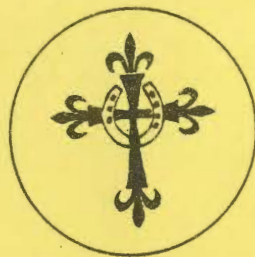


# SWINNERTON

## Family History



*Swinerton*  
*EQ Cycle Sport*



THE JOURNAL OF THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY

VOLUME 8 No. 8

DECEMBER 1991

**THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY**

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[REDACTED]

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**SWINNERTON FAMILY HISTORY**

Volume 8 No.8

December 1991

**CONTENTS**

From the Editor's Desk	122
Family Notes	123
Jottings	124
Swynnerton Cycles - a History	125
Directory of Members	129

*Editor:Iain Spencer Swynnerton*





## FROM THE EDITOR

A bad dose of 'flu 10 days before Christmas completely ruined my schedule so my apologies for the lack of Christmas cards and my thanks to all of you who sent them. It also accounts for this journal not having reached you for Christmas as it should have done. I am writing it at the very end of December but I still have to print, assemble, envelope, label and mail it so it will be 1992 before you get it.

That is going to be an important year for us as it is a year for one of our tri-ennial Gatherings and, by modern standards, our coming of age as it will be our 18th Birthday. Details appear again in this issue and booking forms will be sent out with the March Journal. I hope you have the date firmly in your diaries (Saturday 20th June) and that you will make every effort to come. It is a great opportunity for viewing the family trees (which are always being revised and up-dated as our knowledge increases): for meeting your immediate family and members of the wider family: for renewing old friendships and, of course, for visiting our lovely old church. I hope, particularly, that we shall see a good contingent from overseas.

I have now finished the major task of overhauling our membership records and I am satisfied that I have tracked down every subscription, standing order and covenant. The sad part is the number of members who have died over the years and also the number who have just dropped out for no apparent reason. The final list of paid-up members as at the 31st December 1991 is printed at the end of this journal, it shows that we have 185 members - a drop of 18 over the year. Of these, sadly 3 have died but 15 have not renewed their membership despite several reminders and in most cases a personal note.

1992 is also a leap year, regarded as lucky by many and its digits add up to 21 - also regarded as a lucky number by many. Let us hope they are right. My very best wishes to all of you for a happy, prosperous and peaceful year.

## FAMILY NOTES

We welcome three new members this quarter.

*NEIL ADRIAN SWINNERTON* (NS.17) of [redacted] is the son of our member *Albert Ernest Swinnerton* of the Wirral and is a member of the Wrexham Branch of the family. Neil is a chartered Civil Engineer. His wife *Doctor Briony Jane Swinnerton* née Williams, a speech scientist, has also become a member. Neil is the 7th member of this branch to join the society, the others being his father, his aunts Mrs Wood, Mrs Houghton and Mrs Stocks: the late Kenneth Shaw Swinnerton and his son, our member David Swinnerton of Middlesbrough.

The other new member is *NORMAN JAMES SWINNERTON* of [redacted]. He is a retired Electrical Engineer, is married to Eileen Minnie (née Hughes) and has one son John who is a Civil Servant. Norman's parents were Edward Swinnerton and Martha (née Williams) and they were married at West Bromwich in the last quarter of 1917. The family came from the Perry Bar area of Birmingham. Norman's grandfather was a Joseph Swinnerton and Sarah whose maiden name it is thought was Fellows but that is all we know at present. There is obviously some research to be done on this.

I am happy to welcome back as a member from the 1st January 1992 the *REVEREND BRIAN THOMAS SWYNNERTON*. His sons have been members in turn for the last two years but I am particularly glad to see Brian back because he was one of the original 4 founder members of the society, the other two - Ken Armitstead and John Swinnerton - have sadly died.

The number of family group sheets returned has now crept up to 40 but that is only 22% of our membership. These sheets are a great help to me in compiling trees and providing a quick reference to members' position in the family, which branch they belong to etc. Although I carry a lot of it in my head, age creeps on and it isn't as easy as it used to be. So please - do have a shot at filling them in, don't worry if you can't do it all but do what you can. Everyone can fill in the front side because that is your own immediate family.



The Reverend Brian Swynnerton writes:

"I have in my possession a rather tattered *CREWE AND SOUTH CHESHIRE MOTOR CLUB OFFICIAL PROGRAMME* (price 6d!) for Saturday 11th May 1946 -- the first motor cycle races held by the club after the 1939-45 War.

There were only 16 competitors but two of them were *R.SWINNERTON* No.30 with a Rudge 250 and 500 and *G.SWINNERTON* no.33 with a Velocette 349. Both were members of the Chester Motor Club. I think their names were Ron and George. It was a very exciting grass track race meeting; the two Swinnertons rode brilliantly coming 2nd and 3rd in all the events.

Subsequently, I saw them race equally successfully at many events in those immediate post-war years. However, being a teenager, I never had the courage to speak to them although I was proud that they were Swinnertons. Ron was especially distinctive because he rode with his sleeves rolled up in a white polo-necked sweater.

I wonder if any reader knows of them? They were certainly good sportsmen and both very skilful riders and respected on the Cheshire circuits. Perhaps someone has a snapshot of them that might be published in the Journal. Perhaps they were brothers."

*EDITOR'S NOTE: I think the Ron was probably Ronald of the Adbaston Branch who had a garage in Stafford for many years but he did not have a brother George. He had a cousin of that name who was the father of our member George Maurice Swinnerton who will no doubt be able to throw some light on the matter.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*An anonymous note sent to me said that GERALD G.SWINNERTON is listed in a Directory of Birmingham as having a grocer's shop at [redacted] and a fishmonger's shop at [redacted] in 1935.*

*This was an easy one (the Gerald was the clue) - this was Gerald George Swinnerton of the Warwickshire Branch and the father of our member John Gerald Swinnerton.*

BICYCLE MAY 1991



## KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

Swinnerton's Cycles in the heart of the Potteries has served the cycling community since 1915. Last year Roy and Doris Swinnerton retired after 30 years in the business but, as Ben Orme reports, the shop remains in the family and committed to the same high standards.

**B**ike shops have always come and gone according to the ebb and flow of the cycle industry through the years. The shops that endure are those that place the emphasis on service: nothing too small to repair, no request too troublesome. Swinnerton's Cycles in Stoke on Trent has been a bike shop since 1915 and has always prided itself on this philosophy. Last May Roy and Doris Swinnerton finally retired from the business they had inherited over 30 years ago, but the shop remains very much in the family and although the business continues to develop, the original principles still hold dear.

Roy's father started the shop in a portion of the family home in the Potteries town of Fenton in 1915 with a fleet of some 60 bikes to hire and a thriving repair business. In those days the hire market was booming as city dwellers discovered cycling as a means to the fresh air of the surrounding countryside. 'Dad used to go to work at about 6 o'clock in the morning', Roy recalls, 'and come home at 5.30pm, have a meal and then work in the shop till 10pm at night. He used to work seven days a week: it was hard work in those days.' He had started work as a boy of 13 and was still working in the same factory well into his 70s.

'I remember them telling me', Roy



recounts, 'because I was very young then of course, that they used to put two tyres on each wheel - take the wire out of one tyre and put it on the other one so they wouldn't have any punctures. And if it did puncture they wouldn't even know it! And it was actually a tip like that we used in the last war when tyres were very scarce. You'd take the wire out and twist it round the tube, and put the tube and tyre inside the other one. Very heavy and sluggish, but it did the trick.'

Roy and Doris moved back into the family home in 1954, which they had left when they married, to take over the business during a period when Roy's father was unwell. 'The first week's takings were £7!', Doris recalls today with a chuckle, but 'things began to look up when they began to concentrate on lightweight bikes rather than the old 'sit up and begs'. Working as a company secretary, Roy found his daily routine following the example set by his dad. 'I used to go to work, return to the shop in my lunch hour, go back to work, come home, have a meal and then do more repairs.' And still find time to train for a burgeoning career as a racing cyclist.

Three years after taking over, with two children and two more on the way, the Swinnertons moved out of the house and set about a slow process of expanding the shop within the family home. Most of the work was done by their own hand, without ever seeking bank loans and with maximum flexibility in mind. For a time in the 60s, for example, when there was depression in the bike trade, they knocked down a wall and opened a toy shop within the premises. 'Some of the other cycle shops in the area were carrying toys and doing very well. So we decided to try it and had the shop for some eight years before the advent of mail order began to make it less unprofitable.' The wall went back up. Later the Swinnertons expanded sideways and started a post office which they still have today.

**'We would take the kids, have a good day out, and I'd come back loaded with prizes'**

Roy's competitive record in grass track racing, and his later participation in international competition as a mechanic and

team manager, all helped boost the reputation of the shop. Often held in conjunction with country fairs, horse or flower shows, grass track meets were a more relaxed affair than hard track races. 'If it was a bank holiday we would take the kids, have a good day out, and I'd come back loaded with prizes.'

Roy was still racing grass track when he was 40 and attributes his longevity in the sport to the lower key atmosphere of the racing. 'That's one thing that's different from my kids'

They've won a lot more than me, but I've got a lot more to show for my racing. Because mine was a more relaxed kind of racing I think I was able to carry on for a lot longer than they have.' Today he still does the occasional time trial and has just done his 27th 100 mile reliability time trial.

All but Francis of the seven Swinnerton children have raced at international level - and even Francis married a racing cyclist - Tony Mayer. The racing connection was strengthened when Jackie married the celebrated Irish cyclist, Martin Earley; who lives in Stoke when not on the circuit. When Bernadette was selected for the world championships in 1968 Roy went as the team mechanic and he was in Czechoslovakia the next year when she won a silver. After the 1972 Olympics Roy was made team manager for the Commonwealth Games (1974) where every member of the team won a gold medal bar one. By this time the Swinnertons were also organising local time trials and track league and the shop was hardly ever closed, acting as a clubhouse on a Friday night as well.

In the 70s they also opened another shop in Hanley which they ran for seven or eight years before the development of the shopping centre forced out the small retailers. Nevertheless, the city centre shop had boosted their reputation locally and they found that customers were willing to travel to Fenton for the specialist service offered.

Upstairs in the bike display area of the shop there is a glass case containing the Tour de France jerseys won by Sean Kelly in his illustrious career and a saddle given by Stephen Roche in 1987 when he bought a car from Mark Swinnerton. Kelly is a good friend of the family. 'There is a lovely story' Roy

volunteers, 'that when somebody said to his dad what a tremendous cyclist Sean was, his father replied 'why shouldn't he be, he does nothing else.'

Although Fenton is the least important of the five Potteries towns it is ideally located for road (M6 Junction 15) and rail and draws customers from Shropshire, Derby, Liverpool and Birmingham. Doris recounts with pride the customer from London who told her, 'I always do my shopping here because no matter what I have on the list you've usually got it in stock.'

### **'We're users as well as sellers'**

With former pro cyclist John Herety in charge of the clothing section now, and Mark and Paul Swinnerton doing the buying, the policy has been to concentrate on select manufacturers who seem to produce the best product at the various price points. There are over 1,000 bikes in stock and some 500 helmets alone. Swinnertons have concentrated on leading brand names in all areas, in the clothing line, for example, stocking names like Descente, Cannondale, Ultima and Lusso. It is a policy based on the unparalleled experience of those who work in the shop. 'We're users as well as sellers', as Doris puts it.

Reflecting the national trend about 70% of bike sales are accounted for by mountain bikes, though lightweights and touring bikes are still ticking over well. In fact there has been a definite trend for customers to buy a mountain bike and then go for a touring bike to get around by road quicker. Another significant trend has

been the increase of sales of cycle carriers and roof racks reflecting the willingness of today's cyclist to use the car to get out to good riding terrain. 'Another thing which is happening', Roy says, 'is the return to the habit many years ago of taking children on bikes. For years you had to buy second hand or make your own trailers, but there are now several makes on the market.'

Looking back over the years Roy is well positioned to identify the main developments which have changed the cycle industry. The technical revolution from America is one. 'We were staying in the same hotel as the Americans at the 1968 Olympics, who were then sending to Europe for all their equipment.' Twenty years on and they dictate the trends. 'In 1968 we were using a special mastic on our tyre. Of course the Americans came along and were using a kind of superglue. We were laughing at them then, but we weren't laughing for very long and soon everybody was changing over. Now it's the Japanese taking up the challenge.'

**'When I was young a bike would cost three times a man's weekly wages'**

On the UK scene the big achievement in Roy's opinion has been the acceptance that for years British cyclists have had too cheap a sport. 'My first bike in 1939', Roy says, 'was a lightweight with 531 tubing and cost £7 17d. We were selling bikes for £15 or £16 when we came here: you couldn't get much for that now. When I was young a new bike would cost about three times a man's weekly wages. A labourer was only getting about 17s 6d a week and a foreman about £1 10d. The cheapest Hercules would have cost £3 or £4.'

'About 15 years ago a bike was actually cheaper than it was 30 years ago or more because the wages had gone up more than the price of a bicycle and it took a long time before the industry could sell a bike for more than £100. In this area they've always been very careful with their money. The bread and butter working man just wanted a working bike and didn't want to spend more than £50 or £60. They thought that a bike should be dirt cheap.'

But times have changed and the expectations of what you have to pay has

**Roy Swinnerton Ltd  
67-73 Victoria Rd  
Fenton  
Stoke-on-Trent ST4 2HG  
Tel 0782 47782  
Fax 0782 49877**

Stoke-on-Trent's premier cycle shop where you'll find something of interest for every cyclist.

**Swinnerton**



risen. And then there's the 'posing' element in clothing retailing which has led to a boom in that area. Yet as Doris points out cycling is still a cheap sport to start with: you can get a good 10 speed bike for £125.

With time on their hands for the first time in their lives, Roy and Doris now love to get away cycle touring. They like the simplicity of putting the bikes on the plane, getting off at the airport and just seeing how far they can go. 'We would do a lot more in this country if it wasn't for the weather', Doris says, 'but we like a bit of sunshine.' A trip to Crete last year was delayed when Roy fell off the roof of their house and broke a bone in his back, but he is back to fitness now and future expeditions are in the pipeline. 'My dad used to say cycling is only geared walking', Roy recalls, 'it needn't be hard work, you can go at your own pace and see a lot more scenery than you can walking.'

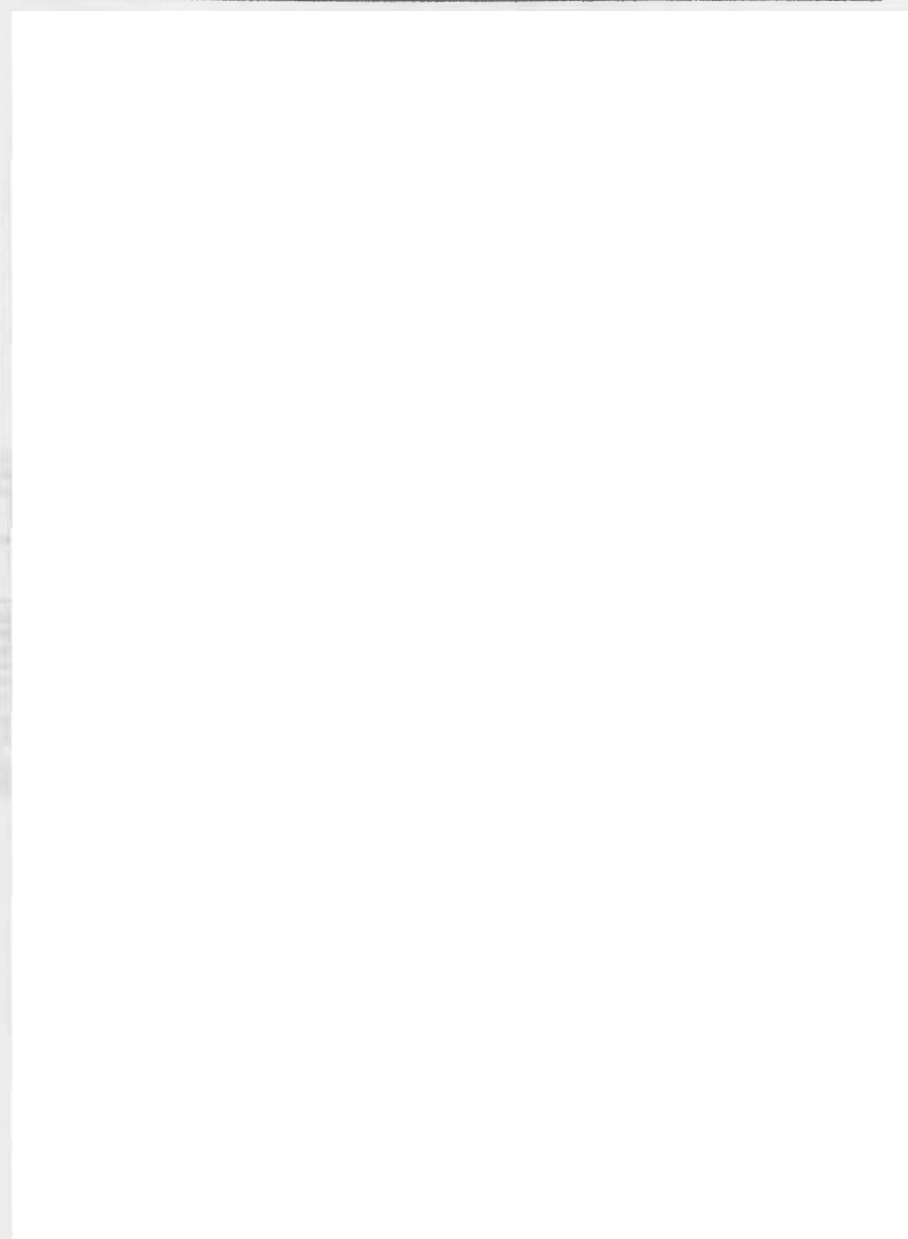
While Doris comes into the shop about four times a week to help with the accounts and keep the place spotless, Roy has found that

the gathering pace of technical development has left him somewhat adrift and he prefers to stay in the background these days. He continues, however, to act as the secretary for the local City of Stoke club, which he founded in 1970, a post he has been trying to pass on to somebody else for 20 years!

Both Roy and Doris have tremendous confidence in the new team of Mark and Paul, John Herety, John Buckley, Ernie King (part-time) and the two mechanics Steve and Lenny, an ex Olympic team mechanic. One of Roy's grandchildren, Jennifer, also works Saturdays. There's not an area of cycling that cannot be expertly dealt with by somebody in the shop.

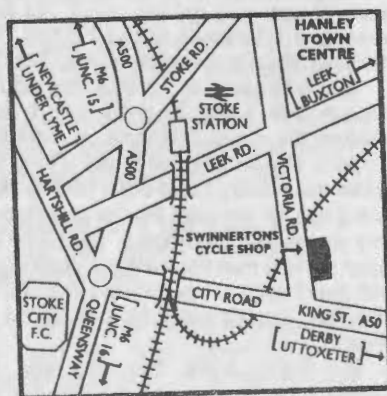
So while Roy and Doris take a well deserved retirement, Swinnertons' reputation for service with a smile is in safe hands. It is the essential factor of continuity that has linked the shop's dealings with its customers - from the early hire days through to the development of the lightweight market and the recent mountain bike boom. □

## THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY - List of Members as at 31 Dec 1991



# Swinnerton

## EE Cycle Sport



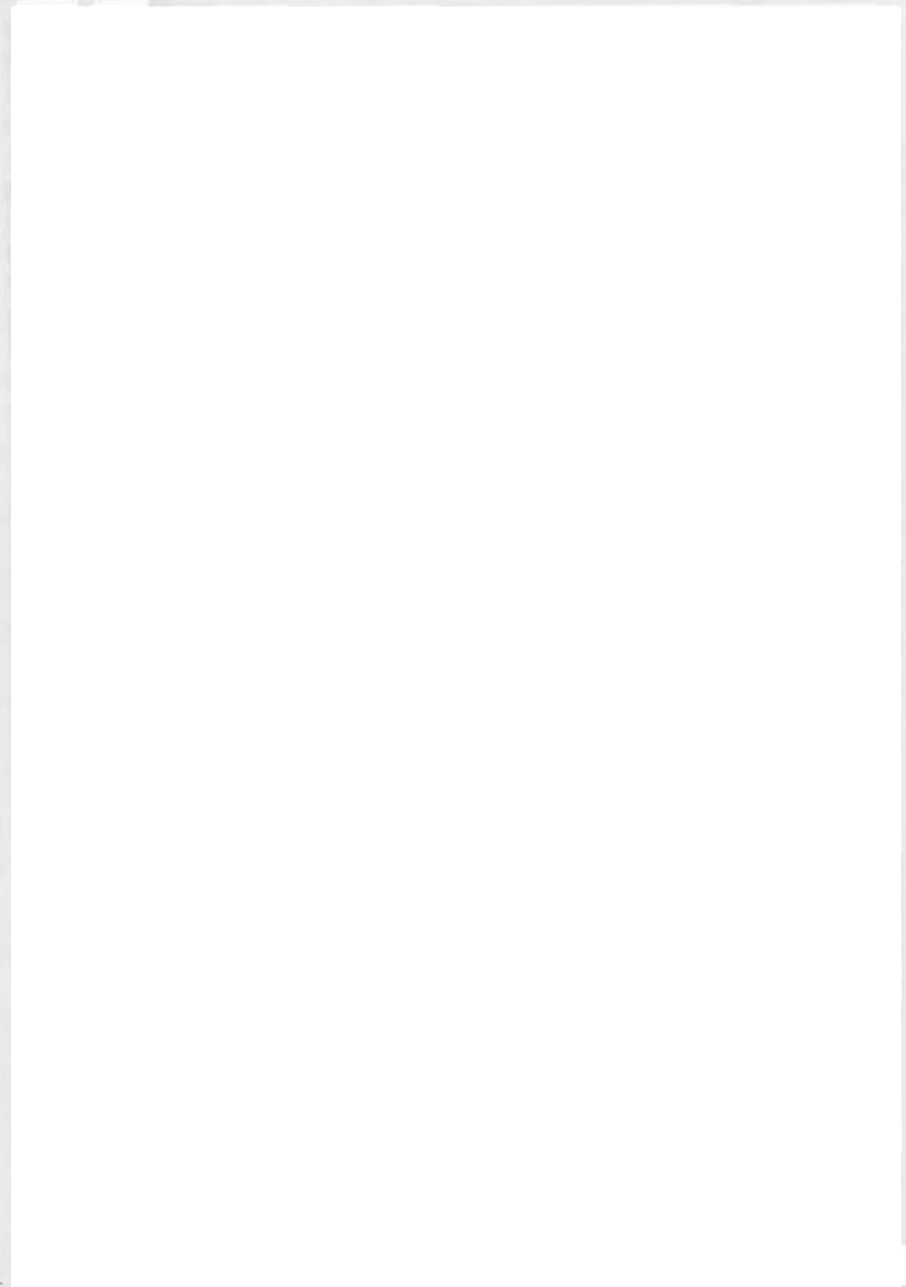
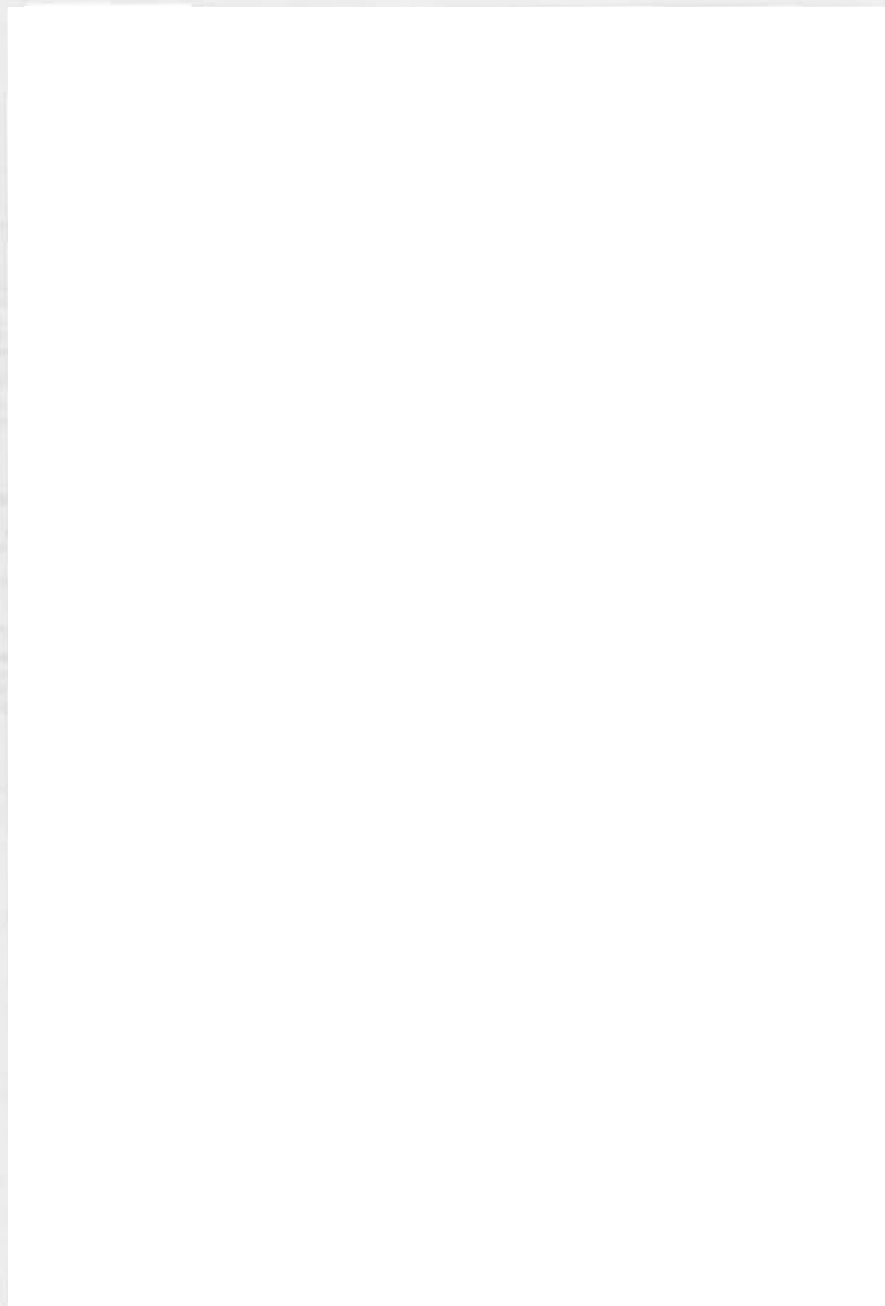
## SILVERTON / SILVERTON OF IRELAND

WILLIAM SHEHARTON	ANNE (AS. 153 b.	MARGARET (MS. 170; JANE b.	MARY AMELIA (MS. 171) b. d.	THOMAS SHEHARTON b. d.	JOSEPH SHEHARTON b. d.
d. 1863 Australia um.	Australia " "	d. " "	(to Canada 1873)	d. (TS. 128)	of New Key Co., Londonderry (JS. 156)
(MS. 122)	John Campbell	Stewart	John Hemmerv		

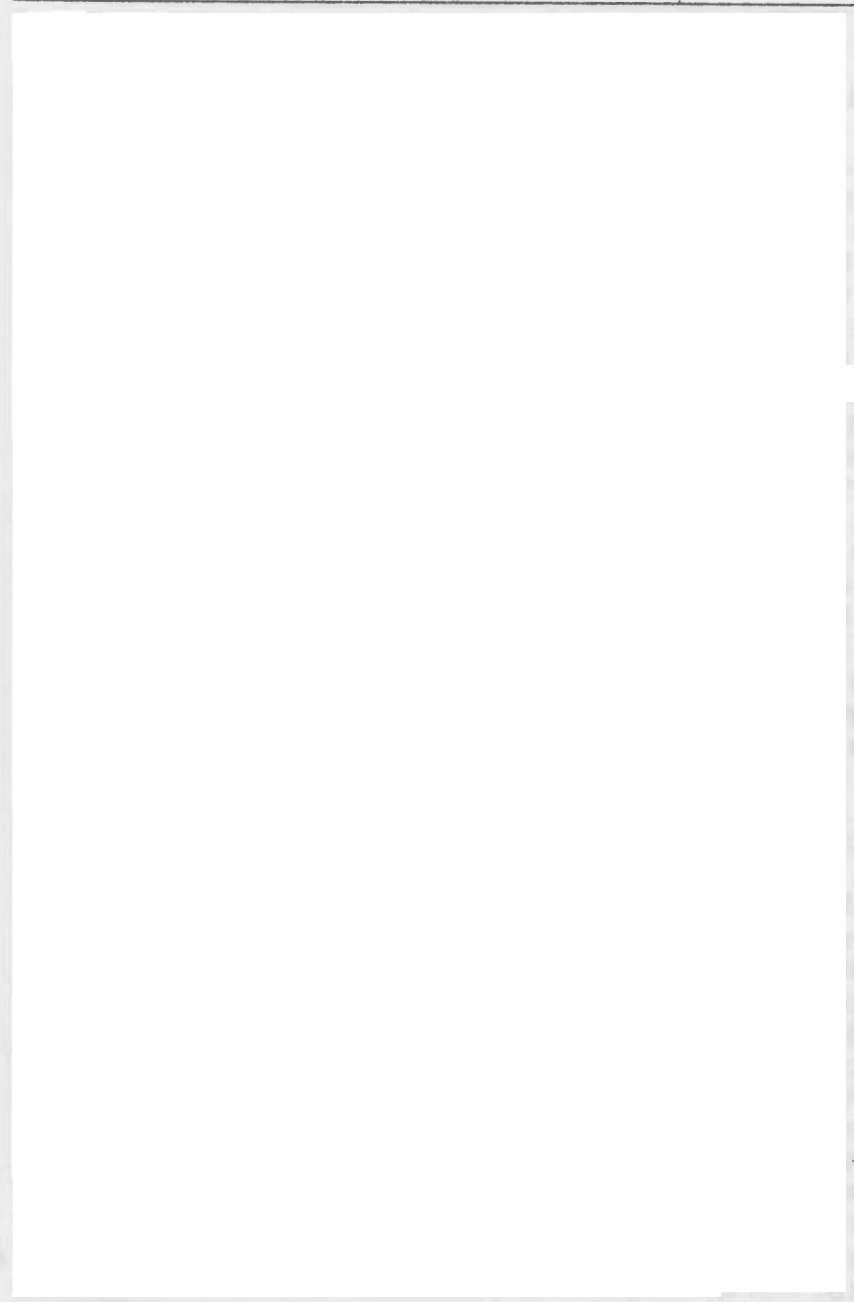
THOMAS JAMES SHEMARTON b. d. (TS. 129)	= Elize Lowe or Lowe	WILLIAM ROBERT SHEMARTON b. d. (Changed name to SHEMERTON) (MS. 123)	= Eleanor Burnett	WILSON SHEMARTON b. d. (died in teens) (MS. 124)	JOSEPH SHEMARTON b. 1836 Rous Key d. 25 Sep 1913 Magherafelt N. Ireland (JS. 390)	Margaret Hutchinson 1 Nov 1876 Kilree, Co. Londonderry d. 26 May 1847 d. 7 Oct 1927 Magherafelt
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THOMAS JAMES = (1) ..... SMERNERTON b.c. 1923 (2) ..... (to Canada) (TS, 130)	JOHN McINTYRE = Elizabeth McIvor SMERNERTON 1958 (JS, 374)	LAWSON A. .... = Joan Boyd SMERNERTON Nov 1915 (LS, 39)	WILLIAM JAMES = Dorothy SMERNERTON b. 30 Oct 1917 (WS, 129)	1944	MAISIE (MS, 173) b. EILEEN (MS, 207) b.	WILLIAM LUNN SMERNERTON = Emma Patricia b. 22 Mar 1879 Magherafelt Fawcett Mar 1915 b. 15 Oct 1880 Magherafelt b. 20 Mar 1882 Monaghan, Eire SMERNERTON circa 1914 (MS, 120)	JOSEPH CREIGHTON = Annie SMERNERTON (Donie) Scott 1944 Magherafelt d. 13 Aug 1956 b.	MARGARET HELEN (MS, 211) b. 4 Sep 1877 Magherafelt b. 5 Dec 1881 Magherafelt (Aey) b. 24 Jul 1959 London d. 28 Mar 1963 London = Creighton Lindsay b. 26 Nov 1881 Ballyronan 1876 d. 11 Jan 1970 b. Laitlie	JANE OLIVIA (JS, 366) b. 5 Dec 1881 Magherafelt b. 14 Mar 1884 Magherafelt d. 19 Nov 1961 Aughrim = Andrew Hutchinson b. 1864	ANNIE AMELIA (AS, 154) Magherafelt (Aey) b. 14 Apr 1887 Magherafelt d. 11 Apr 1940 Castle Dawson	JOHN THOMAS (Jack) = Christine Anderson OLIVER RICHARD = Edith CHALINE SMERNERTON b. 20 Feb 1899 Magherafelt Dungannon b. 26 Dec 1886 Dungannon
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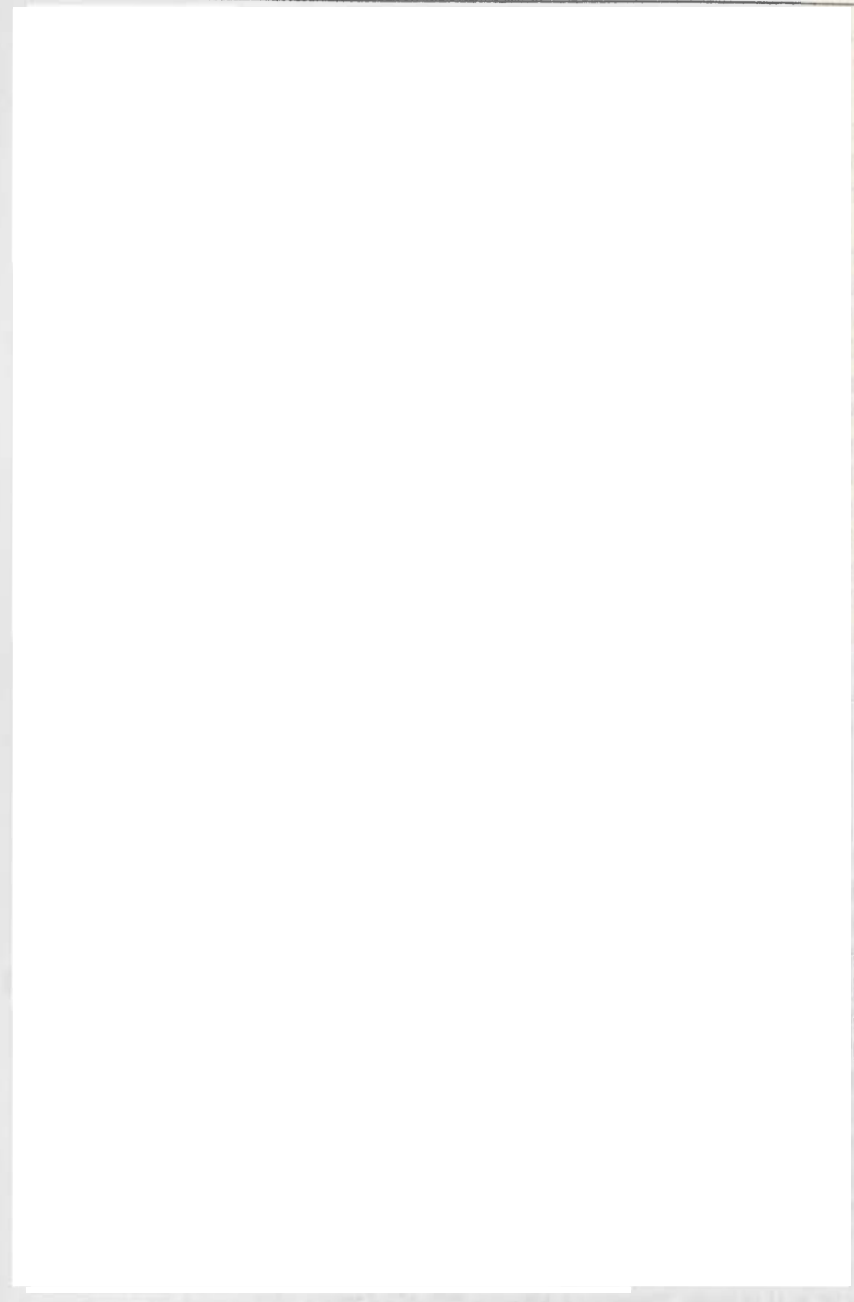
ROBERT SMYTHON b.7Jul1965 (RS,137)	HEATHER(HS,110) b.7Aug1960	ELEANOR(ES,208) b. Jun1953	LORMA(LS,40) b. Aug1955	ERIC WILLIAM = Mildred Pamela SMYTHON Wright b.19Feb1945 19Jul1974 (ES, )	ELEANOR(ES,210) LINDA b.29Jul1947 = James McGill 16Jul1972	DELAH(BS,32) HEATHER b. Jul1954 = Frank Porter 23Nov1972	PAULA(PS,41) b.23Jan1964	WILLIAM LINDSAY SMYTHON b.1May1916 d.12Dec1981 Be East unms. (MS,121)	DOROTHY(DS,60) b.29Feb1918 Monaghan unms.	JESSAMINE(JS,364) MARGARET b.24Feb1911 Magherafelt unms. Magherafelt unms.	MURRAY HELENE(MS,23) JOAN b.25Aug1916 Magherafelt = George Simpson 10Nov1955Magherafelt = Brian Toms b.4Jan1919MagherafeltJun1942	HARRY(HS,212) b.27Nov1920 Castledawson d.18Sep1964 Weybridge Surrey (JS,363)	JOSEPH ANDERSON = Mavis Simmons b. 1914 Castledawson d.18Sep1964 Surrey (JS,363)	JOHN CRIGHTON = Evelyn MOEL SMYTHON (Ian) Margaret b. May1915 Vaughan Castledawson (Peggy) Dunganen (JS,362) 1957 (NS,24) Bunhillia Presb.	WINIFRED LOUISA(LS,18) Calderwood b.3Aug1914 Dungannon Bangor = Jessie McKeery b.17Aug1917 Coleraine d.25Mar1977 Coleraine		
								HELEN PATRICIA(HS,108) b.16Dec1920 Monaghan = Franklin Woods 4Jul1955 Portlough		JOYCE OLIVIA(JS,365) b.12Sep1912Magherafelt = (1) John Teit Woodchapel Essex 17Apr1942 Killed in Action 3Oct1943 (RAF) = (2)Victor Greener	ANNA(AS,151) CHRISTINA (Nance) b.8Oct1918Magherafelt = Ewin Thoroughood 22Sep1943 Wingham, Essex		MARK SMYTHON b.15Sep1952 Weybridge,Surrey (HS,209)	HILARY(HS,107) b.13Dec1950 Weybridge = Alan Graham b.18Mar1947 Oxlowave	EVELYN(ES,209) b.29Oct1953 Weringstown Co.Down	GARY SMYTHON b. 1948 b. 1980 Bangor Bangor Co.Down (PS, ) (GS,109)	PAUL SMYTHON = ..... 1986



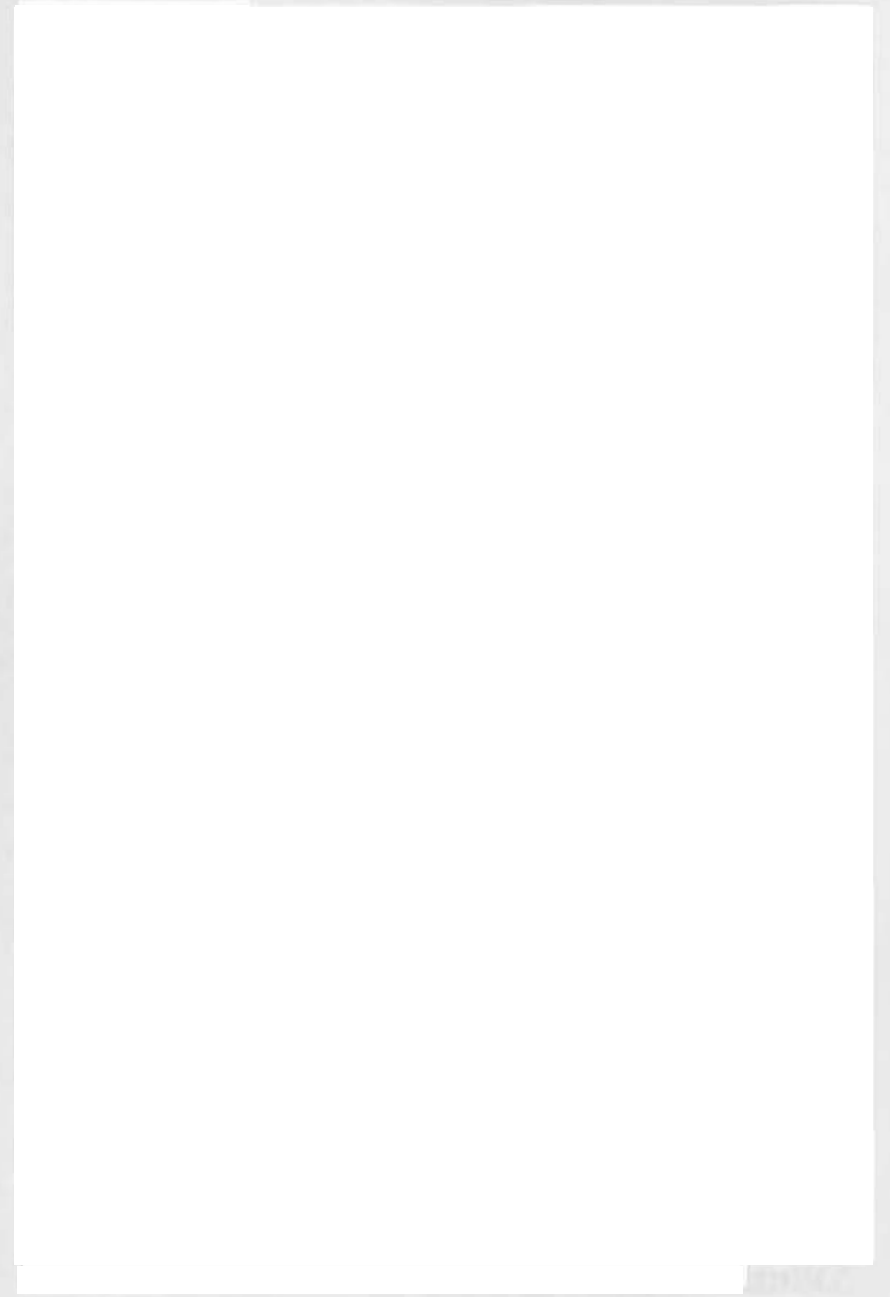
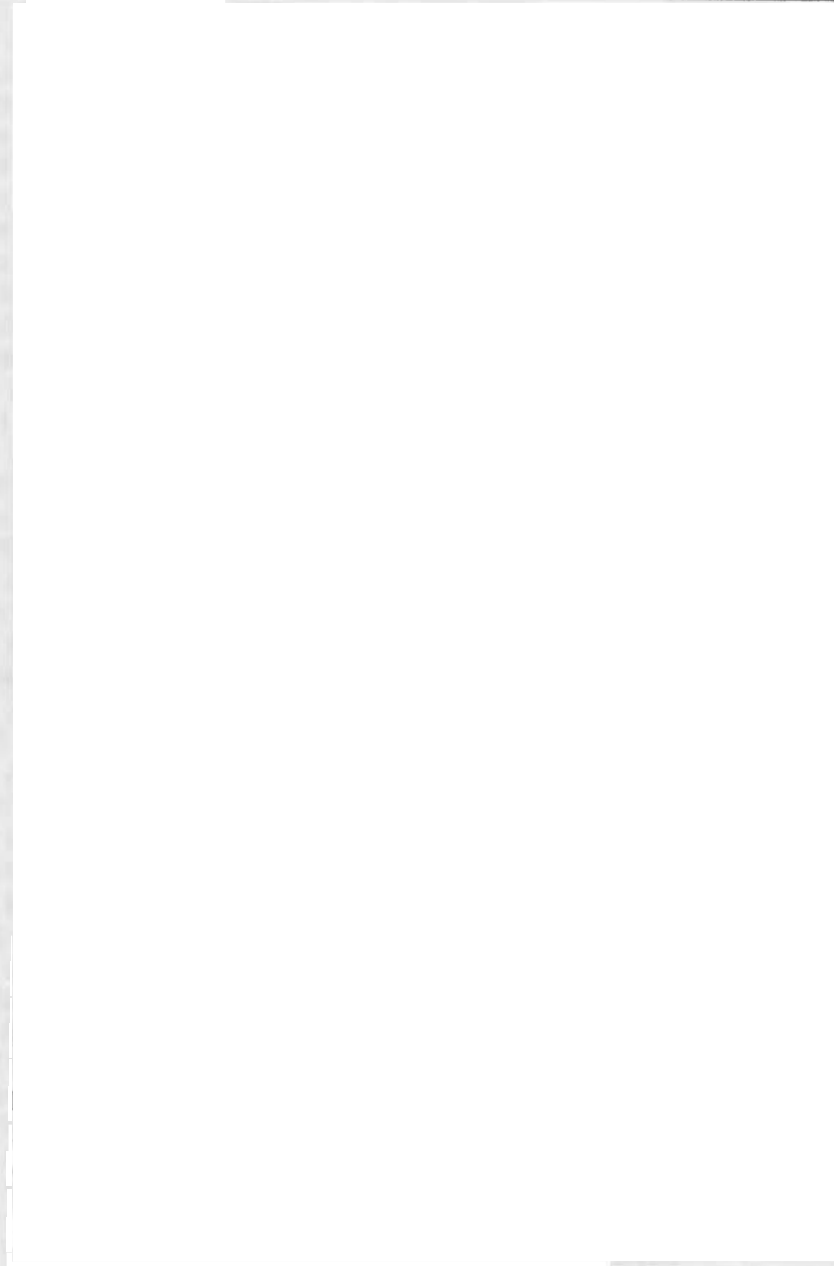




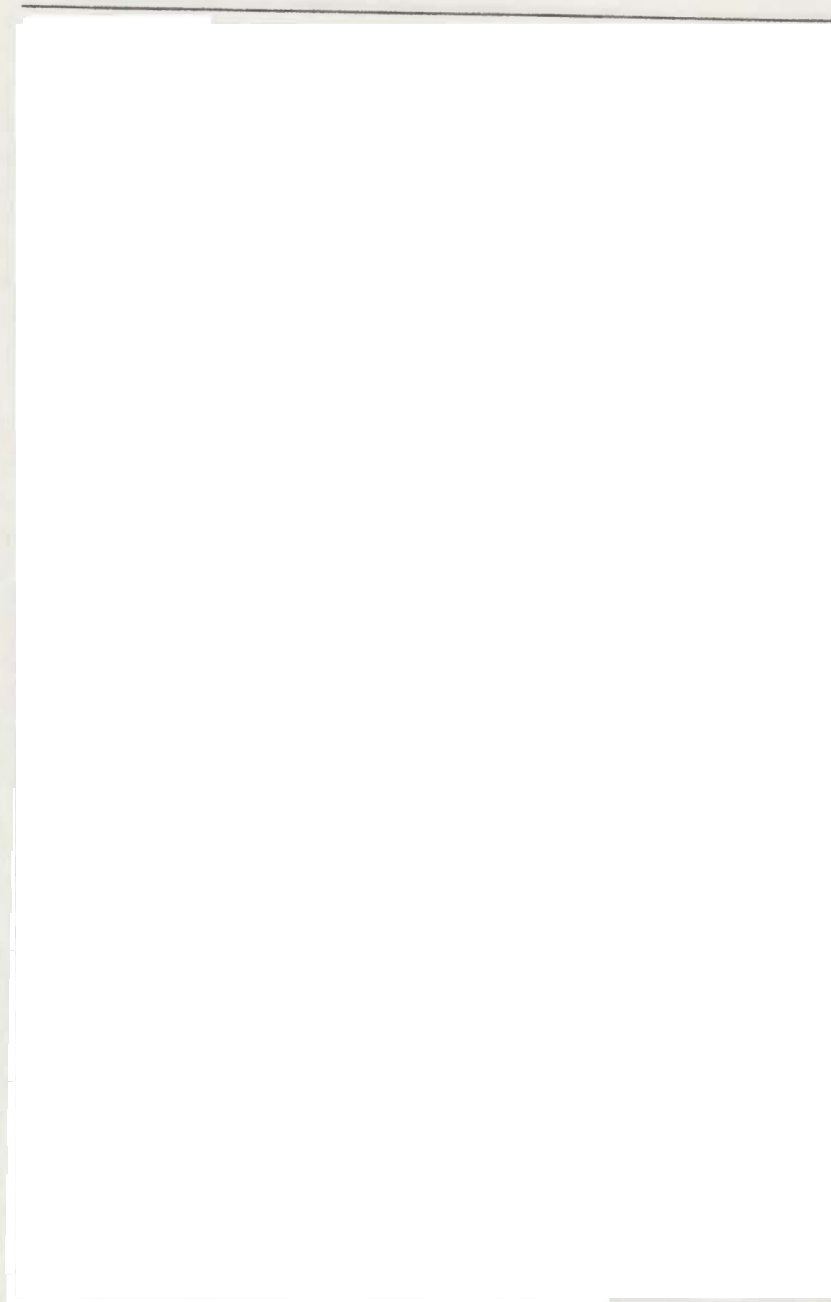
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## FAMILY GATHERING

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.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Renewal Notices for subscriptions for the coming year are enclosed with this journal. Please do deal with it straightaway, it makes my job so much easier if I don't have to keep chasing people. If a notice is not included it means you are paying by standing order.*

\* \* \* \* \*

No-one so far has come forward in response to my request in the last journal for some volunteer indexers. I hope you all made a New Year Resolution to help the society in a small way. Please do think about it and let me know if you can help.

\* \* \* \* \*

### MURPHY'S LAWS AS APPLIED TO GENEALOGY (continued)

*None of the pictures in your grandmother's photograph album have names or dates written on them! (Have yours?)*

### THE SWYNNERTON SOCIETY

was founded in 1973 as a non-profit making organisation devoted to the research and publication of Swynnerton 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 Swynnertons 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.