



E Newsletter



Welcome to **2017** and all the new and exciting challenges that will await us whilst tracing our family tree.

Has usual I ask if you can share any news, views and articles with us for the E newsletter.

You can email them to me using the email address given below.

Just a reminder we will not be having a meeting for the January period, (normally this meeting is cancelled for snow). So we will see you all on the 6th February which will be a research evening.



We at the North Staffordshire Family History Society are always looking for volunteers to help in any way that you can whether it be in a large or small way.

We are looking for people who can transcribe index's for the Staffordshire BMD's project which as helped us all and continues to do so .

Transcribing various documents. And index's

Photographing of internal or external monuments within the local churches and churchyards. You may already have photographs of your own relatives headstones, why not email them to me to be added to the data base we are creating.



robecarter@hotmail.com

Useful Addresses

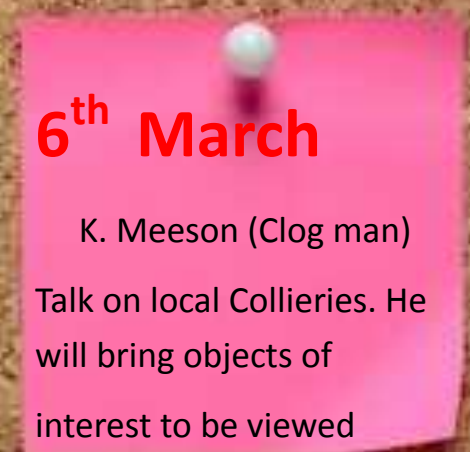
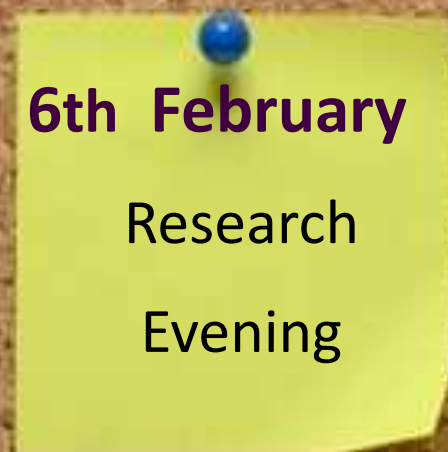
The library and Museum of Freemasonry, Freemason's Hall, 60 Great Queen Street, London, WC2B 5AZ

Order of Women Freemasons, 27 Pembridge Gardens, London W2 4EF

Grand Lodge of Scotland, Freemason's Hall, 96 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 3DH

Grand Lodge of Ireland, Freemason's Hall, 17 Molesworth Street, Dublin 2.

Centre for research into Freemasonry, Humanities Research Institute, Floor 14, Arts Tower, University of Sheffield, S10 2TN



Have you ever wished that there was a way to take all your research into the Record Office but hold it all on a Desktop computer or do not wish to carry a Laptop? Some mobile Apps will only allow a few generations to be viewed eg. I use Roots Magic 6 and installed the App off Google Play store, only to find it crashes after trying to navigate back about 3 generations.

I read about the free App **GedStar Pro** which used to be about £10 but is now free, and after installing it and converting my File I find I can use it without it crashing.

GedStar Pro is an **Android app** that lets you view *all* of your genealogy data in detail on your **Android smartphone or tablet**. A companion Windows program is used to extract and convert the data that is stored in a genealogy program on your PC. The resulting file is then transferred to your device for easy and convenient viewing.

<http://gedstarpro.com/download.php>

GedStar Pro is a two-part application consisting of a Windows application that is used to convert your data from the genealogy program that you use on your PC, and the Android application that is used to view the data on your handheld device. The steps to viewing your family tree on your smartphone are simply as follows:

1 Down load and Run GedStar Pro on your PC and convert your Data from your genealogy program or GEDCOM file. (Depending on your family History Programme it may be necessary to “Export” the data to a GedCom file and use that.) The Master Genealogist and Legacy Family Tree allow direct import of data without conversion.

2 Copy the converted database to the SD card (or other internal memory storage) on your device using a USB cable, or use the third-party Dropbox service to transfer it wirelessly through the cloud. Dropbox is cloud storage and private users can have a free Account.

3 Go to Google Play Store and type GedStar Pro in the search box and download the App to your mobile device (not “GedStar Pro On This Day”) and Run GedStar Pro on your Android device to view all your data although you cannot edit data on your Android device.

There are no known limitations on the amount of data that can be handled (other than the space available on your SD card).

I believe there is a version for a Mac but have not tried it.

Dianne Shenton

Stoke's Forgotten Poet

Elijah Fenton, (1683 – 1730)



Nearly forgotten now, Elijah Fenton, (1683 – 1730) was once a renowned poet. Born in Stoke-on-Trent, and educated at Jesus College, Cambridge, Elijah published a book of poems in 1707. He assisted, Alexander Pope, in his translation of the *Odyssey*, of which he 'Englished' the first, fourth, nineteenth, and twentieth books, catching the manner of his master so completely that it is hardly possible to distinguish between their work. In 1723 he published a successful tragedy, *Marianne*. His later contributions to literature were a *Life of Milton*, and as an editor of *Waller's Poems* (1729).

When his father, John Fenton died in 1694, Elijah wrote the Latin Epitaph which now adorns John's box tomb in the churchyard at Stoke Minster. The tomb was restored in 1888, but sadly, the inscription is now much faded because of weathering,

John Fenton was an Attorney-at Law and a considerable land owner, and his wife Catherine was a renowned beauty. A loose translation of Elijah's Latin inscription on their tomb reads:

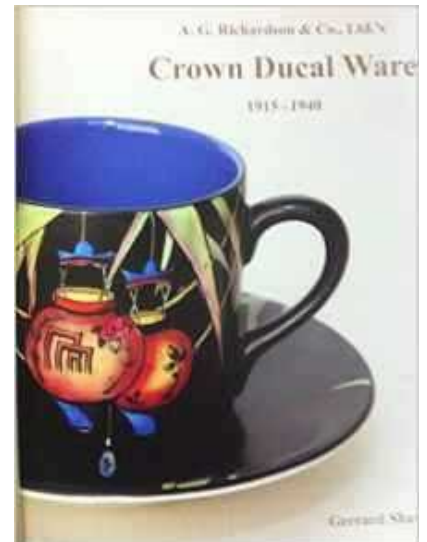
Here lies sepulchred John Fenton, of Shelton, / — a gentleman descended from an ancient Family — / near the Reliques of his Wife, Catharine, / in form, manners, and piety worthy of this most excellent man, / who shone forth in the Church with unshaken faith and unsullied virtues ; / and, also, by the elegance of his polished nature in the refined arts, / and by his benevolent disposition towards all men, / lived happily with those around him. / Having survived his beloved wife 10 years, / he left behind him the great esteem of all good men. / He died in the Year of Grace 1694, and, of his age, 56. / Thus fittingly, and with such rare grace of style, / has the poet commemorated the conspicuous virtues of his parents ; / and has perpetuated the firm faith, elegant accomplishments, / polished manners, mental benevolence, and jocund disposition of his father, / and the triple excellences of beauty, manners, and piety of his mother, Catherine Mare.



**A STUDY OF
A.G. RICHARDSON & Co Ltd
CROWN DUCAL WARE
1915—1940**

By Gerrard Shaw
Publisher: GPS Publishing (2015)
Format: 208 pages, 245 x 325 x 25mm
184 coloured, 38 black and white illustrations
Hardback with dust jacket

ISBN 978 09930941 01
Cost £25 + Postage or through eBay or Amazon
Further details from
Gerrard Shaw at gshaw66@hotmail.com or
Susan Rowe at susanrowe.eclipse.co.uk



This work on the history and products of the A.G. Richardson Crown Ducal name is based on the author's research for his M.A. thesis on the topic. It is clear that many years, of painstaking research have gone into the writing of this book with extensive end notes providing further important additional detail.

This is the first book to comprehensively document in full their designs and products together with a history of the people who managed and worked for the company this includes twenty black & white original photographs of employees in the workplace and lists 350 names of workers with their respective roles which may be of interest to genealogist who had relatives who work at Crown Ducal.

The book also has 184 colour illustrations with full size reproductions of many of the advertisements taken from the trade press, pages from original company pattern books.

Family History Research – Starting Out

The first step in researching your family tree is always to start with yourself and what YOU KNOW. (Possibly on a spread sheet or family history programme) Then to organize the information you find. You should always work back one generation at a time.

1. Record your full name and date of birth. Add in your spouse and date of birth and the date of your marriage as appropriate.
2. In the same section add in any brothers and sisters of yourself, eldest first, down to the youngest. Add in any dates of birth and marriages, and spouses names that you know of. Approximate dates will do based on best guess (ie you might know that your brother was married the same year as a special event or the same year one of your own children was born), until you have more precise information to go on. Call this generation Generation One
3. In the section above add in your parent's names, dates of birth and marriage and if appropriate, date of death. Add in your fathers siblings and their spouse's details as in Generation One then call this Generation Two. Call his father (your Grandfather) Generation Three. Most people can remember at least some details back to this 'third' generation. You get the drift.
4. At this stage you must decide who (first) to research. We recommend you choose one line - for instance your direct line back through your father - his father, then his father, then his father etc. You could choose your mothers line - but for a beginner this would be more difficult (because women change their name upon marriage). This line would be easier to research once you have had some experience.
5. Talk to all the other members, in particularly the older members of your family to obtain more information. Even your own brothers and sisters will have different knowledge and memories than you. They will know tidbits of information which will give you clues which will expand your research. Always ask specific questions as e.g. did father/granddad have any brothers? (Yes he had several I remember Uncle Edward, William, John and Daniel – I don't remember the name of the other one (clue there were 5 or more and you should be able to find a family in the census with these children – very useful criteria if your family has a common surname name). Did he have any sisters? (Yes I remember Aunt Annie – her husband died in the war (clue – look for a marriage before the war start date) and she never remarried (clue – look for her death in the same name) and Mary – she was a teacher (clue – she may have worked in several counties over time). Was he born in Staffordshire? (Yes, I think he was born in Hanley (clue as to which register office to approach). *Continued on next page*

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What did he do for a living? (Granddad was a butcher. His shop was in Smith Street on the corner (clue - did he live 'over the shop? – look in the census). We used to go there for bones to make broth. His brother was a butcher too (clue – did they work together or did his brother have another shop) Specific questions spark more memories of incidents and events etc. Prepare a short questionnaire before you visit of the things you need to know more about (and make an appointment to visit – don't just turn up on the doorstep and expect them to drop everything to talk to you, making an appointment will ensure they are ready for you), but take a notepad as well as there will be other details and clues to note down. A small tape or digital recorder is also very useful, but some people are hesitant to speak into a microphone (especially older people) and this can create an awkward atmosphere. People are more verbal when they are relaxed, so try to create a pleasant atmosphere, have a cup of tea with them, compliment something about their appearance or home, and chat with them about their family (husband/wife children grandchildren) before starting with your specific questions on your ancestors. Listen carefully and take notes as they talk. Do not rely on your memory.

Do not ask 'Tell me everything you know about the family' as this is far too vague and will give you erratic information. Most peoples automatic response will be "I don't know anything" Initially focus on one particular family or person and develop onwards from there. You can always visit, telephone or write again when you have more specific questions to ask.

A simple spread sheet is very easy to use, simple to change (format, layout, and information) and easily understood. Call it your Master List. (always update this immediately with new basic information for every family member on this list and have a separate page for each family line or name you wish to research i.e. one for mother, one for father, one each for their parents etc The names and dates on this sample spreadsheet are fictitious. You can create one for yourself quite easily. It may also suit you to have different family lines written in different colours, i.e. those in blue are the direct line back through your father and lines written in black are siblings and their spouses of the direct ancestors. You can choose your own colours and system to suit yourself, this is just a guide for starters. Use different colours for the Generation subtitle headers for different families – black for father, red for mother, green for grandmother, purple for great grandmother etc. Colour co-ordination can be extended to paper documents, so for instance you can store all paperwork for your father in a black file, all information for your mother in a red file etc.

It is important to keep your information organized, and the people you find, allocated to the correct generation as you will find several people in the one family with the same name as traditionally fathers named one of their sons after his father and one after himself and perhaps one or more of his sons after his brother(s) and his brothers may also do this so name repeat perhaps several times in every generation. It is easy to get confused which information belongs to which person.

Method is important and you should concentrate on going back one generation at a time and finding all the people you can who are blood related, rather than starting with just a collection of names and trying to splice them together into a family tree. You will need a lever arch file or similar, and some extra wide subject dividers plus some plastic punched pockets (sleeves) to store your certificates and papers in to begin with. Organize your lever arch file in the same order as the spreadsheet with a subject divider sheet separating each generation. You will need to obtain birth and marriage certificates from Register Offices to determine parents and spouses' full names to give you clues to finding the previous generations details. Death certificates are a little less useful, but they sometimes confirm perhaps the spouses name or a child's name if they registered the death, or can confirm a link to an address. It is also interesting to see what your ancestors were unfortunate enough to die from.

Civil registration started in July 1837 on the instructions of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. (What foresight she had) She made it law that all births marriages and deaths were officially recorded by a registrar and the standard certificate we still have today was 'born'. Ledgers are kept at local register offices for the area they cover and copies of all those ledgers are kept at the General Register Office in Southport for every Birth Marriage and Death (usually referred to as BMD's for easiness) in the whole country. Some local offices have indexes on line which are free to search (but they are not all complete yet as this is a recent and ongoing project), and even a printable application form which has the reference details for that particular person already filled in along with the address to send it to. Some offices have credit card facilities, and give you the opportunity to apply on line.

The General Register office has this facility. When applying to local register offices a stamped self-addressed envelope should be included. (Make this an A4 sized one if you do not want the certificate to be folded, otherwise you will have creases in the certificate which spoils the appearance)

The references for certificates held at local offices are usually in the format STA/01/642 or something similar

General Office references are always in the format Volume number and Page number, for example Vol 6a Page 257. The references on the <http://freebmd.rootsweb.com> site are the general office references. These are no use to the local offices as they have their own filing and reference system (as above)

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It is easier to apply on line if you have a debit or credit card (and you don't have to supply a stamped addressed envelope) but they are a bit slower to supply due to the sheer volume of applications and their charges are more for a certificate.

They also charge for doing a search, whether or not a registration is found. Apply online at www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/

Look to the right of the page where Research is listed. Have a look through these pages etc.

You can obtain books from the library on Genealogy. Most have a simple guide to tracing your family tree which will give you a general understanding of the processes involved and sources to use. (Don't choose the thickest and most complicated one to start with, as you will not need most of the resources they cover until later in your research).

It is most important to record the details of the source from where the information came e.g. birth cert, census return, gravestone in xyz churchyard, etc. Nowadays you can easily obtain printouts from web sites and copies of documents so it is much easier to record sources, just a few years ago you could only write out details by hand, so it was vital to record what and where your source was located in case you needed to refer to it again. After all - pages and pages of scribbled notes after a day spent at the archives mean nothing if you don't know what source was used and where the information came from.

Websites:-

www.staffordshirebmd.org.uk This site is free to use and will give you the local (Hanley, Stoke on Trent and surrounding areas) register office references to the certificates. You must then obtain certificates of birth marriage and death. The birth certificate will give you the parent's names including the mothers maiden name. You can then go on to trace their marriage certificate and obtain their full names, ages, address, occupation, and names and occupation of both fathers. May also give the reference deceased if the father was at the time of the marriage. Some other register offices have their own web-sites with indexes to the BMD's on them, but by no means do all of them have websites, or the information provided free. (Derby for instance makes a charge for every index item you view.)

www.familysearch.org - a site which again is free to use and has the IGI (International Genealogy Index) and the 1881 census transcription (not images of pages) for England among other things. The IGI has information on baptisms (and some births) marriages and deaths which mainly occurred before civil registration started and is information extracted from parish registers, which is the source to use once you have traced your family back to before 1837 (be careful though as people can upload their information from genealogy software on their own computers and not all that information can be verified [or proved] so always look for 'Extracted' in the appropriate section of the page.

<http://freebmd.rootsweb.com> which is free to use and has Births Marriage and Deaths (BMD's) references

www.ancestry.com this is one you have to subscribe to, to get benefit from the census returns. They have BMD's, census returns for 1841 through 1901 and many other items. Subscriptions start at about £30 per quarter, charged quarterly or about £70 annually. There is also pay per view, but this works out more expensive in the long run, but might be more appropriate when you are first starting out on your research.

Sometimes you will find a reference on one site but not on another so you should check them all. Sites are continually updated and corrections made so are often worth a second look at a later date if you don't find what you were looking for the first time.

Local Archives also have this information on fiche, film and CD, but it does take much longer to search as there are few if any indexes. Local archives have many items which will help in your research so should not be overlooked.

There are city directories in existence which were produced every few years which were much like our telephone directories of today and usually gave all businesses and addresses of most ordinary people (head of household only). These are interesting as you can get a feel for the general area where your ancestors lived – what types of shops and businesses etc were local to them and who their neighbours were etc and the lay out of the streets (vast areas have been re-developed and old streets have vanished now). The Stoke on Trent and Newcastle directories can be found in the Archive Library Bethesda Street, Hanley.

Some directories can also be found on CD which can be purchased, or you may find your local library can loan one, but you will most likely have to use it in the library as they are not usually available to take home on loan. It is exciting finding an entry for a member of your family in print.

Another very important source of information is the Census Returns. These are available on micro film (fiche) and on sites such as Ancestry and again are available in the Archives. (You must book an appointment if you plan on going there and have a 'readers ticket' which you can apply for at the archives free) Census returns are available on CD but are rather expensive to buy as there are often many in a set for just one county for one year. Again your local library MAY be able to loan them for use in the library where you live. An alternative is www.ancestry.com. This is a subscription site (details above) for access to their England and Wales collection. This collection includes all census - 1841 1851 1861 1871 1881 1891 and 1901 census returns (The 1911 census will be available about 2011 – as there is a one hundred year privacy policy on census returns) All census's have parts missing – in some cases whole parishes, a section, several pages or just the odd page so you still might not be able to find the person you are looking for. (Water – fire – damp – insect – vermin –

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Also you can often find children in the families that didn't make it to adulthood and therefore did not have any descendants and you would never otherwise have known about them. You quite often find married children or other siblings living very close by too, so it is worth searching a few census pages either side of any family unit you find.

Potential documents you can search for and add to your files are:-

Birth marriage and death certificates, copies of the index pages for the birth marriage death, baptism record/certificate, 1841 through 1901 census return pages, photographs and written details of houses, churches, hospitals, burial plots, headstones and people, a plan of a civic cemetery or churchyard, burial register entry page, old ordnance survey maps (there was a huge survey taken around 1900, copies are available from Alan Godfrey Maps) of general areas or actual addresses, descriptions of the area from old Gazetteers, copies of entries in City directories, details of places of interest in the locality and local history, Noted people of the area and the nearest 'Big House' Manor or Hall. Going further back there are more items but you would not need these yet.

It is important to keep an open mind when searching for people. You WILL find their name miss-spelled and even completely different – it depends on their accent and how the person recording the original information heard them. (I have a Duffy in my tree variously recorded as Duffey, Dovey, Duffield, and Duttey. Don't forget about preferred names too – we all know a person called Bob – but he most likely wasn't born or baptized with that name. He is probably Robert but might be William – or anything else! First and second names can also change places regularly – Edward Henry Shaw can become Henry Edward Shaw on the next document. It can also depend on handwriting and how well the person who transcribed the ledgers to make the index could decipher it. Transcribers sometimes make mistakes too. People did not always have the benefit of reading and writing skills, so often did not know how they spelled their names and could not read it anyway to correct any errors. Sometimes the way a word is said is not the way it is spelled – cough is pronounced koff, and this happens with names too. Your family name could probably be spelled several ways for instance and I am sure you will have experienced that yourself. Letters could be missed out or off the beginning or end and also added in, which could completely alter the name. (I have seen Hancock spelled Andcoc and Jackson spelled Jaxen) Remember too that there was no printed writing – writing was all in script and some of it was very poor. Add to this the fading of the ink, discoloration of the paper and ink blots, rips, tears and other damage – you can see that there is plenty of room for errors and omissions to creep in. Some records are hundreds of years old – but that is another story!

You will almost certainly find a person in a place you really did not expect to find them. People were far more mobile than you would ever expect. Always consider all options – and always keep a record, you may find later on that it really was that record you were looking for after all. You will almost certainly have a person on your family tree that seems to just disappear without trace – information sometimes gets lost/damaged etc as above.

If you come to a dead end – called a brick wall in genealogy – where you just cannot seem to find the information you are looking for – turn to another person on the tree and find their details. You can then come back to the first person at a later date with fresh ideas and other clues which may help you to find them. Lateral thinking helps. Can't find a person? Look for a sibling. Or even an uncle/aunt. Children were often 'farmed' out to other relatives for a variety of reasons and sometimes took on their name, temporarily i.e. on just one document or occasion, or permanently i.e. on every document or occasion.

People were more mobile than you would ever expect them to be, so don't discount people of the same name found in other counties. Certain jobs called for mobile people – carters and carriers, for instance. Agricultural labourers, etc went where there was work available, sometimes to other relatives' farms or often somewhere completely new. During and after the Potato Famine in the 1840's for example, and during the industrial revolution, huge numbers of people were on the move to find food and employment, and this often involved a drastic change in their lives. Emigration to America is one that springs to mind, and convicts sent to Australia another, and British Home Children – orphans and displaced children sent to Canada yet another.

It is easy to imagine that every member of your family was born in one place and your family name had been spelled in exactly the same way for all time, but you could well find that you have 'roots' in many counties. You might find one person in your tree had changed his first names or address or occupation on almost every one of the documents associated to them and can be the MOST difficult person to track down. These can be the most interesting ones. The more difficult the problem, the more determined you may become to solve it. Most families lived average lives - they were born, went to school, worked, got married, had children, worked some more, worshipped, moved house and died, all in the same location. They are easy to find and you might think are a little boring. Then you find one who is a challenge – and these are the ones who fire you up.

Before 1837 when Civil Registration was started, there were the parish registers for every church, chapel and other place permitted to perform the ceremonies, and all religions. These are not as reliable as civil registration some registers are very scant – not even mentioning the brides name when a man married, and some registers have been destroyed or lost. Dates of birth are usually not recorded, only the date of baptism – and not everyone was baptized – or baptized when they were babies. You occasionally find a family of say 10 people all baptized at the same time – and the eldest child might be 23 and on the verge of getting married – so baptism was usually required - (but the ages are not usually recorded). This is where the IGI (International Genealogy Index) comes in. It has very many (but by no means all) records from the parish registers. So for example your great great grandfather born in 1833 would most likely be found in this. This is available free on the Mormon website <http://www.familysearch.org>

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Generally speaking records go back no further back than the 1200's and most do not start until the 1500's. Unless of course you are descended from royalty or the nobility in which case the family tree would already be documented. Hereditary surnames did not appear until after the Norman Conquest (1066) (11th Century) and Norman landowners often took the name of their chief residence as their surname. Others were often a description of an occupation i.e. Chaucer – a maker of leggings; Smith – a worker of metal; Saddler – a worker in leather harness: a place i.e. Whitchurch, Stockport: a part of the landscape i.e. Hill, Marsh, Wood: a physical description of the person i.e. Giffard means 'chubby cheeks', Short, Broad etc: or took the name from the Lord of the Manor or the Manor to which they were tied and perhaps very many unrelated servants, serfs, farmers, etc took up that same surname, so it would be highly unlikely even impossible to trace your ancestry back to a single person with the only name of that ilk who started the whole population of that name. Names have also altered in some cases quite drastically over the centuries so that they bear little resemblance to the original. The Norman French word 'fitz' means 'son of' so George Fitzalan was originally George the son of Alan. Not forgetting 'son' in the English language which accounts for all those Wil-son, William-son Tom-son etc. There were also a limited number of first names and in the 14th century half of the male population in England had the name John or William, and if you add Thomas Richard and Robert to the equation the percentage rises to 80. Until the late 19th century the majority of the population were illiterate, the speakers accent could account for many variant spellings of a name, and the recorders of information such as clergymen often had their own preferred way of spelling a name, but also changed the spelling at random. So it is important not to overlook a name because it is not spelled in the way you would expect it to be today. Common law allows people to choose and use any name they like providing it is not for fraudulent purposes, and people did change their names

General Methodology

1. Record your own details. Photocopy your Birth and Marriage and any other certificates i.e. baptism and file
2. Record your siblings and their spouse's BMD's. Obtain copies of their certificates (as you wish)
3. Record your parents' details and obtain copies of their certificates, particularly the marriage.
4. Choose which line you are going to research e.g. father
5. Talk to other family members
6. Record their siblings and spouses details; research BMD dates then obtain copies of their certificates (as you wish)
7. Record your grandparents' details, research their marriage date and obtain a copy of the certificate (gives grandmas maiden name, both their ages in most cases and both their fathers names and occupations) then research birth – the marriage certificate will give you a clue from the recorded ages as to which year roughly (gives mothers maiden name) and death dates
8. Look on the 1901 census for them as children with their parents (parents names obtained from their birth certs)
9. Record any other children found in the family. Research their BMD's and obtain certs if you so wish
10. Look in previous census return – 1891 for the family or for your grandparents with their parents (parents names obtained from the birth certs) and siblings
11. Research siblings and parents BMD's. Obtain parents birth and marriage certs and siblings if you wish
12. Look in prior census returns
13. Fill out BMD details on siblings in each generation, including spouse's family details, their children and deaths
14. Look for baptisms in IGI for these older generations