

Living History

Newsletter November 2017

Message from Norman Taylor Chair of the Living History Group

The Living History Group has now entered its 16th year and to celebrate has elected a new chairman and officers. What effect this will have only time will tell. Rhianon will be a hard act to follow. The membership (ie. those who subscribe to the newsletter) remains at a healthy 40 plus, but what is not healthy is the gradual decline in active members. Those who remain are manfully (and womanfully!) creaking along doing their best to continue the valuable work of investigating and recording the history, both past and present, of our community. Their efforts are recorded and presented in our excellent Newsletter for all to enjoy, but the time will come when we will run out of active committed members, ideas, investigations and articles will cease and so will the Living History Group and its Newsletter.

With the foregoing in mind I am hoping that we can revitalise the Group by creating a more social and friendly atmosphere with field trips and talks and the occasional meeting in one of our oldest buildings and institutions, The Bell Inn (which is where the early meetings of the Group took place) where, pint in hand, ideas might also develop!

Our year has started well with the excellent and well attended illustrated talk by Herefordshire archivist Phillip Boucher on 'House History' and the equally informative and comprehensive tour of Fishpool Valley conducted by National Trust archaeologist Imogen Sambrook. So, as they say, watch this space.

Norman Taylor
16 November 2017

House History

On the 14th September approximately 40 people attended an illustrated talk by Phillip Boucher on the resources available to those, who wish to undertake research into the historical antecedents, of the house in which they are living. Philip, a Herefordshire archivist provided a fascinating insight into those resources. Those attending were intrigued to see pictures and records of Yarpole and Bircher in times past. Phillip's talk was complemented by set of PowerPoint slides which he kindly made available to those who attended. These were subsequently distributed by Norman Taylor, the chair of the Living History Group.

Conducted Tour of Fishpool Valley

On the 5th October members of the Living History Group were joined by members of the Yarpole Walking Group on a guided tour of the Fishpool Valley, which lies within the grounds of Croft Castle. The tour was led by Imogen Sambrook of the National Trust which has embarked on an ambitious project to restore the 'Picturesque' Fishpool Valley and carry out vital conservation work. Imogen provided a fascinating insight into both the ecology and archeology of the valley and explained how it could look once the planned restoration had been completed.



Given the threat that the water in the Fishpool Valley poses to Yarpole it was particularly interesting to hear of the planned work on the pools and the dams. It is hoped that Imogen will be able to guide a further tour in 6-12 months time to give those who attended this tour an insight into the progress that will, by then, have occurred.

During the tour Imogen repeated the request she made in the October 2017 edition of *The Parishioner*, and asked that anyone who has memories of working on the Croft Estate in the first half of the 20th Century or has any information of the Fishpool Valley contact her on imogen.sambrook@nationaltrust.org.uk.

Articles

The following articles accompany this edition of the *Newsletter*:

- **Baptismal Record for the Parish of Yarpole 1857- 1918: Analysis of Christian Names by Brian Mitchell**
- **Ernest Mitchell by. Ron Shaw**

We always welcome proposals for articles. Please contact the *Newsletter* editor - Brian by email on seiftonbatch@gmail.com if you would like to discuss possible articles that could be published in the Newsletter.

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The 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Living History Group will be held in the Parish Hall at 7.30pm on Thursday 16 November.

Brian Mitchell
16th November 2017

Ernest Mitchell



Ernest Mitchell is one the enigmas of Yarpole. His name appears on the War Memorial in Welshman's Lane, but this is the only definitive evidence linking him to Yarpole. We know where and when he was born, and that he pursued an early career as a footman. His military career as a member of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry is documented, as is his death on the 29 November 1914. His link to Yarpole and why his name appears on the Welshman's Lane war memorial remain unknown.

Ernest was born in Gateshead in the County of Durham in 1886 to Robert and Dorothy Mitchell, they had married in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1874. The 1881 Census shows Robert (31) and Dorothy (25) living at 77 Harle Street, Gateshead with 2 young sons, Robert W and John E. Father is employed as a Weighman, this work involved him in the transit of goods from ship to land. In 1891 Dorothy and her 3 sons, Ernest now 5, are living with her father, John Robinson and her sister Mary Eleanor at 28/29 Young Street, St. Giles, Durham. See Fig 1 below. There is no record of their father Robert.



Fig 1. 28/29 Young Street clearly showing the bricked up door of No.29

We next find Ernest in 1901 living with his Aunt Mary at 14 Wanless Terrace, St. Nicholas, Durham City. Mary Eleanor is now married to William Wright, a grocer and Ernest is employed as an Errand Boy. Again no record of his father has been found.

Research has revealed that in the first quarter of 1908, a Robert Mitchell died in Durham and a Dorothy Mitchell died in Gateshead. We assume that these are his parents and can only speculate at the circumstances which caused this family to break up. By 1911 Ernest now 25 is living in Pimlico, London; he is employed as a Footman. His military record shows that he enlisted into the army at Chiddingfold in Surrey. The history of the KSLI states that the 5th Battalion was formed at Shrewsbury in August 1914 and moved to Chiddingfold in March 1915 before moving to the Western Front in May 1915. He served in "B" Company with a Regimental Number 10803 and was killed on the 29th November 1915, he is remembered on the Ypres(Menin Gate) Memorial on Panel 47 (see Fig 2 below).



Fig 2: Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial

For his war service Ernest was awarded the following reproduced in Fig 3 below.



1915 STAR



VICTORY MEDAL



BRITISH WAR MEDAL

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Fig. 3. Medals awarded to Ernest Mitchell.

However, while Ernest's name is recorded on memorials to the sacrifice and service of those who lost their lives during the Great War, we do not know what his connection to Yarpole was. Hopefully this will emerge as a result of further research to live of Ernest.

Ron Shaw. 2017

Baptismal Record for the Parish of Yarpole 1857- 1918: Analysis of Christian Names

Brian Mitchell

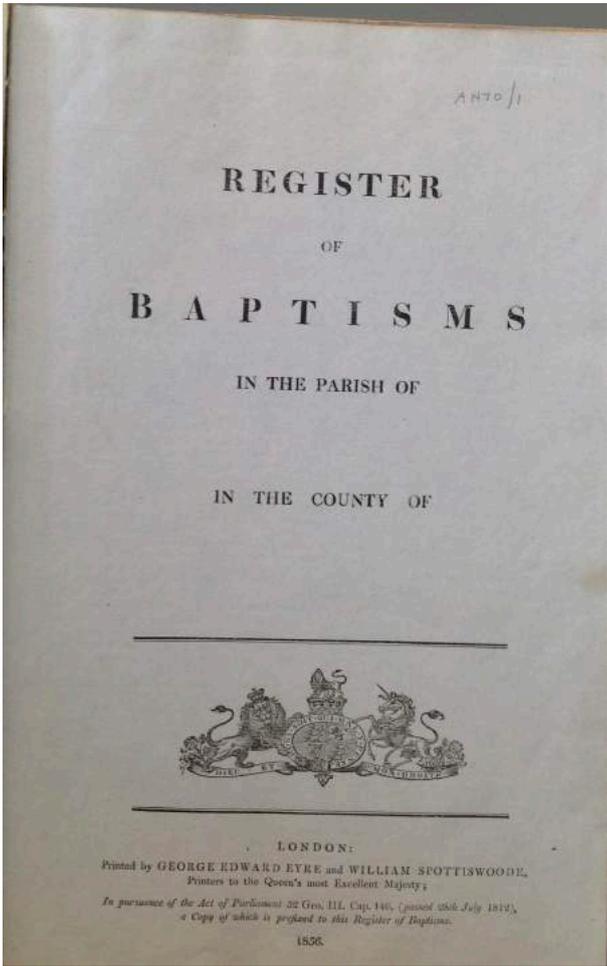
This article is the second of a series of articles based on the Baptismal Registers for the Parish of Yarpole. The first titled, 'The Yarpole Register of Baptisims' was published in the May 2017 edition of the Living History Newsletter. It provided a general insight into the information held in the Baptismal records for the Parish of Yarpole. It was based, as is this article, on a study of the Baptismal Record for the Parish of Yarpole for the period 26 December 1857 to 1 September 1918. This article examines the popularity of the Christian names given by parents to their children in this period.

Henceforth, referred to as the 'Yarpole Register', it is the subject, along with other related records, of an ongoing project by the 'Yarpole Living History Group' aimed at transcribing the information held in the Yarpole Parish Registers. Held in the Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre the Yarpole Register extends over 100 pages. Each page provides for 8 entries, a small number of which are incomplete.

The first entry is dated the 26 December 1857, the year in which the Indian Rebellion started, and the last the 1 September 1918, just over 2 months before the end of the First World War. It provides an interesting insight into life of Yarpole during this

period, recording, as it does, the names of the newly baptised son or daughter, the names of their father and mother, where within the Parish they lived, the father's occupation, and the priest who conducted the ceremony. This information is recorded in a pre-printed register and fig 1 shows the front cover of the Yarpole Register. A reading of the front cover shows that it was 'Printed by GEORGE EDWARD EYRE and WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE, Printers to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty'. To be noted is that it has not been annotated to show the Parish and County to which it relates. It is just one of the Baptismal records for the Parish of Yarpole that is held in Herefordshire's archive.

Fig 1: Front Cover of the Yarpole Baptismal Record for 1857-1918



This article examines the information held in the Yarpole Register as it relates to the Christian name of the child whose baptism is recorded in this document. As noted in the earlier article it is important to keep in mind that the Yarpole baptismal records are not records of birth. They are a record of Christian baptisms and have to be read in that context. They record the date when a son or daughter was baptised not when they were born. At the date of the first entry in the Yarpole Register the registration of births had only recently been provided for in the Marriage Act, 1836.

Registration became a legal requirement from 1 July 1837. Parish Registers of Baptisms,

Page 89.

BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of Yarpole
in the County of Wiltshire in the Year 1871.

When Baptized	Child's Christian Name	Parents Names		Abode	Quality, Trade or Profession	By whom the Ceremony was performed
		Christian	Surname			
1871 Sept 6 th No. 705.	Matilda Mary Anne	Mary Anne	Davis	Yarpole	-	Fullgrown Man Vicar
Sept 25 th No. 706.	Alice	Herbert and Anne	Phillips	Yarpole	Farmer	Fullgrown Man Vicar
Sept 25 th No. 707.	Doris Anne	James and Alice	Pico	Bishop Cosham	Labourer	Fullgrown Man Vicar
Oct 30 th No. 708.	Sarah Ellen	Thomas and Emma	Burton	Bishop Cosham	Labourer	Fullgrown Man Vicar
Feb 12 th 1871 No. 709.	Ray Alice	William and Jane	Nicholls	Bishop Cosham	Farmer	Fullgrown Man Vicar
May 14 th 1871 No. 710.	Ernest	James and Mary Jane	Davis	Bishop Yarpole	Labourer	Fullgrown Man Vicar
June 11 th 1871 No. 711.	John Edward	John Edward and Alice Ethel	Jones	Bishop Yarpole	Farmer	Fullgrown Man Vicar
June 11 th 1871 No. 712.	Christian Mary	Christian and Elizabeth	Jones	Leigh Yarpole	Farmer	Fullgrown Man Vicar

Fig. 2. Page 89 of the Yarpole Register of Baptisms 1857-1918.

have a much older pedigree. Along with those for marriages and deaths, they were introduced in the reign of Henry VIII as a means of providing the state with information about those subject to its governance.

The information in the Yarpole Register is handwritten. Fig 2 above reproduces page 89, as a sample how the information relating to baptisms was recorded in the Yarpole Register. The information on which this article is based is that recorded in the second column which identifies the 'Child's Christian Name.' The entries on page 89 of the Yarpole Register, unlike others, are relatively legible.

An analysis of the Yarpole Register makes reference to 135 different legible Christian Names of which 54 are male names and 71 female names. For the purpose of this article account has only been taken of the first Christian name of the child whose baptism is recorded.

The most popular Christian names given by parents to their sons were, in descending order: William (52), John (37), James (33), George (30), Thomas (27), Arthur (24), and Henry (23),

For daughters the most popular Christian names given to them by their parents were:

Mary (42), Alice (21), Annie (20), Emily (19), Sarah (17), and Elizabeth (13). They were not the only names selected by parents.

I have not provided a list of all the given Christian names for those whose baptism is recorded in the Yarpole Register. Instead I have used word clouds to provide a visual guide to the relative popularity of Christian names given by parents to their children. The above names were not the only names selected by parents for their children. They were the most popular. The following word clouds are based on all legible Christian names to be found in the Yarpole Register.

Please accept my apologies if some of the less popular Christian names are hard to read. A magnifying glass should make them easier to read. If you lack such an aid I will, on request, email a list of the Christian names listed in each word cloud. I have not attempted to explain why parents choose the Christian names recorded in the Yarpole Register. I do not know why William and Mary were such popular names?

William is a name of Germanic origin and derives from the old German name Wilhelm. For obvious reasons its' popularity increased after the Norman Conquest. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle refers to William the Conqueror as Wilhelm. William, as a given name, was popular in the Middle Ages and remained so in the modern times as can be seen from the information recorded in the Yarpole Register.

Mary is the English version of Maria. which was a Latin form of the Greek names Mariam, and Maria. Both of which are recorded in the New Testament and forms of the Hebrew name Miryam.

The popularity of Mary as a given name can be attributed to the fact that it is the name of the mother of Jesus. A number of meanings are attributed to it as a name. It is stated to mean 'bitter', 'beloved', rebelliousness', 'wished for child', and 'marine'.

This concludes, for now, my study of the given Christian names recorded in the Yarpole Register. It will be followed by a study of the information it contains relating to the baptisms of illegitimate children.

Brian Mitchell
7 October 2017
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