

ODFHS Boat Families – Website Updates 2014

17 December 2014

We have continued to expand Cheshire watermen's families including that of Sir Joseph Verdin, who was knighted in 1896 after donating funds to establish the Verdin Technical School in Northwich. His father Joseph, b1807, was a waterman who founded the salt manufacturing company Joseph Verdin & Sons. The other families added in this update are all related by marriage.

11 November 2014

We have now been able to connect to our main tree almost all the boatmen and canal carriers mentioned in Janet Rigby's book "Life on the Lancaster Canal". Thanks also go to Dennis Halsall for ongoing help with the Lowe and Seddon families, and to Janet Cooke for details of Cheethams and Ashcrofts, all of Burscough.

Our recently-added Cheshire boatfamilies have continued to expand, providing most of the main increases and one new name this month.

3 October 2014

The most unusual new name is Ballentine (or Valentine) Bellarous (various spellings) a mariner apparently born in the Philippines whose boatman son, John Ballentine Bellarous, changed surname to his mother's maiden name Alexander and married Grace Parr, a boatman's daughter of Lathom.

Other new families, like most of the main increases, are related to the Runcorn/Warrington/Wirral boatmen we introduced in August. We have also expanded the Cromptons, Robinsons and Sumners who plied the Lancaster canal.

29 August 2014

After Newburgh boatman James Ashcroft married Mary Bamber in 1859 they moved onto the Cheshire canals, and their children and grandchildren married into local boatfamilies including Bebbington, Carman, Hallsworth, and Povey. These families' links to Banner, Boyer, Broady, Ellison, Handley, Hatton, Summerfield and Wilding boatmen provide the main body of this month's huge increase of 785 people in our main tree.

The largest new family is that of George Houghton of Childwall, whose sons and grandsons worked on barges around Runcorn and Widnes, and whose great grandson's daughter Frances Harrison married boatman Fairhurst Meadows of Lydiate.

We have also included most of the boatmen mentioned in Janet Rigby's informative book "Life on the Lancaster Canal", linked to the Leeds and Liverpool via the Ashcroft and Vickers families, and new names here include Churchhouse, Hampton, Needham and Newby, as well as increases in Hardmans and Robinsons. We have also expanded the Hankin family of Lathom/Newburgh to include James Hankin, a canal lock-keeper born 1826, son of Joseph who was briefly a boatman.

27 June 2014

Boatmen from Warwickshire and Buckinghamshire have been added to our main tree through the marriage in 1872 of Peter Harrison of Burscough and Jane Owen of Wolverhampton. Peter's mother Ann, who married Charles Ashcroft some years after Peter and his brother Henry were born, was daughter of Burscough boatman Thomas Harrison and Margaret nee Woosey. Jane was daughter of Henry Owen of Aylesbury, at least three of whose sons were watermen, like his father Francis. Her sister Hannah Owen married in 1864 a Runcorn boatman, John Cook, and three of their sons worked on the canals.

We have expanded the family of George Scott of Adlington who with two boatmen brothers, sons of George Scott b1787 Cockermouth, married three sisters, Jane, Alice and Ruth Riding of Whittle le Woods. We have also added the families of three Thomas Rainfords, born 1786 Halsall, 1795 Halsall and 1797 Downholland. These canal workers are all connected by marriage to our main tree, but help would be appreciated in connecting them to each other.

The increase in Yates family members involves boatmen brothers Thomas and Hugh of Whittle le Woods and their nephews Thomas, who married Frances Felton in 1859, and Hugh, who married Betsy Whitehead in 1870.

6 June 2014

The new names of Heath and Prestwich belong to boatmen from the Whaley Bridge area on the Peak Forest Canal, along with new branches of the Ellis and Hall families who are connected to our main tree through William Heaton/Eaton Staffordshire. He married Elizabeth Disley, daughter of Lathom boatman Thomas Disley and Ann nee Shaw of Halsall, and it was research into her family by David Howard that prompted these additions.

Increases in the Fazackerley, Forshaw and Spencer families have been caused by merging the 94 people in our second boatfamilies group, Canal2, into the main tree, made possible through a key marriage certificate being provided by Audrey Bradburn.

Big thanks must also go to Frank Doherty of Whittle-le-Woods who has helped develop many branches of the Ashurst, Green, Morris, Prendergast, Smith and Walmsley families. He also introduced another new name, father and son boatmen George and Emmanuel Bateman of Lancaster.

And John Morgan alerted us to the ancestors of Samuel Morgan who married Margaret Martland, daughter of Lathom boatman James Martland and Jane nee Baybutt. His father was a sailmaker and his mother, Sarah Cherry Holt, was from a Liverpool family of boatmen and mariners.

22 April 2014

One of our main additions is the family of Mary Alice Glover of Astley who married Newburgh boatman Thomas Draper (son of Henry Draper and Elizabeth Lamb) in 1885. Her brother Charles and father Robert of Wigan were boatmen, as were her half-brothers George and Edward Glover. Edward's wife Mary Robinson had a son Robert who married Lizzie Marshall of Runcorn, whose father and brothers were also boatmen.

Several of the other increases stem from the family of Joseph Abel, an Oxford boatman whose sons Richard and Joseph plied the Cheshire canals and whose daughters married into this month's two new boat families. Sarah Jane Abel married John Beckett, whose father George and uncle William were also Cheshire boatmen, and her daughter Ada Maria Beckett married Matthias Burton, a waterman's son from Runcorn. Sarah Jane's sister Amelia Abel married Birmingham waterman and boatbuilder William Ward-Burton whose stepfather Henry Burton was also a Midlands boatman.

The younger Joseph Abel married a Leigh boatman's daughter Elizabeth Lowe, whose brothers James and Thomas were also boatmen. James Lowe married Rachel Pendlebury of Ince, whose sister Delilah was only 14 when she married another Cheshire boatman John Lowe, from a different Lowe family.

Thanks go to David Howard for help with the Heaton's (aka Eaton) and Johnsons of Astley. We have also expanded the Carringtons of Lathom who we have been able to link to our main Marsden family through the marriage of Alice Carrington in 1832 to boatman William Marsden b 1807 Shevington. This led to the first Professor appearing on our site as their daughter Hannah, a schoolmistress, married Thomas Clayton of Saddleworth, a Professor of Music and savings bank actuary.

28 March 2014

An unusually large update this month is due mainly to information passed on by Mike Clarke, President of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society, from the records of Canal Transport Ltd at the Waterways Archive in Ellesmere Port. Thanks go to him for the continuing help he is providing to our site.

The biggest increase includes the family of John, William and James Martland of Lathom, sons of Joshua and Jane, nee Ashcroft. And we have added the families of boatman/mariner William Taylor and his brother-in-law Robert Johnson of Tarleton.

Another addition is the family of Richard Prescott of Haskayne. He married boatman's daughter Elizabeth Ann Collins of Ince (who we previously had married, wrongly, to a Richard Spencer), and their son Richard b1888 married Jane Gibbons of Burscough (our main Gibbons family).

We have consolidated our main Bamber family, connecting Edward b1843 Burscough as the illegitimate son of Elizabeth Bamber and John Gibbons, and adding their daughter-in-law Elizabeth Alice Mawson's family as one of our new names. Her daughter Elizabeth Ellen Bamber married boatman Levi Bannister of Whittle-le-Woods.

The second new name is Thomas Joseph Prendergast, who married boatman's daughter Margaret Ellen Morris of Whittle-le-Woods, and another new family is that of George Scott, also of Whittle-le-Woods, who married Rufford boatman's daughter Jane Abram of Wigan.

Finally, thanks also go to Barbara Palmer for help with the complicated family of Lathom boatman William Thompson, the illegitimate son of Hannah Thompson and Henry Eaves, whose family used both his parents' surnames at different times.

24 February 2014

We have expanded and amalgamated several Iddon families of boatmen from Tarleton, mainly in the coastal trade, lifting this surname to fifth in our list. The connected Bannister, Spencer and Sumner families also show increases.

New families include those of boatmen Thomas Leadbetter of North Meols and James Lake of Leeds.

And we have tied together various Halsall family branches under boatman William Halsall, b1799, who married Ann Jones in 1903, thanks to help from Dennis Halsall of Montreal who has researched the early Roman Catholic records for Scarisbrick.

8 February 2014

Our new tree, Canal Family 5, is built around boatmen John and Isaac Fairclough of Chorley, their son Paul and his partner Hannah Ainscough, a boatman's daughter from Wigan. She later married another boatman, Lot Crook from Hoghton, who may be connected to the Miller Crook boatbuilders in our main tree, though no connection has yet been found. Hannah's brother Thomas Ainscough married a daughter of Mersey boatman Hambleton Mason whose family lived in Widnes and Birkenhead.

17 January 2014

Our first update of 2014 adds many more Yorkshire boatmen, the largest increase being in the family of David Wright, a waterman's son from Clifton, near Halifax, whose granddaughter Frances married into the Patchett family of Shipley (connected to the Lancashire family of John Thomas Gibbons, b 1900 Lathom). David's sons Henry and Thomas Wright were Leeds boatmen, and his niece Susannah Watson married into the family of Brian Townsley of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal Society, who has provided much recent help. The new Daker, Hawksworth and Mountain families are also connected to his tree (the spelling of Daker gradually changed to Dacre in later censuses).

We are grateful to Jenny Rogers in Canada who has helped develop and amend the Hunters of Hoole and Rufford, also the complicated life of Ann Sutton, born 1810 Rufford, who had children with widowed boatman Richard Forshaw before marrying William Baldwin of Lathom in 1863.

We have extended the family of Richard Sumner of Tarleton, whose daughters Jane and Ann married boatmen brothers John and Henry Latham in the 1820/30s. And we have corrected the surname of Ann Baldwin's husband Edward Scandle, clearly given as such in their 1889 marriage record, to Kendall. The 1897 birth certificate of their son Charles William gives parents' names as Edward Kendall and Ann nee Baldwin. (This must have been a mishearing. Edward was the boatman son of Charles Kendall of Shipley, and Ann's parents were Wigan boatman William Baldwin and Ellen Lyon Malley.)