

SWINNERTON

Family History



*Our new President
Mrs Margery Thomas*

THE JOURNAL OF THE SWINNERTON SOCIETY

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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 welfare of St.Mary's Church, Swynnerton, Staffordshire. Research into the history of the Swinnerton family had been started by the Reverend Charles Swynnerton FSA. in the 1870s and over the years he wrote a number of articles and papers about the family and gathered together many Swinnertons from all over the world. Interest became dormant after his death in 1928 until the present archivist resumed research in 1952 and re-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 in the United Kingdom No. 518184.

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SWINNERTON FAMILY HISTORY

Volume 9 No.8

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Editor: Iain Spencer Swinnerton

FOREWORD

The Chairman

It is two years since the last Triennial Gathering of the Swinnerton Clan was held at the Village of Swinnerton - which means that those present on that lovely summers day are two years older - and if in an older age group - have a few more grey hairs and the rheumatism is more painful. It is also 18 months since I asked in my first message as Chairman, nay implored, members of the Society, if they had not already done so, to record their own family history and that of their immediate family. *In the December 1992 issue of the Journal I offered a prize for the best individual Swinnerton Family History presented to a panel of judges by the time of our next Gathering in 1995 - which by the time you receive this journal will be less than twelve months away.*

Should you have any problems in writing your history I suggested that you take a look at the history which I have produced of my own family for this contains an account of the founder of the Swinnerton family and of the village of Swynnerton. *This can be used as the basis to start your own history and is halfway towards recording the story of anyone with the name of Swinnerton.* To date I have had two requests for a copy of this. BUT, no entry for the competition has so far been received - neither has any intimation that anyone is working on it, or contemplating doing so, been reported.

It will soon be too late to do anything about it and I would urge all the heads of families to get down to it now. Two members I questioned on the progress of their history said they hadn't had time to do anything about it yet, but promised they would - sometime. Others made the excuse that they are "no good at that sort of thing" or "I wouldn't know how to start on it".

As a general idea all you have to do is (1) Write down what you know about your own parents - when and where born - educated - married - what you know of their childhood and adolescent days - their working life. You must have listened and absorbed some of the many stories they told you when you were young - write it down in the form of a story - anything that will be of interest to you, as yet unborn descendants, in 50, 100 and 200 years time will make the account interesting. Just think how thankful they will be that their Gt. Gt. Grandfather/mother, had the sense to record something about their life. (2) If your parents are still alive keep asking questions about their past and write down what they tell you. (3) Should you be fortunate to have grand parents around - get them talking about their early days - have a recorder handy and "tape" what they say. How thrilling it will be for your descendants, in 50 years time, to hear the voices of their ancestor long after they have passed on.

It may be a little harder if these people are no longer around, but start with the bare facts and if short of information try an elderly aunt or uncle, they will know a lot about your family. For further information visit the County Record Office and look up the Parish Records in the area where they lived. The old church records contain loads of information about the inhabitants of the locality - much of it going back to the fifteenth century. Having established where your ancestors lived, look up the Census Returns, which from 1842 at intervals of 10 years, tell much about your family. Record epitaphs on tombstones and take a photograph to include in your narrative. A photograph with the history of the church where your ancestors were christened, married or buried will add interest. Wills dating back to the 1500s are still available to be seen in the Record Offices and give loads of information. Should you have any questions 'phone me on 0922-25942.

A most important aid to writing your family history is the facsimile copy of "An Account of the Family of Swynnerton" by the Rev. Charles Swynnerton. This was first published in 1886 and most of the Swinnertons living to-day will find their ancestral tree recorded therein and will be able to slot their own particular branch into the line. A copy of this can be obtained from our Editor and Historian, Iain Swinnerton. Full details are on the inside cover of this journal. *Don't delay commence your family history to-day - and enjoy your summer holidays.*

J. E. (Joe) Swinnerton.

THE DIRECTORY OF GOLD AND SILVERSMITHS, JEWELLERS AND ALLIED TRADES, 1838 - 1914

VOLUME 1 - from an article by J. Culme

The article reviews in great detail the history of the works of art made by the jewellers and craftsmen through the early centuries and goes on to describe the very first exhibition of "Works of Antique and Mediaeval Art" held by the Society of Arts in London in 1850. The organising committee included Henry Cole, the administrative force behind the Great Exhibition of 1851, Augustus W. Franks, a collector of mazers and other mediaeval plate and Octavius Swinnerton Morgan.

The article says:-

"This important exhibition was very well received. *The Illustrated London News* went so far as to doubt if the opportunity of seeing such an array of old works of art would ever come again. *The Art Journal* approved when the Society of Arts opened the exhibition "at the reduced price of threepence, in order that artisans and mechanics may avail themselves of its inspection" The magazine also had much to say on the subject of honest mediaeval workmanship 'when Art was less an "effort" than a "habit", thus anticipating the ideal of the Arts and Crafts movement at the end of the century.

The first researches were now being done into hallmarks by *Charles Octavius Swinnerton Morgan*, the fourth son of Sir Charles Morgan, 2nd baronet of Tredegar Park, Monmouthshire. Born in 1803, he was educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford, and sat as Conservative M.P. for Monmouth from 1841 to 1874. As an obsessive antiquary in private life, he was a member of several societies to whom he read papers on numerous subjects during a period of more than forty years until his death in 1888. In May, 1850, for instance, he informed the Society of Antiquaries that he had discovered in a Welsh inn the last old English turnspit, a near extinct breed of dog, working away for its supper in a kind of treadmill.

Unfortunately, the only account of Morgan's character which has come to light appears to have been written by a disaffected Morgan family servant. According to this individual, Octavius Swinnerton in his youth was devoted to a domestic existence, overseeing matters in the kitchen, inventing soups and sauces and creating barley sugar sweet. In short, he was 'quite at home in a syllabub'. The biographer thought Morgan 'Indifferent to the sports of the field and all other manly amusements', preferring to spend time

in the drawing-room, 'where he would read in his squeaking and discordant voice a page or two from the last new novel....

Morgan may perhaps been a slightly eccentric figure but it is upon his researches that all subsequent work on hallmarks has been based. Given his preoccupation, it was inevitable that he should have been drawn towards old plate as a subject for investigation; his family's collection was of some importance. At first Morgan had concentrated his efforts on the history and progress of watch making, sending a letter on the subject to be read at the Society of Antiquaries early in 1850. But by March 1851 he was able to show at a meeting of the Archaeological Institute a double salt cellar which, he believed, dated from 1598. In August 1851 he offered to the same body at a meeting in Bristol 'some interesting remarks upon the assay and year marks used by goldsmiths in England, and stated that he has been able to carry back the latter to a much more distant period than was comprised in the lists of the Goldsmith's Company, thus affording the means of precisely ascertaining the date of fabrication of ancient English plate.

The results were published in *The Archaeological Journal* during 1852. Referring to hallmarks in general, he believed that few people had regarded them hitherto in any other light than as proof that the article so marked was made of silver. The contemporary use of imitation hallmarks by manufacturers of plated wares would seem to support this theory. Morgan's slightly imperfect table of date letters up to the year 1835 appeared in the same publication early in 1853. He gave a chronological list of the plate which he had inspected and the names of the owners who had allowed him access to their collections. In addition to certain Colleges, City Companies and private individuals, Morgan had received help from several well known London Jewellers and the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, to whom he expressed his thanks, 'for their kind permission to inspect their records and for the very obliging and ready assistance given ...on all occasions' In view of what was to happen, this acknowledgement is of special interest

Although the response to Morgan's revelations about London date letters was not immediate, the study of old silver over the next thirty years underwent a profound change because of them. As with a well known successor, Charles James Jackson who first appeared in 1887 with a paper on the subject to the Society of Antiquaries, Morgan seems to have had a particular affection for old spoons. As we have seen, Apostle spoons were a favourite topic of enquiry even in the 18th century, and Garrard's as early as 1817/18 had copied one. William Hone for his *Every-Day* of 1825, had found an original set of twelve realising that "The rarity and antiquity of apostle spoons render them of considerable value as curiosities... In a really fine state they are very rare.'

With his more specific approach, Octavius Swinnerton Morgan was able to date spoons with London marks and so place them in a correct chronological, and therefore stylistic order. Less than three years later in April 1855, Christies sold the works of art amassed during the 1820s, '30s and '40s by the M. P., Ralph Bernal, whom Gerald Reitlinger has described as 'a bargain hunter and the first truly historically-minded collector in this country'.

Overwhelmed by the more than four thousand lots disposed of over many days, *The Times* wrote of 'nothing of special importance in the plate sold on Friday. One set of Twelve Apostle spoons, by the same maker, date 1579, said to be almost unique, was bought by Chaffers, for 62 guineas.' The correspondent may have been too weary to notice, but this was the very first time, and unique in the Bernal sale, that an auctioneer had read the assay mark and deciphered a date letter, albeit wrongly.

This famous set, which actually dates from 1539, had been purchased by William Chaffers for the Rev. Thomas Staniforth, who is only remembered now for his interest in spoons and that in 1829 he had taken part first Oxford & Cambridge boat race.....

In his paper of 1851 Morgan only touched upon the Maker's Mark. He did, however, observe that 'Were a large collection of these made, it might be possible ... to identify some of the marks with the workers who used them.' Although his interest in old silver never waned, years later discovering to his horror his family had once owned and given away the Eddystone Lighthouse salt of about 1698, he turned his attention to other matters. But his work had inspired many others including F.W. Fairholt Another was Sebastian Garrard, a partner in the Crown Jewellers, who commissioned drawings of plate he had seen and had them bound into a small album (fig.20) together with Morgan's paper on hallmarks.

Of Morgan's immediate successors in the study of old silver the two most prominent were William Chaffers, born in 1811 and Wilfred J. Cripps, thirty years his junior..... Cripps was a man of independent means who freely acknowledged his indebtedness to Morgan to whom he had dedicated his book. Chaffers managed to get the first fruits of his own research into the London date-letters printed a little later after Morgan had given his key talk of August 1851, but before the latter's work had been published. In response to an enquiry in *Notes and Queries* towards the end of 1852 about the fate of Morgan's promised tables, Chaffers, whose reply was published on 22nd January 1853, wrote with a few remarks on hall marking and a description of the date letters from 1656. The following week on 29th January, Morgan himself answered with details of his own articles in *The Archaeological Journal*, only two of which had then been printed; the third, the one with the illustrated tables of date-letters, was about to appear.

DIRECT ROUTE



"There y'ar', Swinnerton!! If the 'ill frightens yer, what about the short cut?"

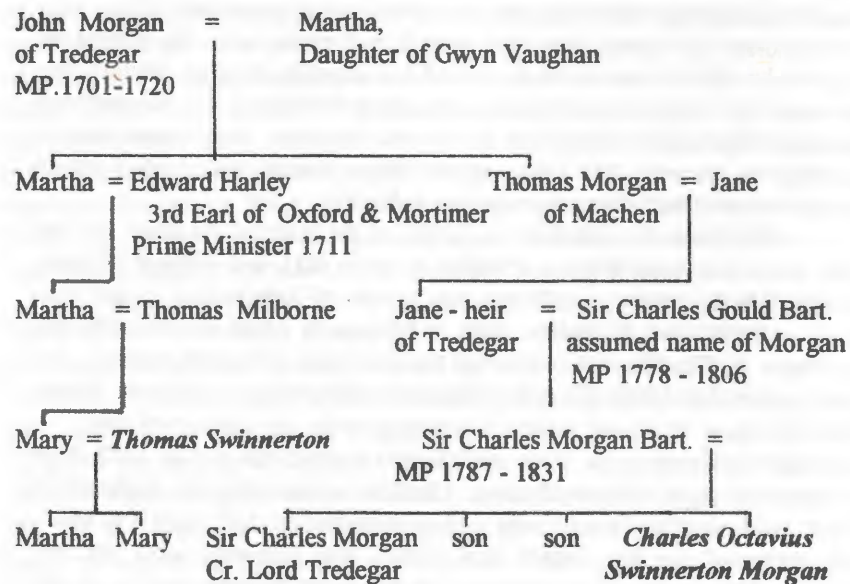
Contributed by the Reverend Brian Swynnerton

Chaffers went on to bring out *Hall Marks on Gold and Silver Plate* in 1863, in which he provided an improved list of date letters with each character set in its correct shield. Like Morgan, he annexed a group of plate, giving all dates and names of owners, adding that most of the items had been shown at the Special Loan Exhibition at South Kensington in 1862. One of these was the great silver-gilt basin of 1741 owned by the Goldsmiths' Company which he described as 'by Paul Lemere'.

Two years later, in 1865, Chaffers published a second edition of *Hall Marks on Gold and Silver Plate*. Here he adds to his list of plate by giving the initials comprising a few of the maker's marks. In two instances only, however, did he furnish the name of the silversmith. The first of these, HA on a piece of 1700, he tentatively ascribed to Henri Auguste.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Octavius Swinnerton Morgan has appeared in our notes before, notably a long time ago in a little article entitled "Nearly a Pirate Ancestor"! To remind you of his rather distant connection with the family here is his line of descent.

THE MORGAN - SWINNERTON CONNECTION



A PEEP INTO LIFE IN LONDON AT THE TIME OF QUEEN ELIZABETH THE FIRST

Elizabethan London was still surrounded by fields, and within its bounds it boasted many gardens and open spaces, so that as one poet wrote:-

Some say the fairies fair, did dance on Bednall Green

The Rat-catcher's song reminds us in an amusing fashion of the countrified aspect of many parts of the town of London:-

Rats or mice, ha'ye any rats, mice, polecats, or weasels,

Or ha' ye any old sows sick of the measles?

I can kill them, and I can kill moles, and I can kill vermin

that creepeth up and creepeth down, and peepeth into holes!

Gerard the herbalist went botanizing in "the fields of Holborn near unto Gray's Inn" ; Fields lay between Tower Hill and Ratcliffe; and there were fields around the tiny village of Charing Cross, an outpost of the country lying forgotten and stranded between the cities of London and Westminster. Gallants and prentices, flocking to the playhouses, rode or walked through fields by Finsbury to reach the Theatre or The Curtain; arable ground and meadows lay all around Paddington; Queen Elizabeth hunted in Hyde Park and at Marylebone; and young men went hawking where now are the British Museum and Liverpool Street Station. Woods too, were everywhere; north of the outlying village of Kentish Town was some entirely uncleared forest land; there were woods by Hampstead, Highgate, Islington and Hornsey, and in Finchley Wood whortleberries could be picked in their proper season. Hampstead Heath was a real heath, where one might find cotton grass, orchids, and lillies of the valley, and where juniper and bilberry bushes grew thickly.

Islington, Hampstead, and Highgate were real country villages. Hackney was one of the country places which supplied London with turnips; the women of the village bought them to the Cross in Cheapside, and sold them in the market, Hoxton, or "Hogsden," was country too, separated from London by the as yet undrained Moorfields, marshy and in many places impassable. To Islington Ponds, so we are informed by Master Matthew Ben Jonson's country "gull" who dwelt at Hogsden, the good citizens resorted for an afternoon's sport, shooting wild ducks. South of the river the aspect was equally countrified: west of London Bridge there was little more than a single row of houses along Bankside and for perhaps half a mile along the main road from the Bridge; all around lay St. George's Fields, and beyond these the open country. East of the Tower on the north side there was again a line of houses along the road for about half a mile, then the open. At the farms by Stratford Bow beyond Whitechapel one might buy cakes and cream,

and "the Oxford Road" began at the village of St. Giles (in the Fields), of whose position Londoners have recently been reminded by the newly named St. Giles' Circus.

Most houses had their gardens even in the old and crowded quarters of the City. As London had grown and the noblemen gradually moved westwards, raising new palaces along the banks of the river between Westminster and the City, many of their old residences were acquired by the wealthier merchants who prized lovely gardens as much as their predecessors had done. In 1602, for example, we find the Marquis of Winchester offering his house near London Wall to the worthy *John Swinnerton*, knighted in 1603, Lord Mayor in 1612, at the price of some five thousand pounds - this much to the dismay of Fulke Greville, Sir Sidney's friend, and Lady Warwick, neither of whom appeared to relish the idea of "such a fellow" for their next-door neighbour. (from a letter from Greville to the Countess of Salisbury).

Both in the new gardens and in the old grew an abundance of flowers and fruit. Hatton Gardens were famous, as were those of Gray's Inn, planted by no less an enthusiast than Francis Bacon. In Old Broad Street, and around Draper's Hall, as round most of the other city companies' halls, there were spacious grounds, fairly laid out.

* * * * *

FRIGHTENED OFF?

In the *Observer* recently in the feature 'Grapevine', there appeared the following:

The Great Gaffsby

This country has often taken pride in recognising American talents unappreciated at home. But Jeffrey Myers's new biography of Scott Fitzgerald (Macmillan) reminds us that we have little to be proud of in the case of one of the century's great writers, though his local admirers included Hardy and Eliot. His first novel, *This Side of Paradise*, (1920) sold 49,000 hard cover copies in America. William Collins's British edition sold fewer than 700. Four years later Collins passed on *The Great Gatsby* ('To publish the Great Gatsby would be to reduce the number of his readers rather than to increase them'), which was then taken up with little enthusiasm by Chatto and Windus.

L.P.Hartley suggested that Mr Scott Fitzgerald deserves a good shaking for writing 'an absurd story, whether considered as romance, melodrama or plain record of high New York life. When Fitzgerald visited the Chatto office in 1925, shortly after they'd accepted *Gatsby*, no one knew who he was; he had an embarrassing encounter with the novelist *Frank Swinnerton* and never visited Britain again!

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, SWYNNERTON

A new leaflet describing the history of the Church was published by the Rector and Church Wardens in June 1991 and although most of the details have been in previous publications it is worth recording again. **JES.**

SWYNNERTON, in spite of the changes which have taken place during the twentieth century, is still an old world village which never fails to charm the visitor. Its ancient and lovely Parish Church, dedicated to St. Mary, forms an integral part of the group of buildings which make up the centre of the village.

The origin of the Church dates from the Norman period, though evidence exists that some stones date back to Saxon times when the manor house in the village was the royal residence of a Saxon prince.

Privileges were granted by King Edward 1 (1272-1307) to Sir Roger de Swynnerton permitting a market day every Wednesday, and an annual Fair on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15th. These privileges have, of course, long fallen into disuse.

There is no evidence of the existence of a Church here until the twelfth century. A few traces of that period can still be seen in the present Church, namely the lower half of the tower and parts of the west wall. A splendid example of the best Norman craftsmanship may be seen in the doorway leading from the base of the tower into the nave. The arch of this door shows sixteen bird beak mouldings, most of which are in good condition.

The upper portion of the tower was built in the sixteenth century. The six bells were re-hung in 1926. The clock which strikes the hours is faced on the west and south walls of the tower. On the outside in the form of adornment are the triangular headed belfry windows and protruding beakheads. The bells were cleaned and re-tuned in 1957.

The nave, chancel and south aisle were rebuilt in the middle of the thirteenth century, the north aisle being added somewhat later. The Church has a seating capacity for two hundred.

The oak screen at the chancel is a fine work of the Tudor period (1485-1603) while the chancel furnishings consisting of a new oak altar, dedicated in 1964, carved oak chairs, two new oak prayer desks, also dedicated in 1964, communion rails and stalls are all no earlier than the nineteenth century. There are two memorial windows in the chancel, one to the memory of the twin sons of the Reverend J. B. Frith, a former Rector, and the other a memorial to members of the Dimmock family.

Under a stone canopy in the south wall of the chancel is the recumbent effigy of a crusader, believed to be that of Sir John de Swynnerton, who died about 1254. He had been Constable of the Tower of London and

Baron in the first Parliament. (*Ed. This is incorrect, it was Sir Roger who was Constable of the Tower in the 1330s*). Carved in local freestone, the effigy has suffered from wear and tear of time. The figure measures 6 feet 2 inches from head to foot and is clothed in the complete armour of a crusader. The legs, crossed at the knees, rest on a lion couchant. On the left arm hangs a Norman convex shield.

There is no inscription on the tomb, but beneath is a burial chamber which was accidentally opened during restoration work in 1856. This chamber was found to contain a body lying exactly under the effigy, corresponding in length and in certain details. The body had been wrapped in lead a quarter of an inch thick which was made to fit close to the form. This had the effect of preserving the body through the centuries until its accidental exposure caused it to crumble to dust.

The discovery revealed this Crusader as a young Knight of ruddy complexion with auburn hair and beard and with two front teeth missing (probably driven out by a lance thrust). The Reverend W. Taylor (whose daughter died a centenarian in 1955) was the Rector at that time, and he and Mr. Thomas Fitzherbert of Swynnerton Hall inspected the tomb, afterwards restoring the masonry, and leaving the remains intact.

Sir John de Swynnerton undertook the rebuilding of the Church in the early English style as it remains to this day.

He was also the founder of a new line of Lords of Swynnerton, his wife Margaret being also his cousin. It was she who probably placed the effigy there to his memory. The present Baron Stafford is a descendant of the de Swynnertons by the marriage of the youngest daughter of Sir Humphrey de Swynnerton to William Fitzherbert during the reign of King Henry VIII. (*Ed. Wrong again, I'm afraid - he was plain Humphrey not Sir and the marriage was in 1616*)

Two other items in the chancel worthy of note are the windows between the priest's door and the chancel and the aumbry on each side of the altar.

Besides the two memorial windows in the chancel there are three others in the south wall of the Church, commemorating members of the Wood family who lived at Meece House.

THE LADY CHAPEL, now used as a vestry, was also formerly a school house. It was built on to the Church about the middle of the fourteenth century. Under the east window of this Chapel, fixed to the wall, is a marble slab, the top of the original altar which was formerly in the Church. Its age is unknown. Close by, on the south wall, are the mutilated sedilia and piscina.

Beneath the Chapel is a vault containing the remains of sixteen members of the Fitzherbert family, buried there between 1612 and 1865.

Against the west wall stands a figure of Christ showing the wound in His side as He appeared to His doubting Disciple, Thomas. This figure had been found buried under the floor a short distance from its present position, possibly having been hidden to avoid destruction at the hands of over-zealous "reformers".

There is a tradition, however, that it was one of several figures dispersed about the county from Rheims Cathedral.

The living of Swynnerton was formerly in the gift of the Bishop of Lichfield who is now joint Patron with the Simeon Trustees since it became the United Benefice with Tittensor in 1981.

The Church Registers date from the first year of Queen Elizabeth 1 (1558).

YARNFIELD. The Parish of Swynnerton includes the village of Yarnfield where there is the Mission Church of St. Barnabas. This Church was known as the Mission Room after the building ceased to be used as Yarnfield Village School in 1846. In 1922 it was licensed by the Bishop of Lichfield as "a fit and proper place in which Divine Service may be performed." In 1979 it was given the name of St. Barnabas, according to local wishes.

Rectors of St. Mary's Swynnerton

1150 Osbert & Osbert	1654 Joseph Sand MA.
1300 Stephen the Parson	1662 Thomas Broad MA.
1306 Richard de Swynnerton (clerk)	1703 William Craddock
1312 Ds. William de Jene (presbyter)	1704 John Plant
1322 John de Typpere, de Salop (accolitus)	1707 Edmund Reeve
1330 Ds. Robert	1728 William Jervis JP.
1334 Nicholas de Hopton (presbyter)	1729 Richard Brett
1338 William de Blorton (presbyter)	1742 William Robinson
1350 Adam de Mokeleston (clericus)	1747 James Robinson
1357 Richard de Jonaston (accolitus)	1750 Jeremiah Robinson
1360 Henry Bedell de Eccleshall	1798 John Nalteride Pearson LL.B
1378 John de Combes (priest)	1801 William Robinson LL.B.
1429 Ds. Peter de Watlyngton	1812 William Corne
1439 Nicholas Potter of Purle	1822 Christopher Dodsley
1453 Ds. William Deynteth (capell anus)	1851 John Paley
1459 Ds. William de Wore	1853 William Taylor
1463 Ds. Edmund Wode	1891 William Robert Frith
1513 Sir John Nowell (parson)	1920 John Brien Frith
1555 William Cureton	1945 Leonard Francis Booth MA.
1556 William Rydware	1955 George Cuthbert Batten MA
1570 Richard Gatteringe	1963 Albert Edward Beech
1573 Thomas Chapman MA.	1967 Lawrence Wybrev Sapsford BA
1603 William Overton DD.	1971 Harry Duncan Leek MA
1604 Stockett Lutwich	1981 William Gerald Gardner BA
1645 Thomas Picking MA.	1987 Barry James Brewer

We are all familiar with the Sheriff of Nottingham in the stories of Robin Hood, invariably portrayed as a bad, greedy man, but just who and what was a Sheriff and what did he do? Several of the family have been Sheriffs so I thought you would like a little background. I quote from an official handout from the office of the High Sheriff of Greater London.

"The most ancient surviving office for a layman dignitary, under the Crown, is that of a High Sheriff of a County. Dating to Athelstan Edgar, it is at least a generation older than the office of Lord Chancellor. Appointments to the Office (for one year only) are made by the Sovereign. Only in most exceptional circumstances would a person be re-appointed to the office within three years of a previous appointment. In recent years the prefix 'High' was added to the title to distinguish the office as one to which appointments are made by Sovereigns and not (as are Sheriffs of Cities) elected by Liverymen and Freemen such as the City of London. In the absence of the Lord-Lieutenant, the Sovereign's representative in a County is the High Sheriff.

This is the modern High Sheriff, an almost purely ceremonial appointment, but in former times the Sheriff held great power in his county.

Today's Sheriff still has two ancient powers remaining - he can actually "Read the Riot Act" and he is the only man empowered to legally raise a mounted posse!

The origins of the office of High Sheriff are lost in the mists of time. The probability is that the position came into existence gradually when King Alfred re-modelled England into shires in the late 9th century, when the Counts or Earls had "vice comites" to help them in their administration. In Anglo-Saxon, "vice comites" was translated as "scir-gerefa" or "shire reeves" and to begin with they were drawn from the thegns (the professional soldiers). Because Earls had many other responsibilities, and because their loyalty could not always be relied upon, Sheriffs became more and more responsible to the King himself, and so developed into his immediate officer within the shire.

After the Norman Conquest came a change. Sheriffs were now appointed from the Baronial class: men of high rank and great power who could have one or more counties committed to them at the King's pleasure, either in perpetual custody, or (more usually) for a certain term. The duties included the care and protection of the King's castles and manors which had to be duly stocked and improved, and the former of which needed to be supplied with ammunition.

The Sheriff also acted as "The King's Farmer" or Bailiff - collecting all rates and revenues. He had to administer justice in the county, and keep the

public peace, and he had power to raise a citizen's posse and to determine all causes in the County Court not exceeding 40/-

The position was therefore one of military and judicial importance, and was avidly sought after. The management of the King's estates could bring profit, and there can be little doubt that most Medieval Sheriffs were greedy, oppressive and speculative. In 1170 King Richard the Lionheart, on one of his rare spells in this country, instituted an enquiry into the malpractices of the Sheriffs and as a result replaced them "Custodis Pacis" (Keepers of the Peace - the original Justices of the Peace who are still with us today) and this led to the development of the legal aspects of the position - fines, amercements and the summoning of jurors. Nevertheless, Richard I and John continued to make a profit from the sale of Sherifdoms.

The method of appointment varied from time to time; from William I to Edward I it was at the King's pleasure. Edward II attempted to make the post elective within each county, but from the reign of Edward II appointments were made by the King on the advice of his Council.

Under the Tudors and early Stuarts the Sheriff's executive importance increased. His duties now included the execution of writs and processes, the proclamation of statutes, the return of Juries and the carrying out of judgements of superior courts. In the 18th century the post was also used politically: Shire Courts were used to elect Knights of the Shire to parliament and the arrangements were in the hands of the Sheriff - there was nothing to stop him keeping the poll open to favour his own party! As well as the old landed families new names were beginning to appear - families who were making their names and their fortunes in law, agriculture, mercantilism and industry. Residence within the shire was essential, and ceremonial was not excluded. For a High Sheriff attendance required was twice a year at the Assizes and at the general gaol delivery, to which he came on commission day in "great parade of equipage" as Hasted, the Kent historian says, with under-sheriffs, bailiffs and other officers, and he remained there until the judges had completed their business and left the town.

With the new statutory authorities of the 20th century most of the High Sheriff's functions have become obsolete, but the post remains as a dignified and fascinating historical survival. In the Cathedral City of Lichfield, for instance, the Sheriff, accompanied by the Lord Mayor, still "beat the bounds" at a stated time each year. i.e. they both ride on horseback around the perimeter boundaries of the city, which is several miles in length, followed by local councillors, other dignitaries and many of the local population.

Several members have served as Sheriff of both Staffordshire and Shropshire.

MISCELLANEOUS

The EUROPEAN MAGAZINE - JULY & AUGUST 1786

Deaths

Mr SWINERTON who formerly kept the Crown & Rolls Tavern, Chancery Lane.

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FROM THE BIOGRAPHY OF E.M.FORSTER

R.Brimley Johnson published two books on novelists - one on females and one on males. In the latter he wrote that 'omitting established writers such as Wells, Barrie, Conrad the 'up and coming romantics' included Forster, John Buchan and Frank Swinnerton. He felt that Swinnerton had greater promise than any other of his contemporaries.

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YORKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY CALENDARS.

MD 335.Add. Misc.416

Valuation of household effects of Col.Thomas Swinnerton esq. of Buttet Hall, Staffs. 1833. Valn. £1507.13/-

This is a mystery, this is obviously the same Thomas Swinnerton of BUTTERTON Hall mentioned in the tree of Charles Octavius Swinnerton Morgan but he did not die until 1836 and I have never heard of him in a military connection before - was he in the Militia? He was, in fact, a Barrister and Recorder of Stafford. He served as Sheriff of Staffordshire in 1795 to commemorate which he had a special armorial coffee service made by Royal Worcester of which 2 cups survive and are in my possession. He was buried at Trentham on the 21st May 1836.

* * * * *

THOMAS SWINNERTON of Whitmore, Gent. is mentioned in the Court Rolls of the manor of Newcastle-under-Lyme held on 21 October 1761 (PRO ref. DL 30 250/1 Chancery Lane). Appears in the will of John Machin, late of Seabridge, Gent.

THE NOAH'S ARK, SHEFFIELD.

In the history of the inn and her family's connection with it, the author Janet Frost (nee Godfrey) says:-

My father, Harold Richardson Godfrey, born in 1895 and later a headmaster in Sheffield told us how his grandmother read the Bible to him and his sisters and how strict she was in the observance of the Sabbath. Not at all unusual in Victorian England except that this grandmother also ran the Public House in which she was then living.

We later discovered that the pub was the Noah's Ark in Intake in Sheffield which bears the same name and is largely unchanged today.

My sister wrote to John Smith's Tadcaster Brewery to seek any information and we were delighted with the treasure chest of documents that their Company Secretary, Mr Rea, copied and sent to us.

The first document was the lease between Messrs *R. & S. Swinnerton* and Mr Thomas Godfrey for the tenancy of the Noah's Ark for seven years from 29th September 1886 at a rent of £55 per annum. This was signed by my great grandfather who was a wheelright journeyman like his father. The Swinnertons, the lessors, came from Surrey and Middlesex.

Tom Godfrey died in on the 14th July 1890 and the next document is a copy of his will.... The article then goes on to give details of this and then of the next set of documents which are the auction notices for the sale of the pub.

The final document is the Indenture made 2nd February 1891 as the Noah's Ark passed to its new owners. This is signed by the Swinnertons and the new owners.

The pub, which adjoined the Sheffield and Eckington Turnpike, was the oldest established in Intake and was close to Birley Colliery. It had formerly been part of the Duke of Norfolk's Sheffield Estate.

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I am slightly mystified at the moment as to who these Swinnertons were and how they came to be own a pub in Sheffield if they lived in the Home Counties. Some research is needed - unless, of course, anyone knows?

CORRECTION:

In the obituary of Hugh Swinnerton in the last issue of this Journal, I said that Hugh was the third son of Joseph & Elizabeth Swinnerton. This was incorrect, he was the third son of George Noel & Edna Swinnerton. My apologies.

THE 1985 GATHERING - OUR 21st BIRTHDAY

This is the poster produced by Bill Swinarton for the North American Supplement. It applies to all our members, wherever they live. We hope to see as many of you as possible on this very special occasion.

Swenarton *Swinnington* **SWENERTON**
Swinnerton Swinerton **Swinarton**
Swinnington *Swinarton* Swinnerton
Swinerton *Swenerton* **Swenarton**

No Matter How You Spell It,
 You are invited to the Family Gathering at Swynnerton,
 Staffordshire, England in 1995.

The Swinnerton Society has been holding successful Family Gatherings at Swynnerton village in Staffordshire, England for many years, the last being held in June of 1992.

Although a precise date has yet to be determined it is something that must be prepared for months in advance, most especially for those of us travelling from outside of England.

Thinking of attending, or would you just like to know more? Please, contact Bill Swinarton. He will be more than pleased to give you all particulars.

Even if you cannot attend the Gathering, you are urged to let us know just how you are making out. And, just as important, take an active role in providing of records so that all family branches are fully accounted for. It has been a long time since we put some of this together and the information that provided your mailing addresses indicates that some of the *once* children in the families have moved out on their own, many married, and probably have children of their own by now.

Most of you know Bill Swinarton. Over almost 20 years he has written, telephoned, and visited with you. So, there is the sincere hope that you remember the importance of up-dating the family records.

Also, you are invited to join with us as members of the Swinnerton Society, organized in 1974 by Colin Swinnerton of England. Again, full particulars are available from Bill.

Please, take the time to contact Bill Swinarton. There is a Canadian-American family newsletter supplemental to the Society's Journal, and it's free to all upon request. You will enjoy the family information that is included. Feel free to supply information for inclusion, that's why it works.

ANOTHER 21st BIRTHDAY

The Federation of Family History Societies to which our society belongs, and of which I was the Founder Chairman in 1974 and have also been President since 1978, also celebrates its 21st Birthday in 1995 and to commemorate the occasion is launching a special project called *Threads of Family History*.

They say "Put down your pens, switch off your computers and delegate your indexing: now for something different!"

Threads of Family History is a special competition of textile craft to be exhibited by the FFHS during Autumn 1995. The exhibition will attempt to show how family history can be creatively used in the many forms of needlework and other textile crafts.

Craftwork itself connects us with our ancestors. In every culture, both women and men took great pride in the production of distinctive decorated textiles. For this exhibition, participants will be asked to take the process beyond the merely decorative and integrate family history to produce a unique heirloom for future generations.

Any type of textile craft is eligible - embroidery, applique, needlepoint, weaving, rug hooking, and beadwork to name just a few techniques. There's no need to be an expert craftperson.

But *before* you begin your "heirloom", write for the complete rules and an entry form - **on or after 1st October 1994** - to *Mrs Jill Valentine* enclosing a 9" x 4" self-addressed, stamped envelope or 2 International Reply Coupons.

There will be two classes of entry, Individual and Collective (ie. Society or Group) but **please note** - application is restricted to members of the Federation's member societies.

The competition was originally the idea of the Ontario Genealogy Society who have given the FFHS permission to use it.

I do hope some of you will enter, I do know we have a lot of talented needleworkers in the family - could we also have a society entry?

OUR OWN 21st BIRTHDAY

We celebrate this in June 1995 because it was in May 1974 that I issued the first newsletter. However, Brian and John Swinnerton and Ken Armitstead and I had been working together for some time before this and we really started the society in 1973 which is the date given in the official records. How sad that neither John or Ken, who both served as Chairman and did so much research into the family, did not live to see this day.

FAMILY NOTES

You will notice, if you examine the list of officers of the society on the inside cover, two main changes. As reported in our last issue, Sir Roger Swynnerton asked us to accept his resignation as President due to 'creeping Anno Domini'. This we did with regret because he had been such a superb President but I am very happy to report that, at the invitation of Council, he has agreed to become the society's Patron. We have been without a Patron since Lord Stafford died in 1985.

To succeed Sir Roger as President, Council invited Mrs Margery Thomas and I am also delighted to tell you that she accepted willingly and thereby, I think, we probably go straight into the Guinness Book of Records as having the oldest Society President, certainly to my knowledge Family History Society, as celebrates her 100th Birthday on the 15th August this year. Many members will remember her entertaining us at a Gathering with her reminiscences of nursing on the Eastern Front in 1916/17. What a double we shall have next year with our 21st Birthday in her 100th year. More about our new President in the next issue.

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We welcome to membership of the society the Reverend Ernest George Francis Swinnerton of

Mr Swinnerton joined us after hearing our chairman, Joe Swinnerton, give a talk to the Family History Group of the Nuneaton Society on the Swinnertons of Nuneaton and Warwickshire to which branch our new member belongs. With three clergymen now as members, we should have the best organised service next year of all time!

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My apologies for the lateness of this journal due to my visit to New Zealand and Australia from 27th April to the 14th July during which I gave 36 lectures at various conferences and on visits to member societies of the Federation of Family History Societies. I also stayed with or met a number of members of the family and established one complete new sub-branch and I hope to give an account of this in the next issue.

STOP PRESS. Just as I was going to print, I was delighted to receive 3 bumper bundles from Bill Swinarton in Canada who is producing the North American Supplement to this journal again - more news next time.

THE LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF RESIDENTIAL HISTORIES

A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESIDENTIAL HISTORIES OF INDIVIDUALS.

We are currently undertaking research on where people lived during their lifetime, and are concentrating particularly on the residential histories of individuals, rather than on the analysis of aggregate census statistics. Although some individual-level data can be gained from sources such as diaries and autobiographies, these are relatively scarce and often unrepresentative. However, there are thousands of family historians around the country who have information about the residential histories of their own family members, often going back to the eighteenth century or earlier. We are particularly keen to utilize this rich source of information in our research.

Your Family History Society has kindly allowed us to place this sheet in your magazine as a way in which we might make contact with family historians. IF YOU HAVE TRACED YOUR FAMILY HISTORY, AND HAVE INFORMATION ABOUT WHERE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY LIVED AND WHY THEY MOVED IN THE EIGHTEENTH, NINETEENTH OR EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY, WE WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE YOU TO CONTACT US. It would also be very helpful to know how many people you have a residential history for. Once we have received this information, we will send you forms on which you can record the residential details in a standard format. We will also enclose a stamped/addressed envelope for your reply. We must emphasize that we are interested in the residential histories of people of all ages, from all walks of life, and including those who moved very little or not at all.

We must emphasize that any information that you do provide will be used only for the purposes of academic research, and that, where appropriate, confidentiality will be strictly maintained in future publications. The project will be completed in 1996 and, in addition to other publications, we will be happy to write a short piece for your magazine so that you will know something about the outcome of the research. This should help you to discover how your family's residential history related to the experience of others. The research project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

You will realise that the success of the research depends entirely on a good response from family historians. We hope to build up a large data-base of information on residential histories, but this will only be possible with your co-operation.

IF YOU FEEL YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP WITH THE PROJECT IN ANY WAY PLEASE CONTACT JEAN TURNBULL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AT THE ADDRESS GIVEN BELOW. FOLLOWING A LETTER OR TELEPHONE CALL SHE WILL SEND YOU THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF STANDARD FORMS ON WHICH DETAILS OF INDIVIDUAL RESIDENTIAL HISTORIES CAN BE ENTERED. IF YOU WOULD LIKE FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT US.

PROJECT DIRECTOR:
DR. COLIN G POOLEY,
SENIOR LECTURER IN GEOGRAPHY.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT:
DR. JEAN TURNBULL,
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SWINNERTON SOCIETY PRODUCTIONS

THE SOCIETY TIE. Made in Woven Jacquard with a single Swinnerton Society Cross and Horseshoe badge. Available in Navy Blue, Maroon and Grey. Price £4.50 plus .50p postage. Set of 3 - one of each colour £12.50 plus .50p postage.

BINDERS FOR JOURNALS. Red with the "Swinnerton Family History" embossed in gold on the spine and the Society's badge in gold on the front cover. Each has 11 strings to hold 10 issues (one complete volume) and the index. £2.50 each plus .50p postage.

Both the above are obtainable from the Secretary, David Brock (address inside front cover)

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FAMILY OF SWYNNERTON. A facimile copy of the original history of the family published in 1886 by the William Salt Archaeological Society, Stafford. Over 200 pages of the family history with trees of various branches of the family. £12 plus .50p postage. Every Swinnerton family should have a copy. Obtainable from Iain Swinnerton (address inside front cover).

THE BOER WAR DIARY OF EDWARD ALBERT SWINNERTON
A vivid and personal account of a soldier during the campaign fought in South Africa almost one hundred years ago. Price £4.00 plus 50p postage.

A HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE OF SWYNNERTON AND THE SWINNERTONS OF WARWICKSHIRE.

A general synopsis of the history of the village of Swynnerton and the original family who lived there. Plus - the history of one of the Warwickshire branches of the family and an article on the Family Heraldry by Iain Swinnerton. Researched and produced by our Chairman, Joe Swinnerton. The first part of the book can form the basis of the history of any branch of the family. Price £7.00 incl. postage.

FIRE & FURY OVER ENGLAND - THE SECOND WORLD WAR - TEN LOST MONTHS. The diary of our Chairman, Joe Swinnerton, of his service in the army during the Second World War. 120 pages with many illustrations. a very good "read". Price £7.00 incl. postage.

The above three books obtainable from I. E. Swinnerton, [redacted]
Prices quoted apply to orders from the UK. Overseas members please send a Sterling cheque or International Money Order in Sterling.