William Bennett
1875 - 8 November 1918

Mary Jane Bennett (nee Day)
1881 - 29 January 1945

William Bennett was born in 1875, the fourth of nine children; Alfred John (7 March 1871), Laura Eliza (October 1872), George (1874), Elizabeth (18 May 1877), Albert Jesse (25 November 1879), Charles Herbert (17 June 1880), Thomas Henry (7 November 1880) and Daisy (July 1886). Another unnamed sibling had died., in Lewes, East Sussex his parents were Alfred Bennett and Elizabeth Stedman Cox who came from Cuckfield.

The 1881 census records William, then aged 5 years, living with his parents in St. Nicholas Lane, Maresfield. In 1891 when William was 15 years old, they were living in Nutley Street, Maresfield. In 1901 they had moved to Danehill and by 1911 had moved to Horsted Keynes.

William married Mary Jane Day in 1901 in the Uckfield District.
They set up home at Folly Cottage, Danehill. William's occupation at that time was a Pit Sawyer.
The 1901 census records William and Mary Jane living at Folly Cottage, Danehill.

In the 1911 census they were recorded living in Danehill in 6 rooms with children; Elizabeth Sarah Jane, William James, Lilly May, and George Arthur Charles they had been married for 10 years. Also, a lodger Harriet Scott, who was a widow aged 69 years.

William died on 8th November 1918 aged 42

Mary Jane died 29 January 1945 aged 63

Left: George 'Shon' Arthur Charles Bennett, son of William and Mary Bennett, taken at Freshfield Lane Brickworks, taken between 1950-1960. Right: Daisy Bennett with her husband Ralph Cook and daughter Esme

Elizabeth Bennett (Cox)
April 1842 - 1923

Alfred Bennett
1844 - 1927

Elizabeth was born in April 1842 to Eliza Stedman Diplock and John Cox and in 1851 lived in Uckfield, Sussex, where she was still living in 1861. Her brother John died in 1868 when she was 25 years old. She married Alfred Bennett in 1871 when she was 28 years old. Alfred and Elizabeth lived on The Green, Horsted Keynes in 1871 in 3 rooms.

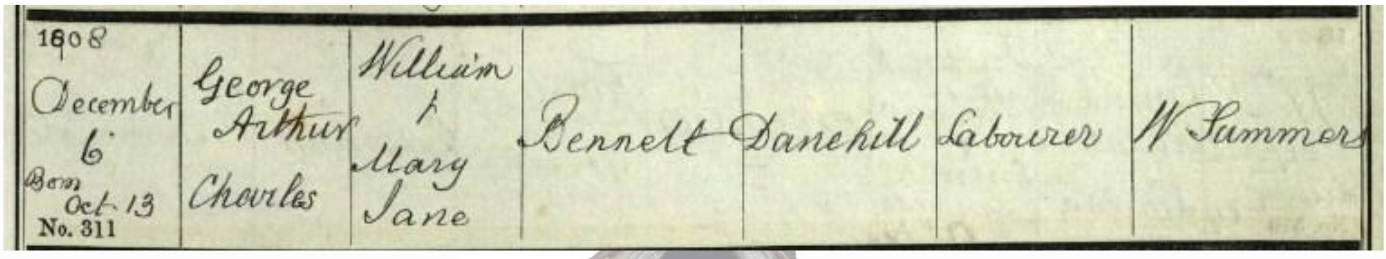
Alfred and Elizabeth had nine children: Alfred John (7 March 1871), Laura Eliza (October 1872), George (1874), Elizabeth (18 May 1877), Albert Jesse (25 November 1879), Charles Herbert (17 June 1880), Thomas Henry (7 November 1880) and Daisy (July 1886). Another unnamed sibling had died.

Alfred died aged 83 years in 1927, and Elizabeth aged 80 in 1923.

Charles Arthur Bennett
13 October 1908 - 15 December 1991

Charles Arthur, sometimes recorded as Arthur, or Shon Bennett or George, was born on 13th October 1908 and baptised in Danehill on 6th December 1908.

His parents were William Bennett and Mary Jane Day.



1908 December 6 Born Oct. 13 No. 311	George Arthur Charles	William & Mary Jane	Bennett	Danehill	Labourer	W Summers

George Arthur Charles Bennett's baptismal records

In 1911 Charles was living with his parents in Danehill in a house with 6 rooms. Charles is 2 years old and his siblings are Elizabeth Jane who is 10, William James 8, and Lilly May who is 4 years old.

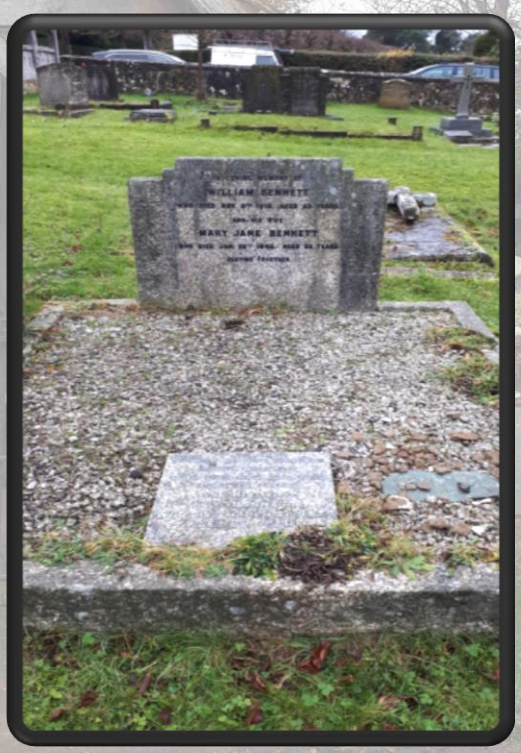
Charles married Ivy Trigg in April 1932 in Danehill.
He worked at the Freshfield Lane brickworks and was awarded the MBE. (See History of Freshfield Lane Brickworks by Shon Bennett c. 1980. Source; hardyfamilyhistory.co.uk

Ivy Bennett (nee Trigg)
1908 - 15 March 1995

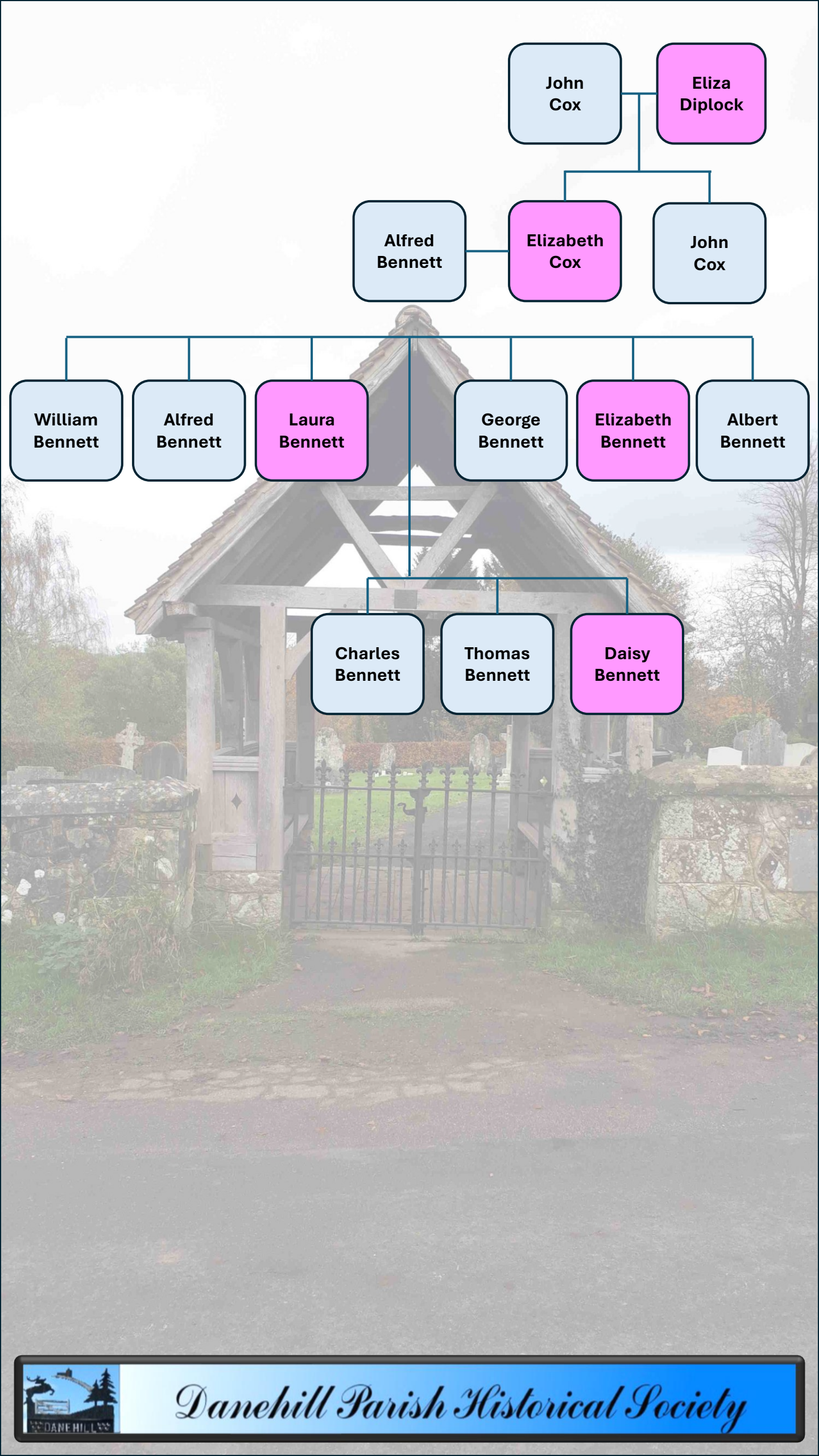
It is unclear whether this is the same Ivy Trigg who was born in Wivelsfield c. 1908 Ivy's parents are listed as Frederick W. Trigg who was an orchid grower from Gloucester, and Clara ? who came from Yorkshire.
A sister Joan is recorded born in 1910, and in 1911 the census lists them all living at 1, Diamond Cottages, Lindfield in 4 rooms.

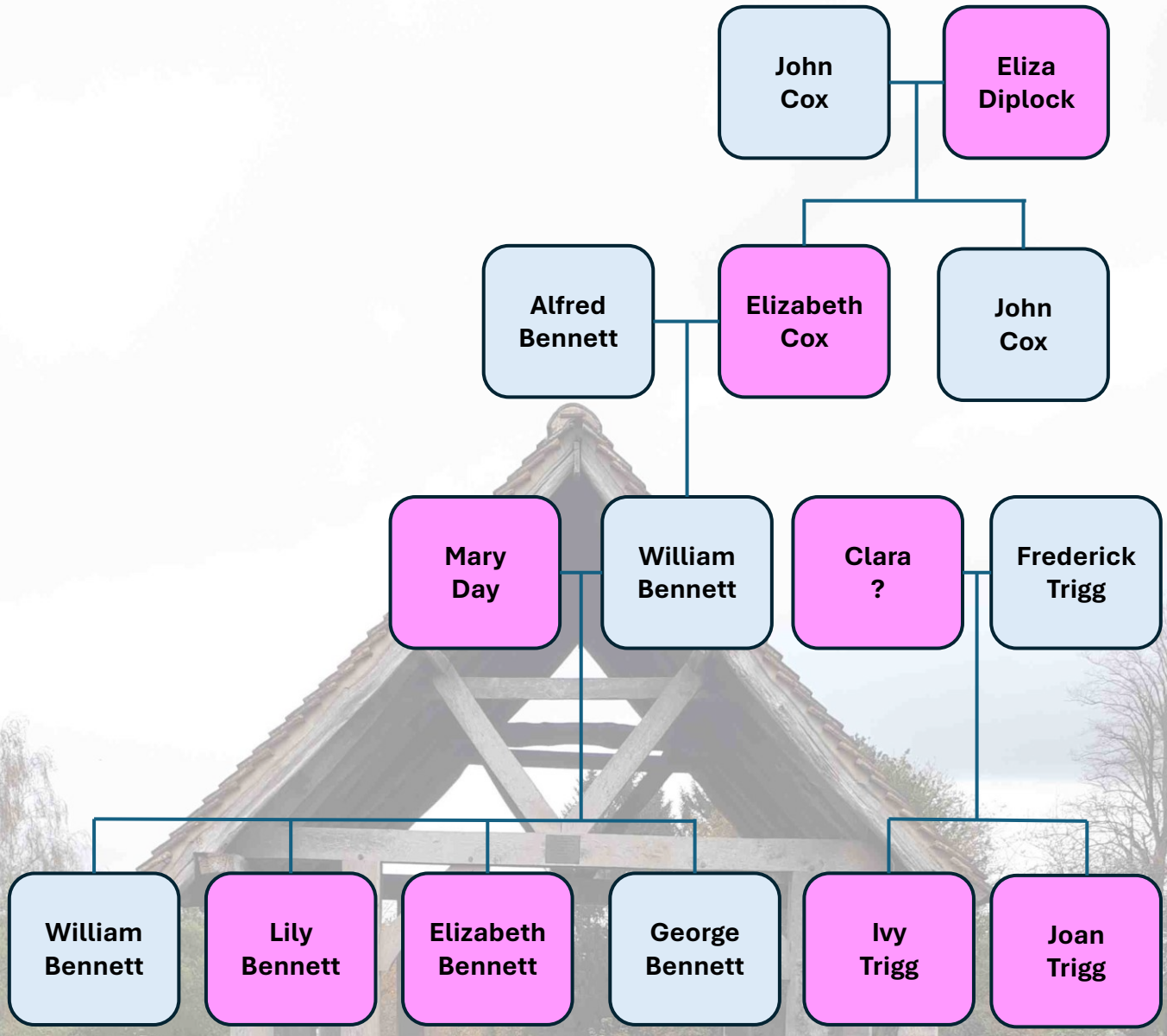
This entry cannot be verified.

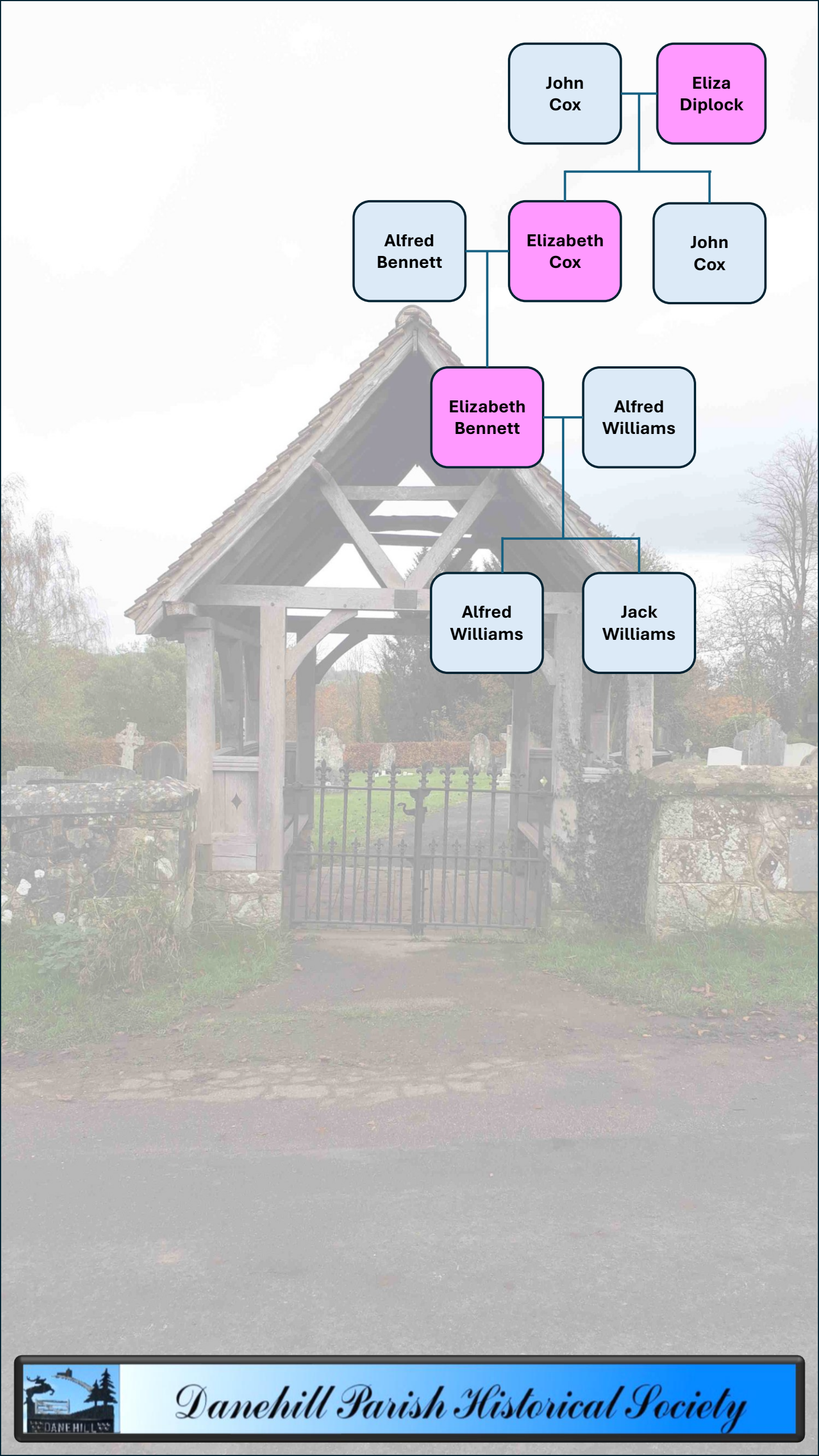
George Arthur Charles Bennett, died 15th December 1991, aged 83, and is memorialized at Danehill cemetery with his wife Ivy, who died 15 March 1995 aged 87. She was buried on 1st June 1995.

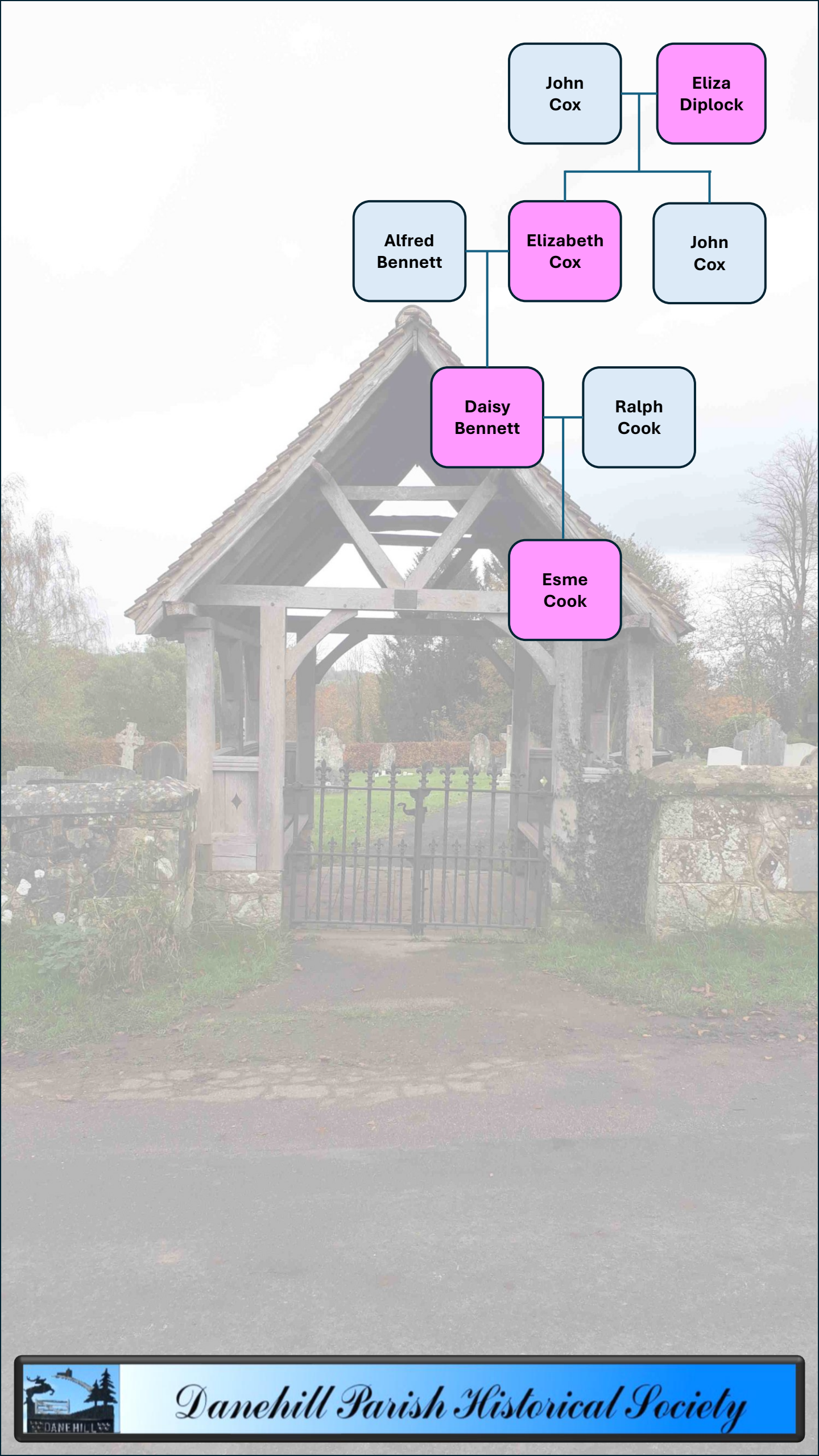


William and Mary Jane are buried together at Danehill cemetery. There is also a memorial for their son George Arthur Bennett and his wife Ivy


John Cox
Eliza Diplock
Alfred Bennett
Elizabeth Cox
John Cox
William Bennett
Alfred Bennett
Laura Bennett
George Bennett
Elizabeth Bennett
Albert Bennett
Charles Bennett
Thomas Bennett
Daisy Bennett


John Cox
Eliza Diplock
Alfred Bennett
Elizabeth Cox
John Cox
Mary Day
William Bennett
Clara ?
Frederick Trigg
William Bennett
Lily Bennett
Elizabeth Bennett
George Bennett
Ivy Trigg
Joan Trigg


John Cox
Eliza Diplock
Alfred Bennett
Elizabeth Cox
John Cox
Elizabeth Bennett
Alfred Williams
Alfred Williams
Jack Williams


John Cox
Eliza Diplock
Alfred Bennett
Elizabeth Cox
John Cox
Daisy Bennett
Ralph Cook
Esme Cook

John Bennett
1816 - 1886

John was born in Fletching in 1816. He married Mary Ann Pearce, born in Fletching 11 August 1813, on 25 December 1839.

The 1851 Census shows John age 35, a broom maker, his wife Ann and his children, Elizabeth (10), Alfred (8), Thomas (3) and Caeser (1), living at Stonebarn. They had another son, George (later known as William George), in 1853.

In the 1881 Census he is described as a broom maker for Her Majesty, employing his son Caeser.

John died in October 1886 and is buried in Danehill.

John and Mary Ann are buried together in Danehill Graveyard

The children of John and Mary Bennett

Elizabeth Anne Bennett
1840 - 1852

Elizabeth was born in Fletching in 1840. She was baptized in Trinity Chapel on 30 April 1840. She was buried in Danehill on 16 April 1852.

George (aka William George) Bennett
1853 - 1934

George was born in Danehill in 1853. He was a bricklayer.

George married Caroline Browning, born in Fletching in 1858, daughter of James Browning, in Crawley Down on 17 November 1877. Caroline died in 1883, buried in Danehill on 19 June 1883.

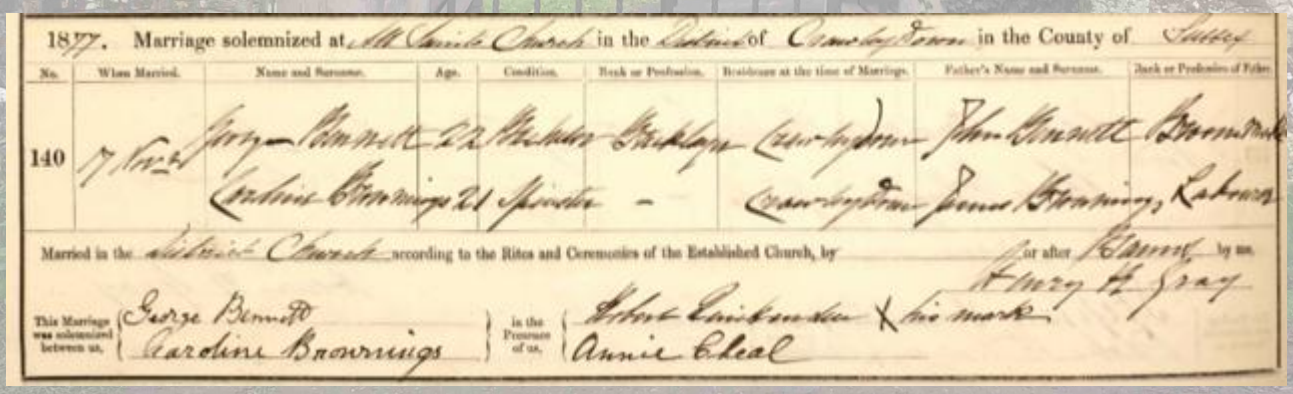
They had a daughter Lucy Ann, baptised 8 September 1878 in Crawley Down.

George married Mary Ann Gasson on 17 June 1886 in Danehill. The marriage register shows that George, a widower, was the son of John Bennett, broom maker, and Mary Ann daughter of Humphrey Gasson, carpenter.

Their children, who were all baptised in Danehill Church were George (1887), Agnes Mary (1889), Fanny (1890), William (1895), Albert (1897) (who was also known as 'Breeches'), Annie (1900) and Walter (1902).

George is described in the registers sometimes as a carpenter and sometimes as a bricklayer. He was a local builder.

He is known as William George in Electoral Registers from 1918 and in the 1921 Census.



1877. Marriage solemnized at St Giles Church in the District of Crawley Down in the County of Sussex

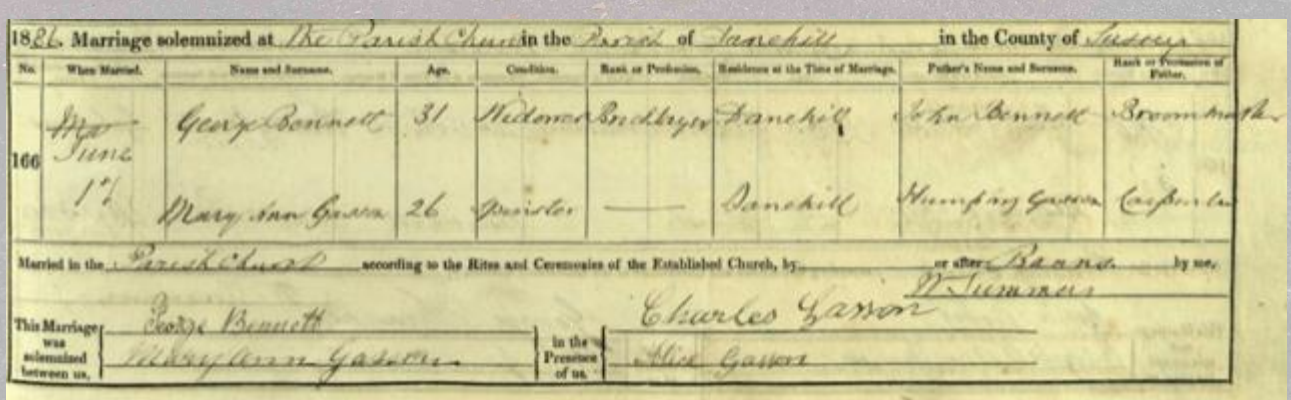
No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
140	17 Nov	George Bennett	22	Bachelor	Bricklayer	Crawley Down	John Bennett	Broom maker
		Caroline Brownings	21	Spinster	-	Crawley Down	James Browning	Labourer

Married in the District Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by ... or after Banns, by me, Henry H. Gray

This Marriage was solemnized between us: George Bennett, Caroline Brownings

In the Presence of us: Albert Cruikshanks (his mark X), Annie Cheal

George Bennett & Mary Ann Gasson's marriage certificate



1886. Marriage solemnized at The Parish Church in the Parish of Danehill in the County of Sussex

No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the Time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
166	May 17	George Bennett	31	Widower	Bricklayer	Danehill	John Bennett	Broom maker
		Mary Ann Gasson	26	Spinster	—	Danehill	Humphrey Gasson	Carpenter

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by ... or after Banns, by me, W. Tuppen

This Marriage was solemnized between us: George Bennett, Mary Ann Gasson

In the Presence of us: Charles Gasson, Alice Gasson

The children of John and Mary Bennett

Thomas Henry Bennett
1848 - 1934

Thomas was born in Fletching in 1848. He was baptized in Trinity Chapel on 28 May 1848.

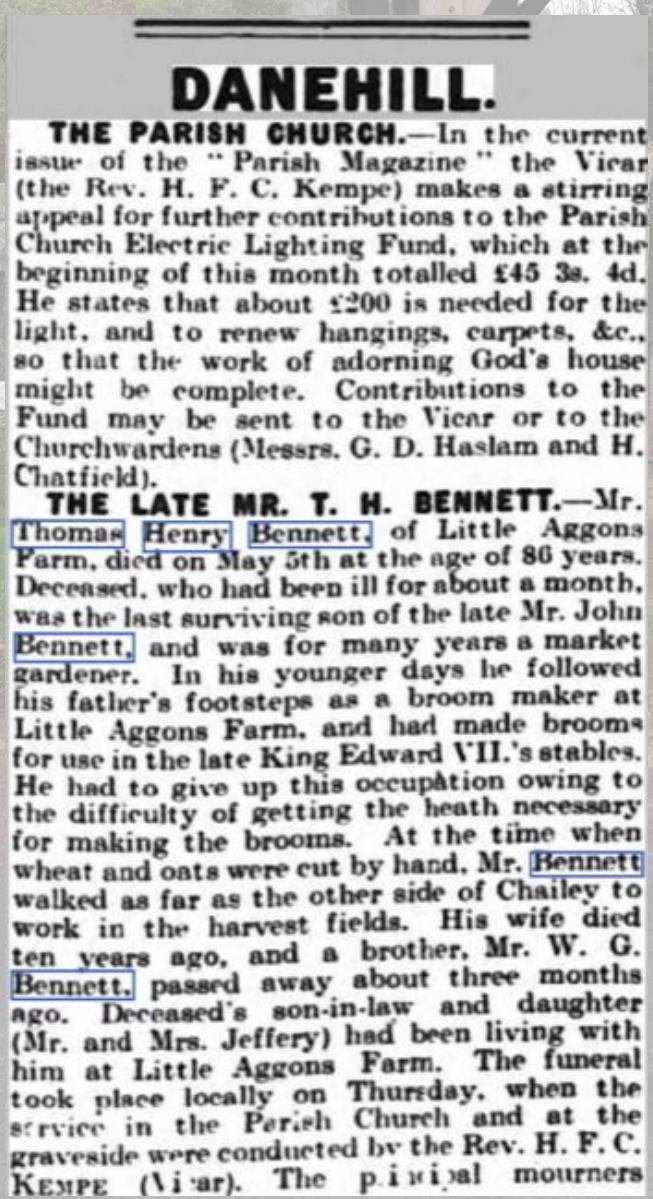
He married Harriett Baker, daughter of William Baker, born in Fletching in 1847, in Danehill on 25 December 1868.

At 1871 Census his occupation was journeyman broom maker living in Chelwood Common. At 1881 Census his occupation was bricklayer's labourer living in Ashdown Cottage. At 1891 Census his occupation is broom maker still living in Ashdown Cottage. At 1901 & 1911Census's he was living at Little Aggons. At 1921 Census, still living at Little Aggons, he was now a fruit grower.

They had two daughters, Fanny born 1870 and Edith born 1885. Twin sons, Alfred William (buried 29 August 1881) and Thomas Henry (buried 5 September 1881) both died as infants.

Edith married Hezikiah Jeffrey on 28 August 1907. Edith and two children, Sidney Frank and Madge Edith were visitors at Little Aggons Farm on the day of the 1921 Census. Hezikiah and eldest son Thomas Edward were at home in Burgess Hill.

They also had an adopted child, Annie Edith (Punnett) born 1903.



DANEHILL.

THE PARISH CHURCH.—In the current issue of the "Parish Magazine" the Vicar (the Rev. H. F. C. Kempe) makes a stirring appeal for further contributions to the Parish Church Electric Lighting Fund, which at the beginning of this month totalled £45 3s. 4d. He states that about £200 is needed for the light, and to renew hangings, carpets, &c., so that the work of adorning God's house might be complete. Contributions to the Fund may be sent to the Vicar or to the Churchwardens (Messrs. G. D. Haslam and H. Chatfield).

THE LATE MR. T. H. BENNETT.—Mr. Thomas Henry Bennett, of Little Aggons Farm, died on May 5th at the age of 86 years. Deceased, who had been ill for about a month, was the last surviving son of the late Mr. John Bennett, and was for many years a market gardener. In his younger days he followed his father's footsteps as a broom maker at Little Aggons Farm, and had made brooms for use in the late King Edward VII.'s stables. He had to give up this occupation owing to the difficulty of getting the heath necessary for making the brooms. At the time when wheat and oats were cut by hand, Mr. Bennett walked as far as the other side of Chailey to work in the harvest fields. His wife died ten years ago, and a brother, Mr. W. G. Bennett, passed away about three months ago. Deceased's son-in-law and daughter (Mr. and Mrs. Jeffery) had been living with him at Little Aggons Farm. The funeral took place locally on Thursday, when the service in the Parish Church and at the graveside were conducted by the Rev. H. F. C. KEMPE (Vicar). The principal mourners

BREECHES" BENNETT'S MEMORIES”

Recalled by his son, Francis

During 1915, my father, Albert Bennett (also known as Breeches) along with his two elder brothers, answered Lord Kitchener's call. He was seventeen years of age, but he convinced the Recruiting Sergeant he was two years older. He accepted the King's shilling, and swore allegiance under the name of Albert Bertie Bennett (sic)

He received his baptism of fire during the Battle of the Somme in 1916 as an infantryman with the Royal Sussex Regiment. He advanced far too eagerly and was struck by shrapnel from his own artillery. He was badly wounded and had received a “Blighty one”. During the hazardous cross-channel journey home by hospital ship he was thrilled to learn that they were heading for the Sussex port of Newhaven. As was normal routine, each wounded soldier was questioned by medical orderlies as to the location of their home. Father replied that he lived fifteen miles from Newhaven, very confident that he would be transferred to a military hospital in Brighton or Shoreham. He was to endure a painful 350 mile journey to a military hospital in Hexham, Northumberland ! In accordance with military logic, wounded Scotsman and Geordies were to sample the pleasures of Brighton or Shoreham-by- Sea!

Home leave was very welcome and father was quite fortunate in this respect. On one occasion and within an hour of his leaving home to return to the Front, his eldest brother, George, appeared on the doorstep. Uncle George had arrived from Salonika following his involvement in the Dardenelles Campaign and for which he was rewarded with bouts of malaria. He reminded my father that they had not seen each other for over twelve months, it would be churlish of him to return immediately to his unit, and suggested that the decent thing was to go AWOL (Absent without Leave). Father agreed and they spent several enjoyable days together during his extended leave. In due course two Military policemen arrived to arrest him. He was marched to Sheffield Park Station where they boarded a train, changing at Lewes en route for Newhaven Harbour.

One of the Military Policemen involved in his arrest was Charlie Hanscombe, who later lived for many years in Stone Quarry Cottage, Chelwood Gate. During his latest working days my father saw a great deal of Mr Hanscombe and they often reminisced about mutual experiences during the War to end all Wars.

When leaving the Front for home leave troops were required to take all their kit with them, including their rifle, however it was strictly forbidden to take live ammunition. Many were prepared to beat the system, they were aware that it was the practice of the Military Police to search every tenth man at the point of embarkation, and if caught with live ammunition were sent back to the front line. Father decided to take the risk, was not searched and duly arrived at Danehill with his armoury. On his first day at home he decided to terrorise the wild life of Jack o' Toms wood. Unfortunately, he was not aware that Tom Baker, a local character, was also in the vicinity. Tom was startled to hear bullets whistling through the foliage, he raced to Tanyard Lane trying to convince all whom he encountered, that the Kaiser's army had landed and was currently advancing through Jack o' Toms wood with hostile intent. Much later that evening, two spirited neighbours, Charlie and Molly Baker, decided to conduct a loud family argument on the path leading to their front door. It continued unabated and father was determined to put a stop to it. With his rifle cocked, he crept under cover of a stone wall, until he was close to the combatants. He then discharged two volleys into the night air. The altercation ceased abruptly and Charlie and Molly fled indoors. My grandfather pulled up the bedroom sash window and peered into the darkness “ Cor Blimey Mary !” he exclaimed, over his shoulder, “I do believe the boy has been and gone and shot 'em.” (*Charles and Molly Baker were living at Stonehouse Farm, Chelwood Common which had been sold on the 25th April 1917)*

The troops who fought in the trenches during World War 1 would have experienced traumatic and horrible events which they preferred to forget and put to the back of their minds. My father, who was wounded twice, fought at both the Somme and Passchendaele (1917). He never volunteered any recollections of trench warfare, and I was not prepared to press him on the matter. He preferred to recall the lighter side, which involved home leave, military hospitals, training camps and the local estaminets.

I can recall just two anecdotes which could be construed as involving “front line experience”

The first involved Fritz Carter, a popular local boy who perished during the conflict. My father was able to have a brief conversation with Fritz, just before the latter advanced “up the line” on that final, fatal, morning.

The second occurred on a fine sunny day when there was a lull in the fighting. An officer ordered them to leave their trenches, their de-lousing and bully beef sandwiches and muster by the side of the road. A few minutes later, and with great fanfare, a high-ranking officer rode up on a horse. Without bothering to dismount, he addressed the assembled ranks by briefly confirming that they were doing a great job and that he thanked them for their efforts. With that, he turned and galloped off - back to his comfortable chateau. a long way from the front-line. Like all his comrades, Father was not impressed by this rare glimpse of the “top brass”.

Left: Albert ‘Breeches’ Bennett

Right: Breeches in a school photo in 1907

Left: Albert aged 2

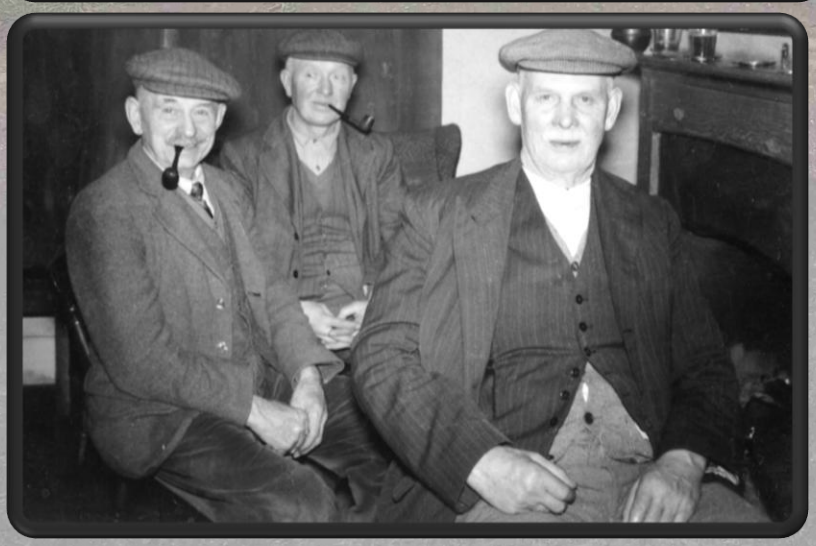
Right: Albert & George Bennett

Top: Group of recruits at Cooden Camp, includes Charles Hanscombe 2nd from left

Second: A photographs of Albert taken at a Military Hospital in France – He is 3rd from the left at the back

Third: A photographs of Albert taken at a Military Hospital in France he is seated on the ground, 3rd from the left.

Fourth: Albert returned to Chelwood Common. Here he is seated in the centre in public bar of the “Coach and Horses”



Caesar Bennett
1850 - 11 September 1924

Charlotte Eliza Bennett (nee Gearing)
1861 - 15 August 1929

Caesar Bennett was born 1850 his parents were John Bennett and Mary Ann Gasson.
In 1871 aged 19 years he was listed on the census as a broom maker journeyman, living in a cottage in Chelwood Common.

By 1881 he is recorded as 27 years old, this is perhaps a mistake by the enumerator. His occupation at that time is a labourer, and he is living in Chelwood Common next to Stone House.

He married Charlotte Eliza Gearing , daughter of Henry Gearing, on 23 December 1886 in Danehill Church.

The 1891 census records Caeser as married to Charlotte, who was born in Lindfield. They had a son, Reginald Caeser, who is just one year old.

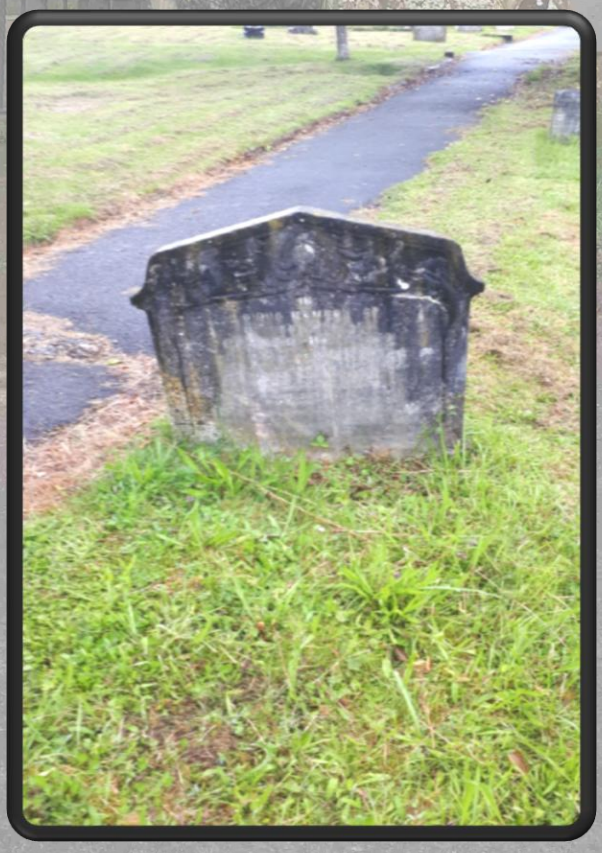
In 1891 the family were living in a cottage near Clay Cottage in Chelwood Common. Caesar's occupation was a broom maker.

By 1901 Caesar is 49 years old, still making brooms and living on his "own means" which is self employed, working at home. Their son Reginald is 11 years old and they live in Aggons Road, Danehill.

1911 finds them living in 3 rooms in Chelwood Gate. Caesar is still working as a broom maker. Caesar and Charlotte have been married for 23 years.

Caesar Bennett died 11th September 1924, aged 74

Charlotte Eliza Bennett died 15th August 1929, aged 68.



Caesar and Charlotte are buried together in Danehill Graveyard

Reginald Caesar Bennett
3 May 1899 - 31 July 1917

Reginald was born on 3rd May 1899. He was the Son of Caesar and Charlotte Bennett of Field View, Chelwood Gate. He was baptised in Danehill on 30th June 1889 and attended Danehill School.

In 1911 Reginald was recorded as a domestic gardener.

He was a Private during the war, of "B" Company, 12th Battalion of The Royal Sussex Regiment, G3402.

He was killed in action on 31 July 1917, aged 28. He is buried in the New Irish Farm Cemetery, Grave XIV A5.

The late Mr Jack Baker remembered him whistling on his way to work for Mr Pinker. He enlisted at Haywards Heath before October 1914, shown as a recruit in the Parish Magazine. The *East Grinstead Observer* twice reported that Reginald had been wounded on 29th July and 23 September 1916. He was killed near Ypres on 27th July 1917, he is remembered on his parent's memorial in Danehill Cemetery.

Reginald Caesar Bennett

Reginald Caesar Bennett is remembered on Danehill's war memorial

John Bennett

Mary Ann Pearce

Caroline Browning

George Bennett

Alfred Bennett

Ceaser Bennett

Elizabeth Bennett

Thomas Bennett

Mary Ann Gasson

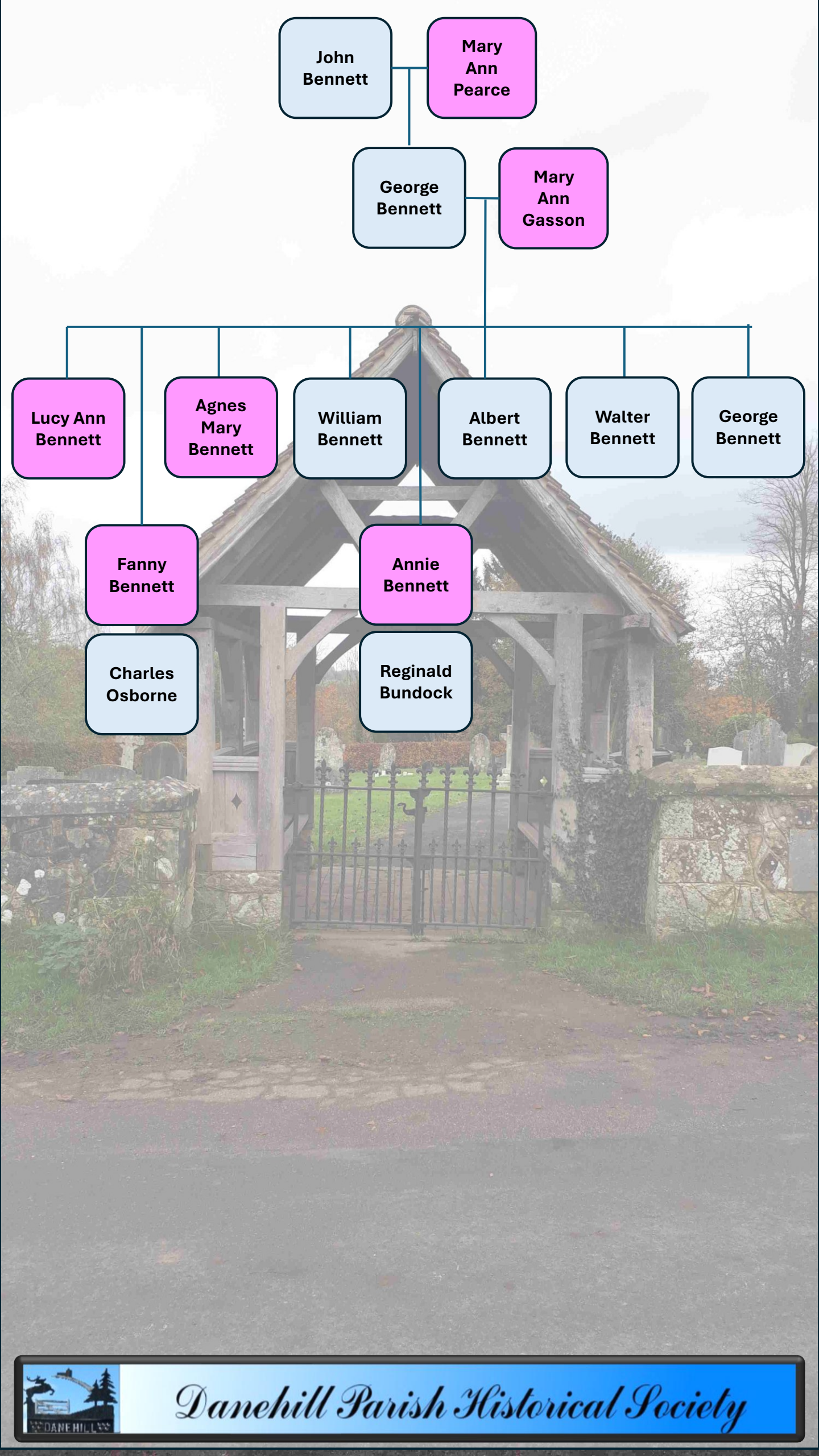
Charlotte ?

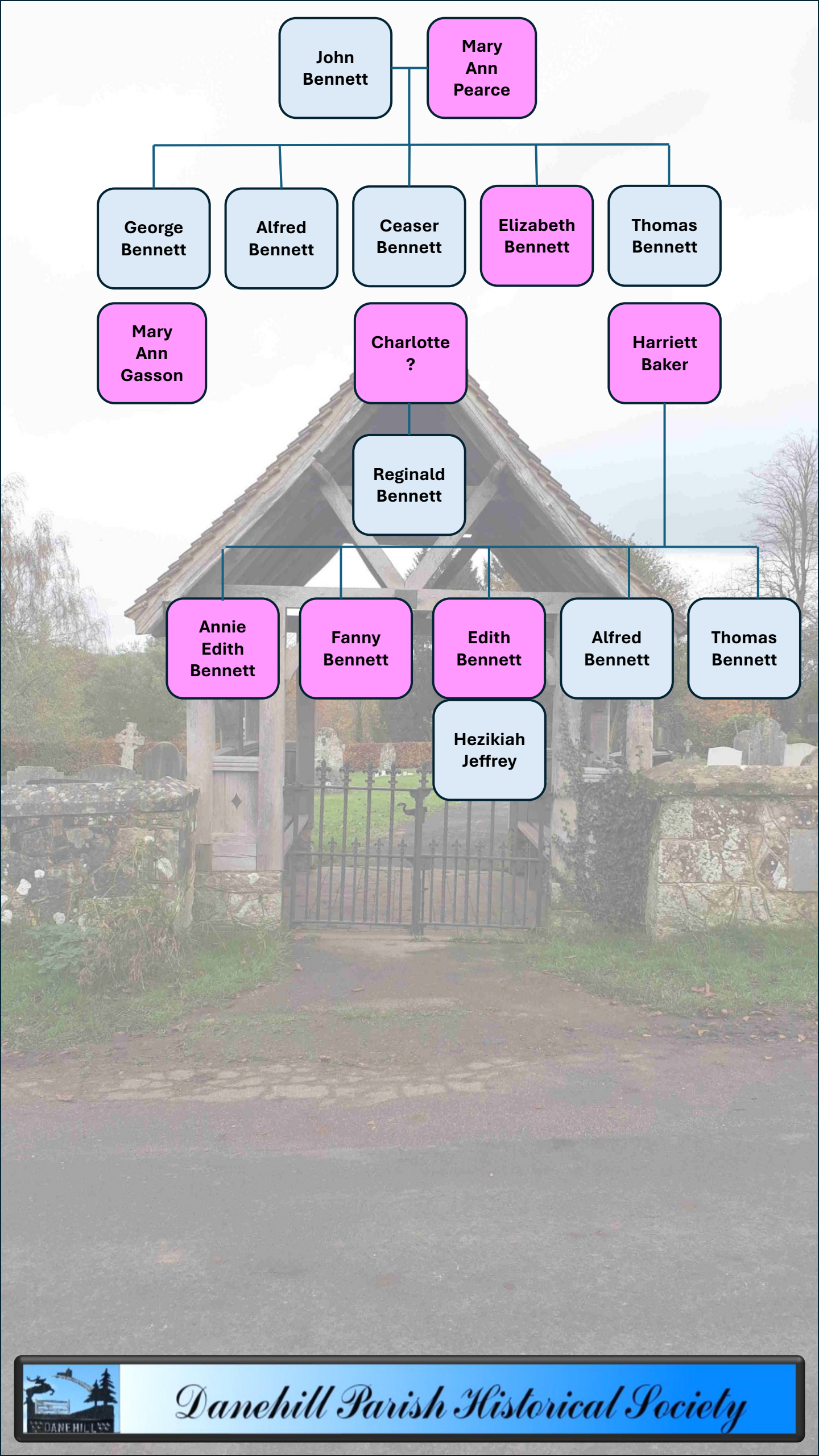
Harriett Baker

Lucy Ann Browning

Reginald Bennett

Albert & George Bennett


John Bennett
Mary Ann Pearce
George Bennett
Mary Ann Gasson
Lucy Ann Bennett
Agnes Mary Bennett
William Bennett
Albert Bennett
Walter Bennett
George Bennett
Fanny Bennett
Charles Osborne
Annie Bennett
Reginald Bundock


John Bennett
Mary Ann Pearce
George Bennett
Alfred Bennett
Ceaser Bennett
Elizabeth Bennett
Thomas Bennett
Mary Ann Gasson
Charlotte ?
Harriett Baker
Reginald Bennett
Annie Edith Bennett
Fanny Bennett
Edith Bennett
Alfred Bennett
Thomas Bennett
Hezikiah Jeffrey

HARRIET BENNETT (nee Goldsmith)
12 February 1815 – March 1886

Harriet Goldsmith was born on 12th February 1815 in Fletching.

Her father was William Goldsmith an agricultural labourer from Buxted and her mother was Mary Burnett.

She was baptised on 16th April 1815 at St. Andrew and St. Mary, Fletching.

She married James Bennett on 21st March 1840 at the same church as her baptism.

The 1851 census records them living at Toll Gate, Fletching, they have 4 children, Mary 11, Eliza 9, Martha 3, and Lucy who is 1 years old. A son James was born later in 1854.

Her husband James is listed as an agricultural labourer.

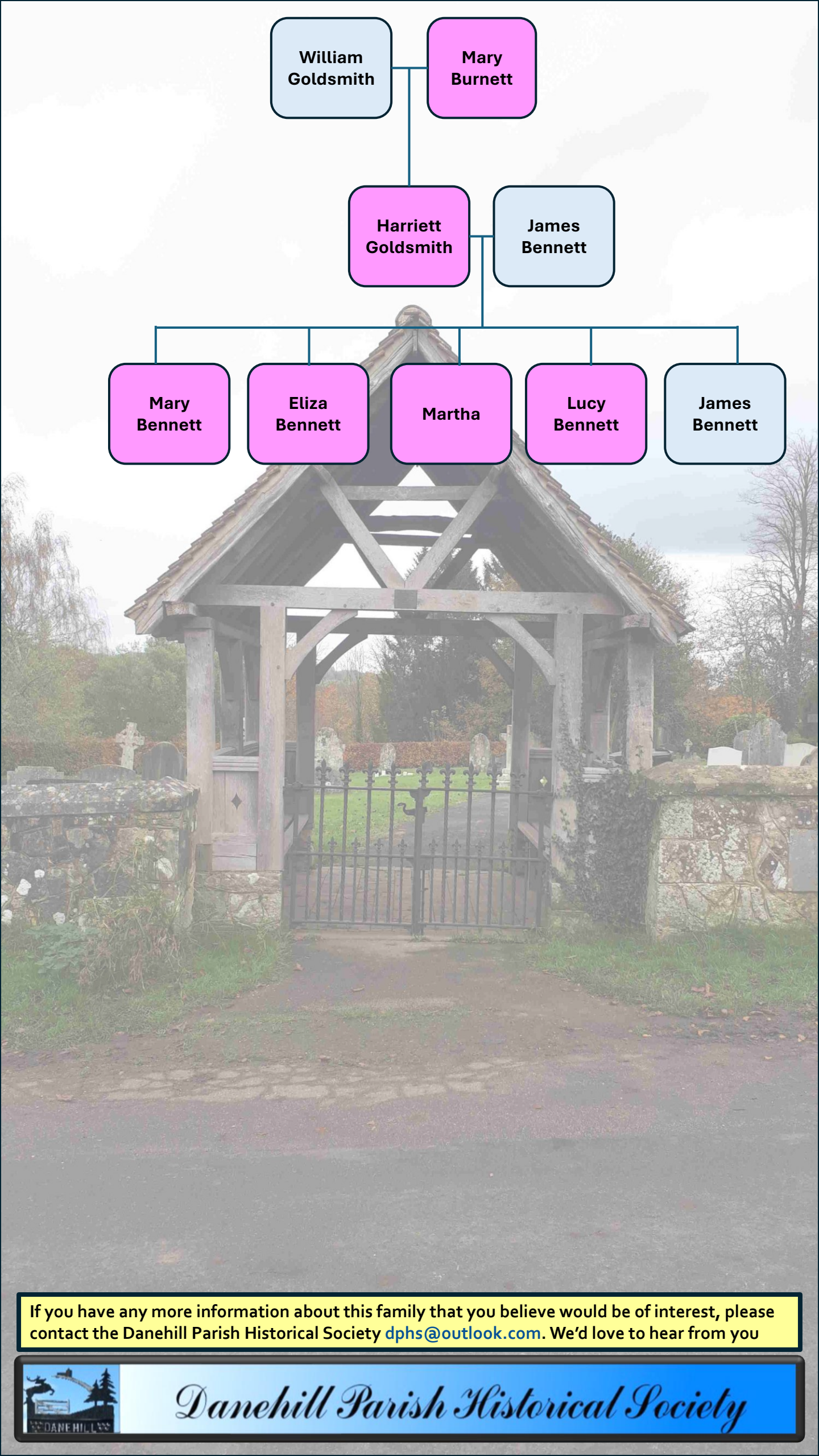
In 1861 they are living at Noddy Cottage, Danehill.

In 1871 they have just two children living at home James who is now 17 and Lucy who is 21 years old. The census records them at Danehurst Cottages, Danehill.

By 1881 all their children have left home and James and Harriet have a granddaughter, Elizabeth Lindfield who is 11 years old, living with them, at Shapes Cottage which is near Mount Noddy.

Harriet died in March 1886 aged 71, and James 3 months later in June 1886.

Harriett Bennett is buried at Danehill cemetery



If you have any more information about this family that you believe would be of interest, please contact the Danehill Parish Historical Society dphs@outlook.com. We'd love to hear from you

Danehill Parish Historical Society