

**BMSGH Bromsgrove  
Branch Briefing  
Editor Mike Fisher**

**Tuesday 10th January 2017**

***“Surnames – Their History &  
Meanings”***

***by  
Richard Churchley***

***A brief history of how the use of surnames came about and a general look at the main categories of English surnames.***

***Then a commentary on specific names of members at the meeting.***

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***Ireland Dog Licence Registers***

OVER 900,000 RECORDS have been added to Find My Past's collection of Dog Licenses. This census of furry, four-legged friends covers all 26 counties in the Republic of Ireland, dates back to 1866, and allows you to find out the colour, breed and sex of your ancestor's dog.

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***Britons are still living in the same 'tribes' that they did in the 7th Century, Oxford University has found after an astonishing study into our genetic make-up. p.t.o.***

Archaeologists and geneticists were amazed to find that genetically similar individuals inhabit the same areas they did following the Anglo-Saxon invasion, following the fall of the Roman Empire.

In fact, a map showing tribes of Britain in 600AD is almost identical to a new chart showing genetic variability throughout the UK, suggesting that local communities have stayed put for the past 1415 years.

Many people in Britain claim to feel a strong sense of regional identity and scientists say they the new study proves that the link to birthplace is DNA deep.

The most striking genetic split can be seen between people living in Cornwall and Devon, where the division lies exactly along the county border. It means that people living on either side of the River Tamar, which separates the two counties, have different DNA.

Similarly there is a large area in southern and central England with a shared genetic heritage which coincides with the boundaries of Anglo-Saxon England. Likewise, separate genetic groups can be found in areas of North and South Wales corresponding to the ancient kingdoms of Gwynedd and Dyfed.

In the North, specific groups were found in the North East, tallying with the area of Bernicia which was colonised by the Angles from Southern Denmark. And, intriguingly, a small genetic cluster was spotted in the West Riding of Yorkshire, which coincides with the former small kingdom of Elmet, one of the last strongholds of the ancient Britons.

Geneticist Professor Sir Walter Bodmer of Oxford University said: “What it shows is the extraordinary stability of the British population. Britain hasn’t changed much since 600AD.

Happy New Year

*Mike Fisher*

Next meeting on the 14th February is “Age of Penda with possible links to The Staffordshire Hoard” by Ray Aspden