The tomb of Sir John 'de Swynnerton in St. Mary's Church, Swynnerton.
From the Editor's desk

In one of my local papers the other day there was a report of an interview with a Television personality who apparently had no family at all. Some of the remarks that she made were so pertinent to our work as family historians that I thought they were worth repeating.

The reporter admitted that it was most unusual for a person not to have any blood relations at all and that in the past such a person would generally be a sole survivor from a terrible war, an orphan of a great accident, a refugee or an exile who had fled a tyranny. Today, however, two small forces are creating individuals who are completely without family ties: mass mobility and birth control.

For an increasing number of people in Britain today, their family tree is an inverted pyramid - tons of ancestors at the top represented by a single descendant at the bottom.

The lady's maternal grandfather was an adventurous Scot who was one of eight brothers. Her father, descendant of a French Hugenot and a captain in Joan of Arc's army, was one of three. Her mother, who was born and raised in South Africa, was also one of three. Yet, except for one aged aunt in Rhodesia, she does not have a single kith or kin to whom she can send a Christmas card.

They have either died out or become too scattered. The last time she met a cousin was when she was 13. People who have families tend not to notice that most of the world's society is built around dynastic and tribal structures - but people without families tend to notice it very much. The lady said she found Britain still a deeply tribal society where networks of kinship count for a great deal and when you don't have a family family life seems to loom everywhere, especially coming up to festivals like Christmas. "It makes you much more sentimental about festivals like Christmas, in fact I'm more sentimental about family life in general. I miss all the really good things about it. The boring things that people complain about don't occur to me. It's really only as you grow older that you notice that you have no family. The first time it really hit me was nine years ago when my mother died. There was no one to help with the funeral arrangements, no one to talk to about her death, no one else at the funeral. It was awful."

Then, a few years later, she had to go into hospital for a minor operation. They presented her with a next of kin form. She said she didn't know who the devil to put down so in desperation she wrote down the name of her boss. "Having no family makes you work harder at friendships, your friends are your family and this does have the advantage that at least you can choose your friends. On the other hand, there is no one that you can really behave badly towards. I could be an absolute bitch with my mother - and I still knew that she'd love me just the same. With friends, there is always just that little edge ... not having a family makes you less of an individual in a sense, because it makes you seek approval from other people more. With a family I feel you can be totally yourself."

Aren't we lucky?


Any of these may be borrowed from the Editor.
Letters

FROM MR. MICHAEL WALCOT.
(Editor of the Walcot Family Bulletin)
I relaxed tonight and listened to some Elgar - Gerontius in fact. Later I turned up Alec Robertson's book "Requiem - Music of Mourning & Consolation" (Cassell 1967) and read about the first performance in Birmingham, 2nd. October 1900.

Apparently the choral rehearsals began well but Elgar's wife noted in her diary at the end of August "Chorus dull and wretched". The chorus was to have been trained by SWINNERTON - HEAP, a founder of the North Staffordshire Festivals and a talented conductor with an innate understanding of Elgar's work. HEAP had died on the 11th June and his place taken by W. Stockley in whose orchestra Elgar had earlier played. Stockley was a non - contaminist and out of sympathy with a work so patently redolent of Catholic dogma. Both Elgar and Newman (who wrote the words) were, of course, eminent Catholics.

The above is paraphrased from page 241 of Robertson's book. It seems to indicate that Heap may have been either R.C. or High Anglican.

Is this of any interest to you? Heap must have been well known in the music circles of Birmingham and the Reference Library may have something on him. I don't know whether you are interested in such Swinnerton descendants - which I assume him to be. He was obviously an important Midlands chap.

EDITORS NOTE: Yes, of course we are interested in him and there has already been one reference to him in this journal - see SPH.2 page 4. My father told me he was a Surgeon of Birmingham. Research is continuing.

From Mrs. Lily Hignett (nee Swinnerton) my family has really kept me busy with our youngest daughter arriving from her home on a station up North 6 weeks before Xmas to have her baby son here in MIllicent (Australia) and then my twin daughter giving birth to a daughter.

Guess you may be wondering what I mean by a station. This is a property extending for 2000 square miles called MULoorina. and they breed cattle for export at Xmas. The company which comprises our family bought another property 100 miles further South and 15 miles out of Leigh Creek which is a Government town where they mine coal. She has now moved to a sheep property called WYRTLE SPRINGS and this property comprises sheep on 365 square miles. Incidentally there are 45,000 Kangaroos on Muloorina. We have been up there and it is 35 miles from Lake Eyre where Donald Campbell made his world land speed record.

From Mr. Bill Swinnerton of Canada I would think that you are interested in SWINNERTON place names. Staten Island, New York also has a SWINNERTON Road or Avenue. I was given this information by another distant cousin living on Staten Island when we visited that area last year. The name of SWINNERTON apparently is shown in records of the Staten Island Historical Society. Perhaps one of your correspondents from that area can get more information. For your information Staten Island is next door to New York City.

FROM MISS C.A. SWINNERTON

Probably more than 15 years ago, I happened to read a short article in the Daily Telegraph in the 'London Day by Day' section. It reproduced a portrait of WILLIAM SWINNERTON - a round faced, jovial man bewigged and dressed in a high collared coat. I kept the cutting for several years but then, thinking it was silly to do so I burnt it. But I remembered some of the details quoted and the connection with Josiah Wedgwood. Since learning from you the history of the family, I have tried to obtain more accurate details of the portrait.

Recently, I read of Mr. Bruce Tattersall's visit to the National Portrait Gallery in Washington and of how he was taking with him a valuable portrait of Josiah Wedgwood by George Stubbs, 1780. This was a ceramic plaque. So I took a chance and wrote to the museum at Barlaston. They very courteously replied and their letter is enclosed. You very likely know of the existence of the portrait and of it's whereabouts. Is it perhaps of a William Swinnerton of Butterton?

EDITOR'S NOTE: I did not know of the existence of this portrait and Miss Swinnerton subsequently wrote to the Daily Telegraph but they were unable to trace the original article - can anyone give us any further information?

FROM WEDGWOOD

Dear Mr. (!) Swinnerton
Thank you for your letter of the 20th July enquiring about a portrait of William Swinnerton. This sounds like the portrait which George Stubbs painted between the 14th and the 24th September 1780 and which I believe still survives. However, this is an oil portrait on panel and not like the portrait of Josiah Wedgwood in enamels on Wedgwood's own Queen's Ware.

No manuscript notes exist by George Stubbs and the record of the painting of Mr. Swinnerton's portrait is found in letters by Josiah Wedgwood to his partner Thomas Bentley. On the 9th September 1780 Wedgwood says: 'Mr. Stubbs dines with Mr. Swinnerton tomorrow and is to paint the old gentleman when he is done with me'. On the 14th September Wedgwood announced 'Mr. Stubbs is gone to Mr. Swinnerton's today for the week out'. On the 25th September 'Mr. Stubbs comes to us again last night after finishing a portrait of Mr. Swinnerton which is much admired and I think deservedly so by all who have seen it and I hope this with our family picture, and some others which he will probably paint before he leaves us, will give him a character entirely new to him here, for nobody expects Mr. Stubbs of painting anything but horses and lions, or dogs and tigers'.

From these letters it is very obvious that Wedgwood did know William Swinnerton who appears to be the subject of the portrait.

SPH.3 p.18
Jane is a real super striker

Super striker may be an over-used phrase in football, but one hockey player who justifies that title is Staffordshire's Jane Swinerton.

Jane has been finding the net with amazing regularity as Staffs have opened their county championship programme with three impressive wins.

She had scored seven in two matches before Saturday and continued her goal-grabbing exploits by netting a second-half hat-trick in the 6-0 thrashing of Shropshire at Shrewsbury.

Also on target were Chris Langham (2) and captain Marjorie Alcock, and there was a welcome second-half appearance by England international Gwen Jones who has been out of action with a broken wrist.

Staffs now have a break from championship hockey until the five-day tournament at Bedford College, starting on December 30, when they complete their programme with matches against Lancashire, Bedfordshire, Derbyshire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire.

EXPRESS AND STAR, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1977

APPOINTMENTS IN SERVICES

Recent Service appointments include the following:

ARMY

COLONEL OF REGIMENT: COL JCA Swynerton, Staffordshire Regt. 10.12.77.

The Daily Telegraph.

Monday, December 5, 1977

A GENERAL'S SON TAKES OVER

A GENERAL'S son and a member of an historic North Staffordshire family takes over today as new Colonel of the Staffordshire Regiment.

And Colonel Jeremy Swynnerton (below) completes a rare "double" by following in the footsteps of his father, the late Major General C. R. A. Swynnerton, who held the appointment in the 1950s.

Currently serving with the Ministry of Defence on the staff of the Director of Army Recruiting, Colonel Swynnerton, aged 30, was commissioned into the former North Staffordshire Regiment in 1946.

A seasoned traveller, he comes from the Swynnerton family which traces its connections with the county through nine centuries.

He succeeds Brigadier Louis Hargraves, aged 60, a Deputy Lieutenant of Staffordshire who has held the appointment since 1971.
WHO WEARS THE GENES? or The GENE - ealogy of the Swinnerton family

In this "scientific age" there must be few of us who now lack the basic knowledge of how genes are the mechanism by which the 'blueprint' of our physical and mental structure is determined. Often a basic pattern seems to opt out for several generations, only to reappear apparently at random at a later date.

This point was brought home to me when a dentist commented that my daughter was deficient in one tooth in the upper jaw - it had simply never been 'blueprinted' in her physical make-up. I thought nothing more about it until a cousin visited me from Australia and it transpired that he, too, was lacking the same tooth.

This set me thinking: to what extent, if at all, does the feature appear in my own or other branches of the family, and what other features can be classified in the same way? Obviously there must be recurrence - perhaps over several generations - in a way which rules out coincidence: my son and I each have a brown mark on our backs but this may be pure chance. Perhaps less coincidental is the fact that my father in later life developed a wart or soft cyst on his scalp and I have developed one in the same position. My appendix was removed when I was 19; my son's when he was 16, and my daughter's when she was only 5! Coincidence? My wife has a firm picture of a 'true Swinnerton' - not suffering fools gladly and as stubborn as they come - and I have to explain to her that this is one reason why we have "kept our end up" for so many centuries!

Perhaps what I have written has set YOU thinking? Have any of the above-mentioned features appeared in your branch of the family, or do you have your own special ones? Perhaps nothing as pernicious as the 'royal disease' of haemophilia; maybe confined to, say, the Betley branch.

Study your 'gene-a-logy' and let us know what you find!

THOMAS WALL'S BOOK of CRESTS

No.537. SWYNARTON of ...... beryth to his crest, a boore passant silver standingy on a terrare vert, a collar asur besante.
(The Ancestor - Volume XII, p.85. 1905)

GEOLOGY OF LINCOLNSHIRE

The first edition of this book by H.H.Swinnerton and P.E.Kent, published in 1949, was the first Natural History Brochure to be produced by the Lincolnshire Naturalist's Union. It has long been out of print and unobtainable. In recent years there has been an upsurge of interest in the study of geology, including an increased status for the subject in schools. In order to satisfy this interest the second edition with additions and revisions by Sir Peter Kent and sub-titled 'from the Humber to the Wash', has been prepared.* It includes new maps and diagrams, an up-to-date biography a supplement of 15 photographs and a chapter on geological conservation.

Accelerated changes in the countryside, particularly constructional activities, have provided temporary sections in hitherto unknown parts of the rock succession - for example pipeline trenches road cuttings, and foundations for pylons. While retaining without change the greater part of the text for which Professor SWINNERTON was originally responsible, it has been possible to incorporate new information which helps towards a better understanding of the processes responsible for the rocks of Lincolnshire.

Further work has also been done since the first edition on the scenery of the county as affected by glaciation. The chapters on the Pleistocene and Post-Glacial events take account of this and introduce the new terminology together with revised datings for the periods of the Ice Age.

(From 'Lincolnshire Life' December 1976, Vol. 16 No. 10)
* available price 3.45 plus 35p Post from J.Rowe, 5 Lindum Road, Lincoln.

SFH.3 p.20
FAMILY HISTORY NEWS AND DIGEST.

By now many of you will have seen the first issue of this entirely new publication in the field of Family History embracing Genealogy, Heraldry and kindred studies which I circulated. It is published by the Federation of Family History Societies of which we are a member. Until now the Federation has only circulated a newsletter to the officers of its member societies to keep them in the picture as to progress but because much of the content was administrative detail a wider circulation was not justified.

The matter was given a great deal of thought and it is hoped the new journal will still keep members informed of what is happening but also be of interest to a much wider readership.

As a result the Digest is quite different from those journals and magazines already produced by the Federation’s member societies. A large proportion of the publication is devoted to digests or abstracts of papers appearing in family history magazines. These digests should give readers sufficient information to enable them to decide for themselves as to whether the article is of sufficient interest to them to justify them applying to the society concerned for a copy of the article. Gradually the Digest will build up into a key index for all Family History topics and this will be of immense benefit to researchers all over the world.

The first issue was a complete sellout and had to be reprinted. No. 2 has now been issued and may be obtained from the Federation’s general secretary Mrs. Elizabeth Simpson, 2 Stallia Grove, Tolleton, Notts. price 75p. post paid (UK) or 2 Dollars (USA equivalent) for overseas subscribers. The Digest will be published twice a year.

More Unknown Soldiers

Private 33766 Frederick William SWINNERTON
Born: Dewsbury (Yorks)
Enlisted: Douglas (Isle of Man)
Killed in Action 7 June 1917, aged 19
Son of JOSEPH & MARY SWINNERTON
of Falcon’s Nest Hotel, Port Erin I.o.M.
Native of Crosley, Isle of Man
No known grave.

AN UNKNOWN CONNECTION

Francis EATON, Manager and Engineer of the Waterworks at Berkhamstead had a son in 1868 who was christened John Thomas SWINNERTON Eaton. Why? His wife’s name before marriage was Brownson so no link there. The name was carried on into the next generation but then died out. The EATONS have been traced back to 1780 but no connection has been found with Swinnerton so far.

ARCHEAEOLOGICA CANTIANA 29.27.(1893)

Kentish Administration 1657 & 1658
FOL. Name of Deced. Parish Granted to.
88 SWINNERTON Eastwell Relic, Mary Josiah 23 June
No other entries in 4 Indexes to Vols. 1 – 88
(ex. F. Higenbottam)

Salop Parish Registers (4) PONTESBURY
1784 Sarah SWINNERTON & Thos. Casewell
Married (From Boyd’s Register)

HODNET
1890 Sarah SWINNERTON aged 72 from Parish of Drayton. buried 23 Nov.

NORTON IN HALES
1745 Edward SWINNERTON & Mary Lowe
Married 24 June

FITZ
1644 Edward SWINNERTON, a servant in the family of F.
Buried 30 May

Letter from Henry M. Brooks, the Secretary of the Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts to Mrs. H.C.Porter dated 3rd. September 1895.

Dear Madam
Your favour of the 2nd. is received enclosing a letter from Delhi, India, in reference to the SWYNERTON family. I find that Dr. JOHN SWYNERTON was a physician in Salem and died — according to his gravestone to be seen in the Charter St. burial ground — on Jan’y. 6 1690, aged 57. Hannah, his widow, died Dec. 23, 1713 aged 71. Mrs. MERCY SWYNERTON died Nov. 3, 1727 aged 43. This is all I know about the family... I think you might possibly obtain further information by application to some person more thoroughly acquainted with genealogical matters than I am. I could recommend Sidney Perley Esq. of this city who is well versed in such matters, and I have enclosed his circular.

NB. Although there is a little difference in the spelling of the name, it is undoubtedly the same family — people in those times were not particular about the spelling. Often in the same document the word is spelled differently.

(Ex. Sir Roger Swynnerton – found among the Rev. Charles Swynnerton’s papers)
NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST

Our warmest congratulations go to our Council member JOHN WALTER SWINNERTON on being made M.B.E. for his work as Chairman of the Hertfordshire National Savings Committee.

Mr. Swinnerton had a double cause for celebration as his son, MICHAEL JOHN SWINNERTON (MS. 66) was married on the 31st December 1977 to Linda Patricia Coles. Our congratulations and best wishes to them both.

Belated congratulations also to DAVID RALPH (DS. 17) and Teresa Swinnerton on the birth of a son STEVEN DAVID SWINNERTON on the 23rd April in Minnesota, U.S.A. As his grandfather, our member, HAROLD ALBERT SWINNERTON says – he could become President of the United States one day but equally, having been born on St. George’s Day (the same as the Editor) he could turn out to be a very patriotic Englishman!

AMENDMENTS TO YOUR DIRECTORY

NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Aylmer Aberffraw Swinnerton of

Mr. Swinnerton was born at Hyderabad in India in 1893, the son of Robert William Swinnerton, an Engineer in the Public Works Dept. of the Indian Government.

Mrs. Edythe Seeley,

Mrs. Seeley is a daughter of the late Anne Barnard and hopes to carry on her mother’s research.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Mrs. J. Barnes to

Dr. G.S. Swinnerton to

RESIGNATION

Mr. E. Swinnerton of