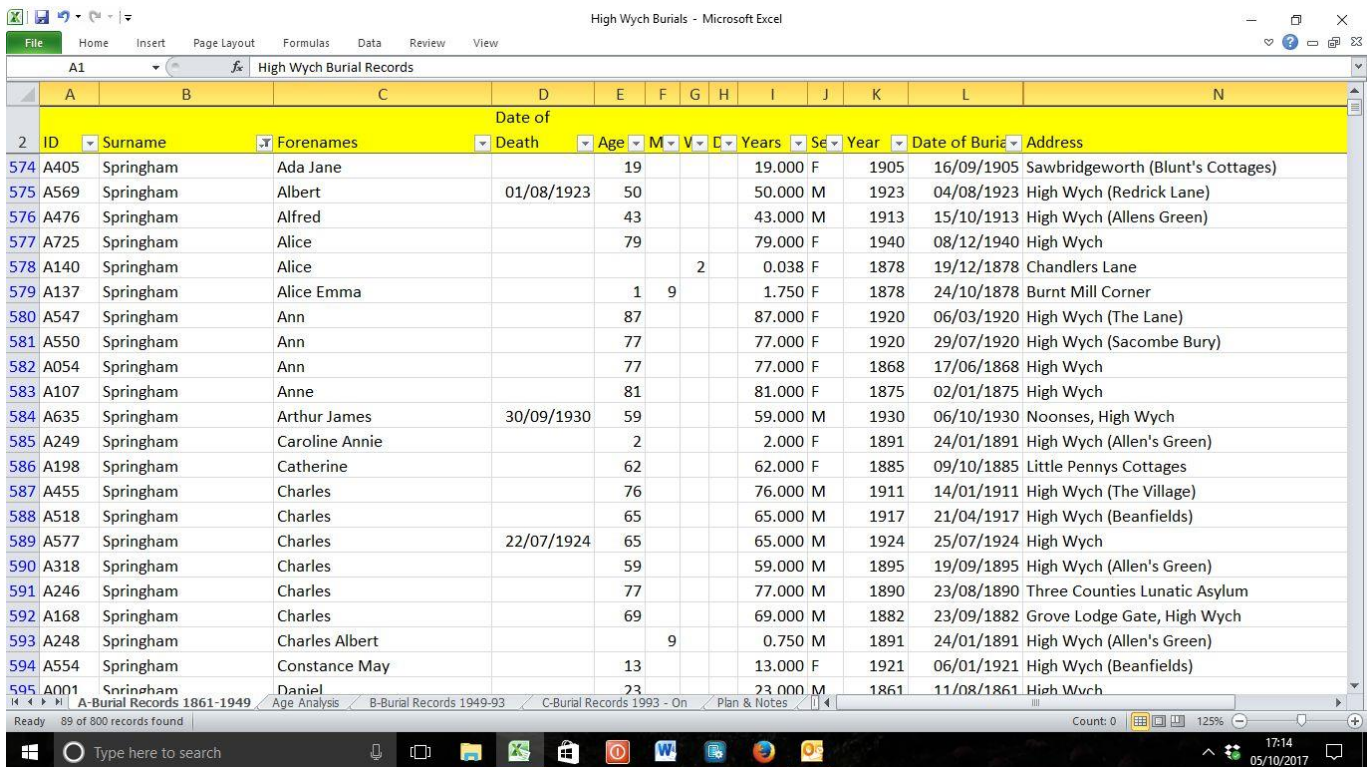


## High Wych History 61

### A farewell present from Anthony

As most of you may know, Anthony Giles, our vicar has left for pastures new and High Wych ecclesiastical parish is currently in an “interregnum”. Anthony and I met most mornings when we picked up our respective newspapers. Over the years we slowly got to know one another better. Despite our differences we got on well. We also liked to have a dig at one another, Anthony is of course a serious christian (well, he would be!); I am an ex catholic and hover between atheism and agnosticism. I remember us getting together over a pint at the rising sun to discuss the WW1 commemoration event of 1914-2014. We shared and still do share an interest in history. On one occasion we even visited Lambeth Palace Library to look at archive material concerning our parish. Anthony also got busy looking at our own parish records and started entering these on a spreadsheet. As “official” village historian I could hardly contain my excitement! Asking how far he had got became a standing joke between us. Well it took a long while but just two weeks before he left us Anthony delivered a spreadsheet listing all burial records between 1861 and 2017. Underneath please find a cross section. To make it a bit more interesting I have limited the records on show.



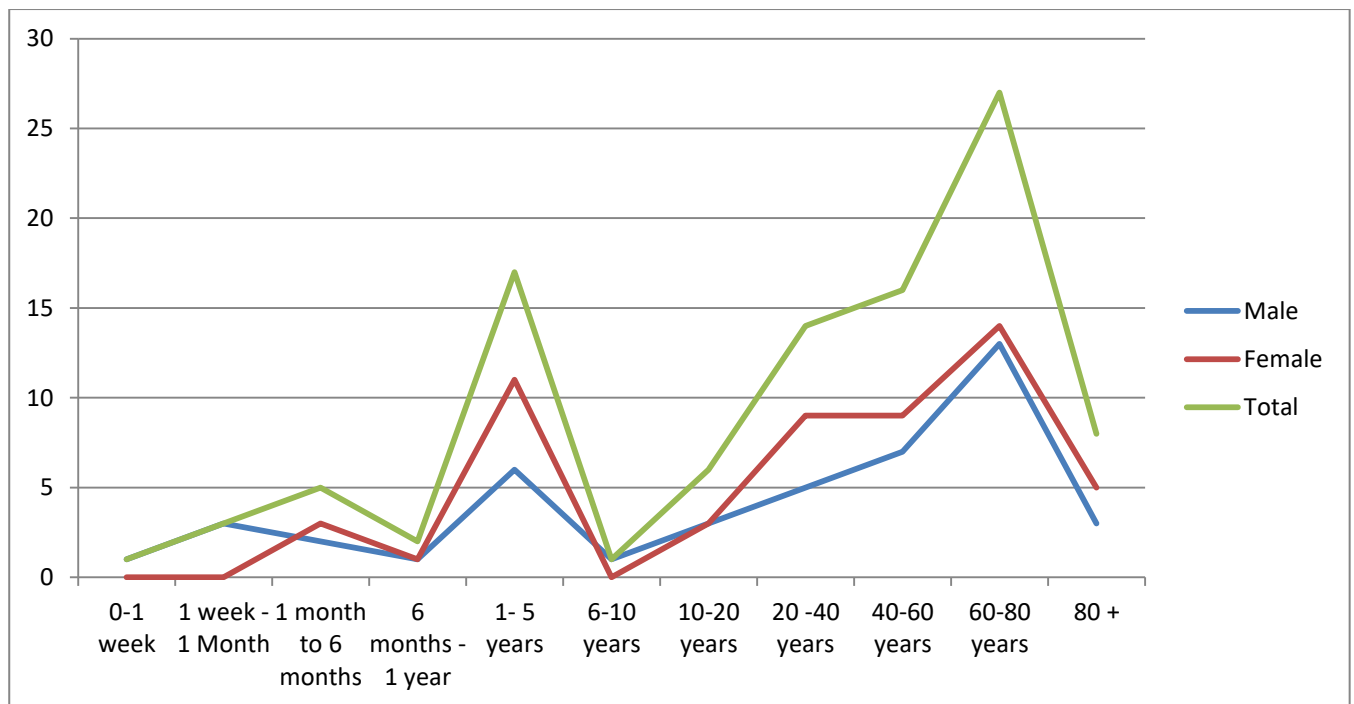
ID	Surname	Forenames	Date of Birth	Age	M	V	E	Years	Sex	Year	Date of Burial	Address
574	A405	Springham	Ada Jane	19				19.000	F	1905	16/09/1905	Sawbridgeworth (Blunt's Cottages)
575	A569	Springham	Albert	01/08/1923	50			50.000	M	1923	04/08/1923	High Wych (Redrick Lane)
576	A476	Springham	Alfred	43				43.000	M	1913	15/10/1913	High Wych (Allens Green)
577	A725	Springham	Alice	79				79.000	F	1940	08/12/1940	High Wych
578	A140	Springham	Alice			2		0.038	F	1878	19/12/1878	Chandlers Lane
579	A137	Springham	Alice Emma	1	9			1.750	F	1878	24/10/1878	Burnt Mill Corner
580	A547	Springham	Ann	87				87.000	F	1920	06/03/1920	High Wych (The Lane)
581	A550	Springham	Ann	77				77.000	F	1920	29/07/1920	High Wych (Sacombe Bury)
582	A054	Springham	Ann	77				77.000	F	1868	17/06/1868	High Wych
583	A107	Springham	Anne	81				81.000	F	1875	02/01/1875	High Wych
584	A635	Springham	Arthur James	30/09/1930	59			59.000	M	1930	06/10/1930	Noonses, High Wych
585	A249	Springham	Caroline Annie	2				2.000	F	1891	24/01/1891	High Wych (Allen's Green)
586	A198	Springham	Catherine	62				62.000	F	1885	09/10/1885	Little Pennys Cottages
587	A455	Springham	Charles	76				76.000	M	1911	14/01/1911	High Wych (The Village)
588	A518	Springham	Charles	65				65.000	M	1917	21/04/1917	High Wych (Beanfields)
589	A577	Springham	Charles	22/07/1924	65			65.000	M	1924	25/07/1924	High Wych
590	A318	Springham	Charles	59				59.000	M	1895	19/09/1895	High Wych (Allen's Green)
591	A246	Springham	Charles	77				77.000	M	1890	23/08/1890	Three Counties Lunatic Asylum
592	A168	Springham	Charles	69				69.000	M	1882	23/09/1882	Grove Lodge Gate, High Wych
593	A248	Springham	Charles Albert			9		0.750	M	1891	24/01/1891	High Wych (Allen's Green)
594	A554	Springham	Constance May	13				13.000	F	1921	06/01/1921	High Wych (Beanfields)
595	A001	Springham	Daniel	23				23.000	M	1861	11/08/1861	High Wych

**A screenshot of Anthony's spreadsheet showing lots of Springhams.**

This article will concentrate on the period between 1861 and 1949. Amongst the 799 people buried during that time there were in fact 89 called Springham. Other names mentioned frequently were Ward, there were 29 of that name, Fish of which there were 27 and Holden, Blackabye and Brace with 23 mentions each.

The very first funeral service held in St. James's High Wych took place on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August 1861. It concerned a 23 year old young man called Daniel Springham. Daniel lived in Redricks Lane with his father James and his mother Mary. Remarkably the second service, held only 5 days later was for another young person called Springham. Susan Spingham was only 21. Both families were headed by agricultural workers. As far as I have been able to gather they were not related, at least not closely.

Examining the spreadsheet leads to other more serious considerations however. Foremost amongst those is infant mortality. In the period covered there were church services for 11 children younger than one month, all in all 48 younger than a year and similarly 62 younger than five years. It may also be worth noting twice as many male children between 1 and 5 died (11) as females (6) But of course this sample is far too small to draw any conclusions from it.



**An age analysis graph showing High Wych Burials from 1861 to 1949**

The reason for this high infant mortality was of course poverty. This is also borne out by the high number of burials of people who gave Union House Bishop's Stortford or Union House Ware as their address. There were no less than 40 of them. Union House Stortford, the poor house, stood on Haymeads where the Herts & Essex Hospital is now situated. It was built in 1836/37 and functioned until 1930. The last inmate of the Bishops Stortford poor house to be buried in High Wych was a Mary Ann Howe who died age 65 and whose service was held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 1928. Similarly 617 graves or 77% of all graves were unmarked, in other words possibly just with a wooden cross and without a grave stone.

One centenarian is mentioned in the 1861 – 1949 burial records: Susan, or Susanna Wybrew, who was born Susan White in 1787, died here age 102. Her burial took place on 19<sup>th</sup> march 1949. Susan married Richard Wybrew on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1808 in Sawbridgeworth. She had at least 4 children and lived at Pole Hole Farm in 1841 and 1851, High Trees near Actons in 1861 and 1871 and finally in 1881 at 37 London Road with Hannah Depledges who was one of her daughters.

However, another famous High Wych centenarian does not figure in the spreadsheet but definitely did live around here. Elisabeth Smith was born in Eastwick in September 1767. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1793 she married Timothy Puckle who in the 1840s was a Miller in High Wych. She had 5 children and lived to 105. Frank Johnson our first vicar wrote about her in a letter to the papers as did Thomas Rivers II. Perhaps Elisabeth was buried in Eastwick where she was born.

There is a lot more information to be drawn from the spreadsheet and I am sure I will be publishing more on this at a future date.

Information for this article was indeed drawn from a spreadsheet provided by Anthony Giles, from an earlier article in this series, from Ancestry.co.uk and from HALS, Hertfordshire Archives and Library Services. Contributions to and help with this continuing History of High Wych are (is) always welcome. Please get in touch. Contact me at [theo@vandebilt.co.uk](mailto:theo@vandebilt.co.uk) or phone me at 01279 725468