



Family History Detectives Monthly

Sharing family history news with everyone

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The new monthly family history newsletter - made better by you!

Welcome to Family History Detectives Monthly – a brand new and exciting newsletter, that I am hoping will eventually become a magazine. The aim is for you to be able to buy a monthly publication which brings together everything you need to know in the world of Family History and Genealogy.

The world of Family History is fast moving, how do you keep pace with all the developments? When records are released and available online?

Each month our newsletter will be packed full of information, as well as you being updated each month, it will also link you and your research with local and national heritage. It will be the place where you can share your experiences, your stories of how you are researching your family history! Your problems and your joys! We will always be

here to offer you support and expert guidance as you search for your ancestors! The success of the magazine will depend on YOU!

We would like to invite you to send us Your discoveries, Your stories, Your problems, Your mysteries, Your suggestions and ideas. We have included at the back of this newsletter some information about how you can contribute!

We hope you enjoy this first edition and look forward to hearing from you with all of your news and experiences.



Paul Wilkins helping to unearth some hidden family history treasures.

P V Wilkins

Submit your contributions to the email address found on the back page of the newsletter.

Latest News

Fromelles New War Cemetery Dedicated

The first new British war cemetery for more than half a century has now been dedicated at a special ceremony attended by Prince Charles. Approximately 1,700 British troops and over 5,500 Australians died in the two-day battle in 1916.

For more information: www.cwgc.org/fromelles

English and Scottish Legislation now Online!

The National Archives have made every piece of English and Scottish legislation since 1267 to the present day

accessible online: www.legislation.gov.uk. That's 743 years of legislation (with a few exceptions) in one database!

Family History Commercials on TV

Findmypast have filmed a series of new television commercials that you'll see on the Yesterday, Watch and Blighty television channels. You can watch them all online at: www.findmypast.co.uk/video-office.jsp



Findmypast adverts on TV

Domesday Online

Domesday Database Online map linked versions of mediaeval record available for free. You can now learn more about the area in which your ancestors lived in the 11th century. The Domesday Book website provides details of who owned towns, villages and land in England as

recorded in the survey conducted between 1085 and 1086: <http://domesday.pase.ac.uk>

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It's here! The National Probate Calendars are now online

The recent release of probate calendars at Ancestry.co.uk is exciting and significant in the world of Family History.

The wills and probate index provides six million wills proven in England and Wales between 1861 and 1941. The release of this index has been likened in importance to the release of the 1911 census. It's now available for everyone to search online for the first time.

What are these Calendars?

If a person makes a will and dies, a court appoints someone to distribute their property. This process is called probate, and since 1858 it has been the sole responsibility of the Principal Probate Registry. For many years, the Registry kept summaries of all its cases in calendars. These calendars, are what have just been released online.

What Information will I find?

If you find an ancestor in these records, you'll discover their full name, their date and place of death, and the executor of their will – often another family member. Crucially, you'll also find the value of their estate.

Currency / 'old money' Converter

If you do find a will, it is useful to find out how much it would be worth today, if you go to the following site you can do just that:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/default0.asp#mid>

The value of the estate will help you uncover your ancestors' wealth, it will also reveal whether they lived in luxury or squalor. It can also indicate social standing. The possessions themselves can offer many clues about hobbies and pastimes.

So, what are Probate Records?

Probate records are court documents created by the distribution of a person's estate after they die. The most important of these is usually a will, which lists the

A handy 'old money' converter is available online

deceased's property and outlines who it has been left to. These records offer a rare view into your ancestors' daily lives.

Ordering a Will

Once you've pinpointed a member of your family in the Calendar, you can use its information to order copies of all their other probate records, usually including a will, direct from the York.

If you want to order a will you can obtain an application for a probate search form from the following site: http://www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk/courtfinder/forms/pa1s_0405.pdf

You need to include as much information as possible, full name and address of the deceased, date of death, if a grant of probate was issued, include all the information off the Ancestry citation. It will cost you £5 fee which is non-refundable, you cannot pay for the service online, you will need to pay by cash or cheque. It will then need to be posted to York, the address is at the

bottom of the form. Everything is going through York, we spoke to the probate service and they have told us that they have been inundated since Ancestry released the indexes, when we spoke to them on the 23/9/2010 they told us that they were dealing with requests received on the 16th August 2010. They also said that on the 22/9/2010 they received 1,500 application forms. You will need to be patient with this!

If you have Scottish or Irish roots, it is also worth looking at this will index, for example there are approximately 110,000 instances where a death is recorded as having happened in Scotland and 66,000 in Ireland.

Resources:

For Scottish wills (1500-1901) visit the following website, you can download a will for a fee:

<http://www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk/content/help/index.aspx?r=554&407>

For Irish wills you can look at them at Family Relatives for a fee:

www.familyrelatives.com/search/search_prerogative_wills.php

For Welsh wills visit The National Library of Wales, which has more than 190,000 wills online that you can search for free:

<http://cat.llgc.org.uk/cgi-bin/gw/chameleon?skin=profef&lng=en>

Want more Information?

Visit: www.ancestry.co.uk/probate

Watch a You tube video about it

www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqzJ92ETeNo

Images of England: Images of the past.

Whether you're researching your family or local history, the National Monuments Record (NMR), the public archive of English Heritage can help you find out more details about the places where your relatives lived, worked or played. One of their websites is Images of England, www.imagesofengland.org.uk, a unique historical photographic record of England's listed buildings at the turn of the 21st century. This free website displays over

323,000 colour photos, taken between 1998 and 2008 together with the listed building record from February 2001. So if you're looking for images for the church where your relatives got married or the country house where they lived or worked, this is the site for you. You can see the types of buildings that were around at particular times in history or perhaps the bridge your relatives crossed while going about their daily business. Go on, have a look.

Deceased online - the national database website of burial and cremation records.

Deceased Online, launched at the 2009 Who Do You Think You Are Live exhibition, remains the only national database website featuring statutory burial and cremation records.

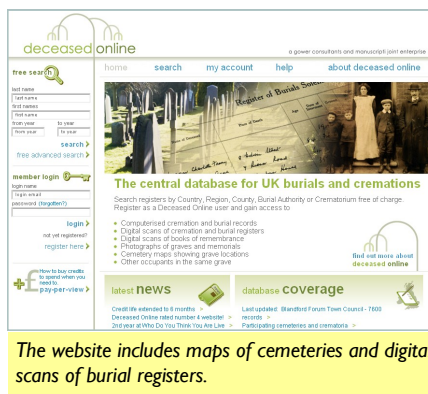
Since the 1857 Burial Act, there are 90 m records managed by burial and cremation authorities (usually local government), but they do not pre-exist in simplified digital data form. Many of the items that we include on the website – such as digital scans of burial registers, maps of cemeteries with grave locations and the occupants of graves – have not previously been made available. Therefore it takes time to prepare this data and present it accurately.

However, the Deceased Online database is growing quite substantially. We have two large

areas in Scotland; Angus, with complete burial records for over 70 cemeteries, and Aberdeen which is currently being uploaded; we hope to add more Scottish authorities soon. In England we have some 15 local authorities' data online varying between the very largest, like Islington and Camden, to small councils such as the Devon seaside town of Salcombe to Gainsborough in Lincolnshire. All participating authorities are listed on the website.

During the rest of 2010 we hope to add well over a million records which should bring the total size to over 3.5 million individual burials and cremations and we plan to have nearly 10 million around the end of 2011.

Documents cost mostly around £1.50 to £2, to download however searching for subjects is free and if users register free of charge, we send updates when new areas are added (these are the only emails we send).



For more information visit deceased online:

www.deceasedonline.com

Readers Story: Military records provide valuable insight into Great Granddad's life

Submitted by: Ann Hodgkins, Birmingham 2010

I started my journey into family history almost 2 years ago at Shard End Library. At 69 years old and only just computer literate I was not confident I could cope with the class. I am so glad I battled on and, with Paul's (FHD) help, have travelled around England and Wales, Australia and India with my ancestors. It has truly been an incredible journey which is only just beginning.



Like many others, Ann found valuable information about her granddad (above) in military records.

I started with my mother's paternal side of the family and only got back as far as 1826..I found a wealth of information which helped me understand my roots.

I had more luck with the maternal side of her family. My great grandmother (who died when I was 21) was only 32 when her husband died and left her with 3 children but that is another story and a fascinating one.

Whilst researching my great granddad I had the help of a cousin in Birmingham and also a distant relative in Australia. She sent me copies of all the information she had on this side of the family including my great granddad's military records. He served 12 years in the Royal Artillery mainly in India. I knew from my cousin in Birmingham that he had been in an out of hospital in India but there were no medical records included. I mentioned this to Paul and he looked up these records and printed them off. He had lots of time in hospital for - Malaria, Ague (due to the climate) typhoid AND 7 bouts of sexually transmitted diseases. He was only 19 years of age when he went to India – RAWALPINDI - which is now part of Pakistan and I suppose the brothels were well frequented by these young soldiers.

I was sad to learn that he died of exhaustion in Birmingham at the age of 39 years . He came to Birmingham after his army service and worked as a labourer .

Back to basics with a **FREE** ancestor chart

Everyone harps on about how brilliant the internet is for doing family history—and they are right—but now and then it is good to get back to basics.

Visit our web site to download a FREE ancestor chart that you can print off as many times as you want.

www.familyhistorydetectives.co.uk

Help corner: An Adoption Query and Plea for help!

Ref. OCTHC01

This month one of our readers is facing challenge with birth certificates for their father who was adopted when little.

My first hurdle came to light with my immediate ancestor, my dad. Dad was born in 1926 in Manchester, his name is Peter Earlam, but as it has come to light he was originally called Simpson, and we think adopted as a toddler in Manchester.

I have tried to get birth record with no success. Dad is very reluctant to help me and I don't know if he has any certificates. Doe's anyone know if there is an original birth certificate, or is it altered? Or do you get two? I have contacted



How do you get a birth certificate for someone who was adopted?

the adoption helpline in Manchester but I have no legal right to access the information, whether Dad is alive or not. My only hope is to take Dad to Manchester to find out, but he isn't interested.

I know records started in 1927, but I am completely stuck. On the other hand I have lots of information about the Earlams but only want to register this if absolutely all else fails, as this is not my true blood line! Can anyone help?

If you can help please email us at the newsletter (email address on back page) and put 'Help corner' and the reference number above in the subject. We will the forward your email on to our reader.

Access Victorian Poor Law Union and Workhouse Records Online for Free

The National Archives have just been released 'Living the Poor Life' featuring more than 115,000 pages of correspondence between local and national Poor Law unions in England and Wales. The documents include letters and reports are free to download.

Records relating to 23 Poor Law Unions in England & Wales have gone online thanks to a project between the The National Archives and volunteers across the country. Starting in 1834, when the Poor Law Amendment Act was introduced, and continuing in most cases into the 1840s and 1850s, the collection comprises correspondence between the union and the central authorities which helps to create a picture of what life was like in a 19th century workhouse.

Individual paupers and staff are mentioned in the records, which can be searched and downloaded free through the National Archives, Documents Online:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/workhouse.asp>

Chelsea pensioner service records online with findmypast.co.uk

Have you got an ancestor who served in one of Britain's most significant wars such as the Battle of Waterloo (1815), Crimean (1853-1856), Boer Wars (1880-1881, 1899-1902)?

If you do then you need to take a look at the Chelsea pensioner service records on FindmyPast.co.uk.

They have recently added a further 185,000 records to its already existing collection, this new batch of records cover the service records of men pensioned out of the British Army between 1760 and 1854, the total records for this collection now numbers four million colour images of almost 700,000 soldiers pensioned out of the British Army between 1760 and 1900.

Records include at least four pages including information about the soldiers date and place of birth, names and address of next of kin, height, hair and eye colour,

medical history, the countries in which the soldier served and the time for which he was there. The records contain information about men born throughout the world with many soldiers native to India and the Caribbean. The records do not list officers, men killed in action or deserters.

The pensions were administered through the Royal Hospital at Chelsea, though the vast majority of soldiers were out-pensioners and did not reside at the hospital itself.

You can search the records online here:

<http://www.findmypast.co.uk/chelsea-pensioners-service-records-collection-search-start.action>

CHELSEA PENSIONERS
BRITISH ARMY SERVICE RECORDS 1760-1913

British Army Service Records 1760-1913

basic search | advanced search | search tips

First name: Last name:

Include variants Exclude variants

Country of birth: Country of birth: Year of birth: +/- years

Records to search: Sort results by:

All Name A-Z

The Chelsea Pensioners Record Series WD97 is now complete and includes 1,041,092 records. Look out for the WO96 Militia Records, coming soon. To stay up to date please make sure that you've [signed up](#) to receive our newsletter.

What are the Chelsea Pensioners British Army Service Records?

Search the Chelsea pensioners records online

distinguishing features such as tattoos, rank and regiment, occupation before joining the army,

October - Black history month

October is Black History Month. Family History Detectives have been running workshops around the West Midlands for the past 4 years. In this article we will be looking at what is now available online for those interested in tracing their roots in Jamaica!

Civil Registration began in Jamaica in 1878. The originals records are held in the Registrar General's Department in Spanish Town, Jamaica, however the LDS Church (Mormons) have filmed these records and they have now become online. If you are interested in tracing someone in your family history who was born in Jamaica between 1878 1930, you might be able to find their birth certificate for FREE! Have a look at the following website, the only problem is that the records are not indexed, all you can see are the images themselves, but at least

*"God gives nothing to those who keep their arms crossed."
African Proverb*

(black history month quotes: <http://www.alliusdirectory.com/Society/black-history-month-quotes.php>)

the record is now up and running and online. Civil Registration is catalogued by parish and district, so you need to know the parish and district of your ancestor, otherwise it will be a long task finding them.

<http://beta.familysearch.org/s/collection/show?uri=http://pilot.familysearch.org/records/trk:/fsrs/c1538386&hash=MPAfKvgWGxfZ5STyuqUCQxOVNk8%253D&recordcount=0>

The collection of films starts at the number 4005250 which lists the records for the parish of St Andrew, and the collection ends with the number 4519937, which lists the records of St

Catherine.

Once you have found the entry you will find the following information on a birth certificate:

- Heading: Birth in the District of _____ Parish of _____
- Date and Place of Birth
- Name
- Sex
- Name and Surname and Dwelling place of Father
- Name and Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother
- Rank or Profession of Father
- Signature, qualification and Residence of Informant
- When Registered
- Baptismal Name if added after Registration
- Footer: Signature of Informant Name of Registrar District Parish

This website also lists records of other parts of the Caribbean, including: Bahamas; Barbados; Costa Rica; Dominican Republic and Grenada.

<http://beta.familysearch.org/s/collection/list>

We hope that you have enjoyed the first edition of our newsletter. Remember though that we need your contributions, your feedback and opinions. So tell us what you think - How can we improve it? What would you like to see?

Some ideas for you to submit:

- Surname interest lists
- Letters To The Editor
- News Articles
- Areas where you need help

Feel free to also send us articles on research techniques, uncommon areas of research, or descriptions and histories of parishes.

Your submissions, comments and other things related to the newsletter should be sent to the Editor at:

newsletter@familyhistorydetectives.co.uk



*Family History Resources
everyone can use*

About Family History Detectives:

Family History Detectives is an organisation dedicated to providing Family Historians - be they individuals, beginners, experts or at any level of experience - with a central source for all their research resources.

With many years of experience, and providing ongoing tutoring, training, consultancy and services to a wide variety of individuals and organisations, here at Family History Detectives we know what we are talking about - and want to share it with you!

Visit us at www.familyhistorydetectives.co.uk