



FAMILY HISTORY Federation

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REALLY USEFUL Bulletin

No 40

December 2023

Welcome to this bumper Christmas edition of the *Really Useful Bulletin*!

In this **SPECIAL 40th** issue you will find two lead articles

Christmas Past and Present and *Women at War*

There are **Christmas giveaways**, our **New Year book sale** plus a
useful list of all Bulletin articles since 2020!



*We send very best
wishes to all Bulletin
readers for Christmas
and for successful
ancestor hunting in
2024!*





Really Useful Bulletin



Christmas Past and Present

by Charlotte Soares

*Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat,
please put a penny in the old man's hat.*

The days are getting shorter, there will be frosty or damp, foggy days as we head towards the darkest time of year in the northern hemisphere: midwinter. The midwinter solstice is when the sun doesn't rise far above the horizon and our forefathers prayed for the return of the sun, for spring to come, for food to grow and for healthy animals to have their young.

In pagan times a festival of light was held on the shortest day. Candles and lamps were burned as a prayer to the sun to bring back warmth and daylight. The further north you go, the less light there is in winter till you never see the sun above the horizon. How did our ancestors manage this time of depressing gloom? Fires were important, they must not be allowed to go out. A log was brought in to burn throughout the dark days, though there is no written mention of them being 'special' till the 1600s when they were referred to as the Christmas or Yule log. Nowadays, we remember them with chocolate log cakes dusted with icing sugar and perhaps a tiny model robin, the bird that kept a flame-coloured breast all year and stands out among bare winter branches like a ray of hope. In snowy winters people would encourage robins into their homes to stay alive through freezing weather.

Once the special winter log was alight, it was bad luck for the fire to go out. It was the only warm and light spot in old houses. People would sit in the inglenook and share stories, especially spooky ones, drink and play cards. On Christmas Eve, a Yorkshire tradition was for the youngest person to light candles from the Yule log and place them on the table. It was a solemn sacred moment and chatter stopped until the candles were on the table. My father was from Yorkshire and, whether a remnant of this or not, we had real candles on a real Christmas tree and there was a solemn moment on Christmas Day when the electric lights were turned off and the candles lit and then we'd sing carols. It seems very old fashioned now we have the television on, fairy lights adorning our trees for weeks and often the trees not even real.

Greenery was important in pagan days and that tradition continues. A cold walk to gather prickly branches of holly, ivy and fir, but the effort was rewarded by the difference it made to the living room. Once the greenery was in, it really was Christmas. Holly round the pictures made the dowdiest room look festive. The Christmas tree did not come in until Christmas Eve and it was the grown-ups

domain to create a surprise for the children on Christmas morning.

Now all the traditional events could take place. In the 1950s we put up streamers of cut and twisted crepe paper, some fringed, looping across the room, corner to corner, and round the edges. When one came unpinned and floated down over the furniture there was a dash to pin it back up, a fire risk with the open coal fire! We had paper lanterns made at school and fancy, bought folded-paper bells and globes. It was all very secular and removed from the Christian celebration of former years.

Margaret climbed on a stool and nailed on the wall the Christmas texts, 'God bless our Home', 'God is Love', 'Peace on this House', 'Happy Christmas and a Bright New Year'. Scarlet-breasted robins, holly, mistletoes, and gay flowers decorated them, and the letters were red and blue on a black background. Never had Susan seen such lovely pictures... (The Country Child by Alison Uttley).

Today, Advent calendars count down the days, a relatively modern tradition rather spoiled by the addition of chocolate which ruins the miniature pictures behind every door. Shopping for almonds and brazil nuts, figs and fruit, ordering a roasting bird or, in these modern days, a nut roast may take over. Preparation through December is, in many ways, the best part of Christmas. Making Christmas cake and Christmas pudding, stirring in wishes, cooking things overnight and waking up to delicious aromas that saturate the house. We try not to get stressed with the endless list of gifts (who realises they symbolise gold, frankincense and myrrh) and devise present hiding places away from children's prying eyes.



I love to see crib scenes as the birth of Jesus was superimposed onto the midwinter festival. Some are life-size, like the one every year outside Canterbury Cathedral. Some are so small they fit in a walnut shell as seen in

a shop window display. There are homemade reminders of schooldays - plaster casts and papier maché a bit worse for wear but loved for their memories - treasures that come out every year after their months in bubble wrap in a cupboard.



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As Christmas is the time for giving, in the old days we used to go carol singing to raise money for a charity. Traipsing door to door, being given mince pies here, hot drinks there, it was a bit of community spirit probably still alive and well in Britain's country villages. In the 80s, a large garishly-lit trailer sleigh with a live Father Christmas on it did the rounds of suburbia blaring out recorded Christmas music. Someone would knock on every door asking for money for a particular charity. It is not the same thing.

Books remind us of other traditions that have faded away. The mummers, sometimes called guisers, acted plays in disguise in people's houses, getting more and more intoxicated as the evening progressed. Alison Uttley gives a vivid description of them in her semi-autobiographical *The Country Child*. They appear in many classics like *Wuthering Heights*, and those by Hardy and Dickens. Dickens started many Christmas traditions with his novel *A Christmas Carol*, having a day off being one. Being generous and not a Scrooge has become an idiom, gathering the family together, reaching out to the elderly or poor, white Christmases, all inspired by Dickens's writing. He was not the only Victorian writer to add to our experience of Christmas, *The Tailor of Gloucester* by Beatrix Potter tells the legend of animals that can speak on Christmas Eve, and there is Thomas Hardy's poem *The Oxen* (1915):

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.

'Now they are all on their knees',

An elder said as we sat in a flock

By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where

They dwelt in their strawy pen;

Nor did it occur to one of us there

To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave

In these years! Yet, I feel,

If someone said on Christmas Eve

'Come; see the oxen kneel

In the lonely barton by yonder coomb

Our childhood used to know',

I should go with him in the gloom,

Hoping it might be so.

O. Henry wrote a marvellous short story about choosing the right present, *The Gift of the Magi*, and Christmas isn't Christmas without reciting *The Night before Christmas* by the American Clement Moore.

When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,

But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,

I knew in a moment it must be Saint Nick.

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,

And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name.

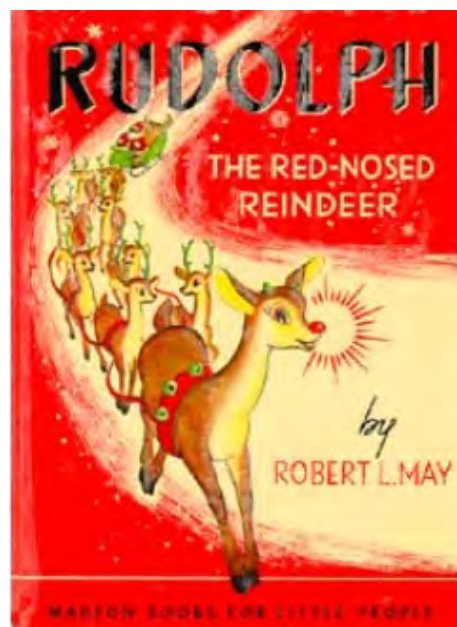
'Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!

On, Comet! on Cupid! on, Donder and Blitzen!

To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!

Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!'

Written in 1822, it puts St Nicholas forever in a flying sleigh with eight named reindeer. There is no Rudolph, he did not appear until 1939 in Robert L. May's book.



More recently, films have joined the Christmas must-do list; *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Miracle on 34th Street* and *A Muppet Family Christmas* (all American).

Many nationalities have contributed to modern Christmases. The Germanic influence is perhaps the biggest with toy-making industries from wooden toys to Steiff teddies, Christmas markets, decorated Christmas trees inside the house courtesy of Prince Albert, and gingerbread houses and biscuits. Swedish snowy *tomte* stories, elves and the festival of Santa Lucia, red-and-white decorations and pepperkarka (ginger biscuits) have been adopted here. Blue-coated Saint Nicholas was the original Santa Claus and the putting of presents in shoes on his saint's day, 6 December, became hanging up stockings on 24 December. Coca Cola advertisements took Santa Claus to a whole new level in red suit with bushy white beard so he is forever now dressed in red. British Father Christmas tries valiantly to keep his name from disappearing under the bombardment of Santas. Thank you Raymond Briggs for writing about Father Christmas and not yet another Santa Claus. His cartoon is a must see as well as *The Snowman* which is now a staple of Christmas. Italy has *Babbo Natale* and a kindly witch, *La Befana*, who gives presents on 6 January, Epiphany, the day the three kings arrived at Bethlehem according to legend. France celebrates the three kings with a cake and crowns, and has a literal translation for Father Christmas as *Pere Noel*.



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DATE OF CHRISTMAS.

The 25th of December is recognised as Christmas Day by Christendom, yet the 25th is merely an accommodation date for the anniversary of Christ's birth. The Christmas pictures, the various carols and suggestions about snow, ice, frost, and the like, would be horribly out of place in Australia, where Christmas falls in summer weather. The year, too, is wrong; most people would say that Christ was born in the year A.D. 1. But our chronology is four years out; this should really be 1924, for Christmas Day, on the most indisputable authority, could not have been later than February B.C. 4.

All attempts to settle the actual day and month have failed, and it took centuries to decide that the 25th December be held as the anniversary. In the first centuries of Christianity several Eastern races observed 6th January as the day, and the Armenians still hold this day.

It was in the fifth century that some uniformity was attained, but many still held "old" Christmas Day. All will agree that if the 25th December is not actually the anniversary day, it is a very convenient one, the holidays breaking the long tedium of winter.

When the calendar changed in 1752, the days between new Christmas on 25 December and old Christmas, 6 January, became days of misrule, 'topsy-turveydom' where anything might happen. At grand houses there was a Lord of Misrule, who was someone lowly in the household selected to organise festivities and entertainment. Masques and plays were performed. Britain brought in the secular pantomime for those lucky enough to afford tickets and live near a theatre. Bawdy jokes for adults go over children's heads so a good time is had by all the family. Panto evolved from the sixteenth-century Italian *commedia dell'arte*, the comic antics of Harlequin and Columbine. Younger children will have had their nativity plays at school, which are often becoming multicultural given the nature of modern society. But who hasn't been a

shepherd, an angel with tinsel halo, half a camel or donkey, or, if honoured, have a speaking part as Gabriel, Mary, Joseph, or the innkeeper – 'No, there is no room at the Inn'.

Christmas today is about company and communication with far-flung friends. I love giving and receiving cards, which first started in Victorian times with the advent of a postal service. During the pandemic I, like so many others, had Christmas alone, talking via Facetime to nearest and dearest and trying to make the best of it. It made me appreciative of the next Christmas when we could gather and share the *Quality Street* tin, and even quarrelsome kids are better than no one to talk to with no charades and monopoly or watching the young ones with their computer games. Last Christmas the postmen went on strike and many cards did not arrive till the end of January often ruined, as in my area, by sacks left outside in all weathers. How often were gifts delayed in our ancestors' days when parcels were delivered by stagecoach and roads were impassable in wet weather which lasted most of the winter?

Other strange Christmases have been travelling ones to explore how other countries decorate: the *marlitrans* of Switzerland driven by St Nicholas; the life-size, red-silk-clad angels in Singapore, and artificial golden Christmas trees the height of houses. Not yet experienced is the Australian BBQ picnic festive season, or a visit to Lapland's many homes for Father Christmas under the Northern Lights complete with reindeer stables, although we did visit one in summer when the reindeer were out to graze and Father Christmas was away on his well-earned holiday!

Happy Christmas!

About the author:

Charlotte Soares is passionate about history and making patchwork quilts. She is a regular contributor to Family Tree magazine, has self-published family histories and aided people with their family history research.

Christmas Gingerbread Biscuits

Make these tasty biscuits and cut in rounds, Christmas shapes or gingerbread men! Great for gifts!

Rub together 350g plain flour, 1tsp bicarbonate of soda, ½tsp mixed spice, 2tsp ground ginger, 1tspn ground cinnamon, pinch of salt and 125g butter.

Add 175g of dark soft brown sugar and mix.

Stir in 4tbsp of golden syrup (warmed—makes it easier!) and one lightly beaten egg.

Work into a smooth dough. Wrap and chill well.

Roll out on floured surface to about 2-3mm thickness, and cut out shapes. Line baking trays with non-stick paper. Bake at fan 160°C / 180°C for 12-15 minutes. Allow to cool a little before transferring to wire rack to cool completely.

If wished, when cold decorate with icing for a festive flourish. *Ed.*

tbsp = tablespoon; tsp = teaspoon.





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Christmas Giveaways!

Our annual giveaways—send one email for each item you would like to win!

Winners will be picked on 5 January.

Overseas readers who win will receive a £20 voucher for Family History Books Online *in lieu*.

Giveaways only available to registered subscribers. All winners will be notified by email.

Entry email is: competitions@familyhistoryfederation.com



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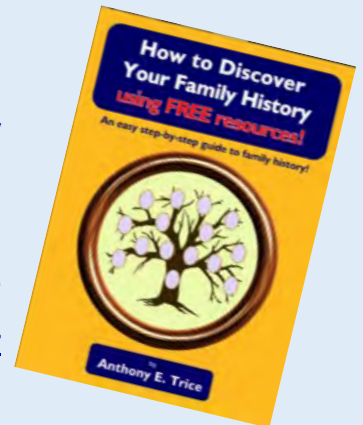


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Two collections to be won!

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Father Christmas himself will select books from the collection at Family History Books to make up your mystery parcel.

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Simply send an email to above address.

Put into the subject line: Mystery Parcel





Women at War

by Ian Waller

Warfare was the domain on men until the twentieth century. The transformation began in the First World War when women were included in warfare – and that still exists today. However, for a woman to serve as a sailor or soldier was easier than you might think, particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There are also earlier examples of women in the military back as far as Boadicea. Before the twentieth century, women who wanted to serve had to conceal their gender or be content to serve as nurse or as camp followers. There have always been females serving in disguise in the British Army. Phoebe Hessel, (pictured) born 1713 in Stepney, was a private in the 5th Regiment of Foot. The medical treatment she received after sustaining a bayonet wound to her arm exposed her gender. Mary Anne Talbot, 1778-1808, also served. She was illegitimate and her guardian, Captain Bowen of the 82nd Foot, disguised her as a drummer boy when he took her with him on campaigns. In her career she served as a *powder-monkey* on HMS *Brunswick*, was a French prisoner and a junior officer on a merchant ship.



For many of us our nineteenth- and twentieth-century female ancestors could easily have served. The two world wars proved that, with opportunity and the right physical and mental qualities, women could serve both at home and in the theatres of war. So, what roles did they fulfil and how can we find valuable information concerning their service?

WOMEN'S SERVICES – FIRST WORLD WAR

Due to the shortage of menfolk, the government actively recruited women to fill vital roles. Several government departments had responsibility including the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of National Service and the War Office. However, it was not until midway through the war that the women's auxiliary services began, primarily to replace men in vital non-combatant roles. Some important background and statistical information about the Ministry of National Service which controlled recruitment of women can be found in class NATS1 at the National Archives. In November 1917, ten regional headquarters for recruitment were fully organised around the country. All three services supplemented by auxiliary and civilian

volunteers had women serving as cooks, clerks, wireless operators, code experts, instructors, drivers, storekeepers and fitters. Many members were also in the *thick of it* in the theatres of war.

THE ARMY

The Women's Auxiliary Army Corp (WAAC) founded in March 1917 became the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corp. There are three main sets of records - administrative, service and war diaries. Administrative records cover accommodation, uniform and importantly transfers between the WAAC and the WRNS and WRAF. War diaries in class WO95/84 & 85 give day-by-day accounts of movements, discipline etc. Although not on combat duties, some members of the WAAC endured shelling and bombing raids by German aircraft. During one attack in April 1918, nine were killed at the Etaples Army Camp and between March 1917 and February 1918, twenty-one of the 6,000 WAACs in France became pregnant!

The service records in class WO398 are available on *Documents Online* at The National Archives, but like other service records many were destroyed by enemy bombing in World War Two and only about 7,000 records survive. The records comprise enrolment forms, which provide basic genealogical information including marital status and next of kin, statements of service, promotions, health and casualty details and if you are lucky much more.

THE ROYAL NAVY

Although the Royal Navy was the senior service, the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) was not established until November 1917. The organisation and administration is very well documented in various classes of ADM116. The location of service records depends upon whether your ancestor was an officer or rating. Both sets of records are available in classes ADM318 and 336 but for anyone continuing service after 1919 the records are still retained by the Navy.

The officers were not commissioned and were regarded as *Civilians in Uniform*. Officers' records contain a wealth of personal information and some anecdotal detail including attestation forms and correspondence. There are also two original registers in class ADM321 that include details of appointments, promotions and resignations. Ratings' service records are less detailed but still give information about service, age on enrolment, next of kin and particulars of character and ability.



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THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

As the Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF) was not formed until 1 April 1918 only a few records of serving personnel are available for World War One. Officers' records do not appear to exist but the records for airwomen do in AIR80. The records are similar to the other women's service records and include details such as religion, dependants, marital status, physical description and statements of service.



First Chief Controller, Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps (QMAAC) in France, Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, GBE.

© Art.IWMART3048

The indexes to service records in AIR79 may give name and service number of those who served after 1919 and for

whom records are retained by the RAF.

The Official History of the WRAF in class AIR1 is an invaluable resource for information for such matters as daily routine, types of jobs, demobilisation etc.

MEDALS AWARDED TO WOMEN

Campaign medal rolls for Women's army service in World War One and those who received a gallantry medal or were *mentioned in dispatches* are available. WRNS medal records are in ADM171 and include the British and Victory medals and the Silver War Badge. Women whose service resulted in an honour such as the MBE are recorded in class WO162/65 and may appear in the *London Gazette*. All such WRNS honours appear in the issue of 9 May 1919.

The women's sections of the three services continued beyond the end of the First World War and like all military records those for later years are still retained by the Army, Royal Navy or RAF.

MILITARY NURSES AND NURSING SERVICES

The Army Nursing Service originated in the post-Crimean War period of the 1850s, although it took many years to convince the army medical department of its worth and consequently for it to develop. The first nurses were employed at Woolwich in 1861 and were joined two years later by nurses at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley (pictured below). This establishment of about a dozen women remained unchanged until 1882 when the military Campaign in Egypt resulted in more nurses being sent to care for the wounded.

After 1883, there was a steady increase in numbers and around the turn of the century, the establishment was augmented by members of the National Aid Society, later the British Red Cross, and also by the Princess Christian Army Nursing Service Reserve. The difficulties of maintaining a nursing service during the Boer War [1899-1902] resulted in a major reorganisation providing professionally trained nurses to care for military personnel into the twentieth century. Their records of service are unfortunately incomplete, but those that do survive, and are mainly territorial, can be found at St Bartholomew's Hospital Archive and in class WO339 at the National Archives. They provide an excellent source of information on their movements but include varying amounts of personal detail. Some nurses continued to work during the Great War, and others returned from retirement to do so - for these there is a good chance of records surviving.

In March 1902, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service [QAIMNS] enveloped the Army Nursing Service. Some members of the ANS chose not to transfer to the new service or retire. Most of those who did transfer held senior positions as matrons and sisters in military hospitals.

Picture © www.netley-military-cemetery.co.uk/





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The service expanded in the pre-war period, relying on members of the Army Nursing Service Reserve to fill shortfalls. Members of QAIMNS had to be over the age of twenty-five, single or widowed, and completed a three-year training course in a War Office approved hospital. At the outbreak of the Great War, trained nurses were serving in military hospitals throughout the world. Enrolment in wartime provided nearly 11,000 nurses mainly in the Reserve.

Their service records are part of class WO399 but few records survive for those who resigned before 1914. However, some details can often be traced through nursing journals of the time, and, if they continued to work as nurses after 1921, through the registers of the General Nursing Council found in classes DT10 - 14. Service records for those who served after 1939 and during the Second World War are retained by the Ministry of Defence.

Although women had been employed in naval hospitals from 1744, the Naval Nursing Service was not established until 1884. In 1902 organisational changes resulted in Queen Alexandra also giving her name to a new nursing service for the Navy.

The nurses were initially employed at Plymouth and Chatham and by 1919 the regulars were assisted by 200 Reserves at fifteen naval hospitals and on nine hospital ships. It was not until WWII that the regular establishment increased substantially.

Early service records pre-1865 in class ADM73 give only scant information. Service records of all branches of Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service up to c1927 are on microfilm in class ADM104 at the National Archives giving details of seniority (in line with Royal Navy procedure), age, hospitals where they served, comments on character and work, training and qualifications and date and reason for discharge.

CIVILIANS IN UNIFORM

The Territorial Force Nursing Service was formed in 1908 providing a nursing service for the Territorial Force primarily in military hospitals in the United Kingdom. The women were all civilian nurses who had undertaken to be mobilised in the event of war. In the First World War they also served overseas alongside their colleagues in the military nursing services.

After the war, most of the women continued to serve by going back to civilian life and committing to be mobilized if

the need arose. Many such nurses formed the core of the service in the Second World War. Their records are again in WO339 although because they were often recruited locally some records *may* exist in county record offices.

In 1909 the War Office granted to the British Red Cross the authority to organise on a county basis Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs) to provide supplementary aid and medical assistance in time of war. By the summer of 1914 there were over 2,500 stations where over 74,000 girls and women volunteered. During the next four years they worked as assistant nurses, ambulance drivers and cooks in Britain and on the front line.

Initially, the military authorities were unwilling to allow VADs on the front line but relented in 1915 when those over the age of twenty-three and with more than three months experience, were allowed to go to the Western Front, Mesopotamia and Gallipoli. Many went as letter-writers for soldiers who were wounded, ill or illiterate. Wives of prominent service personnel served including May Bradford, whose husband was John Rose Bradford, senior physician to the British Expeditionary Force. She did much to educate soldiers in the etiquette of letter writing.

The British Red Cross Museum and Archives hold extensive but incomplete indexes for VADs in both World Wars. There is no guarantee that the person you are looking for will be found. For conservation reasons the records cannot be searched personally so written applications with a donation are required.



The record cards include the dates of service, duties performed, name of the detachment, places of service and any honours. There are also records for those who served in military hospitals, for trained nurses and medal rolls. Records do not survive for pre-First World War or the inter-war periods but some do survive for the post-World War II period.

THE WOMEN'S LAND ARMY

Most of us associate the Women's Land Army with World War Two but its origins are back in 1917. The government decided that women would have to become involved in producing food and goods to support their war effort. Some farmers resisted and in 1916 the Board of Trade sent organizing officers around the country

to persuade farmers to accept women workers. This strategy worked and by 1917 there were over 260,000 women working as farm labourers. Disbanded in 1919, it was reinstated in 1939 disbanding again in 1950.

Above is a popular poster from WWII [image © IWM]



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DON'T FORGET

Women served in uniform during the wars in other capacities such as the police, fire service and civil defence so even if you don't find your ancestor in the military services, they would still have done their bit.

SPITFIRE PILOTS

During World War II women of the Air Transport Auxiliary delivered spitfires, hurricanes and Lancasters to all RAF stations in England and on one occasion to Belgium. Many had never flown planes before. They were civilians in uniforms who were of supreme importance to the RAF throughout the war.



*WWII crew at Hatfield,
from Ruth Ballard collection © ATA Museum*

FIRST AID LINK

The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry was created in 1907 as a vital first aid link between the front line and the field hospitals. During the First World War, FANYs ran field hospitals, drove ambulances and set up soup kitchens, often under highly dangerous conditions. Their gallantry awards included seventeen military medals.

NO LONGER NEEDED?

In 1943, the government ended women joining the armed forces because of a severe labour shortage in factories and on the land. Although conscripted, they were then given a choice of working either on the land or in factories. Both did an invaluable job for Britain survival and ultimate victory.

STAFF NURSE ON A BARGE -

A UNIQUE INNOVATIVE EVACUATION

Staff Nurse Mildred Rees, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (*service record WO399/6913*) was leader of a group of nurses who suggested to the authorities that canal barges could be used as hospital

units to evacuate casualties from France and Belgium. Although a much slower and smoother form of transport, in her opinion they could allow nursing staff to successfully facilitate soldier's repatriation and provide proper nursing care.

During the Battle of the Somme Mildred Rees spent her time at No. 4 Ambulance Flotilla Barge 192 nursing some thirty casualties during each trip; it would take the barges a couple of days to evacuate patients to the hospital trains further down the line and this undoubtedly saved endless lives that otherwise may have been lost. Mildred devoted her war service to the medical and nutritional welfare of hundreds of soldiers and because of her meticulous care, none died on the barges.

THE RECORDS

THE ARMY

Service records for women follow a similar style to that of men. The form of enrolment shows age, address, marital status etc and is supported by other documents such as identification certificates and records of service.

THE ROYAL NAVY

In true Navy fashion, the service records for WRNS are a single sheet giving details of person and service. Many omit place of birth although they give an age. They incorporate the next of kin which is genealogically useful.

THE RAF

Records for WRAFs up to the end of the First World War are not that revealing and consist mainly of discharge certificates. These provide basic information about the person including a physical description, enrolment and trade but are significantly lacking in service details.

IN CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding the few females who served with the military in previous centuries, at the outbreak of WWI, it quickly became clear and it was a case of *all hands to the pump*. Trained soldiers, sailors and airmen were needed for their specific military fighting roles in action against the enemy – the government and the military soon realised that they didn't have time or the manpower for all the additional peripheral support which was sorely needed in times of war. So this is where and why women became increasingly important to the war effort in both World Wars. The country couldn't do without them!



About the author:

Ian Waller is vice-chairman and education officer of the Family History Federation and a retired professional genealogist. He is a Fellow of AGRA and also a Fellow of the Society of Genealogists.



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FHF REALLY USEFUL
Family History Show

LIVE
in 2024

Saturday 20 April

10am-4pm

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EAGfamilyhistoryshowlive@gmail.com

Celebrating 50 years of the Family History Federation

Free parking Refreshments available Entrance : FREE (Show programme £1)

www.fhf-reallyuseful.com

East Midlands LIVE Really Useful Show will be held on Saturday 15 June 2024

Full details next month!



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News from the Federation



www.familyhistorybooksonline.com

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And don't forget to book the dates for 2024 Really Useful Shows, live or online.

The Federation's website has lists of societies, speakers and much more!

Join your local family history society—full list at www.familyhistoryfederation.com/societies-az



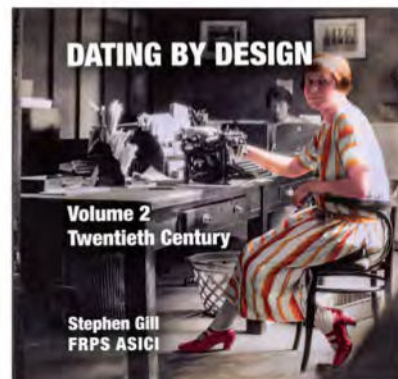
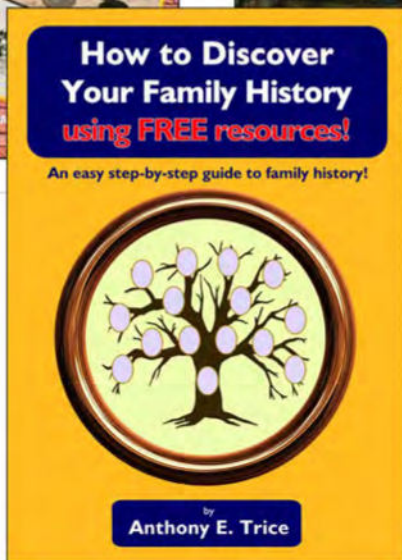
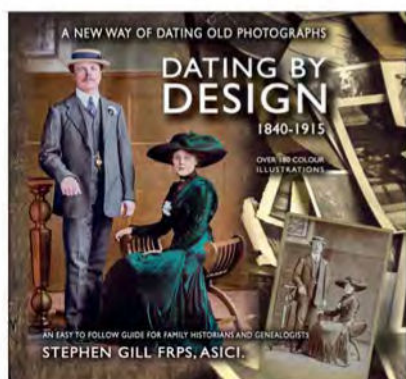
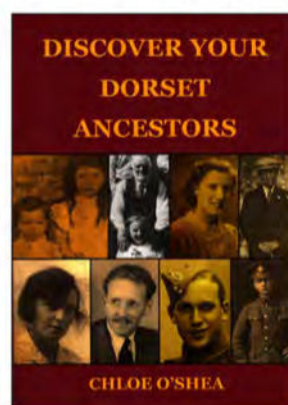
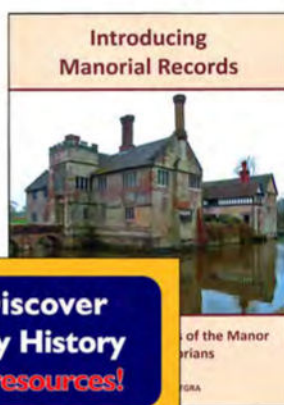
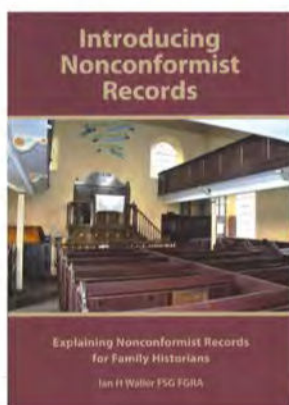
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All *Bulletin* past editions are available on *Explore Your Genealogy*.

The list above will help you to locate the appropriate edition using the issue number from the left-hand column.

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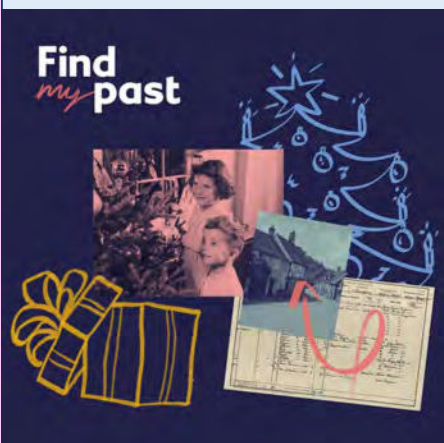
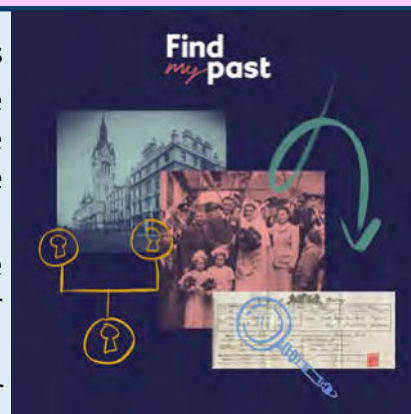
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4. And don't keep your family tree discoveries to yourself. Share your hard work with family, friends and colleagues so they can view your Findmypast tree this festive season. It's a great way to get some research advice, dig up more details and spark conversations – family history is a shared activity, after all.

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