



FAMILY HISTORY Federation

Supporting Family Historians since 1974

REALLY USEFUL Bulletin

No 9

Welcome to the current edition of the *Really Useful Bulletin*
We hope this will provide you with ideas for your family history.



Join us for the expanded autumn show!

Friday 12th November 6pm—10pm

Saturday 13th November 10am—6pm

Early Bird tickets are now available.

Just £7.50 - only on sale until 30 June 2021

Full price of £10.00 from 1st July 2021

Don't miss out— Book your ticket **NOW**

Missed the April Show?

Go to the show website
to see what you missed!



www.fhf-reallyuseful.com





Really Useful Bulletin

England and Wales Family History Research Army Ancestors

Whether you are new to family history research or have been researching for a while, this brief overview with some ideas for researching army ancestors will provide useful background. There are many sources available.

Army Records Prior to WWI

If you wish to research your ancestors' records prior to the Great War, there are a number of sources you can use. The National Archives have comprehensive research guides including army research:

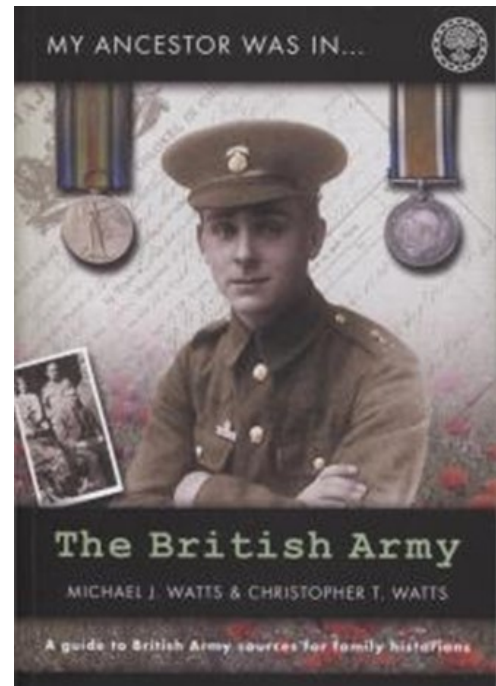
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-soldiers-up-to-1913/

Some of these records are available to download from The National Archives catalogue. These can also be viewed on subscription websites such as www.findmypast.co.uk and www.ancestry.co.uk but please check to see which records they may hold about your ancestor.

Service records before World War I are often not as detailed so you may need to use regimental histories to discover what your ancestor was doing while on service. However, some service records could hold a wealth of information about your ancestor as they will include their name, where they were born and their occupation before they enrolled into the army. It will include their age on enlistment but some also have other facts such as your ancestor's height, colour of hair and eyes and if they had any distinguishing marks such as scars, moles or tattoos, so you can visualise the appearance of your ancestor.

Army records can also include the next of kin of your ancestor. There is often information about marital status and some of the later records may include details of where they were married and how many children they had, plus when and where the children were born. If they weren't married, the record may provide details of their parents and any siblings. The records could include where they served and if they were commended - or even in trouble!

Various forms were used and some provide more information than others. As with all records they have different survival rates and condition. Some are in



***My Ancestor was in The British Army* by
Michael J Watts & Christopher T Watts**

Published by The Society of Genealogists.

Available www.familyhistorybooksonline.com

excellent condition and can be read very easily while some are of very poor quality.

If you are not sure if your ancestor served in the army, this may have been included as their occupation in a birth, marriage or death certificates for family members.

If your ancestor is missing from the family group on the census, this can be an indication that they are in the military. In 1901, if they are missing from the England and Wales census have you considered that your ancestor could be serving in the Boer War? Or if they are missing on another census, could it be they were serving in the military and out of the country at the time?



Really Useful Bulletin

World War I Army Ancestors

The army service records for World War I are known as the “Burnt Records” of “Burnt Series”. The storage facility in Bermondsey was bombed in World War II with a resulting fire and damage to the records; some have survived but not many. If you are very lucky and find those for your ancestors, they will probably have burnt edges on them!

If you are unable to find military records for a World War I soldier, try using the Medal Index Cards as most serving soldiers were awarded at least one medal. The card will confirm what regiment your ancestor served in along with what medals they were awarded. You can search these at The National Archives and please find below a link to the page where you can search.

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-medal-index-cards-1914-1920/

Also, any remaining pension records are available online via <https://www.fold3.com/> (part of Ancestry, but requires a separate subscription).

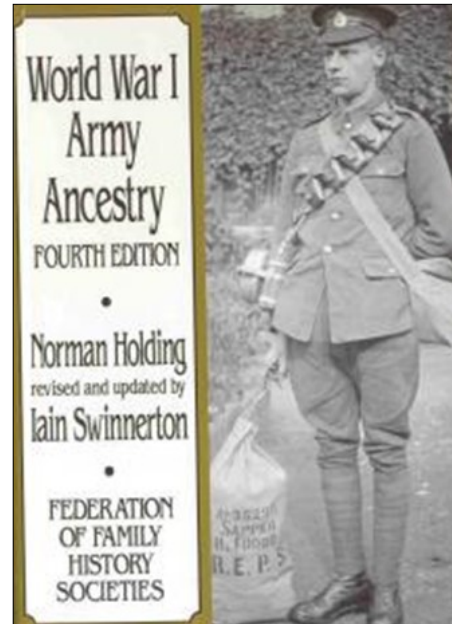
There are many websites where you can search for war memorials where your ancestors were commemorated in the UK – see further on in this bulletin.

War Diaries World War I

Some of the war diaries have been digitised by The National Archives. Although these don't usually provide soldiers' names, you will find out where your ancestor was serving in the war and in which campaigns the regiment was involved. For more information and help with your research, please view the guide by The National Archives:

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-operations-first-world-war/

You may also find that if your ancestor was a regular soldier prior to the First World War and had left, he may have re-enlisted for the WWI and you may find both records or a combined record. This should provide you with the regiment they served with prior to WWI which is normally on the front page of the service record. It will include the regiment served in during the War, and



World War I Army Ancestry (Fourth Edition)

By Norman Holding revised and updated by Iain Swinnerton

Published by the Federation of Family History Societies.

Available: www.familyhistorybooksonline.com

can be a valuable resource to help you with your research and enable you to find more information about your ancestor by viewing other records.

Army Ancestors after 1923

For army ancestors in the UK from 1923 you will need to apply for the records at the Ministry of Defence if you are the next of kin. There is a fee for this service.

<https://www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-service-records/apply-for-someone-elses-records>

Other records to view

Not all of the following records survive but if you are lucky enough to find them there are:

- ◇ pension records,
- ◇ regimental description books
- ◇ regimental registers and muster rolls
- ◇ paylists



Really Useful Bulletin

Army Museums

The Army Museums' Ogilby Trust provides a list of all the army museums in the UK.

<https://www.armymuseums.org.uk>

It may be possible to visit and discover more about the regiment and where your ancestor served along with any campaigns in which they may have been involved.



Websites for Soldiers in Other Countries

Public Record Office Northern Ireland:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/first-world-war-sources-guide-documents-public-record-office-northern-ireland>

Australian Ancestors

<https://www.nla.gov.au/research-guides/family-history/military-ancestors>

National Library of Scotland

<https://www.nls.uk/family-history/military-lists/>

Canadian Army Records

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/Pages/military-heritage.aspx>

United States Archives

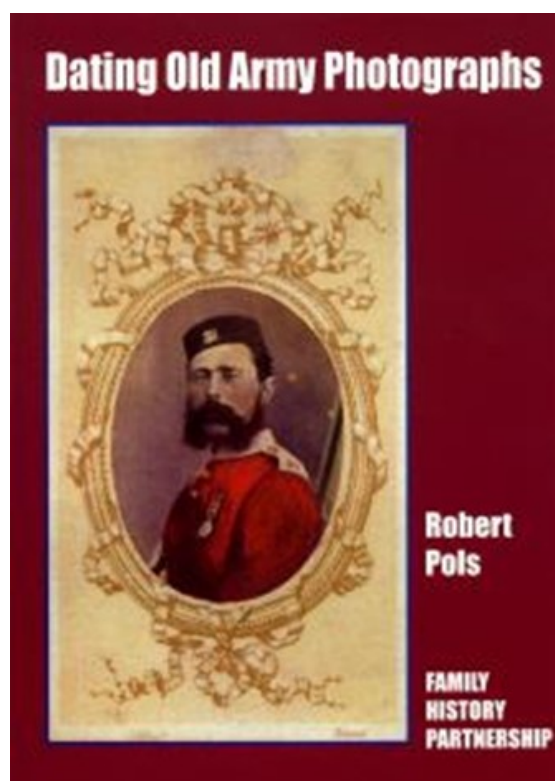
National Archives in Washington hold the records of men who served in the US military and they provide guides on the information they hold.

<https://www.archives.gov/research/military>

Republic of Ireland

<https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/irish-records-what-is-available/military-and-police-records>

Dating Old Army Photographs: Do you have a photograph of an ancestor and are struggling to date it?
This book may be able to assist you.



Dating Old Army Photographs

By Robert Pols

Published by Family History Partnership

Available www.familyhistorybooksonline.com

SUPER-SPECIAL MILITARY OFFER

for military books during May only on

www.familyhistorybooks.com

FamilyTree

Everything you need to grow your family tree

There is information about
researching army ancestors in the

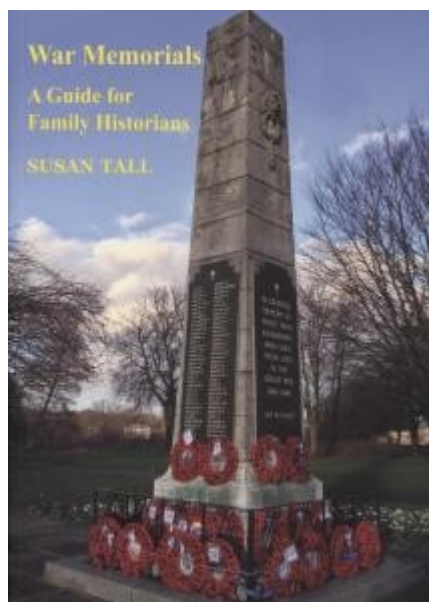
Family Tree Magazine June 2021 edition

www.family-tree.co.uk



Really Useful Bulletin

War Memorials



War Memorials

A Guide for Family Historians

By Susan Tall

Published by Family History Partnership

War Memorials Online

Two websites concerning war memorials. One helps locate a memorial and the other deals with names recorded.

www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk

www.iwm.org.uk/memorials

The IWM site has a comprehensive listing of over 90,000 war memorials and the names commemorated.

Many family history and other societies have collated details from local war memorial and put them online.

London War Memorial

If you have ancestors who lived in London, they might be recorded on a London memorial which you may find this on the website below.

<http://londonwarmemorial.co.uk/index.php#sthash.oXeEDazs.dpbs>



Commonwealth War Graves Commission

War Graves Week

21-28 May 2021



The Commonwealth War Graves Commission **War Graves Week 2021** includes events in which you can be involved. So look on their website and see what is going on in your local area.

www.cwgc.org/our-war-graves-your-history/war-graves-week/

There may be CWGC gravestones in your local area that you can visit; not only did they commemorate those who died abroad but there are some for people who died in the UK too.

If your ancestor died in either of the World Wars and was a British Commonwealth soldier, you may find a record of them on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commission has details of all service personnel who died between 4 August 1914 and 31 August 1921, and 3 September 1939 to 31 December 1947.

<https://www.cwgc.org>

They also have excellent research guides as to how to research your ancestor.

www.cwgc.org/our-work/outreach/learning-resources/how-to-research/

Imperial War Museum



If you are looking to find your ancestor on a war memorial, the Imperial War Museum now has a war memorial register which is searchable.

Another useful site is the Imperial War Museum's Lives of the First World War which commemorate the lives of the soldiers who served in the First World War.

<https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk>



**LIVES OF THE
FIRST WORLD WAR**



Family History Societies



Isle of Wight Family History Society

The Society was formed in 1985 and is for those with family links to the Isle of Wight, England.

Our new website which went live in November 2020 can be found at www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/

Transfer of datasets and pages from our old website are ongoing, therefore some links on our new website will redirect you to the old website. Some sections are password protected with access only being permitted to currently subscribing members.

The new website allows our members to make their own changes to information held by the society instead of having to contact a committee member to make the changes for them. We have held three virtual meetings via Zoom this year.

The first in February which was a Q&A session and the others were in March and April and included talks by invited speakers.

Our One-Day Conference and AGM www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/events/12 will be held via Zoom on Saturday 22nd May.

Our new website includes a free-to-search BMD index for the Isle of Wight (1837-2010) with a facility to order copies of certificates - www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/databases/bmd.

The list of searchable databases can be found at - www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/databases.

Our Resource Centre www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/iwfhs-resource-centre, which is in premises at Northwood Cemetery in Cowes, is shared with the Friends of Northwood Cemetery currently has restricted access by appointment only.

To join the society, go to www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/subscribe.

There are three rates of annual membership (1st January to 31st December) which can include two persons living at the same address but having equal voting rights.

- ⇒ Standard Membership (no paper journal) £ 6
- ⇒ Classic UK Membership £12
- ⇒ Classic Europe Membership £15
- ⇒ Classic Outside Europe Membership £20

Our quarterly journal is published in February, May, August and September. Copies are posted to members who have one of the Classic memberships. Members who have a Standard membership read the journal in PDF format (password protected) via the website. Standard Members are informed by email when each new edition becomes available. Every journal from the first to the latest are available to all members via the website .



Family History Societies

DFHG

Diss Family History Group's booklet *Women Who Made a Difference* is available now. Throughout history there have always been women who made a difference. Here are the stories of fifteen of these women: some famous; some unknown.

To obtain a copy, please email bettymorley@btinternet.com. The price is £5 inclusive of postage UK (for cost of postage abroad please ask).

Diss Family History Group is still unable to meet because of the Covid restrictions but we are continuing with research and continue to provide our members with a twice-monthly illustrated *Newsletter* of at least twenty pages. As soon as restrictions allow we are ready to bounce back.

Fenland FHS



Fenland Family History Society is now pleased to report that Mount Pleasant has been transcribed and made available for searching on FindmyPast website.

Peter and his team are now working on Walsoken. Walsoken graveyard is surrounded by the Norfolk boundary; over the wall is Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. Fenland FHS are used to such boundary issues, with the Fenland area covering north west Norfolk, north Cambridgeshire and south Lincolnshire. The Fenland Family History Society was founded in 2001 to promote and encourage the study of family, local and social history. We will help with research for family history from anywhere in the world, but can offer resources with particular reference to persons having lived in, or having been associated with, the historical area now known as Fenland.

Like many of you, we are looking forward to being able to resume our activities and meetings again. We plan to restart our monthly meetings as soon as it is safe to do so.

We hold our monthly meetings in Wisbech Library on the fourth Thursday of each month from 7 – 9p.m.

Visitors are always welcome.

Find out more about Fenland Family History Society at www.fenlandfhs.org.uk



North Northumberland Group

We are a new, relatively small group and we meet monthly from September to May in Belford which is central for most of our membership in this rural area of the most northerly English county. Some of us have Northumbrian ancestry but others do not. We aim to host meetings where we can share our own experiences of researching our families, regardless of their geographical origins, and learn about the local history of this area. We provide a mix of members' stories sessions where we discuss a particular topic such as ancestors who moved about, and talks by our own members or outside speakers. Our local archivist at Berwick Record Office is a regular speaker.

During Covid lockdowns we have had speakers on the *Accessing Aidan Project* based on Bamburgh and Lindisfarne, *Origin of Place Names in Northumberland* and recently we held a members' session on *Our Experiences of Taking a DNA Test*.

Regular members pay an annual subscription which helps pay for the room hire and speakers' fees. Occasional visitors pay a visitor's fee. We maintain a mailing list to which anyone can subscribe free of charge and this has proved useful for members and non-members who live too far away to attend meetings in person. However, zoom has been of particular benefit in this case.

Shortly after our group was established in January 2019, we were successful in applying for a grant of £500 from our local Village Community Group which was important as it provided initial funding. But perhaps our earlier launch with raffle at a coffee morning hosted by our chair was our real starting point. We also took advantage of a free stall at our Village Community Market to promote our group.

Zoom talks have been a huge advantage in maintaining contact within our group during Covid lockdown but we are looking forward to 2022 when we hope to resume real meetings at our local community centre.

For further information contact Valerie Glass, Secretary, email rowan2010@hotmail.co.uk

Follow us on Twitter [@GenealogyNorth](https://twitter.com/GenealogyNorth).



Family History Societies



Somerset & Dorset Family History Society

Our society was founded in 1975 and over the years we have enjoyed meeting family history enthusiasts at fairs and at one of our eight local groups which meet regularly. Unfortunately, Covid has meant that we have had to meet people "virtually" which we are slowly getting used to; we also attend as many online events as we can. We enjoyed participating in the Federation's first 'Really Useful' online show and are looking forward to the next one.

We are pleased to continue to have the support of our members which currently number about 1,400 members worldwide. We aim to promote and further interest in all aspects of family history in the two counties. Details of our projects, research and membership benefits can be found on our website: <https://sdfhs.org/>

The library at our Family History Centre in Yeovil in Somerset contains many useful books and publications, and access is available to the society's databases, including almost 4000 pedigrees relating to Somerset and Dorset families. Although currently closed, our volunteers continue to undertake research on behalf of members and others until the centre can be opened again to visitors.

Our award-winning journal *The Greenwood Tree* is published four times a year and is mailed to all members as part of their subscription. During Covid we have increased its size slightly to accommodate an influx of articles which we have been delighted to receive; we have also kept in touch with members by sending regular electronic *Newsletters*.

Throughout closure we have continued to work on our photographic project which now has hundreds of images of named local people and places from the earliest years of photography. We also hope to expand the database by indexing people and places from local publications.

Connected to this, the society has published a book, *Secure the Shadow - Somerset photographers, 1839-1939*, detailing Somerset's photographic history, as seen through the lives and work of nearly 800 photographers. Each photographer is listed with details of where he/she was working and when, together with an indication of the source of the information.

Secure the shadow

Somerset photographers 1839 – 1939

Robin Ansell, Allan Collier and Phil Nichols



The Somerset & Dorset Family History Society

2018

The accompanying data DVD, for use on a computer, contains more than 1,500 images, mainly produced by Somerset photographers plus a mini-biography of each of the photographers. In addition to the 105 pages of the book itself, the DVD contains 4,495 pages, 2,746 of which contain the images.

The book may be ordered from the society's centre, or from the online shop at sdfhs.org/product-category/publications/somerset-books/

We are starting to plan our AGM and Open Day in September and are staying hopeful that this will be a time to personally meet family historians once again.



Really Useful Bulletin



FAMILY HISTORY BOOKS

www.familyhistorybooksonline.com



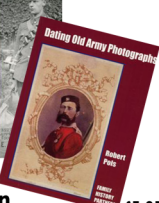




£6.50



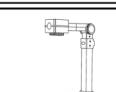
£6.95



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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

Early Bird tickets for sale—book NOW!

Please view www.fhf-reallyuseful.com for details



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