

SWINNERTON

Family History



The Rev Charles Swynnerton FSA.
1843-1928

THE JOURNAL OF THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY

VOLUME 8 No.1 MARCH 1990

THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY

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SWINNERTON FAMILY HISTORY

Volume 8 No.1

March 1990

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Editor: Iain Spencer Swynnerton

FROM THE EDITOR

It seems no time at all since I last wrote that we were once again at the start of a new volume but it is, in fact, 3 years. How time flies. Yes, this is a new volume, the observant amongst you will already have noticed that I forgot to change the number on the last issue - it should have been No.10.

This is our 16th year of publication, 71st issue and the start of the 8th Volume. Not a bad record for a small society. They have not always been on time (like this one!) but we have kept up the sequence. This issue is exceptionally late for which please accept my apologies but convalescence from an operation took 7 weeks instead of my expected 2! Even now, I am only firing on 3 cylinders but I hope to get out the quota of 4 magazines before the end of the year.

We are not alone in this. I frequently read other editorials explaining similar delays. A friend of mine who edits the same sort of family journal as ours put it rather well, I thought, when he said "within the limited time available for the (society) there is always another query to answer or another letter to write". I do so agree.

There is quite a 'new look' about this issue which will be continued from now on. Some changes, such as reverting to pictures on the cover and repeating some items from early issues of the Journal, are by popular request others are an attempt to improve the presentation. The content though will be more or less the same mixture as before and I would very much welcome more contributions from you - the members. This always makes the journal so much more interesting and, after all, it is your accounts of your family history that our descendants will be interested in reading.

THE REV. CHARLES SWYNNERTON FSA.

CHARLES SWYNNERTON was born on the 27th November 1843 at Douglas in the Isle of Man. He was the second son of Charles Swinnerton, a stonemason who had moved from Liverpool to settle on the island where he had married Mary, the daughter of Robert Callister of Castletown (known in the family as the 'short Manx woman'!)

Sometime between 1878 and 1882, Charles and his brother Frederick changed the spelling of their name to Swynnerton which had been the common spelling from about 1100 to 1633 when it had changed to Swinnerton but his other brothers Mark and Robert did not do so and their descendants still use the original spelling as do most of the rest of the family today.

Charles was educated at St. John's School, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex: University College London (1866) and Oxford University (1870). However, there is no evidence that he ever took his degree. He was ordained in 1868 and elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1889. With three of his brothers he was a Founder Member of The William Salt Archaeological Society, Stafford in 1879. He was Curate of St. Olave's, Lazayre and also Headmaster of Ramsey Grammar School from 1868 until 1873 when he left to go to Ceylon as a Government Chaplain where he served for the next 4 years.

On leave in Delhi in 1874, he married Maud, the daughter of Major Henry William Massey of Grantstown, Tipperary on the 23rd November. Only two of their four children survived the rigours of Ceylon and India Francis Massy Swynnerton born in 1877 and Gertrude Mary Massy, known as Maud, born in 1882. His wife Maud died at Mussoorie in India on the 11th November 1882 leaving the little Maud as a two month old baby. Much later in life, on the 23rd October 1909, he married Edith, the daughter of the Reverend T. Aiken-Sneath of Woodchester Lawn near Stroud, Gloucs.

The Reverend Charles Swynnerton (contd.)

After Ceylon, Charles joined the Indian Establishment where he served from 1877-1901. He is recorded as a Chaplain on the Bengal Establishment in 1884 and later as a Senior Chaplain to the Indian Government. He saw active service with the Kabul Expeditionary Force (1878-9); the Hazara Field Force (1881) and the Black Mountain Expedition (1894-5).

The Reverend Charles devoted much of his near 25 years in India to collecting from original sources a large number of folk tales from the Upper Indus and these were published as *The Adventures of the Panjab Hero Raja Rasalu* (1884); *Indian Nights Entertainment* (1892) and *Romantic Tales from the Punjab* (1903). At that time he was a member of the Royal Asiatic and Folk-Lore Societies and of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Amongst his other publications whilst in India were *The Afghan War* and *Gough's Action at Futtanbad*, both prior to 1884 and *A History of the Angelo Family* which was published in 'The Ancestor' (Volume VIII) in January 1904. He also wrote a considerable amount of verse, published under a single cover in 1925 as *A Medley of Occasional Verse, Grave and Gay*. Eight of these were subsequently reproduced in the County Series of Contemporary Poetry (VII. Gloucester) in 1927.

He undoubtedly started his researches into the family history at an early stage and before he went East. In 1885, from India, he wrote the last 5 sections of the Hon. & Rev. Canon Bridgman's *An Account of the Family of Swynnerton of Swynnerton and Elsewhere in the County of Stafford* which was published in 1886 as Part II of Volume VII of 'Collections for a History of Staffordshire' by the William Salt Archaeological Society. He obviously had some extra copies of Part II run off and had these bound up as a separate volume for distribution to members of the family for which he

The Rev. Charles Swynnerton (contd.)

wrote a special *Introduction* of 6 pages which he signed 'Charles Swynnerton, New Oxford & Cambridge Club. 10th August 1887.

The typeface and paper were identical to the main volume and appear to have been produced by Harrison & Sons of London, the Society's printers. In the following year he expanded his introduction to 15 pages and signed it 'Charles Swynnerton, Sialkot, India. May 1888'. From the type and paper, it would appear that this was printed in India. The first 41/2 pages have the same content except for minor editing but the remainder sets out to "modify and amplify Canon Bridgman's conclusions".

He also wrote, for 'Collections for a History of Staffs' mentioned above, *The Swynnertons of Eccleshall & Chell* (New Series Vol III (1900): *The First Two Generations of the Swynnertons of Co. Stafford 1086-1122* (Volume for 1912): *A Newcastle Cartulary of the Fourteenth Century* (Vol. for 1913) and *Two Early Staffordshire Deeds* (Volume for 1926).

For the 'Ancestor' he also wrote *Two Ancient Petitions from the Public Record Office* (Vol. 6 June 1903) and *On Some Forgotten Swynnertons of the Fourteenth Century* (Vol. 7 Oct 1903). Between 1877 and 1884 he also contributed a series of articles to 'The Reliquary' under the general heading of *Notes on the Family of Swynnerton* and had a number of letters published in *Notes and Queries*.

He left India in 1901 and held numerous chaplaincies in Italy, Egypt and Cyprus. We know he also visited the Rev Henry Ulyate Swinnerton in America. On retirement he became Vicar of Leonard Stanley in Gloucestershire from 1912 to 1920 devoting himself to the restoration of the church but still pursued his antiquarian

The Reverend Charles Swynnerton (contd.)

interests, publishing several more monographs including 'Stanley St. Leonard', 'Some Early Selwyns' and contributing papers to the Gloucestershire Archaeological Society. He was active up to the time of his death in 1928, his 85th year when he had in train the republication of his 'Romantic Tales of the Punjab' in 3 volumes, only one of which was printed before his death, the publication of the others then sadly lapsed.

He died on the 16th November 1928 and was buried at Minchinghampton, Gloucestershire.

The Reverend Charles was the grandfather of our President, Sir Roger Swynnerton and of our member Dr. Brian Fitzalan Swynnerton. He carried out research into the family history for some 50 years and laid the foundations of our present archives. The remarkable thing is that he carried out much of his research from India, conducting a vast correspondence with other Swynnertons around the world and with other researchers and various learned journals. Although he did not found a formal Swynnerton Society, he certainly established a strong network of family members around the world as his surviving notes and correspondence show. Between the President and myself, I think we have an almost complete set of his books and articles although some of the documents, deeds etc which he refers to as being in his possession do appear to have disappeared.

Unfortunately, interest in the family history appears to have lapsed after his death until I started work on it in 1953 but we shall be forever grateful to him for the excellent start he gave us.

His personal copies of Volume VII Part II survive in the possession of his grandson, our President. They are heavily annotated with additional information and I have a photocopy in the archives.

SWINNERTON & MILLER Ltd.

The firm was first registered as a partnership between H.A. (Harold Albert) Swinnerton and J.P. Miller in 1956 each partner having a 50% interest. It was formed to set up in business to remove slag with the aid of explosives from the slag pockets of Siemens open hearth furnaces.

Harold Swinnerton gave up his job as a lubricants salesman and, using his knowledge of explosives gained during World War II, together with an employee Roy Fredrikson set off to sell themselves to the world. Fredrikson was a Belgian of Swedish extraction who had the working know-how of hot blasting. Miller remained in the background continuing his job as a boiler salesman but making contacts whenever and wherever possible. He did the office work, provided the business address and generally kept the drain on the limited financial resources as small as possible.

After two years trading it became evident that another full-time member was needed in the business. Miller, under considerable domestic pressure, declined so with the aid of finance from the Midland Bank, Harold Swinnerton acquired his interest and he and his wife became, and remained, the sole proprietors until Harold's death in 1983. The business prospered and Swinnerton & Miller was registered as a private limited company on the 13th July 1960. On the 8th December 1971, SAM (Contractors) Ltd was formed and acquired the plant and effects of Swinnerton and Miller Ltd to become the holding company - Swinnerton & Miller retaining the property and the role of trading company.

The main reason for this move was to shorten the title - 'Swinnerton & Miller Ltd' having proved to be a bit

Swinerton & Miller Ltd.(contd.)

cumbersome for advertising purposes. It also gave the proprietors another company to manoeuvre with in the age of 'wheeling and dealing' that had developed in the late 60s.

In 1962, a minor steel recession saw them out of the steelworks in terms of hot blasting except for blast furnaces in ironworks. Steel plants were modified to oil and oxygen burning, this produced a soft slag which did not require blasting to remove it. The firm survived on the civil engineering programmes which attended the steelworks modification. They next became involved in the electrification of the railways and were responsible for felling reinforced concrete coaling plants, widening rock cuttings to allow re-alignment for higher speed running and removal or modification of bridges to allow clearance for the electrical pantograph collector above tracks and to have structures capable of withstanding the greater dynamic loads below. By the late 70s, they had worked on over 450 structures.

Following the completion of the railway programme, they moved to the modification or complete removal of gas works: the removal of strongrooms from banks on computerisation - these were frequently in the banking hall and occupied valuable space. They also worked on power stations which were being enlarged, removing outdated plant. Oil and natural gas pipelines were next, both required the services of explosives engineers and SAM Contractors were responsible for the blasting work which brought the gas pipeline over Shap Fell between Carlisle and Kendal.

In the late 70s and early 80s, they were involved in the demolition of large plants using explosives following the rationalisation of steelmaking and also

Swinerton & Miller Ltd.(contd.)

dockwork, heavy demolitions civil engineering excavations, power stations, multi-story flats and reinforced concrete bridges.

This account was written by the late Harold Swinerton after he addressed the Society at its Annual General Meeting in 1981 when, members will recall, he spoke in a yellow safety helmet and showed us the most fascinating pictures of things 'being blown up'!

Harold Albert Swinerton (HS.41) was a member of the Adbaston Branch of the family. Universally known in the trade as "Swinn", he was elected the first President of the Institute of Explosive Engineers on its formation. He had always been a great supporter of our society and we published the tree of his branch in the September 1980 issue of this journal (Vol.4 No.4)

He died, suddenly and unexpectedly, in December 1982.



Harold posing in sombre mood for a clever publicity leaflet for his firm which took the form of a police notice saying he was "Wanted" for blowing up buildings and his cartoon of himself caught 'in the act'



Dit Billet zal bij gelegenheid van het lichten van eene Trouw-Akte, bij het aangeven van een kind uit dit Huwelijk geboren, of bij het overlijden van een der Echtgenooten, aan het Bureau van den Burgerlijken Stand moeten vertoond worden.

Reg. N°. 15 Fol. 20.

In het Huwelijks-Register der Stad Amsterdam,
zijn op 21 Juni 1888 ingeschreven

John Swinnerton
Hermina Adriana Schrikker

Belanghebbenden worden herinnerd aan hunne verplichting tot aangifte der verhuizing bij de betrokken Buurtsecretarissen.

(Dit billet mede te brengen)

John Swinnerton
Hermina Adriana Schrikker

The Marriage Certificate of JOHN HENRY SWINNERTON (JS.139) of the Warwickshire Branch and HERMINA ADRIANA SCHRIKKER which took place in Amsterdam on the 21st June 1888. John was the Grandfather of our former Chairman, the late Ken Armitstead and of our member La Comtesse Raymonde de Pommery.

THE FAMILY OF JOB SWINERTON

Mr Brian Austin who lives in Weston-super-Mare and is a fellow-member of the Guild of One-Name Studies wrote to me in May and said he had noted the following:-

Parish Register of Axbridge, Somerset

Mary baptised 24 July 1686 to *John SWINNERTON*

He commented that Swinnerton was a very unusual name down there.

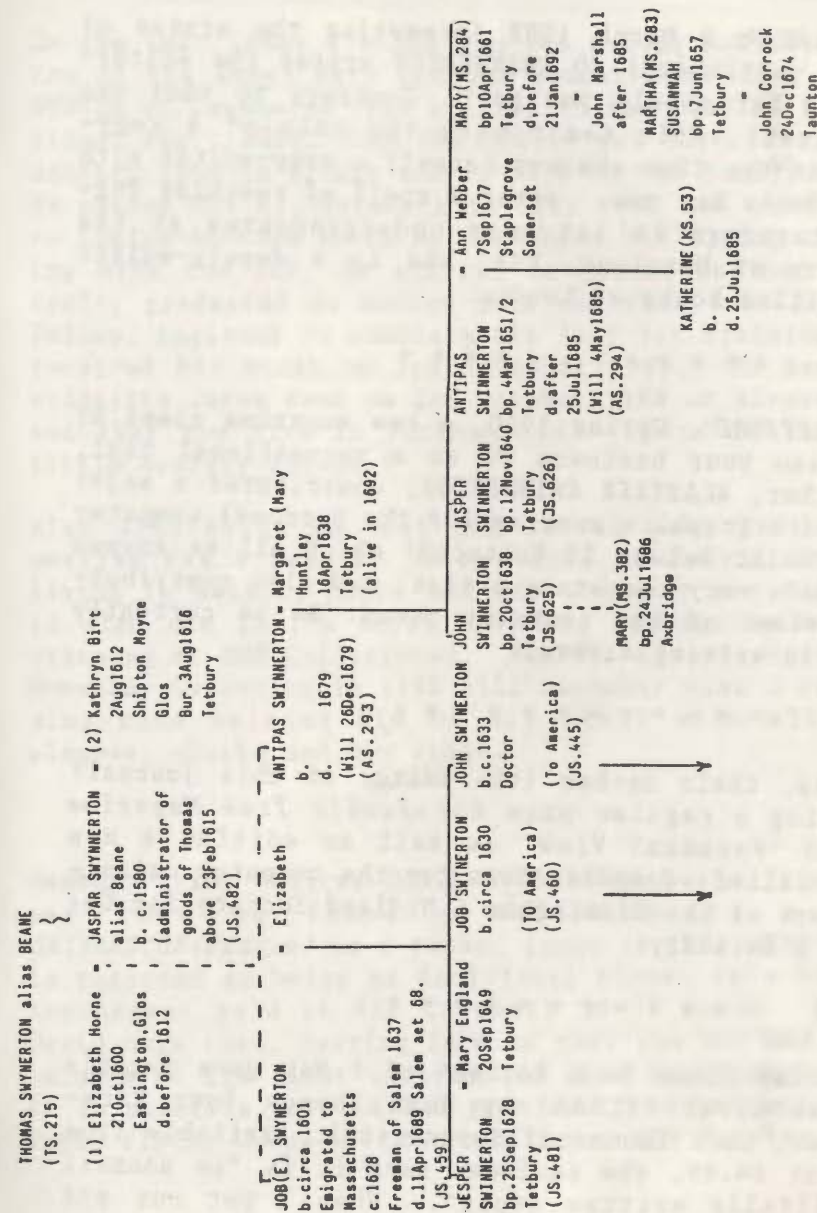
Naturally, I wrote to thank him and explained about our problem with finding the ancestry of *JOB SWINERTON* the early emigrant to America who appears to have left this country from Taunton, Somerset to become one of the founding fathers of Salem Colony in Massachusetts as shown in the tree opposite. I also told him of the Gloucestershire Branch who I thought were probably connected because of the similarity of surnames and particularly of the rare name *ANTIPAS*. This branch eventually ended up in America too.

Mr Austin was obviously intrigued by our mystery and promised to keep his eyes open for any further Swinnerton details.

The baptismal entry would appear to be for a daughter of John Swinnerton (JS.625) as the other John's (JS.445) daughter Mary or Mercy was born in Salem, Massachusetts. However, we have not yet found a marriage for John so it must be conjecture for the moment.

There are a lot of questions to be answered about this tree, of course, but once the family appear in the American records we have a clear descent down to the present day and several of our members are descended from Job.

The Tree of Job Swinerton



A FAMILY OF WRITERS

In *WIPLASH* No.3 March 1988 (promoting the status of women in publishing) JO SWINNERTON writes the editorial 'How far should you go?' Contrary to what one might expect, this dealt with the role of a copy-editor. At the time she was herself a copy-editor with Penguin Books but now, after a spell of teaching English Literature to 1st year undergraduates at the University of Maryland, USA, she is a deputy-editor with Pavilion Books of London.

* * * * *

In '*PC LEISURE*', Spring 1990, a new magazine aimed at how to use your business PC as a recreational tool, her brother, ALASTAIR SWINNERTON, contributed a major review of a graphics program for the personal computer called 'Paint DeLuxe II Enhanced' which allows anyone to become a very competent artist. and also contributed 2 reviews of new computer games. He is currently engaged in writing a novel.

* * * * *

Meanwhile, their father (the Editor of this journal) is writing a regular page for *Family Tree Magazine* entitled 'Personal View' as well as editing a new journal called *Computer News* for the computer oriented members of the Birmingham & Midland Society for Genealogy & Heraldry.

* * * * *

The 'Sunday Times Book Review' of 6 May gave details of a new novel 'KLARA' by Hugh Thomas (our Vice-President, Lord Thomas of Swynnerton). Available from Abacus at £4.99, the reviewer says it is "an unusual and skilfully written story". When I get out and about again, I shall look forward to acquiring a copy.

NOTES & QUERIES

In the last issue I asked who was Sub.Lt.N.J.Swinerton of the Royal Navy and our member ALAN JOHN SWINNERTON of Crewkerne has written to say that he is his eldest son. NIGEL JOHN SWINNERTON was born on the 19 January 1960 in Slough and is NS.8 on the family tree. He passed out of Dartmouth in July 1987 and then went to Linton-on-Ouse where he commenced his flying training with the RAF. He started on piston-engined aircraft, graduated to medium jets and then went to RAF Valley, Anglesey to complete his fast jet training. He received his Wings on 3rd November 1989. He married Bridgitte Jayne Read on 1st October 1988 at Alverstoke and they now live in Fareham. So - there is another little mystery solved.!

Alan also tells me that his second son, PAUL ALAN married Paula Head on 26 Nov 1988 at Yeovil and is living in Nelson, Lancs and his youngest son MATTHEW is also now in the Royal Navy and undergoing weapon training at HMS Collingwood. Members who attended the Domesday Gathering in 1986 will remember Alan's strapping sons helping him on his stall with all the plaques, clocks and key rings.

* * * * *

Member Flying Officer DAVID SWINNERTON has written to say that he found a reference to a *SGT SWINNERTON(France)* in a recent issue of '*RAF NEWS*'. He is recorded as being an individual winner in a boxing tournament held at RAF Cranwell 28-30 April 1919. David says that, bearing in mind that the RAF had just celebrated its first anniversary as a fighting force, it is possible that he had previously served with the Royal Flying Corps or the Royal Naval Air Service.

Notes & Queries (contd.)

I thought that this might have been ERNEST JOHN SWINNERTON who boxed under the name of *Jim Prendy* who was mentioned in Volume 5 No.8 of this Journal but unfortunately, Alan James Swinnerton who gave us all the information about the boxing brothers has dropped out of the society and our member Mrs Brenda Morgan, a niece of the brothers was unable to help. So - the identity of Sgt Swinnerton must remain a mystery for the moment.

* * * * *

I wrote to our member Mrs Martin with another query and although she was not able to help me in that particular matter did give me some very interesting information about her brother DEREK RICHARD MACKENZIE SWINNERTON, another sailor. He was born on the 30th August 1925 in Edinburgh and joined the Royal navy in 1943. After the war he went to what was then Northern Rhodesia and joined Roan Antelope Copper Mines Ltd. He was instrumental in saving the lives of some native miners after an accident in the Storke Service Shaft in June 1922 and she sent me a copy of the letter of commendation he received from the General Manager for his actions. This has now been placed in the archives.

* * * * *

Member MRS MARJORIE NIGHTINGALE from Australia has discovered that THOMAS SWINERTON, the Royal Marine who was on the First Fleet of convicts to Australia in 1788 was married, something we did not know before. He married a lady named MARGARET WILLIAMS but where and when we do not yet know. Mrs Nightingale has promised that either she or her daughter our member Mrs Glenda Hooper will try and get down to Sydney to look at the First Fleet records.

NOTICE BOARD

St Mary's Church Swyanerton.

Flower Festival.

Friday July 20th to Monday 23rd.

Friday The Church will be open for visitors at 6pm, before the Dedication Service which begins at 7.30pm.

Saturday The Church will be open from 10am-6pm. There will be a Concert in Church at 7.30pm given by the "Ashley Voices and Music" choir.

Sunday The Church will be open to visitors from 11am - 6pm (between Services)

Monday The Church open from 12 noon - 9pm.

Refreshments will be available in the Church Hall.

In aid of the Restoration Fund!

PLEASE GO ALONG AND SUPPORT 'OUR' CHURCH IF YOU CAN

NEWS FROM THE ARCHIVES

Our hard-working secretary, David Brock, has been pounding his typewriter again and has typed up all the Swinnerton and variant entries from the printouts of the Mormon 'International Genealogical Index'. This was truly a mammoth task, 34 pages of close-typed A4 and the originals from which he had to work are not at all easy to read. We are most grateful to him for this marvellous effort and it will make my searching very much easier. It will be even better when we can get it onto the computer.

We have, at last, achieved this with the Indexes to Births, Marriages and Deaths from St.Catherine's House in London and we now have all entries for Swinnerton and variants from 1837 (when General Registration started) to 1987 in a database. This means that I can now do searches within given parameters and do comparisons. As an example, if I get a reference to a new Swinnerton who I cannot easily identify, I can ask the computer to give me all of that name born or married or died between certain dates and the resulting list taken with the registration districts, will help me to identify the right person. We have 134 A4 pages of these indexes with something like 6600 entries so searching them visually was a major task.

We had to use some of our research funds to pay to have these put on disk as, although I appealed for volunteers to help on several occasions, I am sorry to say we had no response. However, it is a most valuable addition to our archives and any member with a computer could now have a copy for their own research if they so wished.

Finally, a new Directory of Members is being compiled and will be sent out with the next journal at the end of July. Make sure you are included by renewing your subscription now if you have not already done so.

FAMILY NOTES

I am very sorry to have to report the death of our member GEORGE ARNOLD SWINNERTON on the 15th February in his 79th year. George was a member of the Adbaston Branch and 2nd cousin to my father. He was the first contact I made outside my immediate family when I started research on the whole family in the early 50s. Through his amateur radio contacts, he lead to my first meeting with our former chairman, John Walter Swinnerton who was to be such a help to me when I started the Society.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome Mrs BETTY JOAN PEARSALL and Mrs EILEEN MAUDE CUDD of Australia, Mr ROGER WILLIAM SWINNERTON of Market Drayton Shropshire and Mrs REBEKAH JANE HUNT of New Zealand. Full addresses and connections with the family will be given in the next issue.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

The Reverend Edward Swinnerton to [REDACTED]

Mrs Diana Cunningham to [REDACTED]

Our congratulations to Major & Mrs Paula Barrett (formerly our organist Paula Swinnerton) on the birth of their son Alexander James Swinnerton Barrett on 16th December 1989 and also to Major Barrett on the award of the MBE. Paula is the daughter of our Chaplain, the Reverend Edward Swinnerton and we also send our congratulations to her elder sister Ena on her marriage to Mr Michael Wood on the 29th April this year.

* * * * *

We be of one blood, thou and I (Rudyard Kipling)

SOCIETY MATTERS

I was very disappointed with the response to the family record forms which I had hoped to use as the basis of my new membership file. It is difficult for me to remember just where everybody fits into the family and often entails a lot of looking up in the records. This would have made it very much easier but only 15 members out of 175 returned them which is no good at all. As I said when I sent them out, you do not have to complete it all, just what you can and I will do the rest. Please do let me have them.

* * * * *

Equally disappointing and much more important is the lack of response to the renewal of subscriptions. Only 45 members have send their subscriptions for this year! We simply cannot carry on the society with this very low level of support and I do ask you to please send your subscription straightaway if you have not already done so. You will see from the form that we now have agents in Australia and America who will accept your subscription in Dollars and this will save us a great deal in conversion charges. Do we have anyone out there who would do the same for Canada and South Africa? Everyone is being sent a renewal form; please ignore it if you have already paid.

* * * * *

As you know, we had hoped to hold our AGM in the Isle of Man this year but unfortunately, we discovered that there was a Grand Prix Race being held there on the same weekend. This would have made accommodation very difficult to obtain not to mention the noise! Council also felt that the estimated cost of £70-80 for 2 nights would have prevented some members attending. This is a great shame, perhaps we can arrange a visit to the Swinnerton places there as a special trip sometime and not have a formal meeting.

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 support and welfare of St.Mary's Church, Swynnerton, Staffordshire.

Research into the family history had been started in the 1870s by the Reverend Charles Swynnerton FSA. Over the course of the years he wrote a number of articles and papers about the family and gathered together many Swinnertons from all over the world.

Interest in the family history became dormant after his death in 1928. The present Archivist resumed research into the family records in 1952 and 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 No. 518184.