



FAMILY HISTORY Federation

Supporting Family Historians since 1974

REALLY USEFUL Bulletin

No 12

August 2021

Welcome to the August edition of the *Really Useful Bulletin*
inside find...

Lead article on researching ancestors with mental health issues
along with news from local FHS and from the Federation

The November show is extended and expanded

Friday 12th November

6pm-10pm

and

Saturday 13th November

10am-6pm



Website announcements:

In early September **ALL SPEAKERS AND THEIR TOPICS**

In early October **FULL RANGE OF WORKSHOPS**

Essential booking of workshops will open nearer the show—no extra charge

Near to the show date access to **ASK THE EXPERTS**

New format—you will book a slot with your chosen expert—no extra charge

*Visit family history society and other stalls on Friday evening
to ask local experts for local advice*



Keep visiting the show website for updates — do not miss out!

www.fhf-reallyuseful.com

**Special code rate announced last month
for Bulletin readers - £8.50**

**Use this code—expires on
31st August**

Full price £10

Your local FHS may have an offer code too!



JACKY21



Really Useful Bulletin

Madness, Mania and Melancholia: the mental health of our British ancestors

Janet Few

Please note that, in order to convey the thinking and attitudes of the time, in places, this article uses historical terms that are now considered to be unacceptable. This is not intended to offend but is based on the language found in the contemporary documents. The article looks at the history of, reactions to and treatment of, those whom we would now recognise as struggling with their mental wellbeing. It also investigates the institutions where sufferers might be treated or incarcerated and the sources that we can use to find out more about these, often forgotten, members of our family.



Entertainment at Colney Hatch, Lunatic Asylum - Wellcome Institute L0000641 from the Illustrated London News via Wikimedia Commons

Particularly in the light of world events over the past couple of years, we are increasingly aware of the importance of safeguarding our mental health. Sadly, being unable to manage the pressures of daily life is not a new phenomenon. The stresses and anxieties of our ancestors may have been different from our own but were no less significant. Compared with today, people of the past may have had lower expectations and would have been free from media-fuelled peer pressure but they might have been coping with poverty, hardship, insufficient leisure time and a lack of privacy. A significant factor for many of our forebears was a religious climate that was confining and often accompanied by fears of 'hellfire and damnation'. Faith might also impose a moral code that was difficult to live up to. Asylum admission records frequently make reference to 'religious mania', or that the individual believed they had forfeited their place in heaven.

Mental illness, including such things as post-natal depression, was poorly understood and its occurrence was frequently a cause for shame. Mental or physical disability, or incapacity, might be regarded as a punishment from God. The concept of the 'sins of the fathers' being manifested in future generations, persisted until very recently. Insanity might also be blamed on the actions of the sufferer's mother during

pregnancy. What were regarded as moral lapses, such as giving birth to an illegitimate child, might be equated with madness.

It is important to distinguish between the mentally unwell, who were usually labeled 'lunatics' because of the perceived association between madness and the phases of the moon and those with additional learning needs, who might have been described, in language that is no longer acceptable, as 'idiots', 'imbeciles' or 'morons'. Historically, the distinctions were blurred, particularly before the 1845 Lunatics' Act established, somewhat crudely, definitions for various classifications of mental incapacity.

We might identify family members who were struggling in the sources that we use as family historians. Perhaps there are stories about an auntie who was a bit 'odd', of family members who had a breakdown, or even accounts of those who were institutionalised but the taboo that surrounded mental illness often means that there is no legacy in the oral accounts. By 1871, we can turn to the census. From this date, the disability column of the British census returns includes scope for recording 'lunatics', 'imbeciles' and 'idiots'. An entry in this column may be the first clue that we have that all was not well. Death certificates may also reveal deaths from what we would now recognize as dementia.



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This may be recorded as 'senile decay' or some such similar term. You might also find mentions of 'melancholia' or irrational behavior in service records, as individuals found it difficult to cope with serving in the armed forces.

If mental illness ended tragically, in suicide, this will be recorded, either starkly or more guardedly, on the death certificate. Suicide will have been followed by a coroner's inquest. Sadly, inquests records themselves survive poorly, although it is always worth checking in local record offices just in case. The press coverage of an inquest, however, can be extensive and include verbatim witness statements. Even unsuccessful suicide attempts might be reported in the press.

Suicide was, of course, a crime in the eyes of both the state and the church and would not have been resorted to lightly. Suicide was illegal until 1961. Those who took their own lives could not be buried in consecrated ground until 1823 and were only granted full burial rights by the Church of England in 2015. This means that there may be no burial record. If someone in the family took their own life, it would probably have been hushed up if possible.

Any indicators of mental ill-health should lead you to seek out further information, such as asylum records, for the appropriate area. Even if your own family do not seem to have suffered, it is worth looking at asylum case books to gain an impression of the attitudes of the time. In fact, now more asylum records are being digitised, it may be that a general online search for an individual will include such records and be the first indication of ill-health.



Chained Lunatic Howls in an Asylum – by an unknown engraver, from The Affectionate Parent's Gift, 1828 in the public domain via Wikimedia Commons

The most notorious English asylum is Bethlem (or Bethlehem) Royal Hospital in London, from whose name we get the word 'bedlam'. It opened its doors in the

thirteenth century and from 1407, became known for taking in those who were deemed to be 'mad'. Do not think, because this was a London hospital, that all its inmates were from the south-east. You will find individuals from all over the country in its records, which are held at The National Archives and can be accessed on www.findmypast.co.uk. These include Admissions'



Asylum for Criminal Lunatics, Broadmoor -

Illustrated London News 1867 via Wikimedia Commons

Registers for 1683-1932, Minutes of the Court of Governors 1559-1689, Incurable Patient Admissions Registers' 1723-1919 and Discharge and Death Books for 1782-1906. The most informative are the Patient Case Books which date from 1815-1919. These give information about the name, address, occupation, age and religion of the patients. In addition, they provide details of the background medical history and symptoms; sometimes there is also a physical description. There are observations from two doctors and members of the family, followed by details of the patient's progress. Symptoms that are frequently quoted in the case books are incessant talking, inappropriate laughter or singing, religious mania, neglecting children, irrational fears, swearing or blaspheming and persecution complexes.

A good starting point, when researching your mentally unwell family members, is The National Archives' Research Guide *Mental Health* www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/mental-health/.

They also have a guide to *Asylum Inmates* <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/asylum-inmates/>. The National Archives holds records of the Office of Commissioners in Lunacy. These include Admissions Registers for asylums and psychiatric hospitals of the Lunacy Commission and Board of Control in class MH94, dating from 1846-1960. Those for the period up to 1912 can be viewed on www.ancestry.co.uk. Criminal lunacy and warrant entry books for 1882-1898 are also held at The National Archives in class HO145; these too are available on Ancestry. Both Ancestry and FindmyPast provide access to some records relating to specific asylums and hospitals.



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Lunatic Asylum c 1817 - Casa de Locos by Francisco Goya c 1817 in the public domain via Wikimedia Commons

Until the nineteenth century, those deemed to be insane may have been incarcerated in the village lock-up, managed within the community, or sent to private institutions. Here they would be under the supervision of a 'mind doctor' or 'alienist'. The Madhouses Act of 1774 brought a system of licensing and inspection of private asylums. If they were found to be admitting the sane whose families wanted rid of them, a not uncommon way of removing an unwanted family member, then the license could be refused. 'Treatments' included restraint, drugging with laudanum, hypnosis and from 1938, electro-convulsive therapy.

In 1808, an act gave Justices of the Peace the authority to build county lunatic asylums but not all counties did so immediately and it was not until 1845 that this became compulsory. County asylum records may contain similar information to those for Bethlem Hospital. These are likely to be in the appropriate local archives. In 1815, parish overseers of the poor sent lists of pauper lunatics to the Clerk of the Peace and these will be found with records of the Quarter Sessions' Courts in County Record Offices.

Attitudes to the mentally ill began to change in the early nineteenth century. In earlier times it was considered acceptable to open asylums to paying visitors and exhibit the inmates for 'entertainment'. By the Victorian era, there was less emphasis on restraint and more on the treatment of those who could be helped and the care of those who could not. Scientific thinking gradually replaced superstition and the insane were less likely to be regarded as having been possessed or cursed.

In the twenty-first century, doctors often ask if there is any history of a particular disease in the family. Similarly to some physical complaints, the propensity to depression and mental ill-health can run in families. If we find that our own ancestry includes those who have spent time in asylums, or who have taken their own lives, how do we feel about this? Does it make us more uncomfortable than finding out, for example, that several ancestors suffered from heart disease? It should not do. We are encouraged to talk about our own mental ill-health and we can be empathetic to those members of our family who suffered in times when mental illness was little understood. Let us discuss their difficulties freely and honour their memory. By including their stories in our family history, we might help to support present day family members who are struggling.

Janet Few has an especial interest in the history of medicine and is the author of the booklet *'Til Death Us Do Part: causes of death 1300-1948* (available from www.gould.com.au/til-death-us-do-part-causes-of-death-1300-1948/utp0261/). Janet gives individual talks about the subject of this article and tutors an online course *In Sickness and in Death: researching the ill-health and death of your ancestors* for www.pharostutors.com. In her historical novel *Barefoot on the Cobbles*, which is based on a true story, the characters experience both mental and physical ill-health.



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Further Reading—books:

Arnold, Catharine *Bedlam: London and its mad* (Simon & Schuster 2009)

Burtinshaw, Kathryn and Burt, Dr John *Lunatics, Imbeciles and Idiots: a history of insanity in nineteenth century Britain and Ireland* (Pen & Sword 2017)

Chambers, Paul *Bedlam: London's Hospital for the Mad* (Ian Allen Publishing 2009)

Chater, Kathy *My Ancestor was a Lunatic: a guide to sources for family historians* (Society of Genealogists 2014)
[Available from FamilyHistoryBooksOnline]

Finnane, Mark *Insanity and the Insane in Post-famine Ireland* (Rowman and Littlefield 1981)

Grogan, Susie *Shell-shocked Britain: the First World War's legacy for Britain's mental health* (Pen & Sword 2014)

Houston, R A *Madness and Society in Eighteenth Century Scotland* (OUP 2000)

Ingram, Allan (ed.) *Patterns of Madness in the Eighteenth Century: a reader* (Liverpool University Press 1998)

Jones, Kathleen *Law and Conscience, 1744-1845: the social history of the care of the insane* (Routledge & Kegan Paul 1955)

Parry-Jones, William Llywelyn *The Trade in Lunacy: a study of private madhouses in England in the eighteenth and nineteenth century* (Routledge 1972)

Reid, Fiona *Broken Men: shellshock, treatment and recovery in Britain 1914-1930* (Continuum 2010)

Scully, Andrew T *Museums of Madness: the social organisation of insanity in nineteenth century England* (Viking 1979)

Stevens, Mark *Broadmoor Revisited: Victorian crime and the lunatic asylum* (Pen & Sword 2013)

Stevens, Mark *Life in the Victorian Asylum: the world of nineteenth century mental health care* (Pen & Sword 2014)

Wise, Sarah *Inconvenient People: lunacy, liberty and the mad doctors in Victorian England* (Vintage 2013)

Further reading—online:

The National Archives' Research Guide *Mental Health*
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/mental-health/.

They also have a guide to *Asylum Inmates* <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/asylum-inmates/>

History Co-operative Mental Illness <http://historycooperative.org/a-beautiful-mind-the-history-of-the-treatment-of-mental-illness/>

Change Minds <http://changeminds.org.uk/> and archive for North Norfolk

The History of the Asylum <http://thetimechamber.co.uk/beta/sites/asylums/asylum-history/the-history-of-the-asylum>

History of Mental disorders https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_mental_disorders

Hospitals, Asylums and Sanitoriums (worldwide) from Cyndi's List www.cyndislist.com/medical/hospitals/

The Hospital of St Mary of Bethlehem see www.bethlehemheritage.org.uk

Records of the Central Criminal Lunatic Asylum www.rte.ie/archives/2016/0111/759208-central-criminal-lunatic-asylum/

Transcript of Journal of John Westover with case notes 1686-1700 www.tutton.org/content/Westover_journal.pdf

Peter Higginbotham's Workhouses Site www.workhouses.org.uk

Hospital Records Database www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/hospitalrecords



There is a wide range of books available from FamilyHistoryBooksOnline including Kathy Chater's *My Ancestor was a Lunatic—A guide to sources for family historians*.

<https://www.familyhistorybooksonline.com/>



Family History Societies



Norfolk Family History Society

After fifteen months of closure during the Covid lockdowns the Society has been delighted to open the doors of our library at Kirby Hall once again to visitors all as allowed by the relaxation of the government's Covid guidance.

Currently our normal opening hours are 10.00 – 16.00hrs on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Before visiting please check on our website for any changes to opening hours and any updated Covid guidance for visitors: <https://www.norfolkfhs.org.uk/>

Work on adding transcripts to our Norfolk Online Record Search ('NORS') has continued apace during the lockdowns with many new additions being made by our dedicated band of volunteer transcribers based both in the UK and overseas. NORS currently holds in excess of 4.4 million individual records including banns, baptisms, burials and marriages transcribed from Norfolk Parish Registers as well as many other Norfolk-related records including memorial inscriptions and nonconformist records – full details of the very varied content can be seen here: <https://www.norfolkfhs.org.uk/nors/about/>

Since the Society was formed in 1968, we have, due to the generosity of our members, received donations of in excess of 2,100 family tree documents which have only been available for inspection by visitors to our Kirby Hall Library. These documents, some of which contain more than one family tree, have now been scanned and are currently in the process of being made available to all our members by being uploaded to NORS where a search can be made on the principal family surname on the trees. The uploading may take some time to complete so return visits to NORS may be necessary to find any relevant trees.

Our popular programme of talks by Zoom introduced during lockdown will be continuing and we hope these will be of particular benefit to members not living conveniently close to Kirby Hall. Upcoming talks are:

August 26th 2021 - ***Droughts, Deluges and Dust Devils:***
A look back at 350 years of south-east weather by Ian Currie.

Several centuries of weather with reference to south-east England. From seven-metre-high snowdrifts, cricket ball-sized hail, blazing summers to violent tornadoes or devastating floods.

September 30th 2021 - ***The A to Z of Curious Suffolk:***
Strange stories of mysteries, crimes and eccentrics by Sarah Doig.

A romp through the rolling countryside and along the shingled coastline of Suffolk, unearthing the strange and interesting tales of the county along the way.

October 25th 2021 - ***The Great Thorpe Railway Disaster of 1874:*** Heroes, Victims, Survivors by Phyllida Scrivens.

At Norwich Station in 1874, a momentary misunderstanding between the night inspector and young telegraph clerk resulted in an inevitable head-on collision. Phyllida pays tribute to the twenty-eight men, women and children who died, revealing the personal stories behind the names.

November 23rd 2021 ***Sons of the soil:*** Researching our agricultural labouring ancestors by Janet Few.

This session covers a range of sources, many of them under-used, which help to shed light on the working lives of our rural British ancestors.

Latest details of our talks can be found on our website at <https://www.norfolkfhs.org.uk/events/>

These talks are all free to members of the Society – membership subscription rates start from a very reasonable £10 per annum – full details at: <https://www.norfolkfhs.org.uk/membership/register/>

Also popular with our members is our quarterly journal, the *Norfolk Ancestor*, which we were able to continue to publish throughout lockdown with the editorial team making improvements to its presentation by introducing colour printing throughout. And finally, going from strength to strength during the pandemic has been the Society's Facebook page which now boasts over 3,400 members. It has proved a very successful forum for furthering family research and is open to join for anyone with an interest in Norfolk family history.

Go to: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/familyhistorynorfolk>

Phil Whiscombe
Chair



Family History Societies



The Dalton Genealogical Society

The Dalton Genealogical Society is one of the oldest one-name societies, having been established over fifty years ago. Our focus is on the “D*Iton” surnames: Dalton, D’Alton, Dolton & Daulton.

The Society has evolved over the years, from a “paper and meeting” stage, through a free online research website (<https://www.daltondatabank.org>), and a home website (<https://www.DaltonGenealogicalSociety.org>) to the cutting edge of DNA matching.

Today, we have over 300 members worldwide in Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South America, the UK and the USA. The Society publishes a periodic journal containing articles from members and D*Iton news items, and has a professional genealogist on retainer to help classify and explain the results of DNA testing and matching.

Our DNA programme, the Dalton International DNA Project (DIDP) has over 300 registered participants consisting of DGS members and non-members. We have classified the surnames by genetic family groups at <https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/dalton-international/about>

This was initially a Y-DNA project, but has since been expanded to include MtDNA and autosomal DNA to explore the ancestral roots of all branches of the Dalton, D’Alton, Dolton, & Daulton surnames and other spelling variations.

Many matches have been documented and we have established fifteen separate genetic families. This is an ongoing project and we welcome all persons regardless of DGS membership to participate. We also have analysis of MtDNA and autosomal DNA to give women and men with a D*Iton connection through marriage or through a maternal line the opportunity to explore their ancestry.

Finally, since the inception of the DGS, we have held annual gatherings, where members congregate at different venues around the world with D*Iton significance to exchange data and participate in presentations by members and experts in family research. We invite all persons with the Dalton, D’Alton, Dolton & Daulton surname in their trees to join our society and to discover your “genetic cousins” around the world. Go to <https://www.daltongenealogicalsociety.org/membership/index.html> or scan the QR code to become a member.



Join The DGS

Social Media:

<https://www.facebook.com/dalton.databank>

<https://www.facebook.com/DaltonsofIreland/>

<https://www.facebook.com/DGS.NA/>

<https://www.facebook.com/DaltonGenealogical/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/658778001718847>

(DNA Group)

Pinterest:

<https://www.pinterest.com/daltonociety/>

YouTube:

<http://bit.ly/DaltonYouTube>

Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/daltongenealogy>



NIFHS DNA Summer School 2021

Monday 6th – Friday 10th September

This September sees the return of our very popular *DNA Summer School*, a bit later this year due to circumstances. This time it is being held via Zoom which will give people an opportunity to attend irrespective of where they live.

Classes will last for around 90 minutes – usually a one-hour talk followed by questions and answers. The focus of this summer school is to enhance knowledge of DNA research and to make the whole subject more understandable. All four types of DNA will be covered (X, Y, Mitochondrial and Autosomal) and classes will provide practical advice to enable concepts to be understood and new skills to be learned. There will be a focus on making progress on DNA research within Ireland. However these classes are suitable for anyone irrespective of where their family originated.

The classes are £10 each. However if you wish to attend all 10 classes a discount is available and the booking can be made at a cost of £80.

For full details along with booking please visit:

<https://www.nifhs.org/courses/>



Family History Societies



Hampshire Genealogical Society

HGS HAS MOVED LOCATION!

Hampshire Genealogical Society [HGS] is extremely pleased to announce that they have agreed with Hampshire Archives and Local Studies [HALS] to relocate their Research Centre from Cosham to the Hampshire Record Office [HRO] in Winchester. We are now in the 'Heart of the County' and our new location will allow HGS members, and others interested in family history, to use both our resources and expertise whilst also being guided towards all other Hampshire records, maps and documents available in the record office archives.

HRO is easily reached from all directions by car, train or bus. Our volunteers will be able to offer help and advice, from 10.00 am till 4.00 pm on Tuesday and Thursday each week. If we find there is greater demand, and we have enough volunteers, we hope to eventually open on Wednesdays too.



Volunteer Elaine Boyes with our first visitor.

Follow us on Facebook, and on our website, for up-to-date HGS news and, if you're in Winchester, please pop in to see us. We'll be delighted to welcome you!

Hampshire Genealogical Society
Hampshire Record Office
Sussex Street, WINCHESTER, SO23 8TH

Opening times:
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10.00 am till 4.00 pm

<https://www.hgs-familyhistory.com/>



Dorset Family History Society

For People in Dorset or People with Dorset Ancestors

Dorset Family History Society is offering an *Introduction to Family History* workshop for those who are wanting to start, or have recently started, their family history research.

Thursday 16th September at 10am

During the approximately three-hour workshop there will be a presentation plus the opportunity to look at a range of census returns plus birth, marriage and death certificates and discuss the findings.

After the workshop participants are welcome to stay at the research centre (Treetops) to find out more about the subscription websites or records we have which may help you in your research.

This is a face-to-face event. A very limited number of places are available to allow for some social distancing, so booking is essential.

Cost £5 per person and non-members are welcome.

To book a place go to our website, dorsetfhs.org.uk and use the *Contact Us* form (select *Education* from the drop-down list). The workshop will take place at:

Treetops - Suite 5 Stanley House,
3 Fleets Lane,
Poole, Dorset BH15 3AJ



Stanley House and view of the Treetops research room.



Family History Societies

The area covered by the Peterborough & District Family History Society



Peterborough and District Family History Society

Peterborough – the burial place of two Queens, Katherine of Aragon and Mary I of Scotland; a centre for the railways and the home of the London Brick Company, Perkins Engines, Baker Perkins, Peter Brotherhoods, and British Sugar.

Nearby:

Helpston – the birthplace of John Clare Alwalton – the birthplace of Henry Royce

www.peterborofhs.org.uk

The Peterborough and District Family History Society covers the area known as the Soke of Peterborough, sometimes called the Liberty. This extends to Deeping Gate in the north, Eye in the east, Wittering in the west and Castor and Peterborough itself in the south. The Soke is bordered by Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Huntingdonshire, and Cambridgeshire. Our small area of north-east Northamptonshire has had a fluid political history and now lies in north-west Cambridgeshire.

The society has an impressive archive, which is added to annually. Anyone can freely search our Archives Name Index at www.peterborofhs.org.uk and the index currently contains 190,000 names. These are not just local names but cover neighbouring parishes, the whole of the United Kingdom and overseas as well. If you are interested in a particular topic then our subject index is the place to look. For members, access to all our records is entirely free.

It is difficult to adequately explain how varied our archives are, but a few examples will highlight the diverse nature of the records. These are really just the tip of the iceberg!

For those who have Canadian ancestry we have recently added 2,500 Canadian names from the start of European settlement to the present day.

Peterborough was once a railway centre and the archives contain a wide variety of sources connected with the railways including railway crimes, accidents and deaths, LNER magazines, GNR railway cottage histories and details of the Railway Servant Conference 1903.

Looking for something more local the archives contain a range of Rural Deanery magazines including those for Castor and Ailsworth, Etton and Helpston, Glinton, March, Marholm, Maxey and Newborough.

A few miles to the west of Peterborough lies the site of the Norman Cross Napoleonic Prisoner of War Camp. The archives has prisoners of war baptisms and marriages.

Education is of course part of everyone's life, and the archives

holds registers and logbooks for a variety of schools including St. Peter's College, Walton, Farcet and Fletton infant/primary schools and Deacons and Kings senior schools.

In addition to the archives the society holds monthly member meetings. In 'normal times' these are face-to-face meetings, but with COVID the society has embraced the 'zoom' challenge. This has allowed us to engage with members both locally, nationally, and internationally. The programme of talks over the coming months will cover topics of a general family history nature such as Les Mitchinson's talk on *Wills: pre-1858* and Janet Few's talk on *Your Ancestors in their Place*, to more specific local talks such as Gillian Cable's talk *A Doctor's Life* and talks of a global interest including John Dewis' talk *The Mayflower and the Pilgrim fathers*.

It is the aim of the society to support and assist our members, and the wider community, with their family history research. The society regularly attends local heritage events, and our dedicated volunteers are always eager to share their family and local history knowledge. The society has been involved in many projects, including recording the headstones in local churches and cemeteries and transcribing parish registers. We are always supportive of volunteers who would like to become involved in a project. The society also produces a monthly e-newsletter and quarterly e-journal which enables members to share their research, ask for assistance to break their brickwalls and receive handy tips and advice.

A testament to the Society's success and longevity is the fact that in 2020 the society celebrated its 40th anniversary. Several members who were part of the society in those early days are still members today and were able to share their experiences in a commemorative journal, which is available in Society News on the website for all to read.

Regardless of whether you are a beginner just starting out on your family history journey or a seasoned veteran, if you have ancestors in the Peterborough area then you could do no better than join the society - you will be very welcome.



Family History Societies



Diss Family History Group

We're back - well almost!

In common with everyone else we endured eighteen months of semi-inactivity – although we were beavering away behind the scenes. During this time we managed to keep producing our twice-monthly newsletter, research, help our members and produce our book *Women Who Made A Difference*.

In June we resumed occasional house meetings (after a fashion, following the Rule of Six and taking all precautions). These were by invitation only due to the limitations of space. They were supposed to be “garden meetings” but the weather put paid to that as it rained on every occasion! Nevertheless we managed by using conservatories and keeping all doors and windows open.

We now have a brand new website, courtesy of one of our members, which is proving a great success and is a credit to all his hard work.

We are now poised to return to our regular monthly meetings, although with a difference. Well, several differences in fact. Starting on 20th October we have a change to the third afternoon in each month and a complete change of venue to Diss Bowls Club in the heart of Diss town. We have already booked speakers for October and November and are very much looking forward to meeting up again and to gaining more members. We are all full of enthusiasm and have many plans for the rest of 2021 and beyond. We may be small but, as the saying goes “perfectly well formed”!

Look out world - Diss Family History Group is back!

Betty Morley

Website: www.tharston-past.info/DFHG/index.html

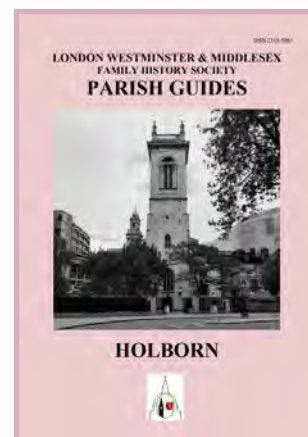


London Westminster and Middlesex Family History Society

For over 40 years we have been helping family historians who either have ancestors in our area or who live here. Please look around our website. Better still, why not join our Society and get the benefit of the knowledge of other members and our quarterly journal **METROPOLITAN**.

LWMFHS was formed in 2001 when the London and North Middlesex FHS (previously the North Middlesex FHS) joined together with the Westminster and Central Middlesex FHS (previously the Central Middlesex FHS).

The Society has started publishing a new series of **Parish Guides**. The purpose of these is to assemble in one booklet a list of the main records of each Ancient Parish in our area and where these can be found, whether they be original hard-copy records or on the internet. Our aim is to inspire family historians and help them locate their ancestors in places they might not have thought of looking before. The booklets cost £6 each plus postage and packing and can be purchased from GenFair; Parish Chest or by writing to the Society.



A useful finding aid for LWMFHS members can be found on the LWMFHS website, where member James Sanderson has uploaded a series of transcriptions. Please note that only existing Society members may do this but of course you would be welcome to join us if you wish to take advantage of this resource.

Membership starts at only £12 for a whole year with an e-journal – this can also be done via Parish Chest.

Society website: <https://www.lwmfhs.org.uk/>

Link to Society shop on ParishChest: <https://www.parishchest.com/london-westminster-middlesex-fhs-4577.php>



Really Useful Bulletin



British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa

Announces its virtual conference

Irish Lines and Female Finds:

Exploring Irish records, female ancestors and genetic genealogy

between 19 and 26 September

Register now for the 26th annual conference!

There will be fifteen sessions online, over eight days
with fourteen international speakers,
experts in their own fields.

Enjoy presentations for all levels of genealogical
experience.

For more information and to register, see

<https://bifhsgo2021.ca/>



MEET THE FEDERATION AT EXHIBITOR CONNECT

The Family History Federation will be available for conference
participants to visit them as below:

Wednesday, 22 September 2021

14:00 – 15:30 (EST) [from 7.00pm in the UK]

Saturday, 25 September 2021

10:00 – 11:30 (EST) [from 3.00pm in the UK]

We look forward to talking to you.

Society of Genealogists



Online Courses for All

From two days to thirteen weeks

Saturday 4 September & Sunday 5 September (10:15-5pm)

Ancestor Journeys:

Broadening your Family History Horizons

This convivial virtual genealogy weekend hosted by the Society of Genealogists and the Halsted Trust will focus on tracing women ancestors and wanderers – so often a challenge. Concentrating on sources and guidance for research we have examples of studies that researched the lives of formidable women. We will also look at how DNA cracked a seemingly impenetrable and confusing case.

The full programme can be viewed on our website, where bookings can be made. The weekend Zoom pass gives access to recordings of each talk for up to 14 days after the event.

A two-day online conference, with online social events (BYO wine!) cost £30.00

Full details at: <https://societyofgenealogists.arlo.co/w/events/87-ancestor-journeys-broadening-your-family-history-horizons>

Family History Skills—Stage 1 (£225)

Thursdays from 16 September – from 6pm to approx. 8pm

A Thirteen Week Course on Zoom

Take the next step in your family history journey. Treat yourself to some dedicated time each Thursday evening by joining us on our thirteen-week *Family History Skills* course. Learn about the essential records and find out how the important databases and archives work.

You may have found the civil registrations, the censuses, the parish records. Now you can learn how to assess the records and what to do when you can't find an ancestor. Explore newspapers, The National Archives and oral histories, with tutors who have expert knowledge. Unravel some of the complications when you search for wills, military records and documents with old handwriting. The tutors always make time for Q&A sessions so ask your questions.

Booking link:

<https://societyofgenealogists.arlo.co/w/events/126-family-history-skills-evening-course-stage-1>



Really Useful Bulletin

News from the Federation

Calling all member societies

We cordially invite the committees of all member societies to an informal get together with the Family History Federation executive. This event will provide an opportunity to ask questions of, and provide feedback to, the FHF officers.

Venue: The physical venue is at The Quarters, St Alban's Road, Watford WD17 1RN, and also online via Zoom if you do not wish to attend in person.

There will be two sessions - you may attend either or both.

Session One: Saturday 18th Sept 10.00am - 12.00pm

Session Two: Saturday 18th Sept 2.00pm - 4.00pm
(These are UK local times)

If you wish to attend in person lunch can be provided, but please remember spaces will be limited.

We encourage all who are local FHS committee members who wish to attend to:

- ◇ Ask questions of the Family History Federation Executive, and
- ◇ Learn more about what we do and how we can assist your society/group.

Your family history society should advise Debbie Bradley which session(s) you wish to attend either by email at admin@familyhistoryfederation.com or by telephone on 01263 824951 by providing your name and email address.

Following registration a Zoom link will then be provided for the session(s) you choose to attend.

We look forward to meeting with you.



How groups can join the Federation

The Family History Federation welcomes any society or group concerned directly or indirectly with family history which:

- has been in existence for at least twelve months
- has an agreed constitution
- has a membership of at least ten members
- has a journal/newsletter in printed or electronic form and/or operates a website

Why Your Group Should Join

The main activities of the Federation are set out in the *About Us* section of the website. Benefits to societies that are members of the Federation include:

- Publicity through our website and at the many public events we attend. This encourages individuals to contact and join member societies.
- Insurance cover (available to UK Members). The annual subscription includes comprehensive Public Liability Insurance. Additional cover may be added if the member society requires it.
- Guidance for family history societies - helping you manage your society: including advice on copyright, data protection and the Charities Act, as well as assistance in such matters as constitutions, trusteeship and internal issues. Guidance is provided in the *Members Only* section of the website and by direct response to specific enquiries from member societies.
- Opportunities to make use of preferential arrangements for selling data online.
- Use of the National Burial Index in member society libraries without needing to purchase a library licence.
- Free access to FindMyPast for use at a fair or society open day.

If your local group would like to know more, please see www.familyhistoryfederation.com/join

or contact the Federation's administrative officer,

Debbie Bradley who will be delighted to help:
admin@familyhistoryfederation.com

We look forward to hearing from you.



Really Useful Bulletin



FAMILY HISTORY BOOKS
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www.familyhistorybooksonline.com



What's on Parish Chest

There are more societies than ever featuring on Parish Chest. The content of Parish Chest already has a good base upon which to increase quantity, quality and type of information on offer and includes some of the following and much more:

- *Parish register transcriptions of births, baptisms, marriages, deaths and much more from local FHS*
- *Memorial inscriptions information from gravestones across the country, compiled by local FHS*
- *Nonconformists: Baptists, Wesleyans, Independents, Quakers and many more nonconformist lists*
- *Wills and Probate Indexes of wills and administrations*

Head over to www.parishchest.com to see what is new to help you add to your family tree.

Family History Books and Parish Chest are both under the umbrella for the Family History Federation

Friday 12th and Saturday 13th November 2021

Special discounts on tickets via opted-in FHS until 12th November!

Ask your local society for details.

Please view www.fhf-reallyuseful.com for details



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Family History Federation P O Box 62, Sheringham, NR26 9AR

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Company Number 2930189 (England & Wales) Registered Charity Number 1038721
Registered Office: 2 Primrose Avenue, Urmston, Manchester M41 0TY