



Toronto Family History Centre Bulletin 2013-33

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Announcements

Back to School – OGS Toronto Courses

Introduction to West Indian Genealogy – Saturday September 21st - 10:00am–12:00pm & 1:00–3:00pm

Instructor Pooran Bridglal - This one-day course is a fast-paced introduction to the principles of West Indian genealogical research with a particular emphasis on methodologies and records pertinent to family historians with African, East Indian and Chinese West Indian ancestors.

Basic Genealogy and Family History - Wednesdays, October 2 to November 20, 2013, 1:30pm-3:30pm

Instructor Jane McNamara - Designed for those just beginning to research or looking to upgrade basic research skills, this 8-week course will cover terminology, types of sources, the use of on-line resources, libraries and archives, including LDS Family History Centres, and record-keeping – to help you “think like a genealogist”. Techniques discussed will apply to a wide variety of geographic areas, providing you with a good base for further courses.

Maps and Mapping for 21st Century Genealogists - Thursdays, November 7 to November 28, 2013, 6:15pm-8:15pm

Instructor James F S Thomson - This course, designed for intermediate and advanced-level genealogists, explores sophisticated ways in which maps and mapping tools can contribute to family history research, analysis and writing, and demonstrates that the current generation of genealogists has no need to feel limited to availing themselves of static maps created by others. The major part of the course considers how a variety of mapping and other tools can be used creatively and effectively in genealogical projects, enabling the user to create unique maps and plans, tailored to the needs of the compiler and incorporating data derived from different sources.

OGS Niagara Meeting

Great Revelations - Canada & the 1921 Census

Brian Amesbury, the programme coordinator of the Niagara branch of OGS, has sent me a notice of their next meeting in the coming week. On Thursday, September 12 Glenn Wright will present "**Great Revelations - Canada & the 1921 Census**". Glenn will speak at approximately 7:30 p.m. One can view the meeting from home: all one needs to do is go to www.ogs.on.ca/niagara, click on "Video Stream", put your name in (so you can be part of the meeting), and click on "Enter Room". You can see and hear the meeting, and there may be opportunities to ask questions by typing or speaking (using a headset makes that process problem free). This sounds like a very innovative way to attend a meeting that one would not normally be able to do.

What's New

Ancestry has added a marriage index for California 1949-1959 and some military records (mainly U.S. Army or Navy personnel) 1862-1970.

FamilySearch has updated the collection of Czech Republic Censuses 1843-1921 (only browsable). FamilySearch has started to add Civil Registration for Hungary 1895-1980; at present this is small collection of indexes.

Soldiers' Wills Online 1850-1986 – As reported by the Guardian and the BBC and sent to the Bulletin by Diana Davies, the HM Courts & Tribunals Service Department of the [UK Government](#) has released a collection of soldiers' wills. There is an online index that is available [here](#); but you will have to know the soldier's surname and year of death. If you find your person of interest, you will be able to register online with your email address and upon payment of £6.00, you will be able to access the will. The collection is in its Beta (test) phase and has only a limited number of wills available – some wills between 1914 and 1921. The [advanced search](#) allows additional information such as first name and regimental number.

News From the Trenches Tracing Forward

Diana Davies has sent the following article to the Bulletin: "I was interested to read in Bulletin 2013-30 that the Toronto OGS is running a seminar called **Tracing Forward - Searching for Relatives in Recent Times** to take place on Saturday, October 26, 2013. Last November I started doing that very thing. My quest was prompted by a small collection of unidentified photographs; my thought being that if I could find someone with identical photographs which HAD been identified, I would know to whom these handsome faces had belonged. I think that my 'mystery men' were descendants of my 2xg-grandfather whom I will call TTD. I had already traced my roots back to him and knew the names of all his 7 children. He probably had a lot of descendants apart from the direct line from him to me.

"Some years ago through Ancestry.com 'Family Trees', I had linked up with a descendant of TTD in New Zealand. I began my quest by contacting him. Both his mother and his grandmother are still alive. A definite bonus! Through them I was able to find out snippets about relatives which I would never be able to find out any other way. They weren't very forthcoming but the few facts I received from them were invaluable. Ancestry.com was invaluable also. Just entering names in Ancestry found family trees with some of my relatives on them and I was able to contact the owners and find out why they had MY relatives on THEIR trees! More often than not it was just a name to them but sometimes I was lucky and found a strong connection.

"At one point serendipity kicked in. I put into Google the name of one of TTD's g-granddaughters and there appeared on my monitor an article about her when she celebrated her 100th birthday in 2012. It was full of names and dates and places, and as a result I was able to write to her, enclosing photocopies of the pictures of my mystery men. Sadly I was to learn that, since her birthday, she had become unable to communicate in any way but I did hear from her son and her daughter in law who were kind enough to share more information and send me old family photographs. Born in Indianapolis in 1912 the old lady was first generation American as was her brother who swam in the 1936 Olympics.

"Meanwhile, through the wonders of the internet - Facebook, Google, Ancestry.com, Find-a-Grave, and Obituaries Online - I had managed to trace two brothers born in Australia. Direct descendants of TTD, they have been marvellously helpful and are now contacting their first cousins for even more information to add to the tree. One of the brothers lives in Singapore!

"Then there is the gentleman born in the USA who lives in South Korea, another direct descendant of TTD. He wrote " . . . my father's mother was a direct descendant of the first settlers of the central Pennsylvania area. Her ancestor came over on the Mayflower in 1620, his name was Brewster. She also had a direct relative who signed the Declaration of Independence named Oliver Wolcott. "

"I have discovered I am connected to war heroes, shipbrokers, American socialites, an Olympic swimmer, a plastic surgeon, an engineer on Lord Astor's yacht, several very successful businessmen, an attorney, a church minister, school teachers, a nun, a university professor, soldiers, sailors, airmen, bank managers, innkeepers, engineers, nurses, master mariners, a watchmaker, a suicide, a chemist, an actor, a prizewinner in a beautiful baby contest and more. Oh yes, a butcher and a baker but they are on a different branch and I still have to come across a candlestick maker! No Ag Labs to date, which surprises me.

"I am not researching descendants more recent than my own generation as I feel it is an invasion of their privacy. To date I know of 83 direct descendants of TTD who were born before 1950 and am in regular e-mail contact with 12 of them. I am compiling all I can find out about all 83 and printing out any documents I find on-line, and there are some incredibly

interesting ones. For example the documents related to the death of the chief engineer of a ship who died in Jamaica and whose body was returned to the USA. The documents list all the worldly possessions he had on the ship with him, and his clothes that were sent to the Jamaican funeral parlour with his body before it was returned home to his wife and family.. I have found many newspaper clippings and school yearbook entries and drawings, too. So far I have filled a 4" binder and the search continues.

"To date no-one has copies of the photos of the mystery men who began this quest, but I live in hope!"

The Forum:

Questions:

Q1/2013/33. Immigration.

If a person immigrated to Canada via an ocean passenger ship in early 1900's they were required to fill out passenger lists on arrival. If they travelled on a cargo ship as a passenger, were the same requirements enforced? If so, where do you find those records?

Q2/2013/22. Passenger Lists Leaving Antwerp.

Did the port of Antwerp maintain lists of passengers embarking for North America? If so, how does one review those lists? It may be another method of examining information on Canadian passenger lists that may be illegible now.

Suggestions:

Q1/2013/32. FindMyPast Subscriptions

Please help me to differentiate between what each of: "findmypast.uk" and "findmypast.com" provide to the subscriber. My research interests are primarily in the UK. I have had offers to subscribe to each one and cannot find any comparison. The ".com" version is considerably cheaper-priced than the ".uk" version. Is one better than the other? Does one incorporate/duplicate the other, and provide even more resources? Is one more comprehensive or more enriched than the other? What are the pros and cons to each? Any other guidance or words of wisdom are welcome.

The researcher should start by looking at the lists of records offered by each subscription. The list of record sets for FindMyPast.com is [here](#) and the list for FindMyPast.co.uk is found [here](#) (although the birth, marriage and death parish registers are not broken down by county or parish). Very briefly FindMyPast.com offers much of what is offered on FindMyPast.co.uk; one of the collections not offered on FMP.com is the England and Wales Death Duty indexes.

FMP.com has records for the US, Canada (Canadian Heritage Resources), Australia & New Zealand, England & Wales, and some Irish records. FMP.co.uk has only the records for England & Wales. Both now offer newspaper collections.

One would think that FMP.com is then a much better deal as it is cheaper, but I have found its search engine incredibly annoying. It seems to default to searching in the US all the time. Having said that, I know that FMP.com is in the process of revamping its search engine. My work-around for the search engine is that I usually choose the specific collection I wish to search and search each one separately. Of course, the flip side is that the FMP.co.uk search engine is better.

You may be able to find much of the information that you need on FMP.com. For those few databases that are available only on FMP.co.uk, I would suggest going to your local family history centre, where access to FMP.co.uk is free (except for the newspaper collections).

Were You Aware...

Convict Registers and Criminal Records

At the One World One Family Conference a couple of weeks ago, a speaker quoted George Bernard Shaw from his 1879 novel, *Immaturity*: "If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance." I immediately thought of my convict 4g grandfather, Aaron Chevell, who was transported to Australia in 1817 for rioting and stealing. I had always imagined that he was basically a good person who had got caught up in the heat of the moment (and drink). I was disappointed to learn that his record in Australia was not exactly stellar. He neglected to attend muster three times. He stole 11 sheep in 1822 and in 1836 he was convicted of being drunk and disorderly. I was glad that he was finally pardoned in 1838 and lived until 1857 with no further black marks to his name. Luckily he is not the only skeleton in my family because they certainly make my family history more interesting. There is a good selection of convict records on Ancestry; others in TheGenealogist.co.uk (mentioned last week). The [Old Bailey Online](#) has a searchable database of the proceedings of nearly 200,000 trials between 1674 and 1913 and it is completely free. [Victorian Crime and Punishment](#) has some prisoners with details such as: Joseph Billing, aged 29 years, with brown hair and fair complexion, was

convicted of horse stealing in 1822 and transported for life. There are a few prisoner case studies and the first (Aaron Layton – The Ely Rioter) explains the riots that my 4g grandfather was transported for. The [Buckinghamshire County Council](#) has an online database with details of prisoners entering the County Gaol in Aylesbury in the 1870's; some of the entries include photographs showing very interesting clothing of the common man (woman or child).

US Probate Records

Unlike England and Wales after 1858, the United States does not have a centralized place where wills and administrations are probated. Most wills in the US are probated at the county courthouse and the records are kept there. These courts can be called superior, circuit, district, chancery, surrogate or register of wills courts. Probate records are usually indexed by the name of the person who left the will or by the person who died without a will. Wills are an invaluable tool in genealogical research and yet many people are put off because they can be a bit tricky to find. Many US wills can be found on films that can be ordered from the Family History Library Catalogue. The FamilySearch Wiki has a really good page and description of US Probate [here](#). It says: "Many early probate records have been transcribed, indexed, and published. The Family History Library has statewide indexes or transcripts of large collections of wills that have been published for Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. These are listed in the Place Search of the Family History Library Catalog." The bottom of the Wiki page has hot links to probate information listed by state.

UK Probate – Online Indexes and Wills

An archived webpage from the National Archives UK has an excellent page on how to find online indexes from probate before 1858. It can be found [here](#).

Sometimes the papers found are not just wills. I was looking for wills in Oxfordshire which are all online at Origins.net. I found a number of documents relating to the Dagley family living in Bicester and Hethe in the 1700s and early 1800s. My 4g grandfather, John Dagley, died in 1811 and left a will. His son died only six years later and left no will. I found some Miscellaneous Papers and Loose Documents for this son, also John Dagley. One set of papers established guardianship of his four minor children, who elected and chose their aunt as their guardian. [My direct ancestor was another aunt who lived in another town.] Another set of these papers was a court case where a creditor of the son, John, applied and was granted administration of the estate. The children, their guardians or their surrogates did not appear in court.

No films which were received in the week ending September 5th.

A patron wishing to view a film ordered by another should check first with staff. The description of the film given above may not be a full description but a search in the FamilySearch catalog will reveal the full content. The geographical abbreviations are Chapman codes.

Toronto Family History Centre Current Opening Hours:

(Always phone us if you do not have a booking to ensure that we are open.)

Tuesday 9:30 am to 2 pm (Linda)

Wednesday 9:30 am to 3:45 pm (Ann, Joe am, Helen & Leslie pm); 6:30pm to 9:30pm (Don & Roberta)

Thursday 9:30am to 3:45 pm (Don & Roberta); 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm (Helen)

Closures: If you do not have a booking, call before you come.

For a copy of a searchable listing of all films, fiche, CDs and books held at the Toronto Family History Centre in pdf format, click [here](#).

[FamilySearch - Search](#)

[FamilySearch - IGI](#)

[Hugh Wallis IGI Batch Numbers](#)

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