

THE

City of York & District

FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

February 2021

THE *City of York & District* FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No.1085228 - Founded 1975

Affiliated to the Family History Federation

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Newsletter

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UPDATE

The Membership Secretary requests that
subscriptions be posted to her home address:
6 Loxley Close, Clifton Moor Gate, York YO30 4XQ

It's been a difficult year for us all and I hope you have all kept safe and well. You will have seen the Newsletters available on our website under the heading *About the Society* and with no need to login. We are grateful to everyone who has accepted this as it has saved us costs of printing and postage. We continue to get new members from here and from overseas so the number of members as of today stands at 330.

Please can I remind you all of the importance of paying your annual subscription. We need these to survive and keep our Research Room, presently closed, open in the future.

Please make use of the "Help Wanted" section in the newsletter and many of you must have stories to tell about your family, any newspaper cuttings, photographs etc. We need these items to fill the newsletter. Let us use this too full advantage.

Rosamund Gray
Membership Secretary (member 2599)

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Subscriptions	Single membership	£ 15.00
	Family membership	£ 20.00
	Overseas membership	£ 15.00

A renewal form is sent. Payment, preferably by standing order,
otherwise by cheque, should be made to the Membership Secretary.

* * * * *

DATA PROTECTION

All articles submitted will be published under the contributor's name and membership number, enabling interested readers to identify the source.

Contributors who wish their contact details to be published alongside must state this in writing. Readers may otherwise make contact with the contributor via the Editor or the Membership Secretary (see inner front cover).

Many thanks as ever to all those who have contributed to this Newsletter. Without your contributions at this time of no meetings it will become very limited!

Ed.

THE MADDERAHS OF YORK PART 1.

Peter Maddra, Australia (via Facebook)

Our ancestors were, for the most part, quite unimaginative when it came to naming their children. The repeated use of names such as Benjamin, William, and Thomas creates a certain degree of ambiguity and uncertainty for the genealogist trying to piece together family groups. Variations in the spelling of the surname also create difficulty when trying to search online data bases. Before the mid-1800's, the name was usually spelled with an “H” – Madderah, Maddrah – but variations such as Madderay and Muddrah are also found in the records. For this story I shall use “Madderah” as it seems to be the most common spelling in the following stories from York in the early 1800's.

The International Genealogists Index (IGI) reveals that **Benjamin Madderah** married **Elizabeth Nightingale** in York on 25th October 1800 and they had at least five children: **Sarah** 1801-1851; **William** 1803-1836 who on 23rd April 1839 married **Ellen Beecroft** 1813-1883; **Benjamin** 1805-1853; **Margaret** 1807-1839; **Thomas** 1808-1834.

I believe the stories that follow concern this family. Admittedly, there are a few inconsistencies, but let's read the stories first and tackle the questions at the end of this interesting exploration of the lives of the York Madderahs.

In 1825 William was in court charged, along with four other young men, of stealing meat from a butcher. In the *York Herald & General Advertiser* of January 22nd, 1825, it was shown that **Charles Prudame** (aged 15), **Geo. Abbey** (aged 13), **John Knowles** (aged 21), **Wm. Madderah** (aged 19), and **Robt. Jennings** (aged 20), were charged with stealing 6lbs. weight of beef, the property of Mr. **Thomas Jewitt**, butcher, in the Shambles. Prudame, Abbey, & Jennings pleaded guilty, Knowles was found guilty, and Madderah was acquitted. The Court sentenced them each to be confined to hard labour six calendar months.

On this occasion he was acquitted, but as we'll see in the next few stories, he was most certainly a dubious character, and his luck was about to change

In the *York Herald* of May 5th, 1827, George Abbey (aged 16), **William Madderah** (aged 22), and **Thomas Madderah** (aged 18) were charged with having removed the window-shutter of **George Birkenshaw**, with intent to commit a felony.

Mr. **Strickland** stated the case: *Between one and two o'clock in the morning of the 1st of February last, the prisoners were observed by Inglis, one of the patrol in Goodramgate. He followed them, and saw Abbey force down the shutter of the prosecutor, whilst one of the Madderahs kept watch, by pretending to be drunk. Inglis knocked one of them down, and pursued the other two, whom he took into custody in Water Lane.*

The jury found them all guilty.

The two Madderahs were then tried on an indictment, charging them with having assaulted **William Exley**, constable of Christ Parish, in the execution of his duty, on 31st of January last, about two o'clock in the morning. From the evidence adduced, it appeared that the prisoners were exceedingly riotous at a house of ill fame, in St. Andrewgate, kept by **Mrs. Pickering**, who fetched the constable, when the assault was committed. The prisoners were found guilty and sentenced. George Abbey, William Madderah, and Thomas Madderah, each to be confined to hard labour for 12 calendar months.

William, Thomas, and George Abbey (the same boy who received six months hard labour in the preceding story) were back in court a couple of years later. I find it curious that all three received the same sentence even though the Madderahs had the extra charge of assaulting a police constable against them. Confinement was certainly not a deterrent to these guys, because within three months of the end of his term of imprisonment, Thomas was back in trouble.

York Herald, August 16th, 1828

STREET ROBBERY

Joseph Mortimer and Thos. Madderah were charged with street robbery. The prosecutor Benjamin Farrer, is a stone mason, working at Naburn. On Saturday night last, he was drinking at the Lord Nelson public-house, in Jubbergate, until a late hour. He left the house in a state of intoxication, in company with the prisoners, who said they would set him home. A young man named Warren, and another followed the party down Castlegate, when Mortimer was seen to turn the prosecutor's pockets inside out. The next morning, the prosecutor finding that he had been robbed of 10s, two knives, a silk handkerchief, and a rule, went to the public-house where he had been the preceding night. There he saw Warren, whom he recollected seeing at the time he was robbed, and gave him into the charge of a constable. Warren deposed to what he had witnessed, when the Lord Mayor committed Madderah and Mortimer until Saturday next, to give time for Warren to find out the young man he stated had also seen the robbery committed. His Lordship further required two sureties for Warren's appearance on Saturday.

I can't find any further details for this story. If Thomas served time for this offence, then it must have been a short sentence because he was back in court three months later for drunk and disorderly conduct

Most of Jubbergate has since been renamed as Market Street, although the section to the northeast of Parliament Street is still called High Jubbergate. *The Lord Nelson* pub relocated to Walmgate before 1850.

York Herald, November 29th, 1828

COMMITTED TO THE HOUSE OF CORRECTION

On Saturday last, Thomas Madderah and William Madderah, for one month; and Sarah Wilkinson and Eliz. Skelton, for 7 days, for drunken and disorderly conduct in the public streets.

A few weeks later, William's past caught up with him in a rather serious way.

York Herald, January 17th, 1829

YORK CHRISTMAS SESSIONS GUILDHALL, January 16th

William Madderah (23), charged with stealing a pair of boots, the property of George Wilson, of Peter-lane, shoemaker.

Mr. Dickens stated the case: On the afternoon of the 20th of December last, the prisoner was observed by a little boy, called Dent, to take the boots from the window, place them under his coat, and walk off. The boy informed Wilson, who followed Madderah, and took him into custody in Jubbergate, with the boots in his possession. In his defence, he said, that he picked them up from the flags. Verdict, Guilty.

York Herald, January 31st, 1829

THE SENTENCES

Transported seven years, **Simpson Horner**, for stealing chisels from Mr. **Aspinall's** yard, in Walmgate; **James Walker**, for pocket picking in Pavement; **John Kelly**, for stealing silver spoons; **Wm. Madderah**, for stealing a pair of boots; and **Thomas Meynell**, for obtaining a table under false pretences.

PENAL TRANSPORTATION

Great Britain began transporting convicts to Australia in 1787 and continued to do so until 1868. Transportation was seen as a humane alternative to execution. By 1770 there were 222 crimes that carried the death penalty, but public opinion was slowly turning against this harsh punishment for crimes such as theft. The courts sought alternative punishments, but still wanted strong deterrents in place. Hence transportation became the fate of anyone receiving a prison term of seven years or more.

Britain's prisons were severely overcrowded around this period and so, after sentencing, male prisoners were usually transferred to makeshift floating prisons. By the time of William's imprisonment, these were mainly war ships decommissioned after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, such as *HMS Discovery*, which served as a prison hulk from 1818 until 1834.

At the end of his sentence – seven years in most cases – a convict who had behaved well was issued with a Certificate of Freedom, and was then able to become a settler or, in theory, to return to England. The whole point of transportation was to get rid of undesirables, so freed men were not encouraged to return. Nonetheless, a few did manage to find their way home. A few even managed to escape and return to England, but that was a risky proposition for the penalty for returning from transportation without the correct documentation was death.

On 12th May 1829 William and the other three men sentenced to transportation at the York Christmas Sessions were transferred from York to the prison hulk *Dolphin* moored at Chatham.

I was surprised to see that William is recorded as being able read and write. That is not typical of other Maddra family members in the days before compulsory education. The record shows that he was transferred to the *Retribution*, another hulk, on 22nd October 1829. He set sail on 26th December aboard the *Nithsdale*, arriving in New South Wales in August 1830.

William's experience does not seem to have deterred Thomas in any way. With his brother still waiting to begin his long sea voyage, Thomas lands in trouble again.

York Herald, May 2nd, 1829

*On Tuesday last, **Thomas Madderah** and **William Brown** were fined 20s. each, for assaulting the patrol, when on duty; and, in default of payment, were committed to the House of Correction for one month. On the same day, **James Howcroft** was fined 5s for wheeling a barrow on the flags.*

. . . . and again a year later.

York Herald, May 1st, 1830

*THURSDAY - - - DISORDERLIES --- Four young men (who are well-known to the police,) named **Thomas Madderah**, **Wm. Robinson**, **Wm. Trenham**, and **John Watterworth**, residents of Newgate, were brought before the magistrates, charged with being drunk and disorderly.*

Preston, one of the patrol, stated that on Tuesday evening last, he saw the four defendants lying on the ground, in Newgate, in a state of intoxication; he informed the constable of the parish, and they took them into custody. The constable corroborated the evidence of Preston, and the parties were fined 5s. each, and costs, but in consequence of non-payment, they were sent to the House of Correction.

... and still more trouble.

Yorkshire Gazette, December 29th, 1832

*FELONY, AND ASSAULT UPON THE POLICE. --- Mr. **Jewitt**, of the Shambles, butcher, laid an information against a man and a woman, called **Mary Thackray** and **Thomas Madderah**, for stealing a neck of pork, his property; and **John Fentiman**, for an assault on the police. ----- **Christopher Robinson** stated that he went to Thackray's house on Tuesday evening last, where he found Madderah, Thackray, and a man called Fentiman, who were just sitting down to supper. He found some pork on the table, some in the cupboard, and some in the frying pan; he told the woman, that she must go to Mr. Jewitt's; she said she would, and witness was gathering up the meat when a knife came whizzing past his head; Madderah immediately struck him over the ear in a violent manner, and then struck him over the nose. --- Fentiman also struck and kicked him violently, and challenged him to a fight; on this witness called for **Silversides**, but Thackeray went and shut the door and bolted it, and he could not apprehend the prisoners until the next day, when the meat was gone. ----- Thackeray was discharged, and the Magistrate advised Mr. Jewitt to indict her at the Sessions, as the case was so weak as to the felony; and the two men, Fentiman and Madderah, were committed for trial at the Sessions on the charge of assault on Robinson.*

Yorkshire Gazette, January 12th, 1833

***Mary Thackray** was charged with stealing 5lbs weight of pork, the property of Mr. **Jewitt**, butcher, of the Shambles on the 25th of December last. Mr. **Alexander** conducted the prosecution, and stated that, the prisoner went to the prosecutor's shop, on the evening of Christmas Day, and bought some pork. While she was there, a man came in, whom she seemed to know. The pork she bought was part of a fat neck. There was a lean neck hanging next to the fat one, and as soon as the prisoner was gone, Mr. Jewitt missed the lean one, and he immediately sent for Mr. **Robinson**, the police-officer, who went to the prisoner's house. He found there Thackray and two men eating some pork, which he seized, when he was immediately attacked by the men (who were called Madderah and Fentiman,) and was forced to fly for his life. ----- The jury after a short consultation, found the prisoner GUILTY.*

***Thomas Madderah** and **John Fentiman** were charged with violently assaulting **Christopher Robinson**, one of the police, when in the execution of his duty, on the 25th of December last. Mr. Alexander appeared for the prosecution; and called Robinson, who stated, that when he was seizing the pork respecting which Thackray was convicted in the last trial, the prisoner Madderah threw a knife at him, and he was violently assaulted by him and Fentiman. ----- The jury found both the prisoners GUILTY.*

To be continued

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Roz Gray

Data Protection Law

Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) any member who does not wish their personal details to be held by the Society should please inform the Membership Secretary. We use this information to record payments and send out the Journals.

Please remember to update your email addresses and changes to telephone numbers with the Membership Secretary (see inner front cover).

New Members:

3360	Mrs. Amanda Fenn	3364	Mrs. Gillian Cattell
3361	Mrs. Susan Cameron	3365	Mr. Peter Bellarby
3362	Mr. Trevor Barker	3366	Mrs. Frances Shepherdson
3363	Mr. Marshal Skelton	3367	Mrs. Alison Reid

Change of address:

3301 Mrs. E. Brown

MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Roy Evans

As we can no longer give out members' contact details without their written permission, contact with the contributing member may be made via the Members' Interests Secretary (see inner back cover).

Contributors:

3334 Mr. M. Hannah 3344 Mrs. A. Jeffrey 3362 Mr. T. Barker

Interest	Place	County Code	From	To	Member
Barker	Knapton/York	YKS	1698	1850	3362
Barker	Overton	NRV	1698	1850	3362
Barker	Sherburn in Elmet	WRY	1698	1850	3362
Barker	Sutton upon Derwent	ERY	1698	1850	3362
Burns-Dyson	ALL	IRL	ALL		3344
Burns-Dyson	ALL	LAN	ALL		3344
Burns-Dyson	ALL	LIN	ALL		3344
Hague	North Ormesby	NRV	1860	2020	3334
Hague	York	YKS	1860	2020	3334
Hall	Pudsey	WRY	1760	1800	3334
Hübner	York	YKS	1850	2020	3334
Hudson	Beverley	ERY	1800	1880	3334
Shufflebotham	Baildon	WRY	1815	1830	3334
Voillet	ALL	YKS	ALL		3344
Wilson	ALL	LAN	ALL		3344

REMEMBERING WHEN MICROFILM READERS WERE A NOVELTY

From *Local History News*

Magazine of the British Association for Local History, No.134 Winter 2020

Shortly before Christmas I was doing some research in a certain record office in the East Midlands, while the rain poured down outside and the hills of *****shire were shrouded in low cloud. It was serious academic research into local history, which happened to be about my own direct ancestors, so very pleasingly it combined two of my all-consuming interests and was moving as well (to me, even after well over thirty years, it's still emotional to hold a document signed by a forebear three or four hundred years ago).

Anyway, this was an exercise in nostalgia in other ways, because I wanted to look at a series of land tax returns and they were on MICROFILM. I hadn't used a microfilm reader for several years . . . the last time was at Banbury local studies library (aka The Centre for Banburyshire Studies) before the *Banbury Guardian* was digitised and available online. So I went into the microfilm room (the only person there during my two-day visit) and sat in front of the infernal machine. It is of course a truth universally acknowledged that any microfilm reader is going to differ in significant ways from every other reader which you've used over the years, and this was no less the case in December.

There was the usual, oh so familiar problem of trying to get the image to be NOT upside down and NOT back to front. Usually, in my extensive experience, the film is wound from left-hand reel to right-hand reel. Here it was the other way round. Then there was the equally familiar challenge of a) making sure the film went into the correct narrow slot in front of the light, so that it would wind through correctly; and b) making sure the loose end of the film was firmly threaded through the slot on the reel. Naturally, the first couple of times it wasn't, so there was that archetypal 'record office circa 1990' soundtrack of demented whirring and rattling as the reel revolved minus the flapping film.

Eventually, those challenges were overcome. The machine was getting warm, then quite hot, as I began winding on. Foolishly – and how many times have I done this – I pressed the 'fast forward' button and the room was filled with that characteristic eldritch screech of microfilm moving at a thousand feet per second between two glass plates. It screeched to a halt, and I slowly rewound. And of course I mean slowly, since every frame had to be checked before I found the beginning of the section I wanted . . . whatever did we do without keyword searches?

So, here was my section – the townships, arranged in alphabetical order, in a particular hundred of *****shire. A very familiar visual experience – jerkily moving the film on, as a thick scattering of fluff, dust and other deposits wound across the screen, backed by the text. Scratches and smears, black blobs (what on earth were they?) and feathery fragments drifted from right to left and into oblivion. Constant twiddling of the focus knob more or less succeeded, but it was often necessary to remove my glasses and peer intently at the screen from a distance of two or three inches, before being able to read a particular name or place.

Now, the relevant data having been copied down, came what was always the most exciting part of the whole ritual – pressing the 'fast reverse' button. The whirring grew louder and more manic, the screech more piercing, the tension mounted and then, yes, the film was wound back and the frantic flapping filled the air.

I was transported back a quarter of a century, to a time when microfilm readers were so contemporary, and microfiche was still a novelty. I reminisced about noise-filled searchrooms with overheating machines, flickering lights, the constant rattle of reels and slamming of microfilm drawers, and the frequent curses as readers discovered that a film had been rewound the wrong way. Thanks, *****shire Record Office, for the memory!

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Dr Alan Crosby,
Editor, Local History News.
www.balh.org.uk*

GLEANINGS FROM EXCHANGE JOURNALS

Jeanne Baxter

These journals from other societies will be retained for 12 months, after which they may be taken in return for a donation. The following is a selection of material from recent arrivals:

John George Lyon, 17th November 1841–27th August 1915 (grandson of James Lyon, born 1792, York)

The Bridge: journal of the Pontefract & District F.H.S., Issue 92, Summer 2020

Lofthouse Park Internment Camp, 1914–1918

Morley & District F.H.G., Cameo, No.2, August 2020

The Weardale Museum & the genealogies of the dales

Northumberland & Durham F.H.S., Autumn 2020

The Women's Land Army

and

Adoption

and

Hardwicke's Marriage Act

and

The Plight of deaf children in early 19th century

Ryedale Roots, No.61, October 2020

Illegal marriages

Domus Historiae: journal of Barnsley F.H.S., Vol. 29, No.1, January 2021

Was your ancestor a tax collector?

and

The Adoption contact Register

and

Know your parish: Appleton Wiske

Cleveland F.H.S. Journal, January 2021

The burial grounds of Pontefract

and

Coroners inquests and coroners records

and

Occupations of the Past (BL to CR)

The Bridge: journal of the Pontefract & District F.H.S, Issue 94, Winter 2020

THE PERIPATETIC BLYTH FAMILY

Part 1. Heck to Goole

Geoff Blyth (member 2924)

When following our male line of descent it would be easier, if a little less interesting, if we all descended from the eldest son who inherited the farm and stayed in the same village where the family clan had been since 1538. For the great majority of us, the reality is that we descend from younger siblings who had to find a living wherever they could, often moving to a nearby village in their teens and marrying a local girl in their early twenties. As the survival of settlement certificates in Yorkshire and elsewhere is very patchy, we have to use other sources of information to trace their movements. Having chased my **Blyth** family around all three Ridings of Yorkshire, I thought I would record the sources I used in the hope that it helps someone else.

The name **BLYTH** gives me an advantage in that the main spelling variations are limited to **BLYTH/BLYTHE/BLITH/BLITHE** with the occasional **BLYOTH** from a scribe who found spelling a challenge and **BLIVE** from one with cloth ears. Perhaps I should blame my ancestors for slurring their words? The name is not common nor particularly rare and is generally scattered down the east coast of Scotland and England from Fife to Essex. I believe that occurrences of the name sprang up sporadically and that there is no single geographical origin, although some branches could perhaps relate their name to the village of Blyth, Nottinghamshire, or the port of Blyth, Northumberland.

My ancestors didn't do any of the genealogically helpful things such as: have unusual first names, not be farmers, be rich, be notorious criminals, get hanged, transported, join the army or navy or invent the flying machine. My reward has been in finding where they chose to hide next.

As a child I remember being fascinated by a large family Bible that was occasionally brought out to look at. It recorded all the births of my great grandfather **William Blyth's** children together with his second marriage. His own death is recorded (with a stated birth year of 1814 instead of 1813) and other family members record the eventual deaths of his children, the last entry being in 1944. Decades later I decided to scribble out a simple family tree – and just kept on scribbling.

Anecdotally, I knew that the family had lived at Howden Dyke in the East Riding, and located them on the 1871 Census. **William** was a farmer and innkeeper of the *Steam Packet Inn*. In fact the family were also operating the (rather large) rowing boat ferry across the River Ouse and the 'Inn' was actually a large three storey brick farmhouse with one room put to use as an ale house. Possession of the ferry boat also allowed them to farm Howden Dyke Island a little way upstream. The farmhouse, probably early 19th century, has been demolished although I recall, as a teenager, looking through the cobwebbed windows as it lay empty.

William Blyth died in 1875 and was followed by his wife **Mary Anne** in 1892. They are buried together in Hook churchyard with **William's** first wife, another Mary, nearby. The 1861 and 1871 censuses record the growing family: **Joseph Whitton** 1852, **Mary Elizabeth** 1853, **William Graves** 1854, **Arthur** 1856, **Charles** 1860 and **Benjamin** 1863, corroborated by the family Bible which adds the times of birth. On the census, **William** usually stated that his birth place was Snaith but in the 1861 census he helpfully narrows it down to 'Heck'.

My initial reaction was to assume that this was an exasperated exclamation along the lines of ‘Why the heck are you asking me all these damn fool questions!’ and that the enumerator wrote it down. Then I realised that there actually is a place of that name in the parish of Snaith.

In 1851 **William** was living on Bridge Street, Goole, at the *Anchor Tavern*, working as an innkeeper and blacksmith employing an apprentice and two servants. He was newly married to **Mary Anne** and had 4 children from his first marriage: **George** 1841, also to become a blacksmith, **Susannah/Hannah** 1843, **John** 1845 and **Mary** 1849, who died at 14 days, her mother **Mary**, nee **BELL**, having died in childbirth. In 1850 **William** had married a widow, **Mary Anne PARRY**, née **WHITTON**, whose previous marriage was childless. **William** is included as an innkeeper in two surviving lists for Goole in 1857 and 1858.

Incidentally, the *Anchor Tavern* is still there under another name, disfigured by plastic windows, although never handsome in the first place. One Sunday morning, quite a few years ago now, I visited it and stood on one of those pub carpets that has had so much beer spilled on it that it has gone dark and slightly shiny. I almost didn’t go in as the inner entrance door had a hole kicked in it. Bravery’s reward was a mediocre pint of bitter.

So now I knew where **William** was born but when did he move to Goole from Heck?

In the 1841 census **William Blyth**, 28 years old, was listed in Doyle Street, Goole, recently married to his first wife **Mary Bell**. He is working as a blacksmith. Doyle Street was situated on a strip of land sandwiched between the Dutch River and the new docks. I can find no record of his apprenticeship to a blacksmith and, in view of his age at this time, he may have been apprenticed in Snaith. There is a smithy at Heck Hall, Great Heck, on the 1853 Six-inch OS map.

Goole was built as a company town by the Aire & Calder Navigation when they needed improved canal access to the Rivers Ouse and Humber and thence to the North Sea. Work started in 1823 and Goole started to have an increasing economic pull in the surrounding area and beyond. Despite the jokes, ‘Goole, Pearl of the Ouse’, etc. (sorry Hong Kong), there was a degree of pride in the town and it was truly innovative in its development of a mechanical handling system for coal exports. From 1863, compartmented steel coal barges, also known as ‘Tom Puddings’, arriving via the canal and river system, were efficiently lifted out of the water by hydraulic hoists and the coal was emptied down chutes into the ships’ holds. The ‘Tom Puddings’ could also be mounted on flatbed railway trucks.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Pudding

It is no surprise that **William** migrated there, where there would be plenty of work for a blacksmith. The Ordnance Survey 6 inch map of 1853 (surveyed 1849), which can be viewed on the National Library of Scotland’s website:

<https://maps.nls.uk/view/102345016>

shows a smithy and forge at the eastern end of Vermuyden Terrace where he may have worked although there is another smithy over the Dutch River in Old Goole. Doyle Street is the unmarked street north of the gas works. It cannot have been a ‘desirable residence’.

It is not well known that the Aire and Calder Navigation carried out a census, with limited names (male heads of households), before the 1841 Census (Goole Library, Local History Section, has photocopies). There were three separate censuses taken by the Aire & Calder Navigation – 1827/8, 1831 (mislabelled 1827) and 1839. The first two only cover that part of Goole lying in the township of Hook, which so far as can be seen, excludes much of what is now Old Goole. The 1839 census *does* include Old Goole, although the descriptions are a little vague ('new cottages near shipyard' for example). No one is listed with the name of **Blyth**, so it must be assumed that, if **William Blyth** was listed in Doyle Street in 1841, he must have moved there between 1839 and 1841 unless, of course, he is an unnamed lodger in the A&CN census. The 1841 Census for Little Heck in the parish of Snaith finds his widowed mother there, living with a married daughter.

Moving on to Snaith parish registers which cover Little Heck, we find **William's** birth. He is the son of **Thomas Blyth** junior, farmer, whose children are all born in Little Heck and christened at Snaith: **Ann** 1802, **Elizabeth** 1804, **Bessy** 1806, **Sarah** 1807, **Thomas** 1809, **Jane** 1811, my great grandfather **William** 1813, **John** 1815 and **George** 1817.

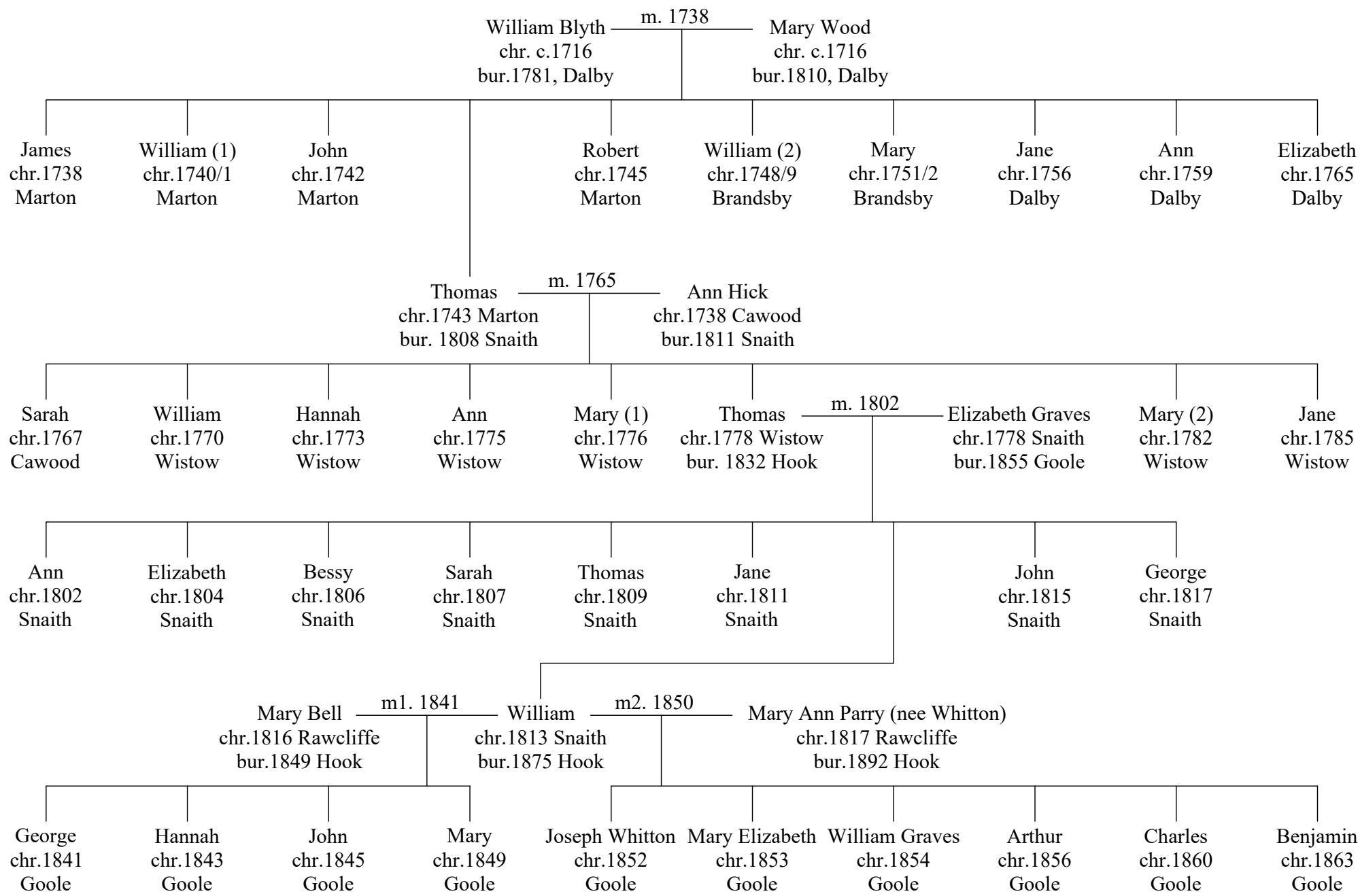
My great great grandfather, **Thomas Blyth**, of Little Heck, was married in 1802 in Snaith parish church to **Elizabeth GRAVES**. Judging by the Land Tax Records (on Ancestry), which survive to 1828, he is farming until at least that year. His older brother **William** was married in Thorne in 1794 and may have been farming in Airmyn near Goole as land tax was paid there by a **William Blyth** from 1794-98.

Then, something seems to have gone wrong after 1828 and **Thomas** junior dies in 1832 at the age of 53 in Hook, close to Goole. This could have been financial or health problems but his burial on 25th January 1832 predates the arrival of the cholera epidemic in Goole in April (Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine, *The History of the 1832 Cholera Epidemic in Yorkshire* (E. Ashworth Underwood, M.B., D.P.H. First Published March 1, 1935).

But where was the family before it moved to Little Heck? There is nothing to be found of them in Snaith parish registers before 1790, when **Sarah Blyth** marries **John GRAVES**. There then follows a series of marriages of **Thomas Blyth** and what must be his siblings.

The parish register alerts us to the fact that there is a **Thomas Blyth** 'the Younger' and we find the burial of **Thomas Blyth** senior in 1808. Snaith is a Peculiar Jurisdiction and **Thomas Blyth** senior's 'peculiar will' of 1808 shows that he was well off enough to describe himself as a 'gentleman'. The will was described as 'under 800£' although he bequeathed more than this to his surviving children and, in the process, confirmed their names. Perhaps he wasn't as wealthy as he thought. **Thomas** junior, the second son, was running the farm, as confirmed by the land tax records, and was appointed executor, receiving the unquantified residue of monies. He was also responsible for providing his mother with 'a sufficient quantity of Milk Butter and Coals'.

To be continued . . .



AGRA:
The Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives
Family History Federation 'Really Useful Bulletin' No 4 December 2020

Fazed by that brick wall? Can't get that vital document from the record office? Then a professional researcher might be the answer, says Simon Fowler.

Let's be honest, there may come a time when you get stuck in your family history research. Hiring a professional researcher can seem an expensive luxury. But there may come a time when a small investment judiciously spent might make all the difference to your family tree. But there are craftsmen and there are craftsmen. How do you know you are not hiring a cowboy researcher?

It's not easy. Many researchers have enjoyed researching their family tree, so think they can do it for other people and earn some beer money on top. The fact that their research was rubbish, and that they couldn't organise the proverbial, doesn't matter, until long-suffering clients discover their incompetence.

In England there are several groups of researchers, but there is only body - the Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives (AGRA) - which only admits researchers who have to pass rigorous tests to become a member and who agree to operate in a professional way.

Clients need to satisfy themselves about potential researchers' credibility and skills. How they reply to your enquiry is a good indicator – do they appear knowledgeable suggesting record sources, telling what they are likely and, as important, what they are not likely to find?

When using AGRA members, you will be in good hands.

It is important to be clear what you want and make that obvious when you hire a researcher so they know what you are expecting. Sometimes it is easy – just check for a name in a particular record. Sometimes less so – particularly when you want to find everything out about a specified family or house. Again, clients also need to agree the form in which they receive the research results. Most researchers prepare reports and, perhaps, suggest further avenues to pursue, and send copies of documents.

Lastly, and of course the most important, you need to agree a fee. Researchers will either quote either an all-in figure for a specific piece of work, or provide an estimate on the number of hours the work might take.

If you are thinking about becoming a professional researcher, then AGRA can help. Joining may well bring clients from around the world through our website. There are regular training days. And, as genealogical research can be very lonely, there are an increasing number of social events for members too. But you will need to demonstrate that you have the appropriate genealogical and business skills before you can join. This may seem daunting, but there is plenty of support and encouragement from existing members.

Details of AGRA members and their research interests can be found at:

www.agra.org.uk.

And there is information about how to join. And why not listen to our informative monthly podcast, where AGRA experts discuss aspects of family history research.



Steps to a Foreign Country?:- “Letters between a Victorian schoolboy and his family” (Telegraphic Review)

Review by John Bibby of “Letters between a Victorian schoolboy and his family 1892-1895”, edited by David Lisle Crane (1999, hardback, ISBN: 0 948545 11 9; pp. lxii + 542, 102 illustrations). Available free from the editor, davidlislecrane@yahoo.com

Were teenage public-school boys of the late Victorian era embarrassed to have an out-of-the-ordinary Christian name like “Tankred”, or was such exceptionality a source of pride? What if your sister’s name is the equally unlikely name “Tyra”, while your younger brothers are simply prosaic “Brian” and “Roy”?

These questions may or may not have perturbed the young **Tankred ‘Tinker’ Tunstall-Behrens** (1878-1939) as he entered Clifton College, Bristol in 1892. His double-barrelled surname may even have concerned him more than his obscure Christian name: teenagers are notoriously conformist. (Much effort went into that double-barrelling, but the army later obliged Tankred – it is said – to drop the hyphen, thus demoting the matrilineal ‘Tunstall’ into a mere second Christian name: Behrens descendants have since recouped the precious hyphen and rebarrelled their name.)

Such questions of nomenclature relate to fashion and to deviance in that foreign country of the 1890s which we can visit now only by multi-stage proxy. They are questions of *attitude*, which surely is the *ultima finis* to which all historians aspire: What did people *think* and *feel*?

Taking attitude as the goal, historical events and documents become mere *detritus* laid down by thought and sentiment. Historians generally count themselves fortunate to have contemporary written or spoken sources: these may suggest nuances in the language(s) used by natives of that foreign country that is the past, but at best they merely signal occasional unsatisfactory intermediate stations *en route* to our ultimate aim of understanding thoughts and feelings.

Some such questions of family nomenclature and sentiment have featured in my current researches on **William Pearson** (1822-1907), whose letters and more importantly detailed bank account records remain at UCL to be investigated after the pandemic. William was born in a village near York, went to Edinburgh, had an illegitimate son, became a Q.C., communed in London with rich slave-owning refugee southerners from the USA, and idiosyncratically christened his youngest son ‘Carl’ – perhaps the only English child born in 1857 who received that name. Why? What did people think of this uncommon name? Did father and son ever discuss the reason?

Carl eventually showed something of his attitude by changing the spelling to ‘Karl’: he became ultra-germanophile and generally known as “KP”. Karl Marx was an acquaintance, but a more salient reason for the ‘K’ seems to have been repeated misspellings of “Carl” while he was in Germany. However, this does not address his parents’ motivations, nor even his own motivation to call his own son “**Egon**” – presumably in *homage* to the ethos of eugenics to which he was attached.

But what *is* in a name? If we had been named differently, would our life have been different? Tancred (spelt with a ‘c’) was a common Germanic name in the Middle Ages, Wikipedia tells me, and was also the title of a novel by Disraeli. Tyra, if anything, was even more cryptic. Could these names be explained by German and Scottish blood in the Behrens family?

This compendious 600-page book is built around 318 letters to, from, and concerning the young Tankred. It starts on 16th September 1892 when the fourteen-year-old travels unaccompanied from Kent to Clifton College in Bristol via London Bridge and Paddington: he had the assistance of three porters who cost 8d in total; the train fares cost 13s.1d and the two cabs were 2s.8d each. On the same day, Tankred’s sister Tyra is being escorted to Roedean. Thus we have a well-off family, even if they are not related to the banking Behrens’s.

Tankred is none-too-happy at Clifton (he had tried to get in at Rugby), but Tyra seems to let nothing get her down. Predictably, Tyra dies young.

Pater and *mater* are the two strongest characters in the book: Behrens senior is a coffee merchant born in Wuppertal; his naturalization papers came through the day before Tankred was born. Mother is a Londoner, born to a “colonial merchant” family.

The book is full of quaint coincidental happenings: “Hurrah!! We have a whole holiday for the Royal Wedding I have had a very bad attack of diahorrea” (6th July 1893). The thirty-page introduction by Julie Crane and extensive commentary sections attempt to put some structure on it. There are also facsimiles, photographs and illustrations and a detailed *dramatis personae*. The book ends rather abruptly with a final letter in 1895, and one is left wondering what happened then. How did the sentiments and actions in this three-year period in Bristol ripple down the rest of his life?

Casual googling is a wonderful thing, but cannot always be relied upon. At best it gives us ‘facts’, not attitudes: Tankred enters the army, is wounded out in World War I, but then rejoins, features in *EuropeansInEastAfrica.co.uk*, does commendable research on Dungeness and receives a brief obituary in the *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society*:

(July 1939:470-471; <https://doi.org/10.1002/qj.49706528121>)

The roundest of these descriptions comes from Hinks (1940) who warmly describes Behrens as “my friend for more than thirty years, ... a man of great versatility”. As a Royal Engineer officer, Hinks says, “*Behrens had many duties to perform and to each of those duties, which might have been done in the conventional way, he brought some touch of originality*”.

To demonstrate this originality, Hinks cites two rather underwhelming examples. First, as army engineering duties included tree-planting responsibilities, Behrens could do his bit to confirm the oft-flaunted nexus between British public school playing fields and military victories:

“Why should we not plant cricket-bat willows in order to make in time this official property of extra value?”, he asked himself, according to Hinks.

More interestingly, Behrens was the UK Commissioner on the post-war Austro-Italian Boundary Commission; he translated Adami’s (1919) standard work, and also

arranged a special boundary pillar for the Brenner Pass frontier point, complete with appropriate classical quotations: a rather triumphalist HUCUSQUE AUDITA EST VOX TUA ROMA PARENS on the Italian side (“Thus far you may hear the voice of your Roman parent”), and a more thoughtful FONTES SEIUNGO CONSOCIO POPULOS (“I separate the waters; I join the peoples”) on the Austrian side – see Close (1927:163).

If sons are parent to the man, we may see resonances in this career microcosm from the young man’s time at Clifton, full of epistolary agonisings and self-doubt: Should I join the gymnasium or the Rifle & Engineering Corps? Should I do Science or German?

In short, this compendious volume contains many gems. It will appeal particularly to those with interests in education of the 1890s, those interested in German immigrants, and especially to Local History Societies in Kent and Bristol, who may investigate distributing multiple copies to their members by contacting the author, who is happy to make copies available completely free (see details above).

Adami, V. and T.T. Behrens (Trans.) (1919) *National frontiers in relation to international law; with an Appendix by the Translator*. Italo-Austrian Boundary Commission, p. 479.

Close, C. F. (1927) ‘National frontiers in relation to international law. (Review of Adami 1919)’, *Royal Engineers Journal*, 69, pp. 161–163.

Hinks, A.R. (1940) “Comments” in Brooks, L. *et al.* (1940) ‘Past Sea-Levels at Dungeness: Discussion’, *The Geographical journal*, 96(4), pp. 277–285.

John Bibby: email: jb43@york.ac.uk

HELP WANTED



I am trying to find a Mrs. **Karen Knight** (née **Finch**) born in 1960 in Margate, Kent. She was step granddaughter to my uncle **Geoffrey Cussons**. Her father **James Kemp-Finch** was in a care home in Margate in 2020 but sadly had just died a few weeks before I wrote to him.

Any help would be appreciated.

Rosamund Gray
Email:- rosamund1946@hotmail.co.uk

Seen on Findmypast:-

Hewley Mortimer Baynes, pa. Nayburn (Naburn), bach., married **Mary Harison**, otp, spr., licence, on 7 or 11 October 1820. Both sign (he signs Baines). Witnesses:- **Will Harrison**, **Mary Baines**, **Augusta Buchett**. Marriage at Ripon Collegiate Church (i.e. Ripon Cathedral).

Jeanne Baxter

City of York & District

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