

SWINNERTON

Family History



Professor H.H.Swinnerton

1875-1966

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SWINNERTON FAMILY HISTORY

Volume 8 No.2

June 1990

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Editor:Iain Spencer Swynnerton

Henry Hurd Swinnerton (HS.47) was born on the 17th September 1875 at Bungay, Norfolk, 4th son of the Rev George Frederick Swinnerton, a Wesleyan Methodist minister. As his father was moved every three years or so to a new ministry, young Henry spent most of his youth in very out of the way country places, mainly in the Yorkshire Dales. His father had originally hailed from Wellington in Shropshire and was a great-grandson of William Swinnerton - the founder of the Adbaston Branch of the family.

Henry was educated at Woodhouse Grove School, near Leeds and then at Kingswood School, Bath. From 1894-7 he was an assistant master at Trowbridge School and then became a student and Demonstrator at the Royal College of Science. In 1898 he passed the London University Degree Examination in Geology, Botany and Zoology gaining the highest place in 1st Class Honours for which he was awarded a University Scholarship at London University. He became Marshall Scholar in the Huxley Research Laboratory and then, in 1900, went back to his old school, Kingswood, for a year as Science Master. After 3 years research at the Royal College of Science, he entered the University College of Nottingham as Lecturer and Demonstrator in Geology, Botany and Zoology.

On the 6th September 1906 at Nottingham, he married Florence Daisy Bennett, the eldest daughter of Joseph Bennett of Nottingham. Their eldest child, Frank, died in infancy but they then had three daughters, Esther Mary, Elizabeth Joan and Margaret of whom the last is a member of the society.

In 1912 he was appointed to the chair of Geology and Geography at University College, Nottingham which he held for the next 34 years. In 1918 he was elected to the Council of the Geological Society serving until 1920 and again from 1927-1932 and in 1935. From 1936-1938 he was Vice-President, served as President from 1938-40 and again as Vice-President 1940 -41.

In 1942 he was awarded the Murchison Medal by the Council of the Society. For some years he was Vice-Principal of the Nottingham College and from 1939 onwards was Chairman of the University Joint Recruiting Board. In 1950 he was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire. He was a Fellow of both the Zoological and Geological Societies.

He published many papers in scientific journals on Palaeontology, Archaeology and Geography and was the author of several books including *The Geography of Nottinghamshire* (Cambridge County Geography Series): *The Lands Behind the Bible Story: Outlines of Palaeontology: The Growth of the World and its Inhabitants: Solving Earth's Mysteries: The Earth Beneath Us and Fossils*. His researches included the *Development of the Skeleton of Sphenodon*, the *Head Skeleton of Gasterosteus* and the *Morphology of the Pectoral Skeleton of Teleosts*.

In 'Who's Who' he originally gave his hobby as simply 'Fieldwork' but eventually added writing, gardening, playing with fossils and painting in watercolours.

In 1922 he was appointed the first Chairman of the Governors of Nottingham High School for Girls and served continuously until he went to live in London in 1956 having served through the time of no less than three headmistresses. His own three daughters went to the school and he said at one prize-giving that "he had three daughters and 750 adopted ones."

In the 1950s, another school in Nottinghamshire, Work-sop College, decided to form a Geographical Society for its sixth-form students and named it 'The Swinnerton Society' in his honour.

He lived in retirement at the home of his son-in-law, the Headmaster of Haberdasher Aske's School, Elstree where he died on the 6th November 1966.

SWINNERTONS IN YORKSHIRE

Over the last 10 years or so I have collected a great deal of information about a branch of the family that lived mainly in Yorkshire. In this I was greatly helped by the late Jack Swinnerton of Blackpool who provided much of the funding to purchase the necessary birth, marriage and death certificates and by Mrs Pamela Palgrave, a friend and professional genealogist who never failed to note down any Swinnertons she came across. She also did a lot of searching records for me and would never make any charge. We shall always be very grateful to them both.

I have compiled a tree of this family using all the information from the certificates, parish registers, census returns, wills, legal papers and local directories and it is now quite extensive. I am sure that it is not complete by any means but it is as accurate as I can make it in the light of our present knowledge.

The earliest Swinnerton I have been able to find is a *JOHN SWINNERTON* who first appears in the parish of Handsworth Woodhouse which is next to Sheffield.

John's wife is named in the parish registers as Margaret but sadly her maiden name is never mentioned and there is no trace of their marriage anywhere in the county. They had 8 children all baptised or buried at Handsworth Woodhouse and John himself was buried there on the 14th September 1680. Margaret survived him by 50 years, being buried there on the 29th of October 1730 so one assumes he was a comparatively young man when he died. The first child was baptised in 1653 so we can guess that John was born about 1630. However, there is no previous entry for Swinnerton in the registers of Yorkshire so we must assume he moved into the county from elsewhere. The problem is that there were several Johns around at the time and I have been unable to pinpoint any particular one so far.

The first part of the tree appears on the centre pages.

MORE SWINNERTONS IN SOMERSET

Mr Brian Austin from Weston-super-Mare did keep his eyes open as he promised in our last journal and has come up with the following.

Somerset Record Society.

Volume 54

The Clergy of Stockland Gaunts (Stokelandgawnte)

Oct 1496 *THOMAS SWYNERTON* - presented by the Prior and Convent of St. Mark, Bylleswyke, Bristol.

1 Feb 1500 Henry Keneseke replaces him.

Volume 55

The Rector of Frome (John Bd 5 Apr 1561)

JOHN SWINNERTON clerk, to the Parish Church of Elme on the presentation of Wm. Herbert, Lord Pembroke.

23 July 1556

(Clerk here means clerk in holy orders ie. Priest)

The Manor of Kyngeston

STEPHEN SWYNNARTON and his wife Margaret put in a claim to this manor during a case in 3 Ed III -1328/9 (Mr Austin says he finds this of great interest as this area in later years is the home ground of the rare Syndercombe family, the two names being very similar in Somerset dialect).

and from an 18th Century 'History of Gloucestershire' he notes the alleged ancient castle named *Swinnerdown Castle* in Tetbury demolished centuries ago.

I think I can identify Stephen although I did not know he was married. Thomas is a bit of a mystery because there was a priest of that time called Thomas who was Rector of Blymhill in 1471 but he is supposed to have died in 1488.

John, at the moment, is a complete mystery.

As always I shall go on investigating and hope eventually to be able to fit them in.

ON SOME FORGOTTEN SWYNNERTONS
OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

I. 'JOHN DE SWYNNERTON'

IN 19 Edw. III. 1346,¹ a 'John de Swynnerton' was serving in the army in France. Among the *Army Miscellanea* of the Exchequer for that year there is an account of the wages of the men-at-arms and others in the retinue of Lord James de Audley of Helegh Castle, co. Stafford, with Henry de Lancaster, the son of the Earl of Lancaster, in Gascony and Guienne. The account is for 197 days, from 26 April, when they started from the castle of Helegh (situated four or five miles from Whitmore) until the last day of November following, each knight receiving 2s. *per diem*, each squire 1s. and each mounted archer 6d. In the list of squires occurs the name of 'John de Swynnerton,' and among his companions we find such well-known Whitmore and Newcastle names as 'William de Thiknes,' 'John de Hinkele,' 'John de Whitmore,' 'Thomas de Whitmore,' 'John de Podmore,' 'Robert de Dut-ton' of Maer near Whitmore, etc.²

John de Swynnerton reappears in 26 Edw. III. 1352, when the king made him a grant of two parts (a moiety in short) of the manor of Sellyng, which had belonged to Henry fitz Roger, deceased, to hold until the full age of the heir.³

He is probably also the second John de Swynnerton mentioned in the following—

By writ tested at Westminster, 4 August, 33 Edw. III. 1359, John de Swynnerton (as commissioner of array), John de Stafford, and the sheriff of Staffordshire, are ordered to deliver to John de Swynnerton forty archers mounted, chosen from the county of Stafford, to be by him conducted to Sandwich on the Quinzaine of the Assumption of the B.V.M. next ensuing at latest, ready to serve in the king's retinue at the king's expense.⁴

The first John de Swynnerton here noted was John de Swynnerton of Hilton, who was employed at home as escheator

¹ *Staff. Coll.* viii. 25.

² *Ab. Rot. Orig.* ii. 222.

³ *Rym. Fœd.* iii. pt. 1, 416.

Some forgotten Swynnertons (contd.)

or sheriff or commissioner of array during the whole of Edward's wars, and who saw little or no foreign service. The other John was evidently then in the retinue of the king.

John de Swynnerton died some time before Michaelmas, 1362, as the extract following shows—Michaelmas, 36 Edw. III. London. Joan, formerly wife of John de Swynnerton, and John Swyft, Chaplain, executors of the will of John de Swynnerton, sued Richard de Lichefeld for a debt of £40. And again—In 36 Edw. III. 1362, the king gave to Joan who had been the wife of John de Swynnerton, deceased, the custody of the moiety of the manor of Sellyng, with the appurtenances, which had belonged to Henry fitz Roger, deceased, to hold until the full age of the heir.¹

It is not at all easy to fix this John de Swynnerton or to find him a place in the pedigree. The pedigree appended to this article will show that the father must have borne the name of Roger, and the following considerations render it probable, though by no means certain, that he was Sir Roger de Swynnerton, knight of Swynnerton.

The two Subsidy Rolls of 1327 and 1333 reveal the striking fact, that all those persons bearing the name 'Swynnerton' at that time in co. Stafford were near kinsmen of Roger, lord of Swynnerton, for though a full list is given of all the tenants, parish by parish, who were assessed, not a single Swynnerton appears among them. The explanation is (as General Wrottesley has pointed out to me) that Roger de Swynnerton was so constantly engaged in personal attendance on the king, in peace and war, and was held in so great esteem by him, that the privilege which exempted him from payment exempted also the whole of his Swynnerton kinsmen.²

The following references out of many will serve to show the position filled by himself and his sons at court.

By Edward II. he was made successively governor of Harlech Castle in Wales,³ governor of Eccleshall Castle during a vacancy in the bishopric of Coventry and Lichfield,⁴ and constable of the Tower of London, in which capacity he produced the Mortimers, then in his custody, before the judges at Westminster and in the Tower, on the Monday and Tuesday next after the Feast of St. Peter ad Vincula, 2 and 3 August, 1322.⁵

¹ *Ab. Rot. Orig.* ii. 270. ² *Staff. Coll.* vii. pt. 1, x. pt. 1.

³ *Rot. Orig.* 14 Edw. III. roll 9 (ii. 255). ⁴ *Parliamentary Writs.* ⁵ *Ibid.*

In the same year, being then a banneret, Sir Roger de Swynnerton had an assignation out of the exchequer of £145 13s. 8d., as well for his wages of war in that expedition made into Scotland in 1 Edw. III., as for his services in attendance on Queen Isabel in 20 Edw. II.¹

Again, in 4 Edw. III. 1330, the king of his special grace remits and pardons to his beloved and faithful Roger de Swynnerton all kinds of accompts by him due to the king, as well for the time during which he had the custody of the Tower of London, as for the time he had the bailiwick of the Hundred of Totemandeslowe in co. Stafford, and the custody of the castle and manor of Eccleshall during the voidance of the bishopric of Chester, by commission of the Lord Edward, late King of England, the king's father. Also all the arrears due by reason of the said accompts, if any, and also the amercements which have befallen the said Roger, and the issues of his forfeiture, because he hath not rendered the accompts aforesaid until now. And the king acquits him thereof by the tenor of these presents. The king is moreover unwilling that the same Roger, by reason of the premisses, shall be hindered or in any way molested or aggrieved by the king, his heirs or ministers whatsoever. Dated at Woodstock, 6 May. By writ of Privy Seal.²

Again, in 6 Edw. III. he had a grant of the manor or Shotewyk in part satisfaction of a grant of £300 voted to him by the king in council for his good services.³

A few extracts from the exchequer accounts and the Pell Issues, kindly supplied to me by General Wrottesley, will still further illustrate the position of the Swynnertons at this time.

Accounts of 8 and 9 Edw. III.—Paid to Roger de Swynnerton, banneret, for his robes (of livery as being of the king's household)—16 marks. And to Thomas de Swynnerton (his second surviving son); 'scutifer' of the king's chamber, also for his robes—4 marks.⁴

¹ Dugdale's *Baronage*, ii. 112.

² *Patent Rolls* 4 Edw. III. m. 22.

³ Ibid. 6 Edw. III. m. 4. He was also one of the twenty-five English magnates to the king's treaty with Patrick of Dunbar, Earl of March, touching the surrender of Berwick (Rymer's *Fædera*).

⁴ *Exchequer Accounts*, 132.

By the same king, on 2 November, 11 Edw. II. 1317, Sir Roger de Swynnerton was made governor of the king's town of Stafford, to hold during the king's pleasure,¹ and on 3 November the king committed to him the superior custody of the peace in co. Stafford to do and to exercise those things which should tend to the fullest preservation of the same peace, as well for the king's honour and advantage as for the tranquillity of the people of those parts.² For some time the county was really under martial law, Roger de Swynnerton, then the most powerful man in Staffordshire, exercising almost unlimited control.

He was also on special service on the person of Queen Isabel. On 18 February, 1 Edw. III. 1327, Roger Mortimer and Isabel being then in the plenitude of their power, letters patent announced that the king (Edw. III.) had, on 11 February last, granted to Roger de Swynnerton the manors, lands, etc., of Hugh le Despencer in the counties of Stafford and Chester to support his dignity, taking into consideration the good and commendable service which the said Roger has done for Isabel, Queen of England, the king's mother, and for the king, etc.³

This grant (really a confirmation) must have been the act of Isabel herself. Roger de Swynnerton and William Trussell, who as proctor of the estates of the Realm had pronounced to the unfortunate Edward II. his deposition in Kenilworth Castle, were both in attendance on the royal party as followers of Henry of Lancaster, whose honours had not yet been restored, and who was at the head of the queen's or revolutionary party. In like manner also the following:—

In 2 Edw. III. 1328—9—Whereas the king is bound to Roger de Swynnerton in the sum of £24 16s. for the charges and cost expended by the same Roger in the king's service from Marlebergh unto Sarum and from thence unto Walynford—the king has assigned him the aforesaid £24 16s. to be taken from the issues of the county of Stafford by the hands of the sheriff for the time being—dated at Coventry, 2 January. And by writ of Privy Seal the sheriff is charged to disburse, and to have due allowance made for the same at the king's exchequer.⁴

¹ *Patent Rolls* 11 Edw. II. m. 17.

² Ibid.

³ *Rot. Orig.* i. 301; *Rot. Fin.* 1 Edw. III. m. 27; *Letters Patent*, 1 Edw. III. m. 19.

⁴ *Patent Rolls* 2 Edw. III. pt. 2, m. 3.

2nd revision June 1990

- Honour
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(Admon
19May1733)

WILLIAM
WINNERTON
p.28Jan1665/6
Landsworth W.
MS.145)

- ANDREW
SWINNERTON
bp. 7 Nov 1559
Handsworth W.
(AS.172)

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ROBERT	= E
SWINNERTON	S
bp. 4 Feb 16 $\frac{71}{72}$	17
H.W.	H.
(RS.152)	

ESSEMAN JOHN
WINNERTON SWINN
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r.9Nov1707bur.25
Woodhouse H.Wood

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Margaret
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ur.29Oct1730
andsworth W.

- Mary
Clerke

bur. 29 Nov 1757
Handsworth W.

ERTRUDE(GS.129)
 2Jan1691
 Handsworth W.
 William Jack
 26Dec1723
 Handsworth W.

T (MS.260) HONOR
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2) Harta (N
RTON bpl3May1
lov1696 Whitgift
Christoph
Jackson
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5) ROBERT
716 SWINNERTON
bp. 28 April 1905
H. Woodhouse
Fox (RS. 153)
/3 Elizabeth

Elizabeth
Coten
27Feb1730
Burton(Hanbury)
-(2)Edward Moor
50Oct1743

Hannah Prior
or Pryor
13Aug1735
Sheffield

- Mary Greasby
25Dec1744
Handsworth W.
bur.25Nov1800
Handsworth W.

ANNAH(HS.131)
25Dec1724
andsworth W.
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andsworth W.

MS.261)
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31) ANN(AS.174)
bp.5Apr1734
Burton
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4Dec1730
Workshop

ARAH(SS.180)
22Apr1740
arton

HANNAH(HS.133)
bp.24Oct1700
H.Woodhouse
SARAH(SS.182)
bp.2May1702
H.Woodhouse

AS	GEORGE
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3) ANN(AS.179
3 bp.24Nov17
bur.24Dec17
H.Woodhouse
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9 HW. HANNAH(HS.
5 bp.20May17

MARK
ON SWINNERTON
1757/8, bp. 30 May 1813
y 1813 H. Woodhouse
use bur. 5 Apr 1813
Attercliffe
(HS. 257)

55
1783)

KETURAH(KS.44
 pp.28Dec1778
 Sheffield
 GEORGE
 SWINNERTON
 pp.31Mar1771/
 1772

- Hannah Day	TH
12Jun1813	SW
Sheffield	bp
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MARY (MS. 359)
bp. 6 May 1779
Barby on Mar
Jonathan Wood
15 Sep 1799
Carleton juxt

- Elizabeth
Walker
28Oct1804
Ecclesfield
bur.16Apr184
Ecclesfield
aged 65

RAH(SS.243)
6May1791
rby on Marsh

CHILD

8Dec1817
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807	28Dec182
876	b.c.1810
	*d.2Jul19
	Hunslet

JOHN
SWINNERTON
bp.23Jun1807
Ecclesfield

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NOTES & QUERIES

My friend David Hawkings who has provided us with so many tit-bits of information in the past has come up with something totally new this time. In the *Guide to the State Archives of New South Wales* No.16 he found in a list of assisted immigrants arriving at Port Philip 1839-51, the name of WILLIAM SWINNERTON who travelled out on the ship 'Berkshire' in 1848. (Shelf 4/4816 p.86)

I think this must have been Walter William (WS.29) the great-grandfather of our member William James of Melbourne. Walter William's eldest son is supposed to have been born in Australia in 1852 but the rest of his children were born in this country between 1857 and 1868 so if it was him, he must have returned to England after only a few years.

* * * * *

Another WALTER SWINNERTON has recently come to light in an unusual set of records. A former student on one of the family history courses I teach is writing a history of the Josiah Mason Orphanage in Birmingham of which he is a former member. Going through the records he came across Walter who was admitted to the orphanage on the 31st May 1886. His date of birth is given as the 30th March 1876 (in fact it was the 13th) and he left on the 1st November 1890.

The records show that in 1886 he "may have a prize for Reading and Arithmetic" as he was 1st in both: in 1888 he was again 1st in Arithmetic and also in History. In 1889 he was 2nd in Physiology - is this, I wonder, what we could call Biology today?

This is the father of our former Chairman, John Swinnerton who never knew that his father had spent his early years in an orphanage. There were also two younger children and we now wonder whether they were there as well.

NOTES & QUERIES contd.

Another long-standing friend to the society, Pauline Saul has drawn my attention to a book that she has just received for review called 'Child Apprentices in America from Christ's Hospital, London 1617-1778'. The book points out that these were not always orphans but sometimes the children of impecunious parents. Provided they were legitimate children of freemen of the City of London, over four years of age and free from obvious infirmity, they were to be educated and prepared either for entrance to a university or apprenticeship to a trade.

From the late 17th century, up to 150 children were admitted annually to the famous "Bluecoat School" on the recommendation of their parishes and a further 90 or so under the terms of charitable endowments. But as early as 1617 and continuing right through the period of the American War of Independence, large numbers of Christ's Hospital scholars took "articles" and left England to serve apprenticeships in America.

On page 79, for the year 1730, we see:

DANIEL SWINORTON baptised 19 June 1720, son of James Swinorton, barber surgeon, admitted from St. George the Martyr, Southwark; 15 August 1735 to his uncle John Langworthy and Mr John Caswell of New England, merchant, to serve Henry Caswell of Boston, New England. (April 1730, an enrolled student)

I have to say that at the moment I have absolutely no idea who this is. There were various little families about in London in the 18th century who I have not yet succeeded in identifying but one day we will!

* * * * *

Those who depend on the merits of their ancestors may be said to search in the roots of the tree for those fruits which the branches ought to produce Barrow

New member William Swynnerton has written to say that whilst motorcycling in Spain, he met a man who on hearing his name told him about "POP SWINNERTON of NORTONS". Apparently this person in about 1916 joined Nortons Ltd of Bracebridge Street, Birmingham, the famous motorcycle manufacturers, as an apprentice. He spent his whole working life there and after 40 years was in charge of the engine department's timing and ignition section. He was a mainstay of the production team and knew all the famous Norton names from R.E.M. Fowler, the winner of the first T.T. Race in 1907, to Geoff Duke.

When the British motorcycle industry began to wind down and Nortons were forced to start to cut their workforce prior to closure, the man said not even the Managing Director Gilbert Smith could give 'Pop' his notice, he told his managers that he could not possibly sack Swinnerton, "he's been here longer than me!" When told that the ever-popular Pop Swinnerton was to stay, apparently, the whole of the engine department stopped work and cheered loudly.

William says that he was told other stories about this legendary member of the family but says that perhaps other members of the family can write of him at first-hand.

WHO WAS HE?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Quotation of the year - "I used to switch off when granny started talking about the family, I wasn't interested then!"

Farewell To Sir Roger

Sir Roger Swynnerton CMG, OBE, MC was elected President of the Tropical Agriculture Association on the 11th May 1983 to fill the loss in December of its Founder President, Ralph Melville.

Sir Roger's wide-reaching experience in tropical agriculture has been of great benefit to the Association. The first twenty-eight years of his career was spent with the British Overseas Agricultural Service, at first in Tanganyika where he left smallholders an advisory book on coffee which is still used to the present day. There was a brief interruption by a spell of War Service in the East African campaign for which he was awarded the MC. A tour of duty with the Government of Malta, to assist in food production during the siege, followed. Not long after his return to East Africa he produced a 'Plan to intensify African Agricultural Development' in Kenya, popularly known as 'The Swynnerton Plan'. As Director of Agriculture in Kenya he was able to implement the land reform programmes which his Plan required and he eventually became Chairman of the African Land Development Board. TAA members will recall that these experiences formed the basis of the fourth Ralph Melville Memorial Lecture on the Development of African Agriculture in Kenya, which he so ably delivered in 1986.

The next fourteen years were spent with the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) as the Corporation's Agricultural Adviser. He built up its Agricultural Department and helped to pioneer the concept of nucleus estates associated with smallholder development and of the establishment of centres for the training of managerial staff. He led many missions to all parts of the Commonwealth and elsewhere both on behalf of CDC and in cooperation with other agencies, notably the World Bank. Roger was knighted in 1976 in recognition of his contributions to tropical agriculture.

Sir Roger regularly attended TAA's Executive Committee meetings where his advice was much appreciated and will be sorely missed. Latterly, his special interest was the publication of TAA's report on the future prospects for tropical agriculturalists and the launching of the Award Fund. Members of TAA will most remember his regular appearances as Chairman to our seminars, where he competently summarised the proceedings, and for his concise and witty presidential addresses at the Annual General Meetings.

It was with regret that, after 61/2 years service as the Association's President, we learnt that Sir Roger felt that he had to stand down. However, we are sure that we shall still see him at some of our meetings and we wish him an enjoyable retirement!

L J Foster T

To Mark from his
brother Frederick.

A l'Aigle d'Or
Place de la Monnaie
Bruges
Belgium
Oct 30th, 1888

Dear Mark

Father has told me you have been enquiring after me in one of your letters, and I am very glad to hear it, for it shows you have not totally forgotten a brother whom you don't know very well. I hear little of you from father, and never saw any of your letters - chiefly because I have not been near father for long since many years. It appears I am something of your own nature a restless character. But I did write to you once or twice but as I never got any answer I gave you up as a correspondent. I should like to hear from you, and to hear how Sarah and the children are, and what on earth you are doing.

As for me I am as you will see abroad again, after a couple of years grubbing for existence. I seriously thought once or twice of throwing all up and going off somewhere - to America - to root you up perhaps and ask for a job. But I have pulled through it alright, not making much money certainly but paying my way. So here I am for one year on contract, a kind of thing very common among the best artists in these degenerate days and therefore nothing to be ashamed of. At the end of my year here I calculate upon making a start in London, where as you perhaps know Joseph and wife are flourishing. But they will see very little of me "chez euse". I hope you have not forgotten your French. I like this place which of course would not suit you at all, it being a dead city so to speak, at least very quiet. But it is picturesque and cheap and models are to be had easily.

I have a lot of friends here, and manage to pass a few evenings per week at houses where I speak various of several languages, to wit French, Italian, English and Flemish. They are very nice people taking them altogether.

A letter from the past (contd.)

I suppose you know I have a small house and studio in the Isle of Man. Father built it and I raised a loan and bought it from him and at present he is living in it. R.P.B's (*Robert Platt Blakely, husband of Mark's sister Catherine*) occupy it during summer months on rental, so I am saved bother about raising interest.

Godfrey has lately been to Australia and China as first mate of the steamer "Afghan" - the ship all that Chinese row was about at Victoria. Charles is in India and is still busy on the pedigree. By the bye have you got a copy of the book? It is all in it, so don't forget to impress on my nephews and nieces that they have a clear descent of 800 - eight hundred - years. Of course in America you don't think much of these things but some day people will be just as vain there of such things as they are here in the Old World - and don't you forget it!

I won't write to you any more for the chances are you will never answer - but if you do answer send me a photo of yourselves and children and I will send you one of my noble self. I have none of myself just now, but am going to get a dozen by order from my young woman.

With love to yourself and Sarah and to the children,
I am

Your affectionate Bro
Frederick Swinnerton.

I suppose you know Joseph and Charles spell their name Swynnerton. Lord! Lord! Godfrey will be home about Xmas. John Nicholson is doing awful pot-boilers just now. He has dropped water colour painting - the only thing he was master of in painting.

(This is a fascinating letter for it tells us so much about what was going on in this family at the time. "The book" was, of course, the history of the family in Vol.VII of Collections for a History of Staffs which Charles had collaborated on and had some extra copies made for the family.)

FROM THE EDITOR

This issue sees another in our "Letter from the past" series. This one is particularly interesting because it gives us so much information about what various members of the family were doing at the time and where they lived and worked. It also dates the change in the spelling of our name by some members, the writer of the letter eventually followed suit but his other two brothers never did.

It also poses some questions. What was the Chinese row at Victoria and who was John Nicholson? If anyone can answer these questions, please write to me.

These letters from another age are so valuable, not only for the sort of information I have mentioned but for what they reveal about our ancestor's life-styles and their views on current events. This is what makes family history so interesting, there is nothing more boring than a long family tree which is just a collection of names and dates. We want to know what sort of people our ancestors were and what sort of lives they lead: what were their occupations and hobbies: were they involved in politics, national, local or parish: where did they go to school: did they have any vices and have we inherited any of them? Old letters reveal a great deal and, of course, to see an ancestor's handwriting and signature can give you a great thrill. If you have any, please consider copying them out to let me publish them in our journal.

I am now reasonably recovered and on the circuit again visiting societies and groups around the country. I have just learned that I shall be going to Australia in May next year where I have been invited to give the opening speech and 3 lectures at the 6th Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry in Tasmania. I shall also be speaking in Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Ballarat. I think I shall also be going on to New Zealand and possibly come home 'the other way' with a stopover in California. If all my plans work out, I hope to see quite a few of you.

SOCIETY NOTES

Volume VII of the *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* published in 1886 which contains the first printed history of our family has long been out of print. Copies occasionally surface in the second hand book trade but they are very rare and expensive. I have managed to acquire one or two copies for members of the family over the years but have not seen one now for over 5 years.

However, I am always being asked about them and so I have investigated the possibility of producing a facsimile copy. I have found a firm who will do this but they would require us to place a minimum order of 30 copies. The text would be an exact copy of the original but the binding would be modern. They would cost £15 each. If you are interested, please write and let me know. They would be produced on a subscription basis, that is to say you would have to pay with your order but please do not send any money yet - we must first see if we have enough support to make up the minimum quantity.

You received a notice about the Annual General Meeting with the last Journal and I hope we shall have a good turnout. There will be the usual sales stall with society ties, binders for your journals, books etc. We now have silver stick pins of the society's badge in stock again. There will also be, either on our stall or on a special stall run by the church, pens and pencils, bookmarks etc in aid of St.Mary's, Swynnerton all bearing the church's name.

A few more record forms have trickled in but the total is still very small. If you cannot fill in the 'tree' on the back, just fill in details of your immediate family on the front. Without them, I have great difficulty in remembering just where everyone fits so do please try.

FAMILY NOTES

NEW MEMBERS.

In the last issue we welcomed several new members. Mrs BETTY JOAN PEARSALL of [redacted]

[redacted] is the daughter of the late Stanley Leichardt Swinnerton and great-grand daughter of John Swinnerton of Astley in Shropshire who emigrated to Australia in about 1878. She is thus a member of our Shropshire Branch and cousin to our members Marjorie Nightingale and Tesla Swinnerton.

Mrs EILEEN MAUDE CUDD (ES.52) of [redacted] Australia is a sister to our members Edwyn Charles (Ted) Swinnerton and Mrs Eunice Byfield and a descendant of the Betley family.

Another descendant of the Betley branch is new member ROGER WILLIAM SWYNNERTON (RS.22) of [redacted]. He is the eldest son of the Rev. Brian Swynnerton.

Finally, Mrs REBEKAH JANE HUNT is a member of the Adbaston & Yew Tree Branches and by that double descent, you will realise that she is a niece of our member Mrs Mary Papps and a cousin of your editor. She is a daughter of Mr Peter Groom and the late Esther Groom (nee Swinnerton) and lives at [redacted]

As we go to press we have received an application from a new member Mr BRUCE HASTINGS SWENARTON of [redacted]

[redacted] Details as to where he fits into the family will be given in the next issue.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mr N.W.R. Watts to [redacted]

Mrs Audrey Swinnerton to [redacted]

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, Swynerton, 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.