Update V71 – 15.2.2017
New Total: 32,668 people
New names: Fallows 22; Hoxworth 21
Main increases: Illidge 56; Roberts 38; Clowes 37; Turner 36; Hough 29; Done 24; Muskett 20; Goodier 19; Whittle 13; Hurst 12

A new family is that of Samuel Fallows and sons, watermen from the Northwich area, who are linked to the Verdins of Witton by the marriage of his daughter Elizabeth to Robert Verdin in 1850.

Further links between West Lancashire and Cheshire boatmen appear with the marriage of Mary, daughter of the Burscough couple John Worthington and Benigna nee Lamb, to John James Hoxworth of Runcorn, and of Mary's brother James Worthington to Maria Kirkham of Runcorn. The Hoxworths are descended from waterman John Oxworth of Warrington, whose family name changed spelling the the mid-1800s.

The wife of William Carrington (b1861 son of Ellen Carrington and John Gill) has now been identified as Mary b1858 Wigan, daughter of James Prescott and Ann Sherman, not Mary b1861 Lydiate, daughter of James Prescott and Frances Rimmer as we previously had it. Her age and birthplace now match the census entries.

We have developed two inter-married Turner families in which Thomas and Ann, children of Henry and Martha Turner (Halsall and Wigan), married Martha and William, children of James and Catherine Turner (Shevington and Halsall) in the late 1870s. After Ann's husband William died in 1900, she married his widowed brother Richard in 1904.

The Wignall family descended from Richard b1782 and Ann (nee Ashcroft) of Rufford has been separated from that of Richard b1823 Eccleston, whose parents were also called Richard and Ann. Other increases are expansions of Mersey and Cheshire watermen's families.

Update V70 – 15.10.2016
New Total: 31,763 people
New name: Oxworth, 15
Main increases: Rose +58; Shaw +46; Clare +44; Illidge +43; Brown +27; Weedall +19; Banner, Ogden +17; Fyles, Sumner +12; Ireland, Maddock +11; Orme, Perry +10

A new family in our main tree is that of John Oxworth of Warrington and Runcorn, whose surname appeared as Hoxworth in some records. His descendants will be developed further in our next update. Otherwise, apart from additions to the Fyles family of West Lancashire, main increases are also among inter-related waterways families based around Runcorn and Northwich, including the ancestors of Glenn Perry, to whom we are grateful for continued help.

Update V69 – 31.8.2016
New Total: 31.197 people
New name: Leach, 34
Main increases: Cox, Perry, Rigby +41; Eccleston +30; Clark +25; Clare, Hind +23; Royle +20; Houghton +17; Palin +13; Hurst +12

The family of James Leach provides a new name in this update, based around Runcorn, as are the increases in Cox, Clare, Royle, Eccleston and Houghton families. Thanks go to Glenn Perry for developing his Cheshire boatmen ancestors. Increases also come in Thomas Rigby and James Palin's families who plied the same waterways.

We are particularly grateful to Maureen Jones for detailed work on the Simpson and Cowen families of West Lancashire, and to Judith Fell for continued help with the Abram and Gill dynasties which have come in for much revision, as has our main Lamb file with help from Keith Byrne.

Update V68 – 13.6.2016
New Total: 30,472 people
No New Names
Main increases: Pimblott +48, Williamson +36, Harrison +32, Stockton +28, Winstanley +24, Rathbone +23, Butterworth, Jones, Taylor +22;

This update has taken us past 30,000 people in our main tree. Thanks go to Ann McKew Hirsch of New York for additions to her Miller-Crook family of Lancashire boatbuilders, and to Judith Fell for her detailed work on the related Gill, Gregson, Rimmer and Robinson boatmen of Scarisbrick and Lathom which led to some corrections in Gregson branches. Main increases are again among Mersey and Cheshire watermen.

Update V67 – 10.5.2016
New Total: 29,951 people
No New names
Main increases: Waterworth +108, Bushell +61, Atherton, Guest +32, Dutton, Weedall +11;

Detailed work by Liz Fazakerley has enabled us to separate the Fazackerley branches who spelt the name with a C from those who dropped it as time went on. Thanks go to her, and also to Judith Fell who has helped separate Gill families who descend from John Gill and Ellen Mair from those headed by Thomas Gill and Margaret Harrison. Main increases are again among Cheshire and Mersey watermen based in Birkenhead, Runcorn and Warrington.

Update V66 – 8.4.2016
New Total: 29,432 people
No New names
Main increases: Hough +112, Hallwood +66, Corker +59, Brown +42, Gorst +40, Clare +25, Anderson, Moss +24, Mills +23, Cornes, Gerrard +22, Burrows, Littler +15;

Our continuing expansion of Mersey watermen's families has provided the main increases in this update; also the discovery of a branch of Cheethams from the Burscough area living in Cheshire. William Cheetham married Lathom boatman's daughter Mary Ashcroft in Wigan in 1845, and they appear in the 1871 census on the canal bank in Runcorn with children born in Liverpool, Ormskirk, Leigh and Culcheth - we plan to expand this family in our next update.

Update V65 – 10.3.2016
New Total: 28,609 people
New names: Allman 51, Whitfield 40, Makin 38, Rutter 24;
Main increases: Hatton +88, Holden +41, Birkenhead +35, Sankey +22, Minshall +21, Broadhurst +18, Ratcliffe +18, Snelson+ 16, Hough +15;

New names and main increases this month are among Warrington and Cheshire watermen, and we have our first "triple cousins" in the 17 or more children of three brothers, John, Robert and William, sons of Sankey waterman John Hatton, who married three sisters, Ellen, Jane and Elizabeth, daughters of Joseph Welsby. We also record John and Joseph, sons of Sankey waterman John Swift, marrying sisters Ada and Mary Forshaw of Ormskirk.

Thanks go to Glenys Lloyd for linking Halsall boatmen William Smith (b1826) and Richard Prescott (b1818) through their mothers-in-law Mary and Ellen Tarbuck, and to Walter Jakeman for clarifying the Hough and Minshall families of the Northwich area. 8 February 2016 –

Update V64 – 7..2.2016
New Total: 27,981 people
New names: Peach 30, Braithwaite 25;
Main increases: Leigh +132, Siddall +26, Swift +24, Woods +20, French +17, Gill +12, Roughley +10;

Two Leigh families of Warrington boatmen, including one inter-marriage, provide the biggest increase in this update, others being mostly among Sankey and Penketh watermen. Thanks go to Carol Gorman for helping develop the Iddon family of Tarleton/Hesketh and the connected Pardoes of Ellesmere Port, and to Ian Taylor for filling gaps in the Peet family of Lathom and Maghull.

We are also grateful to Alex Peach for pointing us to his family of Cheshire watermen who inter-married with the Tinsleys of Blackburn and Chorley. The Braithwaite family of shipwrights is also new, and linked to the Swift watermen of Warrington.

Update V63 – 8.1.2016
New Total: 27,380 people
New names: Pusill 21, Renshaw 13;
Main increases: Hough +86, Atherton +82, Gandy +57, Plumpton +43, Roughley +20, Speed +17, Vernon +14;

Our first update of 2016, which takes us past 27,000 in the main tree, traces Burscough boatman James Robinson to South Africa, where it seems that he changed his name to Smith. He was born in 1837 to James and Catherine Robinson of Lathom and the circumstances of his emigration are unclear, but in 1862 he married Catherine Mullins in Port Elizabeth, Cape Province, and subsequently told his family that he was born in Burscough Bridge as James Robinson. Thanks for this information go to his great-grandson Tony Smith of Tasmania, who has established a DNA match.

We are also grateful to Alan Disley for uncovering yet another Lancashire-Cheshire canal link through the marriage in 1904 of George, son of Lathom boatman Thomas Disley, to Mary Ellen, daughter of Luke Speed, a Runcorn waterman. And thanks go to Jim Meaney of Boston, Massachusetts, for reporting the emigration to New Bedford in the 1930s of Margaret Thomas, daughter of boatman Charles Lamb of Haskayne and Ellen Aspinall of Burscough, to join her husband Robert Thomas of West Bromwich, carpenter in a cotton mill.

The big increases in Hough, Atherton and Plumpton families are among Mersey 'flatmen' based in Sankey, Penketh and Warrington, and the linked Pusills are Liverpool boatmen. Other additions are mainly Cheshire boatmen.