



Lisburn Branch Newsletter



January 2019

Newsletter compiled by Louise and Elizabeth

Happy New Year to all our members.

New Year's Resolutions

Resolutions don't usually last very long so here are two that can be carried out early in the year. 1) Visit the NIFHS Research Library on Thursdays in January and maybe get trained as a volunteer guide. 2) Volunteer for Back to Our Past at Titanic Belfast on 15 - 16 February.

Signatures

It is a bonus to find the signature of your ancestor on a document. At the last meeting we saw how Helene was able to compare signatures to prove that two documents bearing the same name referred to the same person. It is a good reason for paying GRONI £2.50 to see certificates rather than the copies on irishgenealogy.ie Alternatively signatures can be used to differentiate between father and son or cousins of the same name, for example on leases. I have found less confident signatures in elderly relatives or when the writer may only be able to write their name. There is more to learn from studying signatures than just the name.

Googling - Be persistent.

Helene also showed us that the vital clue that you need may be buried in Google. I once had a book that told me how Google algorithms worked in bringing up results to any search. I didn't fully understand it but sometimes the only thing to do is keep looking even to the 10th page!

1841 Census England & Wales

This is the first census to survive intact. The head of the house was given a form to fill in. Anyone unable to read or write made use of an enumerator and mistakes were made in spelling names. Also people were either unsure of their ages or made themselves younger. There was also a policy of rounding down ages to the nearest multiple of 5. Therefore be suspicious if the whole household have ages ending in 0 or 5.

RASCAL- Research And Special Collections Available Locally <http://www.rascal.ac.uk/>

This website gives access to research and special collections held in libraries, museums and archives in Ireland and abroad. For example putting 'estates' into the search box brings up 71 results of Estate Papers, largely held at PRONI, with good descriptions of what each collection is composed of and the PRONI catalogue number. Doing the same on the PRONI site brings up Too Many Results (over 7000) as every mention of estates is counted.

Wild-cards (usually an *)

John Grenham calls wild-cards a genealogist's best friend. Surnames variants are wide spread even among siblings which can be very confusing. It is useful to do several searches with wild cards replacing some of the letters, especially the vowels as consonants are more stable.

Scottish ancestors www.scottishindexes.com

This is a free site with no 'log in' required. It holds a wide range of genealogical records such as mental health records, high court records, prison registers, paternity cases, and early census records in full transcription. The census transcription has a useful link to 19th century maps of the location. It is worth exploring but as a work in progress so there are lots of gaps.

Recording Your Family History



This month's meeting is all about different ways to record your Family History - in a bound book, charts, pictures, scrap books, memory boxes or **wallpaper**. For a mere £175 a roll you can get self-adhesive, re-positionable vinyl depicting your family tree (see left). Want a Coat of Arms above the fireplace? - only £59 a roll. www.squarkinteriors.co.uk This is just to remind you to bring along examples of all your methods and ideas for recording your family history.

Finding Genetic Relatives

| Relationship | Average shared DNA | Range | Probability of Detecting |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| 1 st Cousin | 12.5% | 7.31-13.8% | c 100% |
| 2 nd Cousin | 3.13% | 2.85-5.04% | >99% |
| 3 rd Cousin | 0.78% | 0.3-2.0% | c 90% |
| 4 th Cousin | 0.2% | 0.07-0.5% | c 45% |
| 5 th Cousin | 0.05% | Variable | c 15% |
| 6 th Cousin | 0.01% | Variable | < 5% |

Information on the table comes from 23andMe but is probably applicable to other companies. It shows that there is a good chance of finding 3rd cousins and a fair chance of finding 4th cousins. Beyond that it will be difficult unless you have a very good paper trail. If there are marriages of cousins in your tree this will increase the shared DNA and may push it into a higher range giving a false impression of the closeness of the relationship.

NB Saturday 19th January from 10 am - 1pm Lisburn NIFHS have booked the computer room in Lisburn Library. **Any member** who would like some help with their family history research is welcome. **Please let me know if you are coming.** lisburn@nifhs.org

TALKS IN SAINTFIELD IN JANUARY

Tues 15 **The Early History of Saintfield** *Alister McReynolds* 7.30 pm 2nd Presbyterian Church Hall, Ballynahinch Road, Saintfield

Tues 22 **Prof. Francis Hutcheson** *Philip Orr* 7.30pm 1st Presbyterian Church Hall, Main St.

Tues 29 **The 1798 Rebellion and Battle of Sainfield** *Eamon Phoenix* 7.30 pm Hall at Church of Mary, Crossgar Road, Saintfield

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