



WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

Can you help solve these Genealogical Quests,
which are all centred around Houghton-le-Spring?

If so, get in touch via www.houghtonlespring.org.uk

LABURNUM HOUSE

Dear Houghton Heritage,
After looking through your website, I wondered if you could please offer any information or point me in the right direction in locating information regarding Laburnum House Yard, Houghton Le Spring. My grandfather recently passed away and I am now trying to research his childhood. So far I have discovered that he was born in Laburnum House Yard in 1926 then adopted in 1933. Birth parents Mr Joseph Watson (miner), Mrs Elizabeth Watson (died in childbirth). I am trying to find out what Laburnum House Yard was and the involvement they had with my grandfather, to then hopefully fill in the gap up to the age of seven when he was adopted. I would be most grateful of any information you may have. Many Thanks.

Julie Whyatt

Dear Julie, Thank you for your email regarding Laburnum House, Nesham Place, Houghton-le-Spring. You can see this house on Google Maps. Note the Laburnum tree growing in the front garden! The Nesham Place house-by-house article is now on the Houghton Heritage website. I do hope it proves useful. Kind regards.

Paul Lanagan

COAL RAILWAY

Dear Houghton Heritage,
Just wondered if any of your DVDs or books contain any photographs of the Rainton to Seaham coal railway particularly the section from Rainton to Copt Hill? Or, do you know where I could find out about the railway line and particularly some photographs? I was brought up in Bradley Avenue just a few houses away from Ken Richardson. Back in the 1960s to the rear of Bradley Ave in Staffords Farm fields was a raised bank which was the remains of the Londonderry railway line which ran from Rainton to Copt Hill and then to Seaham. Thanks,

Derek Sharp

GEORGE OSWALD

Re: The burial list, St Michael and All Angels Church, I am interested to know more about George Oswald who died 1836, Jane Oswald nee Fell, his wife, died 1842, children William, George, Elizabeth, John and any related earlier Oswalds. Father may be John Oswald born 1707. Your Thomas Oswald may also be related. I look forward to your advice.

*Janet Caffin
nee Oswald
Australia*

CELLAR HILL

Hi, I have joined this group today and wondered if anyone had any

information on the building at Cellar Hill which I believe was a school at one time? My daughter recently rented the "Stables" on the same development. I am more interested in the history of the building in the 19th century. As I said earlier my daughter rented the Stables for 6 months and in that time both she and her partner and guests experienced some very strange happenings.

Les Golding

ROBERT LONSDALE ROBSON

Dear Mr Lanagan, Born and raised in Sunderland, I lived in Fencehouses for the first 4 years of my married life until common sense (financial necessity really!) forced me southwards, to live nearer my then work in Middlesbrough. I was therefore more than a little pleased when starting research into my family history, to discover that my great-great-grandfather, Robert Lonsdale Robson, was Houghton born and raised whilst his wife Mary (nee Thornton) was from Newbottle. I have fairly solidly tracked Robert from his birth and upbringing, through his subsequent moves around County Durham with his own family, to his final death, aged 80, in the Houghton Poor Law Institution Hospital whilst resident in New Herrington. It was through my Google search

for the Poor Law Hospital that I discovered your excellent website. My current request is in the hope that your burial record can add even more to the information I already have on him. However, my great-great-grandmother's precise origin is proving elusive to pin down. I would be delighted to be put in contact with anyone also researching the various Robsons and Thorntons around Houghton (even if they are not apparently my particular branches of the families) so that we can compare notes and confirm or correct traces as appropriate, hopefully to our mutual benefit. With thanks and regards.

*Bill Woodward
Middlesbrough*

MICHAEL DOYLE

Re: The plaques for Chairmen of Houghton Urban District Council in the Old Rectory. I wonder whether the ??? for 1953 – 1954 could have been Alderman Michael Doyle (he of the Dubmire clock and the nativity wood carving at Durham Cathedral). I would have thought that he had precedence over Donald Cockburn, English teacher at the Grammar School and later head of Spennymoor Grammar – you had to be a Labour Party member to get that sort of promotion). Regards

*Barry Jones
Hampshire*



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SOLDIER SOLDIER

Looking for information on the soldiers stationed in Houghton during WWII. As one of them was my father from Oldham. He met my mother Ivy Graham. Not sure how long he was stationed here and for what reason. Don't know the regiment either.

Lesley Clough

FREDERICK CLARK

Having spent the last 12 months researching the CLARK family, Grandad Clark just seemed to have vanished off the radar. However after picking the brains of the few relatives that are alive, we managed to put together enough information with the "ancestry sites". The outstanding missing pieces were: what year did he die? where did he die? where was his grave? With the help of the Houghton Heritage website we managed to put everything together, and hopefully can put a closure on it. We are planning to visit Hillside Cemetery. Will his grave be marked or just a plot no? Thanking you in anticipation, Sincerely,

*Jacqueline Pinkney
Scarborough*

A CENTURION

Hi Paul, I wonder if you could help me? I have been searching your records for the birth of Howard Nicholson. He said he was born in H-L-S. His date of birth is 1st Feb 1912. As you can see he will be 100

v

years old next Wednesday! His mother was Sarah Nicholson nee Harrison (I'm pretty sure she is the daughter of Elizabeth Harrison nee Skipsey) Dr Nicholson is related somewhere along the line to Joseph Skipsey. His father was Frederick Nicholson who died in WW1 in 1916. I have ordered your book via Amazon as I thought it would be a lovely birthday present. It's just gone midnight and I've just remembered that he may have the original birth certificate - I will check later when I see him. Now I've started I am intrigued by his family tree and will attempt to find out more and show him. He is totally compos mentis, fit and healthy. Must be the upbringing! Look forward to seeing the book. Kind regards.

Kathryn Muir

PIT SHAFT

Anyone know anything about pit shaft right behind Beehive Pub. I remember a brick cap there in the 1960-1970s. It was same as the one at Philly over road from the bus depot.

*Paul Sykes
Fencehouses*

SCHOOL TIME

Hello. I am planning on teaching my class of Year 3 children about the land use of Penshaw during World War Two to link in with our Cross-curriculum topic. I

was wondering if you are able to provide me with information of any sort.

Thank you very much,

*M. Dickinson
Penshaw*

THE WILD BOAR

Dear Paul, I enjoyed looking through the Houghton - le - Spring Heritage website. I lived in Fence Houses and knew Houghton quite well, and I am now living in the USA so I suppose I got a touch of nostalgia there. Could you tell me, though, the origin of that big hog or pig on your masthead. Thank you!

*Jamie Tubmen
Virginia, USA*

THE WHEATLEYS

What a fascinating site. Just been having a browse around the site and came across a PDF on my maternal relatives - the Wheatleys! My grandmother was Nora Wheatley (born January 1920) and her sister was Eva... They was always telling me about the factory and the shed load of relatives that I had! I'll show my mother and her sister the PDF and see what more they can tell me! I'll find out from my mother tonight about which Wheatley they came from. I'm based in Sunderland as that is where my Grandmother moved to when she married. I've been told I have the "Wheatley look". I know that I do look similar to my

maternal great grandfather. Again, any info I do glean I shall pass on to you. Thanks.

Adam Reavley

C OF E ALL ANGELS

When did Houghton Parish Church become known as St Michael & All Angels? I was baptised there in 1938 and have an old Church magazine which states just 'St Michaels'. Was the '& All Angels' added on to distinguish it from the Catholic Church?

*Fred Inch
Houghton-le-Spring*

I have checked my copies of the Church magazine from 1884 and it is noted throughout as 'Houghton Parish Church'. In the old directories, notably one from 1827, it is stated that the Church is dedicated to 'St Michael'. The Catholic Church was built in 1837. It will be interesting to discover when the All Angels was added on!

Paul Lanagan

CHURCH MAGAZINE

My name is Richard Chadwick and I have a 1944 St Michael's All Angels magazine in good reading order, would you be interested?

Richard Chadwick

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Keep reading
for more Family
Tree Quests.



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PUBLICANS

Hi, I have just been reading your excellent website re my family history, in particular the pub lists. I am currently researching the name 'Brownless' as part of my ancestry in the Co. Durham area & found one of the daughters of my 3x Great Grandparents (George & Mary Brownless), a Margaret Brownless married a John Fletcher. They had a daughter named Mary who married Thomas Rigby. In the 1891 census Margaret Fletcher (nee Brownless) is widowed & living with her married daughter at the Lambton Arms, Newbottle Street, Houghton-le-Spring. Her son-in-law, Thomas Rigby, is listed as head of household & Licensed Victualler of the Lambton Arms. I noticed that Thomas Rigby's name is not listed in the innkeepers names & wondered if you would be interested to know this for your records. Also, by the 1901 census Mary Rigby is widowed & she is listed as Head of household & Innkeeper of the Red Lion Inn, Church Street, Houghton-le-Spring. The next house on the census is Rectory Lodge & then Houghton Rectory, then Dairy Lane & 'Clergy House' [in 1948 made the Rectory until 2005, now is Dairy Lane Dental Practice]. As Mary's name was also not on your lists, I thought this little snippet might be of interest to you. I shall continue reading

your excellent site & many thanks for all the hard work that must have gone into it. It must be of much interest both to locals & those further afield (such as myself) researching family history etc. Regards,

*Linda Rowley
Redcar*

GEORGE STEPHENSON THE SMITHY

Any information concerning Elizabeth and Helen Matthews, thought to be buried at Hillside Cemetery, plus: George Stephenson, the blacksmith, with a smithy next to the bus depot in the centre of Houghton, would be appreciated, as he was my great uncle.

*Douglas Matthews
Aberdeen*

MEMORIES OF SUNDERLAND STREET

Re: The memories of Sunderland Street in the last issue (Issue 03). The butchers shop was owned by Harry Harland. The cobblers shop was Ron Waites and Jack Stewart. The Carmichael jewellers was owned by a Mr & Mrs Williams.

*Richard Rose
Houghton-le-Spring*

MEMORIES OF HOME & MORE PUBLICANS

I just love this site. I grew up in Houghton and can trace my family in the area back to the 1700's. We lived in 3 Shakespeare Street from 1947 to 1957. My father worked at Herrington Pit. In 1957 he became landlord of The Londonderry Arms in Chilton Moor and we lived above the pub. My grandparents Luke and Sarah Robson (nee. Fenton) were managers of the Dubmire Club from 1918 to 1922. Luke died in the Pensions War Hospital after WWI, from injuries he had received, and his name is on the Cenotaph in Houghton. My sister and I went to St Michael's RC School in the 1950's - Rita and Maureen Robson. We both live in the south now, but Houghton will always be 'home'.

*Maureen Brown
London*

THE LINDENS, DAIRY LANE

Dear Paul, I am doing some research for a friend's family tree. Can you tell me whether Lyndhurst, in Houghton Le Spring was a residential or family home? I think the street name is Dairy or Daisy Street. The period I am talking about is 1951. Any help you can give me would be most welcome, thanks.

Joan Elliott

MR JAMES JAMES & FAMILY

Hello Paul, I am trying to trace living descendants of James James (my great great uncle) who was born in Somerset 1851 & his sons who lived in Houghton Le Spring & died in that area, Oliver James born 1877 & died 1961, Joseph C James born 1887 & died 1948 plus possibly William James born 1880 & died 1971. I was wondering if you could point me in the right direction - I live near Carlisle. Many thanks.

*Doug James
Near Carlisle*

THOMAS WILLIAM USHERWOOD ROBINSON

Anyone out there in HLS related to Thomas William Usherwood Robinson of the brewery? I am his GG grand daughter. Have a dead end on info about his father and mother George & Elizabeth. I am the Great Granddaughter from his daughter Elfrida who was from his second marriage to Isabella Widowfield.

*Dina Salter
Australia*

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If you can help, please get in touch via the HH website.



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MINING SPORTS

Hi Paul, My name is Kimberley Dobson, I'm currently compiling evidence for a dissertation on the sports which took place at Houghton Feast between 1890 and 1900 as part of a wider study on mining sports and leisure. I noticed that you have some excellent picture of pamphlets and old photographs which would be excellent as primary source materials and I'm just wondering where I can access these materials? I have already got a couple of your books which are really helpful, but if you can offer me any advice or guidance it would be much appreciated, Best,

*Kim Dobson
Houghton-le-Spring*

THE COOKS

Yesterday I logged on to your site and came up with Heritage photos. I was delighted. On reading the preview I see that you are a local historian, so perhaps you can help me. I have past links with Houghton-le-Spring on both my paternal and maternal sides of the family. I have very

little factual information regarding Michael Cook, my Great-Great-Grandfather. Using his marriage of 1820, I estimate he was born about 1796, but not where. Michael Cook married Esther Sewell at St Margaret's Church, Durham, 1820. They had three sons, the youngest, Michael Cook, my Great-Grandfather, was born November 21st 1829 at West Herrington.

The next piece of evidence is provided by Pigot's Directory 1829 - 1830. Michael Cook is mentioned 'Baker & Flour Dealer, Houghton'. I next find Michael Cook and family in the 1841 Census living at South Hetton. This is the last time I can verify his existence. In 1851 Esther Cook is recorded as 'Widow'. I believe that Michael Cook was a victim of the Cholera Outbreak that swept the Durham area around 1849 or thereabouts. If he was still living in the area I have no idea whether he would have been buried locally, if so, where? Or was it at St Michael's, Houghton? His wife Esther Cook also died of Cholera in September 1854. She may have been amongst the earliest burials at Houghton Hillside Cemetery. If anyone can offer any help I would be most grateful. Also if there are any living descendants of Thomas Robinson, born 1799, died 1829. Thomas was married to Jane Swinburn, born Fatfield.

So you can see that my family has many links with Houghton and the surrounding area.

*Judith Cook
Portsmouth*

ALICE DIMAMBRO

Just had a browse through your new magazine and had to say well done, great job and look forward to forthcoming publications. Very interesting to see the name A. Dimambro - ice cream sellers of the village. A coincidence I think, but I thought you might like to know that my Gt. Grandmother was a former Stage Artiste/Singer & Concert Pianist. Her Stage Name was Alice Dimambro. As a family we have no idea why she picked this name - perhaps she knew the Dimambro's? Her signature tune was "The Roses of Picardy" a love song of WW1, written by Fred E. Weatherley/music by Haydn Wood, pub.1916. I'm searching for some of my ancestors who lived at "Scots Pasture" in the Houghton Le Spring area. Does anyone know of this area and if so can you give me a location of it please? Best regards and keep up all your great work.

*Suzanne Tyson-
Butterworth*

HEATH HOUSE

On a death certificate from 1949 place of death is shown as Heath House,

Houghton-le-Spring and place of residence as Broadway House, Chester-le-Street. I believe I located Broadway House some time ago on North Road just off the roundabout at A693. Is this correct? And can anyone tell me if Heath House was or is a hospital? Thanks,

*Pamela Huddleston
Honolulu, Hawaii*

MARKET PLACE

I am looking for pictures that contain (32 The Market Place Houghton-le-Spring) I was born there in 1952 and lived in Houghton until 1966 in the last few years I have been looking for pictures and written material to show my gran-children. I can remember getting in the way of the showmen setting up for Houghton feast and getting free rides before they opened to the public.

Ken Walker

CANDY ROCK

My dad says they used to get mis-shaped rock lollies at Harvians, which was Harvy and Ian Wheatley's sweet factory in Pottery Yard, behind Jaconelli's sweet shop.

Jackie Pittilla

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If you can help, please get in touch!



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METHODISM IN HOUGHTON

Dear Mr Lanagan, my Ritchey family originated in County Durham and Northumberland with an eventual concentration in Houghton le Spring; my mother and Ruth Scott Ritchey were cousins and I referred to Ruth as my great aunt. I just read your new addition to the website about the time line of Methodism in Houghton with great interest as my g. g. grandfather John Ritchey was a local Primitive Methodist preacher in Houghton. I was particularly interested in the picture of "the young men of Mautland St Methodist Church 1896" showing the old church with the original doorway. Are there any names attached to the picture, as my hope would be that one of my Ritchey men might be there? Are there any records that might be available that reference g. g. grandfather John? I did find one citation of John's work in a book called 'Northern Primitive Methodism' by W. M. Patterson in which he lists John among some others with substantial respect "...while speaking of noble men...the good work done by John Ritchie should not be forgotten". How wonderful that was!! Thank you ahead for considering my request. Sincerely,

*Kathleen Haak
U.S.A*

STOCKSFIELD TCE

Hi Paul, Margaret phoned me and we had such a long chat about our old home at Stocksfield Terrace! She still lives in Houghton. I did not know either her or her family when I lived there but we still exchanged lots of tales of the area.

Great bit of feedback from the site. Thank you.

*Betty Stevens
Derby*

HETTON COLLIERY DISASTER

Dear sir/madam, I was wondering if you could help me. Hetton School is doing a project to celebrate their centenary year and I was wondering if you knew of any names of Hetton pupils who were involved in the accident. We would really appreciate if you could e-mail me back if you find out any information. Hope to hear from you soon. Yours sincerely,

*Chloe Mann
Hetton-le-Hole*

SUTTON FAMILY

I'm looking for information on the following SUTTONs, who may have been from the Houghton-le-Spring area: Robert SUTTON, died 1841?, born 1790-1796; Mary (Robinson?) SUTTON, born about 1806; Robert SUTTON born 1827, Many thanks.

*Lucia Menendez
London*

THE SHEARERS

My Grandfather John Shearer (b. 1893) was living at 13 William Street, Newtown, Houghton-le-Spring, according to the 1911 census. His brother Robert was living with him - he was killed during WWI and is listed the one on the Cenotaph along with his brother. I am sure that John Shearer married, around the time of the First World War, to someone named Jane. I was told that he left her to go to war shortly after and that she was pregnant. There is another Shearer mentioned on the WWI memorial - SHEARER B - and I would like to know if he was related at all. He is not on the list inside the Church - any reason for this? Finally, my research has noted that three Shearers were inmates at the Workhouse. Edmund, Joseph and William James. What kind of circumstances would force them to be interned in such a place? Looking forward to hearing from you.

*Mal Shearer
Standish, Wigan*

because the trees are covering that area. I took a picture of my friend whilst we were further in the cemetery and I noticed on the picture in the background that it looks like there is a person standing with their back towards us but with a light purple hood up! We were alone! We have been to that cemetery loads of times even when it is dark and we have seen things too - it's pretty scary! We are very interested in the supernatural do you know of any good ghost hunts to the public?

Demi Pattinson

WITH RESPECT

I have spent hundreds of hours alone at Houghton Hillside Cemetery and have even stayed overnight with the Scouts for a wildlife survey - but any visits to the Cemetery should be with respect and mindful that the site is a consecrated burial ground. Any activities not consistent with this are not to be encouraged.

Paul Lanagan



**These
Family Tree Quests
and more can be
found in the
HOUGHTONIAN
MAGAZINE.**

HAUNTED HILLSIDE CEMETERY?

Hello, My friend and I go up to the Hillside Cemetery all the time and we do agree that it is a peaceful place when you're out in the open part of it. We have noticed how that changes when you go further in but I don't know if that's just



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NORAH SMITH

I have been trying for a long time and have spent too much money on Friends United without any help; I am trying to find where all birth certificates go. I've asked Father Gorman at the Church but he says the Church doesn't keep them any more. My mother was Norah Smith and my dad was Jimmy Smith of 33 School Road, East Rainton. There were seven of us. We all went to St Michael's RC School. Most of the family has died and I am 80 on the 29th of June, so not much time left! I have heard that my mother's father was from Newcastle, Tipperary, Ireland. I wish I could find my mother's birth certificate; she was born 1902, possibly Gateshead. Her father was Tommy Gallagher. Thank you.

*Ann Swain
Darlington*

WRONG COUNTY?

I have Thomas, son of Joseph and Annie (Makepeace) Little died in CAN. Notes say they were from Northumberland. Can you fill me in on the families I see in your cemetery records?

John & Denise Allis

SOUTH BACK LANE

Hi, I hope you can help me. My Great, great grandfather was born in Newbottle in 1886. The family name is Mosley and in the 1891 Census they are shown as living in South Back Lane (mother Pheobe Mosley), Newbottle. If you have any information on my family or perhaps a photo of South Back Lane it would be really appreciated. Kind regards

John Mosley

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 A bumper selection of Family Tree Quests can be found inside the HOUGHTONIAN MAGAZINE online at: www.houghtonlespring.org.uk

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AT A JUNCTION

Hello, Not sure of you can help me. I'm busy building Family Trees etc and one branch of my family says they are from "Junction Row, Newbottle" - I've tried to find this on the map using Google Maps but have drawn a blank - I'm assuming that this 'Row' no longer exists. Can you shed any light on this for me - I'm looking for any old pictures which might show this particular area. Sincere thanks.

*Rob Leach
Northamptonshire*

TOON & COOPER

I'm looking for copies of photos of my great grandmother, Hannah Toon (nee Surtees) or any photos or documents relating to her family. Hannah was born on 17 July 1869 in South Hylton to Joseph Surtees and Hannah Blackett. She married Edward Toon, a locomotive stoker, at Peshaw Parish Church on 7 September 1890. They lived in the Houghton area - Shiney Row and West Herrington. She lived at 8 George Street East, New Herrington from about 1895 until her death on 13 October 1922. Any information will be gratefully received. I'm also trying to get a photo of my grandfather August William Cooper's grave. He's most likely buried in Houghton General Cemetery (after WW1 he was the cemetery superintendent there). He would have been buried in the first week of March, 1980. I'd love to get a photo of the grave marker, but any help, even if it's just to confirm that he is buried there, would be greatly appreciated.

*Ian Brett Cooper
Maryland, U.S.A*

MARGARET MAWSON

I am looking for family info concerning Margaret Mawson, my great-grandmother, who was born in Houghton-le-Spring in 1828. She married William Husband, a tin plate worker from Middleton in Teesdale in 1851. They went on to live in Richmond, Yorkshire, where she had 8 children. She died in 1907. Yours sincerely,

Flora Borgese

THE NAG'S HEAD

Hi Paul, I have recently come across the Banns of my 5xGtGrandparent marriage in 1762. George Addamson (Adamson) of Nags Head P of Houghton le Spring. Isabella Sidgwick of Low Pitt Houses in this P The record then continues: "I found out afterwards that ye parties were both servants at Naggs Head in ye P of Houghton" Can you tell me anything about the Naggs Head? Isabella Adamson died in Torrish Lane 21/8/1802. I would expect it to have been demolished and replaced but does it, by any chance, still exist? Thanks!


*Judith in
Damp Gloucestershire*



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 IF YOU CAN
HELP WITH ANY OF
THESE QUESTS
PLEASE CONTACT
PAUL LANAGAN VIA
THE HH WEBSITE.

COLLING & THWAITES

I am interested in: Jane Thwaites died 1838; Isabella Colling died 1859; Matthew Colling died 1858; Matthew Colling died 1854; John Colling born 1850 died 1866; William Colling born 1808 died 1880; William Colling born 1818 died 1880; Mary Colling (Wilson) born 1815 died 1893; Mary Colling born 1819 died 1884; Peter Colling born 1804 died 1888; Jane Hannah Thwaites died 1860; Emma Thwaites died 1861; Catherine Atkinson Thwaites born 1862 died 1867; Joseph Thwaites born 1815 died 1897; Charles Thwaites born 1874 died 1875; Jane Thwaites born 1833 died 1875; and Joseph Thwaites born 1850.

*Miss Kirstie Franklin
Lincolnshire*

BONE & RICHARDSON

I am interested in: Andrew Bone died 25/05/1844 aged 28 years; Elizabeth Bone nee Richardson died in Houghton-le-Spring on 24/06/1848 aged 30 years; Thomas Richardson father of Elizabeth; John Bone a tailor who lived in Newbottle Lane in 1861. He was born on 12/09/1813 and died on 22/01/1892.

*Mrs Valerie Morgan
Leigh-on-Sea*

THE PICKERINGS

I am researching the Pickering family, most of whom, as far back as I have gone, are from Chester-le-Street in Durham. I don't know how far Chester-le-Street is from Houghton-on-Spring, or if the names are relevant. I have: three William Pickerings, one born about 1772, wife Ann (Humble) born 1776 - she could also be one of the Ann Pickerings - another William, born in 1805, married to Elizabeth (Dixon, or Dickson) - she could also be one of the Elizabeth Pickerings and another William, born in 1868 (but I don't think he's from my direct line). I believe the men were masons (I suppose that means builders?).

*Shirley Bulley
Australia*

CARR THE STONEMASONS

All sides of my family come from Durham - Houghton, Ryhope, Silksworth, Pitlington - so we are up there often, looking in the churchyards for THOMPSON, GALLOWAY, CURRY and now I'm doing my Grandmother, Mary CARR from the Houghton area. My particular interest in her family is the fact that they were stonemasons in Houghton. I would imagine stonemasons would be quite well known. I was wondering if you think that they might have made some of the gravestones in the old cemeteries? My research so far: Mary Carr (1886) married Robert Thompson (1884) of Ryhope. Her parents were: John & Elizabeth Carr (both 1841). He was a coal miner. Her grandparents were: William (1813 - 1886) and Mary Carr (1813). He was a stonemason. Her great-Grandparents were: Anthony (1791) and Mary Carr (1796). Again, he was a stonemason.

*Judy Galloway
East Yorkshire*

THE WHITES OF HOUGHTON-LE- SPRING

I am interested in: Jane White born 1869; Elizabeth White born 1819; and Elizabeth White born 1849.

Mrs S. White

HOUGHTON - LE - SPRING WORKHOUSE

My name is Sally Brooman and I am currently looking into my paternal grandmother's family - her name was Esther Isobel Pattinson Calvert. She was born in 1913 on Dec 2nd, her mother is listed as Sarah Ellen Calvert and father unknown. On her birth certificate she was born at 8 William Street, Houghton. Sarah Ellen Calvert is listed on the birth certificate as a domestic/servant general and the birth was registered by R Harrison, occupier, who from the 1911 census I can see was master of the workhouse, 8 William Street. Are there any records pertaining to Sarah Ellen Calvert or her daughter Esther at the workhouse? Did Robert Harrison live there or have another residence where Sarah may have worked? Was the workhouse also a hospital? Also I am interested in the names Robert Smith and Elizabeth Smith who are listed as being inmates or staff at the workhouse. Sarah Ellen went to live with a Robert Smith, her uncle, in 1891 (in Houghton) and his wife was called Elizabeth. I have thoroughly enjoyed finding out about Houghton-le-spring, as my father did not grow up there and I have never been. I am hoping you will be able to answer some of my questions. Thank you in advance

Sally Brooman

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Any information about Dr Ralph Robert Anderson, of Market Place, Houghton-le-Spring, circa 1851 and 1855, plus his wife Jane Ann Anderson, nee Bell.

Michael Shovlin

Trawling your website for information about the Andersons, I came across the enquiry (above). I don't of course know when the enquiry was made, and it may be out of date, but I have information about Dr Anderson in my family tree, and his family, if the enquirer is interested. I am happy for him to be put directly in touch with me.

Revd Wendy Aird

LAMBTONS & ELLWOOD

Found you on the Net and somebody mentioned your name while I was in Houghton. Information required on the following names: William Lambton born 1837; Joseph Lambton; John Ellwood born 1815; Isabella Ellwood born 1850; and Hannah Ellwood born 1826.

*Wendy Haylock
Australia*

WILLIAM HOLMES OF NEWBOTTLE

Hello Paul, I am trying to trace from family tree, which is a little difficult from the other side of the world. I have though managed to trace I think my ancestors back to Houghton Le Spring. My 4th great grandfather William Holmes born in 1755 in Houghton Le Spring and was married to Elizabeth Robson born 1759 also from Houghton Le Spring. The family seemed to live also around Newbottle and Newcastle upon Tyne. My great great grandfather John Holmes came to Australia in 1850 along with 2 of his brothers and their wives, then onto New Zealand in 1854. I am writing to see if you have any information of the above family. I would appreciate what ever information you have. Many thanks.

*Bronwen Inness
New Zealand*

JOHN J. HENDERSON

Hi, I'm searching for my grandfather's brother, John James Henderson, born February 9th 1883 in Houghton-le-Spring. I would like to discover his baptism records and if he possibly died in the same place. I think his wife's name is Euphemia Marshall McDonald and I think his mother's name was Christina McLean. Any info would be helpful. Thanks,

*Lorraine Starnes
British Columbia Canada*



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SHORTS FROM HOUGHTON-LE- SPRING

Any information on the following individuals greatly appreciated:

Juliana SHORT b.1781
Jacob SHORT b.1755
Jacob SHORT b.1775
Mars SHORT nee
RICHARDSON b. abt. 1756
Jane SHORT b. abt. 1813
William SHORT b.1809

J.Robinson

JOSEPH HOWE'S FATHER MURDERED?

I am trying to find the record of my great-great-great-grandfather. I know that his son, Joseph Howe, was born in Houghton Le Spring in March of 1844. We have been unable to find any record of his parents. Family legend says that Joseph's father may have been murdered, but the case was never solved. If you could be of service, it would be greatly appreciated!

*Becky Rosenhan
Saratoga Springs,
Utah, USA*

THE BANKS FAMILY

Any information on Thomas BANKS or other BANKS who may have been buried in Houghton-le-Spring.

*P.Banks
Northumberland*

JOSEPH CHIVERS ROBBINS

I was wondering if you have any details of an accident that happened in the mines, which involved a Joseph Chivers Robbins of 1 Dickens Street, Houghton le Spring? It states on his death certificate that he was hit by falling stone on 23rd May 1924; Joseph was an overman, he died 19th Feb 1934, his death apparently accelerated by the accident all those years earlier. Any info most welcome.

Margaret Robbins

SUNNISIDE FOOTBALL TEAM

Hi, We are looking for a photograph from Houghton of the Sunnyside football team, but I'm not sure of the year; I have once saw a old photograph in the old Houghton library which was based in Mautland Square it was a local photographer who was doing the show. At the time I was only small (age 14) and now my Uncle and I are trying to find all photographs were possible of family members. Your website has been a great benefit to us and would be grateful if you are aware of any such photographs. Regards,

*Diane Hopkinson &
Robert Davison*

JACQUES HUBERT NICLOUX

Any information on Jacques Hubert NICLOUX would be much appreciated. In 1827, Jacques was an ironmonger and toy warehouse owner on Sunderland Street, Houghton-le-Spring.

R.I. Jackson

FIT AS A BUTCHER'S DOG

During the late 1800s/ early 1900s my great grandfather Jacob Robert Gibson owned a butcher's shop at no. 22 Sunderland Street, his brother Frederick was a tailor at no. 21 and brother-in-law Thomas Harland was another butcher at no.38. Apparently no 22 became a pub some time after my great grandmother died in 1937. If anyone has any information, reminiscences or even photos I would love to hear from them.

*Allison Wright
Ashbourne*

MOSES & MEGGISON

I am interested in the following names: Solomon Moses; Ralph Meggeson Snr; Ralph Meggeson Jnr; Isaac Moses; Thomas Moses; George Moses; John Moses; James Moses; and Lively Moses. Thank you.

Christine Moses

THE WORKHOUSE

I wonder if you can help me please. My mother always said her father died in the 'workhouse hospital'. He died on the 21st September 1934 and his death certificate says 'Heath House, Houghton le Spring UD'. Was Heath House a workhouse at the time? I can't find his name - JAMES GOUNDRY - listed on the website. Any information you can give would be very much appreciated. It's ironic that his father died in the Union-Workhouse at Bishop Auckland. It's possible that my grandfather was not an actual 'inmate' because his death certificate did have an address of 7 Sparks Cottages, Chester Le Street. I think he died of Huntington's Disease, although it was obviously not shown as such back then. This would have needed hospitalisation towards the end. There was an inquest held on the 24 September 1924 and his early death (44) was directly attributed to his war service (shell shock). I would like to trace who lived at 7 Sparks Cottages because I believe they were some kind of relative he was staying with. This would probably need a personal visit to Durham though. Once again, thanks for your help. Thanks and Regards.

Joan Newbold



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THE WORKHOUSE

Dear Paul, I have received a copy of the birth certificate of a George DAVISON Jan 1912, and a copy of a Certified copy of an entry of birth for the purposes of the Factory and Workhouse Act, 1901, for any purpose connected with the Employment in Labour or Elementary Education of a Young Person. This copy shows George was born in Houghton Workhouse. I understand from your website that you have managed to transcribe 4 of the 8 registers, which is a fantastic feat in itself. As my George is not on the list so far can you point me in the right direction to find out more about George and his mother Annie DAVISON (although his birth certificate shows mother as Ellen DAVISON, so a bit confusing). Any advice is much appreciated. Thanks.

Sarah

SWIFTS IN ISSUE

1

Hello Paul, Regarding family requests in the previous issue about a family SWIFT. Dunno if it's anything new but in your list of residents of Heath House there is listed an Evelyn Gabrielle Mary Swift. There was a family called Swift lived on the Racecourse Estate in the early Fifties. Keep up the good work.

Harry Smith

BENEFIT SHOE SHOP

Paul, Been reading your site again about the shops in Newbottle Street, and I seem to remember that there was a Benefit shoe shop there for many years. Have you any record of this? Regarding Booth and Bruce, I cannot remember if it was Booth or Bruce the father - probably Bruce, who originally ran the shop, built a large house [Melrose] next door where I worked in Myre Hall. His two sons took over the shop when he died. They were aircraft enthusiasts and actually built a light aircraft in the basement below the shop. I don't know if they ever got to fly it. Best regards.

Tom Oliver

GEORGE LAING

Dear Paul. I noticed you have listed a grave for a George Laing. I have that name for the father of the bride from the wedding certificate of his daughter Cecily dated 11 December 1876. It's a long shot but as they were Roman Catholics but I have been unable to find him in any census records. Cecily was born in Croag in Sligo but spent the rest of her life in Newbottle as her husband and the majority of her family were coal miners. Best wishes from Western Australia.

*Eleanor Carney
Western Australia*

HOUGHTON ANCESTORS

Hello from Northbrook, Illinois, Am interested in finding out how to get photos of gravestones, copies of wills and land records for my ancestors who lived in Houghton Le Spring for many generations. My brother and I spent an afternoon in Houghton Le Spring a few years ago and was delighted to have a picture in my mind of where they lived and worked for generations. Unfortunately, at the time, could find little online about the town. So glad to find your website tonight. I am the local historian for our community that was settled in the 1840s - a little more than a decade before my ancestors left Houghton Le Spring. Am very accomplished at locating records here and helping people find what they need here but lost in Houghton le Spring. So, I am also interested in purchasing a book or two to give me a better idea of the history and a better feel for their lives. My names of interest are: Gleghorn; Kirkley; Masterman; Blyth; and Robson. Blyth Robson (born 1805 in Houghton le Spring) and his wife Ann Gleghorn were married in Houghton le Spring in 1825. Their daughter Sarah Blyth Robson married James Masterman Kirkley at Monk-Wearmouth in 1855 and left for America a few years

Blyth is listed as a laborer and a farmer in the Census. Ann died there in 1880 and Blyth died in 1883. His will was probated in 1883.

*Judy Hughes
Northbrook, Illinois*

GREY GRAY GRANDFATHERS

Researching my Gray/Grey grandfathers of Durham, Chillingham, Morpeth - wondering if you perhaps may have stumbled upon history, cheers from U.S.

Lynne

MARGARET DOWSON

Hi. I am in Australia and am related to Margaret Dowson, (died Sept 1841 at about 90 years of age) that I see as listed, and also the Mould family - her relative or daughter Ann married John Mould - I am interested in any information related to them. I don't know whether I have the right church or not. Regards.

Sarah Russell



To place a request for help here - or to give help - get in touch via the Houghton Heritage website.



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THE HOUGHTONIAN
WOW well done!
Printing it out to enjoy
with a coffee - love the
genealogy requests
section Paul.
Unfortunately I'm not
living or teaching in the
North East now but I
would like to still receive
your info and pass this
on to my old students
from Houghton, many
thanks again.

Judith Richardson

ROTHSAY HOUSE
Has anyone ever heard
of a Rothsay House
Fence Houses? I have a
marriage cert. of a
relative who was married
at Newbottle church in
1909 and his address is
given as Rothsay House
Fence Houses. It has
been suggested that at
that time Fence Houses
had a railway station and
the term 'Fence Houses'
could have covered a
large area. This thought
is confirmed on the
1891 census, whereby
parts of Shiny Row etc.
are given as Fence
Houses. So Rothsay
House could be
anywhere in the area.
His bride lived in
Philadelphia so it's
possible he lived
somewhere between
there and Fence
Houses. Any help would
be appreciated.

Dave Warne

**THE BURDASS
FAMILY**
Looking for information about
the following with the
BURDASS/BURDESS/BURDIS
surname: William Burdass;
Elizabeth Burdess; William
Burdess; Mary Burdess; Mary
Ann Burdis and Elizabeth
Burdis.

*Mrs K. Gillinder
Cambridge*

TINDALES ET AL
Looking for information about
the following Houghton
people: Robert Tindale;
Esther, John and Isabella
Oliver; the Thurlaway family;
and John, Sarah, and
Margaret Robinson. These
people may have been buried
at Houghton Hillside
Cemetery.

*Alison Crawford
Surrey*

**WILLIAM HERON,
CABINET MAKER**
Any information on William
HERON, a cabinet maker, and
the following Herons:
Margaret Heron x 2 ; Ann
Heron; Ralph Heron; Thomas
Heron; William Heron was the
son of Ralph Heron and Ann
Hammond who were married
in Sunderland in 1798. Thank
you.

J.E. Muil, Cumbria

**THE HONEY
FAMILY**
Hi, Has anyone got any
information on the
Honey family who lived
in the Houghton-le-
Spring, Fencehouses,
Shiny Row areas from
the 1870's to 1930's?
My great grandfather
was George William
Winter Honey who I
believe was postmaster
at Fencehouses. I have
also found that Rebecca
Honey & GWW Honey
are buried at Hillside
Cemetery, but haven't
found William Henry
Honey (Rebecca's
husband) by looking at
the Houghton website.
I've also found a photo
of a football team from
the 1920's I should
think - vertical stripes on
the shirts and dark
shorts. Any help will be
most welcome

*Pat Goodshipp
Wiltshire*

THE LAX FAMILY
To Whom It May
Concern,
I am researching Lax's
and would like to obtain
as much information as
possible about the Lax's
buried at St. Michaels &
All Angel Church. Thank
you,

*Randy Lax
Memphis, Tennessee*

RALPH HALL
Dear Paul, I am writing
from Australia and am
doing family history
research for my
husband, Andrew
Pearce. We have found
links to Ralph Hall
baptised 29th January
1670, his father Ralph
and his son Ralph,
baptised on 29th June
1709 in Houghton-le-
Spring. His daughter
Margaret (bap 29th
April 1734) married
William Johnson on
16th June 1759 and
am wondering if you
have any information
or photos of graves.
Thank you for your
time.

*Samantha Pearce
Hahndorf, S.
Australia*

**WHERE WAS
HANNAH
RICHARDSON
BURIED?**

Does anybody know
where Hannah
Richardson was
buried? She was born
in around 1880 and
died at Shiny Row in
the 1960s and was
buried in Houghton-le-
Spring after 1960.

*Deborah Whinfield
Co Durham*



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HAILING FROM DURHAM

My father's family hail from Co Durham. I had a great aunt whose address was 21 Outram Street in Houghton-Le-Spring and her name was Mrs Jenny Williams nee Stewart. I was in touch with her all through the fifties, when I was a little girl, until her death. She and her husband did not have any children. I am not actually very sure where it was exactly that my father's family originated from but it was the Sunderland-Durham area. My father's father was a John Smith, which is not really very helpful but my grandmother's name was Margaret Purvis (Purves?) and she had a younger sister, Mildred, who married George Richardson, from Sunderland. There was possibly a brother as well (Tom?). Margaret trained as a tailor at Binns in either Sunderland or Newcastle and John was a draper, I think, with the Coop. I am just wondering if anyone might have any memory of these people or know of any descendants.

Gilliam McKim

TODNER OF H-L-S

Hi Paul, I have just seen your web site. I am looking for any reference to the surname Todner. Regards,

*Trisha Bell
Germany*

MR SHENTON, CHURCH ORGANIST

Good evening Paul, I have just discovered your amazing website! I was particularly interested in the photograph of the church choir singing from the tower top'. My great grandfather (William Shenton) was the longest serving organist/choirmaster at St Michael's from 1919 to his retirement in Feb 1972, after 53 years service. I was wondering if the choirmaster/conductor in the photograph was him. I remember him well and, although the face is turned away from the camera, the man in photograph does seem to resemble him. Are you able to confirm this? Many thanks.

*Hilary Thurlbeck
North Yorkshire*

COTTAGE HOMES

I am looking for any relation to Joseph Garibaldi Thwaites, who was married to Susan Octavia Dazley. They had one daughter, Annie, who was brought up in the Cottage Homes, around 1911. She was there until she was old enough to work. Does anyone have any info at all? Susan was a long term resident of Cherry Knowles. I need any info at all that anyone may have. I am a great-granddaughter and am trying to complete my family tree.

Sue Miller

GRAHAM'S STORES 1

Good evening Paul from New Zealand! I visited Houghton-le-Spring for the first time in May, hoping to find long lost relatives of my father - George Graham (b Jan 1896) - (grandson of the George Graham Ltd stores in Fencehouses).

My grand-father was Joseph Graham who ran the business in the 1900s with his brothers and family. My father emigrated to N.Z in the late 1920s and I lost touch with the family after his sister (my Auntie Milly) died. I know I had a cousin Joseph who was a year younger than me, (I was 79 last November) and I was hoping I might find him or any other family members-but no luck!! I was able to find the family home-Morton Grange, Chilton Moor, and also graves in the Burnmoor churchyard, but would really have liked to meet some living family if possible!

I wish I had known of your site before I made my pilgrimage from the other side of the world - I may have been able to find out more information before setting out!

It would be wonderful if you or any of your readers could put me in contact with any existing family members!

Thank you - I do enjoy your web site.

*Helen Cater nee Graham
New Zealand*

GRAHAM'S STORES 2

Hi Paul I have news about Helen's family which I am currently researching for my cousin. As Helen was unhappy about not finding any relations last year in the Houghton area I think she will want to hear from me. Any chance you could release her email address or forward mine, please? I see, like me, she is elderly(ish). So hurry! Best wishes.

*Mike Roberts
Shildon, Co Durham*

GRAHAM'S STORES 3

Hi Paul I am so excited to hear from you! I will look forward to hearing from Mike and I thank you both for contacting me. Kindest regards.

*Helen Cater
New Zealand*

HIGH HAINING FARM

I wonder if anyone knows anything on the Rutter family from High Haining Farm. George Rutter was born c1832 and a farmer in 1911 and his wife Eliza born Seaham Harbour, Durham. Any info helpful.

Alison

GILPIN ALE

Where can I purchase Gilpin Ales? Would love to try it...anyone help me....?

*John Reay
via Facebook*



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WALKERS ET AL

Paul, My name is Lynne Westlake and I found your site by looking for Houghton Le Spring on Wikipedia. Recently I discovered that my great great grandfather, John Michael Walker, was not an Irish Sea Captain (as my aunt had insisted) but a grocer from the Trimdon/Wingate area. I see that he was born in Wingate in 1836. He married Charlotte Bainbridge (b. Nov 12, 1842) in Apr of 1860. Charlotte's father, James Bainbridge, was born in Houghton on March 12, 1814. I am looking for any information on the Walkers, Bainbridges and the Sedgwicks as they are all my ancestors. When I was looking at the grave site information, I noticed that Margaret and William Wigham were listed. My grandfather was John Frederick Wigham born Nov 22, 1892 in Wakefield. Would he by any chance be related to the Wighams in Houghton? In looking at a rather large scale map of your area, I see that many of the places I have listed as birth and death places are quite close together and therefore stand a better chance of being the source of my ancestors. I realize that this is a large undertaking that you have shouldered

and that you probably get all sorts of these requests. But if you were able to point me in the correct direction on this, I would appreciate it. I live in a little town in SW Ontario called Palmerston. I thank you in advance for any help that you could give me.

*Lynne Westlake
Palmerston, S.W
Ontario*

STEIN STONE

PORK BUTCHERS

My Dad's grandparents, Conrad and Anna Steinbrenner, owned the butchers on Newbottle Street in the early 1900's but then they changed their name to Stone after the First World War as they were interned in Germany during the length of the War (they had gone for a holiday in 1914 just before war started and had to stay until 1918). During the War the premises were used for different things but I can't remember what. When they returned from the War the butchers was in the family until the 1960s, which was run by Eric Stone. Renee Stone was married and lived on Wheeler Street. Eric lived above the shop then Fairburn Avenue. Maureen Stone was a

teacher and lived in Glasgow. Greta Stone (my Gran) lived at Burns Avenue North and was married to Frank Bond who worked at Philli Yard NCB; he was a volunteer fireman during WWII and was an usher at the Courts for many years when he retired. Ron Stone was in the RAF straight from school and rose to be a Group Captain, living in Andover. These were all the children of Conrad and Anna. My parents, Colin Bond and Maureen Bewley, now live in Durham. My mother's parents - Agnes worked in munitions during the War and John (Jack) Bewley worked on the farms at South Hetton and was horsekeeper at Eppleton Mine. They lived at Sancroft Drive until the 1980's.


Catherine Hall

ZEPPLIN AIR RAID

Dear Paul, I am attempting to track down the graves of 16 men who were killed in a Zeppelin raid on Palmers Engine Works at Jarrow on 15 June 1915.... hopefully the local people in Jarrow might think it worthwhile

using the information for a memorial. My query relates to John Cuthbert DAVISON Jnr, son of Elizabeth and John Cuthbert Davison: (2) John Cuthbert DAVISON (Jnr) b. 1884, Newbottle, Durham, UK. d. 15 Jun 1915, Jarrow, UK. bur. Jarrow (tbc). occ. Coal miner stoneman (1911), fitter & turner (1915). res. 1891, Philadelphia and Bunker Hill, Newbottle, Co. Durham, UK res. 1911, Bunker Hill Fence Houses, Houghton le Spring, Co. Durham, UK. There is no record of his grave at South Tyneside... thus the logical hope is that he was buried back in his home town of Houghton le Spring.... and there is always the hope he had a gravestone! I have looked at your website and you have a large number of DAVISON burials..... thus I could be in with a chance. Hoping you can help, Best regards.

*Philip Strong
Blue Mountains
NSW Australia*

 Can you help? If so, get in touch via the HH website!



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These Quests are added to every 12 weeks – please revisit soon, or check out the HOUGHTONIAN magazines on the Houghton Heritage website.

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