

BMSGH Bromsgrove Branch Briefing

Editor: Mike Fisher

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“Age of Penda”

“with possible links to the Staffordshire Hoard”

by

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Before King Penda there was no kingdom of Mercia. When he died in battle in AD655, Mercia was a major Saxon kingdom and became the “find spot” of the Staffordshire Hoard.

Have you wondered about the mental state of people recorded in the Census ?

The April 2006 edition of the Family Tree magazine gives the following definitions in use until the beginning of the 20thC:

imbecile - 'mental age of an infant'

idiot - 'natural fool from birth'

lunatic - 'sometimes of good and sound memory and understanding, and sometimes not'

It goes on to say that the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913 introduced revised definitions:

idiot - 'unable to guard themselves against physical danger'

imbecile - 'incapable of managing themselves or their affairs'

feeble minded - 'needing care or control for the protection of themselves or others'

moral defective - those possessed of 'vicious or criminal propensities'

lunatic - retained its old definitions until 1930, when it was redefined to mean 'a person of unsound mind'

