



## Peterborough and District Family History

### Society Newsletter

October 2021



#### From the Chair...

The other day Pauline and I attended a funeral in London. The deceased was Trevor, the husband of my cousin Christine. The week prior to that there was another funeral – Patricia, Christine’s sister and another cousin. This funeral, in Bath, I followed on Zoom. Both Pat and Christine are names on my family tree. At Trevor’s funeral I met people from Australia who also were on the tree but whom I had never met – a younger generation. The spider’s web of our trees is useful to remind us of our connections, but how many of these names do you really ‘know’ and how do you keep in contact?

On my tree I am one of eight ‘first cousins’ and at the death of the last of our parents’ line in 1998 we decided that we must not just meet at funerals. We decided to have a ‘Cousins’ Day’. Since then, in most years, we have met at our various houses for lunch and later tea and cake, in London, Bath, Cambridge, Bedford and Peterborough. We have met spouses of cousins, children of cousins (sometimes – they are now middle-aged and helped with preparations), gossiped, admired gardens and hobbies, sympathised with ailments, noted new members of families on the tree, and generally had a good time. Above all we feel that we know one another, which must be a good thing. The eight first cousins have now become seven, and we wonder who will be next. Covid has put an end to the physical ‘Cousins’ Day’ gatherings for the time being, but we keep contact. So, I recommend you adopt this practice: have a ‘Cousins’ Day’ (real or virtual) and bring your family tree to life.

**Michael Kennelly**

#### From the Editor...

Autumn is one of my favourite seasons of the year as the vibrant greens of summer give way to reds, browns, and golds. There is a sense of slowing down as the daylight hours get shorter and the temperatures drop.

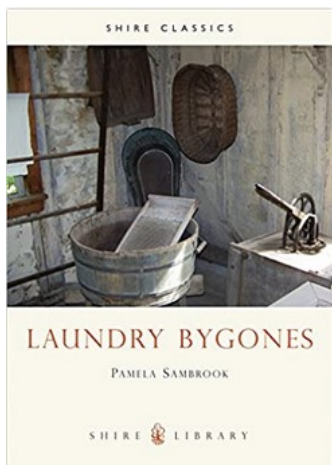
Since I started growing fruit and vegetables on my allotment I feel more in touch with the rhythm of the seasons, as our ancestors would have done. Autumn is a time of plenty as the crops are harvested and stored for winter in dry stores, made into jam, canned or pickled. For me it is a pleasurable activity but for our ancestors it was a necessary occupation to see the family through to the following year. For me a failed crop is a minor inconvenience: for our ancestors it could have been the difference between survival and hunger.

So as we head indoors and turn the central heating on remember your ancestors who survived without the luxuries that we take for granted.

**Sadie McMullon**



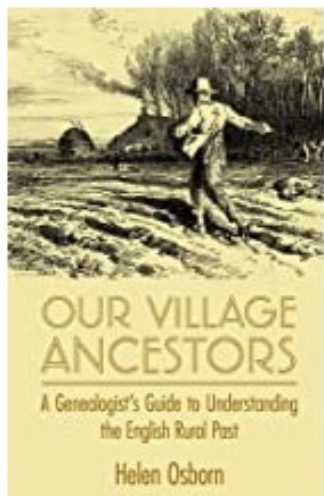
## Book Review



We are fortunate today that our laundry is completed by merely flipping a switch. But for our ancestors the laundry was a time consuming, physically demanding occupation.

Brenda Hazel has recommended *Laundry Bygones* by Pamela Sambrook, which delves into the world of the wash tub, boiling the copper and the mangle.

ISBN: 0852636482



Most of us have ancestors who had a rural background, whether that was an agricultural labourer, local tradesman or farmer.

This book will be an invaluable addition to your book shelf as it summarizes all the sources that will help you understand the English rural past.

ISBN: 0719814162

If you have a book that you would like to recommend to other members then please send me the details.

## Websites and Blogs

[www.chiddicksfamilytree.com](http://www.chiddicksfamilytree.com) is a wonderful blog by Paul Chiddicks telling the story of his family. Paul writes a regular blog for The Family Tree magazine. He is involved in numerous family and local history projects including The Family Tree Forum, which can be found here [www.familytreeforum.com](http://www.familytreeforum.com) and a project which remembers 34 firefighters who lost their lives at the Old Palace School [www.oldpalaceschoolbombing.com](http://www.oldpalaceschoolbombing.com)

Another blog which tells the story of a family is [www.allthosebefore.org.uk](http://www.allthosebefore.org.uk) by Jane Hough.

The above blogs are an excellent example of how we can all share our family history with others.

[www.workhousenetwork.org/more-than-oliver-twist.html](http://www.workhousenetwork.org/more-than-oliver-twist.html) is a project where six workhouse sites researched and recorded the lives of inmates in their institutions in the 1881 census. Please explore their website for a fascinating insight into the world of the workhouse.

If you have come across any blogs or websites that you would like to share with members then please send me the details.

## Please Keep us Informed

If you have changed your snail mail or e.mail address recently then please let us know.

We want to keep in contact with you!!

Contact: [secretarypdfhs@gmail.com](mailto:secretarypdfhs@gmail.com)

## Mystery Object



The mystery object from the August newsletter is a dolly tub. Brenda Hazel shares memories of her grandmother who was a laundress in Kings Cliffe.

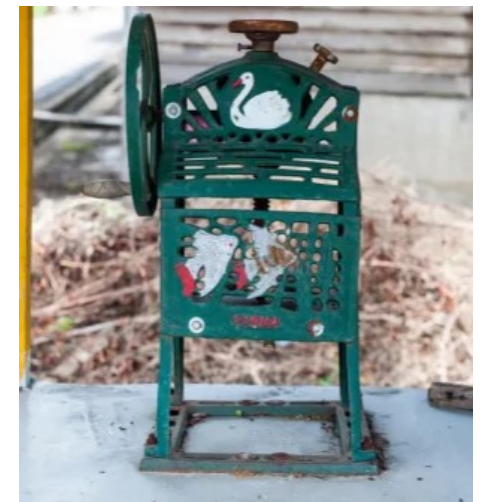
You did not ask for any replies to the “Mystery Object” question in the August 2021 newsletter, but I can’t resist sending you one anyway as the object is certainly no mystery to me! My grandmother, Louisa Palmer, was a laundress in the village of King’s Cliffe before she married in 1910. There is an outbuilding at the top of what was then our garden which was always known as “The Wash House” and this was where she carried out her business. The item pictured is an old “dolly tub”. We had one like it in “The Wash House” but it was no longer used for its original purpose in my time – instead my father kept corn for the chickens in it. One day when I was young, I remember my mother lifting the lid to scoop out some corn to put in the trough in the chicken run and finding a mouse running round and round in circles inside. My mother shrieked and quickly slammed the lid down and the hens had to wait for the corn until my father came home and dealt with the mouse! I’ve no idea what became of the tub, but I see from the internet that these days many are used as garden planters. Other laundry items I remember seeing at my childhood home are the wooden dolly used to “agitate” the laundry in the tub and an old mangle – the latter I can remember my mother using if the spin dryer, half of the new-fangled 1960s “twin tub” broke down. I also remember seeing heavy solid metal irons which had a new lease of life as doorsteps!

To dry the laundry there were clothes lines running the length of our two garden paths, but my grandmother also used to air items in front of the fire in the house, a practice not without its hazards as I discovered last year when I found this report in the Peterborough Advertiser of 5<sup>th</sup> May 1900:

**NARROW ESCAPE FROM FIRE.** – On Friday a spark from the fire ignited some clothes that were hung to air in front of the fire at Mr. Henry Palmer’s. The nephew, Mr. John Harlock, who is a cordwainer and works at the other end of the premises, is lame and unable to walk without assistance, smelt something burning. He knocked very loudly for help, and his cousin, who was working at the top of the garden, thinking by the unusual noise she heard that something must be the matter, ran down to the house, when she found the clothes on fire. The flames had reached the mantle-piece. In a few more minutes the house, which is a very old and inflammable one, might have been ablaze.

There is an excellent little book called *Laundry Bygones* by Pamela Sambrook, published by Shire, if anyone wants to find out more about these objects.

Does anyone recognise the machine pictured on the right?



If you know what it is do you have any memories of you or your family using one? I look forward to hearing from you.



# Online Event

Greenwich Mean Time

Friday 12th November 6pm-10pm +  
Saturday 13th November 10am-6pm



Useful **WORKSHOPS**

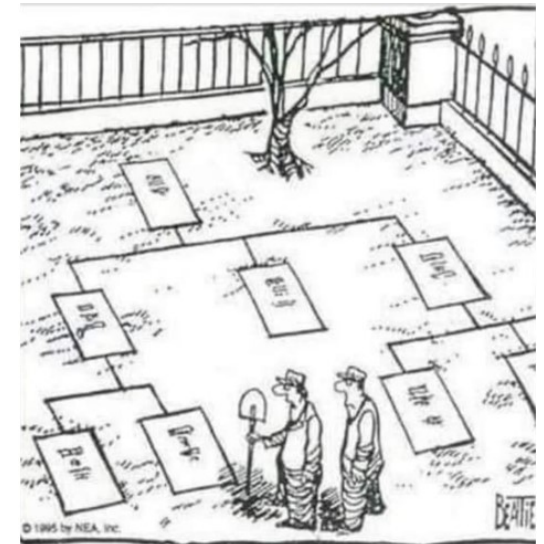
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[www.fhf-reallyuseful.com](http://www.fhf-reallyuseful.com)

This is an old cartoon but still makes me smile. If only this were true it would make our research so much easier!



"Some family actually laid out their plots like this?"

## Free Offer

All of us love family history research. But what do we do with all our hard work? The obvious answer is to record it in some way. But how? Where to start? It seems like a monumental task.

Jacky Spear has a possible solution and it is free. She writes, 'I've created a free workbook **5 Steps To Writing Your Life Story** which contains five short exercises to launch aspiring writers on the road to success. I'd love to offer it to any of your members who would find it useful.' Whilst this is the best place to start, I also have a **Blog**, private **Facebook Group** and **YouTube** channel with other practical, resources (links below). Additionally, I periodically, run a free, live 5 day challenge '**Blank Page to Confident Biographer**' to inspire and equip anyone thinking about writing their life story. So there is lots of free help available. Please get in touch at **The Life Story Café** [Jacky@lifestorycafe.com](mailto:Jacky@lifestorycafe.com) or try the links below:

[Facebook Group](#)

[Blog](#)

[YouTube](#)

## Canadian Help

Alan Wright has sent a request for assistance. He writes:

Between 1869 and into the 1950s, over 100,000 children were sent from Britain to Canada through assisted juvenile emigration. These migrants are called 'home children' because most went from an emigration agency's home for children in Britain to its Canadian receiving home. The children were placed with families in rural Canada. These children were from the many orphanages in the UK. Today almost 11% of the Canadian population are descendants of these children.

We emigrated from Peterborough to Canada in 1980 and a few years ago my wife discovered that one of her uncles had been sent to Canada in 1922 as a British Home Child. Her gt uncle had been in the Royal Navy during WW1 and his marriage had broken down. The son was taken into Dr. Barnardos and then shipped to Canada, When we emigrated to Saskatoon we did not know that we lived 5 minutes from him. He passed in 2012 . His family knew nothing of his childhood because these children were often too embarrassed to tell.

We wondered if any members knew of any children from Peterborough that were sent to Canada. The children were also sent to other Commonwealth countries such as Australia and South Africa.

Alan has also kindly offered to assist with any research he can do for members. He gives talks on this subject in Canada.

Please contact the editor with any information or questions.



## Zoom Talks

Have you given our monthly zoom talks a go yet? Using zoom is easier than you might think. I send a link by e.mail a few days before the talk. Just click on the link and the talk will open automatically. Follow the instructions to download the zoom app. If you have difficulties I can send more detailed instructions. It's a great way to get involved with the society from the comfort of your own home.

Wednesday 6th October	Janet Few	Your Ancestors in their Place	7.30pm
Wednesday 3rd November	John Dewis	The Mayflower and the Pilgrim Fathers	7.30pm
Wednesday 1st December	Christmas Social	Bring your own mince pie!	7.30pm