



# Lisburn Branch Newsletter



October 2018

Newsletter compiled by Louise and Elizabeth

*Family Historians Chase their own Tales.*

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## Pedigree Collapse

Does your family tree suffer from **pedigree collapse**? This term refers to procreation between a couple who share an ancestor, such as cousins, which reduces the size of the tree. It will also affect DNA relationship predictions making any relationship beyond about fourth- or fifth- cousin level difficult to assign with confidence. Hopefully Martin McDowell will shed some light on this problem next month. It has been estimated that 80% of historical marriages took place between second or closer cousins. In Ireland the practice was common up to the late nineteenth century.

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## County Down Family History Research

Two useful websites <http://www.raymondscountydownwebsite.co.uk> and [www.rosdavies.com](http://www.rosdavies.com)

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**The Down Survey of Ireland** [www.downsurvey.tcd.ie](http://www.downsurvey.tcd.ie) - nothing to do with County Down

The Down Survey (1656-1658) of Ireland was the first detailed land survey on a national scale anywhere in the world. The survey measured all the land to be forfeited by the Catholic Irish in order to facilitate its redistribution to Merchant Adventurers and English soldiers. As well as the information about townlands on the maps, clicking on Historical GIS allows you to search by landlord in 1641 and 1670. You can also find how many English and Irish were in a particular townland in the 1659 census and much more.

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## A Nation of Shopkeepers

If you have shopkeepers in your family tree, what might you find out about them? Firstly the location of the shop could be found using the valuation and the census records as illustrated overleaf. Then it may be possible to find a photograph of the street which shows the shop or even a photograph of the shop front. The Magee Community Collection of the University Of Ulster Library Special Collections contains photographs taken mainly in NW Ulster and includes three photographs taken in different years of the front of my Grandfather's shop. I don't know why. These sorts of images often appear in books of old photographs, on the web, in local museums and at PRONI. Newspapers did not print photographs until about 1930s but shopkeepers often inserted advertisements. In December local newspapers filled up their columns with descriptions of the Christmas displays in shop windows. The workhouses advertised for tenders for the supply of all types of goods and the names of the successful suppliers will be included in the minute books.

## Graveyard Inscriptions

You may come across a family gravestone with a large number of inscriptions on it, all perfectly spaced and sometimes including brothers and sisters who died abroad. This usually means that the family have erected the stone after all those mentioned had died, perhaps when they had enough money to do so. Many families could not afford headstones at all. Sometimes a wife who predeceased her husband would be buried with her own family unless he already had a grave plot. I think this is the reason that my great grandmother, who died before her husband or any of her children, is not mentioned on the gravestone inscription.

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## Griffith's Valuation to 2018

In an urban context, it can be difficult to equate a property listed in Griffith's valuation with one that is still standing today. Plot numbers in Griffith's valuation and updates bear no relationship to present day house numbers, though sometimes these are listed in the later valuation updates. House numbers in the census records of 1901 and 1911, reflect the order that the enumerator visited them. For the same property these numbers can be different in the two census records. Recently I was looking for a house in Lisburn Street, Hillsborough occupied by Adam Davidson (a grocer) in 1869. It was plot number 47 in the valuation update. In 1901 this plot was occupied by George Silcock - House 39 in the census record. Lisburn Street contains a Masonic Hall which was listed as number 12. Therefore the enumerator had started at the corner of Ballynahinch Street, worked his way north, crossed the street and come back up the other side. Since Lisburn Street is little changed since 1901, it was easy to count houses on Google Earth and equate plot 47 with the present day Number 20.

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## NIFHS NEEDS YOU



Just like Kitchener's Army, the NIFHS is made up of volunteers who carry out the many roles involved in running the society. Want to do something to help from home? Then how about volunteering for the transcription of Ballymena church records? Or can you spare a few hours helping visitors to the C4 library or doing look ups for members who can't get there? Or maybe you would like to help Martin with the Ancestor Charts? Got an idea for a family history course? Share them with Martin at [education@nifhs.org](mailto:education@nifhs.org). And remember to send your family history stories to the journal editor at [NRoots@nifhs.org](mailto:NRoots@nifhs.org)

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## What's on in October / November

**PRONI Thursday 25 October at 7pm** *'Total War? Ireland in the Revolutionary & Napoleonic Wars 1793 - 1815'* Professor Tom Bartlett. Free but booking is required.

These wars had a great effect on Ireland - leading up to 1798 rebellion and the Act of Union in 1800. The agricultural prosperity of the Napoleonic War years was followed by an economic depression and an increase in emigration once the war was over.

**Thursday 8 November 2 - 4.30 pm** *Exiles of '98*. A half day conference to mark the publication of *'Exiles of '98. Ulster Presbyterians and the United States'*. Booking required.

**DOWN COUNTY MUSEUM Friday 19 October 7.30 pm** *The Life and Times of Thomas Russel in Words and Music*. Tickets £8 / £6 concession Contact 4461 5218

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