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### **Announcements**

#### **FHC Closures**

We will be closed for the Thanksgiving weekend, October 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, inclusive.  
Call before you come if you do not have a booking.

#### **Film Renewals for Films at the Toronto FHC**

If you currently have a film at the FHC ordered under the old system, we would appreciate knowing whether you intend to keep the film or whether we can return it. Please reply before Tuesday, September 21 to this email either way. Thank you very much for your help.

#### **OGS Toronto – Call for Speakers for Scottish Workshop**

OGS Toronto has issued the call for speakers for the Scottish family history workshop that will be held on June 18, 2011 - <http://www.torontofamilyhistory.org/Scottish-Call.html>. The Ontario Genealogical Society, Toronto Branch and the Canadiana Department of the North York Central Library will be co-hosting a one-day workshop on Scottish Family History. The principal speaker will be Chris Paton from Scotland who will give presentations on the Scottish church, Scottish land records/house history and the use of guild records. They are looking for other speakers who would like to be part of the workshop.

#### **OGS Toronto Meeting – September 27 at 7:30pm**

Toronto Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will be holding its next meeting on Monday, September 27 at 7:30 pm in the Burgundy Room at the North York Centre (concourse level). The speaker will be Dr. Mark McGowan speaking on *Death or Canada: The Irish Famine Immigration to Toronto 1847*. Copies of Dr. McGowan's book (of the same title) will be for sale at the meeting for \$24.95 (cash or cheque). The meeting is free to OGS members and \$5 for others. Details at [www.torontofamilyhistory.org](http://www.torontofamilyhistory.org).

#### **OGS Toronto Fall Courses**

The fall courses offered by OGS Toronto start shortly – the first are **Researching British Forces in Canada** starting on September 25<sup>th</sup> and **Basic Genealogy** starting on September 28<sup>th</sup>. All five course descriptions can be found at <http://www.torontofamilyhistory.org/courses.html> . If you are intending to register for the early courses, please contact their voice-mail at 416 733-2608 or e-mail them at [Courses@torontofamilyhistory.org](mailto:Courses@torontofamilyhistory.org) to let them know.

### **What's New**

#### **FindMyPast – New Parish Records for Devon and Calderdale (Halifax and district)**

FindMyPast has added 360,000 Devon baptism records, covering the years 1813-1839, and 270,000 Devon parish marriage records, covering the years 1754-1837, to its site. It has also published 18,000 baptism records for the years 1703-1901 and burial records for the years 1704-1931 for Calderdale. FindMyPast is available to use without charge at Family History Centres through the FHC Portal.

#### **Ancestry – UK Prisoners, Selected Canadian Service Records, Andrews Newspaper Index Cards**

Ancestry has added records of Prison Hulk Registers and Letter Books, 1802-1849. These records give name, when received on ship, age, offence, when and where convicted, sentence, and what happened to them. [A hulk was a decommissioned ship that could still float. Many hulks were moored along the Thames to hold prisoners awaiting transportation, as a way to alleviate overcrowding in jails.] The letter books sometimes include a note of the prisoner's character [Very Bad Char., Idle Disorderly Char., Been Transported Before] and make fascinating reading. [I was delighted to find my gggg grandfather aboard the Justitia from July 3, 1816 to September 5, 1816 awaiting transportation to New South Wales.] More records for Criminals! - About 4,400 licences of parole for female convicts from 1853 to 1887 can now be searched by name, year, birth year, court and year of conviction. After 1871 each file contains a photo of the convict.

Ancestry has added the Canadian service records for 100 selected WWI soldiers and for 100 selected soldiers who died in WWII. This is part of Library and Archives Canada "Lest We Forget" educational initiative.

The Andrews Newspaper Index Cards, 1790-1976, are a collection of about 250,000 cards of notices, like births, marriages, deaths and probate. Although the records are mainly for England from newspapers and various official sources, like the London Gazette, there are references to people around the world with connections to England. I found a lot of references to my family regarding probate in the middle of the 1900s.

#### **Irish Family History Foundation – New Records for the Counties of Laois and Affaly**

IFHF has added another 800,000 records to its online database for Queens County (Laois) and Kings County (Offaly). These records include baptisms, marriages, a few burials, some census records, gravestone inscriptions, and Griffith's Valuation. Go to <http://www.rootsireland.ie/> or their interactive map at <http://ifhf.rootsireland.ie/map.php> to search the nearly 18 million Irish records available online there. Searching is free but you must buy credits to download records.

### **Additions to Our Permanent Collection**

A new book has been donated by Don and Roberta Harris: *Deeper Roots of the Gill, Bhatti, Sidhu, Grar, Tur and Related Jat and Rajput Clans* by Gurchran Singh Gill and James Goldberg. Dr Gill gave a workshop at the Brampton conference on Punjabi family history.

### **The Forum**

#### **Questions:**

No new questions from readers this week.

#### **Answers:**

##### **Q1/36/2010. England. Death Certificates**

A story that has come down the family has it that one of my Grandfather's generation (b 1888 ) threw himself in front of a Northern Line Tube Train at Tottenham Court Road Station in the mid 1920's. His

reasons were perfectly understandable within the context of the times. He had been gassed in WW1 and like so many of his generation suffered terribly from what we would call nowadays post traumatic stress disorder. I assume that given the public manner of his suicide there would have had to be an inquest in a Coroners Court and a likely verdict reached that he "took his own life while the balance of his mind was disturbed". I have looked for him in the BMD's but I have never found him. Are the death certificates for suicides treated differently to those that die of natural causes?

This question prompted more replies than most questions posed here.

Norma Haill writes: "The gentleman concerned was a bit of a rogue uncle of my husband's and we had lost him prior to the WWII when he was deported from the U.S. I had tried to find him many times with no success, including the death records. Then one day I found him, giving us the date and place and we pursued it through the National Death Registry where the records are kept in quarterly fashion. We wrote to the pertinent area (see below) and received the following information. We then checked the newspapers on that date and found the full account. He had gassed himself "while of etc etc".

'In 1946 inquests held in Hammersmith came under the jurisdiction of the Western District of the County of London. Due to lack of space at County Hall, the coroners' records from 1927 to 1967 were weeded and for most years only a 10% sample of the inquests was retained. I have checked the index to the surviving case files and unfortunately the case papers in respect of A.C.'s inquest have not survived. We do not hold any local newspapers at London Metropolitan Archives. Hammersmith & Fulham Archives & Local History Centre or the British Library Newspapers section should be able to assist you with Hammersmith newspapers from 1946.'

Kathy Hartley says: "I have had more than one 'suicide' on my family tree so I speak with some experience re the research. First thing that must be done is find the death certificate - the death certs are not treated differently. With my work, having a coroner's inquest (noted on the cert) led to detailed reports of the inquests in the local newspaper. Gruesome, heartwrenching but 'gold' for family historians. My fellows died prior to the 1920's and before the horrors that befell England and Europe with WW1 so I'm not sure if the papers would have been so 'keen' to cover it, (meaning that war had exhausted people and death was sadly too familiar). At the time I was researching these fellows I located the original copies of the newspapers at the newspaper library in Colindale.

Brian Watkins had a response to the person investigating a suicide in their family: "One of my Grand uncles committed suicide and I did not know until I purchased his death certificate through the Office for National Statistics. So I'm sure that a death certificate is always issued. My uncle died in Kingston, Surrey in 1948. I contacted HM Coroner for Surrey and they sent me a copy of the Coroner's report. If I remember correctly there was no cost to me. Googling 'Middlesex Coroner' returns a range of sites. One has a lot of information about Coroner's records for London and Middlesex - <http://217.154.230.218/NR/rdonlyres/0D15B0CF-8A94-44D5-9966-5F3276C5C74F/0/Infono34.pdf> . I would review the BMD lookup.

Diane Marcotte replied: "In response to the question as to whether death certificates for suicides are treated differently to those that die of natural causes I can only say that my experience has shown that they are not. I ordered a death certificate through FreeBMD of my GG Grandfather who died in Midhurst, Sussex in 1867. The 'Cause of Death' on the certificate is 'Cut his throat when of unsound mind'. I also found the Death notice for a Great-Aunt that died in Lanark County, Ontario and 'Cause of Death' was "Suicide by Carbolic Acid"."

C. Langhelt also had: "A great grandfather of my husband's committed a very public suicide (while on trial in a courtroom) in 1935, Toronto. I found his death certificate on-line through ancestry.ca. It stated that the immediate cause of death was cyanide poisoning, that Morbid conditions were self administered and then later when asked if it was an accident, suicide or homicide, stated suicide.

Not to belabour the point, my gg grandfather committed suicide as did two of his sons and a nephew. There were detailed accounts of the inquests (one day after each death) in the local newspapers and death certificates were issued – suicide while of unsound mind and suicide while in a state of temporary

insanity. We have often wondered about the newspaper quote of my gg grandfather at the inquest into his 25 year-old son's death: "I have had four sisters, and all have been of unsound mind." !

### **Were You Aware...**

#### **Goddard Association of Europe Website Update**

Malcolm Goddard has updated the Goddard Association Website with the UK Goddard Death Index Database, developed by the late Peter Goddard of Toronto. [Peter was a very active and still-missed volunteer at our FHC and started this Bulletin in 2005.] Where appropriate the Death Index also gives links to the Goddard Probate index and the Military Service records index. Please go to the following web address [www.goddard-association.org.uk/](http://www.goddard-association.org.uk/) and click on the *Members Only* link on the menu, enter your email address & membership number in the fields provided and click the Submit button. The searchable databases are available via a link on the left hand side of the main window. Please be patient when searching these databases as they contain over 38,000 records from 1837-2003 and take a little bit of time to load. If you are researching the GODDARD name and are not yet a member, consider joining. Malcolm has started to add the Births database and will then move onto the Marriage database.

#### **Genealogical Treasure or Garbage?**

Two weeks ago I asked what do we do with our genealogical treasures later in life if no-one has expressed any interest in them? Marsha Brown replied: "I just spent 3 years cleaning out an elderly cousin's home. I had the luxury of time and I discovered many family treasures that I was then able to distribute to those of her relatives who wanted them. Most didn't. I would highly recommend that you let your relatives know you are interested in any family/historical items they find." Vida Preece wrote: "People might be interested in donating items to local history museums or universities, particularly if the items are connected to a particular place or industry. Dundee University was quite happy to receive and catalog items about the jute industry in Dundee and India."

#### **Bigamy**

Do you have ancestors for whom you cannot find a marriage certificate? Do you know that an ancestor married twice? Along with suicide, bigamy is hidden in the closet, never to be discussed by the family. I suspect that bigamy occurred more often than researchers think. If you have an example, do send it to the Bulletin.

#### **Films received in the 8 days ending 16 September 2010 and due for return on 14 October 2010.**

<b>Film Content</b>	<b>Film No</b>
BEL Attert Catholic PRs 1688-1797	0619942
RUS Geschlechtsregister, 942-1942, F-K	0074182

A patron wishing to view a film ordered by another patron should check first with staff. The patron who ordered the film will always have priority. The description of the film given above may not be a full description. A film number search in the Family History Library Catalog will reveal the full content of the film. The geographical abbreviations used above are based on 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 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Tuesday 9.30 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Starting October 12<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.)

Wednesday 9.30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Thursday 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon and 6.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

Friday 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon. (Starting October 1<sup>st</sup> open until 4pm)

Saturday 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon.

Closures: Thanksgiving, October 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. Christmas, Dec 18<sup>th</sup> to January 2.

**You can request, by email, a copy of a searchable listing of all the films, fiche, CDs and books held at the Toronto Family History Centre. These will be sent to you as a pdf file attachment to an email but are about 2Mb in size and so high-speed internet connection is desirable.**

*Should you decide that you no longer wish to receive this bulletin, reply to this email with the word "Delete" in the subject line.*

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