



Love Atcherley

Newsletter of the Atcherley family
history website, Atcherley.org.uk
Issue 1 – August 2019

Welcome

For some time now I have joked that I would one day launch a newsletter for the Atcherley family history website, with a title inspired by a certain film by Richard Curtis, *Love Atcherley*. Well, that day has arrived!

The aim of this newsletter is to share snippets, and longer articles, relating to Atcherley.org.uk, Atcherleys, and family history in general, which don't warrant full-scale articles on the website. Some of the material from the website's homepage, and some of my posts to the Atcherley.org.uk Facebook page, will most likely find a more permanent home in the pages of this publication.

As for the timing / frequency and length of the newsletter, that will be down to me – so expect random!

Steve Jackson
Atcherley family historian

Retired on half pay

Several Atcherleys who served in the military (at sea or on land) during the Napoleonic Wars retired on half pay when their service ended. The same thing has now effectively happened to me. At the end of June 2019, after working for the civil service for 37 years, my employment came to end through a Voluntary Exit Scheme which I have converted into early retirement. My pension, like the pensions received by the likes of James Atcherley (a Captain in the Royal Marines) and his brother Roger Atcherley (a Chaplain in the 119th Regiment of Foot), will be half my salary.

So now, health permitting, I really have no excuse not to delve even more deeply into my Atcherley research or to write up and share even more of this fascinating family's stories. No pressure then!

Where there's a will ...

... there's currently a bargain to be had! Certainly that's the case if the will you are looking for is an English or Welsh one proved from 1858 onwards. Recently, the cost of obtaining copies of such wills from the government Probate Service plummeted from £10 each to just £1.50 apiece. (The same goes for 'admons' or letters of administration, issued where there was no will but an application to administer a deceased person's estate is granted.) Naturally, I was 'on the case' as soon as I heard the news and ordered copies of all the Atcherley wills on my list which I didn't already have copies of. Extracting information from these documents, adding it to my files, and sharing any interesting findings, should keep me busy for a while!

Prices will remain at £1.50 for a year before they are reviewed. To order, visit: probatesearch.service.gov.uk

Picture perfect?

Photographs of our ancestors are precious things (whether the term 'ancestors' relates to our direct forebears or is used more broadly). But sometimes the condition of those old pictures leaves something to be desired. Such is the case with several images of Atcherleys and their kin from days gone by, which I have acquired for display in the 'virtual family albums' within the [Pictures](#) section of Atcherley.org.uk. What you see in those albums is not necessarily what I got!

Once a photo has been digitised, the possibility of repair, restoration or enhancement presents itself. I'm sure you have heard of a piece of software called Photoshop, the use of which is so ubiquitous that its name has become verb and we talk of photos being 'photoshopped'. I don't own that programme myself, but I do possess an old version of Paint Shop Pro which I have used as an 'image processor' for years. I often use it to crop images, to adjust their colours, brightness or contrast, or to soften or remove minor aberrations, scratches, spots and dust flecks, to make the pictures more presentable.

On the right you can see an example of an image I have worked on for the website – a scanned photo of Lucy Patterson née Atcherley, kindly provided by Barbara Lang. At the top, you can see the original image. My first step towards making a version of this for the [William and Lucy \(Atcherley\) Patterson](#) album page was to crop it to focus more on Lucy. This still left me with an image which was faded, blemished in places, with part of the label showing, and with a dark streak running down the picture through Lucy's face and body.

Paint Shop Pro's Clone Brush was invaluable when it came to removing the blemishes and the label, enabling me to 'paint over' those parts of the picture with other elements of it in order to mask them. The same tool came into play when I removed the streak, although much more care was needed – particularly when working Lucy's face. The Retouch tool, set to Soften, was also very helpful. This is painstaking and extremely time consuming work, and I have nothing but respect for the professional photo restorers who do this day in, day out!



Boosting the 'shadows' (making the darker parts of the picture even darker) dealt with the fading. Sometimes at this point, because the colours no longer look right, I convert the image to greyscale (black and white). In this case however I adjusted the colour balance in an attempt to create a sepia effect. I hope you will agree that the end result, while far from perfect, is a distinct improvement.

Another of my attempts at photo restoration is shown below. The subjects of the photo are Edward Ryley, who married Mary Ellen Atcherley of the Moortown in Shropshire, and two of their daughters: Maud (left) and Lilian Gertrude. This picture (along with several others) was supplied to me for use on the Atcherley family history website by Pam McFadden, curator of the [Talana Museum](#) in South Africa. The lovely image of father and daughters admiring a flower arrangement in their garden is rather spoiled by the crack in the photo across the top of Maud's head, and the damage near the bottom left corner. Dealing with these (and other, smaller blemishes) allows you to [admire the subjects](#) without being distracted by the damage!



So, if you have photographs of members of the Atcherley family which I could share at Atcherley.org.uk, but you are concerned because they are damaged and might not be usable, send me some scans (there's an email link on the back page of this newsletter) and I will see what I can do! If the damage is too great for my limited talents, then I might well take the option of using the services of a professional photo restorer such as Claudia D'Souza (the [Photo Alchemist](#)), Neil Rhodes ([Image Restore](#)) or Nick Harris ([pick nic Photo Restoration Services](#)), all of whom follow me on Twitter. From what I've seen, all of them can work wonders!

If you would like to have a go at restoring some of your own family photos, you might find [Vivid-Pix Restore](#) (which has recently come to my attention through Dick Eastman's excellent [Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter](#)) useful. It doesn't include repair tools like a Clone Brush or Retouch which can be used on specific parts of an image, but it does enable cropping, rotating, and adjustments to colour and contrast across the whole picture (check out examples on the [Extreme Genes](#) blog). A useful feature is the ability to add 'meta data' (such as the copyright holder's name) to an image file. The latest version of Restore includes a 'zoom/transcribe' feature making it useful for working on genealogy documents as well as restoring photos. If I succumb to temptation and purchase this package, I will 'road test' it and let you know what I think!

Read all about it!

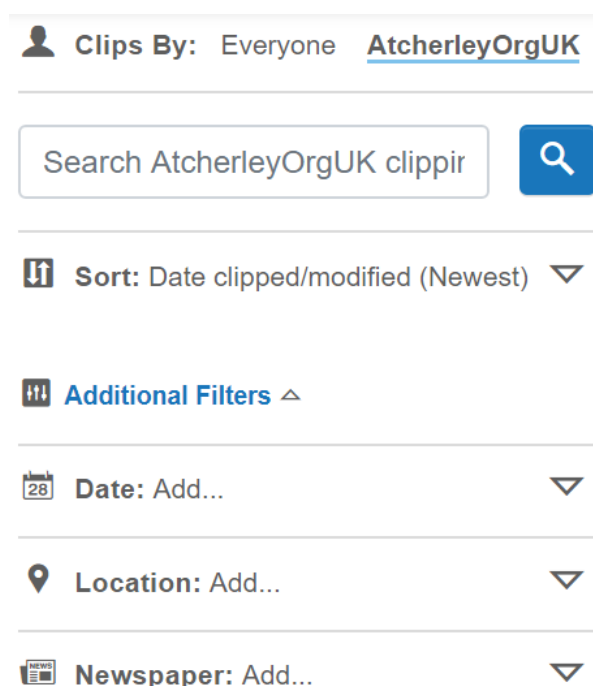
In the 12 years that I've been 'doing genealogy' a lot of incredibly useful records and other documents have been made more easily accessible through digitisation and/or indexing, with the results being put online. Amongst the most useful, for me, have been the many books, periodicals and newspapers. These often contain information about the lives of our ancestors, and the times and places they lived in, which would be difficult if not impossible to find elsewhere. This is one reason why I have created a Links page within the Resources section of Atcherley.org.uk dedicated to [Books, periodicals & newspapers](#). I've given it a couple of tweaks in the course of writing this article, but hopefully a full update will follow soon.

One of the websites on the above page which I want to sing the praises of here is [Newspapers.com](#). Yes, it's a subscription site and yes, it's part of Ancestry. It is also supremely useful to me as a source of information about Atcherleys (and their descendants and kin) in America – especially the Atcherleys of Hawaii. Paying a higher subscription for the 'Publisher Extra' part of the Newspapers.com collection has been more than worthwhile, giving access to lots of newspapers still covered by copyright and not available at the free [Chronicling America](#) website or elsewhere.

There's also a surprisingly large number of UK newspapers in there. Nothing to rival the [British Newspaper Archive](#), but the papers include the *Guardian* (from the days when it was the *Manchester Guardian*) and, I'm pretty sure, all the papers which formed part of the original project to digitise a swathe of newspapers from the British Library. (In the UK you may be able to access the latter as the *19th Century British Newspapers* via your local library membership.)

Best of all, there's a facility for taking digital 'clippings' of newspaper articles of interest and saving them – and these clippings are then available for *anyone* to look at. Currently I have just under 750 clippings, a large number to browse through manually! Fortunately clippings can be searched by keyword, filtered by date, location or newspaper, and sorted by newspaper publication date or the date when the clipping was made.

If you are interested in looking for Atcherleys among the [AtcherleyOrgUK clippings](#), be my guest!



Screen grab from Newspapers.com showing search facilities for clippings

And finally

So, how was it for you? I hope you found this first issue of *Love Atcherley* interesting, and that you would like to see more in the future. Feedback, in the form of emails, Facebook messages / posts, or tweets, can be sent to me via the links below. Feel free to forward copies of this newsletter to anyone who might like to read it; alternatively you can send them this link to download the newsletter from Atcherley.org.uk: <http://www.atcherley.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Love-Atcherley-01.pdf>

The Atcherley.org.uk / Love Atcherley masthead includes a photo of Richard Atcherley from [Wikimedia Commons](#), and one of Ada Mabel Shakeshaft née Atcherley courtesy of Malcolm White. All other images and text are © Steve Jackson except where otherwise stated.

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