



## News from the History Group Research Team .....

It is always fascinating to look at the characters that lived in St. Tudy, and those brave and adventurous people who left to have a new life abroad, why they did so, and what happened to them.

I came across a newspaper article on Richard Rowe who was leaving St. Tudy for America in 1905. Richard was a blacksmith in St. Tudy village and a well known local preacher on the Camelford Methodist Circuit. I wondered what happened to him, and whether he found the promised land. His brother had already established a life there, so that answered the question as to why Richard left Cornwall. He would have received exciting letters from his brother singing the praises of this prosperous country called America.

Following Richard through the American Census information, he arrived in New York, and made his way to Hartford, Connecticut. Richard worked as an aligner for the Underwood Typewriter Company – a far cry from blacksmithing and preaching. He was an active member of the Odd Fellows and was installed as a “Noble Grand” of the Summit Lodge in Hartford in 1914 so he would have had some standing in the community. Richard also served in WW1 for the American Army, as he was naturalised by then.

His wife, Elizabeth Thomas, was said to be a direct descendant of Owain Glendwr. He and Lizzy had two children, William and James and both children were very successful. I am currently in contact with his Great Granddaughter Elizabeth, who knew Richard well when she was very young as he lived with her family in Vancouver, Washington, in his later years. It was Richard that inspired the then seven year old Elizabeth to become a lifelong genealogy buff. He would tell her stories about the families in Cornwall and Wales, of which he was very proud and never forgot.

So, what happened to Richard being a Preacher for the United Methodist Free Church? Apparently Elizabeth was not aware of him being a Methodist Preacher, but because of our shared information, she now understands something that caused much embarrassment to the family when she was young. Elizabeth was brought up Catholic via her father’s side. When Richard would attend mass with the family, she was always very embarrassed when he, in a very loud voice, would add the lines “for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever” at the end of the Lord’s Prayer. She did not know that he was a Methodist, and that is why he added these lines to the end of the prayer. By this time he was blind and hard of hearing, so there was no stopping him once he got started!

He lived to the ripe old age of 99 and is still very fondly remembered by all. Thanks to his story telling the family know of their origins in Cornwall, and because of our contact, they now have a little piece of his life that they didn’t know about previously, and have an explanation as to his loud embarrassing outbursts in Church. So, share your family information as much as you can, you may well be inspiring the next generation to find out more about their heritage, just as Elizabeth was. They may not be interested now, but they will be in the future!