

SWINNERTON
Family History



Joseph Edward Swinnerton 1912-1999

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The Swinnerton Society

A non-profit making organisation devoted to the welfare of Swynnerton Church and the research and publication of Swinnerton Family Records

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SWINNERTON FAMILY HISTORY

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CONTENTS

Foreword - The Chairman	82
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission	85
Charles Swinnerton's New Testament	86
An Extract from the History of Bilston	86
The Enemy is Listening	87
Letter from Hart Davis to Lyttleton	87
Eddowes Salopian Journal	88
Extract from "History of Walsall"	89
Joseph Edward Swinnerton	94
Ann Bagot's Diary (continued)	96
Family Notes	100

Editor - Iain Spencer Swinnerton

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FOREWORD

The Chairman

I suppose many chairmen and editors throughout the world are writing Millennium messages at this moment – that is if they believe we are approaching the Millennium which I personally do not. There never was a year 0A.D. and so I think the Edwardians were quite right when they celebrated the beginning of the 20th Century on the 1st January 1901. However, the majority of the rest of the world seem to be celebrating the beginning of the 21st Century and the new Millennium on the 1st January 2000 so I suppose I shall have to fall in line!

We have discussed it at our recent Council Meeting and I have made a resolution to get all our archive material typed up on to computer during the coming year – something I have been trying to achieve for many years. We are making good progress and it is an attainable target. We have also been looking into the question of where we shall keep them. We have asked Swynnerton Parish Council if they have a room somewhere we could use: there has also been an alternative suggestion that they should be deposited in the William Salt Library at Stafford. The main objection to this is the question of how accessible would they be and who would have access to them? Although many of the records will by then be on computer disk or CD Rom, we will still need to have paper copies for people to look at and we also have a lot of miscellaneous artefacts such as photographs, pictures, books, deeds etc. as well as some actual heirlooms. The debate continues but if you have any views on the matter please write to me.

Quite a few new records have been released during the past year: the computer is undoubtedly making life much easier and most new releases are in this format. Possibly the most valuable genealogical finding aid produced so far came out this year – the complete census of the British Isles for 1881. Although this was previously available on microfiche which we had purchased, one had to laboriously go through every county one by one to extract the members of our family. Now it has been produced on CD Rom disks with the facility to do an overall search of the whole country for our name which, of course, easily throws up those members of the family living in other households, hospitals, on boats and barges, in barracks and, yes, even in prison! A truly marvellous working tool made available at a very moderate cost by the Mormon Church.

Other major aids that have become available are the International Genealogical Index and the records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission which are both now on the Internet.

This is marvellous, of course, and a tremendous help in our research but I am still very glad that I did a lot of our research in the days when I could go to a church and look at the church registers or to the old Public Record Office in

Chancery Lane, London and go through the original census enumerators' books. There is nothing quite like the thrill of finding a record of an ancestor's baptism in a parish register or seeing an actual signature on a marriage entry or will. Of course, there was a downside, I remember once a friend who was also looking at census books complaining to me about the shocking handwriting of the census-taker and then mischievously pointing that he was a Swinnerton!

Also great fun was discovering the wonderful variety of ways in which one's names could be spelt. Spelling in the English language has always been very variable and depended very much on the degree of literacy, the local area and accent and even the state of health of the informant in the days before the 1860s when compulsory education was introduced and less than 40% of the population could read and write.

Here are spellings of our name we have encountered over the years.

In use in the Society today:

Swinnerton, Swinerton, Swynnerton, Swinarton, Swenerton, Swenarton.

Known to be in use today elsewhere:

Swinnington, Swinnington, de Swynnerton.

In use in former times:

Swinniton, Swiniton, Swineraton, Swinnorton, Swinervon, Swinaton, Swinneton, Swineston, Switherton, Swinnirton, Swinentons, Swynarton, Swinharton, , Swenenton, Swynaton, Sunnerton, Swininton, Swyneforton, Swynereston, Swynmerton, Swaynarton, Sequaquaton, Swinn'ton, Swyn'ton. The last two are abbreviations to save space in registers but have led to Swinton which is a totally different very ancient Scottish family.

People change the spelling of their names at will and one of the great advantages of the freedom we have in this country is that they are allowed to do so.

I am sure you have all come across the Smiths who became Smythes and the Browns who became Brownes 'because it looked better'. There were many other reasons – one member of the family in Ireland changed the spelling of our name to distinguish him from his brother who had the same initial because they were always getting each other's post. My predecessor as family historian, the Reverend Charles Swynnerton was born and baptised Swinnerton but decided to change it later in life to commemorate the fact that the family had originally come from Swynnerton. In fact, it was originally Sulvertone and often appears in early documents with an 'i'.

Similarly with Christian names or, as we are supposed to call them now to be politically correct, forenames. There are many instances where a person has changed the spelling of their baptismal name or even changed the name altogether because they did not like the one they were given and lived under that name perfectly legally for the rest of their lives. Alternatively, they may have gone through life under a nickname or pet name with everyone forgetting the original. Accounts of funerals in local papers are very useful in this

respect because you invariably get two lists of those attending. The first gives the proper names 'Mr and Mrs Alfred Snooks (cousin)' and then in the second list (of flowers sent), you see listed Uncle Fred and Auntie Madge'. So it was Alfred (it could have been Frederick) and Margaret but Maisie, Greta and Peggy are also pet names for Margaret. It can work both ways: I remember our late chairman, Joe, altering an entry on a tree I sent him for checking from 'Tom' to Thomas but I had to point out to him that the boy had actually been registered as 'Tom'.

It is a sobering thought that any so-called 'official' record is only what someone told someone else. Those of you who are married will remember being asked how old you were and this was the age entered on the marriage certificate, the vicar or registrar did not ask you to produce your birth certificate to prove it.

Over the years, this has led to some very interesting situations – very few ladies, for instance, would admit to marrying a man younger than themselves and either adjusted their age downwards or that of their potential spouse upwards!

Similarly, deaths are very often recorded by friends or neighbours, the close family are too upset. When asked for the age of the deceased it was often a case of a good guess and I have known them to be at least 10 years out. Do you know how old your neighbour is?

Some years ago I was asked by a solicitor friend to find the registration of a client's birth as she needed a birth certificate to claim her old-age pension. A professional firm of record agents had failed to find it but I did because I carried out a much wider search and she turned out to be 4 years older than she thought she was.

In the censuses which have been taken every 10 years since 1851 (except for 1941) people have been required to state exactly where they were born. Our ancestors seem to have set out to deliberately mislead us. My great-great-grandfather said he had been born in Newport, Staffordshire. Now I knew that Newport was in Shropshire so I searched all the church registers in Shropshire parishes around Newport to no avail. It was several years before I found his birth in Adbaston which is in Staffordshire but only just over the border which runs within a mile or so of Newport – he had given the name of the nearest town!

However, for many years even I thought I had been born in the place where I grew up, which was then in North Worcestershire, but my father moved in my infancy and I was actually born over the border in Staffordshire. It's a chancy business this genealogy.

My very best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year and, I suppose, for the Millennium.

Pain Swinnerton

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission Debt of Honour Register

Name	Rank	Regiment	Date of Death
SWINNERTON, A F R W	Lieutenant	Canadian Infantry (Cen. Ontario Regt.)	1 Mar 1917
SWINNERTON, A W	Rifleman	The King's (Liverpool Regiment)	25 Sep 1916
SWINNERTON, B	Driver	Royal Field Artillery	13 May 1915
SWINNERTON, D M	Civilian		16 Apr 1941
SWINNERTON, E A	Private	Durham Light Infantry	30 Apr 1917
SWINNERTON, F W	Private	Cheshire Regiment	7 Jun 1917
SWINNERTON, H	Private	King's Shropshire Light Infantry	9 Aug 1915
SWINNERTON, H	Sergeant	Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve	28 Mar 1945
SWINNERTON, H	Driver	Royal Field Artillery	1 Sep 1916
SWINNERTON, H	Private	Lancashire Fusiliers	24 Jul 1916
SWINNERTON, J S	Private	South Staffordshire Regiment	18 Nov 1914
SWINNERTON, J W	Private	South Staffordshire Regiment	19 Jul 1944
SWINNERTON, L M	Signalman	Royal Corps of Signals	15 Jun 1943
SWINNERTON, N	Gunner	Royal Field Artillery	21 Jul 1918
SWINNERTON, P W	Rifleman	Rifle Brigade	3 Sep 1916
SWINNERTON, S	Guardsman	Grenadier Guards	17 Mar 1943
SWINNERTON, S G	Private	Australian Infantry	19 Aug 1941
SWINNERTON, S J	Private	Royal Warwickshire Regiment	25 Sep 1915
SWINNERTON, T	Private	Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry	28 Aug 1916
SWINNERTON, W	Bombardier	Royal Marine Artillery	13 May 1915
SWINNERTON, W	Private	South Staffordshire Regiment	2nd Feb 1916
SWINNERTON, W W	Flight Lt	Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve	3 Aug 1943

This has been downloaded from the internet for us by Roger Swynnerton. As you can see it includes the names for both World Wars. It is possible to get an individual scroll for any individual with as many details of the man's family and service as CWGC possesses. The scroll also contains details of the cemetery where the man is buried and has a coloured picture of a typical grave. You can find details of this and other registers they have (eg, Civilian War Dead 1939-45) at www.cwgc.org.

* * * * *

For World War I only, there is another source *Soldiers Died in the Great War 1914-1920* This was originally published in 1921 in 81 hard-back books listing approximately 635,000 men and 37,000 officers who died in the war. A second improved edition of this has just been issued on CD Rom enabling you to print out a facsimile of the original scroll with full colour Royal Arms which was sent to the relatives of the fallen. I have this and would be happy to do one for any relative in the family.

Found written in the New Testament of Charles Swinnerton (CS.42)

Charles Swinnerton born October 21st 1847
 Alice Swinnerton April 4 1851
 William Swinnerton born February 20th 1875
 Annie born October 20th 1876
 Lucy born June 3th 1879
 George born January 16th 1881
 Charles born May 2th 1883
 Alice born January 16th 1885
 Tom born January 29th 1887*
 Charlotte born Friday May 24th 1889
 Francis born Friday April 10th 1891
 Brooke born Friday October 6th 1894
 Walter born Saturday August 22nd 1896

Note: These are all members of Charles's family: he was the son of Elizabeth Swinnerton (ES.94), granddaughter of William of Adbaston. Alice was his wife, formerly Alice Walton. Annie, the second child, was previously unknown to us. *Tom was the one mentioned in the foreword who was actually registered as Tom.

* * * * *

History of Bilston

In 1774 a vestry meeting was held to consider what should be done with the money left by Mrs. Mary Swinnerton to the poor, at which it was unanimously agreed that a certain quantity of land, late the property of Brooke Crutchley Esq. and his two daughters Catherine and Anne Crutchley and Mrs Jane Robins called Churchyard Piece near the present Chapelyard be purchased by ye Chapellwardens for an additional burial ground and the residue of the money over and above the £20 left by Mrs. Swinnerton towards purchasing the ground should be raised and defrayed by levy.

* * * * *

Genealogy – where you confuse the dead and irritate the living!

Swinnerton Family History – December 1999

“The Enemy is Listening - The Story of the Y Service”

by Aileen Clayton.

p.196.

“It became an unwritten law for us (in Cairo)(She was a WAAF Officer) to telephone some of your girlfriends. There was always some party or other at which (an Officer on leave) would be most welcome. I remember there was one boy - ‘Swinn’ - who looked even younger than my kid brother but he was nevertheless a brave and competent flight commander. His greatest pleasure was to come round to my flat ‘to have tea out of a china cup with a tray cloth on the tray, and feel civilised again’. He was an only child and when later, during the Sicilian battles he was shot down, I received a letter of thanks from his elderly parents which reduced me to tears. Thanking me - for doing what? Perhaps for just being around. I believe that it mattered”.

The reference in the Index is “Swinnerton - Flight Lieutenant W”.

● * * * *

The Lyttleton - Hart-Davis Letters 1955-56

p 179 Hart-Davis to Lyttleton:-

Frank Swinnerton is a pet: a small, ugly, bearded, ageless-looking man. He giggles and chuckles a lot in an infectious way, is a brilliant mimic, and is full of malicious anecdotes which he tells without any malice at all: indeed, I don't think there is any in him. When I had finished my Walpole book I told F.S. that there were a number of faintly unflattering remarks about him in it, all made by Hugh, and asked whether he'd like to see proofs in case he objected. He said NO he didn't mind what was said and would nmuch prefer the ipsissima verba to any bowdlerized version. I see him at the committee of the Royal Literary Fund, which I accuse him of not taking wholly seriously, since he occasionally introduces a laugh into that otherwise solemn assembly.

Swinnerton Family History – December 1999

Eddowes Salopian Journal

25 May 1864

Thunderstorms of unusual violence passed over a great part of the country on Thursday and Friday last. We regret to say that its effects on this county have been more fatally disastrous than any we have had to record for many years. Two men named Morris and Fletcher were killed by a lightning stroke at Little Drayton on Thursday. At Cheswardine it struck a tree near the blacksmith's shop, close to the place where a similar thing occurred two years ago. The lightning entered the smithy and **Mr Swinnerton** had a very narrow escape. It also knocked down a servant girl at Mr Mate's of Hanwood near Cheswardine and a galvanised iron bucket she was carrying was driven some yards across the farmyard, but the girl was not injured. At the village of Cheswardine the storm was fearfully heavy. Large hailstones fell and there was a perfect deluge of rain. At Hodnet, five sheep grazing in a field were killed by the electric fluid, and on the Hawkestone estate a waggoner and two fine horses were deprived of life by this fearful agency. Close on the borders of the county at Buerton near Audlem a home belonging to Mr Vernon was struck by lightning and almost totally destroyed. The electric fluid also struck a tree at Chester Castle and glanced off the bayonet of a sentry without doing any material damage. At Wynnstay, the seat of Sir W W Wynn, the feeder's house was struck and the door was damaged; and a fine oak in the park was split to pieces. At Ludlow, Ironbridge and other districts of this county the storm was severely felt. On Friday, London, Liverpool, York and the whole of the north of England appear to have suffered severely, much damage being done by the sudden rise of rivers and brooks to the tillage in their neighbourhoods.

(*This was Samuel Swinnerton [SS.43] 1845-1919).

● * * * *

A true account of such monnye as hath been received towards the reparacons of the Church by ffraunces Maulkyn and John Catcher, Churchwardens of the pish of Hackney, 1605. (Names include, under Newington, Sha., Kingsl., and Darlestonn (c) which are Stoke Newington, Shacklewell, Kingsland and Dalston (c))

Item of 1/4Will1/4m Swinnerton (c) (c) (c) ijs.

Burials include 1616 June 16 Richard Swinnerton, Batcher of Art.

(At 1603(c)6 is a note: "Here began the Great Plague, but I have set down none but men or weomen of note. I have left out all children and vagrants, &c.")

A HISTORY OF WALSALL And its Neighbourhood:

Frederic Willmore M.R.C.S., ENG

Member of the William Salt Archaeological Society.

...On August 25th, 1642, Charles, after leaving Stoneley, where he had been the guest of Sir Thomas Lee, raised his standard at Nottingham, "to which place," says Clarendon, "came very good recruits of foot from Leicestershire and Staffordshire." In the following month he came to Shrewsbury, and "a more general and passionate expression of affections cannot be imagined, than he received from the people of those counties of Derby, Stafford, and Shropshire, as he passed." Later on in January, 1643, he says, "the rebels drew a great body of horse and foot out of Derbyshire, Staffordshire, and Lincolnshire for the siege of Newark." In this county, Lichfield immediately declared war in the king's favour, and equipped a body of horse raised by Sir Richard Dyott and commanded by his son Richard Dyott, Esq. The Close was also strongly garrisoned by the inhabitants under the Earl of Chesterfield.

Tutbury Castle was a royal residence, and was of course garrisoned for the king under the command of Lord Loughborough. The Castle of Ashby(c)de(c)la(c)Zouch was likewise fortified for the king by General Hastings, who had been purposely fetched from Newark by Sir John Harper, of Calke, a warm adherent of the royal party. Tamworth Castle was also occupied for the king, while Dudley Castle was strengthened and garrisoned under the direction of Sir Thomas Levison. The king deemed this stronghold of great consequence, and wrote to Lord Dudley and others desiring them to assist the Colonel in defending it. Eccleshal Castle was another stronghold belonging to the king, and it held out vigorously for a long time, the Bishop of Lichfield himself helping to defend it. Stourton Castle was also fortified by the Royalists, but surrendered to the Parliament in 1644. "The Castle of Stafford was another, which was likewise garrisoned for the king, but it did not hold out long, being taken by Sir William Brereton in 1644, after being bravely defended by the "Ould Lady Stafford." Other garrisons belonging to the king were Keele House, Patteshall, and "Swinerton", while coming nearer home, Col. John Lane, of Bentley; John Persehouse, of Reynolds Hall; George Hawe, of Caldmore; with Hopkins, of Wednesbury, were avowed loyalists. Thus might Clarendon truthfully remark that "Col. Hastings found some convenient garrisons in Staffordshire."

On the other side we may remark, that Painsley House, Caverswall Castle, and the Town of Burton were held by the Parliament. Derby was held by Sir John Gell, and Sir Edward Leigh having attached himself to the same side, assumed the rank of Colonel in the army, strengthened the defences of his house at Rushall, and garrisoned it against the king. Around this little stronghold the tide of battle rose and fell several times before it was finally dismantled by order of the Parliament.

The great town of Birmingham was thoroughly disaffected, while Walsall itself, at this period of the strife undoubtedly strongly loyal to the king, could yet produce such men of distinction and notoriety as Captain Henry Stone and Colonel Fox the Tinker. John Sylvester, of Stonnal, and Capt. Henry Jackson of Wall, were also prominent on the side of the Parliament.

Such was the general aspect of the country around here at the outbreak of the war, and for the next three years this neighbourhood was the scene of continued warfare and bloodshed; while contributions in the form of weekly payments were levied by each party, the whole country being parcelled out amongst the different troops, and the people unwillingly made to support both Royalist and rebel forces. As may easily be supposed this continual feud led to the land around being greatly impoverished, while great distress prevailed, and the fields lay uncultivated and uncared for.

The following letter from a rebel newspaper throws a little light on the situation here at this time:

"Walsall in Staffordshire, September 24th 1642.

"Mast. Comberford, of Tamworth, sent three or foure cart loads of goods and ammunition, with many cattle, lately towards Dudley Castle for safety; but Birmingham men having notice thereof seized upon them. This Comberford is a great malignant. This and other things makes Birmingham extremely threatened. Some cavaliers were lately apprehended here (at Walsall) for indeavouring to levie souldiers, for which dreadful menaces are denounced against us also."&c.

On the 16th and 17th of the following month Charles was at Aston Hall, the guest of Sir Thomas Holt. Before proceeding from

here on the 18th he is reputed to have met the loyal genettlemen of Staffordshire, and reviewed their troops at King's Standing, on the Old Chester Road. For his royal adherence Sir Thomas had not only to compound but also to suffer imprisonment; while his house was ransacked and damage done to the extent of $\text{£}20,000$. The Birmingham men on this occasion seized the King's carriage containing the royal plate and furniture, which was conveyed for security to Warwick Castle.

On Sunday afternoon, the 23rd October, 1642, was fought the memorable battle of Edgehill, and from this time the war was carried on in earnest.

In 'Mercurius Aulicus', a Royalist paper for February 24th, 1643, we are introduced to Col. Tinker Fox, of Walsall. Of his origin nothing is known (he was probably a brasier); but he embraced the cause of the Parliament with great zeal. He raised a troop among his own comrades, constituted himself their colonel; and being joined by numerous recruits, he soon became a formidable and intrepid antagonist.

Thus runs the Royal narrative: "The Rebels intending a Reformation by the Sword, will square their church according to their Army. And therefore they thrust all trades into the Pulpit, since their shops were emptied for Colonels and Captains. Particularly one Fox, a Tinker of Walsall, in Staffordshire, having got a horse and his hammer for a pole(c)axe, invited to his society 16 men of his brethren (above half as many as departed this world at Banbury Assize). This joviall Colonel Tinker, with his 16 swete brethren, marched seven miles to Birmingham, in Warwickshire, neere which Towne they fortified a House, called Edgebaston House. But (remembering their trade) they mended one hole but made a worse; for they pulled down the church to make their fortifications; disposed of the Bells to their fellows in Birmingham. In this house they have nestled so long that their 16 are swollen up to 200, which rob and pillage very sufficiently. A man, whose horse they had stolen, petitioned Colonel Fox to restore his horse, or to set a low price, and he would pay for him. Tinker Fox answered that he must not restore the horse for nothing, and to sell him (quoth he) 'I hold very dishonourable.'"

A few days afterwards we meet for the first time with the

name of Captain Henry Stone, who was ordered "with his soldiers to demolish Swinnerton House, the residence of the Fitzherberts. • A great deal of doubt hangs over this valiant gentleman, and he has received the credit of various charitable benefactions to the town, upon very questionable authority. He is stated by Shaw to be a merchant of Plymouth; but Mr. Worth, the historian of that town, who has made careful enquiries for me, states that he is unable to discover any trace of the name in the local records. Captain Stone rapidly obtained a prominent part in the war; raised and equipped at his own expense a troop of horse, and was soon placed on the "Safety Committee," for the Midland Counties, which sat at Stafford;

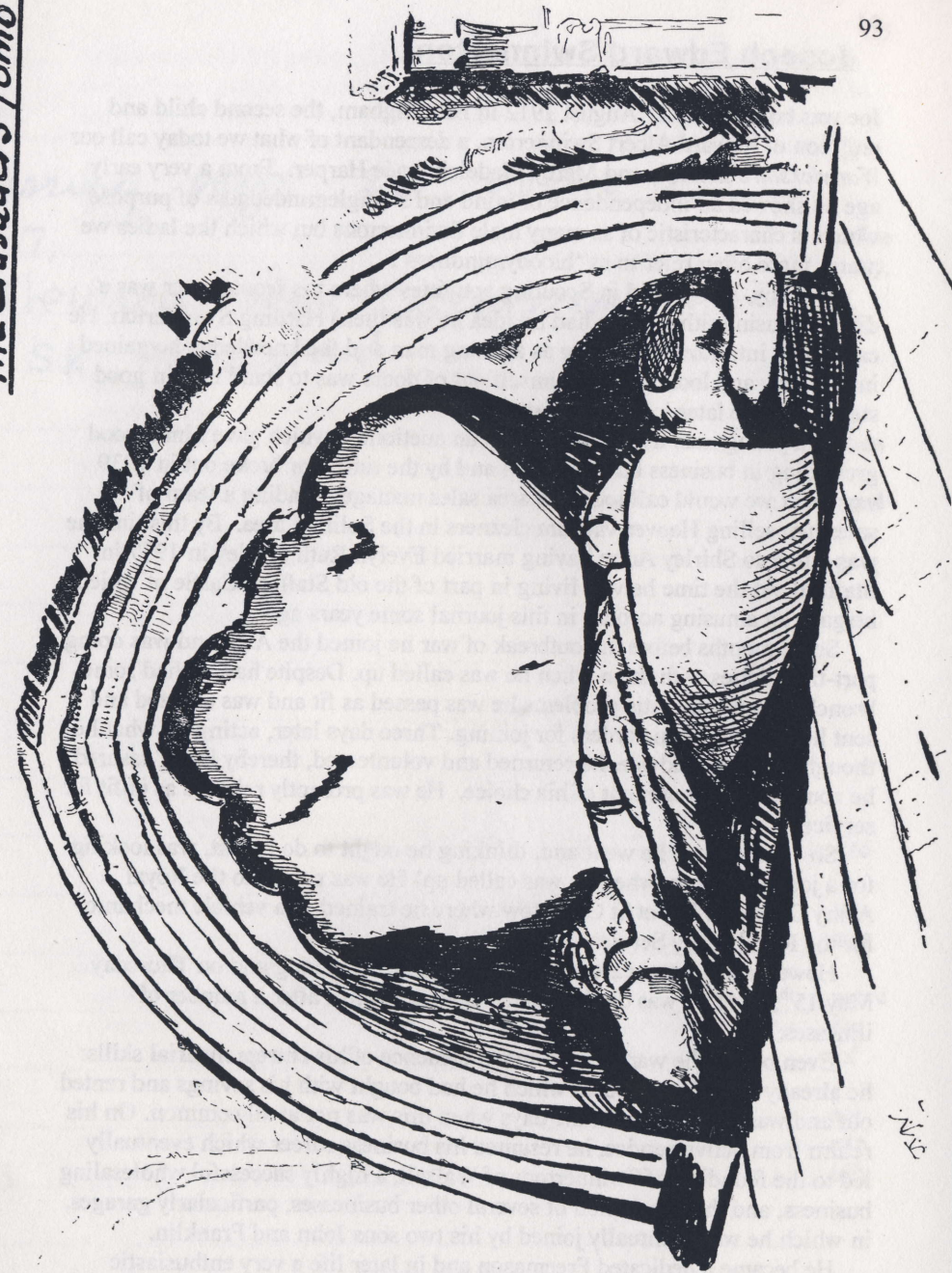
In January, 1644, Colonel Leigh and Lieutenant(c) Colonel Chadwick were fined one shilling each, for departing from the Committee without leave; and on February 29th it was ordered by the Committee "that "Mr. Fitzherbert's house at Swinnerton, be forthwith demolished by Captain Stone's soldiers." •

On February 14th, 1644, Captain Henry Stone, under Sir Wm. Brereton, Governor of Eccleshall Castle, marched against Patteshull (now the residence of Lord Dartmouth), which he surprised and captured, taking many prisoners together with much arms and ammunition. A contemporary account says "it was strongly fortified, moated, and defended by a Popish garrison; but taking the opportunity when the drawbridge was let down, he suddenly forced his passage, surprised the sentries, and fell in upon the garrison, fought with them in the house, and took Mr. Ashley, the governor and owner, with divers gentlemen of quality, two Jesuits, and about 60 soldiers prisoners, and possessed the house, arms, ammunition, and good prize." The next day Sir Wm. Brereton wrote to the Parliament, giving further details of Captain Stone's success.

• * * * *

Old genealogists never die – they just haunt the cemeteries.

The Crusader's Tomb.



The Crusader's Tomb in Swinnerton Church drawn by the Revd. Brian Swinnerton

Joseph Edward Swinnerton

Joe was born on the 21 August 1912 in Birmingham, the second child and only son of Edward Albert Swinnerton, a descendant of what we today call our *Warwickshire Branch*, and Mercy Madeleine née Harper. From a very early age he showed an independence of mind and a singlemindedness of purpose which is characteristic of so many male Swinnertons but which the ladies we marry more often refer to as 'bloodymindedness'!

As a boy, he revelled in Scouting activities where his scoutmaster was a distant cousin (although he had no idea he was then) Harding Swinnerton. He carried on into Rover Scouting as a young man and the knowledge he gained in camping and looking after himself out of doors was to stand him in good stead when he later joined the army.

As a young man he was articled to an auctioneer which gave him a good grounding in business but moved on and by the time war broke out in 1939 was what we would call today an area sales manager, leading a team of salesmen selling Hoover vacuum cleaners in the Solihull area. By this time he was father to Shirley Anne having married Evelyn Ruth Shirley in 1937 in Stafford. At the time he was living in part of the old Stafford Castle of which he gave an amusing account in this journal some years ago.

Some months before the outbreak of war he joined the ARP and was doing part-time duties with them when he was called up. Despite having had some bronchial and asthmatic problems he was passed as fit and was attested and sent home to await his orders for joining. Three days later, acting on what he thought was good advice, he returned and volunteered, thereby being assured he could join the regiment of his choice. He was promptly rejected as unfit for service!

So – back home he went and, thinking he ought to do his bit, was looking for a job in a factory when he was called up! He was posted to the Royal Army Ordnance Depot at Chepstow where he trained as a vehicle mechanic for the Royal Army Service Corps.

However, his army career was not to last for very long and on Thursday May 15th, 1941 he was discharged as medically unfit after a number of illnesses.

Even before the war he had shown evidence of his entrepreneurial skills: he already owned two houses which he had bought with his savings and rented out and was a car owner in the days when this was not at all common. On his return from active service, he resumed his business career which eventually led to the founding of Swinnertons of Walsall, a highly successful wholesaling business, and the acquisition of several other businesses, particularly garages, in which he was eventually joined by his two sons John and Franklin.

He became a dedicated Freemason and in later life a very enthusiastic Rotarian.

In his very late 70s he bought a computer and, despite many problems and much frustration, he mastered it and for some years produced the indexes to the volumes of this journal and also published his memoirs which make fascinating reading. They are listed on the back cover and I can thoroughly recommend them, His son, Franklin, has promised to complete the unpublished parts.

This is, of necessity, only a very brief outline of a many-faceted career: Joe was a very special man, he was I call one of 'life's characters' of which, sadly, there are far too few around these days - everyone is far too busy trying to conform. Enthusiastic and always energetic, even in his later years he could make me feel quite tired, life was never dull when Joe was around and any cause he took up always had 100% of his effort. He was a very loyal supporter of the Swinnerton Society, serving on the Council for many years and as an excellent Chairman from September 1994 to September 1995 when he was obliged to step down under the six years on the Council rule. Joe, being Joe, continued to take a great interest in the Council's work and he and Irene regularly came to our weekend get-togethers.

I shall forever bless the day, back in 1974, when I wrote to him telling about my work on the family history to which letter, of course, I got an enthusiastic letter of support by return post!

• * * * *

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Joe was always very keen making sure the finances of the Society were in good order and so I am sure he would approve of my following my tribute to him with this reminder.

It has been our custom for a number of years to include a list of paid-up members in our December Journal but I have not done so because I am sorry to say that a considerable number of members have not renewed their subscriptions this year and it might prove embarrassing. Because of my move of house in March and the change over to a new subscriptions secretary, the usual reminders were not sent out which will, no doubt, account for a lot of them.

With this journal is a subscription renewal form for 2000, if you did not renew for 1999 the slip is marked accordingly and I would ask you please to send us two year's subs – we do need your support in our work on the family history and we have continued to send you the journals.

AnnBagot's Diary (continued)

March 1820

30th. Left home to go to Milford - found Lou and Baby, Levett and Dick arrived soon afterwards - Levett also brought Henry Bagot with him from school who was so unwell on the road they were apprehensive of not having been able to get on.

A Visit to Blithfield - and its Alterations

31st. Good Friday - We all went to Baswich Church. A note from Dick Bagot to say Henry had got the mumps.

April,

4th. Dick, Mrs. Drummond and myself all went to Stafford Castle - an object familiar to my sight at my native home from my childhood.

5th. I was to have gone with Lady Oakeley to Mrs. Probyn's Quadrille Ball but so violent a nervous headache came on I could not stir.

18th. Lou, Levett and myself went to Shugborough when I had a very civil invite and met with an hospitable reception since my last visit at that home what a revolution of its inhabitants had occurred. We were a party of 15. The Duke of Holstein was to have been there. We dined late and did not get tea until 12 o'clock.

19th. Lady Anson took me to her garden gave me some sanguinana ask'd me to repeat her visit - we return'd to Milford.

26th. Aunt Betty Swinnerton came escort'd by Old Sally and old William remnants of ancient times pleasant to look backupon, a kind of memorial to people long since gone.

28th. Lou took Aunt Betty to see Ingestre where she had been 46 years ago to pay a wedding visit to my father and mother.

May.

2nd. Levett, Lou, Baby and myself went to Sudbury to keep the Anson's wedding-day. Walt: just arrived. Mrs. Anne Vernon and Mrs. Wm. Vernon one of the archbishop's sons made the rest of the party. The Ansons had their seven fine children all at home. Levett drove me in the buggy and at my request and with his usual good nature slept at Blithfield that I might see the alterations there going on. The last time I was there poor My Lady was in the conservatory which was still in great beauty though she was gone. The place was quite empty. I wonder whether it is in the power of time to make me lose that indescribable feel of home which I now experience whenever I go near it or make me view it with indifference?

3rd. Lady Vernon called.

7th. We dined at Lord Vernon's.

Ann Acquires the next door house -

9th. Return'd home.

Signed the lease of Mr. Parker's house. I got in the Masons immediately and before night the room was finished and a fire in it. Lady Oakeley would hardly believe it but to convince her I brought her over to see it. May I be properly thankful to the giver of all good for such an increase of comfort as I hope and believe I shall find in this increase to the size of my mansion.

16th. Lady Oakeley took me to Elford - walked in the new gardens. John Sneyd out.

19th. Oakeleys. Levetts, etc. came to dinner. Party of 14.

22nd. Came home. . . We all went to see the Wild Beasts fed it being Whitsun Monday and consequently Greenhill Bower staid looking at the Animals till after 11 when Levett walk'd home with me.

23rd. Very busy papering my new rooms.

June.

2nd. Went to a very pleasant Quadrille Ball at the Palace - did not come home till near 3.

3rd. The Carpenters went after having finish'd what they had to do in my new bedroom in which I sometimes have a feel I shall die -

4th. This morning which for 60 years has been ushered in by all the Bells and cannons of the kingdom made its appearance in perfect quietness - to me a striking Ainsi va le Monde.

20th. Called at Ravenhill where we found the Madans etc. afterwards at Brereton where we found the Sneyds.

26th. The weather boiling hot - Not sorry for a good excuse to join a picknick at Drakelow.

July.

13th. There was a considerable riot in Boar St. from the people insulting the Military - Sr. F. Darwin had 7 people taken up. It was so completely over that Miss Oakeley and myself walk'd home unconscious till the next day that such a thing had occur'd.

Anne meets the Restorer of the Great West Front of Lichfield Cathedral

17th. Went to a Quadrille Ball at the Deanery beat Sir C. Oakeley at Chess -

19th. Had a pleasant sociable dinner en famille at the Deanery to meet Mrs. and Miss Holbeach - walk'd in the evening, the artist Mr. Harris who is restoring the old Kings on the outside of the Cathedral dined with us, who was an intelligent pleasant man and apparently had great faith in Lavaton's Science having attempted to make the countenances of the Kings answer to their character - Egerton and Henry Legge called meaning to have slept at Mrs. Drummonds' since Mathews the actor did not come owing to some mistake.

20th. Received a letter from Martha Swinnerton to tell me of the marriage of her sister Elizabeth to Mr. Tynte and hope they shd . . have the comfort of seeing me at Butterton; so there I hope an unfounded and unjust anxiety of nearly 25 years expires.

Went in the evening to a Quadrille Ball at the Palace

Went twice to the Cathedral

21st, Went to Kings Bromley where I found Sir Corbet and Lady Corbet, Colonel and Mrs. Madan Miss Jenkins, Brother William and the four Lanes and we had a very sociable and pleasant visit. Lady Corbet talked a good deal about Dr. Johnson who she thought was at times insane - his extreme oddities of manner as well as dirt must have made him a very unpleasant inmate malgre his gigantic intellect. She said his absence of mind was so great as not infrequently to make him put his tea-cup on his head.

He wd. much have liked to have lived with them after Mrs. Thrale had left him but they could not undertake that. Lady Corbet visited him at Boltcomb in his last illness, his abode she described as wretched in an uncommon degree. I hope to visit Adderley in the autumn.

August

1st. Went to a large party at the Palace.

Went to a party at Mr. Whites, met Mrs. Hussey who showed us a very small miniature of Shakespeare painted for Garrick at the sale valued very highly. Levett came to fetch Mary and myself to Milford. Called on the Sneyds by the way.

Anne's Maid dies

27th. Drank tea at Mrs. Falsonn's with the Madans, Mrs. Drummond and Mrs. Gresley. Had a very pleasant sociable evening. The Queen and her infamy engrossing nearly half however of the conversation.

28th. Mrs. Drummond took me to Sudbury where we met with a cordial reception from the Ansons, all their children but Freddy at home.

29th. Went shopping in Uttoxeter. Mr. Broadhurst also Edward Coke and his daughter dined. Mr. Coke actually mentioned to me the Lichfield address to the Queen which I am told had been signed by two or three coalheavers.

31st. Poor Betty (the maid) very ill and still in her bed.

September

1st. Sir F. Darwin came to Betty and thought her in imminent danger. Her relations came over but actually refused to sit up one night with her and went away again.

5th. Found to my extreme surprise poor Betty had not an hour to live; she was perfectly sensible she expired with her hand in mine. It was the first time I had ever felt the icy breath that precedes dissolution, that I had ever seen the

efforts of the spirit to leave its home of clay to meet its Redeemer and its God. It is an awful thought, not a fearful sight. May we all meet again in bliss! I staid to give directions about the funeral. I arrived at Milford at about 6 o'clock - found Louisa & Mary Bagot there - the former had not recovered the fright of having given Baby a wrong dose of physick - the child was not the worse - the mother was.

15th. Mary and I came to Lichfield.

20th. Went to a Quadrille Ball at the Deanery.

22nd. Levett and Lou came to me. We dined at Mrs. Drummond's and went at night to a great ball given by the Staffordshire Yeomanry at the Town Hall. The ball was splendid and fine and very well attended.

Visits to Butterton and Keele

23rd. Louisa, Mrs. Drummond and I went to the stand on the racecourse to see the Yeomanry reviewed by Lord Anglesea and Sir John Byng. William's troop did particularly well.

October

5th. Went to Seabridge. Aunt Betty's horses and old William met me at Sandon. Stopt at the door at Butterton - Mr. Swinnerton not at home - His twin girls and two Sneyds I met at the top of the hollow way. Martha I had not seen for many years - dined tête-à-tête with Aunt Betty.

8th. Went to Church at Trentham and afterwards dined at Butterton. No where are there so many mementoes left as at this old place - the sameness of many of the things which nearly half a century has not been able to alter and the alienation of the near relatives and friends of my youth without cause alleged or given are allmost equally things to surprise one.

10th. Mrs. Sneyd¹ came from Keel and begg'd me from Aunt Betty and a great relish it was to me to return with her. I found her four daughters and her husband all of whom I was glad to see.

14th. Dined at Butterton - met Lady Warburton and her niece Miss Dickson - our evening was more sociable and conversable than perhaps any I have had since my grandfather's death, the girls were in spirits about their father's manners to me.

17th. Went to Keel. Found added to their party Lord John Thynne and Mr. Bouvere, both gentlemanlike pleasant men.

19th. Mary Swinnerton² came - her father would not let them accept Mrs. Sneyd's invitation to dine and sleep nor does he even know that she has called - strange unaccountable man! Bess and Harriet Sneyd came.

¹ Mrs. Sneyd - Anne's cousin Louisa Bagot married in 1786 to Walter Sneyd of Keele.

A Sort of Life – the autobiography of Graham Greene.

If *The Man Within* (his first published novel) had shown promise, it was the brief promise of a dud rocket on Guy Fawkes night. It made no difference to me that the review which had opened my eyes to my fool's progress was by an author, **Frank Swinnerton**, for whom I had little respect – I knew the truth when I read it.

Family Notes

I am sorry to have to tell you of the death in November, after a long illness, of Mrs Edna Olive Swinnerton aged 86, mother of our Subscriptions Secretary, Geoffrey Swinnerton. You will remember that our Silver Jubilee Banner was dedicated to Edna and her husband John, by their children and our sympathy goes to Geoffrey, Frances, Valerie and Cynthia.



On a happier note, our congratulations to Michael Swinnerton (nephew of our member Dennis Swinnerton of Camden, New South Wales) who was selected to represent Australia in the National Under-17s Water Polo Team to tour Slovenia, Slovakia, Greece and Italy in July this year. Apparently he is in with a chance to be selected for the 2002 Commonwealth Games and the 2004 Olympic Games.

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