



FAMILY HISTORY FEDERATION
Supporting the Family History Community for Fifty Years

REALLY USEFUL Bulletin

No 48

August 2024

Welcome to the latest edition of the *Really Useful Bulletin*

inside find...

Lead article *The Magic of Chancery* also FHS at Heritage Open Days/CADW Open Doors
plus news from local FHS and from the Federation

The REALLY USEFUL Family History Show—Belfast



A great day
packed with
happy
ancestor
hunters!



A busy hall (left).
A relaxed *Do you
really think you are
Irish, Tim McGarry?*
(above). Hotel lobby (right).
See also *Federation News*.



REALLY USEFUL Family History Show—Nottingham

Pictures just received



Attentive audience for Martin McDowell's DNA presentation.



Helen Tovey, editor of *Family Tree* magazine with visitors.

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Visit www.familyhistoryfederation.com/ft to register. Only registered individuals may take advantage of offers, etc.



Really Useful Bulletin



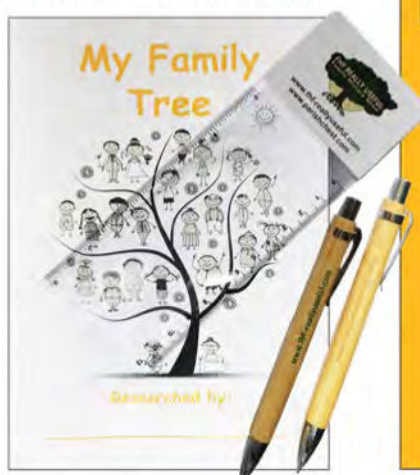
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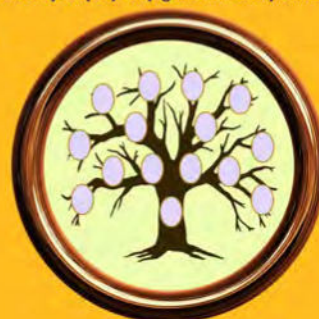
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by
Anthony E. Trice



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Really Useful Bulletin

The Magic of Chancery

by Susan Moore

Imagine that there exists a document that gives you five generations of a family; names of brothers and sisters and of their husbands and wives, that differentiates between different people of the same name and you are probably looking at a Chancery document.

Imagine then that you need to find the text of a marriage settlement or a will or a deed and you may well need to look at a Chancery document

Imagine that you then hope to find a document that refers to women almost as much as to men – and yes, you have it – you need to look at a Chancery document!

And finally if you want a source of documents that refer to butchers, bakers and candlestick makers as much as to the gentry and yeoman farmers, and once again Chancery is where you should be looking.

What is Chancery?

The Court of Chancery was the principle court of equity and was a civil court where one person could bring a case against another person. It operated from the late fourteenth century to well into the twentieth century. In order to understand the background to the Court of Chancery and its purpose, it is necessary to have a basic understanding of the Common Law courts. By 1300 there was a well-established system of common law, with judges, records, profession and history. These courts included criminal cases, and one principal difference between the common law courts and the Chancery court was that the Chancery court did not deal with criminals—it was purely a civil court.

The two principal courts which deal with civil matters by 1300 were the Court of the King's Bench and the Court of Common Pleas. By the sixteenth century the Court of Common Pleas was the principal common law court, however, the popularity of these two courts often changed and by the seventeenth century the Court of the King's Bench had almost as many cases.

The Court of Common Pleas had an exclusive jurisdiction in all the older civil actions:

- the writs of right and entry
- the possessory assizes
- debt - the most prolific
- detinue - the recovery of property
- covenant and account.

Why might people wish to bring a case to the Chancery Court rather than to one of the Common Law courts? There were four categories of cases where the Chancery Court would be preferred

1. The case did not come under the jurisdiction of common law:

- The case concerned a trust or a mortgage.
- Cases where discovery was required. Discovery is used in the sense of 'uncovering' or revealing information. This might be in the form of supplying a copy of grant of land, or accounts, or copy of a will.
- An injunction could be sought by the plaintiff to prevent the defendant from carrying out an action such as cutting down valuable trees on a property which the plaintiff believed should be his.
- The plaintiff was not in possession of the relevant documents to establish his title to lands or property.
- If a creditor died before a debt was repaid, the executors of the deceased creditor could not be sued under common law, but the plaintiff could bring a case against the creditor in the Chancery Court.
- An agreement had been made verbally with no supporting documents.

2. The case could be heard under common law but it was felt that no remedy could be obtained:

- Plaintiff might be too poor to afford common law courts
- Plaintiff might be a weak person compared with the defendant, such as a case where a tenant was bringing a case against a mighty landlord.



Typical bundle of papers—author's photograph



Really Useful Bulletin

3. The common law was being used oppressively or fraudulently:

- Plaintiff feared local corruption or a prejudiced jury.

4. Case brought on the grounds of forgery or duress:

- Plaintiff could not recover money which the defendant had improperly deprived him of under the common law.
- Where the plaintiff was owed money by the defendant, but the defendant might have obtained a release or receipt from the plaintiff by fraud.

Where are Chancery records?

There are eleven miles of records relating to the Court of Chancery at the National Archives at Kew, and these are full of information about families. The records are all in English apart from some very early medieval ones which might be in Anglo-Norman. Your ancestors are just waiting to be found in this magical source of information.

The documents that make up a case in the Chancery court are all filed separately in the National Archives and so finding all the records relating to a particular case can be time consuming.

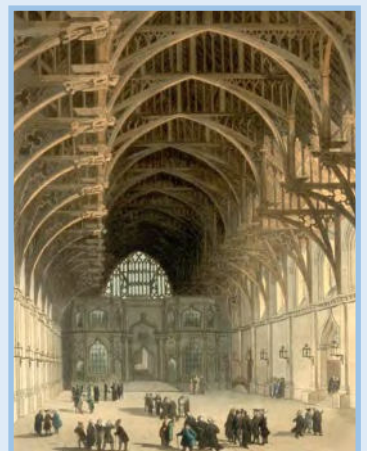
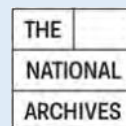
The records listed in the National Archives online catalogue Discovery <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/advanced-search> are the main pleadings where the plaintiffs put their side of the case in the Bill of Complaint, and the defendants respond with their Answer. One of the most common reasons for a family dispute to end up in the Chancery court is when there is a badly drawn up will.

The Pleadings

The best place to start with cases before 1876 is in the National Archives online catalogue Discovery. On the advanced search page, enter the surname, place and approximate date that you are looking for, or if you are looking speculatively leave out the date. Sort the results you get into 'reference order' and then put in a request for documents that you think might be helpful. Be imaginative in the names you look for as the case might be about members of the family with a different surname from the names of the plaintiff and defendant. Looking for the husbands of sisters and aunts can be helpful, as can the names of executors of a will. A case I looked at gave me five generations of a family whose name was different from both the plaintiff and defendant. The plaintiff was the daughter of a married woman, and the defendant was apparently a stranger to whom the plaintiff had left a large bequest. The case was all about the married woman's family and so of course it was her maiden name to which the five generations referred.

National Archives document references for pleadings:

C 1	Early Proceedings	1386 - 1558
C 2	Series I	1558 - 1660
C 3	Series II	1484 - 1690
C 4	Miscellaneous answers	Before 1660
C 5 – C 10	Six Clerks series	Mid 17 th century to 1714
C 11	Pleadings	1714 - 1758
C 12	Pleadings	1758 - 1800
C 13	Pleadings	1800 - 1842
C 14	Pleadings	1842 - 1852
C 15	Pleadings	1853 - 1860
C 16	Pleadings	1861 - 1875
J 54	Pleadings	1876 - 1942



Westminster Hall where the court sat from time of Edward III until its dissolution
Public domain

An example of the type of information you might find is overleaf:



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TNA ref: C 11/2253/8

Bill of Complaint

Dated 20 May 1732

Complainants: Benjamin Tarrant of Marsh Street near Dartford co. Kent, brother of Joseph Tarrant of parish of St. Thomas co. Surrey, gent deceased

Benjamin Tarrant and Elizabeth Tarrant, infants, only children of said Benjamin Tarrant the elder

Ann Ware of Dartford co. Kent, now Ann Gerrard widow, one of the sisters of Joseph Tarrant

Ann Sawyer of Deptford co. Kent, widow, only daughter of Ann Ware

Benjamin Blackwell of Dartford, gent

James Blackwell and Joseph Blackwell infants, brothers of Benjamin Blackwell the elder

William Twigger citizen and clothworker of London and wife Ann

Richard Upton of Deptford baker and wife Mary

Which Benjamin Blackwell, James Blackwell, Joseph Blackwell, Ann Twigger and Mary Upton are all children of Henry Blackwell by Sarah his late wife

Defendants: John Creech

Mary Creech his wife

Ann Creech his daughter

Reference to:

Ann Tarrant, widow, mother of Joseph Tarrant, deceased

Sarah Blackwell, wife of Henry Blackwell, since deceased, and sister of Joseph Tarrant, deceased, joint exor of will of Joseph Tarrant

John Creech nephew of Joseph Tarrant deceased, son of his sister Mary Creech deceased, joint exor of will of Joseph Tarrant, and exor of will of Ann Tarrant

Mary Creech wife of John Creech

Ann Creech daughter of John and Mary Creech

Concerns wills of Joseph Tarrant and Ann Tarrant

Interrogatories and Depositions

The next stage in your research is to look for the statements or depositions by witnesses in response to questions or interrogatories set by the parties. The witnesses were chosen by the parties to answer particular questions. In any one bundle of documents, there can be interrogatories and depositions on behalf of the plaintiff and interrogatories and depositions on behalf of the defendants. In some cases one witness will give a deposition to both the plaintiff and the defendant. The questions are usually very much slanted to obtain the information that will support the plaintiff's or defendant's case.

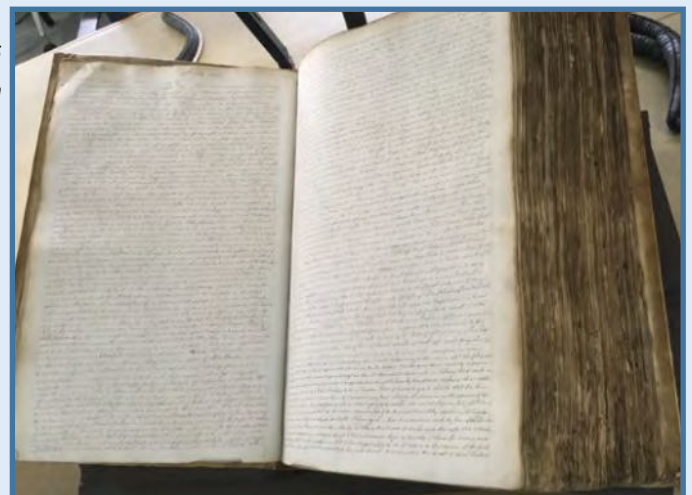
National Archives document references for Interrogatories and Depositions:

C 21	Country Depositions Series I	1558 - 1649
C 22	Country Depositions Series II	1649 - 1714
C 24	Town Depositions	1534 - 1867

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*Volume of records
Author's photograph*

The deponent's depositions can be useful records in themselves, regardless of their relevance to the case in question, as each deponent has to give his name, place where he lived, age and occupation. A typical deposition might read:





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C 13/2755/6

1810

Deposition by Elizabeth Chard of Upottery co. Devon spinster age 51

Has known Richard Chave for 6 years and his wife Mary from her birth as she was a servant in the house

Mary Chave, Sarah Merson and Betty Poole were all born in Culmpine House in parish of Clayhidon co. Devon and were baptised at Hemyock church, children of John Farrant and his wife Sarah

Deponent frequently carried food and drink from the dwelling house of John Farrant to Mary, Sarah and Betty at Wellington School

Mary Chave is aged about 29, Sarah Merson about 27 and Betty Poole about 25

Orders and Decrees

Cases in the Orders and Decrees, for judgements and court instructions, are not included in Discovery but can be found via the calendars which are on the open shelves in the reading room at the National Archives.

National Archives document references for Orders and Decrees:

C 33	Orders and Decrees	1544 - 1875
J 15	Orders and Decrees	1876-1955

Many Orders and Decrees are purely administrative, particularly where a defendant is slow to put in his or her Answer. However, some can be very informative, such as:

C 33/1056 folio 1531

Dated 17 Jul 1858

Complainants: Charles John Cooke Mordaunt and wife Jemima, Samuel Smith, Selina Smith, Charles Smith, George Smith infants under 21, by Jemima Smith widow their mother and next of kin

Defendants: Ellen Maria Smith, George Frederick Rumford, George Desvignes

And his Honor doth order that the following accounts and enquiries be taken and made, that is to say:

1. An enquiry who were the testators nephews and nieces, children of his late brother Samuel Smith living at the time of the decease of the testator and whether any and which of the said children are or is dead and what was or were the age or ages of such if any of them as is or are dead
2. An Account of the personal estate of the Testator come to the hands of the defendants the executrix and executors or of any of them since his decease or of any other person or persons by their or either of their order or for their or either of their use distinguishing such parts of the personal estate as are specifically bequeathed
3. An account of the testator's debts
4. An account of the testator's funeral expenses
5. An enquiry what parts if any of the testators personal estate are outstanding or undisposed of. And it is ordered that the testator's personal estate not specifically bequeathed be applied in payment of his debts and funeral expenses in a due course of administration and ascertain the clear residue thereof

And it is ordered that the further enquiries and accounts be made and taken that is to say

6. An enquiry what real estate the testator was seized of or entitled to at the time of his death
7. An enquiry who has been in the receipt of the rents and profits of the testator's real estate since the decease of the said testator
8. An enquiry what incumbrances if any affect the testator's real estate or any and what parts thereof
9. If necessary an enquiry what are the priorities of such last mentioned incumbrances
10. An enquiry what was the nature of the said testator's right and interest in the business carried on by him at his decease and the fixtures and stock in trade used and employed therein and the debts owing thereto at the time of his decease
11. An enquiry what the trade fixtures stock in trade and book debts specifically bequeathed to the plaintiffs Samuel Smith Charles Smith and George Smith consisted of at the time of the decease of the said testator and how the same have since been used or dealt with
12. An enquiry under what circumstances the trade or business of a gunmaker carried on by the testator at his decease has been carried on since his decease and by whom and with and by means of what funds.



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Affidavits

Affidavits are a little like the depositions, but these are freely given and not as a result of a list of interrogatories. They are given under oath. Although the records date from 1611, it is really only in the nineteenth century that they become useful. In some cases they can give as much information and detail in a case as the Bill of Complaint and the Answer. As with so many Chancery records it is possible to feel that you are listening to the people speaking through the years to us now.

National Archives document references for Orders and Decrees:

C 31	Original affidavits	1611-1875
C 41	Register of affidavits	1615-1747
J 4	Original affidavits	1876-1945

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A typical Affidavit might read:

C 41/49/1047

24th March 1735/6

Affidavit by **James Price of St Annes Lane Westminster gent** who makes oath that Ruth Trench alias Tisdale came to this deponent's house on 12th June last to see a room he had to let ready furnished for lodgings and then agreed from the same and accordingly laid there that night and so has continued to lodge at this deponents house ever since and says that his said lodging was then let her as a simple person who then gave her name to be Trench but soon after declared she had been married to one John Tisdale and that he lately died abroad

And this deponent says that he believes the said Ruth since married to one Beddingfield Johnson and says that he believes the said Ruth by her behaviour to be an honest and sober person **of an unblemished character** and would not forfeit herself on any amount whatsoever

And says that Hannah Accock who amongst others has lately made an affidavit in this cause as this deponent is informed is a **loose idle young girl** and **most notorious liar and not worthy to be believed** on any account whatsoever

And that James Gubbins one other person who amongst others has also lately made an affidavit in this cause as this deponent is informed is a **person of very vile and infamous character and behaviour** on many accounts

Petitions

As with affidavits, the petitions can include a large amount of information about a case. These were also voluntary, and often include requests to the court to release funds that are the subject of a case.

National Archives document references for Orders and Decrees:

C 36	Petitions	1774-1875
J 53	Petitions	1876-1954

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Petitions can be very long-winded with the entire case being recited often over as many as twenty pages, followed by a myriad of requests, usually concerning money such as:

C 36/1526

16th July 1874

That the dividends from time to time to accrue on the bank £3% annuities which after the sale hereinbefore prayed shall be standing to the general credit of this cause together with the dividend (if any) which may accrue on the said bank £3% annuities now standing to the general credit of this cause previously to such sale as aforesaid, and also the dividends from time to time to accrue on the £124 7s 4d bank £3% annuities standing to the credit of this cause to the account entitled "Fund representing the Heirlooms" may be paid to your petitioner during his life or until further order



Really Useful Bulletin

Masters' Reports

In a complicated case, when the Bill and Answer have been submitted, the witnesses have given their depositions, any submitted evidence has been studied, affidavits and petitions have been submitted, the Master will summarise the case in a Master's Report for the Judge and often give a recommendation for the judgment, often with his reasons which were then taken into the growing case law.

National Archives document references for Orders and Decrees:

C 38	Masters' Reports	1562-1875
J 57	Masters' Reports	1876-1962

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These can be very long documents up to 100 pages for a complicated case. They can also be rather simpler:

C 38/304

Pursuant of the order of the 6th December last the defendant and his wife have this day brought before and left with me a deal box sealed wherein are contained several books and writings and have severally made affidavit that in the said box are contained all the books papers and writings which they or either of them have or had in their or either of their custody or power at the time of the hearing of the cause or at any time since that any ways relate to the intestate's estate and that they or either of them do not know of any other book papers or writings that do any ways related to the estate

Which humbly certify this being the 26th July 1709

Signed: Rich Holford

Masters' Exhibits

The range of documents which make up the Masters' Exhibits is huge and encompasses such records as wills, deeds, abstracts of title, marriage settlements, accounts, inventories, correspondence, and some also refer to matters abroad.

These documents are now fairly well described in the National Archives online catalogue Discovery. In the advanced search box enter the name and/or place you are interested in and chancery exhibit.

A selection, chosen at random to show the detailed description that can be available in the catalogue, and to show the wide range of types of document follows:

C 112/220	Bale v Churchey
1601 - 1714	17 title deeds relating to property in Wincanton Somerset
1666	Grant of Thomas Ewens of Penselwood Somerset to Richard Churchey of Wincanton Somerset merchant, of the borough rents of Wincanton
1674	Bill of Complaint of George Tyte of Bristol
1679 - 1730	Bonds, receipts, copy wills, draft deeds, and other papers
1720	5 title deeds relating to property in Horsington, Charlton Musgrove, and Wincanton Somerset
c1720	Inventory of goods of James Churchey deceased at Wincanton Somerset
1721	Probate of James Churchey
c1735	Schedule of the estate of Richard Churchey deceased in Wincanton and Mapperton Somerset



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Summary

The records of the Chancery Court can not only give a large amount of genealogical information that is unavailable elsewhere, but they can give a wonderful insight into the way your ancestors lived. Inventories of goods, lands, names of tenants, and names of creditors and debtors, are also often included as part of an Answer, or in an Affidavit, or in a Master's Report.

Cases usually involve squabbles over inheritance, and this can be over a small plot of land, or a shop, but they can also refer to merchants and tradesmen with reference to property and people living overseas, particularly in America.

No matter what you are looking for in a Chancery case you will soon see that families that were once full of love and friendship can dissolve very quickly into conflict and enmity.

The characters of your ancestors will emerge as you find that some are more truthful than others, some are even more likeable than others.

Before 1876 the best place to start is the Pleadings and Discovery. After 1876 it is easier to start with the Orders and Decrees, but for this you do need to be at National Archives as so little is included in Discovery. Whatever you are looking for, you might need to prepare for a week's stay making the National Archives your home as you dig and delve into the characters of your ancestors and savour some of the *magic of Chancery*.

Susan T. Moore, MA

About the author



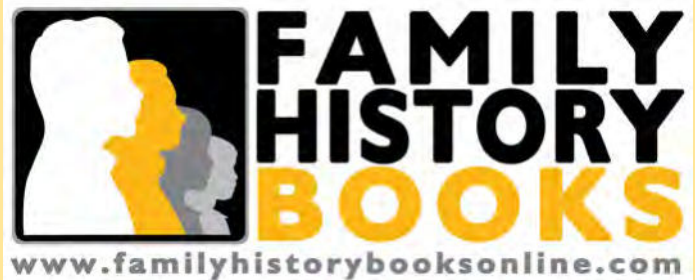
After graduating from the University of St Andrews I have spent all my working life in archives and libraries carrying out historical legal and genealogical research for clients, and now specialise in Chancery Proceedings and other

legal records, particularly those in the period 1500 to 1800. My clients include those writing biographies, local histories, or house histories, lawyers, churches, bodies such as the National Trust, and genealogists and family historians. Passing on my knowledge is important and I am always pleased to give talks or write articles on Chancery records, and particularly enjoy my role teaching *Chancery Records* for Pharos Tutors.

I am the author of *Family Feuds - An Introduction to Chancery Proceedings* and *Tracing Your Family History in the Courts of Equity* [see right].

I am a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, a trustee of the British Association for Local History, an accredited member of the Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives (AGRA), and a member of the National Archives User Advisory Group. I am also a member of the Friends of the National Archives, Society of Genealogists, and many family and local history societies.

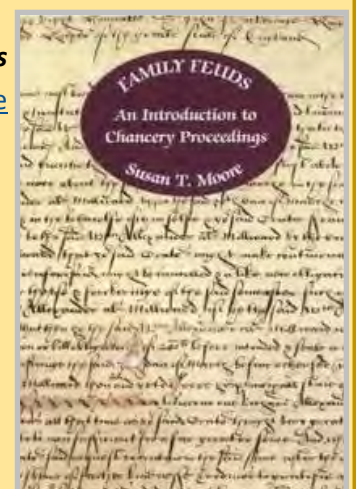
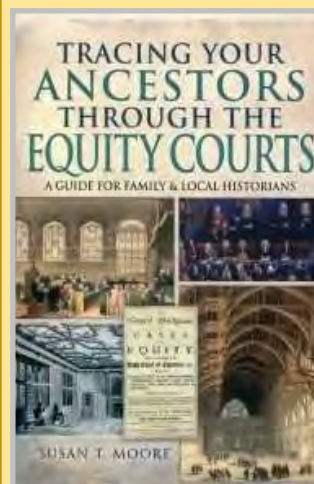
www.susanmoorerresearch.co.uk



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Family Feuds

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Through the Equity Courts**
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Family History Societies



**Doncaster and District
Family History Society**

Family History Fair

Saturday 12th October 2024
10.00am - 4.00pm

Two free history talks!

In the morning at 11.15am a talk on the
history of Hyde Park Cemetery

In the afternoon 2.15pm a talk on the
Falklands War

Lots of heritage displays

Raffle prizes as well

The location is the same as last year,
Old Art College events room,
on **Church Walk** behind the Minster

There will be a small entry fee of £1, but the event will
be free for anyone under the age of 16 years

Refreshments will be available for a small fee

<https://doncasterfhs.co.uk/ddfhs-fair/>



**Dorset Family
History Society**

OPEN WEEKEND AT TREETOPS



Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 October

10am to 3pm

at

**Dorset Family History Society's
Research Centre,
Suite 5 (downstairs), Stanley House,
3 Fleets Lane, Poole, BH15 3AJ**

Everyone welcome

No booking necessary

See website www.dorsetfhs.org.uk for details



STOP PRESS

**Leicestershire and
Rutland Family
History Society**

Golden Jubilee Celebration

Saturday 5 October 2024

10am—3pm

Leicester Adult Education Centre

54 Belvoir Street, Leicester LE1 6QL

Details: <https://www.lrfhs.org.uk/index.php>



STOP PRESS

**Family History Society
of Cheshire**

FHSC wishes to let Bulletin readers know that Cheshire
Archives in Chester, is now closed until 2025/26 to
facilitate the move to new premises.

The FHSC research centres remain open. Details:
www.fhsc.org.uk/research-centres.html

For Cheshire Archives plans:
www.cheshirestoryshared.org/home/the-plan



Family History Societies



Diss Family History Group

We are a very small member (possibly the smallest) of the Family History Federation but we continue to hold afternoon meetings every month at Diss Bowls Club with a rich variety of interesting speakers.

We have recently done research on the village of Winfarthing with some 10,000 items of data and the results of this are on our website: <https://www.tharston-past.info/DFHG/Misc/AllRecords/AllRecordsInfo.html>

Information includes banns, marriage and civil registration entries. Also census returns 1871/1921, parish burials and baptisms, 1878 'Domesday' Landowners, 1939 National Register and others.

Our special autumn meeting will take place on 5 October 2024 at the Lophams Village Hall. The subject is *Little Pat: the Riddlesworth Evacuee Murder*. Tickets are available from b.morley@btinternet.com.

Riddlesworth is a sleepy Norfolk hamlet just "up the road" from us, being seven miles from Thetford, ten from Diss and sixteen from Bury St Edmunds. The village contains some forty households and the large Georgian three-storey mansion, Riddlesworth Hall, built in 1792 and surrounded



by parkland. The Hall was until recently a preparatory school and Riddlesworth's only claim to fame is that Diana, Princess of Wales, was a pupil there.

During WWII Riddlesworth Park was given over to the British Army as a camp for troops, later becoming a resettlement camp under the 1947 Polish Resettlement Act.

In May 1942, in the idyllic surroundings of Riddlesworth Park, the horrific murder took place of Patricia Ann Cupit. This was forgotten until around twenty years ago when author and researcher Darren Norton discovered the details in an old newspaper and began his long research into the events. His book *Little Pat* was published last month and Diss Family History Group is privileged to present his talk. [Tickets in advance as above.]

Little Pat was sent from London to keep her safe from the bombing. At six years old she left for school one morning complete with her sandwich lunch. She never arrived and was eventually found brutally assaulted and left for dead under a cedar tree. The murderer was James Wyeth, a British soldier from the army camp.

North of Ireland Family History Society

NIFHS DNA Summer School 2024



We are delighted to present our fifth DNA Summer School. Two classes each day covering Y-DNA, Mt-DNA and autosomal DNA, with something for all levels of DNA researcher skills. Even if you have attended our Summer School previously, you will find lots of new content and ideas in 2024.

The theme this year is *Case Studies*. Most classes will include one or more case studies, illustrating how you can apply theory in a practical way for your own research. We also feature expert guest speakers and are very excited to have some of the best in their field joining us.

All classes are via Zoom and the live presentations will be recorded. Anyone who has registered for a class will receive a link to the video after the end of Summer School. Classes are at 2pm and 7pm UK time – check your local times!

- ◇ **Step-by-step guide to analysing your autosomal DNA – Part 1** – with Anne Johnston
- ◇ **Step-by-step guide to analysing your autosomal DNA – Part 2** – with Anne Johnston
- ◇ **SNPs vs STRs** – with Martin McDowell
- ◇ **The highs and lows of Y-DNA** – with Anne Johnston
- ◇ **Maximise your maternal research with Mitotree and MitoDiscover** – with Katy Rowe
- ◇ **Mt-DNA Case Studies** – with Roberta Estes
- ◇ **Climbing over brick walls** – with Martin McDowell
- ◇ **Using a chromosome browser effectively** – with Martin McDowell
- ◇ **DNA proof standards** – with Martin McDowell
- ◇ **Ancient DNA (tbc)** – with Miguel Vilar

The price per class is £10 and we are again offering a discounted price of £80 for the full package of ten classes.

And, if you need any more incentive to join us at the Summer School, there will be a few giveaways and special offers throughout the week! Our DNA Summer School is extremely popular, so book now to secure your place!

All enquiries about the classes should be emailed to the *Summer School Team* at Education.Zoom@nifhs.org

Full programme details and booking:

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





Family History Societies



Scottish Interest Group (Ontario Ancestors)

Researching Your UK Ancestors Webinar Series



Join us for three Saturdays in September to learn more about researching your UK Ancestors.

Free for OGS members; \$30 (£17) for non-members or you can purchase a single session for \$15 (£8.50)

Saturday 14 September – 3:00pm ET (8pm UK) – Researching Workhouse and Pauper Ancestors with Simon Fowler

Saturday 21 September – 3:00pm ET (8pm UK) - Welsh Church Records with Eilir Daniels

Saturday 28 September – 3:00pm ET – (8pm UK) Finding Your Scottish Ancestor in Irish Records – Fintan Mullan

Full details and too register: <https://ogs.on.ca/education-programs>

Where are the Records?



Join us for three Saturdays in October 2024, to learn more about where you might more records in Scotland. Each session will be held on a Saturday from 1:00-2:00pm ET. Non-OGS members can join the series for \$25 (£15)

Saturday 5 October – An Overview of Scottish Indexes with Emma Maxwell 1 pm ET, 6 pm UK. Emma Maxwell is a genealogist based in Scotland.

Saturday 19 October – An Overview of Your Scottish Archives with John Pelan 1 pm ET, 6 pm UK. John Pelan took on the role of Director of the Scottish Council on Archives in December 2017.

Saturday 26 October – An Overview of Old Scottish with Fergus Smith 1 pm ET, 6 pm UK. Fergus Smith is an independent historical researcher specializing in Scottish legal records.

To Register: <https://ogs.on.ca/scottish-sig-series/>



Suffolk Family History Society

Suffolk FHS Fair

Saturday 19 October
10am to 4.30pm

The Hold, 131 Fore Street, Ipswich IP4 1LN

Free entry

Car parking nearby

Fascinating talks and interesting displays/stalls from family history and related organisations

FREE family history helpdesk 11am-3pm

The talks:

My Ancestor was an Agricultural Labourer
Ian Waller

The Last Revolt of the Agricultural Labourers—The Swing Riots in Suffolk and Norfolk 1830
Dr Harvey Osborne

The Suffolk Trinity: Unravelling ancestry ties to Suffolk's county animals and family connection
Julie Johnson



For full details and list of exhibitors, visit the fair website:

<https://suffolkfhs.co.uk/index.php/pages/view/society-fair>

Image from society website

Join SFHS

Benefits of being a member of SFHS

- ◇ **Quarterly *Suffolk Roots* journal**
- ◇ **Discount on CDs and downloads**
- ◇ **Members help forum**
- ◇ **Extra resources on website**

<https://suffolkfhs.co.uk/index.php/home>



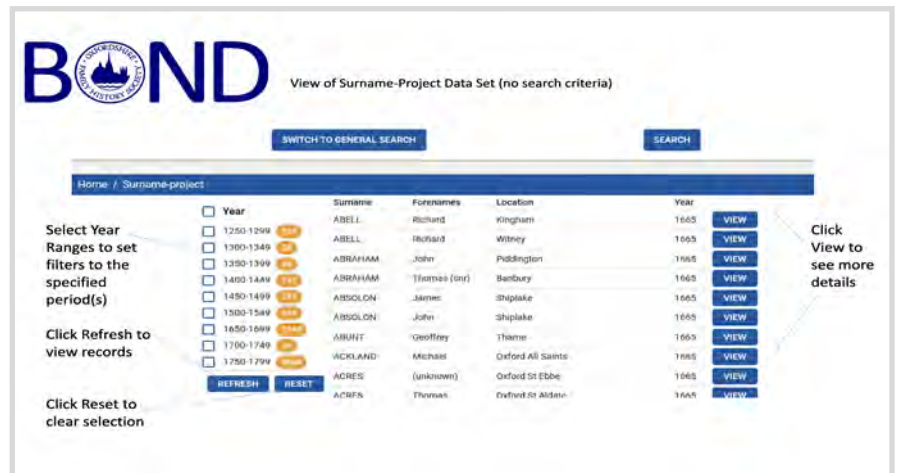
Family History Societies



Oxfordshire Family History Society (OFHS) is ready to release its **Big Oxfordshire Names Database (BOND)** during the week commencing **9th September 2024**.

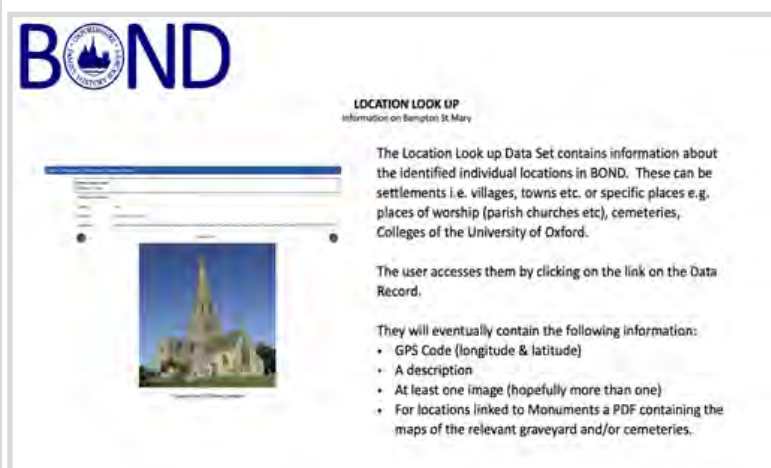
BOND is a name-rich data source of anyone who left their mark in Oxfordshire. The search facilities will bring to light ancestors across multiple sources previously all held separately. The initial release covers:

- ⇒ Parish registers transcriptions of baptisms, marriages, banns and burials
- ⇒ Monumental inscriptions - with images
- ⇒ Surnames - developed from hundreds of books/lists containing Oxfordshire names amounting to nearly 200,000 lines of people data (in 2024) dating from the medieval period to the twentieth century
- ⇒ Surname variants and Oxfordshire places.



Features of particular note include:

- ⇒ The ability to do a general search, say with a surname, to find the possible location of that person if not known - rather than purchasing multiple CDs or downloads.
- ⇒ Ability to use a filtered search to find more information, such as dates and witnesses to a marriage, further validating your research.
- ⇒ For monuments, the dates and inscriptions and photograph give very useful additional information which normally would be very difficult to find, again saving the need and cost of purchasing a memorial inscriptions CD.
- ⇒ The massive surname variants table will offer you different spellings of the surname you are looking for. This is more specific than a general 'sounds-like' feature as we have built it with knowledge of Oxfordshire dialects and common alternatives. It may help you find an elusive ancestor in Oxfordshire by offering alternatives you have not considered.
- ⇒ Choice of specific date ranges is useful to facilitate the search for particular information from the initial database.
- ⇒ Movement between screens is quick and presentation is appropriate, and we have included how to use guides and a feature to contact us with specific queries or suggestions for data 'correction'.



Work will continue to 'standardise' the data, which has been transcribed by many volunteers over the years, before loading into the structured BOND database, and we will keep you informed as the coverage becomes more complete for each dataset.

We will make progress with other datasets such as War Memorials and Wills adding to the power of the searching.

BOND represents the next generation in OFHS's family history data; collated, indexed and made available via our website to members in support of their genealogical research.

For further information please contact publicity@ofhs.uk or visit the Oxfordshire FHS website: <https://www.ofhs.uk/>



Family History Societies

Together with the Society of Genealogists (SOG), Margaret Roberts, is running a Zoom chat with some family history societies.

This is only open for SOG members. Tuesday, 10 September 2024 12:30—14.00

Joining a Family History Society—with Else Churchill and representatives from several societies

This is an online event. <https://members.sog.org.uk/events/65de1925398288000878fc6c/description>



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Conference



Saturday 28 September 2024
at Delapre Abbey, Northampton NN4 8AW

9.00am – 4.30pm

Tickets: £35.00 including lunch

We have the following four talks and speakers:

Mid Victorian to Mid 20th Century Resources
at Northamptonshire Archives

Sarah Bridges, Archives & Heritage Services Strategic Manager

Lying Bastards: Exploring the Impact of Illegitimacy
on Family History Research

Dave Annal

Ancestors on the Margins
Dr Janet Few

Sex, Sin & Probate: Church Courts and their Records
Dr Colin Chapman

Staff from Northamptonshire Archives will be in attendance throughout the day and we shall also have our bookstall and other research information available.

For details and booking visit: www.northants-fhs.org/fairs-events/



The Really Useful Bulletin welcomes contributions from all Federation member organisations.

It is opportunity to promote *your* society to the extensive Bulletin readership.



Family History Societies

Local Societies at Heritage Open Days and CADW Open Doors Days

Listed alphabetically by region. Please use the website links to obtain full details of each event.



WALES



Glamorgan FHS—Open Doors event at Glamorgan Archives on Saturday 28 September when we will be offering two talks and a help/information desk.

<https://cadw.gov.wales/open-doors-glamorgan-archives>



Gwent FHS—Open Doors Heritage Day St Mary's, Panteg 14 September. Parish register searches, helpdesk, displays.

<https://cadw.gov.wales/open-doors-st-marys-church-panteg>

Also World Peace Day at St Cadoc's, Trevethin 21 September. Pontypool Branch on hand with help and advice.

CENTRAL ENGLAND



Leicestershire and Rutland FHS—Saturday 14 September. A small exhibition of photographs of Town Hall Square over the years and of the *Picture Palace* cinema plus all the society's family history resources will be available.

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/open-day-at-leicestershire-and-rutland-family-history-research-centre.html>



Northamptonshire FHS—Saturday 7 September at Wootton Hall Park, Northampton. Northamptonshire Archives will demonstrate behind-the-scenes work of preservation, digitization and conservation. Plus an exhibition of original documents. Northants FHS will be there to help with family history enquiries.

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/northamptonshire-archives-and-heritage-service.html>



Nuneaton and North Warwickshire FHS will be at Fillongley Church Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 September with a small display and team available to assist with family history questions. Do come along! Full details, times, etc:

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/st-mary-and-all-saints-church-fillongley.html>



Oxfordshire FHS—7 September Family History Day at Witney Museum: <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/witney-and-district-museum-family-history-day-2024.html> Also 14 September Family History Day at Banbury Library. <https://www.ofhs.uk/events/event/family-history-day-at-banbury-library-saturday-14th-september-2024>. FHS advisors on hand to help with family history queries, how to get started and much more!



Find My Past—Live at Calke Abbey, Derbyshire. Thursday 12 September. With expert help, you'll discover untold Calke Abbey stories and maybe even a new family connection. Packed with surprises.

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/calke-abbey-discovering-connections.html>

EAST OF ENGLAND



Cambs & Hunts FHS—at the Cottenham Dissenters' Cemetery on 7 September with stories of several people buried in the cemetery including a murder, those awarded DCM and MM and many more including a long-serving teacher.

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/cottenham-dissenters-cemetery.html>



Essex Society for Family History—mini roadshow with family history and DNA helpdesks at Essex Record Office in Chelmsford on Saturday 14 September <https://www.essexrecordoffice.co.uk/>. The ESFH's knowledgeable team will be there, happy to help with any queries you may have. Also Sunday 15 September this time at the glorious Hylands House <https://hylandsestate.co.uk/events/> also at Chelmsford—birthplace of radio!



Mid-Norfolk FHS—7 & 14 September. This year's theme is *Immigration and Emigration—comings and goings in history* at Church House, Church Street, Dereham. See how far some went seeking new opportunities—just how far some Dereham folk went will surprise you! <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/mid-norfolk-family-history-society-immigration-and-emigration-comings-and-goings-in-history.html>



Norfolk Family History Society—open days in September will be Saturday 7, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 11, Thursday 12 and Saturday 14 10am- 4pm at Kirby Hall, 70 St Giles St., Norwich. <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/norfolk-family-history-society-1.html>



Peterborough Family History Society—at St. Margaret's Church, Fletton Saturday 7 and 14 September 1pm to 5pm. St. Margaret's is the home of the world renowned Saxon Stones. Plus displays about the village and local parishioners. We also have on loan from Huntingdon Archives the parish registers.

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/st-margaret-s-church.html>

Please support the society's in your area with their work for CADW Open Doors or Heritage Open Days





Really Useful Bulletin

News from the Federation

REALLY USEFUL FAMILY HISTORY SHOWS

Please note that the **ONLINE** show scheduled for November 2024 has been postponed following the success of the **LIVE** shows this year. 2025 will see further shows—keep an eye on the website for announcements.
www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/

REALLY USEFUL Family History Show—Belfast



What a great day and a huge success too. Lots of visitors who wanted to get into family history and DNA in particular.



The afternoon session with Tim McGarry (left) was very popular. He proved to be a fantastic subject and was delighted with what was discovered about his forebears and origins. He had the audience in stitches! Watch it on YouTube [here](#). An unexpected link at the end.

Exhibitors at the Europa Hotel venue were pleased with the interest in their displays and much help was given to visitors. All of which made for a most successful LIVE Really Useful Family History Show.

Congratulations to North of Ireland Family History Society for pulling out all the stops – well done!



FIND MY PAST – IN PERSON!



Do you have a Calke Abbey connection? Are there mysteries hidden in your family history? Experts from Findmypast and Calke Abbey are joining forces to help visitors unravel their past.

In collaboration with the National Trust, this unique experience will take visitors back in time to meet their ancestors, unlocking amazing family stories, secrets and surprises along the way. Incredible stories about the people who lived and worked at Derbyshire's Calke Abbey will be featured.

There will be eye-opening talks from genealogy experts and special guests to reveal the life-changing power of family research. These will also be available online for those unable to attend in person.

Visitors will leave with all the tips they need to continue their journey into the past. There will be free access to Findmypast's billions of online genealogy records and vast newspaper archive offering the chance to make exciting family discoveries.



Come along on Thursday 12 September and see how your past can shape your future.

See www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/peak-district-derbyshire/calke-abbey/events

FREE Family History Software

The team behind the totally free open-source genealogy software *Ancestris* has asked the *Bulletin* to let you know about this family history program.

We often hear of individuals looking for free-to-use software so that they are fully in control of their research. We also know of individuals who relied upon the facilities provided on some subscription platforms who lost their research.



You can download the software here: www.ancestris.org/

LEAD ARTICLE LAST MONTH

Are you in the right place?



Janet Few would like to apologise for an error in her article in the last bulletin. Poole was never in Hampshire. However, neighbouring Christchurch and Bournemouth were moved from Hampshire to Dorset.

Interestingly, Elizabeth I granted Poole a Charter in 1574, whereby it became a county town which was, at that time, separate from the county of Dorset.

Ed: Thank you to readers for putting us right!



Really Useful Back Page

Family History Research Aids from the Experts



Parish Chest, a service from the Family History Federation, has over sixty family history societies and some twenty-plus traders, at a one-stop online shop, offering a wide range of family history materials in some sixteen categories including:

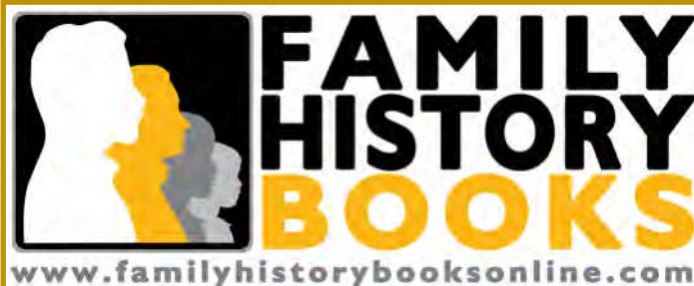
- *Parish register transcriptions and more from local FHS*
- *Memorial inscriptions information from gravestones across the country, compiled by local FHS*
- *Nonconformists: Baptists, Wesleyans, Independents, Quakers and many more nonconformist lists*
- *Wills and Probate Indexes of wills and administrations*
- *Folders, printing facilities, giftware*
- *..and more!*

Societies and suppliers regularly add new lines, so visit to see what is there to help you add to your family tree.

www.parishchest.com

Societies and others interested in joining Parish Chest should initially contact:

admin@familyhistoryfederation.com



Family History Books (FHB) is an online bookshop and publisher; it is owned by the Family History Federation and the aim is to provide a service to the genealogical community. Family History Books offers a range of relevant titles relating to family history research.

FHB welcomes contact from authors! Works of general and specific interest to family historians with wider social history topics are of interest. FHB does not publish individual family histories or fiction. If you have a book in the making, then do contact FHB via admin@familyhistoryfederation.com

The bookstall will be out and about again! The next event is the **U3A Peak District Family History Conference** at the Palace Hotel, Buxton on Saturday 21 September (see Bulletin 47). And then there are several regional events coming up. Do talk to our volunteers if you are visiting!

In addition to its [online shop](http://www.familyhistorybooksonline.com) FHB can also be found at major live family history events around the country. Come and visit us and see all the latest titles available. The stall is always very popular!

Happy browsing!

Please explore the range, and place your orders, at

www.familyhistorybooksonline.com



The REALLY USEFUL Family History Show

Live shows coming up in 2025

2024 ONLINE postponed due to success of LIVE shows

Please view www.fhf-reallyuseful.com for full details



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Company Number 2930189 (England & Wales) Registered Charity Number 1038721
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