

Newsletter

Volume One - November 2016

Written & Published by Simon J. Golding

Hello, and greetings. This is the first of what I intended to be hopefully many newsletters for my one-name study into the Twyman surname. My intention with these newsletters is to give everyone an update on everything that's going on with the study in general, give updates on the records available on the study website, and give articles relating to new breakthrough in the research or interesting individuals. With any luck this shall prove interesting and illuminating, as well as proving fun and informative.

But being a man of few words, I'll get on with it...

Website Updates

As regulars to the site will have no doubt noticed, I've been focusing a lot lately on adding an index to all the individual Twymans I've come across in my research. As you can imagine, this is somewhat of a massive project...at last count there were 23,408 individuals in my main Twyman family tree file, and a further 23,411 individuals in my separate file concerning those Twyman family members of African-American ancestry. Granted there will inevitably be some duplicate entries in my files (so the numbers will come down a bit following merging of duplicate individuals), but as I'm entering each individual manually as well as adding full & coherent source citations against each entry...well, it is a project that is going to take some time.

As of writing this, I've added all those Twymans from my "main file" whose Christian names start with the letter "C" & am currently working through all the David Twymans in my research. I'm hoping to add the next update by 20th December, at which time I'm away for three weeks visiting my god-daughter & her family in the US - so if there's a delay in any response over the Christmas period, please bear with me. Rest assured, I shall reply to any correspondence or enquiries as soon as I'm at my laptop.

Future Research Trips

For the past few years, I've been taking a research trip at the start of February - mainly as my birthday is that week, and I like to give myself the present of

doing research. For me that's a gift that keeps on giving, so to speak. Needless to say, I'm making plans to do the same again in February 2017 - and am toying with either making a return visit to Kent to do some further work on the parish registers for the Canterbury area, or making my first trip to the Isle of Wight to begin working through the parish registers for that island county. I'm undecided which as yet, and this is where I have a request - if anyone has any lookups or suggestions for research in either area, please feel free to email me and I'll bear it in mind while booking my trip. Needless to say if I'm going with a firm question in mind, it's going to make my mind up which area to visit.

American Connections

As no doubt any of our American Twyman cousins are aware, the vast majority of Twymans in the States can trace their ancestry back to a single individual - namely George Twyman on Christchurch in Virginia. For some time it has been known that George Twyman went to Virginia in 1677 aboard the ship *Recovery*, ostensibly to serve as an indentured servant in the colony. He was in his mid-teens at the time, but beyond that he was born sometime around 1660 presumably in Kent little was known of him before that - and certainly nothing of substance.

For obvious reasons, a great many have wanted to discover George Twyman's roots - and naturally this is also a problem I've wanted to solve. Again not an awful lot of substance comes us, and no factual sources have made themselves apparent at yet. There is, however, speculation, and personally I've been wondering if the George Twyman who was baptised in All Saints' Church in Birchington in 1663 might not be the gentleman in question.

Why I wonder is that this George is floated as unconnected to anyone at all in my research, and is somewhat unique in being the only George Twyman I've come across thus far that would have been born around the right time. What I find interesting is that this George, too, would have been orphaned and the only one of his siblings still living - both his father and two brothers having been

sadly deceased for a decade by the time the *Recovery* was setting sail.

Of course this is complete conjecture at this point, and I will endeavour to either prove or disprove this in the coming months and years of research - as this will continue to be a point all those with an interest in the US Twymans will be interested in for years to come.

On the topic of American Twyman families, Mr. Nathan Twyman has recently published online an updated genealogical pedigree of the American Twyman families. This fantastic resource "*interconnects over 1,600 of our American ancestors*" and while admittedly I'm still working through Nathan's work, I can already say that this is a fantastic resource and perhaps the most definitive history of the Twyman family in America published to date. My thanks go out to Nathan for all his work in researching the Twyman family on the American side of the Atlantic, and I'm sure many of us will be using this as a foundation on which to build our research in the United States.

Profile: Alfred Austin Twyman

Another feature I'd like to try in this newsletter is to include a profile of an individual who one has researched - and without further ado I would like to start with my great-great-grandfather, as a chapter in his life is one that brought about my most recent research trip to Kent

Alfred Austin Twyman was born in 1860, one of the sons of Henry Twyman & Mary Savin, in the little hamlet of Maypole in Hoath in Kent. Apart from the usual vital record & census entries, the first life event for Alfred I'm aware of comes along in 1876 - where he appears in the historical record as having been tried at the Kent Quarter Sessions for "*attempting to commit an unnatural act*". Ever since I came across this fact in the crime records on Ancestry, I was curious as to exactly what they meant by unnatural act - and from consulting with archive staff, and formed the idea in my head that this was a veiled reference to homosexuality. I couldn't have been more wrong!

During my research trip of February 2016, I consulted with the surviving records of the Kent Quarter Sessions to discover just what my ancestor was accused of. And I found out, when there in black & white were the words "*attempting casually to know a cow*". At this point I should hasten to add that he was found not guilty, and the case was discharged! But there it is, the skeleton in my cupboard that I'm not completely sure whether to be embarrassed or amused about.

Four years later Alfred married my great-great-grandmother (Emma Elizabeth Foreman), and together they had a number of children - the eldest of which was my great-grandfather, Alfred John Twyman. Sadly my great-grandfather died at a relatively young age, and predeceased his father - after which my grandmother had very little to do with her Twyman forebears, so she was unfortunately not able to tell me much about the man who was her grandfather. The only incident she could recall happened during her childhood, a few years after Alfred Jnr. died - so perhaps the late 1920s. My grandmother told of a very religious family, who wouldn't let her or her siblings go to the shop to buy sweets because it was a Sunday - and I think that impression is the one I'll take away with me when I look back on Alfred Austin Twyman. I just wish I could know more to get to know him better.

Early Connections

Perhaps one of the most important discoveries I've made lately exists in the form of the last Will of a Mr. Thomas Adayne dated 4th February 1583. The Will is in many ways a keystone for edging my Twyman research back beyond the beginnings of parish registers, for the important reason of one of Thomas Adayne's bequests: that of the sum of 40 shillings a piece to his two cousins, William & Zacharye Twyman.

I've long conjectured whether William Twyman of Birchington was the brother of Zacharye Twyman of Margate, and here is the first & so far only suggestion in the historical record to support this claim. Certainly there are still pieces of the jigsaw missing & a lot more research is still needed, but at the very least now the picture is starting to come together & this one piece of evidence does give one hope that out there waiting to be found is something more substantial to break-down even the highest of brick walls.

Farewell

And so I'll draw to a close on this the first newsletter for my one-name study in the Twyman surname. I hope this has proved informative, and I hope to bring you further editions in the future.

If anyone has any news or information they'd like me to include or comment on in future editions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me either through Facebook or via the email on the study website.

All the best and if I don't issue a new edition of the newsletter before then, a very Merry Christmas.