



Toronto Family History Centre Bulletin 2015-38

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<http://torontofhc.blogspot.ca/>

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Announcements

The Toronto Family History Centre will be closed for the Christmas holidays from December 18th to January 4th.

We again urge all patrons to make a booking before they come

What's New

FamilySearch has updated or added to the following collections:

- Lots of updates this week
 - o Florida Probate Records 1784-1990 – Browse only
 - o New York Passenger & Crew Lists 1909, 1925-1957 – 39 million records
 - o British Columbia Death Registration 1872-1986, 1992-1993 – 1.2 million records
 - o New Zealand Probate Records 1843-1998 – 4.5 million records to browse, 329,000 indexed so far

Ancestry's updates or additions include:

- Belfast Newsletter – Birth, Marriage & Death Notices – New (130,000 records)
- US Records of Aliens Pre-Examined in Canada 1904-1954 – Updated (1.3 Million records)
- Ireland Civil Registration Births Index 1864-1958 – Updated (9.5 million records) (from FamilySearch)
- US Border Crossings from Canada to the US – Updated (5.3 million records)
- Illinois Marriage Index 1860-1920 – New (2.3 million records)
- Nevada Carson City Marriage Index 1855-1985 – New (600,000 records)
- Colorado Divorce Index 1851-1985 – New (700,000 records)
- Iowa Divorce Index 1992-2008 – New (129,000 records)
- Utah Select Marriage Index 1887-1985 – New (883,000 records)

FindMyPast has added the following datasets

- Ireland, Electoral Registers 1885-1886 - 3,000 records in 12 counties
- Linlithgowshire (West Lothian), Electoral Registers 1864-1931 – 23,000 records

See [FindMyPast Record Sets](#) for the complete description of the new records.

[DeceasedOnline](#) has just added records for another cemetery in the Lewisham London Borough Council - Brockley Cemetery records 1858-1999.

The Forum:

Questions. No new questions this week.

Suggestions.

Q2015/37/01. Coroner's Reports – England

I recently received the death certificate of my gg-grandfather. He died on February 3, 1838 of **poison**. He was 61 years old and was a schoolmaster at Solihull Grammar School, a well-known school established in the 1500s. The informant is a coroner, John Welchman, of Wheatley and the death was registered on February 5th. I have searched for any coroner's inquests being reported in local newspapers and found no reports, although a couple of papers report my ggg-grandfather's death. I would have thought that a schoolmaster's death by poison was newsworthy but perhaps it is possible that the school hushed up the death, as it might create a scandal. It is also surprising that the coroner came from another county and a town more than 60 miles away. Does anyone have suggestions where I might find the coroner's report?

Extant coroner's records are difficult to find. The Toronto FHC does have the second edition of the book, **Coroners' Records in England & Wales**, and the researcher should consult this book to see what is available for Warwickshire.

To answer this question more completely, I went back to old editions of the Bulletin available [here](#). Paul Jones had written several suggestions for a researcher in early 2008. Paul suggested:

1. Look for the date of the inquest which should be in column 7.
2. Try to find the coroner's record using the book listed above. The Toronto Reference Library has the third edition.
3. Send a query to the county record office: **Warwickshire County Record Office**.
4. Check local newspapers, probably the best bet. In 2008 Paul suggested looking for a local newspaper by looking at the British Library Newspapers at Colindale but Colindale has closed and I cannot find a list of newspapers that might include Solihull except those online at the British Newspaper Archives.
5. If all else fails—or even if you've succeeded—try a [Google Books search](#) on the name of the decedent. Any lurid death may have made its way into print.

The British Newspaper Library used to search for specific material in certain newspapers for a fee but I can no longer find any reference to that. A search of Google Books did reveal several items of interest about John Powell. One came from the London Gazette in 1840 that is available free [here](#). It reads:

PURSUANT to a Decree of the High Court of Chancery, made in a cause Hopkins against Powell, the creditors of John Powell, late of Solihull, in the county of Warwick, Gentleman, deceased (who died on or about the 3^d day of February 1838), are forthwith to come in and prove their debts before William Brougham, Esq. one of the Masters of the said Court, at his chambers, in Southampton-buildings, Chancery-lane, London, or in default thereof they will be peremptorily excluded the benefit of the said Decree.

Another suggestion is to go to the local library; Solihull Central Library has a family history section. If you provide them with all the details of your ggg-grandfather's death and to what lengths you have gone to find this person, they may be able to tell you whether there was a local newspaper at the time or if the only newspapers were Birmingham ones. If you are lucky and they have a local newspaper for the time, they may actually try to find an article or may request a fee for looking for any possible article. [This suggestion was made yesterday to the researcher and he emailed the library and received a remarkable and quick response – see **News From the Trenches** below.]

News From the Trenches

Amazing Response from the Solihull Central Library

The researcher looking for information about his ggg-grandfather who died by poison (in above Questions section) decided to email to the Solihull Central Library to see if they would be able to point him in the right direction to get more information. The Heritage & Local Studies Librarian answered his request this morning in great detail. What an incredible amount this researcher learned about this branch of his family with a simple polite email. This is what the librarian wrote:

Thank you for your email. Unfortunately, the main local newspaper for Solihull didn't start until 1930 – before then, it's most likely that any local news would have been reported in the Birmingham newspapers. Some of these are available online on the [British Newspaper Archive website](#) and FindMyPast [These had already been searched.]

There may be other Birmingham newspapers from the time that aren't yet included on the site but these are most likely to be at the Library of Birmingham. Staff there would be able to advise what else may be available - <http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com/archives>.

However, I do actually have some information that may be of help to you, from other sources we hold here in the library.

There is an article in 'Warwickshire and Worcestershire Life', December 1983, by eminent local historian Charles Lines (1913-2000). He refers to a tale he heard in his boyhood about two Spanish boys who refused to sleep in a house near St Alphege Church, which was called the Priory (not the present building of the same name), because "it was haunted by the ghost of a headmaster who had hanged himself". He goes on in the article to say the facts didn't quite match the tale, and that John Powell, the headmaster in question, had committed suicide at the [old] Priory in 1838, but this was by arsenic poisoning, not hanging. He was allegedly troubled by the conduct of his sons. Charles Lines reports that this information is from the diaries of Archer and Caroline Clive (Archer Clive was Rector of St Alphege Church at the time). We have microfilm copies here but the diaries themselves are at [Warwickshire County Record Office](#).

John Powell had actually taken over the school from his uncle, also called John Powell. It was a private school and both John Powells were Ushers (masters) at Solihull Grammar School (this would have been at a building known as Malvern House, which is still on the corner of New Road and the footpath leading down to Malvern Park). There are some recent photographs of the building on Flickr [here](#).

John Powell (junior) took over the private Powell's School after his uncle's death in 1803, and he resigned his position at the grammar school in 1812. Powell's school was originally in a building on the High Street, before John Powell (junior) bought the [old] Priory sometime after 1804, and extended it to house the school. I've added a photo of the Priory to our Flickr page [here](#).

The [old] Priory was demolished c. 1889, and replaced with a new building to the rear of the old one, also called the Priory (this building is currently still standing and houses the Citizen's Advice Bureau etc. but is due for demolition next year, I believe).

John Powell (junior) died on 3rd February 1838. He is apparently buried in a grave on the south side of St Alphege Church. A memorial tablet at the church reads: "To preserve as long as possible the memory of a generous, upright, honest, and charitable man, a kind husband, and a most indulgent parent, this tablet is erected by his widow and surviving children." (This information is from 'Solihull and its Church' by Robert Pemberton).

I hope this is of some help. If you have any further information about your 3xgreat-grandfather, or his family, I'd be interested to know more about them.

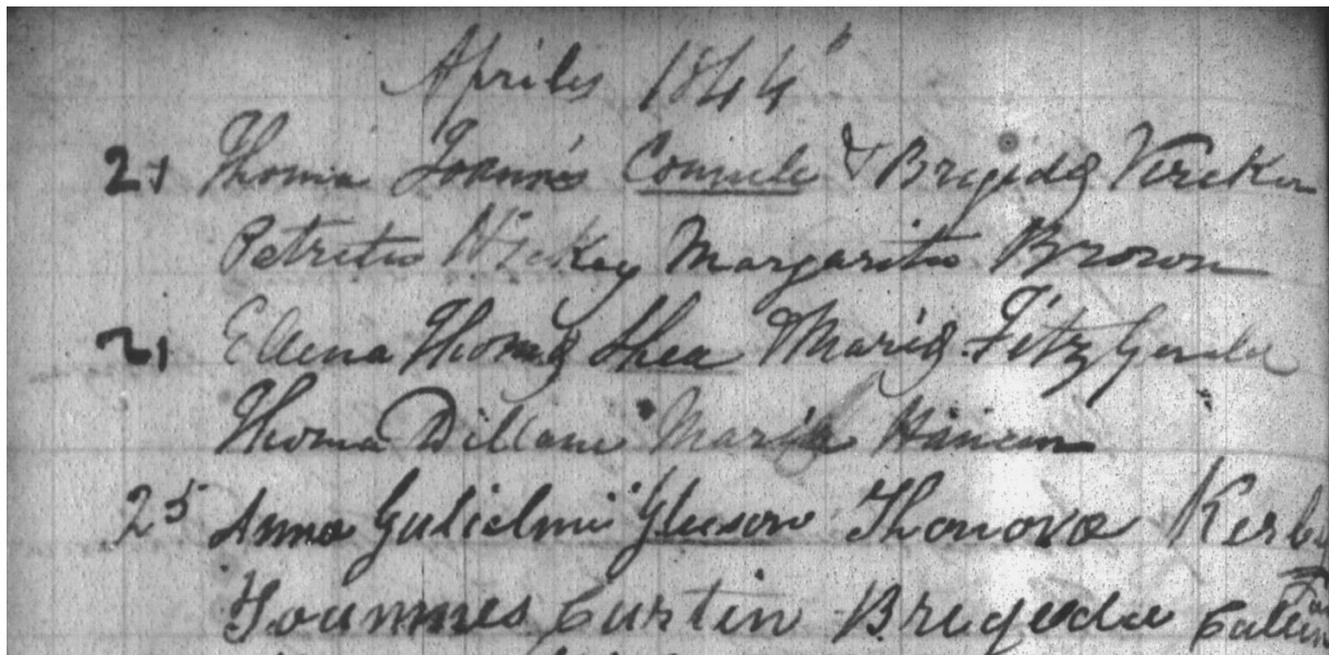
Not only did this wonderful librarian upload a photo to the Solihull Heritage Flickr account but she has posted some helpful information about the building. I imagine that the researcher will be responding to the librarian with further information about his family as requested in her last sentence.

Were You Aware...

Irish Catholic Parish Registers

This week, I had occasion to look at the free online Catholic parish registers for Ireland at the National Library of Ireland. They were put online [here](#) in the summer and I had not previously checked them out. I had found a family member being married in England in 1845 and the censuses consistently state that she was born in Ireland and even better Limerick. The family member who was looking for this person said that she came from Fedamore. That she knew the diocese of birth of her great-grandmother was an amazing fluke because the online records are not indexed and a search is difficult in the extreme unless you know the Catholic diocese the person came from. The records are similar to the browse-only collections on FamilySearch. You isolate the parish and then choose a date range of each microfilm that is online. If you have an approximate date you can enter the date at the top of the page and then scroll down from there.

I was surprised when looking at the baptisms for 1844. The priest had become quite lazy and it was not at all apparent what he was writing. The second and third entries below clued me in: the first name is the child's name; it is followed by the parents' names and the second line has the godparents' names. No daughter of ... or son of ... Of course, the names are all in Latin.



April 21 1844 – second entry reads:
Elena Thomas Shea Maria Fitzgerald
Thomas Dillon Maria Hinsom

April 25 1844 – third entry reads
Ann Guliemo Gleeson Honora Kerby
Joannes Burtin Bridget ?

I was looking for a Jane Gleeson, daughter of Henry, according to her English marriage certificate. First I needed to know what the priest would write for the name Jane. Leslie Dorschell did an internet search and found that Jane, Joan, Joanna, etc. would all be Johanna. Henry would be Henricus (Guliemo is Latin for William). So now it is back to trolling through the registers looking for Johanna of Henricus Gleeson.

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 (Helen)

Thursday 9:30am to noon (Don & Roberta); 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm (Don & Roberta)

Saturday, 2nd & 4th of each month, 10am to 1pm (Grace & Charlene) For Chinese research

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](#)

[FamilySearch Catalogue](#)

[FamilySearch Film Ordering](#)

[Steve Archer IGI Batch Numbers](#)

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