

Newsletter

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Editorial

The Summer holidays are here again and we all love to be out in the fresh air. If you have any spare time or just want to help your Family History Society then please have a quick word with Rob to find out if you can help with our monumental inscription project.

I have found that the small charge required to access full information in the 1911 census well worth the money. It has answered a couple of questions as the information on the actual census sheet was written by my ancestor and covers so much more than any previous census.

I have the utmost respect for early family historians as they did not have access to the internet. I know some members do not like the internet but there is so much available and so many web sites willing to help you. Last year I had an email from a descendent of my grandfather's brother who lives in Dorset and just lately I have started into communication with a descendent of my Grandmother's brother, both found through the *Genes Reunited* website. I have also had an enquiry from a possible descendent of my wife's Grt.Grt. Grandfather. I would never have found these people without the use of the internet.

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An Important Announcement

The Search Room at The British Postal Museum & Archive will close from 29 June to allow urgent work to take place on the air conditioning system. It is expected that the work will take at least 8 weeks although it may take longer. They will continue to deal with email, letter and telephone enquiries during this time but it may take slightly longer to respond. If you are planning to visit us in July or August please contact the Search Room in advance of your visit by emailing info@postalheritage.org.uk or telephoning 020 7239 2570 to check the current status. Updates will also be posted to the website www.postalheritage.org.uk.

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The website for Welsh Heritage and Culture

There is a website called *Gathering the Jewels* which features over 30,000 images of objects, books, letters, aerial photographs and other items from museums, archives and libraries throughout Wales. Though there is nothing specific for the family history researcher I am sure it will only be a matter of time as the site is full of topics such as Welsh industrial history, Welsh way of life and Religion. It is worth a look if you have Welsh ancestors.

From Janice Bebbington.

The 1911 census is now complete

The 1911 Census website has announced that they have added the final batch of records for the 1911 census, which means the entire census is now available for you to search. The newly added records – which follow the launch of the Welsh records last week – include the Channel Islands of Alderney, Guernsey, Jersey and Sark, and the Isle of Man. They have also added records for around 135,000 soldiers based at 288 military establishments overseas, and around 36,000 naval personnel on 147 Royal Navy ships overseas. All these records can be accessed via the familysearch.org website and though it is free to search there is a small cost to download any information you may require. In 1911 the British Empire was nearing its peak; there were soldiers and sailors stationed across the globe, both at Empire outposts and in places that weren't part of the Empire but where Britain had a political and military presence, such as Egypt. You can search for army personnel stationed overseas, plus any family members who went with them. Soldiers stationed overseas who were absent on the night of the census are included, as well as navy personnel who were onboard ship. A soldier stationed overseas but on a home visit may appear twice in the census: at his family home in England or Wales and also as an absentee at the overseas military base he served at.

From the Federation of Family History Societies Newsletter.

More on the 1911 Census

www.1911census.co.uk is easy to access and enables the public to view high quality colour images of their ancestors' original handwritten census returns. Transcribed text versions of the records ensure they are fully searchable by name or address. Public demand for the 1911 census, which will be a key resource for family historians, has resulted in the records being released earlier than the scheduled 2012 date. To make this early online release to the public possible, the 1911 census team worked around the clock for two years - scanning on average one census page per second. In line with data protection legislation, certain sensitive information relating to infirmity and to children of women prisoners will be held back until 2012. Comprehensive and rigorously tested, www.1911census.co.uk has been developed by UK-based family history website findmypast.com, owned by brightsolid, in association with The National Archives. Debra Chatfield, Marketing Manager at findmypast.com, said: "This latest release from the 1911 census offers a crucial new entry point to Welsh family history research for a wide range of people, from novice family historians to seasoned genealogists who have hit a 'wall' in their family tree research. As well as helping people trace their Welsh ancestors, these records shed more light on our predecessors' day-to-day lifestyles, providing a snapshot of a day in their lives, with details of their occupations, housing arrangements and social status." The 1911 census is huge - occupying over two kilometres of shelving - an incredible eight million paper census returns have been transcribed to create over 16 million digital images. This makes the 1911 census one of the biggest digitisation projects ever undertaken by The National Archives in association with a commercial partner. Oliver Morley, Director of Customer and Business Development at The National Archives, commented: "This is a major achievement. By teaming up with findmypast.com, we are bringing history to life for millions. This remarkable record is available online to researchers and family historians all over the world for future generations. The 1911 census is a poignant reflection of how different life was in early 20 century Wales, before the Great War." Handwritten records Completed by all householders in Wales and England on Sunday, 2 April 1911, the census records show the name, age, place of birth, marital status and occupation of every resident in every home, as well as their relationship to the head of the household. People will also have unique access to their ancestors' handwriting as the original householders' schedules were preserved and used as working documents rather than copying the details in to summary books as was the case in previous census years. The launch of the records also creates a starting point for people to trace their own family tree by looking up their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents who were alive in the year 1911'Fertility Census' The 1911 census was the first to ask questions relating to fertility in marriage. Married women were asked to state how long they had been married and how many children had been born from that marriage.

The census also provides a fascinating snapshot of the population of the country just a few years before a whole generation of young men perished in the Great War of 1914-1918.

How to use the 1911 Census records

- * Log on to www.1911census.co.uk and register for free
- * Search for an ancestor in 1911 by entering their name
- * If the name is common you can enter their approximate year of birth, which will help to narrow down the results
- * Search for an address to look up the history of your house or an ancestor's address in 1911
- * Pay as you go to view each record. You will be charged 10 credits per transcript and 30 credits for each original household page. Visitors to the website can buy 60 credits for £6.95.
- * Findmypast.com vouchers are also valid on 1911census.co.uk. Vouchers can be purchased from The National Archives bookshop and redeemed on findmypast.com. Credits can then be spent on both findmypast.com and 1911census.co.uk.
- * For more information about using the 1911 census for family history research, 'Census: The Expert Guide' by Peter Christian and David Annal is available from The National Archives online bookshop at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

Due to the sheer size of the 1911 census, nowhere in this press release by the National Archives does it state that this census will ever be available in paper form.

National Archives and Federation of Family History Societies Newsletters.

