

SWINNERTON

Family History



The Arms of Sir Roger de Swynnerton
(circa 1300)

THE JOURNAL OF THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY

VOLUME 8 No.6

JUNE 1991

THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY

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SWINNERTON FAMILY HISTORY

Volume 8 No.6

June 1991

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Editor: Iain Spencer Swynnerton

I do apologise for the delay in producing this journal, I told you in the last issue I was going on a 5-week tour of Australia, New Zealand and America. When I got back in the middle of June there were 168 letters waiting for me as well as a lot of work to catch up! I am only now getting something like up-to-date and this is the first time I have been able to get down to any family work except to reply to letters.

In that 5 weeks I gave 20 lectures and 4 computer demonstrations, took part in 3 workshops and attended 17 meetings one of which was at 8.30 am in a quayside cafe waiting for a boat!

I knew it was going to be a hard trip and it was. I don't think I have ever packed and unpacked so many times - on average every 5 days. Only for the main Australasian Conference was I in a hotel (but I saw very little of it!), the rest of the time I was hosted by members of the various Genealogy Societies or the family.

My itinerary took in Singapore: Perth, Launceston (Tasmania), Melbourne, Ballarat, Adelaide, Canberra, Sydney, Wahroonga, Katoomba in Australia: Auckland, Levin, Wellington, Christchurch in New Zealand and Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and New York in America.

In Tasmania there was a letter waiting me from Peter & Cathy Swinnerton's parents; I spoke to them on the phone but sadly the schedule was too tight to allow time for a visit. In Melbourne, of course, I stayed with Bill and Grace Swinnerton and we had two family gatherings and, hopefully, have recruited some new members from the family portrayed on the centre page. From Sydney I was able to visit Ted and Shirley Swinnerton and I am glad to say that Ted was recovering well from his hip operation.

On my long coach ride from Auckland to Wellington, I broke my journey at Levin and had dinner with our member Eileen Bolitho and her husband and also the chairman of the local society and his wife.

Finally, in Santa Barbara, I stayed with our American Vice-President Norman Swinnerton and his wife and was able to meet Gordon Swenerton and his wife and Alice Cloherty and her husband Ted.

Certainly some very good contacts were made for the family and I hope these will bear fruit in the not-too-distant-future.

It was very useful for me to be able to discuss the subscription position with Ted in Australia and Alice in America and

as a result, we now have money on deposit in both countries to pay for research costs over there which will save a lot of money in bank charges transferring it back and forth.

My next overseas trip is scheduled for the end of April next year when I have been invited to lecture at the *National Genealogical Conference in the States* at Jacksonville, Florida. They want me also to go to California and do a couple there as well so, all you members who live in those areas, watch this space!

* * * * *

Putting on my Treasurer's hat now, I said in the last issue that all our problems with subscriptions were behind us - the computer gives us an accurate printout of all subs and banker's orders paid. True - but only if the banks tell us! My publication of the list of paid-up members in the last journal raised quite a few protests from members who said they had paid, most of which, I have to say, were justified. I found that the banks were just putting "Swinnerton" on the statement for several payments despite the banker's order form saying quite clearly that they were to put the initials. as well. How on earth did they expect us to know which Swinnerton had paid?

In one case they actually succeeded in losing one sub in the transfer between branches of the same bank and I am still trying to get a refund.

One used to trust banks implicitly, I remember.

However, I have been able to satisfy most of the queries but I am sorry to say that quite a lot of members have not renewed including one or two very longstanding members. It would not be nice to publish any form of 'black list' but I am concerned that our numbers are dropping and I cannot keep on and on sending out reminders. I would ask you all, therefore, to ask around amongst your own families and check that they have renewed. Also would all of you who pay by standing order please check your bank, believe it or not, despite sending out new forms this year, we are still getting orders paid for £2, a subscription for Senior Citizens that went out years ago.

At the Annual General Meeting in 1989 I announced Project '90, the writing of a history of each branch of the family in memory of one of our founder members and some-time chairman Ken Armitstead. It was to be his retirement project but, sadly, he died just before.

Well JOE SWINNERTON has done it for his branch - the Warwickshire Swinnertons which, of course, was also Ken's. He has started off with a general synopsis of the history of the village of Swynnerton and of the original family of that place and has then concentrated on his own branch from its founding at Fillongley in about 1730 to the present day.

Copiously illustrated and containing both original material and items culled from this journal and other publications it runs to 100 pages and Joe has had 50 copies printed. It also contains a short article on the Heraldry of the Swinnertons written by myself at Joe's request and this is reproduced later in this Journal.

If you would like to purchase a copy, please write to Joe direct (not to me) at [redacted]

You don't have to be a member of the Warwickshire Branch to have a copy and I can assure you it is a very entertaining book and a thoroughly 'good read'. Some of the family stories he tells are highly diverting!

What an excellent example he has set us all, who is going to be next? Yorkshire, Stoke, Adbaston? What about it. Obviously, I will help all I can.

Not quite a branch history but, nevertheless, another excellent example to us all is the letter I reproduce next (with his permission) written by ARTHUR KELLS SWENERTON to his grandson Ryan. I was very taken with this when his brother Gordon gave it to me in Santa Barbara, I read it several times and I have showed it to several of the country's leading family historians who all agree with me that it is an absolutely first class example of what we should all have done. After all, the principal reason we are engaged in this business of researching our antecedents is for the benefit of the generations to come or if it isn't, it should be!

So - even if you cannot write a family history, you can all write a letter like this and together they will make a marvellous archive for the future. Obviously, I would like to publish some of them but that is entirely up to you. Arthur has set us a marvellous example, let us all follow it.

March 1, 1990

Dear Ryan,

You are eleven years old, and you have asked me to tell you something of your family ethnic background and history. You have also been told that you represent the last male in our immediate family that can carry on and perpetuate the family name of "Swenerton." (That is true unless your Uncle Steven should happen to father a son.)

This is a tall order, so I've tried to condense the information so I won't overload you with too many details.

Here is some of the background information that is known.

First of all, the name "Swenerton" has its origin in the small village of Swynnerton in Staffordshire, England. The name, Swynnerton, is of Saxon origin and was originally spelled "Seolfortun," which means "Silvertown."

In 1066, William of Normandy (France) set out to conquer England and did so, and he became known as "William the Conqueror." He ordered a survey to be made of all land holdings in order to ensure all of his "Crown rights" for taxation. The name, Swynnerton, appears in this survey (called the "Domesday Book" because there was no appeal from its findings).

In the 13th century, Sir John de Swynnerton, a crusader under then King Richard the Lionhearted, rebuilt the Church of St. Mary in the village of Swynnerton as a thank-offering for his safe return from a Crusade; and he became the second founder of the church that still stands in Swynnerton today.

When Sir John died in 1254, presumably from wounds from a lance thrust in a knighthood tournament, his wife had him buried under the church floor and had a stone effigy of his body placed above it. This effigy can still be seen in the church. We are told that in 1856, about 600 years later, the burial chamber was accidentally opened. The six foot two inch tall body had been covered by a 1/4 inch thick layer of lead. The rector and others of the church reported that when the lead was removed they were astonished to see that the body was intact, ruddy in complexion, with auburn hair and sound teeth (except for two missing in front); but the body remained intact for only an instant and then it crumbled into dust!

There are many variations of the name Swynnerton, including ours. In early days, few people knew how to write and changes in spelling were common. The most common variation now is Swinnerton, but we even have relatives in Canada that spell their name Swenarton (with an "a").

Our name, Swenerton, is definitely part of the many ancestors that came from England and then spread over much of the world, especially throughout the British Empire.

Several branches of the Swinnerton family tree have been traced in an unbroken line clear back to the eleventh century. However, our line, known as the "Irish-American line of North America," has not yet been traced back that far. But we do know that some Swinnertons moved from England to Northern Ireland and later emigrated to Canada and the U.S. in the 1800's, so our established line does go back for over 200 years.

Now for some information about our more immediate ancestors.

Our first recorded direct ancestor, Thomas Swenerton, married Mary McKeown in 1786, and they had a son, Joseph, who was born two years later in County Down, Ireland. Joseph married Margaret Taylor, and they had three children in Ireland before emigrating to Canada in 1831 where another son, James, was born. James married Sarah Wilson, and he died in 1812 after fathering two sons and a daughter. One son, Benjamin (1853-1923) was my paternal grandfather and your great, great grandfather. Benjamin married Henrietta Wright, an Irish woman, in Canada, and they had five sons there before they moved to California. In Canada, Benjamin had owned a grain mill which was destroyed by fire on more than one occasion.

My father (your great grandfather), James Walter Swenerton (1891-1955), was the youngest of the five sons. My mother, maiden name May Sweet Henderson (1897-1982), had three older brothers. So you can see that I had seven uncles, four on my father's side and three on my mother's side.

Your Dad, Earl, made copies of an original family portrait we have that was taken around 1897 that shows my father, his father and mother, and his four brothers, and I think they look very much alike. (Ask your dad to see his copy.)

I'm told that I now look a lot like my father did after he passed the age of sixty. I'm a couple of inches taller than he was, but now I have the similar stocky build, sparse (bald) white hair, hazel eyes and fair skin. My father's four brothers were all taller than he was and all but one lost hair in the same balding pattern that I believe was inherited from my grandmother, because my grandfather Swenerton had a full head of white hair until he died at the age of 70.

My paternal grandmother lived to the ripe old age of 93 and she was mentally alert until she passed on. She was a deeply religious woman, as was the whole family. All were members of the Methodist Church. One of my father's brothers, my uncle Kells, was a Methodist minister, my grandfather Swenerton was a lay minister in his church in Canada, and my uncle Arthur and my father were both choir leaders in church.

My uncle Arthur also played the church organ even though he had one artificial leg after an amputation resulting from an accident in which a hot ingot fell on his leg at the Bethlehem steel mill. My father and his two brothers, Kells and Arthur, along with my grandmother Swenerton and assorted cousins, aunts and other family, would gather round the piano in the minister's parish house at Christmas time and sing half the night long. My brother Gordon and I were still too young so we often were sent upstairs to bed, but we would listen to them sing for what seemed like hours. My father could play the piano some, too, but he especially had a superb singing voice. I'm sorry my grandfather died when I was only two years old because I never got to know him and I never heard all of them singing together.

I'm afraid I didn't inherit their musical talent even though my parents had me take piano lessons for at least four years, starting at age nine. I could learn a piece or two at a time and even play in recitals, but I never had the natural talent required to be really good at it. That's why I've been interested in seeing whether any of my children or grandchildren are "musically inclined." (But so far, no real luck!) Your sister, Kirra, has come about as close as anyone, and your dad played a reasonably good guitar at one time. We'll have to see what the future will bring with the rest of you.

To complete the picture of my father's family, I should comment about my father's other two brothers, Herbert and Ross.

My uncle Herbert was the only brother who didn't emigrate to the USA from Canada, so I only saw him a few times when he came to visit. He had only one child, my cousin Margorie, who married and came to live in California and later in Las Vegas, Nevada, before she passed on.

My uncle Ross (not to be confused with your uncle Ross) was the second youngest brother, and both he and my father fought in France in World War I in the Canadian Army. Both were wounded in France-- my father still had shrapnel in his shoulder when he died. My uncle Ross, totally blinded from a head wound, was hospitalized in England for some time because of his serious injuries. There he fell in love with his nurse and married her. Now permanently blind, he and his wife returned to Canada where Ross was employed in a Blind Institute, receiving commendations for doing outstanding work with the blind. He died at only 35 years of age from meningitis resulting from a recurrence of problems from his old war wound.

My uncle Ross and his wife had only one child, a daughter, my first cousin Barbara, who is just about my age. After Barbara's father died, she and her mother returned to England; she was then only four years old and I never saw her until 1981 when your grandmother Helene and I first vacationed in England. I was amazed at how much Barbara and I resembled one another. The Swenerton "look" was definitely there in both of our faces! Of course, Barbara considers herself an Englishwoman. She is married to a very typically British Englishman named Simond, and their children have the last name of Simond.

I did have other first cousins, children of my uncle Kells and uncle Arthur, but only one male cousin (Henry) survived to carry on the Swenerton family name. My uncle Arthur, the eldest brother, had three children, one son and two daughters. Tragically, the boy-- also named Ross-- died in a car-train accident. Only one daughter lived to marry and have children. My uncle Kells, the minister, also had three children, two sons and one daughter. One son died in his youth of complications from a ruptured appendix (these were the days before antibiotics), but the other two children, Henry and Helen, are still alive and well.

My cousin Helen Swenerton married a man with the last name of Nixon; they also had now-married children (one of her sons is adopted) whose name is Nixon, of course. My cousin Henry Swenerton, has four sons who are all married and raising families to carry on the Swenerton name.

My only brother, Gordon, had only one daughter.

So you can see there are now very few male Swenertons in our family to carry on the family name.

I'm unable to be exact about the proportions of my own ethnic blood lines because I don't know whether my grandfather Benjamin Swenerton was all English or only part English and part Irish. I assume he was mostly English, even though his great grandfather Thomas married a woman with the Irish name of McKeown. The maiden names of his father's and grandfather's wives, Wilson and Taylor, seem English to me. I am certain that my grandmother Swenerton was all Irish; her father's name was Charles Wright and her mother's name was Mary Burke. If my assumptions are correct, my father was probably about 60% Irish and the rest English.

Now to my mother's side of the family, the Hendersons, a common Scottish name.

I've told you that the oil portrait that hangs on the wall in our room addition is of David Henderson, my maternal great grandfather. He was born in Glasgow, Scotland, around 1820 or sooner. In 1840, he married Margaret Muirhead, also born in Glasgow in 1821. (Margaret was one of nine children born to Robert Muirhead and Janet Adams.) Both David and Margaret emigrated to Canada and they raised eight children in Hamilton, Ontario (Canada). David died in 1871 and Margaret passed away in 1904 at the age of 84. Records show that the Hendersons and the Swenertons owned property near one another in Ontario at the same time and both families were heavily involved in the church.

My maternal grandfather, Walter Muirhead Henderson, was born to David and Margaret Henderson in Hamilton, Ontario in 1860. Walter married Alice Vatica Sweet in Springfield, Illinois, in 1883. Since Alice was born in Litchfield, Illinois, in 1864, Walter must have emigrated to the U.S. as a young man.

My grandparents, Walter and Alice, later moved to Kansas first to homestead farm on the prairie, living in a sod hut, and then to run a general store selling supplies and equipment. They raised four children, three sons and one daughter-- my mother.

My mother, May Sweet Henderson, was born in Waverly, Kansas in 1897. After finishing school in Kansas, she with her parents and brothers moved to California. My father had known her even while he was in World War I, perhaps by correspondence, and eventually they were married on February 1921 in Los Angeles where my grandfather Henderson had a house.

There is little doubt that my maternal grandfather Henderson was all Scottish, but I don't know the entire background of my maternal grandmother. I do know that her father, also named Benjamin (Benjamin Franklin Sweet, born in 1837), was a blacksmith and later became a captain in the Union Army in the Civil War. Records show that he died in 1897. Benjamin sent for a German bride, Mellissa Jane Ridenhour, and they married and raised seven children. We assume, therefore, that Mellisa was German and that Benjamin was of Anglo-Saxon origin, but we aren't sure. The Illinois Sweets were largely farmers by occupation.

Well, that makes my ethnic background Irish/Scottish/English with a small dash of German, as a best assumption, so you have those four ethnic blood lines in you as does your father.

It is also true that your father is one-half Armenian from your grandmother Helene. Therefore, from your father's side of the family, you can be sure you are one-fourth Armenian and one-fourth Anglo-Saxon (plus a dash of German).

Your known (to me) Armenian ancestry goes back to your paternal great grandmother Mary Khederian Roupen who emigrated to the U.S. from Turkey in 1921. (The original name Roupenian was shortened to Roupen in the U.S.) Our records show that Mary was born in Istanbul, Turkey, on March 4, 1890. She married Harry Roupenian around 1917. Harry was born in Turkey on March 28, 1880, emigrating to the U.S. in about 1919 or 1920. He was a carpenter.

Although both Mary and Harry were born in Turkey, your grandmother Helene wants you to know that it is very important to know that both Mary and Harry were ethnic Armenians living in Turkey; they never identified themselves as Turkish. So both Mary and Harry, as well as your grandmother Helene, are 100% Armenian.

Harry had three daughters from a previous marriage; his first wife died. His marriage to Mary produced two more daughters, Jeannette, born June 18, 1918 in Turkey, and Helene (your grandmother), born January 13, 1925, in Norfolk, Virginia. Harry emigrated to the U.S. first, and his wife, Mary, followed later.

(continued on page 112)

HEDLEY SWINNERTON m. Rebecca Fraser
 b.16Mar1878
 Ballarat, Australia
 d.8Sep1936
 Melbourne

b.21Jun1878
 d. 1957
 Melbourne

BENJAMIN ALEXANDER m. Ruth SWINNERTON b.14Jul1900	DOROTHY m. (1)Tom Boyd (2)Ron McConchie (3)Bill (4)Alec Rendall b.14Oct1901	HEDLEY FRASER m. Alice Wheeler SWINNERTON 25Mar1934 b.16Apr1906 Ballarat	JOHN SPENCER m. Una Frances Howitt b.27Jul1906 Ballarat d.13Apr1986	DONALD MAXWELL SWINNERTON b.19Oct1909 m. Stella (no issue)	HOWARD WILLIAM m. SWINNERTON b.4Feb1908 d.8Dec1934	EDNA MAY b.12Dec1911 m. David Griffiths							
BENJAMIN SWINNERTON b.about 1932	HEDLEY GARY m Sue SWINNERTON Fairweather b.17Mar1936 Ballarat b.23May1939	NEVILLE FRASER m Vivien Pearl SWINNERTON 4Dec1971 Melbourne b.29Apr1940 Melbourne b.16Jan1946 Melbourne	PAUL WHEELER m. Gillian SWINNERTON Eacot b.25Feb1945 Melbourne b.20Mar1952	GLENDALICE SWINNERTON b.17Jan1939 m. Laurence Neilson b.26Jul1934	JOHN HOWITT m. Pamela McCartney Wadmore b.10Oct1935 Melbourne 17Sep1961 Mel b.19Sep1942	JENNIFER UNA SWINNERTON b.16Feb1933 Melbourne m. Keith Smith 21Sep1957 Melbourne							
Child Child	ADAM SWINNERTON b.13Dec1961	KIMLEY b.15Nov1963	ZOE b.29Aug1967 m. Craig..... Sep1990	JULIAN SWINNERTON b.25May1973 Melbourne	JOSHUA SWINNERTON b.15Jun1976 Melbourne	JESSE SWINNERTON 22Jan1977	JOEL ALEXANDER SWINNERTON b.13Sep1979	DARREN JOHN m. Nelida MACCARTNEY SWINNERTON b.3Apr1962 Melbourne	DIANNE PAMELA Belicovska b.30Sep1967 Melbourne 4Apr1987 Melbourne b.28Jan1959	LORRAINE b. m. Arthur Morris	LORRAINE b.14Jun1915 d. Dec1916	LORRAINE b.16Feb1933 Melbourne m. Keith Smith 21Sep1957 Melbourne	JOAN LORRAINE b.22Oct1917 m. Vernon Back

DANIELLE BELICOVSKA
 b.17May1989
 Melbourne

There is quite a remarkable 'story about how Mary came to the U.S. with her younger half-brother, her three-year old daughter, Jeannette, and two young stepdaughters, across the Atlantic by ship, finally landing at Ellis Island, New York, (without knowing how to speak English) before eventually joining her husband to make a new life in a new country.

Your great grandfather Harry Roupen died on August 17, 1927, in Norfolk, Virginia, when your grandmother Helene was less than three years old. He was killed when a truck hit him while he was crossing the street.

Five years after she lost her husband, Mary made a move to California where she bought rental property and built a small store in Los Angeles to provide income to raise her daughters with the help of her half-brother and her batchelor brother-in-law.

For some time your grandmother Helene and her sister, Jeanette, have been gathering information about the history of their mother, Mary Roupen. Jeanette is now writing a document that we hope will be completed this year. When you read it you may be able to appreciate better the tremendous struggle your great grandmother Mary waged to make a good life for her family.

Your great grandmother Mary Roupen died February 29, 1980, only five days short of 90 years of age. For the last six years of her old age she lived in an apartment just three doors east of our house in Fairfield. I'm sorry you didn't get to know her, but I hope you will appreciate the contributions she has made to your ethnic heritage which includes a great measure of brain power. Your great, grandmother Mary was fluent in at least four languages and could get along in one or two more. She loved this country of ours in a way that I wish all of us fortunate enough to have been born here could, and her experiences should help us realize how well off we are in America.

This completes half of your ethnic background from your grandmother Helene and me, so that leaves the other half from your Ardito grandparents.

I assume your grandfather Ardito is all Italian, but I have heard a mention about the possibility of some Swiss blood as well. If so, you have nearly a quarter of Italian blood with a possibility of a dash of Swiss.

I've asked your grandmother Ernestine Ardito about the Sumner family background (Sumner is her maiden name), but I get the impression that not too much is known about that family's ethnic origins. However, I assume that it is largely Anglo-Saxon, and probably the same mix as mine.

Maybe you can get more information on the Sumner line in the future; it should be interesting for you to find out.

In summary, I believe you and Kirra are each as follows:

1/4 Italian

1/4 Armenian

1/2 Anglo-Saxon, with a dash of German and Swiss.

I hope this letter hasn't been too long or too boring for you. If you are interested, we can fill in some of the other details later. At least now you are one step ahead when in the future your children or grandchildren ask you the same questions.

With love,

Your Grandfather Swenerton

* * * * *



PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT

FAMILY GATHERING

AT
SWYNNERTON

Saturday 20th June 1992

We shall be having our usual meeting,
ecumenical church service,
exhibitions of family trees and
memorabilia.

This is your once-in-3-years chance to catch up
with the family from all over the world.
Happily this coincides once again with the Swynnerton
Church Summer Fair which is held on the lawns in front
of the Old Vicarage. Lots of stalls, prizes, Children's
Fancy Dress Competition, Maypole Dancing etc. - a real
English occasion.

BOOK THE DATE NOW !

We hope to see you there.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Swynnerton on Saturday 22nd June 1991.

The Rev Barry Brewer, Rector of Swynnerton, welcomed all those present and informed the Members present that the Church Hall that we were holding the meeting in and which we had helped to purchase for the village was well used.

The President, Sir Roger Swynnerton opened the meeting and welcomed all those present thanking them for their attendance.

1.91 APOLOGIES were received from the Chairman Col Jeremy Swynnerton, Council Members Joe Swynnerton, Timothy Swynnerton, Nigel Watts and members James Swynnerton, Roy Swynnerton, Julian Hawley and Violet Grant.

There were 20 Members and family present.

THE MINUTES of the last Annual General Meeting held on Sunday the 14th October 1990 were approved and signed.

MATTERS ARISING: It was reported that the new financial year and the one subscription rate were proving very helpful. Our bank had now sorted out the problems encountered in identifying the direct debits. We were still awaiting Architects plans for the door to the Church for the Society's appeal.

2.91 FINANCIAL REPORT:

Col Iain Swynnerton reported that the problems with the accounts were now more or less sorted out with the help of Leslie Swynnerton. The accounts were still in draft form with the Auditors and the statement of accounts at the meeting should read 18 months instead of 15 months. Unfortunately the subscriptions were down which meant a reduced income but the accounts showed an excess of income over expenditure of £27.27. Two books had been purchased for the Society's Archives during the year. The previous Council Meeting had recommended that surplus monies in the bank account should be transferred to the Building Society Account and this had now been done with a balance of about £900.00 in the Building Society.

Proposed by Col Iain Swynnerton and seconded by Leslie Swynnerton that the accounts be agreed. This was carried.

A vote of thanks was given to Leslie Swynnerton for all his work in getting the accounts into order.

3.91 MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Col Iain Swynnerton reported that 190 members were on the roll at the beginning of the year but only 142 had paid their subscriptions for this year. This was felt to be rather perturbing. The list in the last Journal had sparked some members to send in their subscriptions but a number of good supporters of the Society were among those who had not renewed.

4.91 ARCHIVIST'S REPORT:

Col Iain Swynnerton reported that the history of the cycling firm was now firmly on its way and would be a great asset to the archives. He had received a large number of letters giving further information on the Swinnertons. One had revealed two baptisms in Somerset in the late 1600's which he had managed to

Annual General Meeting (contd.)

fit into the tree. They did not however prove to tie into the main tree and Iain did not feel that we would ever trace the link as he did not believe the records exist. The 1881 census was just being transcribed and this was bringing in various bits of information.

Col Iain Swynnerton then gave an account of his recent visit to Australia, New Zealand and the USA which he had undertaken in his capacity as President of the Federation of Family History Societies. In all three Countries he had contacted and met up with a number of our overseas members. There had also been a mini-gathering in Australia. Some monies had also been left in Australia and USA for research purposes in those Countries. Col Iain Swynnerton reported the sad passing of Lucy Swynnerton earlier this year. She had been a good supporter of the Society for a number of years and was well known at the AGMs. It was reported that Edythe Seeley had offered to collect the subscriptions in Canada.

5.91 ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

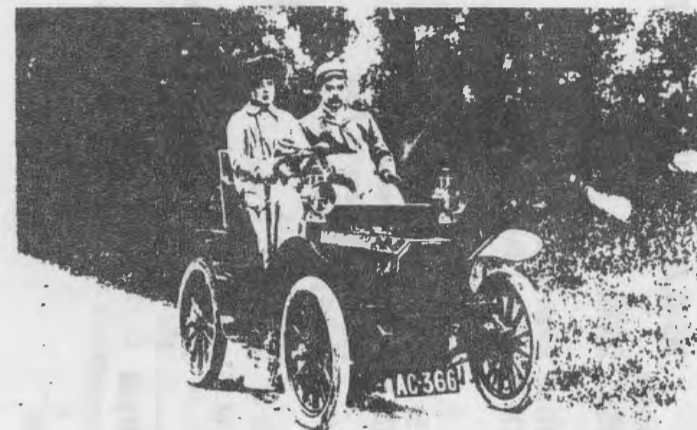
The re-election of Col Jeremy Swynnerton as Chairman, David Brock as Secretary, Col Iain Swynnerton as Treasurer and Timothy Swynnerton to Council was proposed en-bloc by Leonard Swynnerton and seconded by Douglas Hawley and carried. There were still two vacancies for Council.

The re-election of J R Swynnerton and N W F Watts as Auditors was proposed by Iain Swynnerton and seconded by Colin Swynnerton and carried.

6.91 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

After some discussion it was decided that next years AGM would coincide with the Gathering and Saturday 20th June 1992 was provisionally decided upon depending on availability of room at Swynnerton.

7.91 The meeting was closed by the President Sir Roger Swynnerton with thanks to all those who had attended and special thanks to Mr Marsen for providing us with refreshments.



One of the many excellent illustrations from Joe Swynnerton's book.

THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE			PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1990		
12 Months		12 Months	12 Months		12 Months
1989	INCOME	1990	1989	EXPENDITURE	1990
£		£	£		£
845.85	Subscriptions	605.81	9.30	Subscriptions to Societies	6.00
136.00	Sales at Gathering/AGM	442.00	15.00	International Directory entry	13.50
	- Raffle at Gathering/AGM	126.50	184.05	Costs of Gathering/AGM	355.00
2.00	Sale of books	225.50	21.60	Research	157.50
50.00	Sale of binders, ties etc	0.00		- Books for archives	47.00
428.10	Donations to Research Fund	267.00	412.00	Printing of Journal and Directory	611.50
	- Donations to General Fund	181.29	252.33	Postage, photocopying and stationery	573.54
3.00	Building Society interest	5.80		- Ties, binders, pendants, stick pins	223.26
	- Sundry income	208.67		- Typewriter repairs	46.00
	Movement in stocks of binders,		10.00	Bank charges	2.00
(40.29)	pendants, stick pins and ties	-	217.00	Depreciation	-
	Excess of expenditure over income		303.38	Excess of income over expenditure	27.27
1,424.66		2,062.57	1,424.66		2,062.57

BALANCE SHEET AT 31ST DECEMBER 1990

1989		1990	1989		1990
£		£	£		£
	Excess of income over expenditure			Fixed assets	
753.85	At 1st July 1989	1,057.23	1,203.20	Cost of typewriter and computer	1,203.20
	Add for the			Less :	
303.38	period to 31st December 1990	27.27	(1,201.20)	Accumulated depreciation	(1,201.20)
1,057.23		1,084.50	2.00	Net book value at 31st December 1990	2.00
213.25	Creditors	491.77		Stocks of binders, pendants, stick	
			247.87	pins and ties	247.87
			100.41	Debtors and prepayments	17.00
			63.70	Building Society deposit account	519.50
			856.50	Balance at bank	789.90
1,270.48		1,576.27	1,270.48		1,576.27

Heraldry came into being about 1125 (nobody knows exactly when) as a means of identification in battle. The development of armour and in particular the invention of the drop-down visor which completely obscured the face, meant that a knight on horseback was completely unrecognisable to friend or foe!

To identify themselves, the knights adopted individual symbols which were painted or embroidered on a linen surcoat worn over the armour (the origin of the term 'coat of arms') and on their shield, banner etc. They were also much used on seals which were used to witness deeds of land transfers, sales of land etc as, of course, most of them were illiterate and could not sign their names.

The earliest record of arms used by a member of the Swinnerton family appear to be those of Sir Roger de Swinnerton who was Constable of the Tower of London in the time of King Edward III. His arms were *ARGENT, A CROSS FLORY SABLE* which means a black cross with fleur-de-lys ends on a silver shield. This particular form of the basic cross has always been the central device of any Swinnerton arms and is cited as the classic example of that particular form of cross by that great authority Charles Boutell in his wonderful book 'The Manual of Heraldry' originally published by him in 1863 but republished after revision by several distinguished heralds many times since.



Later, the straight armed version of the cross seems to have developed into a very graceful and elegant curved form known as a *CROSS FORMEE FLORY* and this is given in several records and has become the recognised form.

The principal *raison d'être* of Heraldry was a means of identification and so it follows that a coat of arms must be peculiar to one man and that any other person, even another member of his own family, must have some variation of colour or extra device added to distinguish him from the original.

When the head of the second branch of the family, Sir John Swinnerton of Hilton, was granted arms therefore, a red border (in Heraldic language a *bordure engrailed*) was added.

Similarly, when the Swynnertons of Eccleshall established themselves as a separate branch, they added a red diagonal stripe to the shield (*overall a bend gules*) to distinguish them from the original family and this coat was also used by the Swynnertons of Butterton but with a much narrower stripe called a *bendlet*.



The founder of the Swinnertons of Warwickshire, was Thomas Swinnerton, born in Newcastle, Staffs in 1709 but settled in Fillongley, Warwickshire by 1748. He was a direct descendant of John Swinnerton, younger son of Roger de Swinnerton of Butterton. John's great-grandson was Roger Swynnerton of Whitmore, the founder of yet another branch of the family - the Swinnertons of Whitmore and subsequently, Yew Tree and Shut Lane. They, confusing and really quite wrongly, appear to have used the same arms as the original Swinnerton of Eccleshall branch whereas they should have used, as descendants of a younger son, the arms of Roger Swynnerton of Butterton with a difference mark.

I can find no reference to any arms having been granted or used by the founder of the Warwickshire branch who was again the descendant of a younger son but if there had have been such a grant, it would have undoubtedly been another variation on the arms of Roger of Butterton, perhaps with a border or a colour change.

Most, but not all, coats of arms are accompanied by a crest and a motto. The crest was the ornamental stuffed bird or animal that was fixed to the top of the helmet but, unlike the Arms, was not hereditary and could be changed at will. It is therefore quite wrong to refer to a *family crest* although in ignorance many people do, it is the family arms or coat of arms. Most of the Swinnerton

crests recorded have been a Boar in various postures, no doubt a punning allusion to the surname.

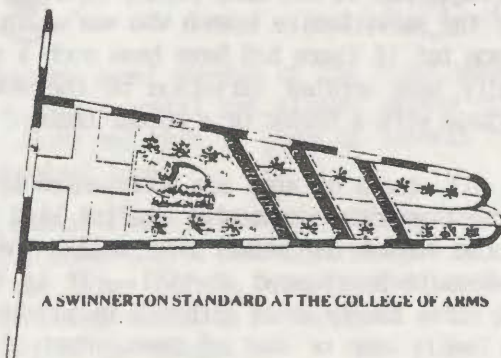
The traditional motto of the first Swinnerton was *Avauncez et marchet bien* (advance and shoot well) which tradition has it was awarded to an ancestor who distinguished himself in a particular battle. However, mottoes are normally chosen by the person themselves!



THE SOCIETY'S BADGE

Finally - a word of warning. You may display any arms in your home for ornamentation or interest but you may not CLAIM or USE any arms unless they have been granted to you personally by the College of Arms or your right to them by descent has been registered and approved by the Kings Arms and Herald's at the College. To do the latter, you must prove to their satisfaction, that you are descended in the male line from the person to whom they were originally granted and pay a fee which is quite considerable.

Members of the Swinnerton Society may, where appropriate, by permission of the College use the Heraldic Badge of the Society which is the personal badge of the founder of the Society and based on his arms.



A SWINNERTON STANDARD AT THE COLLEGE OF ARMS

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 Swynerton 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 Swynerton every 3 years. It is registered as a Charity No. 518184.