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Announcements

The Toronto FHC will be closed on Tuesday, November 20th in the morning.

OGS Toronto - *For King and Country Database*

The Toronto Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society has added 3,000 more names and ten more schools to its on-line database of school memorials commemorating Toronto students and staff who volunteered for active service in the two World Wars and other military conflicts. The newest schools in the ***For King and Country*** database are Brock Avenue, Hodgson, Jesse Ketchum, King George, Lambton Park, Long Branch Continuation, Oriole Park, Plains Road, R.H. McGregor and Sackville Street. There are now nearly 30,000 names in the database. The database also includes transcriptions and photographs of school war memorials, as well as information about the history of the schools themselves and links to other useful school and community websites. Explore this collection at [For King and Country](#).

What's New

[Ancestry](#) has updated several significant English databases: Liverpool Catholic records, Dorset electoral registers 1839-1922, and London England electoral registers 1832-1965. Electoral registers for the Midlands (mainly Birmingham and North Warwickshire) 1832-1955 have been added. A new collection of land petitions for **Nova Scotia** 1765-1800 has been added. One new Australian collection is from **New South Wales** – Gaol Description and Entrance Books 1818-1930. This collection contains detailed records of prisoners; those after 1867 have pictures and personal information about each prisoner, while those before 1867 are not as detailed and may not contain a photo.

[FamilySearch](#) has updated its Ontario Marriage index and the collection of Quebec notarial records. They have updated the collection of Kent Manorial documents 1241-1976; this collection and all the other Kent records are only available to view at Family History Centres. Please call ahead to ensure that the FHC can actually access them; some may not be able to.

[FindMyPast.co.uk](#) added more than 6 million pages of historical newspapers as announced in last week's Bulletin. Unfortunately these newspapers are not available at Family History Centres through the FHC Portal. More distressing news is that the 19th Century Newspaper Collection (the basis for the FindMyPast papers) will soon be discontinued. FindMyPast.com says that they will soon be available on the WorldWide site.

The Forum:

Question:

Q1/42/2012. Yorkshire.

I am searching for the parents of my ggg grandmother, Martha Drake. Martha was born in West Yorkshire sometime around 1801. She married Thomas Speight (b. 28 December 1801 in Bingley, Yorkshire) on 29 Jul 1822 in Bradford, Yorkshire. Their first child, John, was born 15 December 1822 and baptized in Bingley, followed by Samuel Drake (b. ca. 1824) and Alice (b. ca. 8 January 1827). Martha and Thomas and the three children emigrated around 1828 and by 1837 they had settled in Markham, Ontario where seven more children were born. According to obituaries for Thomas (28 February 1875 in Markham, Ontario) and Martha (30 April 1882 in Markham, Ontario) they were Wesleyan Methodists. I can find no record of Martha's birth or baptism in Bingley or Bradford; however a search of Ancestry.ca finds a record in the West Yorkshire Non-Conformist Records 1646-1985 of the birth of Matty Drake born 9 August 1801 at Shipley in the parish

of Bradford to Samuel Drake and Alec Drake. While it may be a long shot, I'm wondering if "Matty" might be a "nickname" for Martha.

I have also uncovered a WY Non-Conformist Record for Hannah Drake born 3 December 1803 to Samuel and Alec Drake and given that Martha and Thomas Speight named their youngest daughter Martha Hannah, I'm wondering if it's reasonable to think that I may have found the names Martha's parents and sister or am I guilty of wanting to make things fit? I would also welcome suggestions for finding baptismal records for Samuel Drake Speight and Alice Speight – searches of Ancestry, Find My Past and Family Search have not been successful.

News From the Trenches

My Favourite Ancestor – Herb Mowat

Jane Martin writes: "I am writing about my Father, Herb Mowat, who was in the Canadian Army and wounded almost mortally at the Battle of Amiens, August 9, 1918. He was left for dead on the battlefield until a young medic came along. Seeing a sign of life despite his hemorrhaging from the mouth, he picked him up and dragged him to a "first aid post" hospital, where he was then assessed and sent to Royal Military Hospital in England. There the bullet was removed from his spine. I wrote the full story in my Dad's words (from a cassette tape) for *Families* at the OGS several years ago. His life ended tragically because of a car crash at the age of 82, but those years were packed with dynamism, adventure, generosity, brilliance, sadness, coping and love. He was on the National Executive of the United Nations Association in Canada, and Chairman of the speaker's panel (DYNAMIC speaker!) in Toronto for many years, but his main focus besides his wife and five children, was the Zionist Organization of Canada. As a Christian, he worked tirelessly for the cause of a home for the Jewish people in Israel, and with his powerful personality and powers of persuasion, was one of the foremost people in the Toronto area responsible for the birth of the State of Israel in 1948. He persuaded many in the Canadian Government to be onside with the Zionist cause including Mackenzie King, Paul Martin Sr., Senator Roebuck, Lester Pearson, our Mayor Phil Givens, and many many more. I had the honour of contributing part of his story to a book published by McClelland & Stewart in 1998 called *Voices From The Heart*, - the stories of many people in the Toronto area who also contributed to the Jewish cause., including Ben Dunkelman, then owner of Tip Top Tailors, and a hero back in the Arab Israeli War. That is the briefest account of Dad's life I could write."

Were You Aware ...

Tithe Applotments vs Griffith's Valuation

John Pepper pointed out that I probably misled readers when I put Griffith's Valuation in brackets after Tithe Applotments in *What's New* last week. Tithes were taxes that had to be paid on agricultural land to the Church of Ireland by the occupiers of the land. The tithe applotment books (TABs) list the heads of the households of each piece of land in a civil parish between 1823 and 1838, the area, and the amount of the tax. Taxes were levied at different rates according to the quality of the land. Digitized tithe applotment books are now (as of last week) available at the [National Archives of Ireland](#) and [FamilySearch](#), but these do not include Northern Ireland. Indexes for the whole of Ireland are available on Ancestry.

Griffith's Valuation is quite different. Richard Griffith was appointed to value all privately held lands and buildings in both rural and urban areas in order to figure a rental rate for each unit of property. These valuations were completed between 1853 and 1868, approximately a generation later than the TABs. Griffith's Valuation, which is available on Ancestry and on CD at the Toronto FHC, references about one million individuals who occupied property before, during and after the famine. It is a census substitute as no census material exists for that time frame. Ancestry has indexed the collection by name of occupier, name of lessor, and place of residence by county, barony, parish and townland.

Transportation in the 1800s

In Rural Ontario: Alan Billing writes: "Regarding Fanny's travels, there are some detailed and interesting descriptions of travel in Southern Ontario a little earlier in the 19th century, from accounts of author/pioneers Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill. The descriptions below are based upon "Sisters in the Wilderness" by Charlotte Gray, which is taken largely from their writings.

"Susanna and Catharine landed in Quebec as migrants in 1832, intending to join a relative in the bush north of Lakefield, Ontario. Travelling by boat to Cobourg on Lake Ontario actually involved two boat trips, and two journeys in stagecoaches to bypass rapids on the St. Lawrence River.

"They travelled north by horse and wagon to Rice Lake. They got soaked by rain as they crossed the lake in a boat, and then the "grubby little steamer" ran aground four miles below Peterborough. The men on the rowboat that eventually arrived to rescue them had consumed a keg of whiskey and were "sullen and gloomy". After an ugly row with the passengers, the men took off into the night, leaving them stranded in the woods. Seemingly a fellow passenger knew where he was going, and in response to Catharine's entreaties, guided them through the dense forest to safety. This was an ordeal (these were upper-class English folks), including a fall into knee-deep water.

“An inheritance allowed them to move, which they set out to do in the early weeks of 1834, in winter. “The journey was a nightmare”. It extended into the night. The sleighs rattled and bumped over the frozen ridges of the icy track, between high snowbanks. Sometimes the two sleighs slid smoothly over the ground; at other times, they were thrown violently forward as the sleigh runners hit a rock or tree stump protruding through the packed snow.”

“In sight of their destination, the heavily-laden sleds were stopped by the massive trunk of a fallen pine tree. The driver of the first sled was able to get his horses to jump the obstruction, and the sleigh teetered on the top of the trunk, but crossed in. The second sled did not fare as well. It “hung poised there for a second and then, in ghastly slow motion, tipped gradually onto its side and finally fell to the ground with a dreadful crash.” The sleigh landed on the wooden crates it carried. “The frozen darkness was filled with the sounds of wood splitting, glass breaking and china smashing.” Susanna was not happy with this trip.

Travel between substantial towns and cities such as Hamilton, Buffalo, Hartford and Toronto was undoubtedly much easier just 40 to 60 years later, but even now Hurricane Sandy can render an easy trip impossible.”

In Toronto: For the first few years local transportation did not exist, as horses, feet, and private carriages were enough to meet the transportation needs of the city’s residents. The Williams Omnibus Bus Lines was the first mass transportation system with four six-passenger buses. Established in 1849 by local cabinetmaker Burt Williams (who made the carriages), it consisted of horse-drawn stagecoaches operating from the St. Lawrence Market to the Red Lion Hotel in Yorkville in ten minutes (faster than today). The bus line was a great success, and four larger vehicles were added in 1850. After a few years, even more buses were in use, and were operating every few minutes. In 1861, the city gave a 30-year franchise to Toronto Street Railways who built a horse car line, and the gauge of the buses was modified so as to fit between the tracks. The omnibus system lasted only until 1862, when it was bought out by the Toronto Street Railway.

In London and England: Ian McLeod sent some excerpts from *The Victorian House* by Judith Flanders who writes on domestic life from childbirth to deathbed. (Call # 640.94109 FLA) In the book, one lady recounts that it was difficult to walk freely in heavy tweed skirts. She sewed “brush braid” to the hem of her skirt to collect the worst of the mud as the skirts inevitably swept the road but found that it could take an hour or more to brush the dried mud off. Trains were the most comfortable way to travel (as opposed to coach and horse) and they were considered perfectly safe for unaccompanied women and even children. The trains were segregated by class; there were three classes and in addition, “workmen’s trains” brought manual labourers into London. Some stations even had separate entrances, waiting halls and booking rooms for each class of passenger. The restaurant or buffet in the station was a male preserve, just as most restaurants in the city were. The Tube was the easiest way to travel longer distances across London and was segregated into two classes. Omnibuses had only one class, but as they began their service at eight o’clock, after the labourers were expected to be at work, they were middle class by default. The fares were also more expensive than third class on trains. Omnibus drivers could pick and choose their passengers, sometime not picking up the poorly dressed. “By 1853 there were 3000 buses in London, carrying an estimated million people a day.” “‘Outsides’ - passengers who rode on the top of the buses – had to climb to the roof by an iron ladder, with a strap to hold on to. They sat on a central bench running lengthways. Women were not expected to ride on top.” There were also a few box seats by the driver, usually reserved for regular male customers. Initially there were no tickets: the conductor charged as much as he thought he could get away with, and passed on to his employers as little as he thought he could get away with, sharing the rest with the driver.”

UK County Resources – Norfolk, next week Cambridgeshire

This week we have some suggestions for Norfolk. If you have a resource that you find particularly useful for Norfolk and/or Cambridgeshire, please send it/them to the Bulletin.

[If you have not tracked any English or Welsh ancestors back to the start of civil registration in 1837, you should start by using the civil registration index at [FreeBMD](#) and census information for 1841 to 1911. If you need some help to do this, please come to any Family History Centre where volunteers will be happy to help.]

Suffolk: [GravestonePhotos](#) has nearly 60,000 photos of gravestones in 311 cemeteries. Request a free photo!
[Workhouses](#) website has loads of information and pictures of workhouses in various counties.
Choose *Workhouse locations* from the drop-down menu on the left (thanks to Vida Preece)

Norfolk: Norfolk researchers are lucky! There are considerable free online resources to help.

[FreeREG](#) is attempting to index all parish records. They have good coverage of parishes in Norfolk and this is a good place to start. My experience is that the transcriptions are quite accurate.

[FamilySearch](#) has images to browse freely at home of Parish registers 1538-1900, Archdeacon's transcripts 1600-1812, Bishop's transcript's 1685-1941, marriage bonds 1557-1915, monumental inscriptions 1600-1900s, Non-conformist records 1613-1901, Poor Law Union records 1796-1900, and Registers of Electors 1844-1952. Some of the Parish Registers have been indexed. (If you can find your person of interest in FreeREG, it is then fairly easy to find the image on FamilySearch.)

The Norfolk Family History Society has a database of parish records and memorial inscriptions for members only at the Norfolk Online Records Search ([NORS](#)). It may well be worth your while to become a member to access this database. I have found that its coverage is not yet as good as FreeREG but it continues to grow.

The Norfolk Record Office has an online catalog: [NROCAT](#) where one can find Norfolk Consistory Court wills, some parish settlement papers and even a few coroner's inquests.

There is good coverage of Consistory Court records in printed volumes at the Toronto Reference Library. The Norfolk County Council has a collection of images of archival material on its [Norfolk Sources](#) website. One can search for pre-1858 probate records, trade directories, broadsides and a few books.

[NorfolkChurches](#) is a wonderful site for looking at photos of churches with a short description for each.

[GravestonePhotos](#) includes about 131 parishes with 16,129 names in Norfolk, which is not complete coverage. The monumental inscriptions are indexed by name, and you can search for a surname through all the entries of all counties at once. One can obtain a photographic image of a monument of interest without charge.

[NorfolkPubs](#) has a list of pubs and their publicans in Norfolk. One can search for the name of a publican as well.

[NorfolkMills](#) has pictures and descriptions of historic windmills in Norfolk. There are 56 drainage mills, 147 water mills, 14 steam mills and 900 corn windmills.

The [Workhouses](#) website has loads of information and pictures of workhouses in various counties. Choose *Workhouse locations* from the drop-down menu on the left, then *English Poor Law Unions*, and then *Norfolk*.

GENUKI [Towns and Parishes](#) is helpful because, for each of the over 700 places, one can get all the administrative areas: deaneries, hundreds, registration districts and poor law unions.

A helpful website of Norfolk Hundreds is available at [Villages arranged by Hundreds](#).

No films were received in the week ending November 15, 2012.

A patron wishing to view a film ordered by another should check first with staff. The ordering patron will always have priority. 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.)

Monday 9:30 am to 2 pm

Tuesday 9:30 am to 2 pm (closed on November 20th), and 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm

Wednesday 9:30 am to 4 pm

Thursday 9:30 am to 12 noon and 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm

Friday 9:30 am to 12 noon

Saturday 9:30 am to 12 noon

Closures: If you do not have a booking, call before you come. Closed Tuesday morning, November 20th.

For a copy of a searchable listing of all films, fiche, CDs and books held at the Toronto Family History Centre in pdf format, go to the Toronto FHC Website at <http://torontofhc.blogspot.com/> and look for it under Resources.

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