

Net Notes

FAMILYRELATIVES

www.familyrelatives.com

FAMILYRELATIVES has expanded its offerings! Previously, I have always known this website as a source for UK records, but it now has US records, the ability for you to create an online family tree, a social networking component and so much more!

Let's start with the UK records. Though you have some search capabilities when not a member, to fully access these records, you have the option of a membership (\$75 US) or pay per view (ranging from \$9.75 to \$23.50 US). I recommend the latter if your needs are specific and limited.

- Official GRO Birth, Death, Marriage Indexes, 1837-2005
- Overseas Birth, Death, Marriage Indexes, 1761-1994 (these can be browsed and viewed for free)
- WWI — Army, Royal Navy, 1914-1918
- Soldiers who died in the Great War, 1914-1921
- WWII — Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, 1939-1948
- Parish records, more than 1,500 parishes 1538-1837

Note that you can always quickly tell whether you are accessing the available record or one that is part of the subscription/pay per view services. For the latter, if you are not authorized to access the information, your search results will typically list relevant names and no further details and you won't be able to "view" the associated image.

For the Official GRO indices, a nice feature is the inclusion of fully transcribed records for 1866-1920 and 1984-2005 and the ability to fully search the indices. Historically the GRO indices only allowed

you to search on the first three letters of a surname, necessitating finding your person manually in the indices to then identify the specific birth/marriage/death record needed. Additionally, the search function includes features like "Marriage Match", "Maiden Name" and "Age at Death" to help more quickly and accurately narrow your search.

Recent additions include 1830s Pigot's Historical Occupational Trade Directories for 27 Counties and coming soon are census records for England and Wales, and school registers.

You also have access to select US records for free. Note that these records are available elsewhere on the Internet though, in various locations.

- Irish Immigration records, 1846-1850
- Social Security Death Index
- California Births (1905-1995) and Deaths
- Texas Marriages and Divorces
- Maine Marriages and Deaths
- WWII — Enlistment and Prisoners of War records
- Korean War — Prisoners of War and Casualties

And don't forget to try out the ability to create (and share) an online family tree, as well as the various social networking options now available. Related to these two newer options are features where you can add a comment to any transcribed record and become part of history. You can also explore an Age Distribution map for England and Wales. You select a period, type in your surname and find out in which county your ancestors lived the longest. It appears that for the surname Richard, I could live to 103 in West Sussex! — DIANE L. RICHARD

BLOODLINES OF SALEM

<http://www.bloodlinesofsalem.org/>

THE SALEM WITCH Trials have always been fascinating to me. My first exposure to them was the play "The Crucible", as one of those required high school reading assignments! Then, as I pursued my genealogy, another link was made when I learned that my father was born in Salem, Massachusetts, (though more than 200 years after the witch trials occurred).

Now, the website Bloodlines of Salem has come online as a place where visitors can share ideas and information about the Salem Witch Trials of 1692, its participants and their families.

Although the trials unfolded more than three centuries ago, they continue to feature in the studies of history, law and religion.



Many have researched and proved descents from one or more of the participants. The purpose is not only to share lineages and to celebrate their memories, but to examine the mysteries that continue to fascinate new generations of their families and the public.

The history page, <http://www.bloodlinesofsalem.org/HISTORY.HTM>, is the one most directly applicable to genealogists — in addition to a timeline and an overview of daily life, there is also a list of participants, such as officials, plaintiffs and defendants.

Whether you have an ancestral connection to this period in Salem's history or a fascination with it, this website informs and reminds us of this controversial historical period. — DIANE L. RICHARD

SHADES OF THE DEPARTED

<http://www.shadesofthedeparted.com>

SHADES OF THE DEPARTED is a great new blog by long-time genealogy blogger "footnoteMaven" (<http://www.footnotemaven.com>). The unique blog name comes from a comment in a magazine from Adam Bodardus in 1894. He noted that a photographer was frustrated by people who never picked up their prints after ordering, so he hung up the portraits in the window with the sign "Shades of the Departed". The focus of Shades of the Departed is photography, but since most of the articles relate to research techniques and genealogy, it deserves a mention here.

The author is a photograph collector and genealogist whose grandfather worked with the famous photographer-traveler Burton Holmes. Shades of the Departed takes a unique and refreshing look at photography with several recurring weekly columns. Each week there is a "Photo of the Week" that highlights a special find in the author's collection. But the "Photo of the Week" is more than just a photo! Each image is analyzed to determine what can be learned about both the photographer and the person sitting for the photo. Since all research sources are expertly documented, these photo mysteries can serve as a tool for your own research. At least one of the mysteries was solved online, and the photo was returned to the descendants of the person pictured in it.

"Twice Told Tuesday" columns offer reprinted

articles from vintage photography magazines and books that offer an interesting glimpse into the past. Readers have learned about such varied topics as how to photograph children from an 1877 article and what you can and cannot photograph in an English court of law from a 1926 article.

"Web Wandering Wednesday" and "Many

Things Thursday" columns offer miscellaneous but quite fascinating finds, such as books, websites or blog posts.

One of the popular recurring features on Shades of the Departed is "Friday from the Collectors". Each Friday a guest columnist writes about various aspects of photography and how it relates to, or enhances, genealogical research. Examples include an article by professional photographer George Geder on "Why Photo Restoration is Important" and one from genealogy blogger and professional graphic artist Jasia on "Digital Scrapbooking for Genealogists". One of the

more intriguing titles for a guest blog post came from lawyer and genealogy blogger Craig Manson. His article, "Oscar Wilde, Sonny Bono, and the Naked Orphans", discussed copyright issues with old family photographs.

Whether your interest is photography, vintage fashion or furniture, history, genealogy or solving mystery photo puzzles, Shades of the Departed will not disappoint. — DONNA J. POINTKOUSKI



PURPOSE GAMES

<http://www.purposegames.com>

DO YOU NEED a respite from your genealogical research? Head over to Purpose Games for a fun yet educational break. The games at Purpose Games are not only enjoyable, but they might teach you a thing or two about the world in which your ancestors lived.

Just how well do you know the history and geography of your ancestors' world? Try your luck at these fascinating quizzes and find out. Test your knowledge of your ancestors' lives and countries with quizzes, such as "The Countries of Europe 1914", "United States 1823-1845" and "Black Death Places". If you have traced your ancestry back to the 17th century, you'll enjoy "The Countries of Europe 1648"; Saxony, Brandenburg, Wallachia and Transylvania are alive and well in this quiz.

There are many quizzes in the History and Geography categories that cover nearly every time period and every region of the world. There are also Linguistics quizzes if you want help learning your ancestors' language, and Entertainment, People or Sports quizzes if you just want to have some fun or hone your pop culture trivia.

One of the interesting things about this site is the ability to create your own quiz. With free registration to the site, you can create a quiz or game about anything using multiple choice, maps or photos. There is also a community message board if you need help with your creation.

One thing is certain — history and geography were never this much fun when I was in school! — DONNA J. POINTKOUSKI

