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**The Wetheridge
Family History Society**

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continued on inside back cover

The logo shown on the front cover represents the boundaries of the County of Devon. The small black circles represent the Town of Witheridge and the Manor of Witheridge. Both are listed in the Domesday Book.

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Visit the Witheridge Family History Society website:

<http://www.WitheridgeFHS.com>

Remember that you can download a full-colour version of this magazine from the Members Only area of the website.

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Editorial

This is the last issue of 2006 and the last issue before the Society's twentieth anniversary year of 2007. I have devoted quite a lot of magazine space in this, and the previous three, issues to publicising the Anniversary Reunion. Please, if you can, come to the reunion and help make it a really special occasion.

This issue is a little late, for which I apologise. Unfortunately, the winter sniffles, sneezles and wheezles struck both my wife, Beryl, and myself just at the moment when I should have been finalising the magazine and shipping it off to the printers. It caused a delay of just a few days, but at a really crucial time.

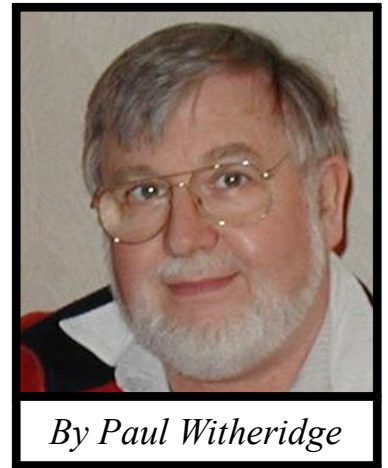
If the previous issue was 'enough to gladden the misanthropic hearts of *Witheridge Times* editors', because of the abundance of material for inclusion, this issue has been a more sombre affair, with problems assembling enough material, and especially the right sort of material, to fill the magazine—what we are short of is articles about *Witheridge family history* and research into it. Even the last issue was light on these core topics. So, please, I beg those of you who have been delving into your family history: *publish*, publish soon and publish in *The Witheridge Times*!

There's also scope for those of you who have not assembled a mass of genealogical research material. In this issue, I am starting a (hopefully) ongoing series called *Down Memory Lane*. I have penned the initial article myself (you can see it on page 32). So, if you have a short, simple, story (especially where you have photos) about a memorable past occasion when you, or other Witheridge/Witheridge-descendents, were involved, even as onlookers, please write it up and send it in. I promise to return any photos.

After that *call to arms*, I must thank all those who contributed to this issue, especially first-time contributors. Thank you all very much.

A big welcome to a new member of the Society: Sue Witheridge—full details in the next issue. Sue says that she intends to come to the 2007 Reunion. Looking forward to meeting you there, Sue.

Finally, the very best of Christmas wishes to all our members and their families, and may 2007 turn out to be a good year for all of us.



By Paul Witheridge

2007 Subscriptions

By the Membership Secretary

I would like to remind members that subscriptions are due in January for the year 2007 (except, of course, for those members who have already paid in advance—a big *thank you* if you are one of them).

We have added an alternative method of paying subscriptions that should make it easier if you live outside the UK. We'll come to that in a moment.

First, a reminder of the subscription rates.

For UK residents:

Single person membership	£7.00
Family membership (all at the same address)	£10.00
Economy membership (for those receiving state retirement/unemployment/disability/other benefit)	£5.00

For non-UK residents:

Overseas membership (all at the same address)	£12.00
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continued overleaf

On the side: the Cornish pasty, or maybe not

Cornish pasties have played a significant role in my life. When my wife was pregnant with our first child, I found myself scouring north London, in the middle of the night, for the closest approximation to a Cornish pasty that would satisfy her craving. Even now, thirty-six years on, visits to Cornwall will evoke an echo of that craving and a quick trip to the nearest pasty shop must be organised.

Imagine my surprise to discover that the 'Cornish' pasty may well have been invented in Devon! According to a news item carried by the BBC, not only is the earliest record of a Cornish pasty to be found in a Devon recipe from 1746, but the earliest known reference to any pasty comes from Plymouth, Devon. That city's civic account book for 1509 and 1510 mentions a '10d' pasty (10d being, of course, ten old pence, when there were twelve pence to the shilling and twenty shillings to the pound—a lot of money in 1509).

Naturally, Cornwall has struck back with details of caves at the Lizard (in south Cornwall) where 10,000 year-old line-drawings show men hunting a stag and women eating leaf-wrapped pasties. Hmmm—leaf-wrapped? Not at all the same thing!

I have to say that, during the dark days of my pregnant wife's addiction to 'Cornish' pasties, the best we ever found came from a bakery-cum-restaurant in Bideford, Devon, situated on the river front, not far from the famous bridge over the River Torridge. For years, we made a point of calling in whenever we passed. Sadly, it's now a fast-food shop.

See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/cornwall/6144460.stm> for more details.

2007 Subscriptions—how to pay

There are now two alternative ways to pay the subscription.

Method one: send a cheque or postal order, by mail, to:

The Membership Secretary
1 Ragmans Close
Marlow Bottom, Marlow
Bucks, SL7 3QW
England

made payable to *The Witheridge Family History Society* (**please note: not *The Witheridge Society***). Also, please note that we can only accept payment in UK currency (pounds sterling).

Method two: use the *PayPal* service on the Internet, which should make it much easier for overseas members to pay in pounds sterling. It automatically takes care of any necessary currency conversion. We have set up a PayPal account for the Society's treasurer. The way it works is as follows:

1. If you want to pay via *PayPal*, just e-mail me, at Membership@WitheridgeFHS.com, to request this. I will confirm back to you, by e-mail, that I have received your request.
2. I will then ask the treasurer to send you a separate *payment-request* e-mail. This e-mail will come from Treasurer@WitheridgeFHS.com.
3. The *payment-request* e-mail will contain a 'link' that will look rather like this:
<https://www.paypal.com/uk/prq/id=xx>
where the 'xxxxxxxx...' characters represent a string of apparently random letters and digits. Clicking on this link takes you to a PayPal payment page for the Society.
4. You do **not** need a PayPal account, yourself. You can just pay with a credit or debit card; you get billed in your own currency; the Society gets paid in pounds.
5. You get an e-mail acknowledging payment. The treasurer gets an e-mail to say that you have sent a payment and then signs-on to the Society's PayPal account to accept that payment. The funds can then be transmitted electronically from PayPal to the Society's bank account.

PayPal charge a small amount for this service. This amounts to 3.4% of the transaction plus an additional 20p per transaction. There is an additional fee of 25p for transferring amounts under £50 to the Society's bank account.

We have decided to ask members using PayPal to pay a small surcharge: £12.70 instead of £12.00, £10.60 instead of £10.00, or £5.40 instead of £5.00. So, if you are a UK resident, it's definitely cheaper to use *method one* above. However, if you live overseas, even though we ask you to pay the surcharge (and you will also be paying a small currency conversion charge on your credit/debit card payment), you don't have to pay postage and you don't have to buy any form of international money order, so you could be saving quite a bit. It's also very easy—our chairman, Ron Dixon, tried it out and found it really straightforward.



By the Secretary

Witheridge FHS News

Highlights of the Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Society's committee was held on Saturday, 23 September 2006. Most of the meeting was spent planning for the upcoming Twentieth Anniversary Reunion in 2007. However, many other items were also discussed, including major changes to the Society's constitution.

The main decisions made by the meeting were:

1. Paul Witheridge (Canada) was confirmed as Webmaster, replacing Kathy Witheridge who had decided to step down. Kathy Witheridge remained a member of the committee.
2. Two alternative proposals, from the new Webmaster, for refurbishment of the Society's website were reviewed, and conclusions passed back to the Webmaster.
3. A timetable of events and activities was agreed for the 2007 Anniversary Reunion (see *2007 Twentieth Anniversary Reunion*, overleaf, for more details).
4. The Society's Christmas card would support a cancer charity.
5. A first draft of proposed changes to the Society's constitution was agreed. This will undergo further reviews by the committee, before being submitted to the members at the Annual General Meeting in 2007. The two areas that would be most affected by these proposals were:
 - How the Society's Executive Committee was elected—all committee members would be elected, instead of having a mixture of elected and co-opted members, and overseas representatives would be more involved (if they wished).
 - Membership categories for UK residents—these would be reduced to a single category, replacing the existing three categories, to simplify and remove the inequalities between UK and overseas membership.
6. The subscription amounts were reviewed. It had remained unchanged since the Society was founded in 1987, while costs had increased. Although the Society's bank balance was still healthy, at current subscription levels, we face a potential shortfall of over £150 per year. The committee decided to recommend to the 2007 Annual General Meeting that the rate for the new single UK membership category be set at £10 (same as the current 'family membership'), with a further review of the subscription rates in 2008. There was also some discussion of deferring the subscription change for existing UK members.
7. The Assistant Treasurer reported his findings on PayPal as a means of members (especially overseas members) paying their subscription. The Treasurer was authorised to set up a PayPal account for the Society (see *2007 Subscriptions—how to pay*, on the facing page, for more details).

8. Following a review of information about the UK Data Protection Act, it looked as if the Society was legally required to register, at cost of £75 for three years. The Secretary was asked to look further into this and report back to the committee.
9. The Membership Secretary presented a draft for a new membership application form, which asked new members for their permission to publish information, from the form, in *The Witheridge Times*.
10. The Chairman, Ron Dixon, indicated his wish to step down.
11. The next committee meeting would be held on Saturday 24 February 2007. Any member who wanted a matter raised at this meeting should contact the Secretary (e-mail to Secretary@WitheridgeFHS.com or write to the address shown on the inside front cover of this magazine).

The full minutes of the committee meeting are available for download from the *members-only* area of the www.WitheridgeFHS.com website. You will need your membership number and sign-in password to access this area (see *Signing-in to the Witheridge FHS Members Only Area* on page 31 of *The Witheridge Times* Volume 19 Number 3, the winter 2005 issue).

Devon 2007: Twentieth Anniversary Reunion

In November 2005 the committee started to make plans for the 2007 reunion. That seems a long time ago now. But, here we are just one hundred and sixty-nine days from the reunion weekend and the plans are well under way.

Although Paul and I have attended three reunions (and arranged two of them) since joining the Society in 2003, this will be our first *special* one. We are both looking forward to meeting many of you for the first time, especially those coming from around the world. We may even meet others from the same Witheridge family as us (the Totnes, Newton Abbot and Woodleigh family). Now that would be a real bonus.

A few of you may have already seen the write-up, that Paul and I did, on the Coombe Cross Hotel in Bovey Tracey, Devon, which is the venue for the reunion. This write-up is available for download from the *members-only* area of the Society's website. However, website logs show that many of you have not yet seen it. (Especially those without internet-access!) So we have decided to reproduce it in this issue of *The Witheridge Times* (see *Devon 2007: Coombe Cross Hotel* on page 8). Even so, if you want to see the photos in living colour, go to the website.

The society has arranged to take over the whole hotel for the reunion, but the hotel will only hold all its rooms for us until the end of March 2007. After that they will resume accepting reservations from the general public and other societies—they are very confident that they can fill them! So, *please* make sure you get your booking in early, and help ensure that the hotel is ours for the whole three days.

Richard Witheridge, our 2007 Reunion Coordinator, has been working very hard on everyone's behalf, trying to ensure that the reunion goes smoothly and all our wishes are met. He has published a timetable of events, which is reproduced on the facing page.

Devon 2007: Timetable

Friday 18 May

A Welcome Pack will be provided for all attendees on arrival

7:00 p.m. Informal evening meal in hotel restaurant

Saturday 19 May

8:30 a.m. Breakfast in hotel restaurant

All following activities to be held in function room

9:30–11 a.m. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

11 a.m. Refreshments (coffee, tea, biscuits)

11 a.m.–1 p.m. Social (getting to meet people and chatting)

1–2 p.m. Buffet lunch

2–3 p.m. Talk (max 45 mins; topic to be decided)

3 p.m. Cutting the anniversary cake plus coffee, tea, etc

3–5 p.m. Exhibits and items for sale

5 p.m. Everyone exit function room (so hotel can set up for dinner)

Social activities can continue in bar and lounges

7 p.m. Formal Reunion dinner

Drawing of Raffle

Sunday 20 May

An early breakfast (e.g. 7:30 a.m.) is recommended as coach will leave at 9 a.m. prompt (note for North Americans: a 'coach' is a Brit word for a long-distance bus)

9 a.m. Coach tour (probably North Devon, based on returned questionnaires)
Stop off times, lunch stop, etc, to decided

6 p.m. Coach returns to hotel

7 p.m. Informal evening meal in hotel restaurant

Monday 21 May

Use cars to take members to additional places they wish to visit

9 a.m. Meet in hotel lounge

6 p.m. Bar and lounges

7 p.m. Informal evening meal in hotel restaurant

Close of 2007 Reunion

Tuesday 22 May

8 a.m. Breakfast for those staying Monday night

Devon 2007: The Coombe Cross Hotel

The *Coombe Cross Hotel*, in Bovey Tracey, is where the *Witheridge Family History Society* will hold its Twentieth Anniversary Reunion, on 19–21 May 2007.

We took Paul's father, Ray, for a pre-Christmas break to Devon, and stayed in the Coombe Cross Hotel. This is our feedback on the hotel and its environs.

The hotel is situated about half a mile from the centre of *Bovey Tracey*, a small Devonshire town, on the southern edge of the *Dartmoor National Park*.

The town dates back to a Saxon settlement around AD 500. Later, following the Norman conquest, Henry de Tracey made it a borough, and in 1259 obtained a grant of a weekly market and a three-day fair at the feast of the Translation of St Thomas.

Later still, Bovey Tracey was caught up in the English Civil War—Bovey Heath was occupied by a Royalist force, but on the evening of 9 January 1646, this force was completely surprised and overwhelmed by a parliamentary army under Cromwell. In the 18th century, a pottery industry was established.

Today, Bovey Tracey is a typical Dartmoor town—a compact centre of narrow streets and small privately-owned shops, surrounded by a modest expanse of modern housing, with a hospital and some minor industry.

The Dartmoor National Park, itself, is an ancient and rugged moorland. Parts of it are pretty inaccessible, and are the nearest that you come to a 'wilderness' area in England. Other parts are crisscrossed by country lanes, some of which are very narrow.



By Beryl and Paul Witheridge



Dartmoor ponies



Ancient bridges—Postbridge

Everywhere, you can see the *tors*—massive outcrops of rock rearing up from the moorland. Round any corner, even on one of the narrow lanes (drivers beware), you may come across some of the famous *Dartmoor ponies*, whose shaggy coats enable them to survive the savage winters up on the moor.

There is a lot of history here, including many prehistoric stone circles and standing stones. From more recent centuries, there are ancient *clapper* bridges, and old coaching inns.

Bovey Tracey nestles under the edge of the moor. If you go further south, you come to the densely populated areas along the coast. This is the *English Riviera*, with the towns of Torquay, Paignton, and Brixham—famous for its fish. Densely populated also equates to dense traffic, but Bovey Tracey is far enough away to escape this curse.

Coombe Cross Hotel is a rambling, family-run, English ‘country house’ hotel, where you can still take afternoon tea in the lounge. The staff are friendly and helpful, and will even carry your bags to your room. Unlike some country hotels we have stayed in, children are welcome and catered for.

It’s very easy to find, given some simple directions, and is situated in a quiet residential area.

From the restaurant, you can see *Haytor Rocks*, just over four miles distant, on Dartmoor. A few miles north of Haytor Rocks, but not visible from the hotel, is *Hound Tor*, famous for its association with Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watsons’ confrontation with the Hound of the Baskervilles! Nearby is another stone circle and the ruins of a medieval hamlet.



Prehistoric stone circles (and Beryl, who insists she is definitely not prehistoric)



Coombe Cross Hotel, in the evening sun



Haytor Rocks

The hotel is non-smoking, very clean, comfortable and homely, with a warm cosy atmosphere, and is well suited for our event. It has a large function room, and already hosts many private club events, such as bridge weekends, walking groups, and artists workshops. With the number of members we hope will attend in 2007, we should be able to take over the whole hotel, which would help make the 2007 reunion a very special occasion.

The hotel facilities are as follows:

- Twenty-three bedrooms, all with en suite bathrooms. Most have over-bath showers; a few have only showers.
- Three lounges, where one can have afternoon tea, pre-dinner drinks, after-dinner coffee and mints, or just sit and talk. The bar is situated in one of the lounges.
- A restaurant, looking out onto the hotel garden and, in the distance, Dartmoor and Haytor Rocks.
- A good sized function room—when not in use for meetings, guests can use it for table-tennis.
- A beautiful new swimming pool and spa—towels are provided.
- A sauna and solarium.
- A small, but well-equipped gymnasium.

The Coombe Cross is not a motel, or one of your standardised chains, like Holiday Inns or Travelodge—its rooms come in different shapes and sizes and the hotel has no lift (elevator).

Most of the rooms are on the first floor (second floor to North Americans),



The function room, set up for table tennis



One of the standard double rooms...



...and its bathroom



One of the hotel lounges



Another lounge

accessed by a flight of stairs, and along the hotel's rambling corridors, you come across one or two mini-flights of four steps, either up or down. Paul's father, who was nearly eighty-six at the time and had recently undergone a hip replacement, managed the stairs very well.

Of these first-floor rooms: two are single-occupancy; another is a family room, with a queen-sized, and a single, bed, plus plenty of room for either two more single beds, or one single and a cot (crib); the remainder are double occupancy rooms, some of which have standard double beds (4ft 6in), some have queen beds (5ft), and some have twin beds which can be zipped together to give king-sized beds (6ft).

The top floor of the hotel (second floor, or third floor for North Americans), is reached by a second staircase, and is a suite of rooms suitable for a family. It consists of two bedrooms (one double and one single/twin), one bathroom, and one shower room. Cots (cribs) can also be set up.

In addition, there are four ground-floor bedrooms (next to the function room). One of these has facilities for disabled persons, with easy access directly from the car park, and a walk-in shower with seat—however, access to the main hotel is via an interconnecting door



The hotel restaurant



Afternoon tea in the lounge

to the adjoining double room, or externally via the car park. The other two ground-floor rooms comprise one twin and one double.

All rooms are equipped with: telephone, TV, clock radio alarm, tea/coffee making facility (with biscuits), and a trouser press. Hairdryers, irons and ironing boards are available on request. You need to bring your own face flannel (wash cloth).

Room service is available. The hotel also provides a 'baby listening' facility, whereby you can dial your room from a ground-floor phone to check for crying children.

If we run out of rooms at the hotel, there are several other hotels and B&Bs in the area, and I am sure that the Coombe Cross Hotel can provide recommendations.

The restaurant is light, and nicely laid out, with gentle background music. High chairs are provided for young children.

As you would expect, from an English country hotel, breakfast can be massive: starting with a buffet offering fruit juice, cereals, fruit and yoghurt, followed by a 'full English breakfast' (eggs, bacon, sausages, tomatoes, fried bread, toast and marmalade), but lighter alternatives are available, including fish.

Dinner is three courses, chosen from a one-price set menu, with plenty of alternatives for each course, including a vegetarian dish. The menu changes every three days.

Coffee and mints, in the lounge, are included in the price, so the only extras are any pre/post dinner drinks or wine/beer with the meal. If you take the all-in 'B&B and evening meal' rate, the dinner seems a really good value, and we found the food pretty good—the roast potatoes were



The gymnasium, or 'fitness room'



The swimming pool and spa



Dinner is a three-course set meal

absolutely the best we have ever come across in any restaurant, including one famous English restaurant in The Strand! On the down side, all main courses come with a side dish of the vegetables of the day, which are beautifully cooked, but go better with some dishes than others, but once we figured this out, we were able to make appropriate choices for the main course.

The function room has ample space for our needs. Its facilities include: plenty of electrical sockets, a flip chart stand, a TV/video player, and a projector screen (however, we would need to supply our own projector). The hotel will also set up the function room for a formal evening meal—our Twentieth Anniversary Reunion Dinner.

The hotel has its own off-road parking. If you are travelling by public transport, the nearest railway station, or coach/bus station, is at Newton Abbot, about half a dozen miles away, and a taxi to the hotel would cost about £12.

We enjoyed our three days at the Coombe Cross Hotel, and would go back again, especially to walk the moors, and relax afterwards.

Although prices would normally rise (don't they always!) from one year to the next, the hotel is offering us rooms in 2007 at the 2006 prices, as shown by the following table:

	<i>Standard Rooms</i>		<i>Moor-view rooms</i>	
No of nights	Bed & breakfast	Dinner, bed & breakfast	Bed & breakfast	Dinner, bed & breakfast
1 or 2	£35.00	£51.00	£40.00	£56.00
3 or more	£32.00	£47.00	£37.00	£52.00
7 or more	£30.00	£43.00	£35.00	£48.00

These prices are per-person, per-night, double-occupancy of a twin or double-bed room. For single occupancy, add £15.00 per night—there are also a small number of single rooms available (price on request from the hotel). *Moor-view* rooms have, unsurprisingly, a view of Dartmoor, but most also have ‘zip and link’ twin beds which can be combined to create a king-sized bed.

More information about these, and other facilities, can be found on the hotel’s website (see www.coombecross.co.uk).

A Noise in the Night

It was Kathy Witheridge, of Ontario, who alerted me to this noise, which was heard by James Witheridge of Old Warden, Bedfordshire, in his father's farm yard, one night.

It sounds like a clue in a Sherlock Holmes detective story and it did result in an appearance at the Bedfordshire Quarter Sessions. Kathy found this information on the Internet.

The report read:



By Joyce Browne

Quarter Sessions Roll 1826

Jas. Witheridge, Warden, farmer's son. Heard someone in his father's yard at night. He went with their servant, David Hall, to the hen house and found Wm. Warner, with five dead hens. Sent for the constable. Dickens, the constable, told him he had seen a man near the fence. Pursued a man he heard running away. Overtook Jas. Warner; son of the prisoner, Thos. Bygraves, Sam. Bygraves and Jn. Chesham. When asked how it was that they were there at that time they replied "they thought it was six o'clock at which time they were ordered by my Father to be at his house, he being Overseer of the Parish - they being out of Work: One of them, Samuel Bygraves said, he knew it was very forward, as he had heard the Bell Man cry three o'Clock, just as they left Biggleswade.

This was intriguing, as we have never heard of any Witheridges in Bedfordshire, until the arrival of my own family in the twentieth century. From terms used in the report, 'overseer' and 'Bell Man' (a watchman who patrolled at night, ringing a bell and calling the hour), it could be that the term 'Roll 1826' referred to a year. I thought that I must search for the original transcript of the Quarter Sessions to make sure that the name was 'Witheridge' and had not been mistranscribed during its migration to the Internet. Farmer Witheridge must have been a man of some standing if he was the Overseer of the Poor, and there might be other items of interest.

A search of the Quarter Sessions Roll for 1826 revealed that the name of the deponent was James Witheridge. Where had these Witheridges come from and where had they gone?

The village of Old Warden is about twenty miles from where we live. It is a lovely picturesque place of unspoilt old cottages and famous for the Shuttleworth Collection of early aircraft. Thousands of people visit for the flying displays, but I went to look in the churchyard for clues about this new-found family. There were none—no Witheridges or any names that might be construed as such.

The 1841 census had not a single Witheridge in Bedfordshire, but I did find a Susannah Whitteridge, a widow, living at Manor Farm, Old Warden, and a James Whitteridge dwelling in the village, his occupation given as Constable. Had *Witheridge* metamorphosed into *Whitteridge*, or the other way round?

Searches of the Parish Registers of villages in mid and north Bedfordshire revealed events for *Whitteridges* reaching back to 1614, and an abstract of a Will made in January 1837, by John Whitteridge, Farmer, of Old Warden., leaving his property to his wife, Susannah and his sons, convinced me that the boy who heard the noise in the night was a *Whitteridge*.

There is a later document from the Quarter Sessions Rolls which records the prosecution of William Warner by James Whitteridge for the theft of a cock and four hens from his father, John Whitteridge. It would appear that, on the original document, a court official misspelled the name.

I was interested in the outcome of the court case—what happened to William Warner and his companions? He could hardly claim that the hens had died of fright. William was found guilty of theft and sentenced to two calendar months' hard labour, which he served in Bedford Gaol. The other men were not prosecuted, presumably for lack of evidence.

Who would have thought that a noise in the night could have led not only to five dead fowls, but a real red herring! It shows that when it comes to names, not even court records can be trusted!

On the side: Blind driver ordered to take extended test

According to a BBC news item, an eyeless driver has been given a suspended jail sentence after being pulled over for operating a motor vehicle without MOT, licence, insurance, or eyes!

Omed Aziz, aged 31, attracted the attention of police as he was driving down the wrong side of the road at 35 mph.

One of the officers at the scene told the court: 'I attempted to speak to the driver, who appeared to be fumbling around with the controls. At that point the passenger leant across and stated: "He's blind".'

His colleague added: 'I asked him if he could see me. He removed the dark-coloured sunglasses he was wearing and I could clearly see he was blind as he had no eyes.'

Aziz denied dangerous driving. However, he was given a twelve week jail sentence, suspended for a year, banned him from driving for three years, and ordered to take an extended driving test.

To add spice to the court proceedings, there was a nine minute delay after the chairman of the bench 'declared Aziz's t-shirt to be offensive and ordered him to remove it'.

Note: for readers from outside the UK, an 'MOT' is the certificate issued when a motor vehicle has successfully passed its yearly inspection. Also, to be fair to the magistrate, the law required him to order the extended driving test.

Desktop Detective: The Mysterious Witheridges of Green Dragon Lane—Part 2



By Kim Cook

In the Spring 2006 issue of The Witheridge Times (volume 20 number 1) I wrote of the Witheridge/Woodridge families of Green Dragon Lane, Bridgwater. Tracing this family has been difficult because they varied their surname so much. Census entries include Witridge (1851), Witheridge (1861), Withridge or Witteridge (1871), Woodridge (1881) and Wooderidge (1891)! The birth, baptism, marriage and death of one person could be recorded under four different names. One branch (Family 2) stayed in the Somerset area, another branch (Family 3) had not been found in any census since 1851, while many members of the branch I called Family 1 moved to south Wales. However, the descendants were so numerous that it was impossible to include the full pedigree in that issue. Since then I've done some more research, added it to the ENP I'd already prepared, and this is the result.

Since writing the first article, I've had access to an indexed version of the 1841 census. However, most of the Bridgwater people indexed as *Woodridge* were in fact *Woldridge*, of yeoman farming stock, and apparently unconnected with the Woodridge/Witheridge clan I was seeking. Having searched under every variation of the name I had yet come across, and found nothing, I used a somewhat drastic ploy that has worked well in the past.

I took the name of the youngest person born before the census, and known to have been alive for the following census. In this case it was James Witheridge, who had been born c 1840. I then embarked on a search for any James, with no surname specified, entering both the birth county and county of residence as Somerset, and a birth date of 1840, plus or minus two years.

This may sound odd, because that includes 1842—an impossibility in the 1841 census! But this allows for a two-year error before 1840, but just a one-year error after, and cuts the number of possible answers. If there isn't a likely surname beginning with W, it's worth trying names beginning with M, which could have been misread.

In this case there were fifty-three boys called James born in Somerset between 1838 and 1841, and still living there in 1841. Number fifty-one on the list was surely the one—*James Willerage*!

Looking at the original, the entry could be *Willerage* or *Witterage*, but the address was Fryern Street, and this was definitely the right family. There was the father James, who had died before 1851, with his wife Sarah, and most of the children whose baptisms I had found in the registers of the local Zion chapel. Missing were Sarah, who had been baptised on 29 January 1829, who may have died young, and Rebekah, baptised on 14 April 1833, and known to have died in May 1834. Initially it seemed that the second Rebecca, baptised on 23 August 1835, was also missing. However, there was an entry for Robert, aged 7. There is no evidence for a Robert in the family, and I believe the name Rebecca had been poorly written in the pencil

copy, and when the enumerator made a good copy in ink, he misread his pencil note. The census details were added to the Enhanced Narrative Pedigree (ENP).

Also added to the ENP was something I had forgotten to include in Part 1, and to which Joyce Brown had drawn my attention. This was the will of William George, eldest son of William (the rope maker) and his wife Annie, née Bennett.

William's birth had been registered in December quarter 1874, in Bridgwater (5c 389) as William George Withridge, and after cropping up in various documents under many surname variations, his name in the GRO death indexes had been listed as Witheridge (Dec qr 1955, Pontypool 8c 257, aged 81). However, in the probate registers, which give his date of death as 5 November 1955, he is listed as William George Witheridge or Woodridge, of 31 Jones Street, Newport. Administration of his estate, valued at £138 16s 10d, was granted at Llandaff on 12 December that year, to Arthur Stanley Woodridge, farm labourer. Who was this Arthur Stanley?

In December quarter 1893, the birth of an Arthur Stanley Woodridge was registered in Newport (11a 213), but sadly he died soon after birth (Dec qr 1893 Newport 11a 144). The death of another Arthur Stanley Woodridge was registered in Newport in 2000, and his date of birth is given as 20 April 1914. The GRO birth indexes for the June quarter 1914 have Arthur S Woodridge (Newport Mon 11a 550), with a mother's maiden name as Taswell. As there were so many possible variants of the Witheridge/Woodridge surname, and as Taswell is fairly uncommon, I searched the marriage indices back from 1914 to 1901 for Taswells, but found nothing that matched. As we already have listings for all the Witheridge marriages (and most of the variants), I then searched an indexed site for all the Woodridge marriages between 1890 and 1905. In September quarter 1898 (Newport Mon 11a 237), I found William George Woodridge and Fanny Caroline Tazewell or Tazwell both indexed with the same reference.

An earlier search of the 1901 census had failed to find William George, or his father, so I had another hunt, using the no-surname techniques, and soon found them indexed as *Wordridge*! Looking at the original entry, I would say it was Woodridge. There they were, at 31 Livingstone Place, Newport—William and Annie, daughter Elizabeth, son William G and his wife Fanny C. Boarding with them was 81-year-old widower George Tazwell, born Weston Zoyland, Somerset. QED!

I had also been unable to find William, son of James, in 1851, under any recognisable variant of the Witheridge/Woodridge surname. Using the tactics described above, but this time using the least common Christian name, I searched for any Harriet, born c 1827 in Devon, and living in Bridgwater. This produced only four candidates, one of whom was Harriet Wibredge! Looking at the original, it is meant to be Witredge, but other entries on the page show that the enumerator had a habit of making a downward curl when he crossed the letter 't', this making it appear like a 'b'. William and Harriet were living at a place called Pigs Cross, Bridgwater, with their daughter Sarah Ann, but their son James was not at home.

Of the seven children born to William and Harriet, I have so far found only two, James and Emma in 1871. Charles was still alive, as in 1881 he was living with Emma (by then Mrs Edwards), but I have been unable to find him in England or Wales in 1871.

There are other problems still to be resolved. One is the mystery of James Manley, tinsmith, born c 1850 and said to be a grandson of James and Sarah. Which of their daughters was the mother of this James? So far no marriage has been found to indicate who his parents were. Where does Mary J Wilkins, born c 1848, fit in? Where were James (born c 1840) and his son James (born c 1865) in 1871?

The search will continue, but at least the major lines of descent from James and Sarah have now been established. This is their family.

Bridgwater Witheridge ENP

[Note: the enhanced narrative pedigree styles differs from the normal style of the magazine. So, genealogically significant names appear in bold, rather than being underlined—the standard magazine style reserves bold text for headings or exceptional emphasis. Ed.]

Family 1

James Witheridge/Woodridge and Sarah (surname unknown)

James Witheridge/Woodridge, born c 1793 in Somerset, married c 1820 **Sarah** (surname unknown), born c 1795, Minehead. In 1841 (listed as Witterage) they were living in Fryern Street, Bridgwater, with five children, and James was working as a journeyman clock-maker. James died between 1841 and 1851, and in 1851 Sarah, listed as Wootridge, widow of a watch- and clock-maker, was still living in Fryern Street, with two daughters, a son and a grandson. In 1861, listed as Witheridge, she was living at Green Dragon Lane and working as a charwoman. In 1871, as Witterage, Sarah was still in Green Dragon Lane and still working as a charwoman. Living with her were 19-year-old unmarried grandson John Witterage, a tinman, and 15-year-old grandson James Manley, a rope-maker, both born in Bridgwater. Given that in 1901 James Manley was a 51-year-old tinsmith, and there was no grandson John born c 1850, it is possible that the two names were transposed, and that James Manley was the 19-year-old tinsmith and John Witteridge the 15-year-old rope-maker. In 1881 (as Woodridge), and said to be 89, Sarah was still in Green Dragon Lane, with her widowed daughter Mary Ann Wilkins. James and Sarah had seven known children:

- 1 **Mary Ann Witheridge**, born 1824, Bridgwater, baptised as Woodridge on 21 November 1824 in Zion Chapel. In 1841 she was in the family home in Fryern Street. In 1849 she had a liaison with **James Coram**, baptised 29 January 1832, North Petherton, by whom she had one son, and possibly two, although her second son may well have had a **different father**. Finally, in 1867, she married **Charles William Wilkins**, a tailor, born c 1832, Bridgwater, but no children of this marriage have been found.
- 2 **William Witheridge**, born c 1826, Bridgwater, was living in the family home in Fryern Street in 1841 (listed as Witterage) and working as a shoemaker's apprentice. He married, Dec qr 1847 (Bridgwater 10.563), **Harriet Salome Jordan**, born c 1827 in Plymouth, daughter of Jonathan Jordan and his wife Mary. In 1841 she had been living with her parents in Westwell Street, Plymouth St Andrew.
- 3 **Sarah Woodridge**, baptised 11 January 1829, Zion Chapel, Bridgwater. She was not in the family home in 1841, and may have died in childhood.

- 4 **Elizabeth Woodridge**, baptised 27 March 1831, Zion Chapel, Bridgwater, and in the family home in Fryern Street in 1841. An Elizabeth Woodridge married, Dec qr 1856, either John Salter or Charles Cotton Rice Turner, but no entry matching either of these has been found in 1861.
- 5 **Rebekah Woodridge**, baptised 14 April 1833, Zion Chapel, Bridgwater, died 11 May 1834.
- 6 **Rebecca Witheridge**, born 1835, Bridgwater, baptised as Rebekah Woodridge on 23 August 1835 in Zion Chapel. In 1841 she was in the family home in Fryern Street, wrongly listed as Robert, and said to be aged 7.
- 7 **James Witheridge**, born c 1840, and in the family home in 1841, was a scholar at home with his widowed mother in 1851. He married, c 1860, **Elizabeth** (surname unknown) who had been born c 1840 in London. In 1861 they were in Green Dragon Lane, where James was a journeyman blacksmith and Elizabeth a boot-binder. Despite extensive searches, they have not yet been found in 1871. Elizabeth (as Withridge) died Dec qr 1879 (Bridgwater 5c 260), aged 38. By 1881 James (as Woodridge) was a widower, living with his mother and sister in Green Dragon Lane, and working as a bright smith. Also in the household was his 15-year-old son, James. James and Elizabeth had:

- 1 **James Woodridge**, born c 1865, Bridgwater. In 1881 he was a general labourer, living with his widowed father in the home of his grandmother in Green Dragon Lane. He married, c 1888, **Jane** (surname unknown), born c 1867, Bridgwater. Early in 1891 they moved to Wales, near Mwyndy, Llantrisant, with 7-week-old daughter Mary Jane, who had been born in Bridgwater. James was an hostler (groom). By about 1893 they were back in Bridgwater, and in 1901 they were at 32 Market Street, with five children, Mary Jane (11), William John (8), Clifford E (6) and Bertie E (2), all born Bridgwater. James was a brickyard labourer.

In Dec qr 1881 (Newport Mon 11a 311) a James Withridge married **Bessie Suthard**, believed to have been Elizabeth Southard, born c 1861, daughter of Joseph and Mary Ann, whose mother had married James's brother William Woodridge. In 1891 James Withridge, a 50-year-old plumber, and his 31-year-old wife Bessie (indexed as Wathridge), were living in four rooms at 19 Livingstone Place, Newport, Mon. In 1901 James, a whitesmith, and his wife, named as Elizabeth Ann, were at 17 Livingstone Place (possibly the same house, renumbered), very close to William and Annie at 31 Livingstone Place. Also in the household was James John M Manley, a 51-year-old tinsmith, born Bridgwater, and described as a nephew. James and Bessie (Elizabeth Ann) had:

- 2 **Violet May Witheridge**, born c 1896, Newport, an at home there in 1901. A Violet May Witheridge, born 26 May 1896, died Mar qr 1980 (Warwick & L 31.0650).

Mary Ann Witheridge and James Coram and Another and Charles William Wilkins

Mary Ann Witheridge, born 1824, Bridgwater, baptised as Woodridge on 21 November 1824 in Zion Chapel. In 1841 she was in the family home in Fryern Street. In 1849 she had a liaison with **James Coram**, baptised 29 January 1832, North Petherton, by whom she had one son, and possibly two. In 1851 and 1861 she was unmarried, and living in the family home with her widowed mother. Mary Ann and James Coram had:

- 1 **William Witheridge**, born 1850, Bridgwater, at home with his mother and grandmother in 1851, and at home in 1861, working as an errand boy. By 1870 he was a rope-maker, and on 4 September 1870, in Trinity Parish Church, Bridgwater, he married **Annie Bennett**, born c 1849, Bridgwater. In 1871 they were at Roberts Buildings, Eastover, Bridgwater St Johns. They moved to Gloucester c 1875, and in 1881 were at 1 Counsel Street, Kingsholme St Mary, Gloucester, where William was still a rope-maker. In 1891 (as Woodridge) they were at 4 Providence Place, Newport, Mon, where William was a platelayer. By 1901 they had moved to 31 Livingstone Place, Newport, with daughter Elizabeth, son William George and his wife Fanny C. William snr was a platelayer, GWR. Boarding with them was George Tazwell, an 81-year-old widower, born in Weston Zoyland, Somerset. William and Annie had:
 - 1 **William George Withridge**, born Dec qr 1874, Bridgwater (5c 389). In 1881, listed as Witheridge, he was a scholar in the family home at 1 Counsel Street, Kingsholme St Mary. By 1891 (as Woodridge), the family had moved to 2 Providence Place, Newport. Although William was said to be employed, no occupation was listed. In Sep qr 1898 (Newport Mon 11a 237), as Woodridge, he married **Fanny Caroline Tazewell** or **Tazwell**. In 1901 they were at 31 Livingstone Place, Newport, living with William's parents William and Annie, and Fanny's 81-year-old father George Tazwell. They are known to have had children, including **Arthur Stanley Woodridge**, born 20 April 1914 (mother's maiden name Taswell). William George died on 5 November 1955, aged 81, and his death was registered in the name of Witheridge (Dec qr 1955, Pontypool 8c 257). However, the probate registers list him as William George Witheridge or Woodridge, of 31 Jones Street, Newport. Administration of his estate, valued at £138 16s 10d, was granted at Llandaff on 12 December 1955 to Arthur Stanley Woodridge, farm labourer.
 - 2 **Isaac Charles Witheridge**, born Dec qr 1876 Gloucester (6a 316), in 1881 a scholar at home in Gloucester. In 1891, a Charles Woodridge, aged 14, born Gloucestershire, was lodging in New Street, Shillington, Yorkshire, with the family of miner David Lister. Charles was working as hewer in a coal mine. By 1901, listed as Charles Wodridge, he was at Whitley Upper, near Holmfirth, working as a coal hewer, and lodging with the family of colliery banksman (above ground) John Bridgewater. Although there was no daughter Amy in the household it seems likely that his bride came from this family, for in Jun qr 1901 an Isaac Charles Woodridge married (Huddersfield 9a 659), either Amy Bridgewater or Amelia Horne.
 - 3 **Elizabeth S Witheridge**, born c 1879, Gloucester, at home in 1881 and 1891. In 1901 she was at 31 Livingstone Place, Newport, still living with her parents, with her

occupation listed as domestic. Elizabeth Sarah Woodridge married, Jun qr 1901 (Newport Mon 11a 328), either William George M Drew or Walter Henry Gore.

Mary Ann is believed to have had a second child, John, but his father's name is **unknown**.

2 **John Witheridge**, born c 1855, Bridgwater, in 1861 a scholar at home with his mother and grandmother. This may well be the John Witteridge, ropemaker, who was living with his grandmother in 1871. He married (as Woodridge) Dec qr 1878 (Goucester 6a 508) **Prudence Beard**, born c 1856, Gloucester. In 1881 (as Woodridge) they were at 111 George Street, Kingsholme St Mary, near his brother William. John was a labourer in a wagon works. In 1891 they were in Counsel Street (no number listed), with John now working as a blacksmith's labourer, and in 1901 they were still there, at number 29, with John a blacksmith. John and Prudence had:

- 1 **Rosa Woodridge**, born c 1878, Gloucester, at home in 1881 and 1891. She married, Jun qr 1900 (Gloucester 6a 667), **Alfred Langford**, born c 1877, Gloucester, (possibly a double wedding with Edward William Langford and Elizabeth Victoria Avery). In 1901 Rosa and Alfred were living at 16 Gordon Road, Strood St Nicholas, Rochester, Kent, and Alfred was working as an engineering blacksmith.
- 2 **William J Woodridge**, born 1881, Gloucester, at home in 1881, but not in 1891.
- 3 **Elizabeth Ann Woodridge**, born c 1882, Gloucester, and in the family home in 1891, listed as Ann. She was still there in 1901, listed as Elizabeth A.
- 4 **William John Woodridge**, born Dec qr 1886, Gloucester (6a 267), and in the family home there in 1891 and 1901.
- 5 **Prudence Kate Woodridge**, born Mar qr 1889, Gloucester (6a 272), and in the family home there in 1891 and 1901. She married, Sep qr 1911 (Gloucester 6a 656) either Arthur J Harris or Henry E J Monk.
- 6 **Ellen B Woodridge**, born c 1892, Gloucester, and in the family home there in 1901. She married, Sep qr 1914 (Gloucester 6a 725), **Edward Watkins**.
- 7 **Henry R Woodridge**, born c 1895, Gloucester, and in the family home there in 1901. He married Jun qr 1915 (Gloucester 6a 907), **Beatrice E Pollard**.
- 8 **Hilda O Woodridge**, born c 1899, Gloucester, and in the family home there in 1901.

In June qr 1867 (Bridgwater 5c 605), Mary Ann (Woodridge) married **Charles William Wilkins**, a tailor, born c 1832, Bridgwater. In 1851 a Charles Wilkins, a tailor aged 25, and his wife Mary, 22, (presumably his first) were at Mount, with 3-year-old daughter Mary J. She may have been the one who, ten years later, was working as a nursemaid for the family of James Woodridge (see Family 3 in a later issue). In 1871 Charles and Mary Ann were at 5 Coster Place, where Mary Ann lopped ten years from her age, claiming to be 36. Also in the household were four Wilkins children, William (19), Fanny (13), Elizabeth (7) and Celina (4), but it is not known if any of them were born to Mary Ann. In 1881 she was a charwoman, at home with her mother, but her husband wasn't there.

William Witheridge and Harriet Salome Jordan

William Witheridge, born c 1826, Bridgwater, was living in the family home in Fryern Street in 1841 (listed as Witterage) and working as a shoemaker's apprentice. He married, Dec qr 1847 (Bridgwater 10.563), **Harriet Salome Jordan**, born c 1827 in Plymouth, daughter of Jonathan Jordan and his wife Mary. In 1841 she had been living with her parents in Westwell Street, Plymouth St Andrew. In 1851 (listed as Witredge, and indexed as Wibredge), they were at Pigs Cross, Bridgwater St Mary, where William was working as a shoe maker. Their daughter Sarah was at home, but their son James was not. In 1861 they were at Green Dragon Lane, where William was a journeyman boot-maker. Harriet died December qr 1867 (Bridgwater 5c 273), aged 41. William and Harriet had:

- 1 **James Witheridge**, born c 1847 Bridgwater, in 1861 in the family home working as an errand boy. In 1871 James, a smith, was in Black Torrington, Devon, visiting the family of John and Mary Hearn.
- 2 **Sarah Ann Witheridge**, born c 1849 Bridgwater, in 1861 a scholar in the family home. She married, as Woodridge, Dec qr 1869 (Bridgwater 5c 658), **Charles Wallace**, a mariner born c 1847, Bridgwater. In 1871 they were at Williams Buildings, Bridgwater St Mary. By about 1874 they had moved briefly to Swansea, returned to Bridgwater within a year, but had gone back to Swansea in about 1880. In 1881 they were living at 24 Hoo Street, Swansea. Charles was now a spelter-man. In 1901 they were living in Moat Lane, Bridgwater, and Charles was a boatman on the river (barge). Sarah died Dec qr 1906 (Bridgwater 5c 226), at which time her age was given as 54. Sarah and Charles had:
 - 1 Rosina Wallace, born c 1874, Swansea, and a scholar in the family home there in 1881.
 - 2 Jane Wallace, born c 1875, Bridgwater, and a scholar in the family home in Swansea in 1881.
 - 3 Polly Wallace, born c 1878, Bridgwater, and in the family home in Swansea in 1881. She married, c 1898, Frank Rapsey, a brickyard labourer born c 1876, Bridgwater, and in 1901 they and their 1-year-old daughter, Gladys, were living in Moat Lane, in the next household to her parents.
 - 4 Ada Wallace, born c 1879, Bridgwater, and in the family home in Swansea in 1881.
 - 5 Sarah Wallace, born c 1881, Swansea. In 1901 she was in the family home in Bridgwater, working as a stitcher in a shirt-collar factory.
 - 6 Susan Wallace, born c 1887, Bridgwater, and in the family home there in 1901.
- 3 **Elizabeth Witheridge**, born c 1850 Bridgwater, in 1861 a scholar in the family home.
- 4 **Emma Jordan Woodridge**, born September qr 1853 Bridgwater (5c 428), in 1861 a scholar in the family home. In 1871 she was at Penfield Place, Monmouth Street, Bridgwater, working as a domestic servant in the household of auctioneer Christopher Babbage and his family. She married September qr 1872 (Bridgwater 5c 652) **Henry James Edwards**, born c 1851, Bristol. They moved to Portenant, Swansea c 1875, but by 1881 they were at 88 Danygraig Road, Swansea, where Henry was a spelter-furnace worker. In 1901 they were at 22 Shackelford Row, close to Emma's widowed brother Charles.

Henry was still working as a spelter-works furnaceman. Visiting them were Ernest Ballinger, a spelter-furnace man from Bridgwater, his Welsh-born wife and their family. Henry and Emma had:

- 1 Lewis James Edwards, born c 1872, Bridgwater, a scholar at home in 1881.
 - 2 Margaret Louisa Edwards, born c 1875, Portenant, a scholar at home in 1881.
 - 3 William Edwards, born c 1877, Portenant, at home in 1881.
 - 4 Bessie Jane Edwards, born c 1879, Portenant, at home in 1881.
 - 5 Annie Edwards, born c 1883, Swansea, at home in 1901.
 - 6 Ernest W Edwards, born c 1886, Swansea, a mason's labourer living at home in 1901.
 - 7 George Edwards, born c 1888, Swansea, at home in 1901.
 - 8 Florence Edwards, born c 1890, Swansea, at home in 1901.
 - 9 Emily Edwards, born c 1892, Swansea, at home in 1901.
 - 10 Percy Edwards, born c 1895, Swansea, at home in 1901.
- 5 **William Witheridge**, born c 1856 Bridgwater, in 1861 in the family home there. In Jun qr 1873 (Bridgwater 5c 759) a William Woodridge married Mary Furber. In Mar qr 1879 (Bridgwater 5c 497) a William Woodridge married Mary Seaman.
- 6 **Charles William Witheridge**, born December qr 1856, Green Dragon Lane, Bridgwater, (5c 444). In 1881 (as Woodridge) he was single, lodging with his married sister, Emma Jordan Edwards, at 88 Danygraig Road, Swansea, and working as a general labourer. He married (as Witheridge) Jun qr 1885 (Swansea 11a 955) **Lucy Eliza Dawes**, born c 1863, Bridport, Dorset (see below).
- 7 **Harriet Witheridge**, born c 1858 Bridgwater, and in the family home there in 1861. After the death of his first wife, William married, March qr 1873 (Axbridge 5c 867), **Mary Ann Southard**, born c 1843, Chudleigh, Devon, widow of Joseph Southard, a tinplate worker. In 1881 William, a shoemaker, and Mary Ann were still in Green Dragon Lane (now also known as Fryern Street). Also in the household were two stepchildren, Elizabeth (19) and Joseph (12) Southard, as well as well as seven Witheridge children, entered as Woodridge! By 1901 William had died, and his widow Mary Ann had married Edwin J Trapnell, born c 1830 Bridgwater. William and Mary Ann had:
- 8 **Henry William J S Woodridge**, born September qr 1873, Bridgwater (5c 427), a scholar at home in 1881. He married, c 1896, Fanny (surname unknown), born c 1873, Bridgwater. In 1901 they and their 3-year-old daughter Ethel were living in Green Dragon Lane, occupying four rooms in the next household to his stepmother, Mary Ann Trapnell. Henry was a coal-yard labourer, and Fanny a factory-hand making shirt collars. Henry is believed to have died in Bridgwater in Mar qr 1909, aged 35.
 - 9 **George Henry W G Woodridge**, born March qr 1875, Bridgwater (5c 419), a scholar at home in 1881. He married, Mar qr 1899 (Bridgwater 5c 493), Mary Baker. Mary may have been related in some way, as George's aunt Rebecca had married, in 1854, Henry James Baker.

- 10 **Florence E E Witheridge**, born c 1876, Bridgwater, a scholar at home in 1881
- 11 **Lilly Beatrice M Woodridge**, born March qr 1879, Bridgwater (5c 392), at home in 1881. She married (as Woodridge), Dec qr 1896 (Bridgwater 5c 647), Abraham Llewelyn Morris, a brickyard worker born c 1866 in Llanerfyl, Montgomeryshire. In 1901 they were living in Green Dragon Lane with three children, William (3), Albert (2) and Llewellyn (10 months), occupying three rooms in the next-but-one household to Mary Ann Trapnell and her Woodridge step-children.
- 12 **Albert W Witheridge**, born c 1880, Bridgwater, at home in 1881. In 1901 he was living in Green Dragon Lane with his stepmother Mary Ann Trapnell, and working as a coal-yard-labourer. In Sep qr 1909 (Newport, Mon 11a 446) an Albert W Woodridge married either Florence Annie Burland or Amy Louise Smith.
- 12 **Laura Woodridge**, born c 1884, Bridgwater. In 1901 she was living in Green Dragon Lane with her stepmother Mary Ann Trapnell. In Sep qr 1905 (Bridgwater 5c 633), Laura Agnes Woodridge married either Frederick John Crocker or Harry Goodman.
- 13 **Ethel Woodridge**, born c 1885, Bridgwater. In 1901 she was living in Green Dragon Lane with her stepmother, Mary Ann Trapnell. In Mar qr 1913 (Bridgwater 5c 639), Ethel H Woodridge married **William J Hurford**.

By 1901 William had died, and his widow Mary Ann had married Edwin J Trapnell, born c 1830 Bridgwater. In 1901 Edwin, a fish hawker, Mary Ann, one of her Southard sons, four Woodridge children and a Woodridge grandchild, Edith, born c 1899 Bridgwater, were all in one household, occupying four rooms in Green Dragon Lane. Fryern was now spelled Friarn. In the adjacent household were another of the Woodridge sons Henry, with his wife Fanny and daughter Ethel.

Charles William Witheridge and Lucy Eliza Dawes

Charles William Witheridge was born December qr 1856, Green Dragon Lane, Bridgwater, (5c 444). In 1881 (as Woodridge) he was single, lodging with his married sister, Emma Jordan Edwards, at 88 Danygraig Road, Swansea, and working as a general labourer. He married (as Witheridge) Jun qr 1885 (Swansea 11a 955) **Lucy Eliza Dawes**, born c 1863, Bridport, Dorset, who had a son William A R Dawes, born c 1880 in Swansea. In 1891 they were at 25 Shackleford Row, Swansea St Thomas, where Charles was a machine-belt maker (leather). Also in the household were their two sons and William Dawes. Lucy died Mar qr 1898 (Swansea 11a 600), aged 34. By 1901 Charles, a widower, had moved to 12 Shackleford Row, working as a leather-belt maker, close to his sister Emma Edwards who was at 22 Shackleford Row. At this time, William A R Dawes was listed as William A R Witheridge, son, and was working as an engine stoker. Also in the household was Martha Wroe, 35-year-old married housekeeper, born Pontardawe, and 3 boarders, a widower and his two sons. Charles died 1920 in Swansea. Charles and Lucy had:

- 1 **Charles W J Witheridge**, born c 1886, Swansea, in 1891 a scholar at home. By 1901 he was working as a hawker on his own account, and living with his widowed father.

In Jun qr 1907 (Swansea 11a 1609) a Charles Witheridge married **Ellen Waters**. Charles and Ellen had:

- 1 **Lucy May Witheridge**, born Jun qr 1908 (Bedwellty 11a 159).
 - 2 **Charles William Witheridge**, born Sep qr 1909 (Bedwellty 11a 119).
 - 3 **Sidney G Witheridge**, born Mar qr 1912 (Bedwellty 11a 286).
- 2 **Alfred Thomas Witheridge**, born c 1887, Swansea, at home in 1891 and in 1901.
 - 3 **Lucy L A Witheridge**, born c 1892, Swansea, at home in 1901. A Lucy L Witheridge married, Dec qr 1913 (Liverpool 8b 50) a Mr **McKenzie**.

Charles W J Witheridge and Ellen Waters

Charles W J Witheridge, born c 1886, Swansea, in 1891 was a scholar at home. By 1901 he was working as a hawker on his own account, and living with his widowed father. In Jun qr 1907 (Swansea 11a 1609) Charles married **Ellen Waters**. Charles died Sep qr 1912 (Bedwellty 11a 103) aged 26. Charles and Ellen had:

- 1 **Lucy May Witheridge**, born Jun qr 1908 (Bedwellty 11a 159).
- 2 **Charles William Witheridge**, born Sep qr 1909 (Bedwellty 11a 119).
- 3 **Sidney G Witheridge**, born Mar qr 1912 (Bedwellty 11a 286). His father died when he was only a few months old.

While researching additional information for this article, I found the 1841 census entry for the Witheridge/Woodridge family listed in my first article as Family 3. At that point the only evidence I had for Family 3 was an entry in the 1851 census listing widower William Witheridge, born c 1808, and two sons, born c 1832 and 1836. I had found no evidence of these three after 1851. However, in 1841 William's wife Mary was still alive, and there were five children in the household. Information on these other three children enabled me to track down descendants of William and Mary, and this will form the third part of the article on the Bridgwater families.

On the side: A prayer for the Stressed

Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I cannot accept and the wisdom to hide the bodies of those people I had to kill today because they p****d me off.

Family News

News from the United Kingdom

A Golden Wedding for two of our oldest members

Congratulations to Monica and Gordon Witheridge, from Leicester, who celebrated fifty years of marriage in March of this year.

A quote from the North Devon Journal

On 3 August 2006, the *North Devon Journal* published a item, in its *Sports* section, about Ian Jewell, who made a tremendous come-back, a year after discovering he had leukæmia. Richard Witheridge alerted us to the story, which is a tribute to Ian's courage and determination. Ian's parents, Sheila and Tom Jewell, are honorary members of the Society. The following are some selected quotes from the article:

Almost a year to the day after being diagnosed with a rare form of leukaemia, North Devon triathlete Ian Jewell made his inspirational competitive comeback in the Shoreline race at Bude. The event marked a huge turning point in Ian's recovery and sent out an overwhelming message to others in a similar situation - to never give up.

Following a gruelling 500m sea swim, 12-mile cycle and three-mile run, Ian astounded his emotional supporters by completing the course in 1-24-43. The 49-year-old described crossing the finish line as a strange mix of emotions.

"There was a sense of relief and achievement, and it was exhilarating and emotional all at the same time."

In April 2005 he first suspected something was seriously wrong when he started to get stomach cramps and found he was struggling to recover from triathlon training. Two months later, tests showed Ian's bone marrow had failed and he wasn't making any new blood. He was diagnosed with multiple myeloma - a type of incurable leukaemia which affects the bone marrow and blood. Despite there being no cure, the disease is manageable with treatment and Ian continues to take medication.

"The first time I tried to walk, I could only do 10 yards but, with the help of friends and relatives, I gradually built up to do 50 yards, then 100 yards, then 150 yards. Every day I kept saying in my mind I'm going to go further than yesterday. Then in February, I started to wonder if I would be able to run and I entered the Bude Triathlon just in case."

Ian, who is back at work in his job as an engineering estimator, did his first triathlon 25 years ago .

So what advice does Ian have for other people who have cancer?

"Have faith in the treatment and live one day at a time. Don't be afraid to talk about it and, I know it's easy to say but, try not to worry about it too much."

You can find the full story a www.northdevonjournal.co.uk . Start by entering 'jewell' in the search box; then modify the search dates to include August 2006 and repeat the search.

A Christmas Carol

(with apologies to Charles Dickens)

Charles Dickens had a good idea:
 'Deck the halls with holly, bring in the Christmas cheer'
At Dingley Dell and Fezziwig's Ball
 A rollicking time was had by all

Even Scrooge, the bitter miser,
 Ended up by being wiser
And grasping meanness shocked away
 Helped others celebrate the day

Dickens' world was much like ours—
 Mourning wreaths among the flowers,
Contrast stark from rich to poor,
 Bells pealing peace mid sounds of war

Ought we to join the roistering throngs
 Heedless of a grim world's wrongs?
There is one toast which we can raise
 Round the world in happy phrase
With Tiny Tim, Bob Crachit's son,
 'May God Bless Us, Every One'

Joyce Browne

A Little Bit of History from Morwenstow

The spring 2005 issue, volume 19 number 1, of *The Witheridge Times*, carried an article welcoming a new member, Nancy Clemente and included a family tree tracing Nancy's ancestry back to Thomas Witheridge, born 1723 in Bradworthy, Devon.

The family tree also noted that Thomas's son, George Witheridge (born 1761 in Morwenstow, Cornwall) married Jane Oke in 1783 in Bradworthy, and that from George and Jane are descended several of the Society's past and present members including: Nancy Clemente, Pamela Glynn (that's me), Barbara di Mambro, Alison Smith and Paul Witheridge (Canada).

Last year we visited Morwenstow and took this photograph of the font, in the Church of St John the Baptist, presumably the one used for the baptism of George Witheridge on 12 April 1761. The inscription by the font read:

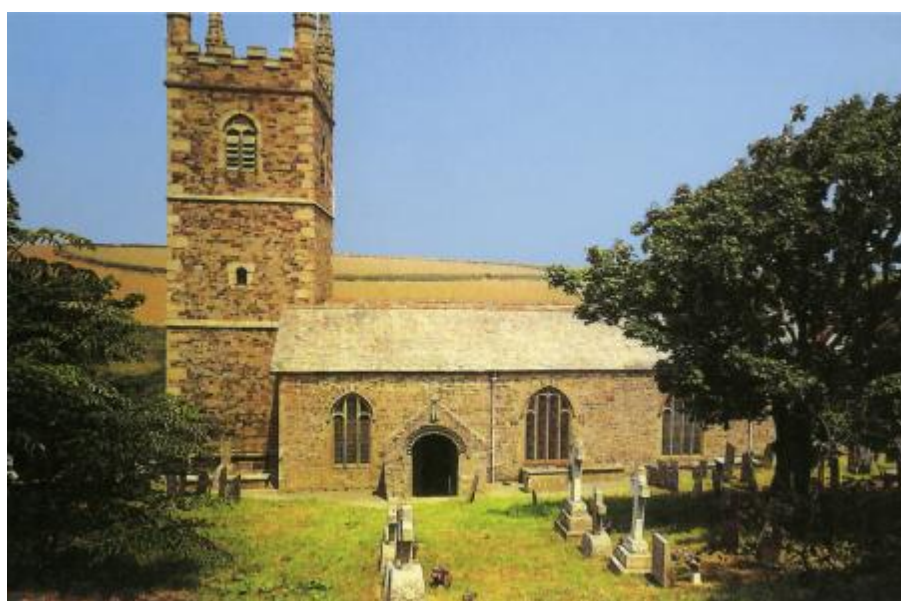
When the Celtic Church, which stood here, was reconstructed by the Norman builders, this ancient Font was preserved. The stone from which it is cut is unlike that used by the Norman workmen. Note the rough cable moulding which is found on Saxon work, the irregular bowl & the absence of a lead lining. Since the year 950 AD this old Font & water drawn from St John's well, hard by the Church, have been used for Holy Baptism.

Pilgrim, pause & consider what history this old Font could disclose. Pray God that those baptised therein may be numbered with His Saints in glory everlasting.

It is so picturesque and well worth a visit, but very remote and you definitely need good weather!



By Pamela Glynn



The church of St John the Baptist, Morwenstow

Witheridge Family Recipes

As it's coming up to Christmas, we have decided to include several recipes for using up leftover turkey.

I don't know about you, but I can cope with one snack-serving of turkey sandwiches and I always look forward to cold turkey with bubble-and-squeak and Branston Pickle. However, neither of these dishes are really palatable if more than about a day or so has passed since the turkey left the oven! So, the following could just be your antidote to the post-Christmas turkey-blues!

These dishes are not really photogenic—just tasty. So, on this occasion, we are dispensing with any pictures of the finished articles.

Spicy Turkey (or Chicken) Pie

Ingredients (for about 4 servings):

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1) 2 medium onions chopped | 6) 1 tsp cornflour |
| 2) 2 oz (60 g) mushrooms sliced | 7) ½ pt (284 ml) chicken stock |
| 3) 2 oz (60 g) butter or oil | 8) 12 oz (350 g) cooked turkey (or chicken) chopped |
| 4) 3 tsp garam marsala spice | 9) Puff pastry; enough to cover both top and bottom of a 7–8 in (18–20 cm) pie dish |
| 5) ½ can of sweetcorn drained | |

Note: the amount for ingredient (7) is given in *Imperial pints* which are larger than *US pints* (20 fl oz instead of 16 fl oz).

Method:

Fry the onions until soft, add the mushroom and cook for a further 3 minutes. Add the corn-flour and mix well. Add the garam marsala spice, sweetcorn and stock. Cook for 5 minutes on a low heat. Add the turkey (or chicken), mix well and allow to cool. Line a pie dish with the puff pastry. When the mixture is cool enough, put it into the lined dish and cover with the remaining pastry. Bake at oven temperature of 180°C, 350°F or gas mark 4, for 35–45 min until brown.

Turkey (or Chicken) Pie

Ingredients (for about 4 servings):

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) Short crust pastry for top | 7) 6 mushrooms sliced |
| 2) 6 oz (170 g) plain flour | 8) 1 onion or 2 shallots |
| 3) 3 oz (85 g) margarine, shortening, or mixture of both | 9) 1 can Campbell's condensed chicken or mushroom soup |
| 4) water to mix | 10) 4 fl oz milk |
| 5) 12 oz (340 g) cold turkey (or chicken) chopped | 11) Dash of white wine for added flavour |
| 6) Small can or frozen sweetcorn | 12) Salt, pepper and a little tarragon |



By Tara Witheridge



By Sharon Witheridge

Method:

Make the pastry and chill. Saute the onion and mushrooms until soft. Stir in the remaining ingredients and heat through. Put in into an oven proof dish. Roll out the pastry, fairly thick, and cover the top. Place in a pre-heated oven at 180°C, 350°F or gas mark 4 and bake for 25–30 mins until golden brown.

Note: as an substitute for the condensed soup, you can add 1 chicken stock cube, crumbled in to the onion and mushroom mixture, followed by 10 fl oz (284 ml) single cream (or light cream for USA).

Turkey (or Chicken) Parcel in Filo Pastry

Also by Sharon Witheridge

Ingredients (for 4–6 servings):

- 1) 8 oz (250 g) turkey (or chicken) leftovers chopped into chunks
- 2) 4–6 button mushrooms chopped
- 3) 1–2 shallots, spring onions or scallions finely chopped
- 4) 1 small packet Philadelphia cream cheese
- 5) 6–8 sheets of ready-made filo pastry

Method:

Fry the onions and mushrooms together. When cooked, add the turkey (or chicken). Stir in the Philadelphia cream cheese. Lay the sheets of filo pastry (brush with melted butter between each layer) onto a baking sheet. Spoon in the turkey mixture into centre. Gather edges of the filo and bring together in the centre to create a parcel. Alternatively roll into a log shape. Brush with melted butter or milk and place in pre-heated oven at 180°C, 350°F or gas mark 4. Cook for 20-25 mins until golden. Serve warm or cold with salad.

Turkey Mousse Flan

Although it can be used at any time of year, this flan is particularly good at Christmas or Thanksgiving. If you're fed up with all the usual recipes for turkey leftovers, this makes a delicious change, and goes a long way. It's a favourite with our family.

Ingredients:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) 12 oz (340 g) frozen shortcrust pastry | 6) 1 lb (450 g) minced turkey (or chicken) leftovers |
| 2) 1 pt (568 ml) bread sauce or white sauce | 7) ½ pt (284 ml) milk (approx) |
| 3) 3 large eggs (separated) | 8) Juice of ½ lemon |
| 4) Salt and pepper to taste | 9) Onion seasoning |
| 5) Mixed herbs | 10) Chopped parsley |

Note: the amounts for ingredients (2) and (7) are given in *Imperial pints* which are larger than *US pints* (20 fl oz instead of 16 fl oz).



By Kim Cook

Method:

Roll out pastry very thinly and allow to rest. Line 30 cm (11 in) flan dish (approx 2 in deep) with pastry. Make bread or white sauce (or use leftovers) and thin down with about 4 fl oz milk. Beat yolks of 3 large eggs, and add ¼ pt milk. In a large bowl, combine turkey, sauce and egg mix, and add lemon juice and seasoning. Add more milk if necessary, to bring mixture to a pouring creamy consistency. Beat 3 egg whites, and fold into mixture, using a metal spoon. Pour into flan case. From surplus pastry, cut 7 or 9 stars, and brush with egg or milk. Place one star in the centre, and the others evenly around the edge. Bake at 180°C, 350°F or gas mark 4 for approx 40–50 minutes, until set and golden.

On the side: Grandad and the Computer

The computer swallowed Grandad
Yes honestly, it's true
He pressed 'control' and 'enter'
And disappeared from view.
It's devoured him completely
The thought just makes me squirm
Maybe he's caught a virus
Or be eaten by a worm.
I've searched through the recycle bin
And files of every kind
I've even used the internet
But nothing could I find
I asked Jeeves in desperation
My searches to refine:
The reply from him was negative
Not a thing was found online.
So, if someday in your 'Inbox'
My grandad you should see
Please 'Scan', 'Copy' and 'Paste' him
In an e-mail back to me !

Down Memory Lane: VE Day 1945

This is the start of a new series that, I hope, will encourage more members to send in articles.

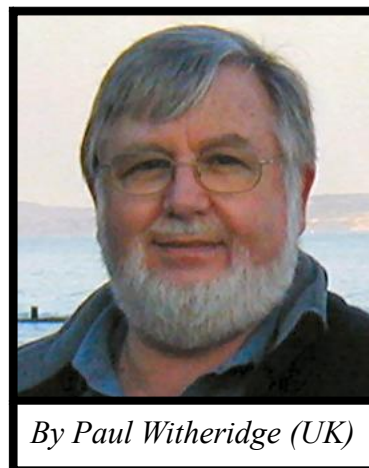
The idea is to share some personal memories of events gone by: small events or big events, it does not matter; what counts is that they happened and that a Witheridge, or descendant, was there. Of course, having photos is a big bonus.

The articles need not be very long; indeed this one of mine is very short, as I can only recall a few fragmentary memories from the actual occasion, which took place on *VE Day, or Victory in Europe Day*, 7 May 1945.

The memory is of a street party, held in Observatory Street, Oxford, just a few yards from where I was born. I was only just over three at the time. In the photo below, I'm the little one at the front with diagonal bands over my chest, the wheelbarrow and the sign reading 'Dig for Victory'. The other two placards read, from left to right: 'No more war' and 'We pray for lasting peace'.

To tell you the truth, the strongest memory I have of the occasion is not the party itself, but sitting on a chamber pot beforehand, while my mother kept telling me to hurry up or I would miss all the fun!

The photo at the top of the facing page shows the street party in full swing.



By Paul Witheridge (UK)





FFHS and GoONS Publications

The secretary is holding the following publications received from these societies:

From the GoONS (Guild of One-Name Studies):

Journals: Vol 9 Issue 3 July–September 2006, and Vol 9 Issue 4 October–December 2006.

From the FFHS (Federation of Family History Societies):

Journals: Vol 15 No 4 September 2006 Family History New and Digest
(This is the last issue in hard copy format, subsequent issues will be published on the FFHS website six times per year).

Newsflashes: No 75 June 2006, No 76 August 2006, and No 77 October 2006.

Booklets: Family History Research in Yorkshire (2nd edition), by Pauline M Litton
The Crimean War 1854–56, by Phil Tomaselli
The Anglo-Boer War 1899–1902, by Phil Tomaselli
The Zulu Wars 1879, by Phil Tomaselli

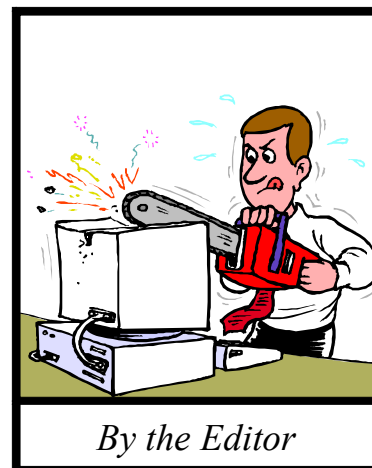
A list of publications and prices which can be ordered from the FFHS via our secretary.

To borrow the Society's copy of any of the above publications, contact the secretary via e-mail to Secretary@WetheridgeFHS.com, telephone at 01628-484026 or by mail at the address shown on the inside cover. You will be expected to pay return postage.

Using Your Computer to Search PDF Documents—Part I

This is the first of a series of articles on searching documents using your computer.

The driving force behind these articles is the fact that we are scanning all the back issues of *The Witheridge Times*, from Volume 1 Number 1 (spring 1987) through to Volume 18 Number 3 (winter 2004), creating digital, computerised, versions in PDF format.



The later issues, from Volume 19 Number 1, spring 2005, onwards, already exist in PDF format (and can be downloaded from the *members-only* area of the Society's website at www.WitheridgeFHS.com).

All twenty years of *The Witheridge Times* will be available on CD-ROM for members to purchase at the 2007 Anniversary Reunion, or by mail if you cannot attend the reunion. We have not set the price yet, but it will probably be under £5.

Of course, you will need a computer to make use of the CD-ROM (sorry, it just won't play on your hi-fi system!), but, using the computer, you can read any of the back numbers or print a hard copy. However, the real **power** of the digital versions of the magazine is not unleashed until you learn how to use your computer to search the entire collection.

What is the PDF format?

If you have used a computer, you will already have come across all sorts of different document types: word-processing documents, spreadsheets, photos, audio, movie, and so on—and each of these general types may have many specific document formats, depending on how the actual data is organised in the corresponding computer file. The specific format is denoted by an *extension* to the file name. I am sure you are familiar with many of these: '.doc' for a Microsoft Word document, '.xls' for a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet format, '.jpg' for a photo, and so on.

Primarily, PDF is just another document format, with an extension of '.pdf' appended to the file name. It stores text and graphics (remember this; it's *important* and we will return to it later), together with the necessary instructions about how these are to be displayed on your computer screen, or printed on your printer.

However, a clue to the importance of the PDF format can be found in its full name: *Portable Document Format*. It was invented in 1991 by the Adobe Corporation and was an attempt at achieving the 'paperless' office. Over the years, it has become *the way* to distribute material such as magazines, technical articles, user guides, government reports, academic papers, and so on, in electronic, paperless, form.

About the only document format that is more ubiquitous is the *web page*, that we encounter whenever we browse the Internet. However, web pages are not guaranteed to look the same on all computers—*web browser* programs are entitled to display them as they see fit, which

allows web pages to adapt to different computer environments, but makes them a poor candidate for distributing a magazine that should be displayed as it was laid out by the publisher.

How do you view or print a PDF document?

You need a piece of software called the *Adobe Reader* (older versions were called the *Acrobat Reader*). It's available, as a free download, from the Adobe website (www.adobe.com), but most computers have it already installed and the PDF document will open automatically when you double-click on the document's icon.



PDF document icon and file name on Windows XP

If the PDF document does not open when you double-click on it, and you get an error message stating that 'Windows cannot open this file', then you almost certainly do not have the *Adobe Reader* installed on your computer. Also, in that case, the document will be represented by a generic icon, instead of the one denoting a PDF.

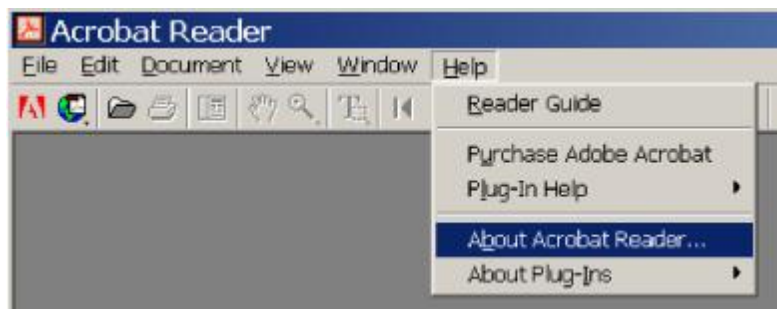


Typical generic icon on Windows XP

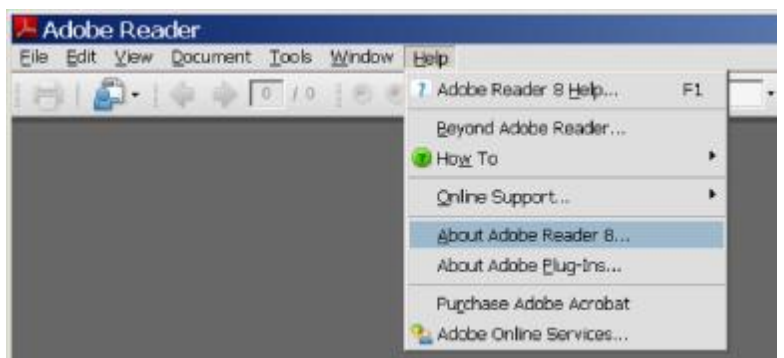
If you need to download it, be warned: it's a 20MB download, which will take quite a while on a dial-up connection (if anyone is really stuck because of this, e-mail me at Editor@WitheridgeFHS.com and I will snail-mail you a copy on a CD).

Versions of Adobe Reader exist for Microsoft Windows, the Apple Mac, Unix/Linux and even for several different hand-held devices. However, since I am sure that almost all our members, who own computers, use Windows, I am going to concentrate on the Windows versions. (Besides which, the others probably know what they are doing and don't need my advice!)

The latest version of *Adobe Reader* is 8, which has only just been released. The Adobe website still provides updates for versions 6 and 7, and versions 4 and 5 are probably still out there in the wild, but no longer supported by Adobe. However, the 'extended' searching facility, that I describe on page 38, was introduced with version 7, so if you have an older version installed on your computer, it is well worth upgrading to the latest version.



To check what version you actually have, click on About Acrobat Reader (or About Adobe Reader) from the Help menu. The screen shots at the right show Version 4 (top) and Version 8 (bottom).

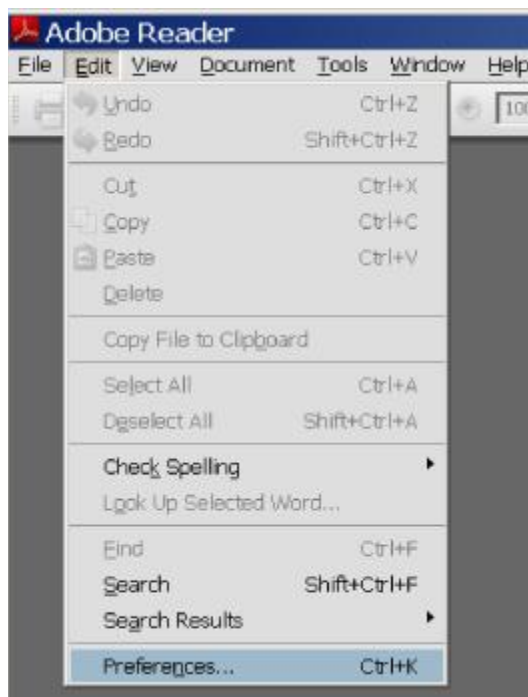


What about security?

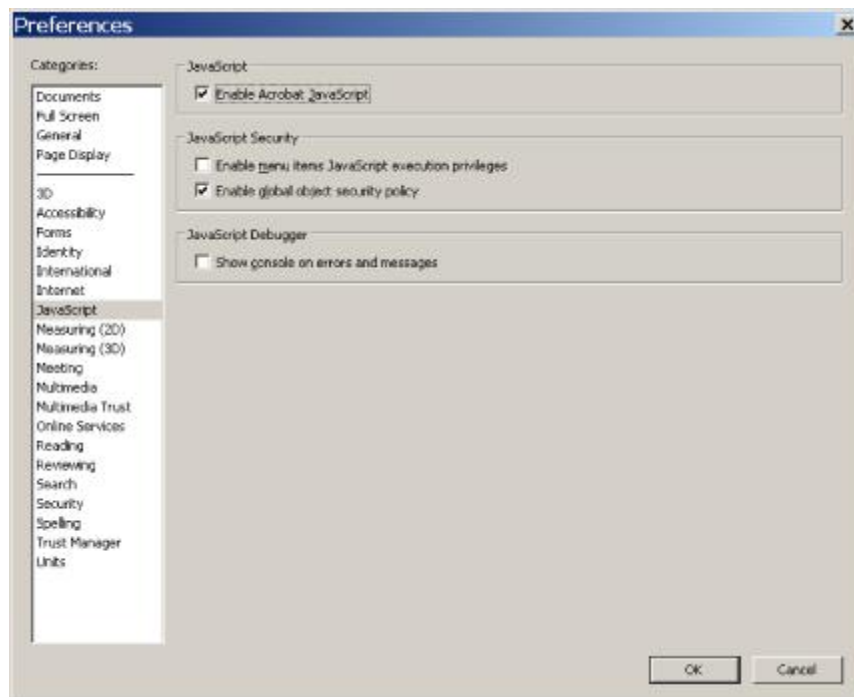
The big question is: ‘Can malicious software attack your computer via a PDF document?’

I’m afraid the answer is: ‘Yes!’

However, you can reduce your risk very considerably by turning off *JavaScript* in the Adobe Reader Preferences. Click on Preferences from the Edit menu, select JavaScript from the list of categories and uncheck Enable Acrobat JavaScript. The screen shots below are taken from Adobe Reader version 8, but version 7 is very similar. The *JavaScript* feature was introduced with version 7, so earlier versions do not suffer from this vulnerability—but they also do not include the extended search capability.



Adobe Reader edit menu



Adobe Reader preferences dialog box

The other precaution is simple: don’t accept PDFs from strangers!

That means don’t open a PDF that arrives in an e-mail unless you know the sender and are confident that it is a *genuine* e-mail from that person. Likewise, don’t open a PDF that is downloaded from a website unless you know it’s a trustworthy site.

That being said, I’ve never experienced a malicious attack via a PDF and I don’t know anyone who has.

Search technologies

Although, in this article, I am only going to cover searching by *Adobe Reader*, later articles will look at some other products. So it’s worth saying a brief word about the two major methods of searching, which I will call *Pre-indexed searching* and *On-the-fly searching*.

Pre-indexed searching is something we are all familiar with if we have used any Internet-based search engine such as *Google*. But did you know that Google, Yahoo, Microsoft and

others, provide desktop versions that you can download and use on your computer. Once installed, they beaver away, in the background, building an index to all the documents on your hard-drive(s). The advantages are that the search is blindingly fast. However, there are some major disadvantages: the index is often not quite up-to-date; the index does not include documents on removable media, such as CDs or DVDs; it can be cumbersome if you want to limit your search to a specific folder; and it's very easy for private data to end up in the index when you don't want it to.

For me, the last point is quite important. I'm not only editor of *The Witheridge Times*, I'm also the membership secretary (since last May). I keep all membership-related information in an encrypted area of my hard-drive, so that even if the computer is stolen, the information is unreadable. But what's the good of doing that, if a lot of the information is replicated in a non-encrypted index. The moral of this is that you need to look at these indexing facilities with care. Can you exclude certain folders from the indexing process? Where is the index actually stored?

On the fly searching is where the search scans the actual documents at the time you initiate the search. This is obviously a lot slower than using an index, but is still pretty fast when you are searching a limited amount of data such as the back issues of *The Witheridge Times*. It has other advantages: it's easy to search a specific folder; you can search removable media like CDs and DVDs (although these would be rather slow to search); private data does not get copied into an index; and more complex searches are possible.

We will look at more complex searches in a later article. An example of a complex search would be to look for the words 'George' followed, but not necessarily immediately, by 'Witheridge'—so that both 'George Witheridge' and 'George Causey Witheridge' would be found

All documents are equal, but some are more equal than others

It's true that all data in your computer is made up of binary bits and all can be searched by a program that simply reads the data off the disk and scans through them looking for a specific pattern of bits.

The problem is that an information item, like the phrase 'George Causey Witheridge' may be stored as one bit-pattern in (say) a Microsoft Word document, and a different bit-pattern in (say) a PDF document. So, the program used to perform the search (often referred to as a 'search engine') must be aware of the type of document *and* be able to decode it.

The document type is easily inferred from the file-name extension (e.g. '.doc' or '.pdf'), but the ability to decode documents of that type must be programmed into the search engine.

Windows comes with a built-in search engine (accessible from the *Start Menu*), but this does not understand the way PDFs are encoded and so cannot search their contents (although this function can be added by a plug-in called 'Ifilter' which can be downloaded from the Adobe website). As one would expect, *Adobe Reader* does understand the make-up of PDFs and also does a very good job of searching them. We'll get to that soon, I promise.

Text versus graphics

For graphics, read ‘pictures’. ‘Graphics’ is just fancy computer-speak for any sort of picture. Now you and I can look at a page of information, and if the word ‘Wetheridge’ appears anywhere on it, we will recognise it, even if it crops up in a photograph.

Computers are not as bright as you and I, at least at this early stage of the twenty-first century. I know Central London is ringed with cameras linked to computers that read your number-plate (license-plate to North Americans) and automatically fine you up to £150 if you don’t pay the congestion charge on time. However, I’d still like to know how many times a fine has been issued to the wrong person!

To an ordinary desktop computer, text is text, a picture is a picture and the word ‘Wetheridge’ will be represented by a completely different pattern of bits in each. Even worse, the bit patterns will vary between two pictures. So while search engines can easily locate words within textual information, they will ignore pictures. There are special computer programs called ‘Optical Character Readers’, or OCRs, which *can* extract text from pictures, and they are improving all the time, but, at the moment, they are too slow and too error-prone to be incorporated into general search engines—I’d like to see one tackle *my* hand-writing.

So, what does this mean for the digitised back issues of *The Wetheridge Times*?

First, there are actual pictures—maps, diagrams, drawings, photographs—which are carried over into the digitised version as graphics. Any textual information visible in this graphics can be read by you or I, when we look at the PDF on screen, but is ignored by any search engine.

Second, there are some items of textual information—family trees, really complex tables, hand-written information—where the package I am using to scan the back issues (actually quite a good OCR program) just cannot make head-nor-tail of the layout. In this case we fall back to including it as a graphic, which will be ignored by a search engine. We are keeping the raw scans; it is quite possible that a future version of the OCR package may become a little cleverer. In that case we can re-analyse those pages and issue some updates to those members who bought the original CD-ROMs.

Extended search facility: using Adobe Reader to search multiple PDFs

Ideally, when searching a library of PDFs for a particular word or phrase, we want:

- To specify the location of the folder containing the documents to be searched
- To find all the occurrences (hits) of the word or phrase in all the PDFs
- To be given enough information about each occurrence, so that we can easily weed out the ones that we don’t want to follow up
- To be able to follow up any particular occurrence quickly and easily, opening the corresponding document at the right page.

Fortunately, from version 7 onwards, Adobe Reader does a brilliant job of most of this.

If you start up Adobe Reader (via the *Start Menu* or the desktop short-cut), and select *Search* from the *Edit* menu (or press *Ctrl+Shift+F*), you will open up the *Search PDF* window (see below, top left).

It's set up to search the currently-loaded PDF document, but you can quickly change the *Where would you like to search?* option to *All PDF Documents in* and select the target folder for the search from the drop-down list (see below, bottom left). Click on *Browse for Location...* to pick a new target folder. It also remembers a list of recently picked folders.

See below right for an example of the results from a search for 'John Witheridge'.

continued overleaf

The screenshot displays the Adobe Reader Search PDF interface, divided into two main sections: search configuration (left) and search results (right).

Search Configuration (Left Panel):

- Search Term:** A text box for entering the search query.
- Where would you like to search?:**
 - In the current PDF document
 - All PDF Documents in: *My Documents* (dropdown menu)
- Search Options:**
 - Whole words only
 - Case-Sensitive
 - Include Bookmarks
 - Include Comments
- Search Button:** A button labeled "Search" with a yellow arrow icon.
- Navigation Links:**
 - [Search the Internet using Yahoo!](#)
 - [Use Advanced Search Options](#)
 - [Find a word in the current PDF document](#)

Search Results (Right Panel):

- Search PDF** (Title bar)
- Finished searching for:** **John Witheridge**
- Finished searching in:** **U:\Common\WFHS Magazine\Back Issues**
- Documents found:** **10**
- Total instances found:** **43**
- New Search:** A button with a yellow arrow icon.
- Results:** A list of search results with expandable icons:
 - U:\C...\Vol 01 No 2 Winter 1987.pdf
 - U:\C...\Vol 02 No 1 Spring 1988.pdf
 - U:\C...\Vol 02 No 2 Summer 1988.pdf
 - U:\C...\Vol 02 No 3 Autumn 1988.pdf
 - Mr **John Witheridge** 6 More Close, Darland, Gillingham, Kent. ME7 3
 - holding, **John Witheridge** paid 10s.0d for 'Heffields', and John Wit
 - and **John Witheridge** 'for a cotage, garden and orchard, one harve
 - Barnstaple, **John Witheridge**, and in Fremington the presenter was
 - U:\C...\Vol 03 No 1 Spring 1989.pdf
 - U:\C...\Vol 03 No 2 Summer 1989.pdf
 - U:\C...\Vol 03 No 3 Winter 1989.pdf
 - U:\C...\Vol 18 No 3 Winter 2004.pdf
 - The Witheridge Times Vol 19 No 1 Spring 2005
 - The Witheridge Times Vol 19 No 2 Summer 2005
- Sort by:** *Relevance Ranking* (dropdown menu)
- Collapse file paths
- Navigation Links:**
 - [Refine Search Results](#)
 - [Done](#)
 - [Find a word in the current PDF document](#)

In the screen shot, the results for *Vol 02 No 3 Autumn 1988* have been expanded (by clicking on the '+' next to the document name). You can see there are four hits in this document—each showing the context in which the phrase 'John Witheridge' occurs, which is a big help in deciding whether to follow up a particular hit.

Following up could not be easier: click on the corresponding and the document opens, in the main *Adobe Reader* window, at the right page with the target phrase highlighted.

This article has look at the basics of searching a library of PDF documents. Part II will follow in the next issue will look at more advanced searching and explore some of the 'gotchas' that can make searching more complicated than you might expect.

Members e-mail Addresses

By Kathy Witheridge

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We currently have e-mail addresses for only about half the membership. If you are one of the other half, or even *think* you could be one of the other half, *please* help us out by sending an e-mail to Webmaster@WitheridgeFHS.com, letting us know your correct e-mail address. If you want it to remain private—that is, not published in *The Witheridge Times*—just say so.

Post scriptum: the next issue and don't forget your subscriptions

The next issue will appear around the beginning of May 2007 and will provide details of how to find the Combe Cross Hotel in Bovey Trace, Devon, where the reunion will take place. I hope to meet many of you there.

Please also heed my appeal, in the editorial, for more articles about Witheridge Family History.

Until the next issue, may good fortune attend you. *The Editor.*

Continued from inside front cover

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