



# Lisburn Branch Newsletter



September 2019

Newsletter compiled by Joyce McNamara, Elizabeth Scott and Louise Lewis

*'They toil not, neither do they spin.'* - How one Mr. Hugh Holmes of Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin, describes his four unmarried daughters on the 1901 Ireland Census. Mr. Holmes, unlike his daughters, was clearly a burdened man.

---

## Welcome to All

Welcome back to a brand new year of family history, when hopefully we will be partaking in some toiling and spinning of our own, and maybe even a little sowing and reaping - of the genealogical variety of course. 2019/20 is set to be a particularly special year as it marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NIFHS, with a raft of celebratory projects and events in the pipeline. Here at Lisburn Branch the celebrations kick off on September 10<sup>th</sup>, with members' reflections on their own research journeys over the past forty years. The first meeting will also see the distribution of our attractive new programme, with a strong series of talks lined up for the coming months. One to put in the diary for January 2020 is Tom Hartley's 'Stories from Stones', where he talks about the hugely rewarding task of researching graveyards. And don't forget Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September, when Lisburn Branch will host the AGM, plus lunch and tours of the Linen Centre and Castle Gardens, Lisburn. Details have been circulated. We look forward to seeing you at both.

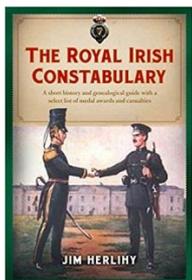
---

## Church Records Made Easy at PRONI

Congratulations to PRONI for the lovely job they are doing on the transfer of church records from microfilm to computer. Happily, the Roman Catholic records for most Irish parishes have already been digitised by the National Library of Ireland, so PRONI is concentrating on the most-used, non-Catholic records for Northern Ireland. So far records from 29 Church of Ireland and Methodist churches have been digitised. These include several from around Belfast and Lisburn. The task is laborious. Each microfilm is first cleaned. It then takes about 15 minutes to copy each page. The result is highly legible records and easy to locate registers. Records are viewed onsite, with two dedicated terminals located near the Help Desk in the Public Search Room - a little initial guidance is recommended. A list of church records now digitised is available at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/proni-guide-church-records](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/proni-guide-church-records). Catholic records can be viewed remotely at <https://registers.nli.ie>.

---

## Genealogical Records for the Irish Police 1816-1922



The Royal Irish Constabulary had its beginnings in the early 1800s. By the time of disbandment in 1922, some 83,500 men and 1,500 officers had passed through its ranks. In addition, during 1832-1857, 3,700 'Poteen Hussars' served for the Revenue Police. If your ancestor was amongst these men, you could benefit from a wealth of official records, which chart the career of each, alongside rare, biographical data (much predating civil registrations). Jim Herlihy has written several books on police genealogy. 'The Royal Irish Constabulary: A Short History and Genealogical Guide' (available C4, Libraries NI) describes the two main sets of RIC records -

Service Registers and Pension Records. It details what information they provide and where to find it. Herlihy explains how each recruit held a unique Registration Number, thus providing an invaluable key to all records throughout his career. These numbers can be located on *Find My Past* (free at C4) and in Herlihy's book, 'The Royal Irish Constabulary: A Complete Alphabetical List of Officers and Men, 1816-1922' (available Libraries NI). Herlihy's 'The Irish Revenue Police: A Short History and Genealogical Guide' (available C4, Libraries NI) lists all who served as 'Poteen Hussars'. Other good sources of information are:

\* *Find My Past* (free at C4) - images and transcripts of RIC Service Registers, RIC Pension Records, and Revenue Police records. \* PRONI (Series MIC454) The National Archives, Dublin (Series MFA24) and Kew (Series HO184) - microfilms of the RIC Service Registers. Dublin and Kew hold other related records. \* 'Royal Irish Constabulary Officers: A Biographical and Genealogical Guide' by Jim Herlihy - biographies of 1,500 Officers and some photos (Libraries NI).

---

### Researching Your Scottish Ancestors? Fife Death Index 1549-1877

Here at NIFHS, the transcription of old records by volunteers is a key part of our service. Our Scottish cousins do likewise and the Fife Family History Society has demonstrated just how powerful the results can be. The 'Fife Death Index' is a 250,000-strong, record-set, gleaned from multiple sources, such as burial records, Kirk Session Records and newspapers. It covers 1549-1877 and can include, name, age, family members, occupation, death date and cause. Visit [www.fifefhs.org/category/news-and-events/announcements](http://www.fifefhs.org/category/news-and-events/announcements) for news on the coming downloadable version. If you are researching your Scottish ancestors and can't wait for that, the records are now on the *Find My Past* Scottish Collection (free at C4). If you're searching beyond Fife, the Collection holds over 1.5 million death records. Just enter 'Parish Burials' under 'Sub-Category'.

---

### Census News - Roaring 20s or Troubled 20s?

As we approach the 2020s, we look forward to the expiry of the 100-year embargo on the 1921 UK census records. Sadly, due to the troubles in Ireland, no census was taken across the island in 1921. It's great news, however, if you have ancestors in England and Wales. From January 2022 those records will be available on *Find My Past* (free at C4). This 1921 census provides more information than before, including fuller details about employment, marital status, and age. The broadly similar Scottish census will be released on Scotland's People a little earlier in 2021. For more details see [www.findmypast.co.uk/1921-census](http://www.findmypast.co.uk/1921-census) and [www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/record-guides/census-returns](http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/record-guides/census-returns). Here in Ireland, the new Irish Free State held its first census in 1926 and a petition is underway requesting release prior to 2026. The drought for those of us researching the northern counties continues. Although Northern Ireland also took a census in 1926, this has been declared 'lost'. More on the Irish censuses in the next Newsletter.

---

### Visit C4 - NIFHS Research Centre, Valley Business Centre, Newtownabbey

This year, C4 is once again open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-8pm. Enjoy free access to *Find My Past* (which, as above, hosts strong Irish and Scottish collections) alongside a unique range of family history resources [www.nifhs.org/resources/library-list/](http://www.nifhs.org/resources/library-list/) Parking is free, and a 2D bus runs from Upper Queen St., Belfast, to the nearby Valley Leisure Centre, every half hour.

---

### What's on in September

European Heritage Open Days, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> September. Programmes can be viewed, or downloaded, at [www.discovernorthernireland.com/events/European-Heritage-Open-Days](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/events/European-Heritage-Open-Days).