

FORRESTER FAMILY – PATERNAL LINE

John FORRESTER

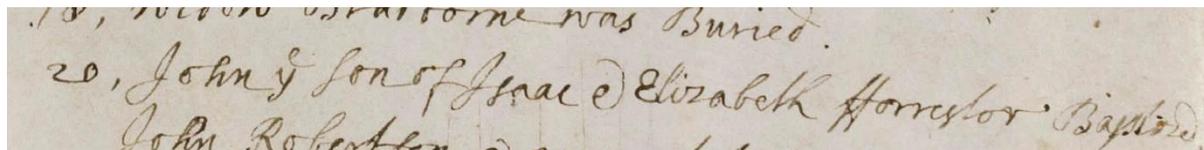
lived

dd Oct 1731 to dd Dec 1810

Genealogical notation: The primary connector for the phases of this family history is the matching signatures on the various documents. The secondary attribute is the notation that John Forrester was a widower on the two later marriage licences.

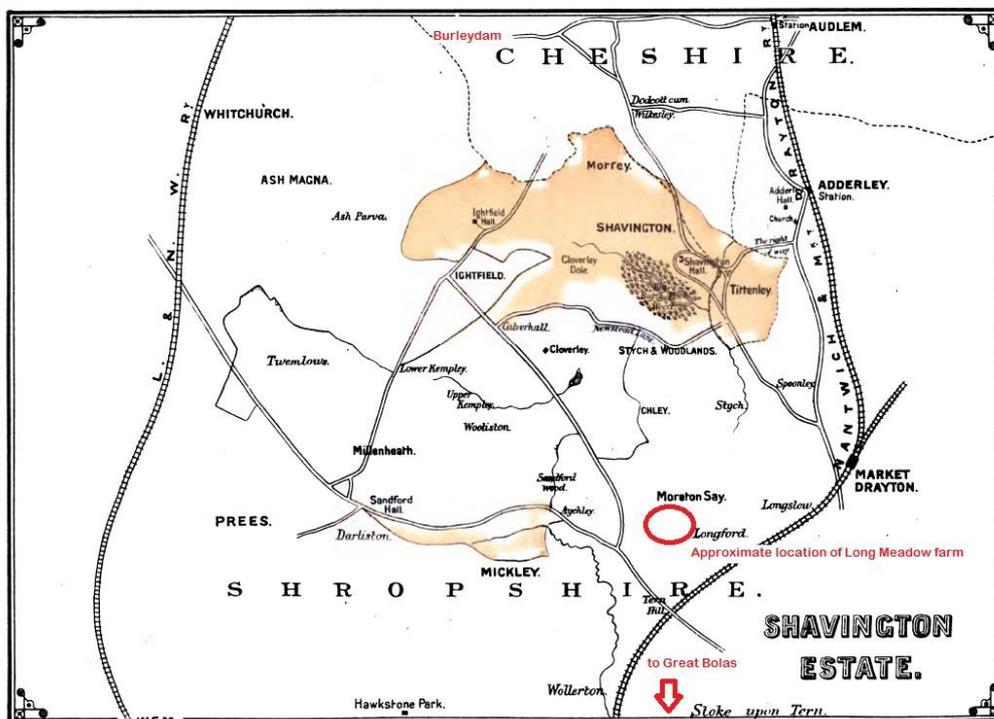
John Forrester was a man of the Georgian era; a period of British overseas expansion, of almost continuous international warfare, and of great economic and social change.

John was born to Isaac Forrester and Elizabeth (née Morris) around October 1731, and was baptised at St. Margaret’s Church, Moreton Say, Shropshire on 20 Oct 1731.



Source: Moreton Say Parish Register, 1731: Findmypast.co.uk

In 1723 Isaac and Elizabeth Forrester, were living at *Long Meadow*, a property that was most likely very close to the village of Moreton Say, and was a farm which was part of the Shavington Estate owned by the 12th Viscount and 1st Earl Kilmorey. It is assumed that the family continued to live at the same property following John’s birth.



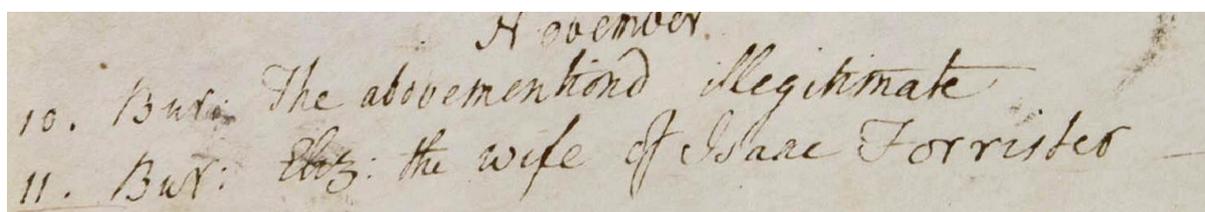
Waste ground about Shavington House, Doye Coat, &c.	4	0	0	} 19
Isaac Forrester Long Meadow	6	0	0	
Cinderhills & Cinderhills Meadow	6	0	0	
John Barnes for his farme				} 120

Source: *The History of Shavington in the County of Salop*, Henry D. Harrod (1891) Shrewsbury, Salop Printing Works.

John was the third child born to Isaac and Elizabeth Forrester. Their first child; also Isaac, was baptised on the 24th June 1720 at Moreton Say, and their second child, Thomas, was baptised on 1st January 1730. Thomas died in February 1739 and was buried at St. Margaret's Church, Moreton Say.

With a ten year gap between Isaac and Thomas it is possible there were other children born who died in very early infancy, and were not baptised. This possible and very tragic early infant mortality is evident from the records of the fourth child; William, who was baptised at St. Margaret's Church on 6th July 1735, only to be buried on 20th August 1735. A fifth child and the only girl recorded; Elizabeth, was also buried at St. Margaret's Church in 1735 on the 19th October. No record of her baptism has been located at time of writing. It is possible that either William or Elizabeth were actually born before 1735.

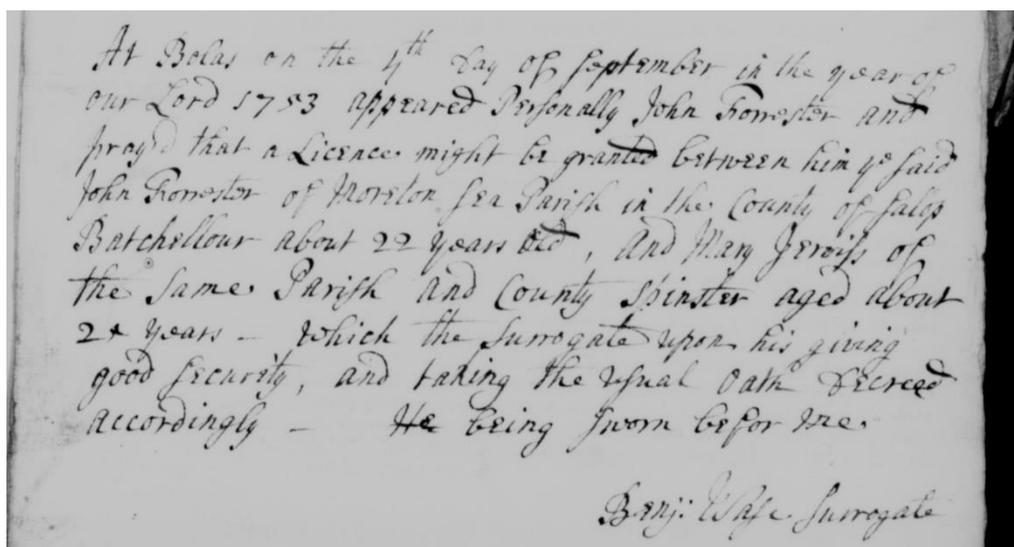
Isaac's wife (John's mother), Elizabeth, died and was buried 11th November 1752 at St. Margaret's Church, Moreton Say when John was around 21 years of age.

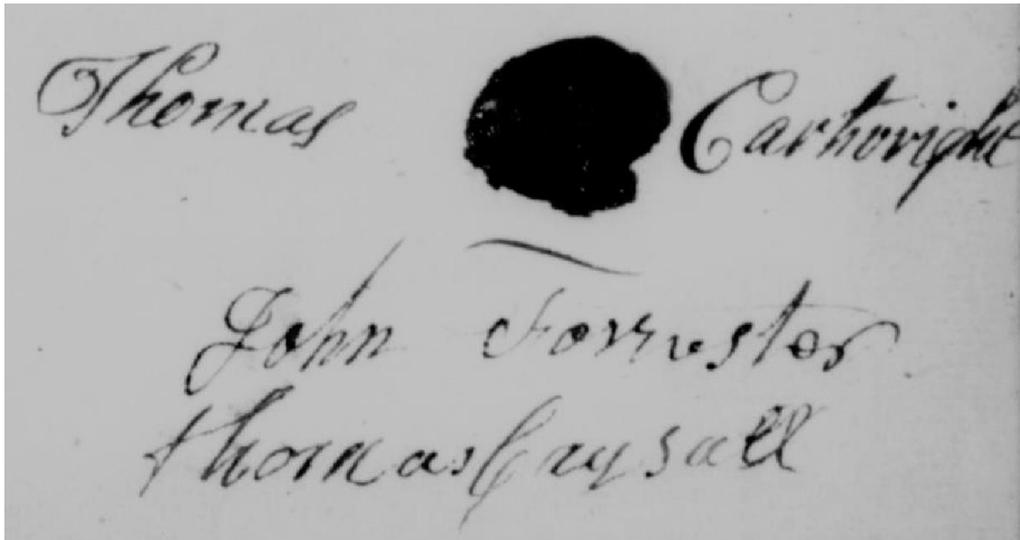


Source: Moreton Say Parish Register, 1752: Findmypast.co.uk

John's first marriage

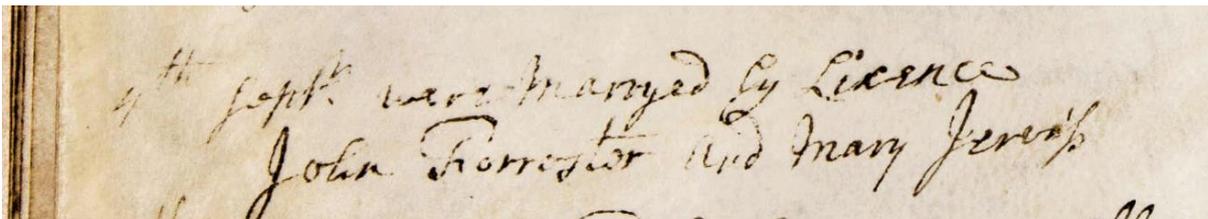
Almost a year later, on 4th September 1753, John obtained a licence to marry Mary Jerviss. John was aged 22 years, and Mary was 24 or 25 years old. John was joined by Thomas Cartwright of the village of Hodnet, and what looks like a person named Thomas Gaysall, as co-guarantors for the £100 marriage bond.





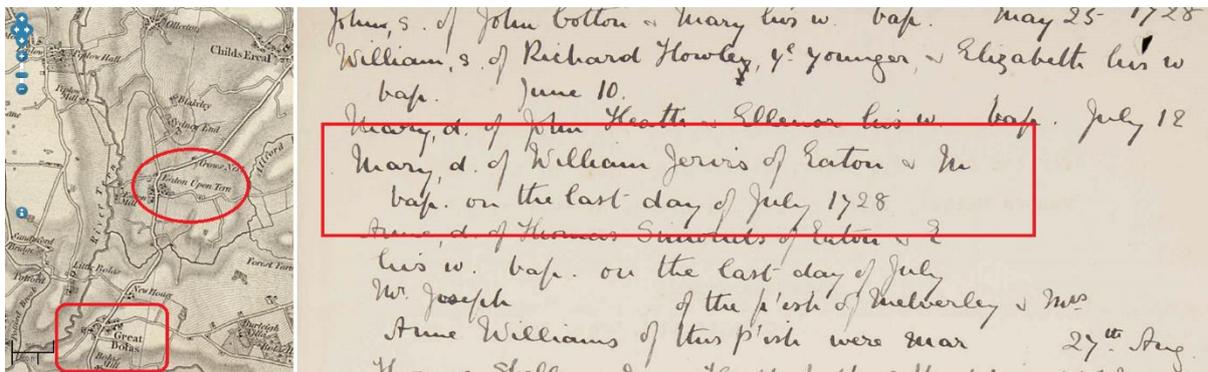
Source: UK Marriage Bonds and Allegations: Findmypast.co.uk

John and Mary were married on the same day the licence was obtained; the 4th September 1753, in St. John the Baptist's Church in the village of Great Bolas; known also as Bolas Magna.



Source: Bolas Magna Say Parish Register, 1753: Findmypast.co.uk

Mary Jervis was most likely the daughter of William Jervis of Eaton; a village located between Great Bolas and Moreton Say. She was baptised on 31st July 1728 at the nearby village of Stoke on Tern.

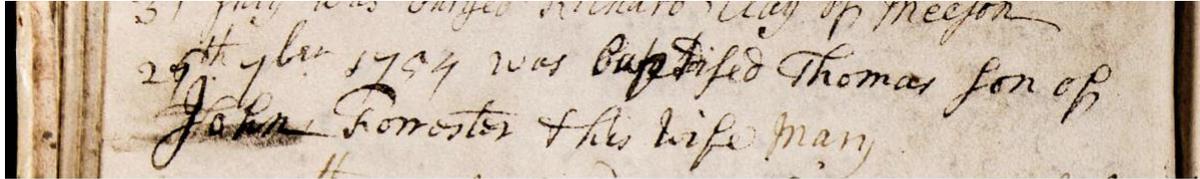


Source: Stoke on Tern Parish Register, 1728: Findmypast.co.uk

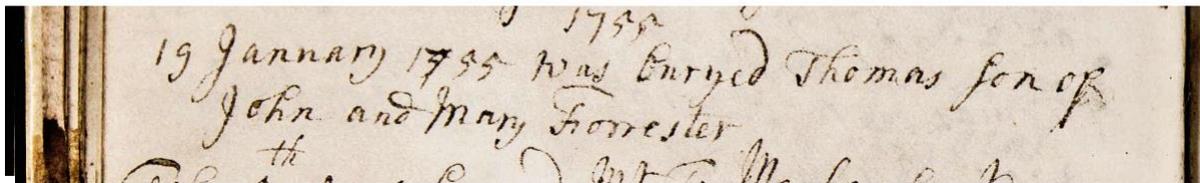
John and Mary most probably lived with or near to Isaac Forrester because most of their children were baptised at St. Margaret's Church, Moreton Say.

Their first child, Thomas, was however baptised on 25th September 1754 in Bolas Magna most probably in respect for Elizabeth's parents and at the church that they would have considered to be their parish.

Most unfortunately the boy did not live long and his burial is recorded on 19th January 1755 also at Bolas Magna.



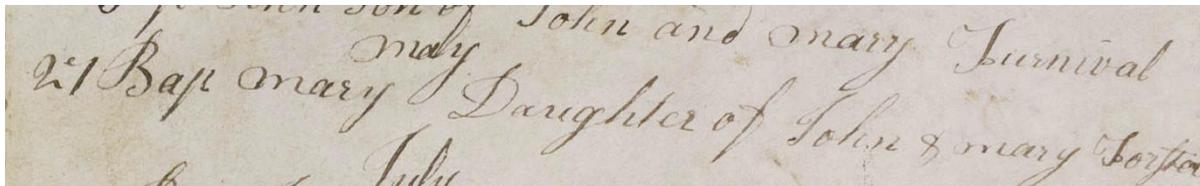
25th Sept 1754 was baptised Thomas son of John Forrester & his wife Mary



19 January 1755 was buried Thomas son of John and Mary Forrester

Source: Bolas Magna Parish Register, 1754-1755: Findmypast.co.uk

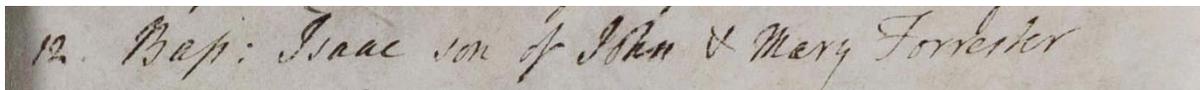
The next likely baptism recorded is not until 27th May 1759; for Mary daughter of John and Mary Forster which may be a child born to the couple. The handwriting in the parish register changes at April 1759 indicating that the parish had a new rector. It is possible the new parish priest may not have known the family, and could have confused John and Mary for another couple in the parish; John and Elizabeth FORSTER. There are no other Forsters in the Moreton Say parish at this time.



27th May 1759 was baptised Mary daughter of John & Mary Forster

Source: Moreton Say Parish Register, 1759: Findmypast.co.uk

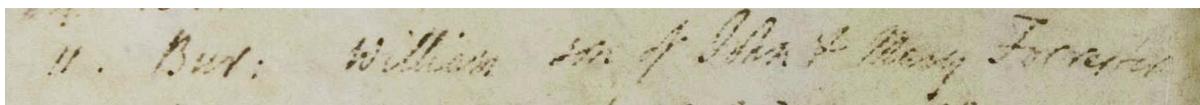
The second certain child to be born to John and Mary was Isaac who was baptised on 12th October 1760 at Moreton Say.



12th Oct: Isaac son of John & Mary Forrester

Source: Moreton Say Parish Register, 1760: Findmypast.co.uk

The next child to John and Mary was William. William was buried 11th December 1761 but was not apparently baptised and so may have died at birth.



11th Dec: William son of John & Mary Forrester

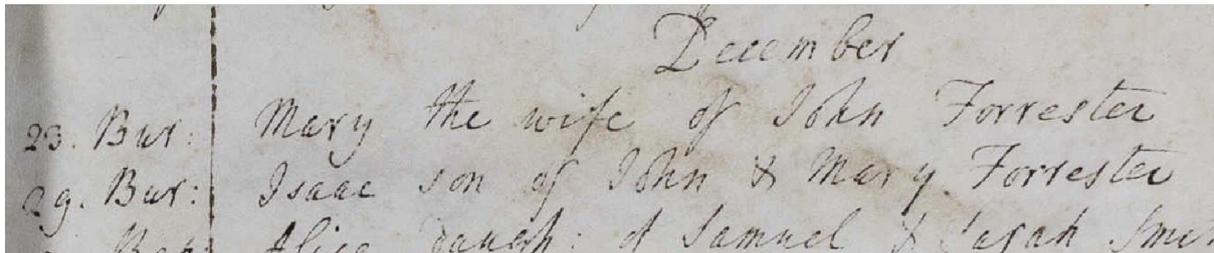
Source: Moreton Say Parish Register, 1761: Findmypast.co.uk

John's and Mary's fourth certain child was again named William. He was baptised on 6th March 1763 at Moreton Say.



Source: Moreton Say Parish Register, 1763: Findmypast.co.uk

The year 1763 ended however with not only the death of John's wife, Mary, but also the death of their 3 year old son Isaac. Mary Forrester and her son Isaac were buried at St. Margaret's Church, Moreton Say.



Source: Moreton Say Parish Register, 1763: Findmypast.co.uk

It is only a guess as to the cause of their deaths however throughout England at this time there were regular outbreaks of disease, and in 1763 Shropshire was particularly effected by a smallpox epidemic.



From *The Dance of Death: The Apothecary* by T. Rowlandson (1816). An apothecary, as a tradesman, treats the common people while Death labours as the apothecary's apprentice. Queues, obesity and impatience prevail, then as now. (Wellcome Library)

DATE	EPIDEMICS & OUTBREAKS
1755	Measles epidemic
1757	Smallpox (Manchester 19,839)
1758	Influenza type epidemic
1759	Measles epidemic; scarlatina epidemic (Newcastle, Yorkshire)
1760	Measles epidemic; Influenza type epidemic recorded in horses
1763	Smallpox
1766	Paving Act improved health in some cities
1768	Measles epidemic (London)
1770	Scarlatina epidemic (London)

<http://www.kdhs.org.uk/>

It is possible that a further child had been born to John and Mary, however no record of the birth or baptism has been located. Much later, in 1783, John Forrester is noted as witness at the marriage of Elizabeth Forrester to John Hall at Wrenbury, Cheshire.

(93)

Banns of Marriage between *John Hall & Eliz. Forrester* were published on the *12th 14th 26th* of *Jan^y* 1783.

The said *John Hall* of *Wrenbury* Parish *Yeoman* and *Eliz. Forrester* of *this* Parish *Springton* were

Married in this Church by *J. Banns* this *Seventeenth* Day of *Feb^r* in the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and *Eighty three* by me *Jos. Taylor, Minst*

This Marriage was solemnized between Us *John Hall* & *Elizabeth Forrester*.

In the Presence of *John Forrester* & *Saml^l Woulton Jun^r*

Source: Wrenbury Parish Marriage Register, 1783: Cheshire Archives

Until 1823, a single person under the age of twenty one could not marry without their parents' permission. Therefore this Elizabeth Forrester must have been born no later than 1762 although a certain record of her baptism has not yet been located anywhere at the time of writing. The large gap between the baptism of Thomas in 1754, and the possible daughter Mary in 1759 or the certain son Isaac in 1760 does make it a possibility that Elizabeth was a daughter of John and Mary Forrester. Since a clear connection between the two has not yet been established the father – daughter relationship can only be surmised at this stage.

John's second marriage

John next married Ann Hussey, also from the village of Moreton Say, at St. Margaret's Church on the 2nd May 1767. Now 36 years of age, once again John chose to marry by arranging a licence rather than by having the Banns of Marriage read at the church. At this time John is recorded in the marriage licence as being a 'farmer', of the age of thirty years and upwards, and a widower. Ann Hussey is described as being a 'spinster' aged thirty years and upwards.

Banns of Marriage

N^o 52 *John Forrester* of *this* Parish *Farmer* and *Ann Hussey* of *this* Parish *Spinster* were

Married in this *Church* by *License* this *second* Day of *May* in the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and *67* by me *Robt. Clive*

This Marriage was solemnized between Us *John Forrester* & *Ann Hussey*

In the Presence of *Ann Smith* & *John Timmons*

Source: Moreton Say Marriage Register, 1767: Findmypast.co.uk

At Moreton on the Thirtieth
Day of April. 1767 before
Geo: Greeting
Surrogate.

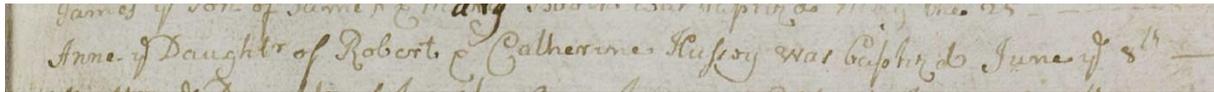
On which Day personally appeared John Forrester
Farmer of the Parish of Moreton-say, in the County
of Salop & Diocess of Lichfield & Coventry & did allege
that he was of the Age of thirty years & upwards and
a Widower, & that he intends to marry Ann
Hussey Spinster of the Parish of Moreton-say
in the County of Salop & Diocess of Lichfield & Coventry
aged thirty years & upwards; not knowing or believing
any lawful let or impediment, by reason of any
Barr contract, Consanguinity or Affinity to hinder the
said intended Marriage; wherefore he prayed a
Licence to be granted to him to solemnize the
said Marriage in the Parish Church of Chapel of
Moreton-say in which said Parish the said John
Forrester also made Oath that he has had his
usual abode for the space of four weeks last past

John Forrester

The said John Forrester being duly sworn
before Geo: Greeting
Surrogate.

Source: UK Marriage Bonds and Allegations: Findmypast.co.uk

Ann Hussey was possibly the daughter of Robert and Catherine Hussey of the village of Prees, which is located only 6 miles or 9 kilometres to the west of Moreton Say. Corroborating evidence of this connection has not been located at the time of writing and so must be considered to be conjectural only at this time.



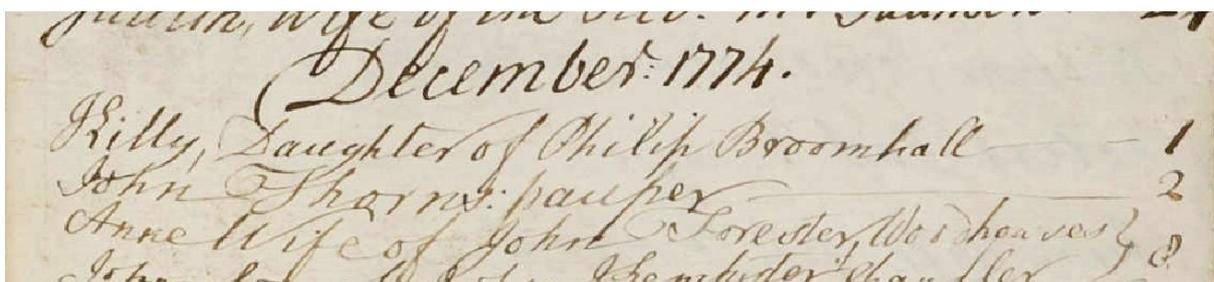
Source: Prees Parish Register, 1735: Findmypast.co.uk

No baptism records for children born to John and Ann Forrester have been located at the date of writing this family history. It is apparent however that the family moved to Whitchurch at some time during the seven years following their marriage in 1767.

It would seem, from an advertisement that appeared in the Shrewsbury Chronicle, that by 1773 John and Ann had been living near Whitchurch long enough for John to want to contribute to a fund set up for the purpose of prosecuting felons.

Again however tragedy struck. An entry in the St. Alkmunds, Whitchurch parish register records the burial of Ann Forrester from Woodhouses on 8th December 1774. Again there is no clear indication of the cause for the death of John's wife.

By this time John's son William would have been aged 11 years, Mary would have been 15 years old, and if the Elizabeth whose marriage he witnessed was his daughter then she would be around 12 or 13 years old.



Source: Whitchurch Parish Register, 1774: Findmypast.co.uk

The locality of 'Woodhouses' is to the east of the town of Whitchurch, and very close to the village of Burleydam. There is both an 'Old Woodhouses' and a 'New Woodhouses'. The Forresters lived at New Woodhouses, although it is not clear in which of the actual wood houses they resided. (see the map on the following page)

Tithe records from St. Alkmunds church record that a tenant farmer named 'Forrester' "paid £46, jointly with Thomason, rent to Rector for corn tythes" (Source: Whitchurch Heritage Names Index: <http://www.allourstories.whitchurch-heritage.co.uk/names-index/>). A further document held in the Staffordshire Archives provides evidence that John's father,

Shrewsbury Chronicle 10 July 1773

Page 2 of 4 Article: THURSDAY'S POST.

Whitchurch, Shropshire, June 24, 1773.

Whereas divers Persons guilty of Felony, Burglary, Grand and Petit Larceny, frequently escape punishment, either through fear of the expence which may attend their prosecution, or for want of an immediate and vigorous pursuit, or from a principle of ill-timed lenity and moderation,

Notice is therefore hereby given,

That in order to prevent in some degree the evil aforesaid, We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, inhabitants of the parish of Whitchurch aforesaid, have formed ourselves into a Society for the purpose of raising a sufficient fund to defray the expence of pursuing, detecting, and prosecuting with the utmost rigour, such as shall be guilty or shall be suspected to be guilty of the crimes or offences above specified, against the person or property of any member of this Society.

Samuel Pace	John Kempster	John Bromfield
George Boulton	Benj Blakemore	John Baker
Roger Eddowes	John Hamnett	William France
John Pearson	Robert Tudman	John Thomas
John Boulton	John Beckett	Thomas Rice
Richard Taylor	Samuel Turner	John Gill
John Pratchill	John Davenport	John Cartwright
James Mullock	John Povah	John Richardson
Thomas Hinton	Roger Atcherley	Jos. Richardson
Richard Murhall	John Forrester	Richard Deaves
Tho. Kempster	Samuel Sandford	

WELLINGTON and WROCKWARDINE, in the County of S A L O P.

Isaac Forrester, was living with John certainly in 1776 and may have been living with him prior to Ann's death. In 1776 Isaac would have been aged around 75 years old. Note that Betley is a village very near to Checkley-cum-Wrinehill; a location that comes up again a little further on.

Reference: D210/M/33

Description: Betley

Date: 22 Oct. 1776

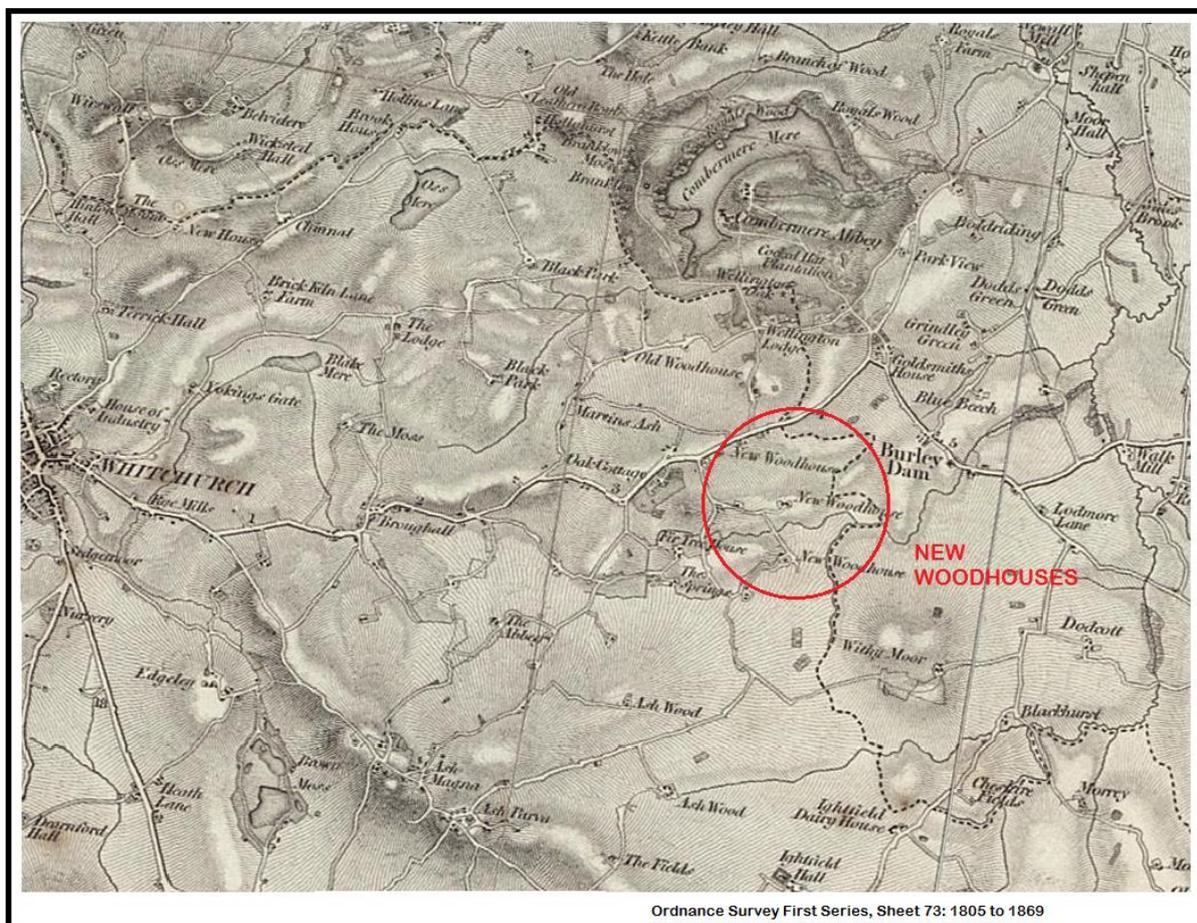
Release to make tenant in precipe

1. Isaac Forster alias Forrester of New Woodhouses, Whitchurch, co. Salop, yeoman.
2. Joseph Allen of S. Andrew, Holborn, co. Middlesex, gent.
3. Edward Layne of Whitchurch, co. Salop, gent.

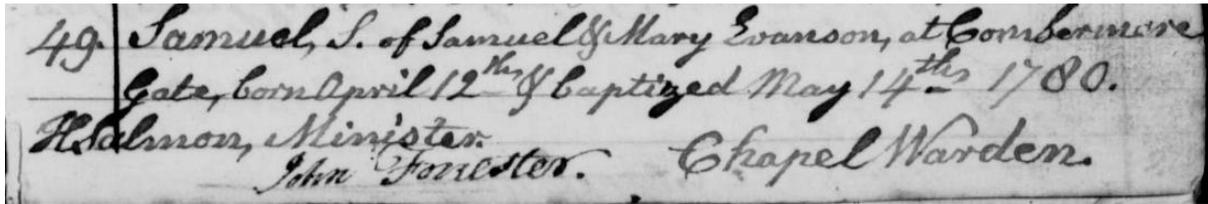
2 pieces of land in Betley called Rushay or Rushy Moors.

3 red seals - poor impressions.

Source: Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive, 1774: Stafford County Record Office

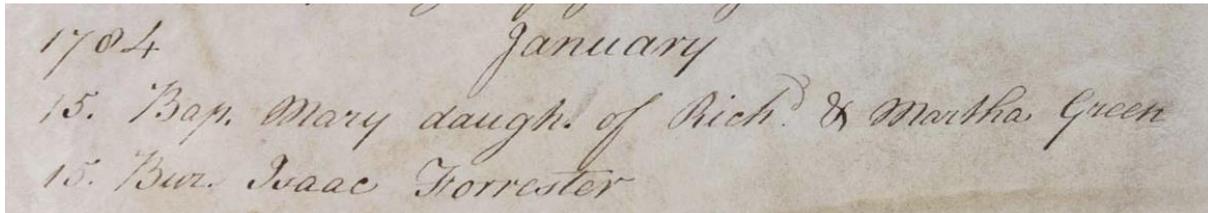


In 1780 John's signature appears for a brief moment in the Burleydam Chapel register where he signs the church records as 'chapel warden'. John's name does not appear again as chapel warden in the chapel register.



Source: Burleydam Chapel Register, 1780: Findmypast.co.uk

A few years later John's father, Isaac, also died and his burial is recorded in the register of St. Margaret's Church, Moreton Say. He was buried on 15 January 1784.



Source: Moreton Say Parish Register, 1784: Findmypast.co.uk

John's third marriage

Up to this point John Forrester's occupation had been as a farmer. Perhaps it was as a consequence of his father's death; perhaps he received a small inheritance, but from around this time the now 53 year old became a 'school master'.

John Forrester married for a third time, again by marriage licence, on 9th January 1786 to Elizabeth Nickson (or Nixon). On the marriage licence John is now described as being 'of the Parish of Wrenbury' and a 'schoolmaster' of the age 'of twenty-one years and upwards'. Elizabeth is 'of the Parish of Adderley' and is similarly described as being of the age 'of twenty-one years and upwards'.

For reasons that will be explained further below it is thought that Elizabeth was the daughter of Ralph and Ann Nickson of Chorley Stock; a village which lies 8 miles, or 13 kilometres, north of Whitchurch and quite close to Wrenbury. If marriage licence is correct, and Elizabeth was 21 years of age or older, then she would have been born in 1765 or earlier. At the time of writing an exhaustive elimination of other Elizabeth Nickson or Nixon possibilities has not been completed, and so at this time Elizabeth's parentage is only assumed to be correct.

It is fortunate that John Forrester chose to arrange a marriage licence for each of his three marriages because it has allowed a chronological comparison and matching of his signature, without which there would be no clear proven connection between each of the John Forrester records. While the marriage licence signature on the following page is not a clear match because John has been at his calligraphic best, it is the signatures on the Marriage Register which allows us to be certain that the three sets of marriage documents are tracking the same person.



Know all Men by these Presents that We, John Forrester of the Parish of Wrenbury in the County of Chester Schoolmaster and Godfrey Wolley of the Parish of Whitchurch in the County of Salop are held and firmly bound to Richard Smallbrooke Doctor of Law Vice General of the Diocese of Lichfield and Coventry in the Sum of One Hundred Pounds of lawful Money of Great Britain to be paid to the said Richard Smallbrooke, or his certain Attorneys Executors Administrators or Assigns for the true payment whereof We and our selves and each of us by himself for the whole and every part thereof and the Hirs Executors and Administrators of us and each of us firmly by these Presents Saled with our Seals Dated the third Day of January in the twenty sixth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third by the Grace of God of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King de cetera of the Faith and in the Year of our Lord one Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty six.

The Condition of this Obligation is such That if hereafter there shall not appear any lawful Let or Impediment by reason of any Precontract entered into before the twenty fifth Day of March One Thousand Seven Hundred and fifty, for Conjunctivity Agency or any other lawful Cause whatsoever but that the above bound John Forrester aged twenty one Years and upwards and Elizabeth Nixon of the Parish of Adderley in the County of Salop aged twenty one Years and upwards may lawfully solemnize Marriage together and in the same afterwards lawfully remain and continue for Man and Wife according to the Laws in that behalf provided and moreover if there be not at this present Time any Action Suit Point Quarrel or Demand moved or depending before any Judge Ecclesiastical or Temporal for or concerning any such lawful Impediment between the said Parties nor that either of them be of any other Parish or of better Estate or Degree than the Judge at granting of the Licence is suggested and by him sworn to before the Reverend John Collier Minister of the Parish of Adderley in the County of Salop Surrogate of the said Richard Smallbrooke. And lastly if the same Marriage shall be openly solemnized in the Church or Chapel in the Licence specified between the Hours appointed in the Constitutions Ecclesiastical confirmed and according to the Form of the Book of Common Prayer now by Law established. And if the above bounden John Forrester or Godfrey Wolley do prove harmful to the said Richard Smallbrooke his Surrogates and others his Officers whatsoever by Reason of the Premises then this Obligation to be void or else to remain in full force and Virtue.

SEALED and delivered in the Presence of John Collier

J. Forrester

At Whitchurch the third day of January 1786. Before the Rev^d John Collier A.M. Surrogate &c

On which Day appeared personally John Forrester of the Parish of Wrenbury in the County of Chester Schoolmaster and being sworn on the body Evangelists made oath as follows (to wit) That he is of the age of twenty one Years and upwards, and a Widower and intends to marry Elizabeth Nixon of the Parish of Adderley in the County of Salop and Diocese of Lichfield & Coventry aged twenty one Years and upwards; not knowing, or believing any lawful let or impediment by reason of any precontract consanguinity, affinity, or any other lawful cause whatsoever, to hinder the laid intended marriage: WHEREFORE he prayed a Licence to be granted to him, to solemnize the laid marriage in the parish Church of Adderley aforesaid, in which said Parish of Adderley the said John Forrester also made oath, that he the said Elizabeth Nixon hath had her usual abode for the space of four Weeks last past.

J. Forrester

The said John Forrester was duly sworn, and the Licence was decreed to be granted by me John Collier Surrogate

Source: UK Marriage Bonds and Allegations: Findmypast.co.uk

The marriage licence indicates that John Forrester had a Godfrey Wolley act as his co-guarantor for the licence bond. Godfrey Wolley's occupation is noted as 'clerk', which in the 18th century referred to a clergyman or cleric. Mr. Wolley was almost certainly Reverend Godfrey Wolley (Jnr) who, five days after John's wedding, on 14th January 1786 was appointed as Vicar to the parish of Acomb in Yorkshire. The evidence suggests that Rev. Wolley was in Whitchurch to help establish Freemason's Lodge No. 478 which commenced on 15th November 1785.* There is no evidence however that John Forrester was himself a Mason, and so any other connection between the two currently remains a mystery.

Banns of Marriage

N^o 94 John Forrester of the Parish of Wrenbury Schoolmaster and Elizabeth Nixon of this Parish Spinstrix were Married in this Church by License this ninth Day of January in the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and eighty six by me Matt: Salmon Curate This Marriage was solemnized between Us { John Forrester Elizabeth Nixon In the Prefence of _____

Source: Adderley Parish Register, 1786: Findmypast.co.uk

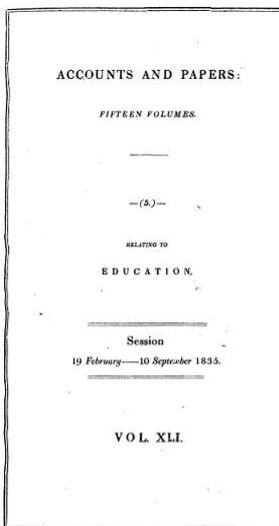
* United Grand Lodge of England (Sept 2015) "We have checked such indexes as we have to our 18th century membership registers but have not been able to find the name of John Forrester/Forrester listed."

At the date of writing no records have been located to say where John Forrester was employed as a schoolmaster. There were several Free Grammar Schools; schools which usually operated under the jurisdiction of the church, located in the area around Woodhouses and nearby Burleydam. John may have been employed at any one of these, or alternatively may have been employed as a tutor for children of a wealthy family at one of the stately homes nearby.



Combermere Abbey (*shown at right in 1829*), which was very near Burleydam and was the seat of the Cotton family, is one example.

It is somewhat surprising how many small schools existed around this time. Parliamentary Papers from 1835 for the British House of Commons, albeit almost fifty years after John's time as a schoolmaster, show that there were six schools within the Wrenbury Parish, and a further nine schools in the Audlem Parish, within the County of Cheshire. There were also an additional three schools in the town of Whitchurch by 1835.



AUDLEM Parish:

AUDLEM Township (Pop. 1,558.)—*Six Daily Schools* (two of which have about 16 boarders), one containing 20 males; is endowed for English, Latin and Greek; but the scholars pay for every other branch of education; another contains 24 females, and is endowed with a modus of tithe hay; another, 30 of both sexes; another, 32 males and 13 females; another (commenced 1826), 5 males and 18 females; in the three last Schools the children are instructed at the expense of their parents; in the other (commenced 1833), are 65 females; this School is entirely supported by Miss Warburton.—*Three Sunday Schools*, in one of which are 35 males and 90 females, who attend the Established Church; another, appertaining to Baptists, consists of 55 males and 35 females; the other (commenced 1833) to Wesleyan Methodists, 27 males and 12 females; all are supported by subscription and voluntary contributions.

BURTON Township (Pop. 464.)—*Two Daily Schools*, one (commenced 1822), consisting of 29 males and 21 females; and the other (commenced 1831), 6 males and 18 females; these are all instructed at the expense of their parents.—*One Sunday School*, wherein 20 children of each sex are gratuitously instructed; all the above Schools appertain to Wesleyan Methodists.

DODCOT-CUM-WILKESLEY Township (Pop. 637.)—*One Daily School*, wherein are 18 females, of whom 14 are paid for and clothed annually by Viscount Combermere, and the other 4 are instructed at the expense of Lady Needham.—*One Sunday School*, of 20 females (commenced 1823), supported by subscription; most of the daily scholars are included in the Sunday School.

HANKLOW Township (Pop. 289.)—No School in this township.

TITTENLEY Township (Pop. 30.)—No School in this township.

WRENBURY Parish:

BROMHALL Township (Pop. 181.)—*One Daily School* (commenced 1830), containing 20 males and 12 females, who are instructed at the expense of their parents.

CHORLEY Township (Pop. 168.)—*One Daily School*, in which there are 13 males and 10 females; of these children, 15 are instructed at the expense of the Marquis of Cholmondeley, and the remainder at that of their parents.

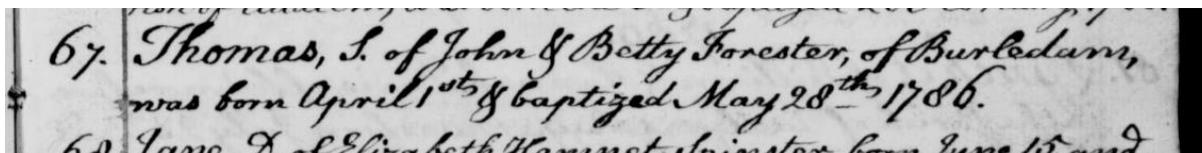
DODCOT-CUM-WILKESLEY Township.—See AUDLEM Parish.

WOODCOT Township (Pop. 30.)—No School in this township.

WRENBURY-WITH-FRITH Township (Pop. 524.)—*Three Daily Schools*; one containing 24 males and 8 females, is endowed with the interest of 230*l.*, for which 10 males are instructed; the remainder of the children are paid for by their parents; another, 30 males and 11 females; the other (commenced 1833), 21 males and 11 females; in the two last Schools all the children are instructed at the expense of their parents.—*One Day and Sunday School*, consisting of 8 males and 32 females; supported by Mrs. Starkey and Mrs. Hewitt.

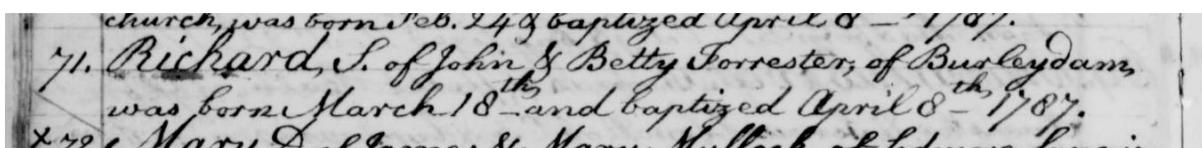
Source: Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons and Command, Volume 41 (1835) H.M. Stationery Office (<https://books.google.com.au>)

Shortly after their marriage on 9th January 1786, John's and Elizabeth's first child, Thomas, was born on 1st April 1786. I will leave the maths involved in these dates to the reader. Thomas was baptised on 28th May 1786 and the event was recorded in the Burleydam chapel register.



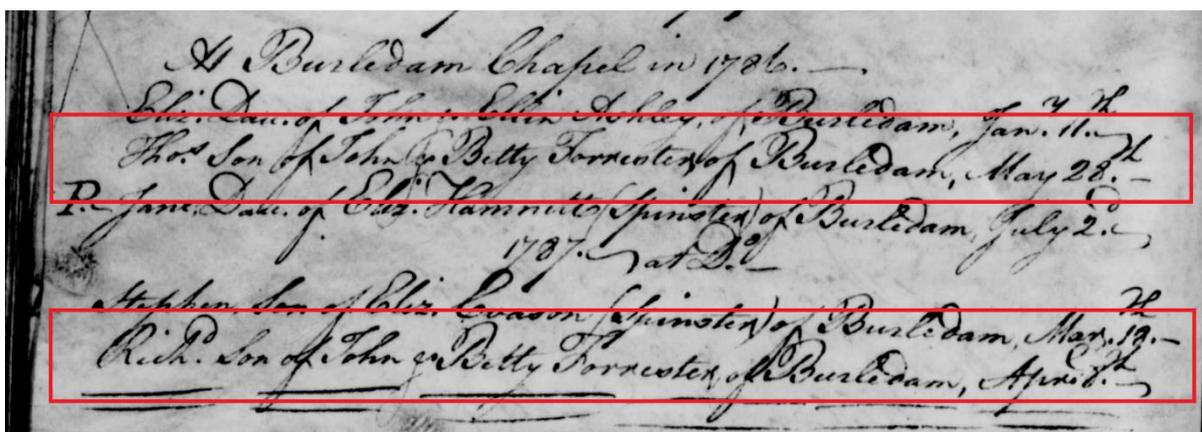
Source: Burleydam Chapel Register, 1786: Findmypast.co.uk

Their second child, Richard, was born on 18th March 1787, and was baptised on 8th April 1787.



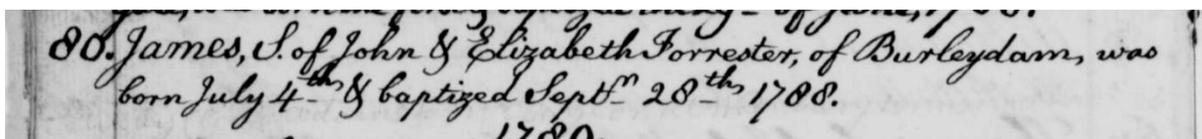
Source: Burleydam Chapel Register, 1787: Findmypast.co.uk

Both Thomas' and Richard's baptisms were also recorded in the Wrenbury Parish Register.



Source: Wrenbury Chapel Register, 1786 to 1787: Findmypast.co.uk

James was the third son born to Elizabeth on 4th July 1788. He was baptised at Burleydam Chapel on 28th September 1788.



Source: Burleydam Chapel Register, 1788: Findmypast.co.uk

Lastly, a fourth son, Joseph, was born on 6th October 1789 and was baptised at Burleydam Chapel on 3rd January 1790.

1790.
Ob. Joseph, S. of John & Betty Forrester, of Burleydam, was born 6 Oct^r 1789 & baptized 3 Jan^y 1790.

Source: Burleydam Chapel Register, 1790: Findmypast.co.uk

Both James' and Joseph's baptisms were again recorded in the Wrenbury Parish Register.

An account of the Baptisms
at Burleydam Chapel in 1788. —
Wm. Son of Sam. & Mary Coasson, of Muckhale, June 29. —
James, Son of John & Eliz. Forrester, of Burleydam, Sept. 23. —
— — — — —
— — — — —
— — — — —
At L. in 1790. —
Jos. Son of John & Betty Forrester, of Burleydam, Jan. 3rd —
Rich. Son of John & Ellen Ashley, of Burleydam, Apr. 16. —

Source: Wrenbury Parish Register, 1788 and 1790: Findmypast.co.uk

The village of Burleydam is set in the gently rolling green fields and hedge rows of the countryside along the Shropshire Cheshire border. In the latter part of the 1700s this countryside was experiencing significant economic growth attributable to multiple factors including enclosure and consolidation of farmland, development of turnpike roads and the first canals, greatly increased population, and the rise of large new industrial centres in the midlands area such as Birmingham and Manchester. Britain's superior naval power created the conditions for more reliable overseas trade, and the successive military campaigns against France's Revolutionary and Bonapartist imperial aspirations also added momentum to economic prosperity of the time.



Fields near Burleydam, Cheshire

Move to Checkley-cum-Wrinehill

A large part of this next phase of John Forrester's story, it has to be admitted, is inferred and has not been verified with primary evidence.

In about 1798; when John was aged around 67 years old, John, Elizabeth and most probably the four youngest children all moved to live in or near the village of Checkley-cum- Wrinehill.

Land Tax assessments show that the family became tenants to Sir Thomas Broughton of a house and land from 1798 up until 1805.

COUNTY of *Chester* Township PARISH of *Checkley cum Wrinehill*
Union of Nantwich
 An Assessment made in Pursuance of an Act of Parliament passed in the 38th Year of His Majesty's 203
 Reign, for granting an Aid to His Majesty by a Land Tax to be raised in Great Britain, for the
 Service of the Year 1798. 1482

No. of Register.	Names of Proprietors.	Names of Occupiers.	Sums Assessed.	Date of Contract.
	<i>Sr Tho Broughton Bart</i>	<i>John Forrester</i>	<i>11-6</i>	
	<i>do</i>	<i>Winehill</i>	<i>9-10</i>	

Source: UK, Land Tax Redemption, 1798: Ancestry.com.au

However from 1806 to 1809 the Land Tax assessments show that John Forrester was the owner of the property, and then from 1811 the property passed to the ownership of Thomas Forrester.

County of CHESTER, to wit. For the Township of *Checkley cum Wrinehill* in the said County.

AN ASSESSMENT made in pursuance of an Act of Parliament passed in the Thirty-eighth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for granting an Aid by a Land-tax Rate to be raised in Great-Britain, for the Service of the Year 1798, which Act has since been made perpetual; and of several other Acts passed for continuing and granting to his Majesty a Duty on Penfions, Offices, and personal Estates, for the Service of the Year 1806.

Names of PROPRIETORS, or Persons rated.	Names of OCCUPIERS.	Sums assessed on Lands and Tenements.			Sums Exonerated.			Sums assessed on Offices and Penfions.			Sums assessed on personal Estates.		
		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
<i>Sr Tho Broughton Bart</i>	<i>Self</i>	0.	19.	0									
<i>John Steele</i>	<i>John Steele</i>	16.	18.	8									
<i>William Steele</i>	<i>Do</i>	0.	2.	0									
<i>Thomas Whitaker</i>	<i>Self</i>	7.	10.	0									
<i>William Bourne</i>	<i>Self</i>	6.	11.	0									
<i>William Mop</i>	<i>Self</i>	4.	10.	0									
<i>John Mop</i>	<i>Do</i>	0.	2.	0									
<i>John Forrester</i>	<i>Self</i>	0.	15.	6									

Source: Cheshire Land Tax Assessments 1786-1832, 1806: Findmypast.co.uk

County of CHESTER, to wit. }
 For the Township of }
 Checkley sum 4*l*. 1*s*. 6*d*. }
 In the said County. }

AN ASSESSMENT made in pursuance of an Act of Parliament passed in the Thirty-eighth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for granting an Act by a Land-tax Rate to be raised in Great-Britain, for the Service of the Year 1798, which Act has since been made perpetual; and of several other Acts passed for continuing and granting to his Majesty a Duty on Pensions, Offices, and personal Estates, for the Service of the Year 1809.

Nantwich, Cowan, Printer.

Names of PROPRIETORS, or Persons rated.	Names of OCCUPIERS.	Sums assessed on Lands and Tenements.			Sums Exonerated.			Sums assessed on Offices and Pensions.			Sums assessed on personal Estates.		
		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Sir Tho: Broughton Bart	Self	0	12	0									
John Steele	Self	17	0	0									
Tho: Whitaker	Self	7	10	0									
Wm Bourne	Self	6	11	0									
Wm. Hoop	Self	4	12	0									
John Forrester	Self	0	17	1									
Wm. Medley	Self	1	11	0									

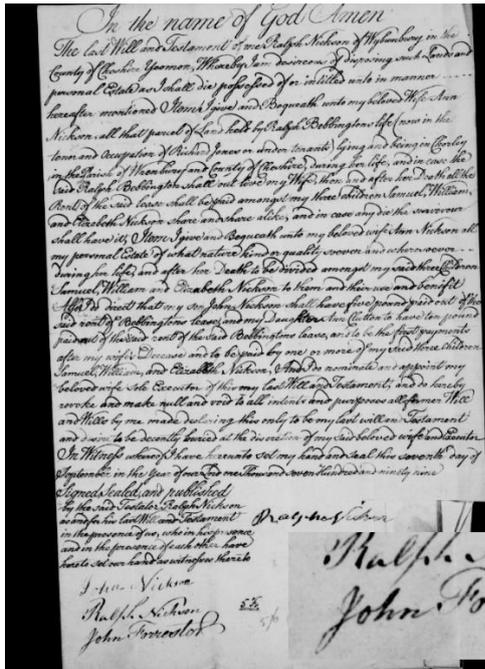
Source: Cheshire Land Tax Assessments 1786-1832, 1809: Findmypast.co.uk

The reason why this John Forrester is considered, on the balance of probability, to be the same John Forrester school master of Burleydam is based upon two pieces of evidence.

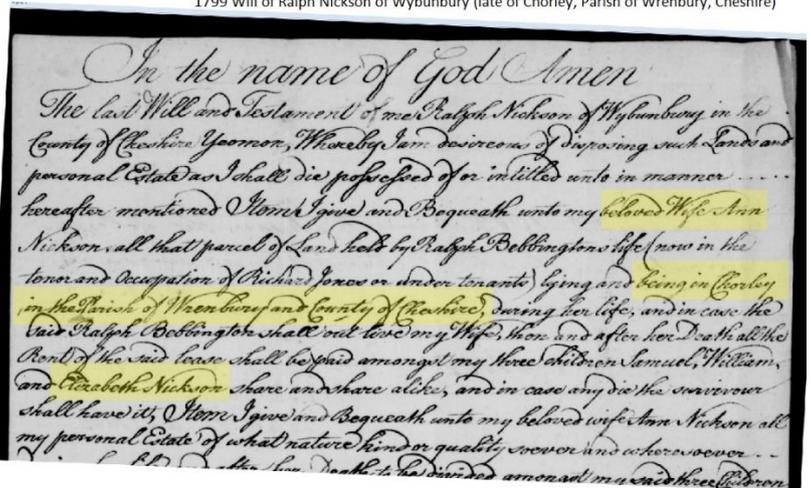
The first, a signature on a Nickson family will, is certainly the same John Forrester. The second; a reference to a burial in Wybunbury is much less certain and yet appears correct alongside other facts for John's son, Richard, and his later connection to people in the area around Checkley and Wybunbury.

In 1799 Ralph Nickson of the town of Wybunbury, but previously from the village of Chorley which is located a short distance to the north-west of Wrenbury (*see map below*), wrote a will which was witnessed by John Forrester. In the will Ralph Nickson mentions his daughter 'Elizabeth Nickson'. Unfortunately he does not name her Elizabeth Forrester, or Elizabeth the wife of John Forrester. The close proximity of these villages to each other, John's signature on the will, and the will being written the year after Land Tax records at Checkley begin to note John Forrester as a resident, all indicate strongly but not conclusively that:

- The John Forrester at Checkley is the same one who signed witnessing the will; and
- The Elizabeth Nickson named as daughter of Ralph and Ann Nickson is the same Elizabeth Nickson (or Nixon) who was John's wife



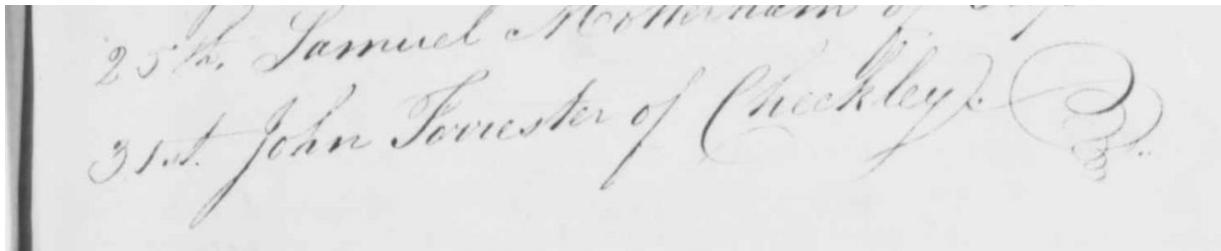
1799 Will of Ralph Nickson of Wybunbury (late of Chorley, Parish of Wrenbury, Cheshire)



Source: Cheshire Wills and Probate, 1803: Findmypast.co.uk

The second set of documentation relates to the burial and description of the grave of John Forrester at St. Chad's, the Wybunbury parish church.

The burial of John Forrester of Checkley is recorded in the St. Chad's parish register on 31st December 1810.

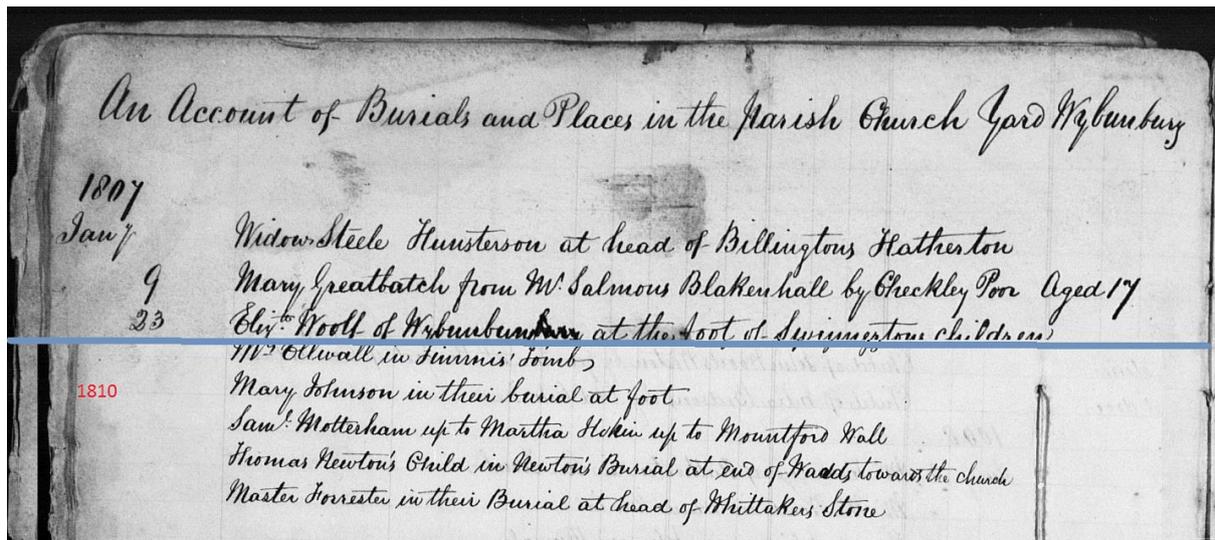


Source: Wybunbury Parish Register, 1810: Findmypast.co.uk

In and of itself this record does not provide evidence to confirm that this was the burial of John Forrester the school master. There is however an account of the inscription that was on the gravestone, and also a record which describes the burial in a little more detail.

According to Family Heritage Research, who completed research for me into John Forrester's genealogy, a catalogue was compiled in the 1980s by the Cheshire Family History Society of the inscriptions on grave stones in the cemetery at St Chad's, Wybunbury. The catalogue lists a grave for a 'Master Forrester' but says that much of the grave stone inscription was worn away.

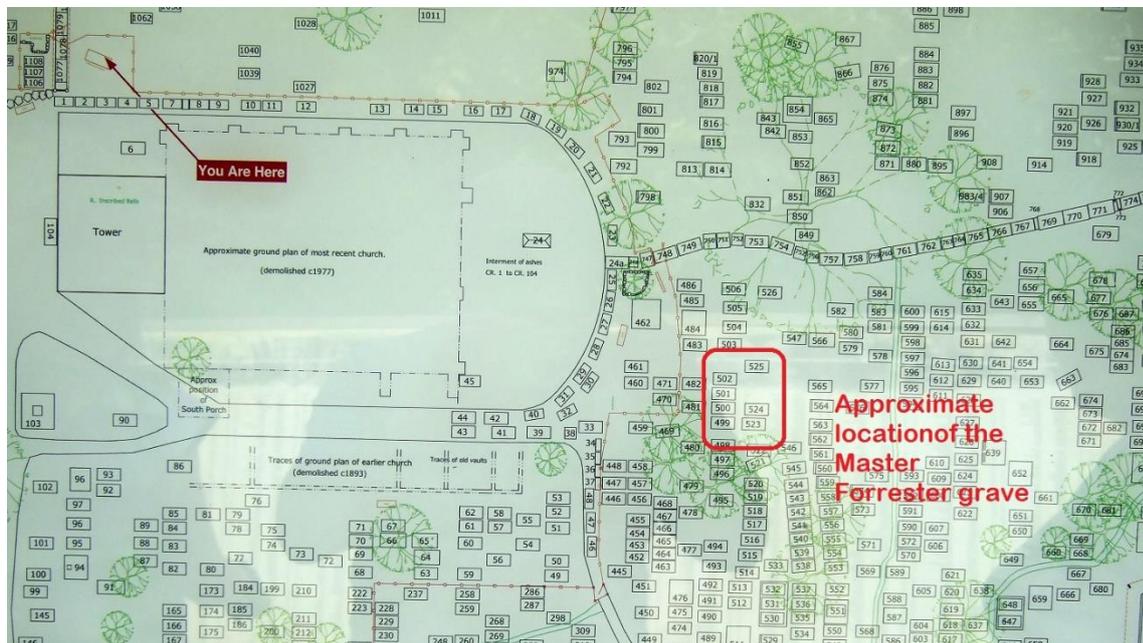
An account of the burials at St. Chad's and the location of the graves provides a little more information about the location in the cemetery of the burial but also confirms the CFHS comment about the gravestone inscription. The interpretation is that this is clearly the burial of someone who warranted the title 'Master'; as in the master of a school.



Source: Wyburnury Parish Records: Cheshire Archives

Unfortunately attempts by James Martin, and then also by Michelle, Aimee, Chloe and I in 2016, to locate the actual grave stone in the St. Chads cemetery and verify the inscription failed possibly because the stone has been removed or because it has fallen flat and has been buried under the grass.

The fact that this burial record matches to the Parish Register burial for John Forrester of Checkley at least confirms that they are the same person and provides a reasonable degree of confidence that this John Forrester was the same person as school master John Forrester for Burleydam.



Map of graves at St Chad's Wyburnury

Summary

If we can assume that his baptism occurred shortly after his birth then John Forrester lived for a little over 79 years.

During his lifetime John was married three times, was father to between eight and eleven children, and changed his occupation from farmer to schoolmaster. It is clear that he was educated from an early age as evidenced by his already very confident signature at the age of twenty two years on his first marriage licence.

Having been born in or near the village of Moreton Say, John moved first either to Whitchurch or possibly direct to New Woodhouses near Burleydam. He later moved to Checkley-cum-Wrinehill probably so that Elizabeth, his wife, could be closer to her parents.

Clearly never a wealthy person (he left no will and his children do not appear to have had any wealth at all) John Forrester nonetheless perhaps inherited sufficient funds upon the death of his father, Isaac, to enable him to cease farming and to become a schoolmaster at 53 years age of age. While it is clearly only an assumption, perhaps the fact that John Forrester acquired a licence for each of his three marriages indicates that he had aspired for a long time to be a 'man of letters'.

John Forrester lived at a time of significant social, industrial, economic and political change. The French Revolution in 1789 which led to the execution of Louis XVI in 1793, the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte and the successive British military campaigns right throughout this period, somewhat paradoxically led to a generally positive economic environment where, because of British rule of the seas, trade flourished, the price for farm goods was high and employment prospects were good. When John died in 1810 Bonaparte's French Empire was at its strongest.

However for John Forrester's wife and children life would take a sudden turn for the worse. Through the ten years from 1812 to 1822 England suffered through a number of economic and social problems caused, firstly, by the failure of crops and intensely cold winters, and then a long economic recession following the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815.

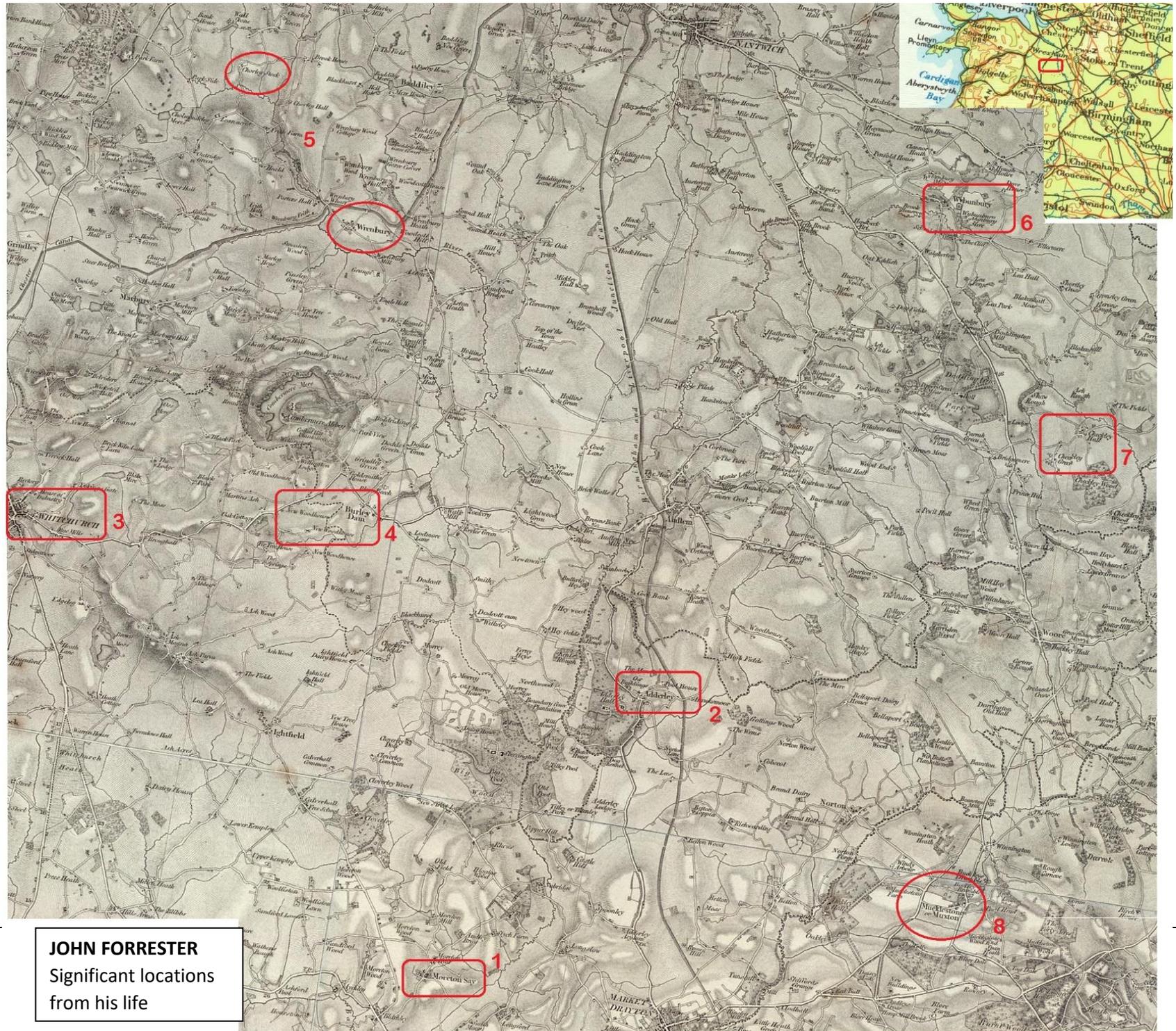
For John's son, Richard Forrester, his adult life would quickly become years of upheaval and a challenge to survive in an England caught in the grip of unemployment, poverty, and hunger. Richard first moved 6 miles; roughly 10 kilometres, south to Mucklestone in Staffordshire where he met and married his wife, Mary Birks, in 1809. It is worth noting that the later recorded burial in Mucklestone in 1832 of a 77 year old Betty Forrester, which may be the record of Richard's mother's death, lends more weight to the supposition that our John Forrester was the man who passed away in Checkley in 1810.

In early 1811 Richard and Mary Forrester moved east to the growing mining and pottery town of Burslem near Stoke on Trent, perhaps in search of employment, before finally deciding to immigrate to South Africa in 1820.

Richard Forrester
Bendigo, 2016

Significant Locations

1. Moreton Say, Shrops
2. Adderley, Shrops
3. Whitchurch, Shrops
4. Burleydam and Woodhouses, Chesh
5. Wrenbury and Chorley Stock, Chesh
6. Wybunbury, Chesh
7. Checkley-cum-Wrinehill, Chesh



JOHN FORRESTER
Significant locations
from his life