

Families of Cannock Chase



Have you ever wondered why England's flag has 3 lions on it, or why the England football teams have 3 lions on their shirts?

It all started in 1066 when William the Conqueror (c. 1028 - 1087) became King of England. His family crest had 2 lions on it. The third got added later by King Henry II (1133 - 1189) to celebrate his marriage.



William the Conqueror's coat of arms



King William loved hunting and Cannock Chase became one of his hunting forests. If anyone was found hunting deer there without his permission, the punishment was death!

The Paget family were given Cannock Chase in 1546. In 1815, Henry Paget was made Marquess of Anglesey and this was his coat of arms.



A coat of arms was useful during battles to show who was fighting when they had a helmet over their face!

Design your own coat of arms!

A coat of arms has a colour, called a 'tincture.'

It also needs a shape inside it, such as a cross or stripe. These are called 'ordinaries.'

Finally, you need to include symbols that are important to you and your family (such as a type of animal or plant). these are called 'charges.'

King William the Conqueror and Henry Paget both had very interesting families with strong links to Cannock Chase. See if you can investigate their family trees and some of their 'horrible histories'!



Did you know that Marquis Drive was built so that Henry Paget could still go hunting after losing a leg? His leg had to be amputated after he was hit by a cannon ball during the battle of Waterloo (18th June 1815). This made it too difficult for him to ride a horse through the forest, so he had a road built to use instead.

Many interesting families have lived on Cannock Chase over the centuries and not all of them were rich land owners. See if you can find out about some of these other interesting characters:



Holly Bank Rescue Team, 1913.
One of the earliest teams to be trained at
the Mines Rescue Station.

Joshua Payton 1872 - 1943

A captain of the Cannock Fire Brigade for 21 years, Mr. Payton was then trained to rescue people from mining disasters. He became head of the mines rescue operations station in Hednesford.

Dr. John Kerr Butter 1856 - 1920

Dr. Butter was once the owner of the largest private zoo in England. He kept animals including kangaroos and ostriches, and looked after circus animals if they became ill.

During the Boer War (1899 - 1902), Dr. Butter treated soldiers, becoming a Major Surgeon. He returned to Cannock to a hero's welcome.



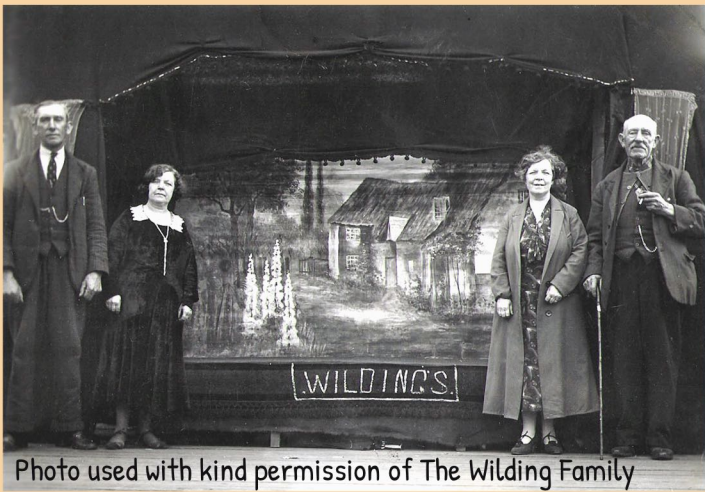


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Harry Wilding 1857 - 1941

After joining the circus at the age of six, Harry Wilding joined his father's company and learned to become a puppeteer. He moved to Cannock Chase and started his own puppet company that toured all over the world.

Other families lived in the Cannock Chase area for many generations. Research one of the following family names, and find out what they are known for in the area:

Littletons
Talbots
Harrisons
Vernons
Hanburys

What did you find out?

If you were inspired by Harry Wilding and his puppet shows, you could make your own puppets. Why not use them to put on a show about the people you researched?



If you don't have access to a computer or printer at home, you could become a member of your local library and ask about how you could use a computer for free!