



BIGWILL

# NEWS



Vol. 11, No. 1

March/April 2004

## Tips on using parish records is topic for March BIGWILL meeting

Carol Knigge will present "Searching for Your Ancestors in Church Records... Clues on Using Parish Records of the British Isles" for the British Interest Group of Wisconsin and Illinois (BIGWILL) on Saturday, 20 March. The meeting will be held at Grace Lutheran Church, 6000 Broadway (just off Hwy. 173) in Richmond, Ill.

Church records are some of the more readily available records in the British Isles, and some of the most underutilized by researchers. Knigge will help researchers through the maze of locating them and how to use them when found.

Knigge has been researching her own family history for over 30 years and has traced her own English ancestry back to the 17th & 18th centuries, using parish records. She is a past board member of BIGWILL and has been the president of the Lake County, Ill. Genealogical Society as well as their current editor for the *LCIGS*

*Quarterly*. She has given lectures at various genealogical societies in the area, and conducts classes on beginning genealogy at libraries and schools.

### Check out our library

BIGWILL is slowly building a British Isles library at the Nippersink Library in Richmond. We have recently begun offering research hours, with members manning a table to help with your British Isles and basic genealogy questions. This "help desk" will be held from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. after the regular BIGWILL meetings, on the third Saturday of January, March, May, July, September, and November. The helpers are volunteers and will only guide you in your research. You may be referred to professional researchers by asking for names.

Please come and visit after the program at the Grace Lutheran Church.

## Notes from the January meeting

by Ann Wells

Sometimes, the unexpected is just the ticket. Our January meeting was cancelled due to possible weather concerns. However, fifteen of us met at Nippersink Public Library in Richmond.

We had a collection of people who have been researching for a various number of years – from two years to over 20 years. Several topics were discussed in conjunction with questions asked by each attendee.

The importance of subscribing to a family history society in the British Isles was discussed, and several examples of family history society journals were shared with the group. Joining an appropriate society in the British Isles will allow the subscriber to post a query in hopes of connecting with someone else researching the same line. Many of the British Isles family history societies have memberships of over a 1000. Articles in their journals may be the only places you'll find information about vari-

ous records that apply to the area of research or books that have been written. Many societies will index records that will never be published in book form, but will be published in their quarterly journal.

Finding where your ancestors came from in the British Isles might be helped by doing a search of the IGI (<http://www.familysearch.org>). Do the census work here and look for obituaries and probate. If the census shows others from the British Isles, then you may have to do some research on the neighbors in order to find where they all came from. Also, remember to research all the siblings in each generation. You never know where information will be found.

Using maps can often help in locating the logical record office, church, etc. Knowing what the countryside looked like may save you time and energy. If your ancestor had to cross a raging river or climb a mountain to get something recorded, he may have waited for better weather or used a different one.



P.O. Box 192 • Richmond, IL 60071  
<[www.rootsweb.com/~wiiibig](http://www.rootsweb.com/~wiiibig)>  
email: <[bigwillgen@yahoo.com](mailto:bigwillgen@yahoo.com)>

### NEXT MEETING

**20 March**  
**10 a.m. - noon**

**Grace Lutheran Church**  
**6000 Broadway Street**  
**Richmond, IL**

A map is located at our web site:  
<[www.rootsweb.com/~wiiibig](http://www.rootsweb.com/~wiiibig)>

### TOPIC:

*Searching for Your Ancestors in Church records... Clues on Using Parish Records of the British Isles*  
by Carole Knigge

Refreshments will be served  
Guests are welcome

### NOTICE

#### Meeting cancellation policy

Meetings will only be cancelled if law enforcement advises us of hazardous driving conditions in the Richmond area. We will attempt to have cancellations aired on WGN (AM 720) and other area radio stations, but there is no guarantee.

You may check on the meeting status up until 9 a.m. on meeting days by calling Ann Wells at (815) 455-7150. You can also check the web site: <[www.rootsweb.com/~wiiibig](http://www.rootsweb.com/~wiiibig)>.

We also had an opportunity to use some of the books in our collection at the library. Many thanks to Kathy Hausmann for letting us meet there, especially on such short notice.

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN:

DOWN  
ROCKY'S ROAD

by Peggy Gleich  
BIGWILL president



Hello again everyone. Is spring around the corner? It is a possibility. Are you anxious to do some genealogy traveling and researching? Let us know what you do, where you go, and above all, what you find. Your find and research tales would make interesting items in our newsletter.

Speaking of our newsletter, you will definitely notice a different look to it. Please welcome our newly-crowned newsletter editor, Dave Dexter of Neenah, Wis. (up there very close to Green Bay – near those Packers, ya know, the Cheeseheads??). At our recent BIGWILL board meeting, Dave showed us just a small glimpse of what he was doing and we were very impressed. Keep up the good work. Thank you, Dave, for volunteering!

Dave would like you to contribute to the newsletter. If you have items, please send them to the BIGWILL post office box listed elsewhere, or e-mail them to Dave, also listed elsewhere in the newsletter.

One way to contribute would be to place a query. A new form has been made up and is in the newsletter. You can enlarge this form, fill it in, and e-mail or handwrite it out and send it to us. Again, you can mail it or e-mail it. These will be printed, space-permitting, as the editor sees fit. They must be legible, so please PRINT and make sure your surnames are CAPITALIZED.

This was not used effectively previously, and we would like to see more members do so. The more often you use it, the more chances you have of receiving a response. Remember, our newsletters go all over the United States and overseas and are read by many, many people. This is a membership benefit which should be taken advantage of and used over and over again. There is no limit on the number of times you can place a query. One for each family, once a year, is recommended at the very least.

We have a meeting cancellation policy in effect now. It appear on the front page of this newsletter. Please use your common sense when it's bad weather.

We received many exchange newsletters over the past 12 years and these are now at the Nippersink Library in Richmond with the British Isles collection, along with other BIGWILL materials. You are able to go

there and read through all the other materials, queries, and articles submitted by other researchers.

What a wonderful resource we have available to us. Before, these newsletters/journals/quarterlies sat in members' homes, gathering dust, or were shuffled around, just waiting for people to want to read them. Now they are out on the shelves where many people have access to them every day. Stop in and check them out. You just might find your family in those that are British Isles related!

### Membership list

Should we print our membership list? What do you, as members, think of this idea? This would only be for members and distributed only to members. Many times you want to contact another BIGWILL person in your area, but you do not know their name, only that they live near you, or some such thing. Please write me either by letter or e-mail – or a phone call will do. You can find those listed elsewhere in the newsletter. We would like to have your opinions as soon as possible, please. Most groups do this on a regular basis. This list would not be sold to any mailing lists.

The following is what would be included on the list: name, mailing address, phone if you have given it to us, and e-mail if you have given it to us. If you do not want one of those items published, you must let us know. Right now we want your opinions on how to proceed with this project.

### BIGWILL website

Be sure to check out our website at <[www.rootsweb.com/~wiiilbig](http://www.rootsweb.com/~wiiilbig)> and see the great work done by our Rollie Littlewood. Our BIGWILL Register with your surnames is also listed there. You can pick up data submission forms at a meeting, download them from the BIGWILL website, or ask for some to be mailed to you.

I hope to see many of you at our March meeting. Carol Knigge will present an excellent program on church parish records in the British Isles.

Happy Researching!  
Peggy Rockwell Gleich

## BIGWILL

### British Interest Group of Wisconsin & Illinois

P.O. Box 192  
Richmond, IL 60071

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wiiilbig>  
[wiiilbig@yahoo.com](mailto:wiiilbig@yahoo.com)

BIGWILL is a genealogical special interest group for all those who wish to research their ancestors in the British Isles.

BIGWILL meets the third Saturday of January, March, May, July, September and November, unless otherwise noted.

Our bi-monthly newsletter keeps members up-to-date on events and resources and gives support. The BIGWILL Register is a growing database of members' surname interests.

Please check out our website at <[www.rootsweb.com/~wiiilbig](http://www.rootsweb.com/~wiiilbig)>. The site contains much helpful and useful information, including a map and directions to our meeting place.

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except where noted.

# Civil registration in England and Wales

By Ann L. Wells

One source for research in England and Wales is the general registration of births, marriages, and deaths. There are several ways to access and use these records. The Genealogical Society of Utah has all of these events on microfiche up to about 2000. They can be ordered from your local branch library for about \$.15 per fiche.

You can also access them online either through Ancestry.com <<http://www.ancestry.com>> or through <<http://www.1837online.com>>. The 1837 Online site is exactly the same as the microfiche from the Genealogical Society of Utah. The Ancestry site indexes are from 1837 Online.

According to information on Ancestry, the records included only go up to about 1900. This bit of information was at the bottom of the page that indicated Farington Granger was not there. However, the later indexes are available. My aunt died in December 2001 and she is listed on the 1993-2002 portion of the Civil Registration Index. While the indices only give the month and year the event was recorded, it does give the full birth date.

In addition many of these events are available through Free Births, Marriages and Deaths <<http://freebmd.rootsweb.com/>>.

Volunteers are extracting from the original records but the project is not yet complete, so a "not found" message does not mean the person of interest is not in the registers. The transcribers may not have gotten to them yet.

Using Ancestry.com requires a subscription (some libraries have this subscription). You only need to type in the name of the person you are looking for, and the source of "England and Wales Civil Registration" with various dates will be shown. Click on the appropriate one. Then once the person is found, click on that name and the reference information will be shown.

Access to FreeBMD is free. Although the index is not complete, it's well worth a check. The information given will include the reference information needed to obtain the certificate from the General Register Office.

There are several options to use to find the name. You can search by just last name, or full name with other details such as age. Try all combinations before you decide your name isn't there.

This site can be very slow, as it is very busy. Probably the best time to use it is from 5 p.m. to 3 a.m. CST. 1837 Online requires you to purchase credits to actually see the index. A minimum of £5 (\$9.50) for 55 credits is necessary (you can charge this to a credit card). Each page you look at is one credit. Once you've used it a few times, you'll be able to figure out within a page or two where the surname you are looking for will show up. After you have submitted your name, you'll get a page that looks something like this:

Quarter	Year	Surname range	Number of Pages	VIEW
Jan-Feb-Mar	1926	GOW-GRA	1	VIEW
Jan-Feb-Mar	1926	GRA-GRA	3	VIEW

As the name I was checking for was Granger, I went to the second entry and found the name Granger on the first of the three

pages. This was before I realized I had estimated the incorrect year of death. Once I figured out it had to be 1932 or 1933, I was able to find it in one hit.

I used all of these sources to find a death record for Farington M. Granger. I tried Ancestry.com, but only found reference to the 1891 census for him. I then tried FreeBMD, and found nothing. The last one I tried was the 1837 Online, and found him there in 1932. Based on the information given, I have requested a copy of the death record from the General Register Office by fax. Once the index reference is known, you can send a certificate request to:

General Register Office  
P.O. Box 2  
Southport, Merseyside  
PR8 2JK, England, U.K.  
fax: 44 1704 550013  
phone: 44 870 243 7788

Phone and fax orders are perfectly acceptable. On-line requests are limited to those in the British Isles. The fee, with full citation, is £8.50 (about \$15.80).

Another option, once you know the district the record was recorded in, is to write directly to the county record office. Usually it is a bit less expensive to write directly to the county. There is a site on-line, <<http://www.fhsc.org.uk/genuki/REG/fln.htm>>, that will help you figure out where the registration district is. I typed in "St. Asaph," which is what was indicated on the index, and found the following:

Created 1st July 1837. Mainly in Denbighshire, but included parts of Flintshire.  
*Sub-districts* : Abergele, Denbigh, St Asaph.  
*GRO volumes* : XXVII (1837-51); 11b (1852-1930).

Bodfari, Cwm, Dymeirchion, Dyserth, Meliden, Rhuddlan, St. Asaph.

*Registers now divided between Denbighshire North, Colwyn and Denbighshire South districts.*

You can click on the district names and the addresses and other contact information will be shown.

Very often the county record office and the country archives are together, and while you are requesting a copy of the death record you can also ask for an obituary.

Hopefully this information will encourage some of you to check for births, marriages, and deaths for your ancestors for those events that occurred after 1 June 1837.

## Member Privacy Notice

BIGWILL intends to distribute a printed membership directory with the next issue of this newsletter. The directory will include names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail address for all members, unless a member explicitly requests that some or all of their information be withheld. If you want information about YOU to be withheld, then send an e-mail request to <[bigwilgen@yahoo.com](mailto:bigwilgen@yahoo.com)>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST...

### 13 March

Delavan Historical Society presents Carol Cartwright on "Researching the History of Your House." Delavan Community Bank, Community Centre.  
Contact: Peggy at 608-752-8816 or <pgleich@sbcglobal.net>.

### 10 April

The Scottish Genealogy Group will present John Macleod, who will speak on tracing his ancestors in the Hebrides. Heritage Hall at the Scottish Home, North Riverside, Ill.  
Contact: Jackie Torrance, <jackie329@juno.com>.

### 23-24 April

WSGS' "GENE-A-RAMA 2004" at Oconomowoc, Wis.  
Contact: Rollie Littlewood at (608) 273-0211 or <rklittle@wisc.edu>, or WSGS at <wsgs@chorus.net>.

### 24 April

31st Annual Quad Cities Genealogical Spring Conference;  
Contact: <http://www.rootdig.com/sandburg.html>.

### 24 April

Newberry Library, Tony Burroughs & Tony Hoskins present "Your Family History: Do It Right & Do It Better" workshop. 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Reservations required.  
Contact: 312-255-3514. Check website at: <www.newberry.org/nl/genealogy/fog/html> or e-mail <davisk@newberry.org>.

### 1-2 May

Society of Genealogists' Family History Fair in London. Check website at: <www.sog.org.uk/events/fair.html>.

### 6 May

Irish Cultural Centre of New England & Irish Ancestral Research Assoc. (Tiara) present "Discover Your Irish Roots," Canton Mass., Irish Cultural Centre.  
Contact: <www.tiara.ie> or write TIARA, P.O. Box 619, Sudbury MA 01776.

### 15 May

#### BIGWILL MEETING

"Isle of Man – Doing Your Research There and Adding Culture and History of the Isle of Man," by Robert Kelly of the North American Manx Association

### 19-22 May

NGS Conference, Sacramento, Cal. Contact: <www.ngsgenealogy.org>.

### 10 July

The Scottish Genealogy Group will present Kathleen Picken, who will speak on the Picts of Scotland. Heritage Hall at the Scottish Home, North Riverside, Ill. Contact: Jackie Torrance, <jackie329@juno.com>.

### 17 July

#### BIGWILL MEETING

"Making Your Own British Isles Library at Home," by Mary Storbeck. (Storbeck's Genealogy Book Sales also available on-site.)

### 26-30 Aug.

Federation of Family History Societies' 30th Anniversary International Conference, at Loughborough University, Leicestershire. Contact: <society.liason@ffhs.org.uk>.

### 18 Sept.

#### BIGWILL MEETING

"Researching the British Isles at Home Using the Family Search Web Site, and also Through the Resources of the Family History Center," by Bob Heck.

### 9 October

Walworth County (Wis.) Family History Month genealogical fair.  
Contact <pgleich@sbcglobal.net>.

### 20 November

#### BIGWILL MEETING

H. Clark Dean will present "A Road Trip through England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland."

**BIGWILL'S British Isles Workshop is coming in 2005!**

## 'Gene-A-Rama 2004' set for 23-24 April in Oconomowoc

by Rollie Littlewood

**John Philip Colletta**, one of America's most popular genealogical lecturers, will be the featured speaker at **Gene-A-Rama 2004**. This two-day conference is sponsored by the Wisconsin State Genealogical Society (WSGS); it will be held at the Olympia Resort and Conference Center, located on Highway 67 in Oconomowoc – just north of I-94 exit #282.

The opening event of the conference will be a workshop presented by Bob Heck, "Internet Research for the Beginning Genealogist."

John Colletta, from Washington, DC – the author of *They Came in Ships: A Guide to Finding Your Immigrant*



**Rollie Littlewood**

*Ancestor's Arrival Record; Finding Italian Roots: The Complete Guide for Americans* and numerous how-to articles – will present four lectures and a banquet talk.

His lecture titles will be "Passenger Arrival Records, Colonial Times to Twentieth Century;" "Lesser-Used Federal Records: A Sampling for Fresh Research Idea;" "Assembling and Writing Your Family History;" and "Turning Biographical Facts into

Real-Life Events: How to Build Historical Context."

To get a flavor of the breadth of his genealogical knowledge and of his presentation style, visit his web site, <genealogyjohn.com>, and especially the web page there which contains the Prologue from his latest book, *Only a Few Bones: A True Account of the Rolling Fork Tragedy and Its Aftermath*, the chronicling of his 30-year investigation into a mystery in his own family's history.

Four other speakers from the region will present lectures: Lori Bessler, "Directories: More Than Just Lists of Names;" Grace DuMelle, "Exploring the Resources of the Newberry Library" and "Chicago Genealogy 101;" Gary Haas, "Using Technology in Family Research;" and Craig Pfannkuche, "Railroad Records in Family History Research" and "Digging Grandma's Privy" – truly something for everybody. (Yes, you'll have to hear the final talk listed above to understand how it relates to genealogy!)

Complete information about this conference, including a registration form, is available on the WSGS web site, <wsgs.org>. Conference attendance will be limited to the first 400 registrants. Society membership is not required to attend, although WSGS members will receive a substantial discount on the registration fee. There is also a discount for early registration (by 10 April).

If you would like to receive a printed program/registration brochure, contact the WSGS office at P.O. Box 5106, Madison WI 53705 or <wsgs@chorus.net>. Questions can also be directed to the conference chair, Rollie Littlewood, at <rklittle@wisc.edu> or (608) 273-0211.

**NOTICE:** We are experimenting with ways to offer this newsletter to members electronically. (The electronic version would supplement, not replace, the print edition.) As part of our testing process, we may be sending you a copy of this newsletter via e-mail. Please direct your comments to Rollie Littlewood at <rklittle@wisc.edu>.

# BOOK REVIEWS

by Paul Milner



## ***Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1675 – 1815.***

Written and edited by Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, and David N. Doyle. Published by Oxford University Press, 198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016. 2003. 788 pp. Illustrations, index, maps. Softcover \$35.

This is a monumental collection of original letters, diaries, and memoirs from 68 Irish immigrants offering a definitive first-hand portrait of the Irish diaspora. They describe in their own words why immigrants left Ireland, how they adapted to their new homeland, what challenges they faced, and how they ultimately persevered in a difficult, often hostile environment. From surviving frontier women and homesick merchant's wives, revolutionary soldiers to radical idealists, statesmen and politicians, loyalists and conservatives, the upwardly mobile and the spectacularly wealthy, criminals, indentured servants, debtors, farmers – they cover the full spectrum of colonial and revolutionary society.

The original documents have been gathered from archives, libraries, and court houses all over Ireland, Scotland, England and the United States. There have been some compromises in the transcriptions, but the reader is alerted to these changes. The obstacles to understanding the documents posed by dialect forms, idiomatic expressions, exotic spellings, changes over time in the meaning of words or phrases are all discussed in the footnotes.

The value of the original documents is increased by an essay that puts the family and documents into its correct historical context. These essays describe why and when the people left Ireland, when the Irish moved into a particular geographic area, who the key players were, especially those that helped or hindered the specific family, and often describing what happened to the parents and children of the immigrant.

For each family and its original document(s) very detailed sources are given for the history and the family specifics in the appendices. This source information is what will guide the researcher to next steps when a document is found that fits the time and place of their own ancestors.

This is book worthy of being read com-

pletely to get a detailed overview of early Irish immigration. However, most researchers will want to see if there are people and documents fitting the situation of their immigrants. The table of contents gathers the documents topically addressing: causes of Irish emigration; process of Irish emigration; farmers and planters; craftsmen, laborers and servants; merchants, shopkeepers and peddlers; clergyman and schoolmasters; Irish immigrants in politics and war.

In each section the name of the writer is given along with a date which may be the birth and death date of the writer, the dates the person was in America, or the date of the document, depending upon the information known. There are then a series of maps showing where the writers came from in Ireland and where they settled in America or the West Indies. There is an integrated index to the book, including many subjects, places and names of people. However, the name index is not complete, especially for people named within the documents.

— Reviewed by Paul Milner

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***The Workhouse: A Study of Poor Law Buildings in England.*** By Kathryn Morrison. Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England. Published by English Heritage. U.S. distributor, David Brown Book Company, P.O.Box 511, Oakville, CT 06779. 1999. 255 pp. Illustrations, index. Hardcover \$72.

This book explains how poor-law buildings developed from the small 'hospitals' and 'working houses' of the 16th and 17th centuries into the parish workhouses and houses of industry of the 18th century. Then it progresses to the huge union workhouses and industrial schools of the Victorian era to the more specialized institutions of the early 20th century. With the end of the poor law in 1930, most of the workhouses and infirmaries were transformed into municipal hospitals, or homes for the elderly and mentally handicapped.

## BOOK REVIEWS

continued on page 6

## — OBITUARIES —

compiled by Ann Wells

**Barb (Olga) CASSIDY**, died January 2004, Waukegan, (Lake Co.), IL. She was born 28 February 1925 in London, England, daughter of Author and Emily Wood. Married Charles Cassidy in London during WWII. Survivors include her children: (Marcus) Chatman; Kacie (Jaron) Robertus; Kiera Posemato; Michael (Debbie Bonya) Paul (Kendra) Quinn. Also survived by great grandchildren: Chelsea, Peter and Ian Chatman; Sara and Zachary Bony and Chloe Quinn. Preceded in death by her husband Charles, son Michael Charles Cassidy, her parents and her sister Ann Hauser. Burial at Northshore Garden of Memories, North Chicago. *The [Chicago] News Sun, Tuesday, 6 June 2004, page B6, col. 2*

**Margaret BRYANT**, born 6 October 1941 in Manchester, England to Frank and Cecelia (Conway) Ward. Married John E. Bryant on 9 January 1971. Survivors include husband, two daughter, Nicole L. and Sara M. Bryant and her mother. Preceded in death by her father, a sister Cecelia Knolls and brother Anthony Ward. Buried Crystal Lake Memorial Park Cemetery. *Northwest Herald, Friday, 14 May 1993. (no page or column number given)*

**Nancy A. BROWN**, born 25 September 1910, in Ireland to Mr. and Mrs. Bracken. Died 25 November 1995. Survived by her daughter, Kathleen Kowall; four sons: Patrick (Diane) Hughes, Dennis Hughes, Michael Hughes and Frank Hughes. Preceded in death by her husband Patrick James and a son William Hughes. *Northwest Herald, Sunday, 26 November 1995 (no page or column number given)*

**Margery D. BROWN**, died 18 May 1981, in Elgin. Born 4 July 1922, Cumberland, England to Stanley and Annie Wright. Married 13 November 1942 to C. Roland Brown in England. Survivors include her husband and two daughters, Carolyn Huntley and Lynn Spiton, a sister Aileen Gray of Batavia (IL) and a brother, Ernest Wright of England. Buried in Memorial Park for McHenry County, Woodstock. *Harvard Herald, Wednesday, May 20, 1981 (no page or column number given)*

**Doreen M. BROWN**, born 21 January 1937 in London, England to George and Daisy (Wright) Hall. Married Horace "Harry" Brown on 25 July 1959 in London. Survived by four daughters, Alyson Brown, Beverly (Kyle) Miller, Caroline Brown and Deborah Brown. She is also survived by two sisters, Vera (Norman) Bescoby and Margaret Knowles, both of England. Preceded in death by her parents and sister, Joan Grace. Buried St. Patrick's Countryside Cemetery, McHenry. *Northwest Herald, Tuesday, 19 December 1995, (no page or column number given).*

## Confused?

### *Is it Great Britain? The British Isles? Or the United Kingdom?*

Which is it? I wondered too, at times.

And I found the definitive answers delving into one of our former leader's and the past newsletter editor's book, *Discovering Your English Ancestors; How to Find and Record Your Unique Heritage*, by our own Paul Milner and Linda Jonas. Both Paul and Linda have spoken to us at our meetings. Both are extremely knowledgeable and they certainly should have the answers.

So I have copied their summary word for word:

Great Britain includes England, Wales and Scotland.

The United Kingdom has different meanings depending on time period. From 1801 to 1920 it included England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. From 1921 it includes England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

The British Isles includes England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man.

Thank you to Paul and Linda. This should help you in your research. I have it highlighted in my book.

— *Peggy Rockwell Gleich*

*Discovering Your English Ancestors; Milner & Jonas. Betterway Books, Cincinnati OH. 2000.*

## Meet your new editor

BIGWILL has been fortunate to have had Paul Milner to put out this newsletter for the past 10 years. As a professional genealogist, nationally-recognized expert, and author of numerous articles and books, Paul has left big shoes to fill.

I don't intend to fill those shoes. I don't pretend to have Paul's ability or expertise. But within the membership of BIGWILL there IS the ability and expertise to continue the quality newsletter that Paul brought us for many years.

Unfortunately, I don't know most of you. I've been a member of BIGWILL for just over two years, and have only attended two meetings. I live kind of far away, in Neenah, Wis. (about 30 miles south-southwest of Green Bay). I don't know which members have expertise in which aspects of genealogy. I DO know that ALL of you have at least one interest, perspective, or expertise which would be of interest and use to fellow genealogists – so please volunteer to share them through this newsletter. I, for one, will always be delighted to hear from you. (My address and phone number can be found on page 2.)

In the last issue of the newsletter, Paul Milner warned you to expect a change in the look and feel of this publication. Those changes are going to happen. They won't necessarily make this newsletter any better (and hopefully won't make it worse), but they will occur because it's what I'm used to doing, and it allows me to produce this newsletter more quickly. But the real value of this newsletter will continue to be the content, not the appearance. And the content is ultimately up to you.



Dave Dexter

## BOOK REVIEWS

*continued from page 5*

The children's homes and schools often continued to function as before. It was not until the 1980s that many of these institutions closed with the reorganization of the National Health Service.

All of us doing English research will sooner or later find ancestors or relatives who spent time in the parish or union workhouses. They may have been orphaned, elderly, sick, mentally ill, or temporarily or permanently unemployed. This book will help you understand what life was like. It discusses the changing values and politics of how problems should be addressed in the different time periods. It shows how the buildings changed to represent these changing values.

The numerous building floor plans, perspective views, and photographs are superb and of a very high quality. The illustrations are from all over the country and so no matter where your ancestors lived you will find information from that area. This quality makes the book both a delight to read and to look at. Reading this book will give the researcher a better understanding of what life in the workhouse was like.

The appendices provide a listing of all post 1834 poor law institutions, arranged by (pre-1974) counties. For each it pro-

vides the name of the authority, the location of the institution, the type of facility, ordnance survey map coordinates, building date, name of architect (when known), and the National Monuments Record file number. There is a similar listing for all the institutions in the London Metropolitan area. There is also a collection of model building plans that were issued by the Central Poor-Law Authority. The book concludes with a very extensive bibliography of published works and government documents which provides an ideal starting point for anyone seeking to dig further into life and conditions in the workhouse.

— *Reviewed by Paul Milner*

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***An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting Houses in Eastern England.*** By Christopher Stell. Published by English Heritage at the National Monuments Records Centre. U.S. Distributor, David Brown Book Company, P.O.Box 511, Oakville, CT 06779. 2002. 380 pp. Illustrations, index. Hardcover \$120.

This is the fourth and concluding volume in a series that provides an inventory of non-conformist chapels and meeting houses in eastern England, here defined as the area south of the Humber Estuary,

including Lincolnshire, all of East Anglia, London, to the southern coast of Sussex and Kent. It thus covers the puritan stronghold of East Anglia, the poorly developed areas of Lincolnshire where Methodism flourished, and the diversity of the London metropolitan area.

Chapels from many denominations are included, such as the early Quakers and Baptists (General and Particular), the Independents and Presbyterians, and the later Methodists. It also covers smaller groups such as the Culimites in North Cambridgeshire, the Peculiar People in Essex, the Cokelers in Sussex, followers of William Huntingdon in Kent and Sussex, the Catholic Apostolic Church, and the Agapemonites.

The book is arranged by county with a brief overview of denominations, history, and building materials. Then for each civil parish there is a listing of chapels with their original denomination. For each chapel there is a description of the building and its history, some are short while others are very extensive. The many sketches, floor plans, and photographs are superbly reproduced and add to the text.

For those who know their English ancestors were of a particular denomination, this will help to locate the options for place of worship. The descriptions and illustrations will make that place become real.

— *Reviewed by Paul Milner*

# Genealogy needs YOU to volunteer

by Peggy Rockwell Gleich

An hour. I know each and every one of us wastes at least one hour every month. Think now... what were you doing the last time you remembered wasting a perfectly good hour – 60 minutes, 1/24th of a day, 3,600 seconds?

With a few slight revisions and additions, I'm bringing back an article I wrote several years ago. April is "Volunteer Month." We need to thank each and every one of our wonderful volunteers for their time and efforts. We could not keep our societies running without them. However, we are running short and we need more volunteers. YOU are wanted. Please, don't stop reading now. You are just getting to the best part. Read on.

Below are listed several suggestions for the next time you have 60 minutes, those 3600 seconds on your hands:

Take a blank sheet of paper and write down a particular genealogical problem; brainstorm how to go about solving it, writing down all your ideas – the good, bad or the ugly.

Write a short article (two to four paragraphs) regarding a certain crusty or crotchety ancestor you are crazy about (or one you are not so crazy about).

Describe briefly how you resolved a tricky genealogical problem.

Were you recently on a research trip? Your best discovery? Your worst disaster? This could be a trip to your local library, across the country, or an experience in England, Africa or Transylvania.

Do you have a genealogical nightmare that should be well documented? Write it down now. (You might even discover a clue a two while doing so, making sense out of that nightmare.)

Want to interview great-great-great-grandmother Sophia? Write down those questions you want to ask before they are forgotten. Imagine you are living during her time period and the questions will come to mind. There are also many books available. (Contact me for compiled bibliography.)

There, don't you feel better now? You have explained things to yourself – and probably given yourself new avenues to help your research as well. You probably have had a laugh or two, benefiting your health also. You've truly helped yourself immensely with that "wasted" hour. Imagine what you just might have done for someone else.

Now write your name and date, copyrighting your work, along with your contact information, and submit this to the editor of your genealogical, historical society or other group publication. I also suggest

dating a copy of your work and do keep one copy for yourself. This could be the beginning of a writing career...?

Do you have any idea how ecstatic that editor will be? Receiving 12 hours of work in a year from one to 300 members would be a dream come true for any editor. Remember s/he is a volunteer also and needs assistance. You would be "doing your bit" of volunteer work for any group you belong to. This could be submitted to more than one society newsletter. This could be a wonderful gift idea for those societies you belong to far, far, f-a-r away.

Everyone leads such busy lives these days and things are going at such a fast pace. This is only one idea to benefit others and help you at the same time. Wouldn't it be something special if your article lead someone to great-great-grandpa Charlie and then back to you?

Why not volunteer today? "Volunteerism" is a relatively new word, not found in most dictionaries, but it is more of a feeling than a word. Volunteerism is something you can positively do and feel really good about. Give it a try. After all, it's only a wasted hour once a month.

If you are not a writer, here are other things you could do: become a greeter at monthly meetings, help with refreshments or nametags, index cards (yes, just for an hour), help with data entry, re-shelf books in your society library, prepare and give a short "mini-lesson" or program, or visit an ill member. We all know they are plenty of other volunteer needs out there.

With most society members employed in or out of the home today, no one has a lot of time to volunteer. But everyone probably has one hour a month to waste. Start jotting down your notes today. You may have the beginning of your family history book.

Is your "volunteerism spirit" ready? Let's go waste an hour right now. What are your suggestions?

*Peggy Rockwell Gleich is president, of the British Interest Group of WI & IL (BIGWILL); vice president of the Green County Genealogical Society (GCGS), and past president of the Walworth County Genealogical Society (WCGS).*

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## Need Help? Try the BIGWILL member query service

### GUIDELINES:

- Please PRINT or type your entire query.
- CAPITALIZE your surnames used throughout the query.
- Best query is no more than 50 words. (not including your name and address).
- Do not use abbreviations.
- Write dates 14 August 1845. Spell out entire month.
- Use complete state, city, township, county, country, etc.
- Remember: use who, what, where, when, why, and sometimes how.
- Your query will not be printed if it is not legible.
- Your name and address, not just an e-mail address, must be included with each query you submit.

Please photocopy this form for future use. You may reduce or enlarge this form also.

**EXAMPLE:** Charles WILKINSON born \_\_\_\_, England 3 July 1810. Left for New York circa 1830 with wife Maria/h SMITH. Maria born 10 October 1819. Married 1838 probably Lancashire. Settled Westchester, New York; four children born: Joseph, George (my great-grandfather); Emma, Nellie. Family moved Walworth Co WI circa 1850 settling LaGrange Township. Who are Charles and Maria's parents & siblings? Please write: Peggy Rockwell Gleich, PO Box 8003, Janesville WI 53547-8003.

Print your query here: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
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 \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO: BIGWILL Query • P.O. Box 192 • Richmond, IL 60071

# BIGWILL library update

by Susan Sincere  
BIGWILL librarian

The genealogy/local history collection at the Nippersink District Library is growing thanks to the wonderful donations of our membership. You can search the library catalog on-line through a link from the BIGWILL Internet site, <<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wiilbig/>>, or at the library Internet site, <<http://www.nippersinklibrary.org/>>.

The catalog can be searched by subject, title, or author. You can also search the catalog by call number for Gen/LH. This will list all the genealogy/local history holdings, and you can scroll through them. Some of the books have been reviewed in previous newsletters and these reviews are on the BIGWILL Internet site. So if you find a book that interests you, remember to check for a review on the BIGWILL site.

All Illinois residents who have a library card can check out books from the

Nippersink Library. Wisconsin residents would need a special card that can be purchased for about \$25. Please check with your local librarian for details.

We are always looking for suggestions for additions to the library collection. Please give Susan Sincere, Ann Wells, or Peggy Gleich your ideas.

Volunteers are still needed to staff the library to assist patrons interested in genealogy from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. after our regular meetings in May, July, September and November. Please sign up at the March meeting.

As was pointed out to us in the last newsletter, one does not need to be experienced in either genealogy, family history, or the British Isles. All one needs is to have an interest in helping others. There is a folder of information to assist the volunteers in answering questions. The folder contains information on research centers, Internet sites, historical societies, and how to start a family history. Please ask for the folder at

## BIGWILL research dates

at the Nippersink Library in  
Richmond (1 p.m. to 3 p.m.)

**20 March**

**15 May**

**17 July**

**18 September**

**20 November**

the library reference desk, copy information as needed, and return the folder to the reference desk when done.

The staff at the Nippersink District Library is very excited about the growing genealogy/local history section and the Saturday afternoon volunteer program. They greatly appreciate all the support from our BIGWILL membership.

*BIGWILL welcomes donations of genealogical books and reference materials. If you have items to contribute, please contact Susan Sincere at <[sincereps@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sincereps@sbcglobal.net)>, or (815) 337-1452.*

Receiving the *BIGWILL News* is one benefit of belonging to the **British Interest Group of Wisconsin and Illinois**. Another benefit is the opportunity to list your surname and geographic region interests in the *BIGWILL Register*. The online version of the *BIGWILL Register* makes it especially easy for others with similar interests to “hook up” with you and share your genealogical passion. We’ve had reports of people finding listings in the *BIGWILL Register* via *Google*, without even first knowing that the *BIGWILL Register* exists! Not familiar with the *BIGWILL Register*? Visit the BIGWILL homepage on the web at <[www.rootsweb.com/~wiilbig/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~wiilbig/)>, click there on [Surnames our members are researching](#). From this next web page, you can select from [BIGWILL Register sorted by Location](#), [BIGWILL Register sorted by Surname](#), [BIGWILL Register Data Submission Form \(with instructions\)](#) or [Hints on how to get the most from your BIGWILL Register data submissions](#). Here is a sample of what you will see on the [BIGWILL Register sorted by Surname](#) page:

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "BIGWILL Register Sorted by Surname - Mozilla". The browser address bar shows "http://www.rootsweb.com/~wiilbig/". The main content area displays a table with the following data:

Surname	Place Name	County Code	Country Code	Period	Member Name
Ackley	Shelford	ESS	ENG	1635	<a href="#">Joyce &amp; Russell Doeblor</a>
Adams	Anywhere	ALL	ENG	Pre 1790	<a href="#">Jon Harrie</a>
Addison	Anywhere	LAN	ENG	c 1675	<a href="#">Bobbie Briggs</a>
Ager	Anywhere	ESS	ENG	Pre 1659	<a href="#">Kenneth Brown</a>
Ager	Anywhere	LND	ENG	Pre 1659	<a href="#">Kenneth Brown</a>
Ager	Anywhere	MDX	ENG	Pre 1659	<a href="#">Kenneth Brown</a>
Akenside	Anywhere	NBL	ENG	Pre 1800	<a href="#">Paul Milner</a>
Anderson	Knockbridge Parish	MOG	IRL	19 C	<a href="#">Dannah McCauley</a>

Clicking on a Member Name in the right-hand column will open up a new email message, either to the member (if the member has given BIGWILL permission to encode their email address into this table) or to [bigwillgen@yahoo.com](mailto:bigwillgen@yahoo.com) (for forwarding to the member).