

Newsletter

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Editorial

Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2008. Doesn't time go quickly? I started to research my family history in 1988 and I can not believe it's twenty years ago. In that time I have lost members of my extended family and it's only now that I wish I had asked more questions about my family. Who was that uncle of my fathers we kept visiting in Macclesfield when I was young? What really happened to my uncle when he was a prisoner of war. These are questions I wish I had asked my father and my uncle before they died. What I am trying to say is that we, as family historians, should ask our parents, aunts and uncles as many questions as we can. Today it is not too difficult to trace a families history back, but you try to trace the life story of an uncle or an aunt from about 1910 to today. The Data Protection Act comes into play. Anyone who was born during the early Twentieth Century and might be alive today has their personal information protected. In the 1901 census my grandfather had five brothers and three sisters. I only know the history of two of his brothers and two of his sisters. I often wonder who was the mystery uncle I used to visit in Macclesfield?

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The Women's Institute

On February 19, 1897, the first Women's Institute was founded in Canada. During World War One John Nugent Harris, the secretary of the Agricultural Organisations Society was looking for a way of involving more women in the production of food. He found the answer in Madge Watt, a Canadian living in England, and her enthusiastic descriptions of the Canadian Women's Institute.

Madge Watt was appointed by the AOS to set up Women's Institutes in the UK. The first was formed at Llanfair PG, Anglesey on Sept. 11th 1915. The organisation soon blossomed, with 40 Women's Institutes in England and Wales by 1916. Rapid growth led to the formation of a Women's Institute Committee. Gertrude, Lady Denman was appointed chair, beginning her long-standing association with the Institute. She would become Chairwoman of the National Executive Committee of the National Federation of Women's Institutes in 1917, a move marking the Institute's new self-governing status. After the War, Madge Watt returned to Canada, but continued to visit the UK, and remained active in the organisation. By the time of Gertrude Denman's death in 1954 there were over 8,000 Women's Institutes.

This article is by kind permission of Find My Past. Their website has more information about the WI

Support your Local Archives.

There is a wealth of information in our local archives which can enrich your family History for no more cost than the price of your travel there.

Stafford Record Office, Eastgate St. Stafford. **Open** Mon, Tues, Thurs 9.00-5.00, Wed. 9.00 -8.00, Fri. 9.30-4.30 and Sat. 9.00-4.00
Tel 01785 -27839 for Archives Enquires or 01785 -278373 for Appointments.

William Salt Library, Eastgate St. Stafford (Next door to the Record Office) Tel. 01785-278372

Apart from their book and Photo collection they have all the Staffordshire Advertiser Newspapers, which I have searched back, as far as 1823 so I am not sure when the 1st edition was.

Stoke on Trent City Archives, Bethesda Street, Hanley. Tel 01782 -238420

Open Tues. Thurs. Fri. 9.00-5.00, Wed. 9.00-7.00 and Sat. 9.00 - 4.00.

On the first visit you need to produce proof of Identity to obtain a Reader's Ticket at no charge.

Prepare in advance if possible by visiting the online catalogue - <http://www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk>
Both the City Archives and the SRO have a subscription to Ancestry.com and computers can be booked by readers and then searched for free.

Dianne Shenton

Using Land Tax Records.

I would like to contribute the following information that I recorded by mistake but it could be of use to another member and also illustrates how useful Land Tax Records can be.

These Records can be viewed on film at Stafford Record Office and although not complete have the majority of years available.

The Land Tax Records list the owner of the property, its Occupier and its annual assessment, so even if your ancestor was not affluent enough to own a property they could be listed as a Tenant. By comparing the assessments you can gauge how affluent they were in comparison to their neighbours.

e.g. At this time many houses were Assessed at 9d. so 18/8d was a lot of money. By Following the owner, tenant and assessment you can track a property.

Look at the following over a 50 year span: -

Land Tax Returns for Chatterley.

1781 Owner of the Property Mr. Salmon, with the Tenant Widow Hancock, the property assessed at 18/8d.

1781 Property owner John Berington, Tennant Widow Hancock assessed at 12/8d

(So Widow Hancock is renting 2 properties that are probably largish ones or land.)

Ditto in 1784, but in 1786 Widow Hancock only has the one property assessed at 18/8d.

In 1786 the 18/8d property has a new tenant of William Hancock

(Without any BMD records my guess now is that William Hancock is the son of Widow Hancock and has taken over the property.)

All entries remained the same until 1803 when the Tenant changes from William Hancock to Mary Hancock.

(Again without any BMD entries I would guess that Mary was the wife of William or less likely his daughter. So Has William Hancock died?)

Mary remained the tenant, even though the property changed hands and became the property of Mrs Eardley, until 1818 when the Tenancy changed to Thos. Hancock.

(So again if I was guessing, I would think that Thomas Hancock was the son of William and Mary Hancock and has taken over the family property. This can be checked in the Parish Records.)

On a general note there is a big expansion of property in Chatterley in 1822. Which could be the reason that in 1823 the assessment drops to 17/-

By 1826 the entries change again with the owner listed as the Late John Eardley and the Tenant, Thomas Hancock, being listed as a Farmer and the Assessment has gone down again to 15/6d.

No alteration until 1830 when Thomas Hancock is listed as the owner of the property and the same entry occurs in 1831.

So to me this looks like 3 generations of the one family renting the same property until Thomas Hancock has become an affluent enough farmer to buy it from the Landlord.

Dianne Shenton

Interesting snippets form the Records

An Example of documents found: -

Film number Q/10 at Stafford Record Office. (**Quarter Sessions records**) Michaelmas Session 1823.

The King against James Cooper, Israel Taylor, and Jonathan Gater, for riot and assault upon Nathaniel Latham. Defendants appeared, heard the Indictment read and plead "Not Guilty". No details recorded. After the trial they were found guilty and "Ordered by the Court that they be imprisoned and kept at hard labour in the Common Gaol of the County for the space of six weeks" "Each to enter into a recognisance in the sum of £10 and one sufficient surety for each in the sum of Five Pounds" to keep the Peace for one year.

Next case

The King against Thomas Gater, John Chadwick, William Cooper, James Gater and Samuel Taylor, for a riot and assault, on William Willshaw.

As before there were no details but I guess it was part and parcel of the above case. They "plead not guilty". Were found guilty, and sentenced. "Ordered by the Court that they be imprisoned and kept at hard labour in the Common Gaol of the County for the space of, "Thomas Gater, 3 months, plus a surety of £10 for one year's good behaviour. William Cooper and Samuel Taylor, 2 months in gaol and a surety of £10 each. John Chadwick and James Gater, One month's imprisonment and £10 surety".

Calendar of Prisoners 1823-29 seen at Stafford Record Office. Michaelmas session 1823 (15/10/1823)

Handwritten and squashed at the end of the page – Jonathan Gater for Riot Thomas Gater, Samuel Taylor and William Cooper to be imprisoned and kept at hard labour for 3 months for riot and assault on William Wilshaw the Constable in the execution of his duty.

No description of who they are, or what the relationship was, or details of the case. So I checked in the **Staffordshire Advertiser** at the William Salt Library next door, but it only reported that 10 persons were convicted of riot and given various lengths of imprisonment.

The staff in the record Office suggested that I look at the actual **Quarter Session Records**, rather than the filmed ones, as I might find depositions, so I went through the Quarter Sessions records at Stafford record Office (QSB) for the Michaelmas Session 1823 - 15/10/1823.

On 7/10/1823 William Wilshaw a Constable brought a Bill -

There was a Bill against Thomas Gater, John Chadwick, William Cooper, James Gater and Samuel Taylor of Talk on the Hill aforesaid, Labourers for Unlawfully, riotously, Tortuously and Tumultuously assaulting together at Talke on the Hill aforesaid with diverse other persons on Sunday the Fifth day of October instant and then and there Unlawfully riotously and Tumultuously assaulting the said William Wilshaw in the due execution of his office and rescuing from his lawful Custody James Cooper, Israel Tailor and Jonathan Gater.

I also found the record -

"Be it remembered That on the Seventh Day of October in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty three Jonathan Gater of Talk on the Hill in the said County Labourer and Mary Gater of the same place Widow, Victualler, personally came before me one of the Justices of our Lord the King, assigned to keep the Peace within the said County, and severally acknowledged themselves to owe to our said Lord the King; that is to say, the said Jonathan Gater the sum of Forty Pounds, and the said Mary Gater the sum of Twenty Pounds, of good and lawful Money of Great Britain, to be made and levied of their Goods and Chattels, Lands and Tenements; respectively, to the use of our said Lord the King, his Heirs and Successors, if Default shall be made in the Condition hereunder-written.

The Condition of this Recognizance is such, that if the above bounden Jonathan Gater shall personally appear at the next General Quarter Session of the Peace to be held in Stafford, in and for the said County, then and there to answer one or more Bill or Bills Indictment to be preferred against him and others by Nathaniel Latham of Talk on the Hill aforesaid for a riot and assault upon the said Nathaniel Latham on the fourth day of October instant at Talk on the Hill aforesaid then this Recognizance to be void, otherwise to remain in full force.

Taken and acknowledged before G. Tollet."

There was a similar document when Nathaniel Latham Victualler, was bound in the sum of Forty Pounds to come to the next quarter sessions to prefer a charge against James Cooper, Israel Tailor and Jonathan Gater.

No other records found.

(Using the Measuring Worth web site it calculates that £20 in 1823 would be worth £1280 in 2006 and £40 worth £2560.)

What are your conclusions of the above records? Please turn over for what I think happened : -

What do you think?

I have interpreted these documents as probably a punch up in a pub – possible due to rivalry between landlords as Mary Gater was a widow and had probably taken over the pub on her Husband Thomas's death. The Audley Land Tax records (seen at SRO) have an entry which appears repeatedly up to 1818 - Assessment for George Tollett esq. - one of his tenants was Thomas Gater, no description of property, assessed at 6/7d. In 1819 the same entry appears with Mary Gater listed.

Jonathan Gater was my 4x Great Grandfather and Mary was his Mother. Thomas and James were Jonathan's brothers. Interestingly enough Jonathan's Granddaughter married Richard Latham but I haven't managed to find out if Richard was related to Nathaniel yet. Jonathan and his wife Ellen upped sticks and moved to Burslem from Audley between 1831 and 1841.

Land Tax assessments for Talke 1831 Owner Wm. Pedley, tenant Jonathan Gater, house and garden assessed at 1 shilling 1 1/2d, but the family are in Burslem by 1841.

However the brothers remained around Audley, and Jonathan's son Thomas returned there as an adult.

(Using the Measuring Worth web site it calculates that £20 in 1823 would be worth £1280 in 2006 and £40 worth £2560.)

Dianne Shenton

Did your ancestor own a bit of the Theatre Royal, Hanley?

