



Peterborough and District Family History Society July 2025



From the Chairman...

I am writing this whilst waiting for the Wimbledon Men's Singles Final to begin and it got me wondering what sports my ancestors enjoyed either as a player or (like me) a spectator. Did they live in a place that had a particular sporting association? My uncle and aunt lived in Doncaster and always went to watch the horse racing.

Maybe there is a family story of someone in the family achieving sporting fame. I had a distant cousin who was apparently a proficient fen skater. I was able to verify this by reference to articles in the Spalding Guardian.

A sport-related story about my parents was that my father met his mother-in-law before he met my mother. It turned out that he played for the Werrington Football Team. The changing room for their match with Crowland was the Wheatfield pub. The landlady was my maternal grandfather's cousin. On match days my grandmother helped behind the bar.

Have you done research into a similar family story? If so, Sadie would be very happy if you can write a short article on how you got on for the Journal/Newsletter.

Alan Johnson

From the Secretary...

Has anyone encountered a coincidence when you have been researching your family history?

I have heard stories of people living in the same village as their ancestors, totally ignorant of the fact until they start researching. Or people feeling a strange affinity with an area, again not knowing that their ancestors lived there previously. A friend of mine recently visited Scotland, only to discover later that she had visited places where her great grandfather had been born and was brought up.

Or perhaps your life has mirrored an ancestor's! Perhaps you married at the same age, attended the same school, worked in the same occupation, or visited the same places. The author in one of the book reviews felt particularly drawn to one of her ancestors because their lives followed a similar path.

For me it's these twists and turns that makes family history such a fascinating hobby.

Please, consider sharing your experiences with other members, and write an article for the journal. We would all love to hear about your research, and your ancestors.

Sadie McMullon

Mystery Object



As you may remember Ewan sent in this mystery object in the last newsletter.

Max King remembers the item well, and writes:

'It is a tool to aid cutting rug wool to length, prior to tying onto rug canvas using a hooked handle'. Max remembers using one in 1940/41 during the blitz, for something to do.

Ewan also recalls:

It must have been when I was about 4 years old that I remember sitting beside my paternal grandmother as she sat on the left-side of the cooker range in the farm house, making a peg-rug. She had opened out the large open weave oats or chaff sack, and was using a hook to pull pieces of cut up trousers, jackets, skirts etc that had been patched up so many times that either there was so little of the original left to be decent, or else that they had run out of other old garments to use for patching, through the sack. I would help by selecting pieces of garments cut into about half inch by some three inches for her to put through the sacking weave.

A few years later my mother saw advertised a more up-market fire rug by Readicut, who provided a selection of patterns to choose from and then provided all the necessities to make the rug at home from the stouter backing with the selected pattern printed on, the latch hooks with wool retainer, to numerous packets of wool already cut to the length required.

The next step once all the provided packets of wool had been used up was to purchase the wool and wind it reasonable loosely around the former, as given in the competition photo, (above) and then with sharp scissors cut along the groove to achieve pieces evenly cut to the required length.



Thank you Ewan and Max for this wonderful reminder of past crafts, what we today would call hobbies. Can you remember any activities that your parents or grandparents did? Please share with other members via the journal, and if you have a mystery object please share that as well.

Zoom Talks

Please find below the programme of meetings for the next few months.

All meetings are currently being held by Zoom. Joining instructions will be sent in the week prior to the meeting.

Wednesday August 6th	'Mind Mapping'	Linda Hammond
Wednesday September 3rd	'School Days'	Members' Evening
Wednesday October 8th	'Birch, Beer, Bibles'	Angela Dunsby

All meetings start at 7pm to allow social time prior to the talk at 7.30pm

Websites

'Website Archives'

The UK Government Archive can be found on the National Archive website, [UK Government Web Archive](#).

You can find archived websites, and archived social media channels Twitter, Flickr and YouTube.

'Geograph'

Geograph Britain and Ireland is a project which aims to collect representative photographs and information for every square kilometre of Great Britain and Ireland. From a family historians viewpoint it allows us to see the area where our ancestors lived, even if we are unable to visit. If you have free time you could also contribute to the project.

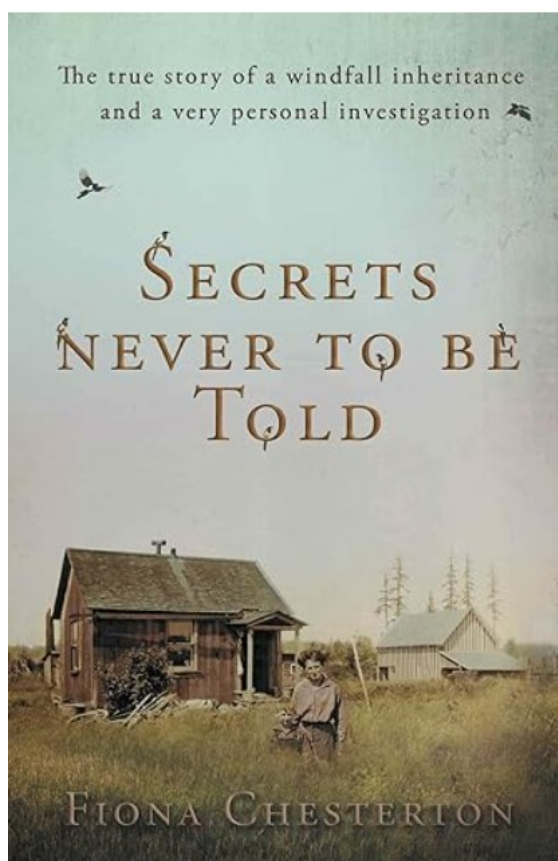
When I looked on 'geograph' I found this very unusual memorial to those who were killed and missing in the Second World War. It is located in the Hand and Heart public house in Millfield, and is one of only 60 memorials in the country, located in public houses.



This Art Deco-style pub was built in 1938 and is notable for the fact that its internal fixtures have been largely preserved. These include the original bar counter and a 'jug bar' which was once used for off-sales (i.e., alcohol purchased for consumption off the premises).

Please have a look to see what you can find, on both of these websites, and share your findings with other members via an article in the journal.

Book reviews



'Secrets Never to be Told' is an extraordinary story, compellingly told, which unravels a century and a half of family secrets. It reveals how being born illegitimate shaped the lives of two women – one of them, the author.

Starting with a letter revealing a mystery inheritance, the author goes on a five- year quest taking her from Victorian Cambridge to modern Vancouver. She uncovers how her cousin Jessie emigrated to Canada, one of thousands of female domestic servants exported as 'surplus' women before the First World War. Woven alongside the contemporary detective investigation on the trail of one immigrant's untold story, is that of the author's strange 1960s childhood of social isolation in a Midlands city, obsessed with a world seen through TV - and with the Beatles.

ASIN : B09L7D4QWG

Was one of your ancestors a brickmaker or are you just curious about bricks and brickmaking? This book will give you all the answers. Bricks are everywhere but people seldom give them a second glance.

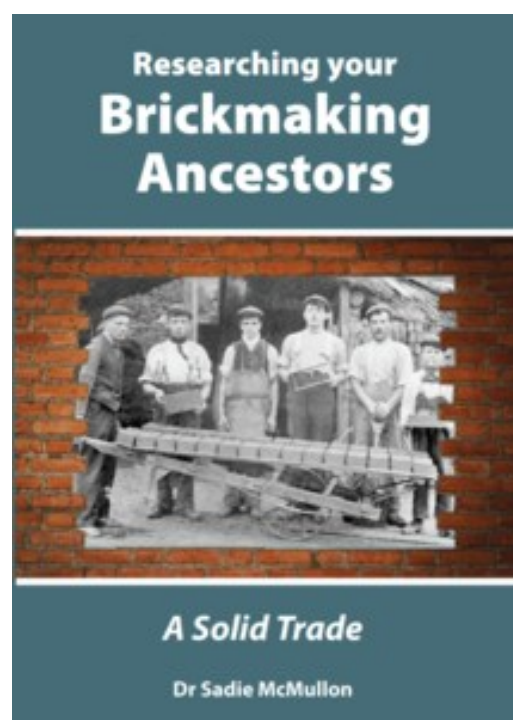
The author's passion for bricks is evident on every page as she paints a picture of the earliest bricks in the walls of Jericho to the fabulous patterned brick buildings we see today.

This book focuses on the people involved and covers specific brickmaking areas, guiding you through extensive records thus providing a better understanding of the industry. We read about entrepreneurs, businesses and companies; how some thrived while others went bust, and how some were family affairs. Brickmaking was a risky and perilous occupation; various reports, in graphic detail, and inquests indicate the dangers and accidents that could occur.

Different chapters cover specific brickmaking areas revealing why it was prominent there; we learn about types of clay, various innovations in machinery and the tasks of different occupations.

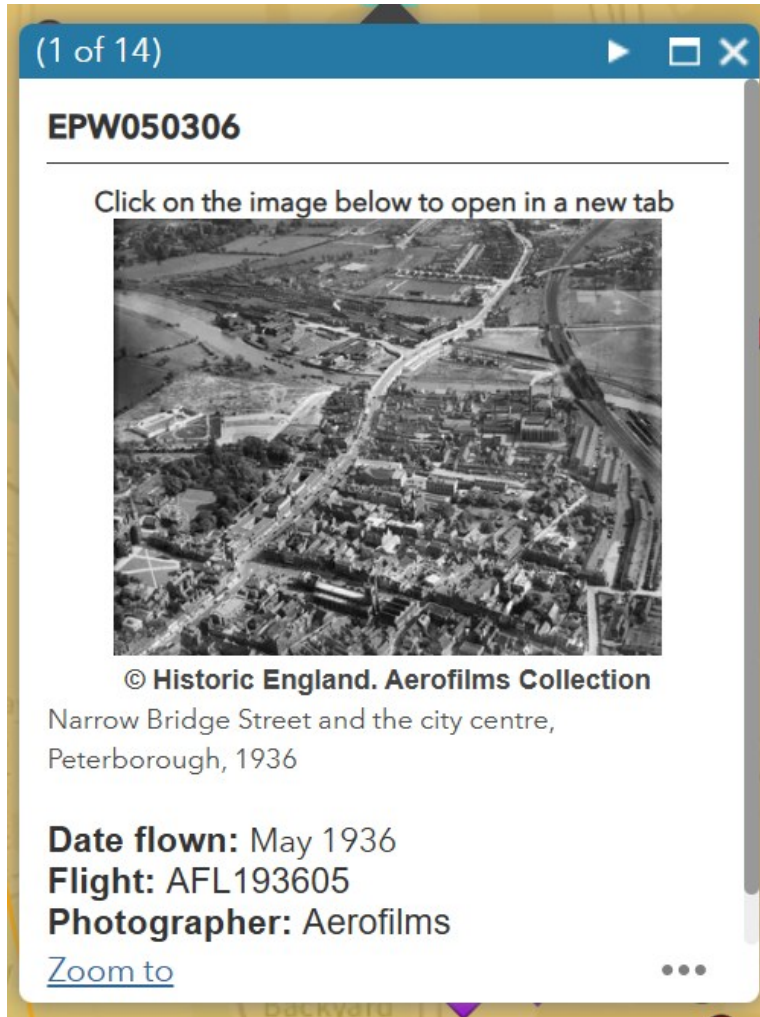
This well-illustrated book will appeal to everyone-whether you have brickmaking ancestors or not. You will view bricks differently after reading this fascinating book.

ISBN : 976-1-916599-10-9



‘Historic England’

Historic England recently launched a new website with a searchable database featuring a treasure trove of historic images, timelines, aerial photos, videos, and important stories from every corner of the country. Users of the [Local Heritage Hub](#) can search by place (e.g. city, county, district – including historic counties such as 'Cumberland') to find a wealth of superb resources.



This is well worth exploring; Just be aware that you could spend hours lost in these materials!

Moreover, it is possible to use the Hub's photos on things like websites and newsletters – useful if you are looking for relevant images for stories or features. Full guidance is available here: [Using Images from the Historic England Archive | Historic England](#).

On the left is an image of Narrow Bridge Street, and the city centre.

Please explore the website and let me know what you discover.

‘The Cocker family’

I would be pleased to hear from anybody in your organisation that has an interest in the Cocker family or associated families as I am collating a family history and any information they can provide would be greatly appreciated.

I should therefore be most grateful if you would kindly mention this to all your members at any appropriate moment.

I am always happy to correspond with relatives however distant in a mutual understanding of the family history and how we have spread ourselves within Britain and across the globe.

With kind regards
Peter Cocker

fmy098@gmail.com



The Heritage Open Days are almost upon us again. Running between the 12th and 21st September, and boasting many sites, there is bound to be something available that meets your interests.

In Peterborough, alongside Peterborough Cathedral, The Bishop's Palace, and St. John's in the city centre, why not drop in to St. Margaret's Church, Fletton.

St. Margaret's will be open on Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th September, between midday and 4pm.

There will be a chance to see inside St. Margaret's church and look at the world famous Saxon Stones. There will be members of the congregation on hand to guide you through the displays. You will be able to trace your family history using the parish registers that will be available. Take time to absorb the wonderful architecture. Listen to the short talks available. Explore the World War Two artefacts.

After enjoying what is on offer enjoy the peace of these wonderful surroundings whilst having a cup of tea or coffee and treat yourself to some homemade cake.

**To start the event St. Margaret's are hosting a talk,
'Fletton– its Part in World War Two', by Derek Smith,
on Friday 12th September at 7.30pm.**

The talk is free to attend and light refreshments will be served afterwards.

If you have any World War Two artefacts that we could display please get in touch with Sadie 07796952746/ sasmc2000@yahoo.co.uk

