Corpus Christi Even last passed, between eight and nine of the clock at afternoon, Sir Humphrey Stafford had brought my master, Sir James of Ormond, toward his Inn from my Lady of Shrewsbury, and returned from him towards his Inn, he met with Sir Robert Harcourt coming from his mother towards his Inn, and passed Sir Humphrey; and Richard his son came somewhat behind, and when they met together, they fell in hands together, and Sir Robert smote him a great stroke on the head with his sword, and Richard with his dagger hastily went toward him, and as he stumbled one of Harcourt's men smote him in the back with a knife; men know not whom it was readily. His father heard a noise and rode towards them, and his men ran before him thitherward, and in the going down of his horse, one, he knew not who, smote him on the head with an edged tool, - men know not with us, with what weapon, - that he fell down, and his son fell down before him as good as dead.

And all this was done, as men say, in a Paternoster while. And forthwith Sir Humphrey Stafford's men followed after, and slew two men of Harcourt's, one **Swynerton** and Bradshawe, and more be hurt. Some be gone and some be in prison in the gaol at Coventry...And all this mischief fell because of an old debate that was between them, for taking of a distress, as it is told."

Paston Letters No.60

TOM SWINNERTON

Just as I was going to press I heard the sad news that Tom Swinnerton (TS.92) had died on the 23rd January. Tom was one of the great characters of the family. He was born in Wolverhampton, Staffordshire in 1913, the son of John Russell Swinnerton and Agnes Emma née Lang. He was of the Betley branch although his father had been born in Scotland, son of the famous 'English Tom' Swinnerton who had gone to Scotland to import fireclay. Tom's wife, Elizabeth (Bess), a nursing sister in the Q.A.I.N.S. who served in North Africa and Italy and who he married in 1945, his mother and grandmother were all Scottish.



Thomas Swinnerton (TS.91), John Russell Swinnerton (JS.237) and Tom Swinnerton (TS.92) in Scotland circa 1924.

Tom trained as an electrical engineer and went out to Africa in the thirties with a few clothes and a bag of tools! The first job he was given was to build the telegraph north of Salisbury in what was then Rhodesia. To do this he was given a wheelbarrow and a gang of native labourers and lived in the bush for 2 years. His stories of his life out there were absolutely fascinating.

On the 27th August 1939, he joined the British Army. He had asked to go in the Sappers but there were none in Lusaka so he was posted to the infantry - the 1st Bn. The Northern Rhodesia Regiment. He served for 6 years in Africa and Burma having been commissioned into the Royal West Kent Regiment and then seconded back to the N.R.R.

After the war he was given a new branch of his company to run in Gwelo but there was little business at the time so, as by now he had a wife and four children to support, he resigned and bought a butcher's shop in South Africa where he remained until he retired in 1983.

To Bess and his family Rosabelle, John Rowan and Jim we send our sympathy.

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