

ODFHS Boat Families – Website Updates 2018

Update 89 – 31 July 2018

New Total: 39,040 individuals

New Name: Van Dyken

Main Increases: Pickstock +84, Boden +52, Newall +25, Sandbach +24, Oakes +13

The main increases are all in related families of Cheshire watermen, and include a rare divorce in 1877 between Thomas Whitehead Boden and Annie Grindell, because of his cruelty and adultery. And we have our first Dutch waterman, Paul Van Dyken, whose daughter Martha married Rowland Boden of Northwich in 1890.

We have amalgamated two Burscough branches of Watkinsons, William b1796 and John b1798 as brothers, sons of boatman Robert Watkinson and Ann Sharrock of Rufford.

Boatfamilies is now taking a summer break, so this will be the last update before mid-September.

Update 88 - 10 July 2018

New Total: 38,744 individuals

No New Names

Main Increases: Twigg +30, Parr +15

The Wartime Census, now available on Ancestry, has enabled us to continue adding watermen to several Lancashire families, including a moderate increase in the descendants of George Twigg and Eliza Hayes of Wolverhampton and Runcorn, whose granddaughter Sarah Ellen Twigg married William Ashcroft of Appley Bridge, Wrightington, in 1907. Their daughter Phyllis Ashcroft married Burscough boatman Luke Draper Pye in 1931.

The increase in Parrs is caused mainly by our reclassifying as Parr, rather than Wilson, several descendants of Burscough canal bank labourer John Wilson. He was born in 1801, son of Alice Wilson who married John Parr in 1816, after which most of his children and grandchildren used Parr as their surname.

Update 87 - 4 June 2018

New total: 39,541 Individuals

No New names

Main Increase: Sutton +33

We have finished adding information for Burscough and Tarleton from the 1939 Census, and the only significant increase is in the families of brothers John and James, sons of Tarleton boatman James Sutton (b1831) and Ellen Mayo.

We are relieved to have resolved confusion between two John Barrows, both b1861 Burscough, who married in 1881 two Ellen Halsalls. And we have added more Weedalls of Northwich, for which thanks go again to Judith Preston.

We repeat our request for canal-linked information from researchers who have access to the Wartime census on Ancestry or Findmypast.

Update 86 - May 28 2018

New Total: 38,397 individuals

No New Names

Main increases: Weedall +64; Forshaw +11, Ashcroft +9

The recent addition of the 1939 Census details on Ancestry has helped us to add a generation to many families, and we have started with some of the Ormskirk sections, from New Lane to Moss Nook, and from Stanley Street along Carr Lane to Top Locks, Hoscar, Ring O'Bells and Newburgh. This has meant small additions to most of our main Burscough families, but more significantly has produced a big increase in the number of recorded marriages, which are now more than 10,000.

In the months to come we will continue working our way along the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and eventually try to expand Cheshire and other waterways. We would be grateful for tip-offs about boatmen from researchers who have access to these new records.

Our main increase in this update has come from connecting and developing the Weedall families of Northwich watermen.

Update 85 - May 8 2018

New total: 38,397

New name: Dumbell

Main increases: Royle +79; Stubbs +59; Shingler +49; Pollitt +18; Davenport, Weedall +16; Fox +13; Oakes +11

Our new family, including the watermen brothers David and John Dumbell of Warrington, came to light while expanding the Weedalls of Runcorn, who now go back to Peter, b 1728 Northwich. His grand-daughter Jane married David White of Runcorn, and their son William's widow, Emily Ann (nee Grice) married John Dumbell. John's first wife was Phoebe Pollitt, whose family also increases in this update.

The biggest increases are in the Royle watermen of Frodsham and Over, who link with the Stubbs, Shingler, Fox and other Cheshire families, and thanks go again to Judith Preston for her continued research assistance.

Update 84 - April 2018

No new names

Main increases: Hatton +55; Cheetham, King, Nicholas +21; Burgess +17, Wright +10

We are again indebted to our regular contributor Judith Preston for significant additions to the Hatton and Burgess families of Cheshire watermen, and we have added to the Nicholas family who figured in last month's update.

We have also expanded the family of William King, b1822 Frodsham, whose daughter Fanny married Mersey waterman Frederick Wright.

Thanks go to Brian Davies for details of his family of boatmen from Adlington, and to SusAnn Clift for correcting our birth details for William Webster Langton of Lydiate, who was baptised in 1843 as son of Catherine Webster before she married Edward Langton - we previously had him as son of Edward's brother John Langton and Mary Webster.

Update V83 – 26 March 2018

New total: 37,547 individuals

New name: Moffat 29

Main increases: Atherton +103, Whitby +58, Weedall +27, King +25, Nicholas +21, Lee +14

For the first time since we launched this site in 2010, Forshaw is not our most populous family. Atherton now holds top spot, with a big increase including a new branch headed by Northwich waterman Thomas Atherton and Sarah Gorst. Their daughter-in-law Elizabeth Poole was first married to Richard Baldwin of Rufford whose son Richard, b1840 Lathom, was a canal boatbuilder in Wigan.

Thomas and Sarah's grandson William Atherton, b1833, married a Frodsham waterman's daughter Elizabeth Whitby, whose family links to our other main increases and to our new family headed by Scotsman Benjamin Moffat, a canal carrier's clerk in Ellesmere Port. His son, a waterman/stevedore born in Ireland in 1840, had the wonderfully alliterative name Manius Meredith Moffat.

Update 82 – 2 March 2018

New total: 37,122 individuals

New name: Hackett 24

Main increases: Gosling +97; Hindley +51; Cooper +42; Leach +33; Basnett, Hough +26; Smallwood +24

This month we have made a significant extension of our main tree into the Midlands waterways, thanks to a regular contact, Pamela Simmonds, who has provided a link to Cicely Baldwin, b1837 Newburgh, granddaughter of Lathom boatman John Baldwin and Cicely Disley.

After Cicely Baldwin's father-in-law William Jackson died, his widow Mary, nee Bunn, married in 1840 Jeremiah Gosling, a boatman from Smethwick, near Birmingham. His family provides the largest increase in this update, with links to Coopers, Smallwoods and our new Hackett family.

Thanks also go to Jane Beattie for further help developing the Leach family of Cheshire watermen, who link to the Hindleys, Basnetts and Houghs from Northwich and Runcorn.

Update 81 - 4 February 2018

New total: 36,674 individuals

New Name: Pollitt 40

Main increases: Pye +38, Holden +34, Roughsedge +19, Weedall +11, Gleave +8

Grateful thanks to Jane Beattie for providing details on John Leach, who died suddenly in 1877 while driving his barge on the Bridgewater Canal. Further research led us to a new family, as John's sister Alice Orme Leach married boatman's son Samuel Pollitt, whose sons were also watermen around Runcorn. A long string of increases then followed in families we already had on the site.

Samuel's son Samuel Thomas Pollitt married a canal porter's daughter, Emma Roughsedge, and his sister Phoebe Pollitt married George Holden, from the large family of Warrington-based watermen we knew about. George's widowed grandfather James Holden had married Jane Harrison, whose first husband was Thomas Gleave, another waterman.

Thomas's daughter Jane Gleave married a Liverpool seaman, Charles Lawson, and their son James Henry Lawson married Margaret Weedall, who we previously had as Margaret Weeder, as in their marriage record. Research into this family showed that the spelling varied in early records before settling as Weedall. Jane's uncle John Weedall married Hannah Pye, from the large family of Cheshire boatbuilders descended from Thomas Pye and Mary Chadwick of Leftwich.

Update 80 - Jan 13, 2018

New total: 36,417 individuals

New names: Howcroft 24, Shepley 14

Main Increases: Marsden +26, Gorton +20, Lewis +14, Disley +9, Hulse, Robinson +8

The new names and most main increases link boatmen from Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire - more examples of the interconnections between canal families that caused this website to be launched in 2010.

Job Howcroft of Lymm, Cheshire, had two sons who were also boatmen, and a daughter Letitia who married Luke Marsden of Huddersfield in 1831. Their daughter Hannah Marsden married Enoch Hulse, a waterman and lock-keeper of Over, Cheshire, and their son Edward Marsden's daughter Mary Ann married boatman James Disley of Leigh, near Wigan, in 1886. She died the following year, and James remarried Mary Ellen Robinson, daughter of a Southampton boatman.

Job's son Job was also a waterman, and his daughter Elizabeth Howcroft married in 1870 George Lewis of Runcorn, brother of another boatman, Abraham. Job junior's brother William had a daughter Ann Olive Howcroft who married John Shepley of Sowerby Bridge, Yorkshire, one of six brothers based on the Calder and Hebble Navigation whose father George Shepley was a waterman born in Mirfield in 1788.

Luke Marsden's son Luke was also a boatman, and his daughter Letitia married into the Runcorn and Leigh-based Gorton family of watermen in 1899. Her husband Herbert was grandson of Joseph Gorton who, like his sons and son-in-law Henry Waterworth, plied the Cheshire canals.

We have made a few additions and amendments to the complicated Parr/Wilson family of Burscough and Maghull, descended from John Parr and Alice Wilson, who in the censuses alternated between the two surnames, and in 1911 appear as Wilson-Parr.

Update 79 - Jan 2, 2018

New total: 36,218 individuals

No New Names

Main Increases: Royle +23, Robinson +16, Boden, Pedder +11, Sumner +10

An early update for the New Year introduces several Cheshire watermen descended from James Royle (b1824 Over) and Ann Brooks, who connect with Atherton, Hurst and Hulse families already on our site - thanks go to Stephen Groves for these details.

There are also small increases in two unconnected Robinson families - John b1844 Northwich, and Peter b1806 Scarisbrick - also in the Pedder family of Liverpool boatmen and boatbuilders.