

Net Notes

THE WORKHOUSE

www.workhouses.org.uk

IF THE WORKHOUSE was part of your ancestors' lives, this website has more than 2,000 pages of information, ranging from photos, plans and maps, to a time line on the subject. There are some records about specific people, such as the 1881 British Census listing the residents of Whitechapel Union Infirmary, Bakers Row, London and Middlesex. The primary focus, though, is a wealth of information about the workhouse, including where to find the relevant records.

The workhouse gradually developed in the 17th century as an establishment offering relief to the poor funded by the local government. It provided a com-



Peasants outside a workhouse in the 19th century.

nation of communal accommodation and a requirement for residents, particularly the able-bodied, to perform work, which was often deterrent in nature.

This comprehensive site can be easily searched from a search box in the upper left of the home page, and wild cards are accepted. If you don't find information about a specific workhouse, shorten the name and use the wild card (*) feature, to accommodate possible spelling changes.

At the end of your visit to this site, you can test your knowledge by taking the Workhouse Quiz.

— S.C. Meates

THE NEHGS ONLINE SEMINAR SERIES

www.newenglandancestors.org/education/main/online_lectures.asp

IF YOU LIVE in the Boston area, it's easy enough to visit the New England Historic Genealogical Society for its frequent, free seminars. But now, thanks to the Internet, those who can't make the trip to Newbury Street have some options too.

The NEHGS online seminar series offers an ever-increasing roster of lectures presented by NEHGS staff. The lectures are available on the NEHGS website 24/7. To run them, you'll need Macromedia Flash Player, which is installed on most browsers (if you don't have it, you'll find a link to a download at the NEHGS Seminar Series website, www.newenglandancestors.org/education/main/online_lectures.asp).

Newcomers to family history research will surely want to begin with the three-part "Getting Started in Genealogy" series, narrated by Marie Daly, the NEHGS Research Library Director. In Part One, you'll find tips on gathering information, documenting your sources and organizing your data. You'll also locate lists of useful genealogical websites, and be able to download a free pedigree chart and an extensive syllabus for further reference.

Part Two introduces you to research in census records and vital records. Using a sample family



Bring an expert seminar home to your computer.

history search, Daly shows how to uncover data through censuses, marriage and birth records. Part Three continues the sample search, but expands the sources to compiled genealogies, local histories, city directories, maps and atlases, and manuscripts.

Keep in mind, however, that many of the resources you'll see featured will illustrate a family history search grounded in New England; Daly's family has evidently been in the US since at least the 18th century. And understandably, these lessons highlight the usefulness of NEHGS resources, including databases and other resources accessible only to paid members.

The seminars also go beyond these introductory lessons. Other current offerings include guidance on transcribing gravestones (with a lecture by David Allen Lambert, the NEHGS Online Genealogist and author of *A Guide to Massachusetts Cemeteries*); advice on applying to lineage societies (with Christopher Challender Child); and an introduction to Irish genealogy research (again with Marie Daly). Each brief seminar lasts about 10-15 minutes. Check the website for new offerings and updates.

— Erika Dreifus

IMMIGRATION HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

www.ihrc.umn.edu/

THE IMMIGRATION HISTORY

Research Center (IHRC), based at the University of Minnesota, preserves and promotes understanding of the history of the American immigrant experience. The IHRC maintains a library and archival collection, provides research assistance, produces publications and sponsors academic and public programs. Unlike other websites, little data about individuals is available. What you learn about is the immigrant experience as a whole. This information can greatly help you research your European and Mediterranean ancestors.

Navigating the website is straightforward. The main drop-down menu box at the top of each

“Research Sources and Services”. On this page, you can search the archival collection, the books, periodicals and images. There is also a link on this page to information on family history and information about the available research services and the costs (all in US dollars).

For example, in their archival collection for Eveleth,

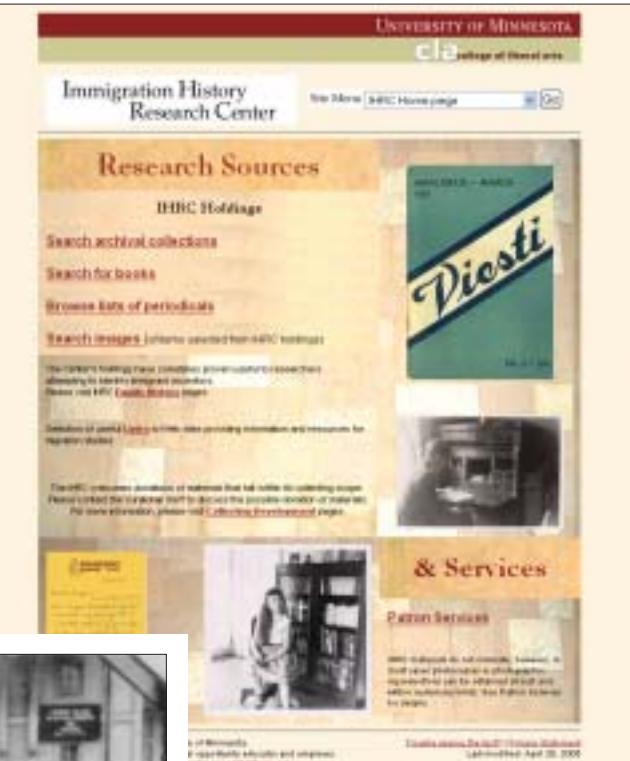


page links to a customized index for each of the following main sections: About the Immigration History Research Center, News & Related Community Events of Interest, Research Sources and Services, Scholarly Collaborations and Programming, Friends of the IHRC, Marketplace to Order Books, Microfilm and Stories Worth Remembering.

Of most interest to you, the Internet genealogist, are the

Minnesota, are the papers of two individuals, a temperance society and a cooperative. With a companion search into the image archives for Eveleth, you get a fascinating glimpse into Finnish immigrant life. I found this a great source to learn more about the Finish population in Eveleth and it suggested other resources that I might examine to track down my elusive Blom family.

One of the richest resources is



Thousands of American immigrants arrived via Ellis Island, right, in New York. Learn more about your ancestors' immigrant experience and how they began their new life online at the Immigration History Research Center, www.ihrc.umn.edu/.

the guides produced in 1991 by the IHRC, www.ihrc.umn.edu/research/g1991/index.htm, which highlights the Center's collections in documenting eastern, central and southern European and Near-Eastern ethnic groups who migrated across the Atlantic in the latter half of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Using this resource list, I then used the inter-library loan source to obtain these books via my local library or used the Center's fee-based reproduction services for an article.

So, if you are looking to learn more about the rich heritage of your immigrant ancestors, this is a great resource.

— Diane Richard