

*The  
Swinnerton  
Saga*



*An oak, 8 day, brass dial, moonphase longcase clock by Joseph Swinnerton circa 1735*

**THE JOURNAL OF SWINNERTON FAMILY HISTORY**

**VOLUME 15. NO. 10**

**DECEMBER 2014**

## Annie Swynnerton's Paintings – No..20

### Oceanid



Bradford Museums and Art Gallery.

Oil on Canvas 170 x 180 cms.

Painted in 1908

Oceanid was the mother of Prometheus

## THE SWINNERTON SAGA

VOLUME 15 NUMBER 10  
DECEMBER 2014

(No 154)

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Editor – Col Iain Swinnerton,

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Red binders with gold-blocked badge and title for the *Swinnerton Saga* and back copies may be obtained from the Mrs Margaret Antill  
(see inside of back cover)



## THE CHAIRMAN'S PAGE



Since the election of new officers in June we have unfortunately not had an opportunity for a committee meeting. This is now planned for 15th November in Swynnerton but not quite in time for this issue of the journal. Sadly, since the last issue no one has come forward prepared to act as Secretary so if there

are any willing and able volunteers out there who would like to help us please let me know.

I have to be honest and say there are some big question marks over the future of the society, the major one being the retirement of Iain as editor of the journal.

Our meeting on 15th will mainly be to plan for the family gathering on June 6th next year in Swynnerton. I hope that as many of you as possible will be in attendance and it would be great if you could encourage some of the younger members of your families to come along with you in the hope that some interest in family history may be ignited and that they may one day take up the reins from those of us of more advanced years. Let's do all we can to keep the society running into the future, it would be such a shame if this year's gathering were to be the last.

On a personal note I have had a busy time trying to finish everything off at work prior to my retirement at Christmas and getting my daughter started at university in September - so the times they are a changing!. I also researched the names on the war memorial in our village in Worcestershire and gave a talk in August on the anniversary of the outbreak of the Great War, about what happened to each of those villagers who never came home. I felt it brought them back to life in peoples' minds just for a short time.

I look forward to meeting you all again in June.

## Best wishes

## Julian

**PRIVATE SIDNEY GEORGE SWINNERTON AIF.**

I have been chided by our former chairman, Barrie Swinnerton, for not knowing who Sidney George Swinnerton, whose photograph I showed in the August issue of *Saga*, was! He was, in fact, Barrie's uncle, the son of George Swinnerton of Stafford, a member of the Adbaston branch.

Sidney emigrated to Australia between the wars and enlisted in the Australian Army on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 1939 at Paddington, New South Wales. His regiment embarked on the 10 January 1940 for Salonika. Thanks to Kerry Swinnerton, we now have a complete set of his records, including the German records of his time as a Prisoner of War, which she obtained for us from Canberra and emailed to me.

Geburtsort:	Lullag 182	Eintragungsstelle:	Fr. der Erde:
Aufnahmeort:	England	Gef. der Erde:	Fr.
Name:	Lewinerton	Beruf:	Lithograph
Vorname:	Lydney, George	Religion:	engl. Kirche
Geburtsdatum:	10. 3. 1918	Dienstgrad:	Leutnant
Geburtsort:	Lydney, Austra	Eintragungsstelle:	Fr. der Erde: 10. 3. 1918
Geburtsort:	George	Eintragungsstelle:	Fr. der Erde: 10. 3. 1918
Geburtsort:	May geb. Rand	Geburtsdatum:	10. 5. 1918 - 90. 10. 1918
Geburtsort:	Lewinerton, George	Geburtsdatum:	Geburtsdatum: 10. 5. 1918 - 90. 10. 1918
Geburtsort:	Lewinerton, George	Geburtsdatum:	Geburtsdatum: 10. 5. 1918 - 90. 10. 1918
Geburtsort:	Lewinerton, George	Geburtsdatum:	Geburtsdatum: 10. 5. 1918 - 90. 10. 1918
Geburtsort:	Lewinerton, George	Geburtsdatum:	Geburtsdatum: 10. 5. 1918 - 90. 10. 1918
Geburtsort:	Lewinerton, George	Geburtsdatum:	Geburtsdatum: 10. 5. 1918 - 90. 10. 1918
Geburtsort:	Lewinerton, George	Geburtsdatum:	Geburtsdatum: 10. 5. 1918 - 90. 10. 1918
Geburtsort:	Lewinerton, George	Geburtsdatum:	Geburtsdatum: 10. 5. 1918 - 90. 10. 1918
Geburtsort:	Lewinerton, George	Geburtsdatum:	Geburtsdatum: 10. 5. 1918 - 90. 10. 1918

*A page from the German section of his records.*

He died on the 19th of August 1941 aged 23 whilst a prisoner of war and was originally buried at Salonika but he was later reinterred in the Phaleron War Cemetery in Greece.

As I said to Barrie, a few years ago I would have known instantly who he was but I am afraid my memory at 82 ain't what it used to be!



## THE LAST OF THE LINE

### Humphrey Swynnerton of Swynnerton and Hilton

Humphrey was the 11<sup>th</sup> in line from the accredited founder of the family, John de Swynnerton who died between 1254 and 1257, and his second wife, Eleanor de Peshale. Humphrey was the son of Thomas Swynnerton and Alice Stanley, daughter of Sir Humphrey Stanley of Pipe Ridware and Clifton Campville. Humphrey's maternal grandfather Sir Humphrey Stanley was knighted by Henry VII after the Battle of Bosworth and made a Knight Banneret after the Battle of Stoke Field. He was close to King Henry and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

In 1537, Humphrey was appointed bailiff of the Black Ladies estate, near Brewood, by the new owner Thomas Giffard, who outmanoeuvred Edward Littleton of Pillaton Hall, husband of Humphry's aunt Helen, to get it. The estate was a former Benedictine nunnery, dissolved by the *Dissolution of the*



*Lesser Monasteries Act*. Shortly afterwards, Humphrey made a family link to the Giffards too by marrying Thomas Giffard's sister, Cassandra daughter of Sir John Giffard of Chillington.

About 1541, shortly after marrying Cassandra, Humphrey inherited the family estates on the death of his father. They fell into two quite distinct parts. Swynnerton near Stone, which had been in the family longest and Hilton near Wolverhampton (site of today's Hilton service station on the M5).. The family had also had an interest in the Little

Saredon estate in Shareshill, close to Hilton. There were also lands at Barrow in Cheshire but the ownership of these Cheshire lands was disputed by Sir John Savage so Humphrey sold them to him, in 1555 and thereafter divided his time between Hilton and Swynnerton.

In addition to his estates, Humphrey had income from other poitions which he had inherited from his father. He became steward of the Royal Forest of Cannock in 1541, and in 1559–60 was Escheator for Staffordshire. (An escheator was a local Royal officer responsible for 'escheats', that is broadly speaking for upholding the king's rights as feudal lord and in the case of men dying without heirs, ensuring that the estates reverted to the Crown).

Humphrey served as the Member of Parliament for the borough of Stafford in Queen Mary's parliament of April 1554. The influence of the Giffards, now at the height of their power in the county, most probably secured him the seat - in the electoral indenture he was placed second in order of precedence after John Giffard. The returning officer was the High Sheriff of Staffordshire who just happened to be Thomas Giffard - the father of John and Humphrey's brother-in-law!

Humphrey was, of course, a staunch Catholic as were the Giffards and both



families would have welcomed the restoration of Catholicism under Queen Mary. During his time as an MP, Parliament was mainly concerned with the queen's marriage to King Philip II of Spain and passed an act validating the marriage treaty, already negotiated by Mary and her ministers. It also another passed another important act which recognised Mary as Queen Regnant, with the same powers as a king. This was all achieved in a month whereupon the parliament was dissolved and Humphrey's brief part in the country's affairs was over. When Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, because of his recusancy, he never served as an MP again. (Recusant comes from the Latin word for refusing – in this case, someone who refused to attend the Church of England).

Humphrey was a deeply religious man and kept and preserved a large breviary (a book containing the Divine Office for each day of the year to be recited by those in Holy Orders). Lichfield Cathedral had been compelled to dispose of its treasures under Edward VI. but when Mary restored Catholic worship through her first parliament in 1553, the chapter of the cathedral took stock of what was needed



and found that the only breviaries they could obtain were Humphrey's, which he promptly gave back to them, and a damaged one from Sir Thomas Fitzherbert, his son-in-law's brother. When Queen Elizabeth came to the throne in November 1558, she immediately called a parliament to pass the Act of Supremacy, establishing the Church of England to be Protestant and herself as Supreme Governor. This faced Catholics like Humphrey and John Giffard with a clear choice between continuing to hope for



a Catholic revival within the church or breaking with it to become a separate community. The dissenting or recusant group were distinguished by taking advantage of the general pardon issued by Elizabeth at her coronation on 15 January 1558 and Humphrey and Thomas Giffard both sued for pardon.

Thereafter, Humphrey led a quiet life devoting himself to the affairs of his estates and, in particular, to the rebuilding of the church of St Mary and St John at Shareshill. It had been originally a chapel of ease of the important collegiate church of St Michael at Penkridge but had been given its independence in 1551, after the dissolution of the chantries eliminated the college and the vicar of St Michael's conceded the right to Shareshill to perform burials. It was Humphrey's parish church when he was resident in Hilton, and was in great need of repair and enlargement so the medieval building was largely replaced at his expense.

Humphrey's will is dated the 6 July 1561. It stipulated that if he were to die at Swynnerton, he should be buried in the lady chapel before the former location of the Madonna which had been destroyed by the Protestants but if he were to die at Hilton he was to be buried in the chancel of Shareshill church, where the image of St Luke had stood. He left 3s.4d. to the chapter at Wolverhampton to pray for his soul. He had no sons so his estates were divided between his two daughters. He died on 25 August 1562 at Hilton, and was buried, in accordance with his wishes, at Shareshill. His wife Cassandra was buried next to him on 7 January 1570. An impressive tomb with alabaster effigies was built and those effigies, although damaged, survive and are today located on internal window sills of the church.

His elder daughter Elizabeth married William Fitzherbert, son of the eminent jurist Sir Anthony Fitzherbert, of the important Derbyshire landowning family, another staunch Catholic family. She took with her the estate of Swynnerton, which was pledged to the Fitzherberts, who are still at Swynnerton today, Fitzherbert being the family name of Lord Stafford. William died in 1558 or 1559 and Elizabeth, being a very young widow, then married Francis Gatacre of Claverley, Shropshire. She survived another 46 years, dying in 1606.

Humphrey's younger daughter Margaret married Henry Vernon of Sudbury Hall, Derbyshire in 1547, a member of yet another important recusant family. She was allotted as her portion Hilton, which thus became part of the Vernon estates.

During my research into the family two remarkable coincidences occurred. When I attended my first meeting as a Trustee of the William Salt Archaeological Society many years ago, to succeed the Revd Brian Swinnerton, the chairman came to greet me and said 'Welcome - we are related of course'. He was Peter Giffard of Chillington, a direct descendant of Sir John Giffard above. He was right but it was a very distant relationship! It was something of a family tradition to support the society, the Revd Charles Swynnerton (whose address is given as the New Oxford and 'Cambridge Club, Albemarle Street as he was serving in India as a Chaplain to the Forces), his father Charles and brother Robert both listed as 'of Douglas, Isle of Man', were among the very early subscribers.

The second coincidence was that some years later, I received a letter from Tarmac Ltd (as they then were) saying that they had been recommended to contact me as they wished to have some advice on the heraldry displayed in Hilton Hall which they had purchased as their headquarters. I duly went to see them, and it was obvious that they had no idea of the history of the building or my connection. I was duly commissioned to survey the heraldry and write a report – probably the easiest commission I have ever had.

## MEMORIAL AT CONNAH'S QUAY

Researcher Mavis Williams

Memorial Connahs Quay

Name Norman Harold Swinnerton

Regiment Royal Field Artillery 86th Bde.

Service Rank and Number Gunner

243992

Military Cemetery/Memorial

St. Riquier British Cemetery.

Ref No Grave/Memorial B. 5.

Country of Cemetery/Memorial France,

Locality: Somme

Medals Awarded Victory & British War Medals

Date Circumstances of Death 21 July 1918 Died of Wounds.

The Royal Regiment of Artillery





## THE INDIAN ECCLESIASTICAL REGISTERS

In Volume 14 No.9 (March 2011) I printed a series of extracts from the Bengal Ecclesiastical Registers. I can now add some from Bombay. In the baptisms you will see the baptism of our late President, Margery Swynnerton, mother of our Patron, and her brothers Charles and Joseph and in the marriages, the marriage of her parents.

### Bombay Baptisms

15 March 1895

Margery Augusta Angelo dau Frederick and Louisa Oldfield Swynnerton, Delhi Artist .born 15 May 1894. St James's Church, Delhi (Index Vol 241 p 272)

24 Aug 1891

Charles Roger Alan s of Fred and Louisa Oldfield Swynnerton of Simla, Artist at Christ Church Simla born 12 Feb 1901 (Index Vol 293 p134)

8 July 1909

Joseph Cecil Louis, s of Frederick and Louisa Oldfield Swynnerton of Simla, Artist at Christ Church Simla born 7 Mar 1909 (Index Vol 358 p 286)

### Bombay marriages

22 Dec 1891

Robert William Swinnerton, 35, bachelor, Civil Engineer PWD of Bolarum, Hydrabad, father William Swinnerton and Thurza Frances Johanna Cullen, 20, spinster of Amaorti Berar, father James Craig. Free Church of Scotland, Bombay. (RS96) (Index Vol 66 p.40)

1 Dec 1892

Frederick Swynnerton, full age, bachelor, artist of Simla, father Charles Swynnerton and Louisa Oldfield Angelo, full age, spinster of Simla by License. (Index Vol 226 p.114)

1906 John Christopher Swinnerton, 37, widower (Misc. Unattached List) Father William Swinnerton.

Married Emily Martha Dame 31 Sp. Dau of John Malvern Dame. By License. Both signed. Witnesses M.Miranda and Charles Elliott.



*Christ Church Simla  
(now Shimla)  
where Margery was baptized)*

## THE IRISH FAMILIES

Brian Swinnerton has been working very hard trying to unravel the complexities of relationship between the different Swinnerton families who lived in Ireland. I say Swinnerton but this is one of the great difficulties – the spelling of our name in Ireland varied widely from Swinerton-Swenerton-Swenarton to Swinarton to name just a few. Then there were the Sunnertons and the Sinnertons of which we have documentary proof of the changes from Swinnerton.

The other great difficulty is the loss of a great part of the Irish records on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 1922 during the Irish Civil War. The records were held in Dublin's Four Courts Building which originally held the four courts of Chancery, King's Bench, Exchequer and Common Pleas but by the early 1900s, the four courts had been replaced but the name was kept and the west wing of the building was being used as the Public Records Office (PRO) of Ireland. The PRO housed many genealogical treasures including Irish census returns, originals wills dating to the 16th century, and more than 1,000 Church of Ireland parish registers filled with records of baptisms, marriages and burials but nearly all were lost during the conflict when, after a two-day bombardment, an explosion and fire ravaged the building.

These included the Irish Censuses of 1821, 1831, 1841, and 1851 (only a few fragments survived) and just over half of all the Anglican Church of Ireland registers deposited there following the disestablishment of the state church in 1869. In addition, the majority of wills and testamentary records that had been proved in Ireland were reduced to ashes (although transcripts of many testamentary records survive). All pre-1900 documents from the legal courts were lost, as were local government records for the same period. Nearly all export and trade records from the 18th to early 20th century also perished.

So – as you can see, it is a herculean task. This is what we now have.

### **Ireland 1 – Swenarton**

(Joseph Swenarton c.1800-1875 & Margaret ?) Magherafelt

### **Ireland 2 – Swenerton/Frackleton**

(Joseph Swenerton 1762-1849 & Jane Frackleton) Lurgan

### **Ireland 3 - Swenarton/Haydock**

(John Swenarton c.1720 & Abigail Haydock ) Lurgan

### **Ireland 4 - Swinerton/Sinnerton 1.**

(Richard Swinerton 1727 & ?)

### **Ireland 5 – Swinerton/McKeown**

(Thomas Swinerton 1768 - & Mary McKeown) Canada

### **Ireland 6 – Swinnerton/Roberts**

(John Swinnerton c. 1815 and Helen Roberts) Ireland/Glasgow/NZ

### **Ireland 7**

Headed by Joseph Swinerton born? died 25 Apr 1794 Clankilorriff. Based on notes made by Anne Barnard after a visit to Ireland - many of these are from Quaker records.



## HOW IT WAS IN THE OLD DAYS

Before we had microfiche or computers, the only way to collect records of the family was to visit the churches or County or Diocesan record offices. This was a painstaking and slow process if your family had lived in different areas. When you got there, you were only allowed to take notes in pencil, rubbers were not allowed neither were cameras and there were no photocopyers. Here is the result of a typical such visit which, including the journey there and back would have taken about 10 hours!

They would have probably remained as rough pencilled notes without the kindness of Brian Swinnerton who gallantly struggled with my infamous hand writing to type them up for which I am most grateful. He did append a note at the end asking if I had ever been a doctor!

### Notes taken at Gloucester Record Office December 1981.

#### Marriage Licences Index.

Swinerton. Mary            4 Jun 1774            Berkley Q 368 P.6.  
William Spillman of Berkeley. Wdr Yeoman 26 and Mary Swinnerton of Berkeley Sp 22.

#### Roe's Marriage Index

1526 – 1550	NIL.	
1551 – 1575	NIL.	
1551 – 1575	(Supplement) NIL.	
1576 – 1600	1600 Swinerts (N) Gasper & Elizbth Hornes.	Eastington
1576 – 1600	(Supplement) NIL.	
1601 – 1625	1612 Swinerton Jesper & Katheryin Bird.	Shipton Moyne.
1626 – 1650	1646 Beane Antipas & Mariane Taylor.	Shipton Moyne)
NIL.		
1625 – 1650	(Supplement) 1636 Swineington Gyles & Elizabt Perwise (or Perwife).	Horsley.
1638	Swinerton Antipas & Margaret Huntley.	Tetbury.
1649	Swinerton Jasper & Mary England.	Tetbury.
1633	Swynworth Benjamin & Hester Wess.	Hawkesburn.
1651 – 1675	NIL.	
1651 – 1675	(Supplement) NIL.	
1676 – 1700	NIL.	

1701 – 1725	1719.	Swinerton George & Mary Webe. Tetbury.
1751 – 1775	1773	Swinerton Benjamin (S. of Geo. Decd) & Judith Warr (d. of James). Tetbury Lic.
1776 – 1800	NIL.	
1861 – 1900	NIL.	

#### BRIDES.

1526 – 1625	NIL.	
1626 – 1650	1655	Swinerton Mary & Thos Sharpe Otherwise Aftsan Tetbury.
1676 – 1700	1655	Elizabeth Swinton & John Webb Alderley.
1700 – 1725	NIL.	
1725 – 1750	NIL.	
1751 – 1775	1774	Swinerton Mary (d. of Geo) & Thomas Dorman (Wdr) Tetbury Lic.
1776 – 1800	1778	Swinerton Elizabeth & Samuel Rogers Tetbury Lic.
1782		Anna & Humprey Tugwell Tetbury Lic.
1783		Ann & James Bowker (wdr) Tetbury Lic.
1790		Swinerton (signs Swinnerton) Martha. wid & John Bailey (signs Jno) Sr. Wdr.
1801 – 1826	NIL.	

#### BT's (Bishops' Transcripts) INDEX.

1784	Swinerton Elizh & James Robertson.	Wotton Edge
1788	Sarah & Henry Woolrich	Berkley.
	Henry Woolrich of All Hallows London b. & Sarah Swinerton o.t.p.	
	sp Lic 2 June 1788	
	James Robertson & Elizh Swinerton.	3 Aug 1784. Wotton under Edge.

*(Note: it is always important to record when you have not found entries to avoid doing that period again. Also note the variations in the spelling of our name).*



*The famous market hall at Tetbury*

# WANTED



## FOR DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTIES

This is possibly the best advertising leaflet I have ever seen. This is the late Harold Swinnerton of Wolverhampton, a staunch supporter of the society from the early days and shows his wonderful sense of humour. He started his career in explosives in the Ordnance Corps in WW2, eventually finishing the war as a Sgt Major. Back in civilian life, he set up the firm of Swinnerton & Miller, demolition engineers and eventually became the first President of the Institute of Explosive Engineers. He was a great chum and a great support to me in the early days and is still missed.



Harold was a member of the Adbaston Branch and I am happy to say that his daughter, now Mrs Janet Harbord of Southwell, Nottinghamshire, has kept up the connection.



## SOLDIERS' WILLS

Traditionally, soldiers have always made wills when joining up just in case! I have a copy of one made in 1545 at 'Mutterell' in France in the Duke of Norfolk's camp but this is quite exceptional. Wills were first centrally registered in 1850 and soldiers were given the opportunity to make a will by completing a form in their pay book. The book was officially numbered AB (Army Book) 64. The soldier was required to carry it at all times - it just fitted nicely into a tunic (or later battledress) pocket. However, they were not carried on raids when any identification was removed to avoid identification of units if the man was captured.

The Pay Book also contained details of the soldier's next of kin, some medical information as well as records of his training history and leaves taken.

The will had to be entirely in his handwriting, signed by him and dated. The full names and addresses of the persons whom he wished to benefit, and the sum of money and the articles of property he wanted to leave to them, had to be clearly stated. The mere entry of the name of an intended legatee on the opposite page without any mention of what the legatee was to receive is of no legal value. It did not require any witnesses and, provided it was signed, was valid in English law.

About 229,000 soldier's wills are now available on line out of nearly 373,000 men killed or died. The missing ones are probably accounted for by men who did not bother to make one or for men whose bodies were never recovered. Sadly, for our purposes, only three have survived out of 13 Swinnertons who were killed in action or died on active service.

The first two wills are important for us because they prove that it was Edward Swinnerton who died and not his brother Edwin Algernon Swinnerton the Commonwealth War Graves Commission gravestone says Edward Algernon Swinnerton.



The file containing Edwards's original papers is fine but there is a second file also labelled Edward which is a complete mixup of his and his brother Edwin Algernon's details which has resulted in the error.

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**INFORMAL WILL**

N.O. No. 1 of 1914/15. DECEASED, *English*

Deceased No. *10/150000-11*

The deceased's name as stated in the will is *Edward Swinnerton* and signature *Edward Swinnerton*

Age, sex, *32677 Private*

Rank, *1st Class*

Service, *1st Bn. London Regt. Infantry*

Address, *10, 1st Bn. London Regt. Infantry*

WAR OFFICE.

Date *31st October 1917*

**WILL.**

In the event of my death I give the whole of my property and effects to my Mother

*75989 Mrs Swinnerton*

*Nº 1 Room 2nd*

*Walsall*

*Staffordshire*

*England*

Witnesses *James Swinnerton*

*David & Margaret R. and 4th Field Coy*

Date *6/3/18*

**INFORMAL WILL**

W.O. No. 272581 DOMICILE England

Record No. 154765617

The enclosed document dated 6.5.15 was signed William Swinnerton

Age 26 989 Grison appears to have been written or executed by the person named in the margin while he was "in actual military service" within the meaning of the Wills Act, 1937, and has been recognized by the War Department as constituting a valid will.

WAR OFFICE.  
Date 30.5.1916 W. Swinnerton  
for the Assistant Registrar.

## A CANADIAN TRENCH RAID IN WW1

From Six Bits, Issue 6, Page 63

On the left of the battalion front the resistance was not so great, and three parties in this sector, under Lieuts. Wallace, Molyneux and Swinnerton, penetrated to a depth of from 300 to 600 yards, bombing several dug-outs, and inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. Owing to the severe fighting on their right, these three parties were forced to retire. Lieut. Swinnerton was killed near the Hun wire, and his body recovered some time later. The centre party brought back one wounded prisoner.



This was Aysceau Frederick Robert William Swinnerton born in Bolerum, Hyderabad, India on the 16 October 1892. He is mentioned on the Canadian Vimy Memorial - you will find his family tree in the centre pages of Volume 15 No.9. He was serving with the 75<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Canadian Infantry



An original WW1 Pay book - the man has not completed his will form.

Below .  
The Gospel given to every man by Field Marshal Lord Roberts (sometimes it was a New Testament)





## THOMAS SWINNERTON - CLOCKMAKER

I have recently been having a long correspondence with Mr Jeremy Stringfellow who is the proud owner of a long case clock made by Joseph Swinnerton in 1737 which he is having restored. Joseph was baptised at Whitmore on the 31 January 1666

In the course of our correspondence, we have also discussed Joseph's elder brother John and his younger brother Thomas who were also noted clockmakers in their time. John was baptised on the 6 Jan 1663 at Whitmore and was buried there on the 15 April 1712. We have not yet found Thomas's baptism but he was buried at NUL on the 14 July 1708

In his research on his clock, Jeremy came across the following:

**FOR SALE: SWINNERTON, Thomas.** Mourning ring with an interwoven plait of brown and white hair under an oval crystal panel with seed pearl surround, mounted on a triple band shank in gold (tested 18ct), engraved inside Thos. Swinnerton Obt 8 Novr 1796 AE. 76. Internal diameter 18mm. £400



The accompanying note on the sale catalogue says: Thomas Swinnerton (1720-1796) was the son of Thomas Swinnerton and Mary Turner of Whitmore, Staffordshire. He married Sarah Furnival (c1736-1805) in 1757 in Sandbach Cheshire, the year after election as mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyme. Thomas Swinnerton was buried on 11 Nov 1796 in Newcastle-under-Lyme. This is Joseph's younger brother.

### The Priory of Our lady at Abergavenny

The possessions of the Priory were granted to James Gunter of Breconshire at the dissolution and continued in his family until the beginning of the last century when Mary, daughter and heiress married George Milbourn of Wonastow, an old recusant family, and so conveyed the Priory and its estates to him and then, together with the Priory, to his son Charles who married Lady Martha Harley, daughter of the Earl of Oxford and their only daughter and heiress, Mary, carried them to her husband **Thomas Swinnerton** of Buttern, Staffs.

## KING GEORGE IV AND MRS FITZHERBERT

Continuing the story of Humphrey's daughter Elizabeth (see page 230) who married Thomas Fitzherbert of Swynnerton, a descendant of theirs, Maria Fitzherbert, actually married the future King of England. She was born Maria Ann Smythe on 26 July 1756 at Tong in Shropshire, the eldest daughter of William Smythe and Mary Ann Errington. Her father was the son of Sir John Smythe, Baronet, of Acton Burnel in Shropshire and her mother was a half sister to the Earl of Sefton. She was brought up in the Catholic faith and was sent to France to complete her education.

In July 1775, aged just 19, Maria married Edward Weld, a wealthy Catholic landowner of Lulworth Castle in Dorset who was sixteen years older. The marriage was very brief because Edward died after falling from his horse just a few months later. Sadly, he had not had time to make a new will in Maria's favour so she was left virtually penniless and dependent on her family for support.

In 1778, she married Thomas Fitzherbert of Swynnerton in Staffordshire but this marriage was also short-lived as Thomas died from wounds inflicted during the



anti-Catholic Gordon Riots in 1780. They had a son but he died young. However, Thomas was a wealthy man and left her well provided for with a London town house and an annuity of £1000 per annum – a very considerable sum in those days, worth about £70,000 a year today.

In 1784, she met the Prince of Wales who was six years younger than her – she seems to have had a propensity for older men! She was very beautiful, wealthy and he fell heavily in love with her. She is said to have *Maria Fitzherbert thought to be by George Romney* resisted his advances for some

time as she did not wish to become his mistress and could not marry him because it was illegal under the Bill of Rights and the Act of Succession of 1701



for a royal prince to marry a Catholic. He persisted however because he was so drawn to her and was even willing to give up his succession to the throne to win her.

They solved the problem by having a secret private wedding on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 1785, in the drawing room of her house in Park Street, London witnessed by her uncle, Henry Errington, and her brother, Jack Smythe. This invalid marriage ceremony was performed by one of the prince's Chaplains in Ordinary, the Reverend Robert Burt, whose debts of £500 were paid by the prince to release him from the Fleet Prison. It is believed they had two children but Queen Victoria is said to have destroyed the evidence, King George was, after all, her uncle! The marriage was eventually discovered and declared invalid under English civil law because it had not received the prior approval of King George III and the Privy Council as required by the Royal Marriages Act 1772. Nevertheless Pope Pius VII declared the marriage legal and gave them a certificate to prove it



Following the death of King George IV on 26

*Steigne House in Brighton* June 1830, it was discovered that he had kept all of her letters and they were destroyed. However, she had told the Duke of Clarence, the brother of King George and later King William IV, about their marriage and showed him the document in her possession. It is said she was offered a Dukedom and the Royal Pavilion to live in where she had lived since 1804 but she refused preferring to retire to her house in Brighton, it having been the Prince of Wales's favourite place. She died on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 1837 aged 80 and was buried at St John the Baptist's Church in the Kemp Town area of Brighton

## FATAL RAILWAY COLLISION

Roy Talbot has identified the dead fireman (see Saga Vol 15 No.6) as James Swinnerton (JS701), aged 24, the son of John Swinnerton and Hannah Mansfield of Stoke – see the UFO7 'tree.



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"SHOULD AULD ACQUAINTANCE BE FORGOT?"

Postcard by Jimmy Swinnerton – the founder of the comic strip.  
published in the *Chicago Sunday American*

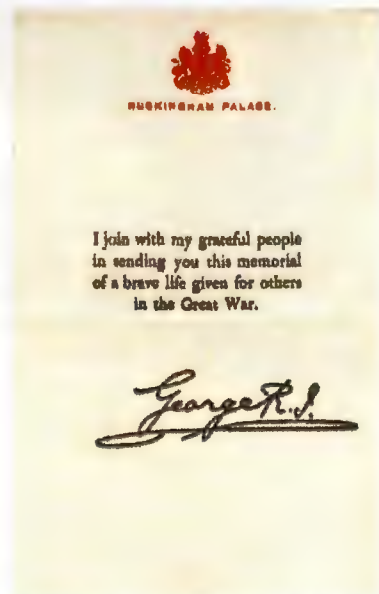


## SWINNERTON SOLDIERS DIED IN THE GREAT WAR

### No.8 Private Herbert Swinnerton



No.15684 Lancashire Fusiliers was the son of Charles Swinnerton (CS99) of the Betley Branch. He was baptised at St Jude's Harwick Street Liverpool on the 18th May 1881 as Jessie Herbert Swinnerton (and registered as such), as had his uncle been before him, but was always known as just Herbert. Jessie, of course, can also be a girl's name so perhaps that was why he dropped it. He was serving with the 18<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers when he was killed in action on the Somme in Northern France on the 24 July 1916. He has no known grave but his name appears on the Thiepval Memorial on the Pier and faces 3C and 3D..



I join with my grateful people  
in sending you this memorial  
of a brave life given for others  
in the Great War.

*George R. S.*



Thanks to Ray Swinnerton's sterling efforts many years ago, we possess his 'Dead Man's Penny' (as it was popularly referred to) in our archives.

This was sent to the next-of-kin of all soldiers who were killed in action or died of wounds in the Great War

## A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN



As many of you reading this will already know, Crispin and I married in July.

During the run up to the wedding, people asked whether I would take his name and, I have to confess, it took me a long time to reach a decision. After all, I had been a Livesey for 47 years. I was known as Reverend Livesey to many people. And then there was all the hassle of changing every piece of documentation - real and virtual. Could I be Mrs Dale, but Reverend Livesey, or was that just too confusing? In the end, it was a wise word from a colleague that swayed me: "If you are known as

Reverend Livesey," she said, "people would call Crispin Mr Livesey". so Reverend Dale it is .... and it feels wonderful, even if I do still find myself occasionally signing 'Livesey' in the church registers. But it did get me ; thinking about names, and about family.

As lovers of genealogy you can probably imagine my delight when I realised that our marriage would be the very first entry in a pristine new register. And I wondered what future family historians would make of our entry in the register. Whenever I open the church registers - whether baptism or marriage or burial - I am conscious of the changing social history they portray; some of the wonderful meat on the bones of genealogy. In the marriage registers, the changing occupations of bride and groom - and their fathers (one day, perhaps, their mothers will be reflected there too), the ages that people are married, their marital status and their addresses (most marriages today show a shared address for bride and groom) all add colour and texture to the picture of our changing times. In the baptism registers it is now common to see whole families of siblings being baptised together, and to note the ages of those being baptised. Increasingly we annotate the register to indicate which of the parents' surnames the child bears.

Whatever we feel about the changing nature of family life, one thing is clear. Family - whatever it looks like, whatever its joys and frustrations, whatever mistakes we make - is important. At its best, it is where we learn to love and be loved, where we find our stability, where we find space to be absolutely ourselves.



I don't think it is by accident that Jesus was born as part of an earthly family on that first Christmas and would become a big



brother to a number of siblings, with all the squabbling, disagreement, banter and love that entails. He would ultimately draw us into one family - brothers and sisters in Christ, with God as our heavenly Father. That family sometimes gets it wrong, sometimes fights, sometimes disappoints, but also brings such great joy, fellowship and support. But God's love endures - that love demonstrated so visibly at Christmas - and He will always hold us, His precious children. One family - His. One name - His. One history - His

May the peace of Christ be with you and all those you love, this Christmas and always.

Love

Rachel

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## DID YOU KNOW THAT -

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The Holy Days and Fasting Days Act of 1551 makes it obligatory for everyone to attend a church service on "*the nativite of our Lorde*" and also demands that everyone walk, not ride, to church and back. Any vehicle used for Christmas Day church-going may be confiscated and sold to benefit the poor. Walking to church would, of course, be a good way to work up an appetite, especially as the Unlawful Games Act of 1541 forbade all sports,

In 1646 the Long Parliament prohibited eating a Christmas dinner of more than three courses; it also banned the eating of mince pies and Christmas Pudding, describing both dishes as "abominable and idolatrous".

*From the newsletter of the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies, Cnterbury with grateful thanks.*

Christmas has been abolished three times, by Oliver Cromwell, by the Sheriff of Nottingham and by Birmingham City Council in 1977 and 1988 when it was renamed Winterval.

Despite all that, a Happy Christmas to you all



Signalman Mike Swinnerton controlling the huge array of levers at New Bridge Signal Box on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Mike (Michael Paul) is the son of our former chaplain, the Reverend Edward Swinnerton. Working for British Railways, Mike was sent to New York where he bought and restored his own disused railway! You can read of his exploits thereafter in early copies of this journal.

Now he is back in this country and using his experience, as you can see, to help out with a famous preserved railway in this country.



A famous shot on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway in 2012



# *The Swinnerton Family Society*

The objects of the society are:

1. To research and record the history of the Swinnerton Family.
2. To establish links with members of the world-wide Swinnerton Family to promote a sense of kinship and to encourage them to study their own family history and contribute it to the history of the whole family.
3. To publish a magazine – *The Swinnerton Saga* – to record that history.
4. To preserve those records together with associated objects and ephemera.
5. To assist, where possible, in the welfare of St Mary's Church, Swynnerton.

*Patron* – *The Rt. Hon The Lord Thomas of Swynnerton*

*President* – *Colonel Gair Swinnerton*

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*Vice-Chairman and PRO*

*Brian Swinnerton*

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*Subscriptions* – *Ray Swinnerton*

*Database* – *Roy Talbot*

*Website* – *[www.swinnerton.org](http://www.swinnerton.org)*

Webmaster: John Swinnerton

Subscriptions £12 per annum (or local currency equivalent)

USA: Mrs Ellen Lum Morris,

Canada: Kevin Bowers,

Australia: Mrs Glenda Simpson,

UK and the rest of the world – see Ray Swinnerton above

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