



## *Parwich & District Local History Society*

www.parwichhistory.com

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## **Some Eighteenth Century Love Letters**

**Peter Trehwitt**

In 2002 the Derbyshire County Record Office acquired a collection of Swindell papers relating to Parwich and Brassington in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These records, from a descendant in North America, contain family documents, such as wills, letters, farm records and some parish related records. The family lived at the Fold in Parwich for several hundred years. Various members of the family had served as Overseer of the Highways, Overseer of the Poor and Constable at different times. This collection of material is a rich source of information on village history, but also it gives some insight into the personalities.

Even the farm records are surprisingly revealing. One account book, for the 1790s and early 1800s, contains draft Overseer of the Poor accounts, records of cattle breeding, wage records for staff and mathematical exercises, all mixed together. The mathematical exercises are quite complicated, and the cattle records list the cows' names, which include the following: Grissil, Mottle, Blossom, Pricket, Young Pricket, Lovely, Broadhead, Bentley, Roachback, Big Twinter, Less Twinter, Cherry, Snoball, Longhorn, Lilley, Lilley one eye, Stirk, Throssel, Briend, Young Briend, Buck, Finch and Young Ash. These names are a wonderful mixture of the descriptive and the poetic.

Below as an initial taster are four love letters written by one James Swindell of Parwich and a letter of rejection from an unnamed lady; they are in various states of preservation. Not all are dated, and the documents, although eighteenth century, all appear to be copies rather than originals. They are filed together in the Derbyshire Record Office (catalogue number D 5759/3/4).

We do not know who, if anyone, was the intended recipient of this first letter, or if it was ever sent. It was folded as though it were a letter, but only addressed "*To his most dear*"

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Aprill 8 \_\_\_\_\_ 1741

*Madam I hope though I a stranger am  
your candid goodness will not let you blame  
this boold attempt of mine sinc what I doe  
an ardent pashion doth compel mee too  
I mean a real respect I have for yow  
I would be silent fearing to offend  
But then my torments near would have an end  
and since its so I thought it not amiss  
Dear mdm in y<sup>o</sup>\* least to send yow this  
in order to demonstrate unto yow  
that very night in which I took a view  
Your conquering Eyes did by thear magic...  
Convey such flames into my captived heart  
I could not rest pray thearfore donot prov  
feurll(?) to him whom your eyes tought Love  
Nor let your coyness blind y<sup>o</sup> glorious light  
of your fair Eyes which then did shine so bright  
for she y<sup>o</sup> gives occasion to despair  
I needs must say... is neither kind nor fair  
I wish indeed that none your charms could see  
and y<sup>o</sup> were undiscernd by all but mee  
so I might love with some security  
till then I ... to see these loyns (lines) ...ksess  
on which depends my fewtor (future) hapyn...  
an answer to these loyns I hear have pend  
will kindly ... received by mee your friend*

*James Swindell*

Below the signature is the following:

*I break ... help heaven ... behove  
no herb doath grow whose virtue cureth Love  
your words are music all of silver sound  
your wits so sharp y<sup>o</sup> like scarce be found  
your humble servant most sincearly wishes  
mor hapy Joys then in y<sup>o</sup> sea be fishes  
fo ... y<sup>o</sup> air on y<sup>o</sup> earth be flowers  
or ... be drops in 20 thousand showers  
Earts plenty heav... ...lis and all things incidint to this*

And on the reverse is the following acrostic:

*A knights delight it is in deeds of arms  
Perhaps a lady Loves sweet musicks Charms  
Rich men in store(?) of welth delighted be  
Infants Love dandling on thear mothers knee  
Coy maids Love some thing nothing ...l express  
Key y<sup>o</sup> first Letors of these Loyns and gues  
A Lady fair of y<sup>o</sup> green sickness lay*

\* y<sup>o</sup> seems to be used interchangeably for 'thee' or 'ye', 'the', 'thou', 'your', and 'that'; basically a substitute for most of the shorter function word that begin with 'th'. In one letter y<sup>o</sup> also seems to be used for '&'.

*Pity to see being troubled very soar (sore)  
 Redy to rew her tr...lous estate  
 In great apolos (Apollo's) name she did implore  
 Cure for her ... y<sup>o</sup> orackle asighnd  
 Keep y<sup>o</sup> first Letes 6 Loyns*

The first letters of each set of six lines are A-P-R-I-C-K, though I am not sure what is intended, unless they refer to a prick or a wound, perhaps caused by Cupid's dart. The second letter, dated four years later, is almost, but not quite, identical. It was also folded as though it were a letter, but again only addressed "To his most dear"

*Septembe \_\_\_\_ 3 1745*

*Madam I hoap though I a stranger am  
 Your candid goodness will not let you blame  
 This boold attempt of mine since what I doe  
 An ardent pasion doth compell mee too \_\_\_\_\_  
 I mean a real respect, I have for yow  
 I would be silent fearing to offend  
 But then my torments near would have an end  
 And since its so I thought it not amiss  
 Dear molly(?) in y<sup>o</sup> least to send yow this  
 In order to demonstrate unto yow  
 That very night in which I took a view  
 Your conquering Eyes did boy thear magick art  
 Convey such flames in to my captured heart  
 I could not rest pray thearfore donnot prove  
 Fennell(?) to him whom your eyes tought to Love  
 Nor let your coyeness Blind y<sup>o</sup> glorious light  
 Of your ... .. then did shine so bright  
 For she that gives occasion to despair  
 I needs must ... is neither kind nor f...  
 I wish indeed y<sup>o</sup> none your Charms could see  
 And y<sup>o</sup> were undiscernd by all but mee  
 So I might Love with some security  
 Till then I rest to see these Loyns sucksess  
 On which depends my futer (future) hapyness  
 An answer to these loyns I hear have pend  
 Will kindly by received by mee your friend  
 So I conclude who am your constant and faithful*

*Lover James Swindell Parwich*

There is a possible clue to the recipient in the following acrostic, written on the reverse:

*An epitome(?) upon y<sup>o</sup> name of Anne Boulton  
 As we behold in a clear winters night  
 No star to shine so clear or half so bright  
 Nor glorious as y<sup>o</sup> doth to our sight  
 Even so amongst others seems my hearts delight  
 Beauty itself in her sweet face is found  
 Oh her two star like eyes did give arround(?)  
 Unto myself but yet her vertues I  
 Love and prize much more I ll tell yow why*

*Tis those I must adore until I do (die)  
Of all y<sup>r</sup> blessings that heaven to mee doath send  
None more than her I wish for so I End -----*

We do know the third letter was sent to Ann Boulton, as this is clearly indicated on the reverse "To M<sup>rs</sup> Ann Boulton living at Covent Garden". It was also written that the letter had been franked, but no frank is present, further suggesting what we have is a copy. At this time 'Mrs', an abbreviation for 'mistress', does not necessitate that the person so addressed was married. The surviving document appears to be a copy made by Ann Boulton herself, though this is not certain as a section of the page is missing. If it was copied by Ann Boulton, then the preamble could be her own words. However as the first third of each line in this first section is missing, it is difficult to interpret.

*a gentle woman ... ..  
I am non married to made ... in  
it was y... rapture of a C... a man  
... ..  
your live upon a wright Biass. To give yow an  
our regard one to another, I shall enclose  
severall of his Letors wrote to mee 40 years  
my lover; and one writ  
day after so  
cohabitation \_\_\_\_\_*

1753

*vigilance and no thowsand wishes for yow'r  
and repose could have any force, yow last  
in security, and had every good angell in  
dance To have my thoughts ever fixed on yow  
constant fear of every acksident to which hewman  
and to send up my howrly prayers to aver...em(?)  
from y... I say madm thus to think and thus to suffor  
is what I do for her who is in pain at my approach, and  
calls my tendor sorow impertinence, you are now before  
my eyes my eyes y are redy to flow with tenderness, but  
cannot give relief to my gushing heart that dictates  
what I am now saying, and yearns to tell yow all its  
acings, how art thow oh my sowl stoln from thy self;  
How is all thy atemtion(?) broken, my books and blank  
papers and my friends are all in trewdors(?). I have no  
hope of ... .. from yowr pitey. To grant it  
would ... .. for yowr triumph. To give pain is  
... .. hapy if trew empire of bewty, if yow  
would consider(?) a wright, yowd find an agreeable change  
in dis... y<sup>r</sup> atendance of a slave, to receive y<sup>r</sup> complaisance  
... .. I dear y<sup>r</sup> former in hopes of y<sup>r</sup> lator condition:  
ass ... .. chains without murmuring at y<sup>r</sup> powr which  
infl... .., so I could enjoy freedom without forgetting(?)  
I am yowr most devoted most obedient serv \_\_\_\_\_ J. S.*

The final two letters are copied onto one sheet of paper, one is by James Swindell and the other by an unnamed lady, though the wording does not seem to suggest either is a response to the other.

*This letor wass wrot by a gentleman to his M<sup>rs</sup> (mistress) after a quarill had hapened between their parents so far y<sup>o</sup> her fathor gave her charg to com no more in his company*

*The thought of my constantianiah(?) which for some years has been my only hapiness, is now be com a greator torment to mee than I am able to bear, must I then live to see yow anothers; the streams y<sup>o</sup> fields y<sup>o</sup> modows (meadows), where we have so often talkd together grow painfull to me, life itself is be come a burden. may yow long be hapy in y<sup>o</sup> world. but forget ... their wass ever such a man in it as James Swin \_\_\_\_\_*

Overleaf the lady's letter is copied after an enigmatic three lines:

*Allthow a whore canot see her chastite nor a priest his charity yet it is a very clear glass A looking glass. A looking glass*

*Sir*

*Why will you aply to my fathor for my love; I cannot help it if hee will give you my person; but I asnewr you it is not in his power, nor even in my own, to give you my heart. Dear sir do but consider y<sup>o</sup> ... consequenc of such a match: yow are 55 (and) I (am) 21(?) you are a man of business and mightily convesant in arithmetick and making calculations; but pleas theirfore to sit down and calkewlate the diference between you and mee*

Hopefully we will have in future issues more extracts from these records and more information on the Swindell family of Parwich as there are a number of people researching this family.

# The Prince Family

By Peter Trehitt

**Prince:** *English and French: nickname from Middle English and Old French, presumably denoting someone who behaved in a regal manner or who had won the title in some contest of skill*

P Hanks, F Hodges, A D Mills & A Room (2002) '*The Oxford Names Companion*'

The name Prince, developing from a nickname, could have arisen independently in a number of different locations, so families with this surname may have no direct connection with other families of the same name. Indeed it occurs relatively frequently from at least the 1500s, and is found in most English counties, though in 1881 it was most common in London, the South West, North Wales and the Midlands (see [www.nationaltrustrnames.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrustrnames.org.uk)).

In Derbyshire the name occurs across the county, however before 1800, despite being found at least occasionally in over 50 parishes, it was most often present in the following towns and villages (figures calculated from the Mormons' International Genealogical Index or IGI, see [www.familysearch.com](http://www.familysearch.com)):

## Occurrences of the name Prince pre-1800

<b>Bonsall</b>	(75 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Marston on Dove</b>	(47 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Derby</b>	(44 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Longford</b>	(34 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Ashbourne</b>	(33 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Repton</b>	(32 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Chesterfield</b>	(28 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Church Broughton</b>	(25 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Norton</b>	(20 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Hartington</b>	(17 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Sutton on the Hill</b>	(16 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Brailsford</b>	(14 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Heanor</b>	(13 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Mackworth</b>	(11 baptisms, marriages or burials)
<b>Osmaston</b>	(11 baptisms, marriages or burials)

As the IGI is incomplete and there are some duplications, this is not a definitive list, however it does give us an idea where the surname was most frequent, and some possible origins for the Parwich Prince family.

## **The Prince Family in Parwich (from the nineteenth century records)**

So far the earliest occurrence of the name Prince found in the Parwich records is the marriage of Isaac Prince to Mary Kirkland (Kirkham?) in 1739. It is not known if they had any connection with the Princes subsequently living here.

The next occurrence in the records is the marriage of Henry Prince and Elizabeth Webster in August 1817, who are the earliest ancestors, so far identified, of the Parwich Princes. We know nothing of Henry's origins, though it is most likely that he came to Parwich as a farm labourer from fairly close by, perhaps from Bonsall, Hartington or the Ashbourne area, or possibly from Staffordshire. We do know that Elizabeth Webster was born around 1797 in

Parwich. There were two Elizabeth Websters baptised here about this time, but it is not clear which, if either, she was.

Henry and Elizabeth lived in a house on the site of Church View (demolished around 1873/74 when the new church was built) as tenants of the Parwich Estate. They had at least 10 children. Henry died in his forties, but Elizabeth lived well into her eighties. Most of their surviving children seem to have initially gone out of the village as domestic or farm servants, a trend that seems to have continued in the family through out the nineteenth century. However three of the boys (John, Thomas and James) returned to Parwich and worked in farming. All three were to eventually farm in their own right, though by 1881 only Thomas and James were still farming, with John and his son, John, and James' son, Thomas, all appearing on the Census as woodcutters. Indeed by 1891 only James' son James was farming independently, and by 1901 none of the family were doing so, though James junior was still working as an agricultural labourer, and his son, Leonard, was working as a groom for Wright Greatorex at the Fold.

The family lived in various locations in nineteenth century Parwich, including: Church View (as well as a previous house on this site), Littlewood Farm, Nether Green, Knob Hall, The Square and Shaw Lane.

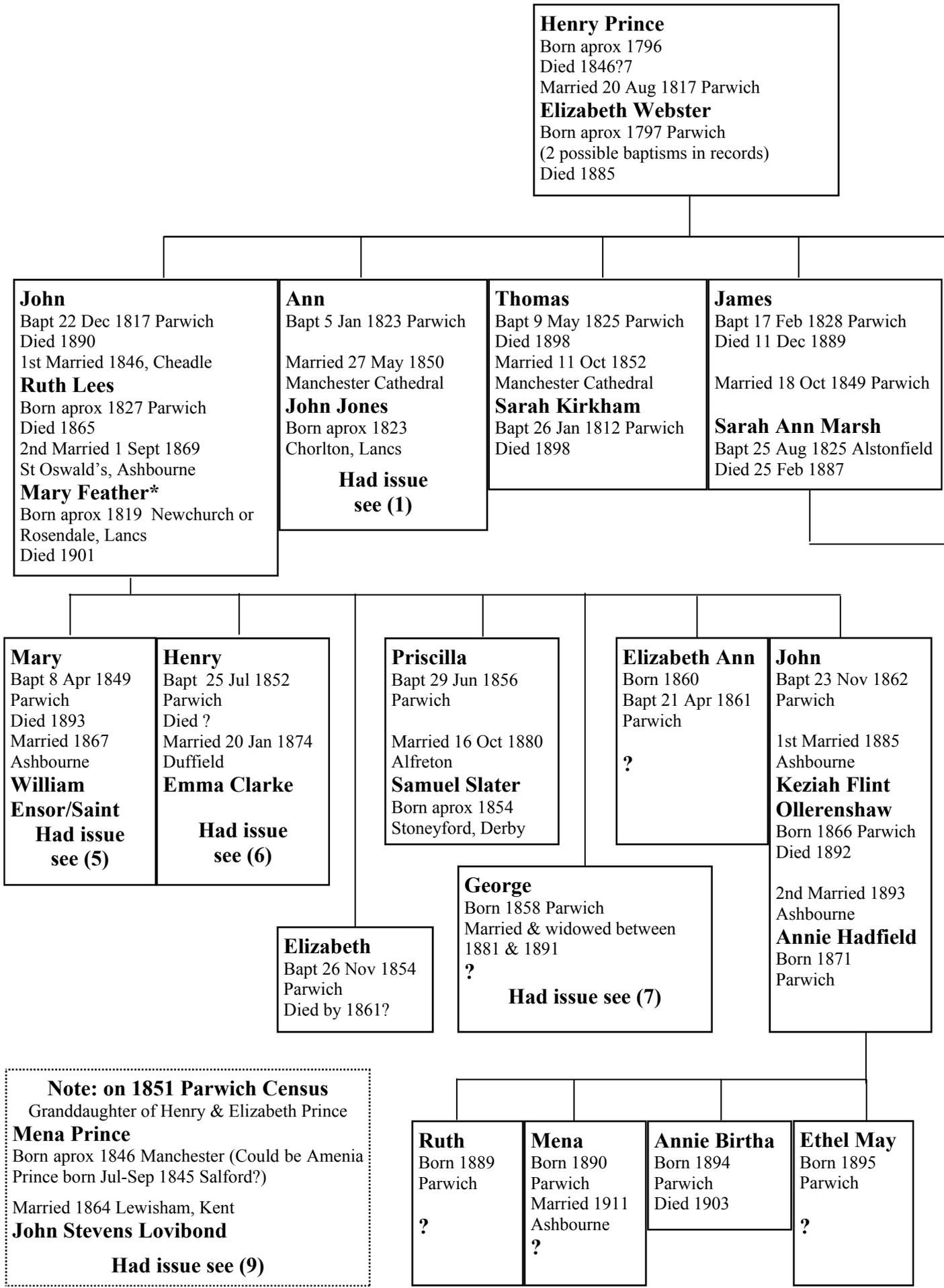
Only a relatively small number of the family's baptisms, marriages and burials appear in the Mormons' IGI. Although the IGI is incomplete, there are more gaps here than one might expect, which raises the possibility that a number of the family were not members of the established church. Parwich Methodist Chapel was built in 1849, indicating a strong Methodist congregation in the village.

Also of interest is what happened to the family members who left Parwich for good? Three of Henry and Elizabeth's children and one of their grandchildren settled in London in the late 1850s or early 1860s. Joseph Webster Prince, initially a bar manager, then a licensed victualler, was to become a wine merchant presiding over a substantial household in Croydon. Interestingly only one of Joseph's five children married before his death, though the remaining four seemed to marry quite quickly after it. Priscilla Webster Prince married John Ettridge, a park keeper, and they lived most of their married life in one or other of the gate lodges to Richmond Park. Grace Webster Prince married David Jennings, a dairyman living on the Portobello Road. The granddaughter, Mena Prince, married John Lovibond, listed variously as a miner and excavator. Did this mean he was involved in digging tunnels for the Underground or the London sewers?

The next group to leave the village were at least four of the children of John senior, who settled in the Derbyshire coalfield in the 1870s, later also spreading into Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire. The eldest Mary married William Ensor, who changed his name to Saint in the early 1870s when they moved to Shirland. William seems to have been illegitimate and Saint may have been his father's name. He was able to set up as a grocer in Shirland; did the change in name indicate an inheritance? The next child, Henry, was in 1881 a 'horse keeper' at a colliery; though by 1891 he was a publican (see below) and had died by 1901. The next daughter Priscilla married Samuel Salter who became a coal miner, as did the next son George. Only the youngest child John, after working in a colliery, returned to Parwich.

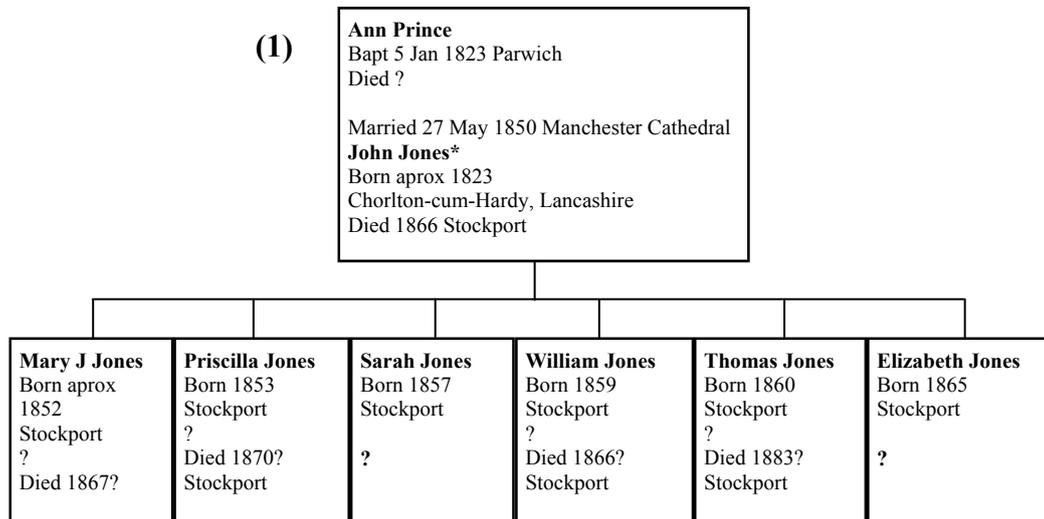
It is worth noting, that a number of the family worked in the liquor trade, perhaps surprisingly because of the possible Methodist link. As already mentioned, Henry and Elizabeth's fourth son Joseph Webster Prince worked as a barman, eventually becoming a wine merchant. Their youngest son Henry also worked as a barman in Blackpool, though he

Continued on p. 14

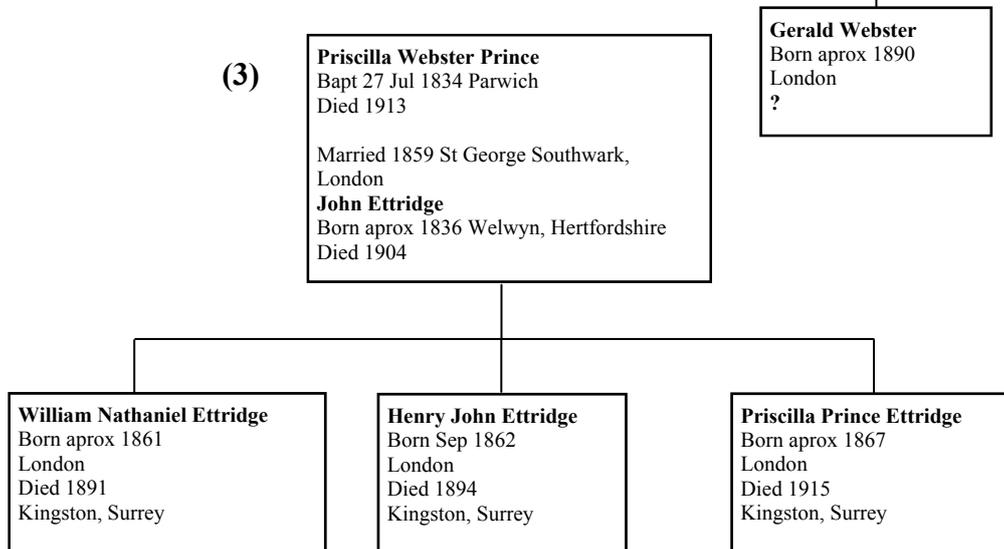
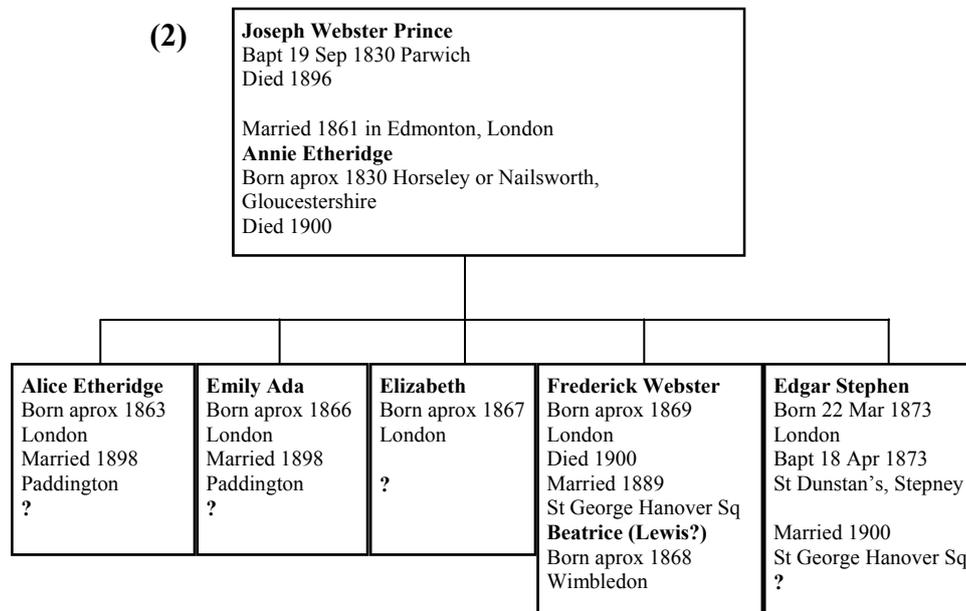


\*The only possible Mary Feather found in the Censuses was the wife of Pharaoh Feather (born approximately 1822 in Holmes Chapel, Lancs and died in 1862 in Burton upon Trent). See 1861 Census for Burton upon Trent.

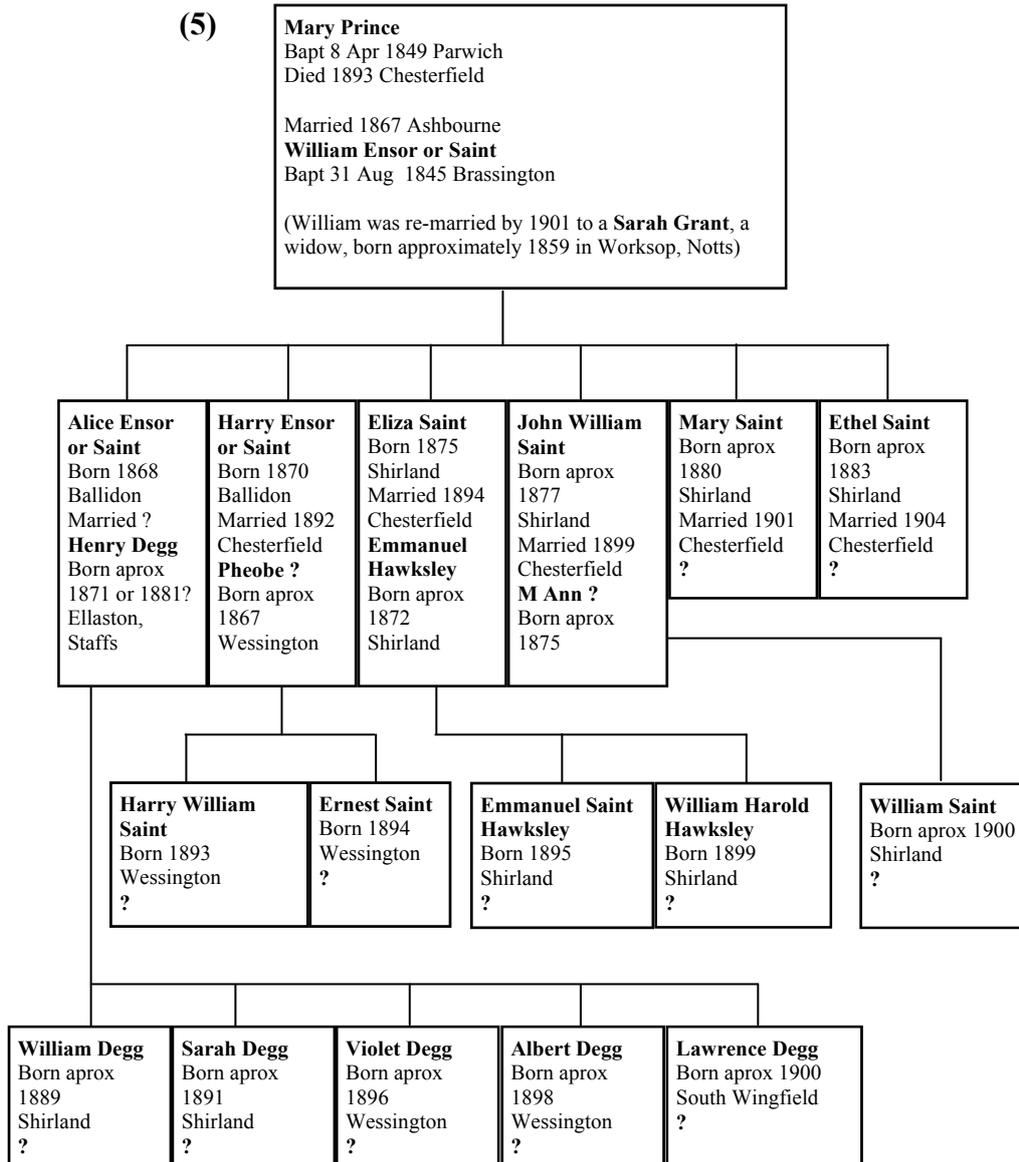
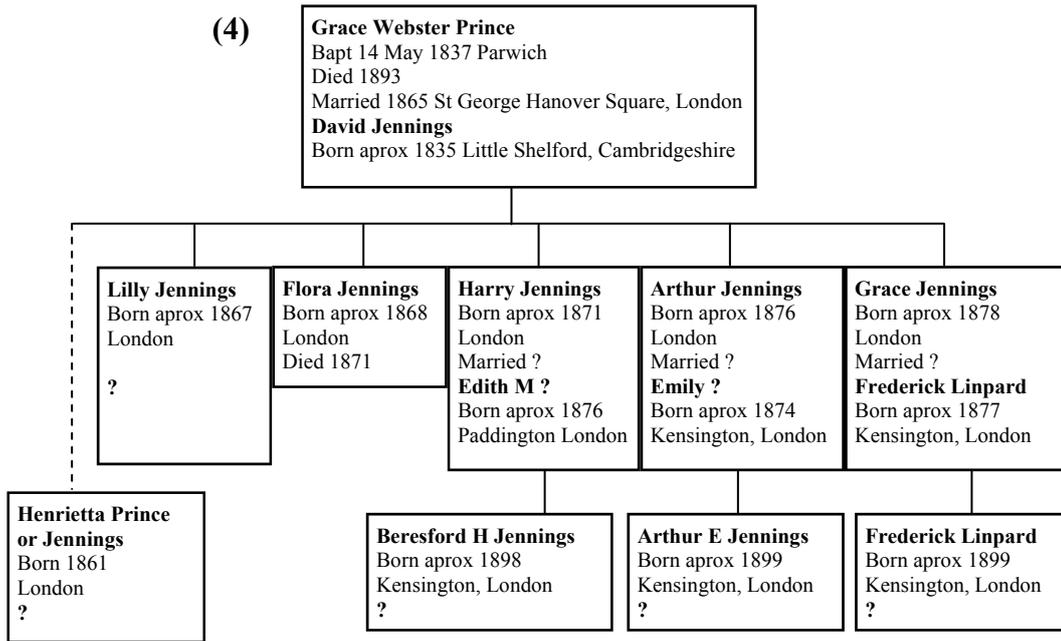


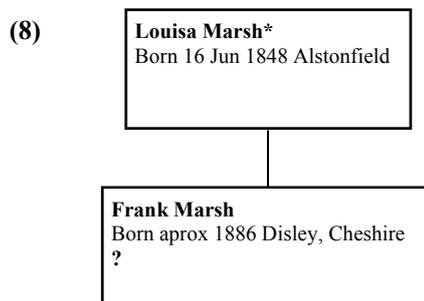
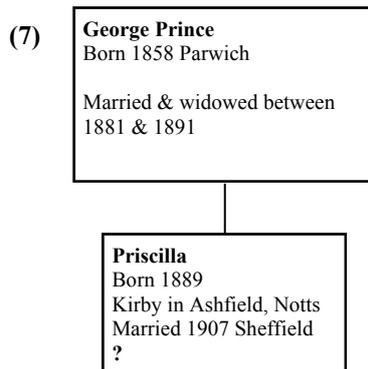
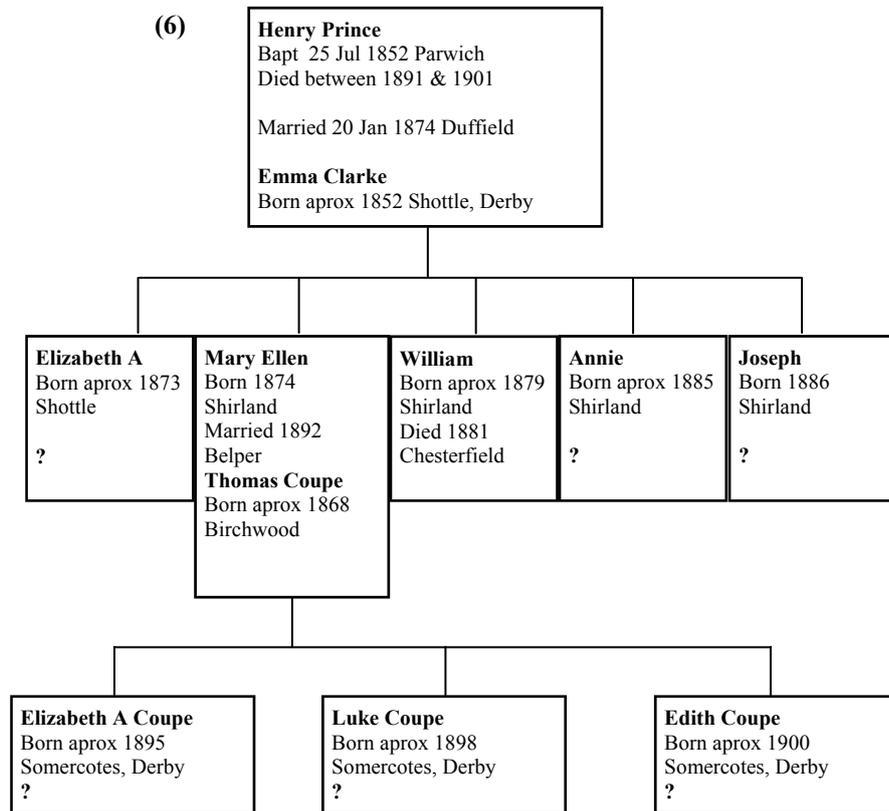


\* It is problematic identifying the events relating to this family as there are a number of Jones families in Stockport, and each birth, death & marriage certificate would need to be checked for several individuals to confirm we have the right individuals here.



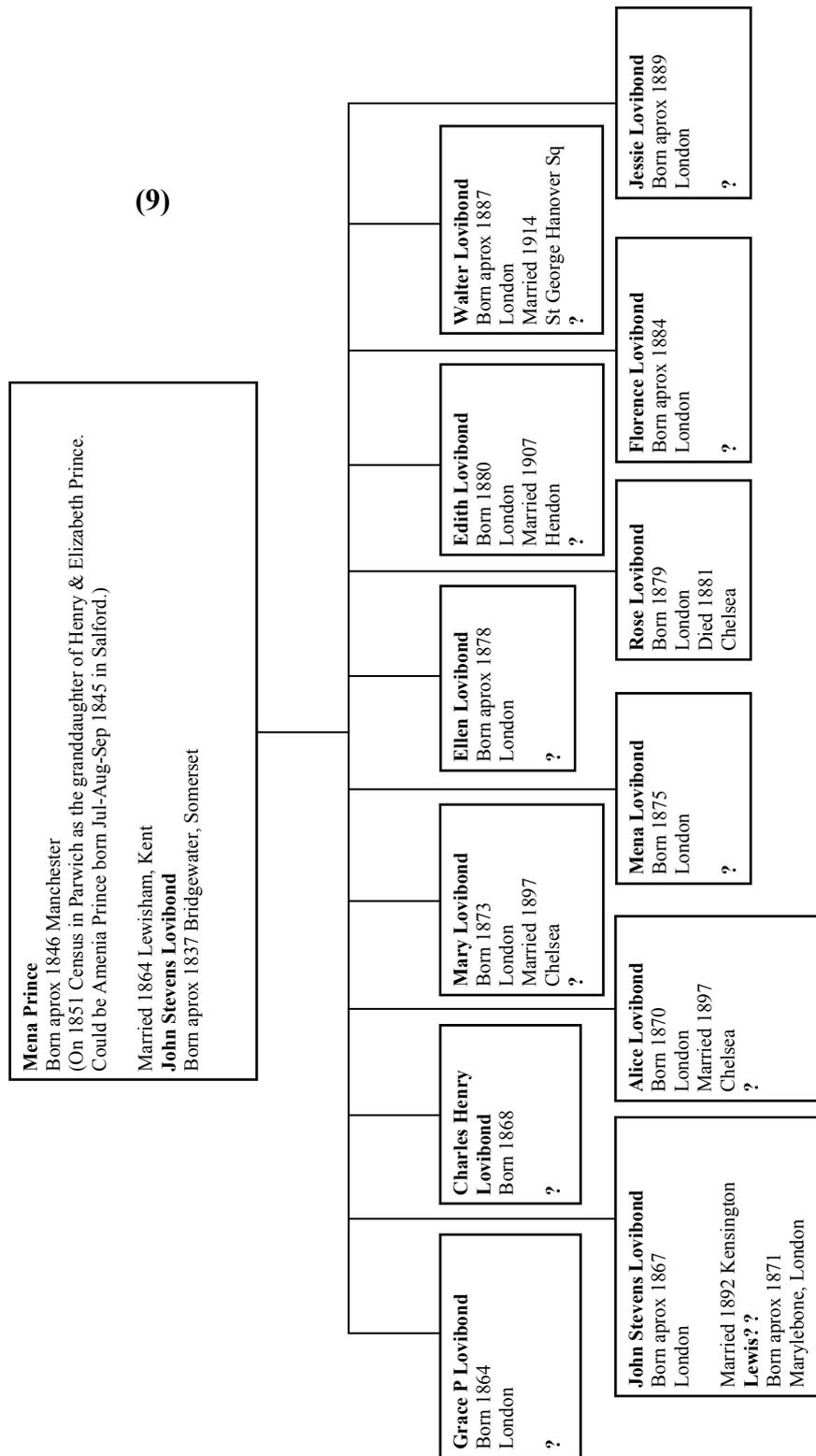
# Descendants of the Parwich Prince Family settled elsewhere





\*Louisa Marsh was the illegitimate daughter of Sarah Ann Marsh and one Benjamin Leese. We know this from a disposition made by Sarah Ann on 29th January 1849 to Sir Henry FitzHerbert Justice of the Peace, when she was chasing up the father for arrears of maintenance amounting to £1 6s. (See 'Deposition of Sarah Ann Marsh - Bastardy Case' Papers of the FitzHeberts of Tissington in the Derbyshire Record Office, reference D239 M/O 296.) Sarah Ann is described as a 'singlewoman' of Parwich. Presumably she was working here, where she met James Prince, who she married later the same year. On her marriage Benjamin Leese would no longer be obliged to pay maintenance for the child.

# Descendants of the Parwich Prince Family settled elsewhere



Continued from p.7

seems to have died relatively young at about forty. Their eldest grandson (Henry see above) was also a publican in Alfreton. Finally a John Prince was landlord of the Crown Inn in Parwich in 1906 and 1907, the last before it closed in 1907. This is likely to be the John (son of John and Ruth), who was working as a colliery labourer in Shirland in 1881, but who returned to Parwich by 1891 as woodcutter (see above), and by 1901 is listed as a 'road man', presumably working for the council maintaining the local roads.

The next group to leave Parwich settled in New Mills, in the north west of the County. Louisa Marsh (the illegitimate daughter of James senior's wife Sarah Ann Marsh) had various domestic posts locally, including working as a 13 year old kitchen maid at Castern Hall. By 1891 she and her son, Frank Marsh, were settled in New Mills in a grocer's shop with sufficient accommodation for lodgers. It would be interesting to know more details of this successful lady, who by 1901 ran her own business, was in a position to provide a home for three of her orphaned(?) nieces (Sarah Jane Prince, Annie Prince and Louisa Marsh Prince) and still have lodgers. There was further scattering of Louisa Marsh's other nieces and nephews around this time. However we have reached the end of the published censuses, and the best way to progress their stories is by asking their children and grandchildren.

Other Princes from the neighbouring area occasionally crop up in the nineteenth century, mainly as farm labourers, but none remained here, except one: Lydia Prince from Longnor in Staffordshire, who married William Hadfield of Parwich in 1856. It is interesting to note that in 1861 they seem to be living next door to John Prince senior, whose son John married an Annie Hadfield of Parwich in 1893.

It would be possible to gain more detailed information from the actual birth, death and marriage certificates, as well as copies of any wills. Perhaps a member of the family will use these sources to extend this research. However the above does give us a clear idea of life in nineteenth century Parwich. Here most of the work was farming related, and youngsters leaving home in their early teens were initially scattered: the sons as farm workers and the daughters as domestic servants. Some of the sons returned to the village to work in farming and success meant raising enough resources to be able to rent your own smallholding.

In the mid nineteenth century there were also opportunities in the big cities, and some children gravitated there, in the case of this family to London. As the nineteenth century progressed farming declined, and for this family in the 1870s the Derbyshire coal field also provided employment, either directly as coal miners or indirectly as grocers, inn keepers, etc. By 1901 only one member of the family remained in farming and the limited local work opportunities meant there would be further scattering in the next generation. We hope to flesh this information out with more information in the future based on family memories.

### Sources

- The Family Bible of James and Sarah Ann Prince
- Baptisms, marriages and burials from the IGI (see [www.familysearch.com](http://www.familysearch.com))
- Census information for Parwich (see [www.parwichhistory.com](http://www.parwichhistory.com))
- Census information outside Parwich (see [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com))
- Index of births, deaths and marriages (see [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com))
- Licensees from the Petty Sessions Records held in Derbyshire County Records Office in Matlock
- 1843 Parwich Tithe Map held in Derbyshire County Records Office in Matlock, transcribed by Brian Foden
- 'Deposition of Sarah Ann Marsh - Bastardy Case' Papers of the FitzHeberts of Tissington in the Derbyshire Record Office, reference D239 M/O 296.

For a transcript of the records used above relating to the Parwich Prince family go to:

<http://www.parwichhistory.com/NewsQuarterly1-supplement.pdf>

# October & November 2007 Slavery Season.

It is estimated that world wide, up to twelve million individuals are subject to some form of forced labour or slavery. Can we be confident that the contents of our shopping baskets in the current global market were produced without oppression and exploitation? To commemorate the 200th anniversary of the British Abolition of the Slave Trade, Parwich Church and the Local History Society organised a short series of events.

## **Operation Reflex - a talk by Alasdair Duncan. (30/10/07)**

One of the points that came out of this evening was the difficulties not only in establishing who is guilty of these crimes, but also identifying when these crimes are occurring. Some of the questions raised related to what could we a small rural community do in relation to this issue:

- most importantly, as in the eighteenth and nineteenth century abolition movement, recognise that individuals taking a stand can create change.
- support the relevant charities and organisations.
- raise awareness to help establish when these crimes occur.
- explore the issue of 'safe houses'.

## **Local Links with Slavery: a few facts and a lot of speculation - a talk by Peter Trehitt. (20/11/07)**

Peter Trehitt outlined the local involvement in slavery from pre-historic times through the high reliance on slave work forces in Roman and Saxon times to the influx of wealth from the exploitation of African slaves on Caribbean plantations, also exploring a number of byways.

Perhaps the main message of this talk was that slavery is not something foreign and remote from us. It is likely that we are all descended from both slave owners and slaves; that the environment around us has been shaped by slave labour and the profits from slavery; that direct links between our area and slavery continued as recently as the early twentieth century. Discussion included the problems of how easily people seem able to justify the oppression of others when it is in their self interest, and that lack of education, opportunity and self belief can be as debilitating as direct oppression.

Slavery has been a feature of British life from earliest times. We do not know its earliest origins, but they are likely to be prehistoric. In the Neolithic times (from eight thousand years ago), farming and larger building projects such as stone circles and burial mounds began to appear, indicating the development of more complex social structures. It is possible that this increased requirement for man hours resulted in some form of forced labour. Local Neolithic monuments include the stone circle at Arbor Low some four miles north of Parwich, and the massive burial mounds at Minninglow just outside the parish. In the Bronze Age burial mounds such, as Moot Low, continued to be built locally, but they tended not to be as large as the earlier mounds.

We know much less about what was happening in the Iron Age in our immediate area prior to the Roman Invasion. It is known that the Peak District formed the southern range of the

Brigantes, whose territory stretched north over what is now Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cumbria, Durham and Northumberland. On the richer farm land of what is now south Derbyshire, in the territory of the Coritani, settlement remains are found in the broader river valleys, and to

the north, in Brigantia, settlement seemed focused around hill forts such as Mam Tor, Fin Cop and Carl Wark. However there are few archaeological remains here, the nearest possible hill fort site being Castle Ring on Harthill more, some five miles north of Parwich. We do know that in Iron Age or Celtic Britain, slavery did occur: as a result of capture in battle, punishment for crimes or as a result of extreme poverty. Also by two thousand years ago across the English Channel tribes, such as the Belgae who gave their name to the modern Belgium, were increasingly raiding Britain for slaves for the expanding Roman market. Although our area distant from the sea may have been safe from the Belgae, its lack of archaeological remains from this period and the hill forts to the north suggest the earlier population may have been displaced and even enslaved by border disputes between the Brigantes and the Coritani.

With the Roman Invasion everything was to change. Initially the Brigantes under Queen Cartimandua became a loyal subject kingdom. However in AD 68, Cartimandua decided to dump her husband, Venutius, in favour of his armour bearer. Venutius, having charge of the army, rebelled against his queen and her Roman overlords. This resulted in Rome declaring direct military rule in Brigantia and any rebels would have been fair game for enslaving. (Note, the Brigantes became something of a byword for unruliness and gave us the modern word 'brigand'.)

The Romans quickly organised our area under the centre of Lutudarum, exploiting the lead here. They will have brought in a slave work force for civic buildings, though we do not yet know where the town of Lutudarum was located. Some argue it is now under Carsington Water reservoir, and others that it is under the foundations of Wirksworth. Also slave labour will have been used to build the two near by Roman Roads; Hereward Street and King Street, known locally as the Street. The Street continued in use as the main route from Derby to Manchester up to the Turnpike Era of the eighteenth century.

We do not know how the Romans provided labour for lead mining but there are local traditions that slaves were used. In Bakewell there is the tradition that the town was established by Italian criminals enslaved as punishment for their crimes and brought here to mine lead. Also there is a tradition that there was a barracks for slave lead miners in Middleton by Wirksworth at the time of the Emperor Hadrian.

There has been some investigation of the local Romano-British settlements at Lombard's Green (Parwich), Royston Grange (Ballidon) and Rainster Rocks (Brassington). All three were involved in lead mining; however Lombard's Green and Rainster Rocks have provided no evidence for direct Roman involvement, suggesting that mining was undertaken only by Britons and leaving open the possibility that they were freemen not slaves. In contrast at the more extensively investigated Royston Grange there is evidence for a direct Roman presence in addition to the native settlement, suggesting that mining may have been undertaken by slaves here.

Christianity will have made its first appearance here in the late Roman period. It is possible that St Mary the Virgin in Wirksworth with its unusually circular/elliptical church yard is a Roman site. It has been also argued that the unusual carved coffin lid that can be seen in the

church is a late Roman survival and not as some suggest Anglo-Saxon.

Again we have a gap in the archaeological and historical record between the end of the Roman period and the establishment of Anglo-Saxon rule. We do not know what happened to the Celts from the Romano-British settlements identified. The indigenous Celts would have been fair game for Anglo-Saxon slavers; indeed *weahl*, originally meaning 'foreigner' which came to indicate any British Celt and is the origin of the modern name for 'Wales' and the 'Welsh' was also widely used to indicate a 'slave'. Yet there must have been some continuity as there are some place-name survivals. Parwich is thought to be a combination of the Celtic 'pever-' thought to be the brook's name plus '-wick' Anglo-Saxon for a dairy farm. Also the Ecclesbourne valley takes its name from the Celtic 'eccles-' meaning a church with the Anglo-Saxon '-bourne' or broad brook. In this case the most likely candidate for the church is St Mary the Virgin in Wirksworth, meaning it could be a site of continuous Christian worship for over fifteen hundred years.

Slavery was a major factor of Anglo-Saxon Britain, with as much as one in ten of the population of what was to become England being slaves. There were also established slave trading routes through Bristol to Ireland and across Europe to Rome and on through Venice to the Byzantium, and later to the emerging Muslim world. Perhaps the best known story of Anglo-Saxon slaves is that of Pope Gregory's famous encounter with the blond Anglo-Saxons in a Roman slave market, saying when told they were Angles, 'Angels not Angles', which supposedly resulted in St Augustine's mission to Canterbury in 597.

We do not have any records for this early slave trading, but information begins to emerge in later church records, laws and wills. By the tenth and eleventh centuries, we know that the larger estates relied heavily on slave labour. Often slaves provided the labour, with ploughing being particularly associated with slaves. The Colloquy of Abbot Ælfric of Eynsham near Oxford contains:

*'What have you to say, ploughman? How do you undertake your work?'*

*'Oh, my lord, I work excessively. I go out at day-break, goading the oxen to the field, and I join them to the plough; there is not a winter so harsh that I dare lurk at home for fear of my master. But after yoking the oxen and securing the ploughshare and coulter to the plough, throughout the whole day I must plough a full acre or more.'*

*'Have you a companion?'*

*'I have a boy spurring on the oxen with a whip, who even now is hoarse with the cold and shouting.'*

*'Do you do anything else during the day?'*

*'I certainly do more. I must fill the stalls of the oxen with hay and supply them with water and carry their dung outside. Oh! Oh! The work is hard, because I am not free.'*

But also tenth and eleventh century wills indicate that skilled workers such as metal workers, goldsmiths, and needlewomen could also be slaves.

Locally we have little direct evidence relating to the levels of slavery. Our area seems to have been settled as a spread of farmsteads such as Parwich, Alsop, Newton Grange, Hanson Grange and Cold Eaton. However as early as the seventh century, we find high status graves cut into the Neolithic site at Wigber Low. These graves indicate a wealthy warrior elite in the area, and it has been speculated that they drew their income from more than just farming, also exploiting the lead mines locally. It is probable such a family or families would be slave owners. The people in this area were known as the Pecsæte, and by the late seventh century

they were firmly part of Mercia, though near the much disputed border with Northumbria.

By 966 Parwich was in the hands of Ælfhelm, who had considerable landholdings in the Midlands. After Ælfhelm's death, Parwich became part of a royal estate under his son-in-law King Canute. This estate was centred on Wirksworth and almost certainly would have made use of slave labour. King Canute although accepting the institution of slavery attempted to control it by legislating against: parents selling their children into slavery; married men taking female slaves as concubines and the export of Christian slaves to non-Christian lands. Another large holding at the time of the Norman Conquest was that of Siward Barn 'commended man' of the earl of Mercia, who held a significant number of Derbyshire manors, probably including Brassington, Bradbourne, Tissington, Elton and Winster. Again he was likely to be a substantial slave owner. However we do not know if the many small farmsteads scattered across the limestone plateau made use of slaves.

The Normans brought with them a system of serfs that had largely replaced the use of slaves in agriculture. Moreover the distinction between slaves and free fellow tribesmen was irrelevant to the Norman overlords, so the institute of slavery disappeared, with the slaves gaining freedoms, whilst the landless Anglo-Saxon freemen lost status and had reduced rights. However it was not until 1102, in response from pressure by Church leaders, that the Council of Westminster formally outlawed the slave trade in England: "That no one is henceforth to presume to carry on that shameful trading whereby heretofore men used in England to be sold like brute beasts."

The next link with slavery is perhaps a surprising one, the Crusades. It is known the members of a number of local families including the Alsops and the Beresfords went on Crusades. The Knights of St John held land locally. In Parwich Church there are several twelfth century grave stones known locally as the 'Crusader graves'. The Crusades brought English knights into contact with a wealthy and sophisticated Islamic culture that made extensive use of sub-Saharan Africans as slaves. The numbers of black Africans that died crossing the Sahara desert in the slaving caravans may have equalled the numbers that were to later die in the infamous middle crossing. This trans-Saharan slave trade was responsible for establishing the local slave trading infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa that the Europeans and the British were to later utilise in the trans-Atlantic trade. But perhaps most significantly the Crusades brought the English into contact with cane sugar.

The first British colonies in North America attempted initially to develop either a native work force or make use of transported criminals. Neither was particularly successful and in New England bonded labour became the norm. Here individuals who sought to emigrate would sell their labour for a fixed number of years in exchange for their passage and land options when their term was complete. So far we have only identified members of the minor gentry and yeoman classes emigrating from our area in the early seventeenth century. This includes Alsops from Alsop en le Dale, Hawleys from Parwich and Brownson possibly also from Parwich. They had the resources to pay for their own passage and establish themselves in the new world, but it is likely they would have been supported by bonded servants also from our area.

The shift from slave to serf did not take place in the Iberian Peninsula, where the fighting between Moslem and Christian provided a ready source of slaves for both sides. Neither side can take the moral high ground, though by the sixteenth century, the few returning British travellers who had been galley slaves on both Moslem and Christian vessels reported

harsher treatment on the latter. The expulsion of the Moors from Spain reduced the supply of Moslem slaves and opened the way for Spanish and Portuguese slave trading directly with sub-Saharan Africa. The Spanish and Portuguese were the first to establish sugar plantations in the Americas and make use of slave labour, initially Native Americans, and then Africans. However the British were not slow to follow suit.

The FitzHerberts of Tissington, a cadet branch of the Fitzherberts of Norbury, who had been established there since the twelfth century, illustrate the involvement of the British gentry in exploiting African slaves. William FitzHerbert (1712-1772) inherited the Turner's Hall plantation in Barbados from his wife's family, the Alleyne's. His son, also William, spent some time in Barbados managing the family estates there, so can not claim ignorance as a defence for the suffering of the slaves. The son, William FitzHerbert (1748 - 1791), in turn further inherited four Jamaican plantations (Vere, Forrest, Grange Hall and Blue Mountain) through his wife, Sarah Perrin. The Jamaican plantations amounted to some 3,000 acres and would have been home to between 300 and 400 slaves. These plantations were managed via attorneys from Tissington Hall, with the Perrin and FitzHerbert records now housed in the Derbyshire County Archives giving insight into their extent and management. Their involvement continued until the final emancipation of slaves in British territories in the late 1820s.

The current Baronet, Sir Richard FitzHerbert, speculates that the compensation his ancestors received from as compensation on the final liberation of their Caribbean slaves paid for extensive building work in Tissington.

In the late eighteenth century Ashbourne 'boasted' a manufacturer of manacles and irons for the slave trade. This is perhaps surprising for such a land locked town, although Ashbourne did have a thriving metal working industry at this time, and the FitzHerbert connection may also be a contributory factor.

As well as providing examples of slave owners, the nineteenth century Derbyshire gentry also contained more enlightened individuals. The Evans family of Darley Abbey were good examples of evangelical Anglicans active in the Abolitionist movement. They were related to the campaigner the Rev Thomas Gisborne of Derby, and personal friends of William Wilberforce:

*A great event during my parents' residence at Parwich was a visit from Mr. Wilberforce, the great philanthropist politician, and religious reformer. At the time when his influence first made itself felt, religion appeared to be almost extinct in the upper circles of Society. His book, A Practical View of the Christian Religion, had a wonderful effect in awakening careless persons to a sense of their responsibilities. I have heard the remark made that this book, combined with Mr. Wilberforce's personal influence, revolutionized London Society. At the time I speak of he was a Member of Parliament, together with my uncle, Mr. Evans, of Allestree, a kindred spirit, and they worked together for the suppression of the Slave Trade.*

*To the great joy of my parents, Mr. Wilberforce accepted an invitation to visit them. The day after his arrival, my mother had asked her most distinguished neighbours to meet him at dinner, probably at any time between five and six o'clock, and the previous hours were spent in a visit to Dovedale and Ilam Hall. In the library at Ilam, Mr. Wilberforce discovered some ancient volumes or manuscripts, in which he became so engrossed that my mother (who was growing uneasy at the lateness of the hour) could not induce him to leave them. The London gentleman had evidently no idea of the earliness of country hours. He was so absorbed in the*

*ancient books that he would not listen to any persuasions, and when at last they did make the start for home my mother realised with dismay that it was impossible for them to reach home before the guests should have arrived.*

*On entering her drawing room she found the company, in full dress, sitting round the room awaiting her arrival. "What could I do?" she asked, in telling me the story; "I could only say to them, 'I have brought him, he is here, I could not help it, you must forgive me.'" I never heard what happened to that dinner. In spite of this inauspicious commencement the evening was a grand success. Mr. Wilberforce put forth his most brilliant conversational powers. The guests were delighted, impressed, carried out of themselves by his gifts and eloquence, and went away expressing to my mother their warmest appreciation. They left about ten o'clock, and my parents supposed it was bedtime, but the Londoners considered that the evening was only just begun, and more conversation ensued. Towards midnight Mrs. Wilberforce, quite unaware of the exhaustion of her hosts, got out her drawing materials! Here my recollections of my mother's narrative of this interesting episode come to an abrupt close – memory will help me no further.*

(from Mrs. Curtis' "Memories of a Long Life")

The Derbyshire County Records Office also provides an example of twentieth century involvement in slavery. The family papers of the Gells of Hopton contain records from Philip Gells' time on the board of the British South African Company (1899-1923). The papers clearly indicate that the company knowingly tolerated the use of slave labour by African subcontractors outside direct British rule for a number of years before eventually taking a stand against it.

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# Sir Gawain and the Green Knight:

## A tale of magic and mystery that is set not far from Parwich

### Rob Francis

The story of Sir Gawain and his mysterious meetings with the green knight is the basis for one of the great epic tales from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The tale begins when Sir Gawain, is challenged to a fight by a huge green knight during the annual Christmas festivities at Camelot. In taking up the challenge he sets in motion a sequence of events that culminates a year later in a meeting at the mysterious Green Chapel when the quest reaches its dramatic and terrifying climax.

The author of this great epic poem, written in Middle English at just about the same time as Chaucer was writing, is not known but the dialect of the poem hints that he came from the Derbyshire/Cheshire borders. Recently academics have even located the likely inspiration for Green Chapel just twenty miles to the north-west of Parwich in that strange and rather magical area where Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Cheshire meet, in the Dane Valley, 2 miles north of The Roaches and 2 miles west of Flash. The place itself is a massive and deep crevasse. It is a highly unusual geographical feature, perhaps 100 foot deep, and totally hidden from view. Known as Lud’s Church its dark and damp situation provides a very eerie and fitting place for a meeting between Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.

In a new and vivid translation of the poem by Simon Armitage describes it as follows:

Then he presses ahead, picks up a path,  
Enters a steep-sided grove on his steed  
Then goes by and by to the bottom of the gorge  
Where he wonders and watches – it looks a wild place:  
No sign of settlement anywhere to be seen  
But heady heights to both halves of the valley  
And set with sabre-toothed stones of such sharpness  
No cloud in the sky could escape unscratched.

In the autumn New Perspectives Theatre company are touring with a dramatisation of this exciting story. There will be a performance in Matlock on November 13<sup>th</sup> and the history society has made a block booking of 25 tickets. A few days later we will be organising a trip to visit the Green Chapel itself and will have the opportunity to explore this unusual place – though we may not be meeting up with the Green Knight!

An impression of this place is given in the photographs opposite that I took a few years ago.

# Local History Questions from our 2007 Christmas Quiz

Rob Francis

1 Put the following in the order they were built:

Parwich Hospital (Rathbone Hall)

St Peter's Church

Parwich Primary School

The British Legion (Original part) - This could be disputed as the Legion was developed from an older building used in the nineteenth century by the Webster family. What is intended here is the date of its creation as the Royal British Legion club.

Parwich Chapel

Parwich Hall

The Memorial Hall

1 point for each correct., max 7 points

2 Which four families were known to have been in Parwich before 1550:

Allsopp

Brownson

Brownlee

Crompton Inglefield

Dale

Parwich

Pikehall

Swindell

1 point for each one correct, max 4 points

3 What in Parwich is the Grade 2 listed structure based on a design by Sir George Gilbert Scott?

1 point

4 What crime links the following two people:

Robert son of Aylward de Alsop in 1281 and William Webster of Parwich in 1807

1 point

5 Put the following landlords in order:

Don Keyworth

Janet Gosling

Richard Swindell

Ken Wain

Alan Wood

1 point for each correct, max 5 points

6 The Great Western Railways locomotive Parwick Hall was built in February 1949. Why was it given this name:

a) Sir John Compton –Inglefield was a director of GWR

b) It is an invented name that has nothing to do with Parwich

c) The designer was the grandchild of a Parwich vicar (who had lived at the hall)

d) The names of trains in this class were taken from a 1935 book of gardens open to the public.

1 point

7 Put the following in the order they were built:

Smithy Close  
Church Walk  
Rathbone Croft  
Parsons Croft  
West View  
Sycamore Cottages  
Chestnut Cottages

1 point for each correct, max 6 points

8 What metal was stamped with Lutudarum?

1 point

9 In what is now the British Legion Ernest Webster had:

Shoe maker    Carpenter's Shop    Butcher's shop    Chair bottomer

1 point

10 Which of these families were **NOT** living here after 1850

Levinge  
Parwich  
Twigg  
Swindell  
Evans  
Sanfaille  
Brownlee  
Stanlowe

1 point for each correct, max 4 points

11 Put the following local organizations in the order of when founded:

Parwich Unity Club  
Parwich and District Local History Society  
Oddfellows  
Parwich United Charities  
Parwich and District Horticultural Society

1 point for each correct, max 4 points

12 What career links the following names in Parwich:

Potter  
Twigg  
Bradbury  
Williams

1 point

13 There is a metal plaque in Parwich which reads: *Success, Rushy Cliff and Nancy Consols Lead Mining Company ... Trespassers will be prosecuted 1872.*

- Where is it now?
- It refers to test mining in Parwich parish – where did this take place?
- This company had a commercially viable min in a adjacent parish. Which was it?

1 for each correct, max 3 points

14 Which is the only building in Parwich to be built of dressed sandstone?

1 point

15 Link the follows farmers' names with the farms:

Farmers:    Bunting

Gosling  
Austin  
Mamby  
Keeling  
Hotchin

Farms: Upper Moor  
Middle Moor  
Low Moor  
Sitterlow  
Hill Top  
Hawkslow

1 point for each correct pairing, max 6 points

**16** Daisy Bank Farm was initially developed soon after 1838 in order to hire out horses.  
What were the horses used for?

1 point

Points sub-total /47

See p.27 for answers. We hope to be able to include the photograph section of this Quiz in a later issue.

# Social Evening at The Sycamore

John Henbery

Scrapbooks and photographs stimulated memories of people and events in Parwich at our pub social event in April. Covering the latter half of the 20th century, the collection was brought to the Sycamore by Brian Foden to kick-off the evening discussion. The power of the captured image to jog memories and pose questions of who, where, when soon had us all engaged in an exchange on village history, putting names to faces, faces into houses and linking families together. For those of longest residence in the village mostly a memory trip, but for more recent incomers like myself a fascinating revelation.

Most of us have kept a scrapbook at some time in our lives, often including both press cuttings and photos. Press cuttings usually have a completeness by including a photo with descriptive text giving names, event and place, but sadly all too often photographs have no annotation and the critical information gets lost. So, if you have a scrapbook, or a box or album of photos from the past, can I urge you to write the details of who, where and when on the back. After all, you've kept them for a reason, and others will be interested one day.

Hopefully, by now I will have prompted you to remember those books or boxes of photographs that you have in the attic or under the stairs. If these contain pictures of people, places, buildings or events in or around Parwich please dig them out and share them with other members of the society. Perhaps they may form the basis of the next social event?

## *Parwich & District Local History Society*

[www.parwichhistory.com](http://www.parwichhistory.com) (email [parwichhistory@hotmail.com](mailto:parwichhistory@hotmail.com))

**President:** Brian Foden                      **Chairman:** Andrew Robinson  
**Treasurer:** Rosie Ball                      **Secretary:** Peter Trehwitt  
**Committee:** Brian Ball, Martin Compton, Rob Francis, Mike Goulden,  
John Henbery and Gill Love

**Website editor**  
Brian Ball

**News Quarterly editorial team**  
Brian Ball, Rob Francis, John Henbery and Peter Trehwitt

Our **representative** on the **Memorial Hall Management Committee** is  
Christine Duffel

## Editorial

Our last Newsletter (no. 28), was issued in February 2007. The Committee had intended that its successor would reappear in the May/July quarter of 2008, and we have dated this issue then. Unfortunately for various reasons, including Peter Trehwitt's health, it has been delayed, so please accept our apologies, as it is likely to be November 2008 when you are reading this.

It is planned that our new *News Quarterly* will as its name suggests be issued quarterly. It will be available for members to download in pdf format or for those who prefer to receive in paper form. Our apologies to contributors who have waited some time to see their contributions in print. Do continue to send in information on any aspect of the history of Alsop, Ballidon, Parwich and Pikehall and the surrounding area, or on families connected with our area.

We are currently reviewing our website which is planned to include some more interactive elements especially related to family history. Also readers not already familiar with it may be interested in the new more general Parwich website [www.parwich.org](http://www.parwich.org) set up by Parwich Memorial Hall and covering the communities of Alsop, Ballidon, Parwich and Pikehall.

## Answers from quiz on p.22

1. 1st Parwich Hall 1555? & 17475, 2nd Parwich Chapel 1849, 3rd Parwich Primary School 1861, 4th St Peter's Church 1873/4, 5th Parwich Hospital (Rathbone Hall) 1912, 6th The British Legion (Original part) 1951, 7th Parwich Memorial Hall 1963
2. Allsopp, Dale, Parwich, Swindell
3. The Phone Box
4. Both committed murder
5. 1st Richard Swindell, 2nd Ken Wain, 3rd Alan Wood, 4th Don Keyworth, 5th Janet Gosling
6. d) The names of trains in this class were taken from a 1935 book of gardens open to the public
7. 1st West View, 2nd Church Walk, 3rd Sycamore Cottages, 4th Chestnut Cottages, 5th Smithy Close, 6th Rathbone Croft, 7th Parsons Croft
8. Lead

Continued on overleaf

## Programme for 2008

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Thurs 28th Feb | 7-30pm <b>AGM</b> Memorial Hall  |
| Thurs 13th Mar | 7-30pm <b>Danny Wells</b> an illustrated <b>Ashbourne Gateway to Dove Dale</b> Memorial Hall   |
| Thurs 10th Apr | 8pm An informal meeting to <b>Share memories and information on the recent history of Parwich</b> Sycamore Inn                       |
| Thurs 8th May  | 7-30pm <b>Darrell Clark</b> of the Arkwright Society an illustrated talk <b>The Restoration of Cromford Mill</b> Memorial Hall       |
| Wed 4th Jun    | 7-30pm <b>Ron Slack</b> leads <b>An evening walk around Brassington</b> meet in front of the Miner's Arms, Brassington               |
| Wed 11th Jun   | 7pm <b>Brian Foden</b> & others lead <b>An evening tour of Parwich</b> for Bonsal Local History Group, meet in Sycamore Inn car park |
| Sun 6th Jul    | 6pm Bishop of Repton takes dedication service for <b>Replica Tympanum and the Graham window</b> in Parwich Church                    |
| Tues 15th Jul  | 7-30pm <b>The Arkwright Society</b> leads <b>A tour of Cromford Mill and more</b> meet at Cromford Mill car park                     |
| Wed 13th Aug   | 7pm <b>Brian Foden</b> leads <b>An evening walk up to Cardlemere Lane and back</b> (cancelled)                                       |
| Sun 5th Oct    | 2pm <b>A visit to Middleton Top and Leawood Pump House</b> meet at Middleton Top car park  |
| Wed 12th Nov   | 7-30pm <b>New Perspectives Theatre Company</b> perform <b>Sir Gawain &amp; the Green Knight</b> Highfields School Matlock            |
| Sun 16th Nov   | 12-30pm <b>Rob Francis</b> leads <b>A visit to Lud's Church, site of the Green Chapel?</b> meet Sycamore Inn car park                |
| Thurs 27th Nov | 7-30pm <b>Denis Laycock</b> an illustrated talk <b>The Mystery of Local Postcards</b> at Memorial Hall                               |
| Thurs 11th Dec | 8-30pm <b>Christmas Social &amp; Quiz</b> at Sycamore Inn  |

## Programme for 2009 so far

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Mon 12th Jan   | 8pm An informal meeting to <b>Share wartime and military memories &amp; information</b> Parwich British Legion Club             |
| Thurs 12th Feb | 7-30pm <b>AGM</b> Memorial Hall   |
| Thurs 26th Mar | 7-30pm Dr John Moreland a talk on <b>Bradbourne's Archaeology and History</b> (title to be confirmed) at Bradbourne Parish Hall |

(Admission charges to our events in the Memorial Hall are £1 for members and £2 for non-members, unless otherwise stated; other events are usually free, though there may be a charge if any expenses are involved.)

Website: [www.parwichhistory.com](http://www.parwichhistory.com)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 9. Butcher's shop  | Hill, c) Tissington   |
| 10. Levinge, Parwich Sanfaille, Stanlowe   | 14. Methodist chapel  |
| 11. 1st Parwich United Charities, 2nd Oddfellows, 3rd Parwich Unity Club, 4th Parwich and District Horticultural Society, 5th Parwich and District Local History Society | 15. Gosling at Hill Top, Austin at Sitterlow, Mamby at Middle Moor, Keeling at Upper Moor (The Keelings moved in 2008), Hotchin at Hawkslow |
| 12. They were all doctors  | 16. Pulling trains (Cromford & High Peak Railway)   |
| 13. a) Willow Cottage (Alan and Barbara's), b) The   |   |