

## Using personal and family histories in the classroom

The only parts of my own history that I mentioned when I began teaching were that I'd taught abroad as a VSO (Wakefield students seemed mesmerised by my ability to shout at them in Arabic but ignored me in English) and that I'd been to the same school as John Lennon. I was picking out the unusual, newsworthy bits while ignoring what I saw as the ordinary and humdrum. Years later I now realise that to make effective and motivating use of family or personal history you don't need an ancestor slain at Waterloo or who invented a critical piece of machinery during the Industrial Revolution. Instead, the 'ordinary' can have extraordinary impact and a wide range of uses.

What's now obvious (and confirmed by many teachers who have used their own histories) is that when we tell students of any age about ourselves they listen with far more concentration – creating a deeper, more intense silence in the room. This concentration then develops into deeper interest and a stronger focus in the lesson. Why does this happen? I can only suggest that students are so used to seeing teachers as teachers that when we open up, and the human being inside the teacher steps out, children respond to the 'risks' we take in doing so – maybe there's a sudden, unspoken realization on their part that their teacher is actually a human being just like them (probably quite a scary thought!)

Knowing this now, I wish I'd found out more about my own family history earlier but below is a series of suggestions for approaches to using your own life history or your family history. Chronologically I haven't gone very far back with my own family (to the late 1700s through web-based census returns etc), but that's more than enough to provide plenty of information – and even the gaps can be useful for prompting enquiries. What follows is a series of brief descriptions of approaches to using family and personal histories. I'm not suggesting you use all of the approaches below but a judicious selection may add variety, stimulus and improve the dynamics in your classrooms. Most are useable at KS2 and KS3 but Number 8 relates particularly to GCSE 'Medicine through Time'.

If you have other suggestions for using personal and family history that you'd like to pass onto other teachers I'd be delighted to hear from you.

## **Different Approaches**

1. Using family generations to link back to past events
2. Telling family stories to introduce ideas about migration
3. Personal memories as stimulus for creating or summarising a sense of period
4. Making the Industrial Revolution human through family history
5. Using family memories to explore changes in everyday life (with attachment)
6. Using family history to create an overview of the 20th century (with attachment)
7. Getting personal with wars – family starters for investigating the start of World War Two (with attachment)
8. Injecting personal experiences into GCSE Medicine through time (with attachment)

### **1. Using family generations to link back to past events**

How do you link today – and people today – to past events? How do you make that human connection across time? One method, which isn't very profound but is simple, is to create a human timeline representing the generations of your family, linking today with the past event. I did this at the SHP Conference as an introduction to the Civil War – how many generations are needed to take us back to the 1640s?

Simply create a timeline of people, starting with yourself, then a student for each generation, your father or mother, a grandparent, a great-grandparent etc. My line needed only 11 people (we haven't been very quick off the mark in recent generations in having children!). I know the names back to the late 1700s and orally added in some information to try to create a sense of real people – my Dad, born in the same week as Emily Davison's Derby, my grandfather with the odd middle name 'Loft' that nobody knew where it came from, his mother, Fanny Cooper and her mother, Frances Loft, both of whom died aged 32, Frances's father, Thomas, a Liverpool

shipwright but born in Lambeth and the first person in the family to be able to vote, his dad, George, a plasterer born c.1750 but where?. Further back is a mystery but I still had people in the line to represent those ancestors. I jotted my notes down like this:

1951	1913	1876	1849	1817	1783	c1750	c1720	c1690	c1660	c1630
Me	Dad	GLD	FrAnC	Fr Lft	Th Lft	GLft	?	?	?	?

What I was trying to do was create some sense of duration; focus on people, not events, and make a link between now and then through those people. This hopefully then made it easier to focus on the impact of the Civil War on ordinary people. For some people at least it brought the 1640s closer – there were fewer generations that expected – almost, if not quite, touching distance. Here are some reactions from teachers who were there:

**James Nichols** *I found it very effective as I did not realise how close it was in terms of generations. Definitely one that I shall be using in class.*

**Russell Hall** *This exercise immediately connected me (the audience) with my ancestors and made feel as if these moments were no longer just 'History' but connected to me and my experience as a human being. The value of such a timeline is that it opens a door on the past and gives us a sense of our place in history; that our lives, too, are historic in essence. It is an invaluable opening activity because immediately we care and want to know more.*

**Danielle Breachwood** *I really liked the use of the family timeline, I think it was a brilliant way of making the Civil War tangible, especially in family-terms as we often think of History only happening to the 'key individuals' like Cromwell or Fairfax and it by-passing everyone else. I think it would be a valuable tool, and something I am going to try myself as I have branches of my family named and dated going back to the Civil War era. I think it will create questioning in students too to think that History has happened to people they know, and ask 'Nan, were you around in the war?' etc.*

**Ian Luff** *This will have great power in combating the all-too-common tendency for kids to see any period in the past as part of the amorphous fog of 'The Olden Days' and therefore impossibly distant from their own lives. It does create a human bridge or human time measure to the past and thereby makes the time gap seem far less vast. I'll certainly be using it in my classroom.*

There have also been suggestions for amending my original idea:

**Jamie Byrom** *It could be developed with relevant props to link people to characteristic features of their era or own life. You might put a "veil" of some sort over the ones whose histories are hidden or at least a screen to show that we are moving into the realms of the unknown/unproven in the family history.*

**Matt Dawson** *In the classroom I'd stand the students in front of a timeline so the going back in time is clearer – they're inside the timeline. Make sure the students in the timeline are facing forward so they can look along the line and see where they fit with the other generations. I'd also give them cards showing the names (probably just first names) of the people in the timeline to help the rest of the class identify with them – but it has to stay simple.*

## **2. Telling family stories to introduce ideas about migration**

‘Have I told you about my Uncle Frank?’

It's not just the question itself that introduces family and maybe something different – it's the tone. It needs saying to the class in a conversational, chatty, informal, ‘unteacher-in-the-classroom’ way. The key words are ‘my Uncle’ – I'm revealing something about me and my family, I'm letting you in on my secret life away from school.

So, why Uncle Frank? I wanted a way into migration and to get students thinking about two things – why people migrate and whether there's really any difference between emigrants and immigrants despite the fact that different vocabulary is often linked to these ‘groups’. ‘Emigrants’ are often seen as pioneering, brave and adventurous, ‘immigrants’ as ‘needy’, ‘selfish’ or ‘demanding’ – when really they're the same peoples and the labels just vary according to geography.

So I began with two stories, Uncle Frank first, which went roughly like this:

Frank was my Dad's eldest brother, born in 1905 in Liverpool – how do you think his life as a boy was different from yours? TV? Radio? Car? None of these etc – all this trying to develop brief sense of time. Then, when Frank was 9, came the war and his father joined up – which countries were involved in the First World War – quick list, ideally including Australia. All this is building up a picture of Frank's background – left school, started work. In 1922 he heard of a scheme to go abroad – the government of South Australia had contacted many industrial towns in England seeking young men to go out to replace men killed in the war – they needed workers. Frank decided to go to Australia – aged 17, 5ft 6 inches, 8st 10lbs, according to his migration papers. He went as a farm apprentice though he had no experience of farm work at all.

What kind of young man was he? Even his daughter, my cousin, says he was quarrelsome, always looking for an argument. The papers she sent me recently which record his early time in Australia show him moving on from farm to farm after some unspecified 'friction'. This maybe suggests his migration was more about getting away from home than an adventurous nature. But eventually he married and had a family. He came back for a visit in 1950, the first time my Dad had met him since 1922 when Dad had been only 9. Pictures can bring these people closer – including recent pictures of Frank's daughters, grandchildren etc.

Then I told another story – asking what did Frank have in common with this man? This is the story of Barates, a young man from Palmyra who joined the Roman legions and ended his days in Britannia living near Hadrian's Wall – he married a British girl, she took a Roman name (Regina) and both of their gravestones survive, which is how we know this story.

Now – what do Uncle Frank and Barates have in common – despite the chasm in time? Which of them was the immigrant and which was the emigrant? Answer – each man was both. How would we describe them – what words would you use? Why might each of them have migrated?

So, it's been a story-telling start, based on real people and it takes you into the heart of some basic issues about the history of migration. Any real people will fit the bill but the personal link creates a more intriguing, inclusive, even intimate, beginning.

For the story of Barates and Regina see:

<http://www.icons.org.uk/theicons/collection/hadrian-s-wall/iconfolder.2006-02-24.8798214363/people-of-the-wall>

For the use of these stories and development see **SHP Y7 textbook** pp.20ff.

<http://www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/Books/BooksSHP/BooksKS3New.html>



### **3. Personal memories as stimulus for creating or summarising a sense of period**

This activity I owe to Dale Banham. When Dale was working on SHPs Year 9 textbook he used an extract from David Kynaston's book 'Austerity Britain 1945-51' to sum up life in the late 1940s and as stimulus for students to write their own version of their own decade. The essence of this extract is that, rather than being written in informal sentences, it accumulates words and phrases to build a word picture. We then developed the idea for the decades from the 60s onwards for the accompanying Dynamic Learning web-based activities and I was given the task of writing my summary of the 1960s (when I was a teenager) in 200 words at most. Here's my effort:

#### **The 60s – 'I have a dream'**

The Famous Five, Airfix kits, Biggles, Blue Peter, The Sound of Music, James Bond 007, record players and discos, John, Paul, George and Ringo, Yeah, yeah, yeah, 'Turn that racket down!', mini-skirts, Hippies, Flower-Power, Woodstock, 'Hair – flow it, show it, long as God can grow it.'

Churchill's funeral, Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy assassinated, Aberfan.

'I have a dream', Martin Luther King assassinated.

Civil Rights, Black Power, Student riots, Make Love not War, Sit-ins, End the Vietnam War, Ban the Bomb, Anti-Apartheid, Ban the South Africa tour, Northern Ireland, Send in the army, The Troubles. Another soldier ... next of kin have been informed.

One small step for man. National Service – the end. Hanging – the end. Race Relations Act, abortion legalised, The Pill, heart transplants, moon landing, motorways, fridges, washing machines, tights – warmth for women!, 3 TV channels – now in colour!, central heating (for some) – no more freezing bedrooms so teenagers have their own space, cars (for some), foreign holidays (for some), university (for some), students leave their home towns (and don't go back), comprehensive not grammar and secondary modern. Blocks of flats, concrete, concrete, concrete, 'all the lonely people, where do they all belong?'

You'll never walk alone. The Kop. Leather footballs. £100 a week footballers, 1966 World Cup – 4-2 extra time.

'I have a dream.'

'They think it's all over. It is now!'

This task seems a really good way of summing up a period of history, whether it's decade or a century or an era such as Roman Britain, the Renaissance or the Industrial Revolution. However I think it gains an extra edge if it begins with your own summary of the decade you grew up in because you engage students by revealing something of yourself. So – choose your decade and write your summary – in the number of words you want students to use for the task you'll set them. Then read it aloud, using lots of intonation – surprise, delight, sadness, shock etc. Finally, for this stage, ask students to analyse the words and the sounds – what range of topics you have included (inventions, sport, people and events, having fun, etc etc), what's the overall theme, the one greatest symbol of the period, how have you written it, any other features (e.g. lines from songs)? This process of analysis helps define their task.

Then set students their task – to sum up the 1940s, the 1530s, the 14th century, Renaissance Medicine or an era such as Roman Britain in 200 words or whatever

limit suits them. For most students this could be done as a summing up but at A level you might use this at both ends of a module – at the beginning as a research task (how much can we learn and convey in 200 words about the reign of Elizabeth I) and then re-do it at the end – what’s similar and different from the first version, what’s been learned and conveyed in this second version? For both GCSE studying the 20th century this might be tackled with different groups describing different decades to get a sense of similarities, differences and key features of each decade. Similarly A level classes could use this to look for similarities and differences within a period.

Students with an artistic streak could do this in images, filling a sheet of A4 with drawings but picking one image as the central dominant one to sum up the period.

Other valuable and important elements, once the descriptions are complete, are

- a) for students to compare their descriptions and explore why there may be differences
- b) going to the heart of sense of period by picking out of the descriptions those elements that have similarities with other periods and those that do most to distinguish this period from others. Sense of period is very strongly about this balance of similarities and differences amongst periods.

For use of this approach within an enquiry into social change since 1900 with Y9, see **SHP Y9 textbook**.



<http://www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/Books/BooksSHP/BooksKS3New.html>

For more examples on **SHP and Hodder’s Dynamic Learning** materials for KS3 see

<http://www.dynamic-learning.co.uk/Product.aspx?productID=67>

## **4. Making the Industrial Revolution human through family history**

It can be hard to make the Industrial Revolution human – the term too easily conjures up images of vast machines or disease-ridden slums populated by hundreds or thousands of people – but not individual human beings that we can relate to. I began

thinking more about the human scale of the Industrial Revolution when I uncovered information about strands of my father's ancestry. What emerged via census returns was splendidly ordinary but really useful for introducing two of the basic features of lives in the 19th century – movement from rural areas to towns and the resulting changes in types of work.

What follows is aimed at KS2 or KS3 students and isn't detailed – it doesn't have to be long – but it does benefit from being based on a real family with strong blood links to the teacher. It's important that students ask questions and pull out the key points rather than me saying 'this story tells us that ...'.

I might start with the generation timeline idea as context (see Approach 1) – how far back am I going in generations and to introduce and identify my relationship with the key people below – but then it goes something like this:

*Have I told you about my great-granddad? No ...? Well, it's about time I did. His name was Seth, Seth Duke. Seth was born way back in 1850, the youngest of 5 brothers and sisters. One of his sisters was called Sethina! Seth was born in the far north-west of England, in the Lake District, near a place called Ulverston. It was very rural and Seth's father was a farmworker, just as his father had been and I suspect his father had been and so on back through time. When he was a lad Seth must have expected that he'd spend his life working with cattle, sheep and in other farming work.*

*But when Seth was about your age – his early teens – the family left their home and moved many miles away. I don't know exactly when they moved, it was sometime in the 1850s, but by 1861 they were all living in Liverpool, one of the largest cities in Britain. After this Seth's life was very different from what he'd expected, growing up in the countryside. Now – what questions do you want to ask about Seth, his family and their story?*

What I'm after are questions such as:

- **Why did they move?** [work probably – Seth's father, John, was a 'beer house keeper' in 1851 so his earlier work as a herdsman – had gone. Maybe there was less farm work. ]
- **How did they get there?** [Probably by steamship – there was weekly steamer from Bardsea to Liverpool]
- **Was it a success?** [hard to tell – they did stay and didn't go back]
- **What did Seth and his family do in Liverpool?** [he worked in industry, making moulds used in iron-casting; he married and had a family. I must find out more about his brothers and sisters]
- **How do you know?** [census material tells me about the family every ten years – where they lived, ages, jobs]

So Seth and his family can open up two very important strands of the Industrial Revolution – migration within Britain and changes in employment. The 1850s is obviously quite late in this Revolution but this has the advantage that you can focus on how much has changed (and when investigating a period such as the IR it's often better to start at the end with the human effects and then go back to explore causes and events rather than automatically starting with causes because they came first chronologically. Similarly teaching about the English Reformation always goes better when you begin with the Dissolution and Pilgrimage of Grace, not Luther!). This could lead to a range of possible enquiry questions for investigation, such as:

- How did the Industrial Revolution change the lives of Seth and the Duke family?
- Which developments during of the Industrial Revolution were most important to the Duke family?

- What was life like in Liverpool in the 1860s for Seth and his family?

and ideally students will come up with their own enquiry questions to explore.

Finally, census pages provide a very concrete form of evidence to accompany this introductory story. Other valuable assets are historic maps such as the old Ordnance Survey maps that have been published and, in this instance, provide a graphic illustration of the wide-open space of Furness and the closely-cramped streets of Liverpool.

For such maps see [www.alangodfrey.com](http://www.alangodfrey.com)

## **5. Using family memories to explore changes in everyday life**

Attachment – My mother’s memories of growing up in the 1930s

[www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/Issues/FamilyHistories/downloads/FamilyMothers30s.pdf](http://www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/Issues/FamilyHistories/downloads/FamilyMothers30s.pdf)

The attachment is my mother’s account of growing up in 1930s Liverpool. Until the early 30 her family had lived in a terraced house in Everton but then:

*‘On moving to West Derby we had a house with 3 bedrooms, big living room, good kitchen and the most important thing – a bathroom – it was a miracle to have hot water coming out of a tap and an inside toilet. At first we would run round the house switching the lights on and off!!’*

The excitement of hot water and electricity! This is the kind of information and reaction that can be captured in family memories and oral history although this didn’t happen without prompting. One Christmas I gave my mother some homework – an A4 notebook empty apart from a question at the top of each page – ‘What was Christmas like when you were young?’ ‘What kind of home did you live in?’ ‘Did you have holidays?’ etc etc. Without that structure I doubt I’d have persuaded her to start writing.

How could you use such a memoir at KS2 or KS3, whether from the now distant 1930s or a more recent decade? Here's a possible sequence of activity:

- a) use a short extract such as that above with the class, asking 'what can you learn from this about ...?' It helps to use a photograph of the writer to personalize and get a sense of period.
- b) What other questions would you like to ask? Create a class list, sort and organize into categories.
- c) Now the research phase, either through students undertaking oral interviews or using the rest of the memoir you've obtained or researching in books and the internet or a mix of them all. Which of their questions can they find answers to? Do the people they talk to provide the same answers as the books?
- d) The reporting back and writing up phase, maybe including podcasts or other oral and pictorial media. What was everyday life like in ...? How varied was life? What was changing? How fast was life changing? What were the similarities and differences between then and now?

Personal memories can take you into all kinds of areas. My wife's sporting experiences in the late 1960s show how far attitudes to women have changed. As a county athlete at school she was not allowed to enter a race longer than 800 metres – anything else was too far for girls! And while she played hockey for South of England under 18s there was no England team at that age – international competition was too much for young women. It wasn't until she played for England Universities that she got her international shirt.

## **6. Using family history to create an overview of the 20th century**

Attachment – Dad's 20<sup>th</sup> Century Lifetime – the conflicts

[www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/Issues/FamilyHistories/downloads/FamilyDads20CLifetime.pdf](http://www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/Issues/FamilyHistories/downloads/FamilyDads20CLifetime.pdf)

Surveying a whole century it can be hard to keep a sense of individual people – they get lost in the changing events, perhaps especially in the 1900s when World Wars, the Cold War and other events seem to be on such an inhuman scale. One way to introduce the patterns of the 20th century is to do so by telling the story of an individual whose lifetime covers most of the century. Chris Culpin did this very well in his KS3 book *The Twentieth Century through Mollie Simpson's Century* – not just wars but first experiences of cinema, television, trips abroad and political demonstrations. I wrote a similar outline of the 1900s sometime ago around my father's life (1913-1993) – see attachment – but as this was for a GCSE book for Modern World courses it has a narrower focus, more war, less social change. What I'd really like to do is create a resource with a voiceover and family pictures from the late 1800s to today to help students see the shape of this period – first experiences of x, which great events affected lives, could such and such a situation develop today, when was y changing fastest, which one event would you pick out from each decade?

If you have the family resources this could be a very intriguing and personal way to introduce the 20th century, improving students' motivation because the unfolding story is that of the teacher in front of them.

## **7. Getting personal with wars – family starters for investigating the start of World War Two**

Attachment – My mother's memories of wartime

[www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/Issues/FamilyHistories/downloads/FamilyMothersWartime.pdf](http://www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/Issues/FamilyHistories/downloads/FamilyMothersWartime.pdf)

During a plenary at the 2010 SHP Conference Neil Bates, AST in Hampshire, demonstrated how he began teaching about Peterloo. Brandishing (carefully) a sabre acquired from a family friend, Neil asks students to ask questions about the sabre – but only answers with a limited amount of information so that the picture of when it was used, by whom and why only emerges slowly. It occurred to me that I might do the same with my Dad's World War Two campaign medals of which the Burma Star was the one he was most proud of. The aim would be to work through – which war, who did they belong to, why were they awarded until we move into questions I can't answer, of which the most obvious is 'why did Dad join up in September 1939?'

So the medals are a starter and my genuine ignorance something to be made good use of – can the class research the outbreak of war in 1939 and why people joined up and having done so, offer me possible explanations of why my own father did so? Clearly I'd have to explain a little about him (such as until 1939 he'd never been further from Liverpool than the Isle of Man) and that why he joined up was one question I never asked – having spent over 4 years in India and Burma he never wanted to talk about his wartime experiences.

So, nothing lengthy there – just a personal way into exploring a big topic. A not dissimilar question was sparked by another session at the 2010 Conference when James Woodcock ran a workshop on aspects of locality and significance, including work by his KS3 students on why World War One was so important to the people of Cottenham. Stealing this question, I could also ask 'why was World War Two so important to my mother?' - a potentially interesting question because the answer has little to do with the usual aspects of war – causes, campaigns or, for women, work on factories or farms. For her the war was an escape – as the attached extract explains she deeply resented being forced to leave school at 14 and then her father's death in 1942 prompted her to join the WRNS under-age – after training she was posted to Troon in Scotland, worked on a communications switchboard in the clubhouse at Royal Troon Golf Club (ironically one of those golf clubs that for years after the war didn't allow women members) and went dancing with Canadian Air Force fliers. Most dramatically she and other Wrens did communications duties on landing craft practicing for the D-Day landings on the west coast of Scotland – all before she was 19. So for her World War Two was escape, excitement, freedom – and that was not untypical.

## **8. Injecting personal experiences into GCSE Medicine through time**

Attachment – What do we owe our lives to?

[www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/Issues/FamilyHistories/downloads/FamilyWhatLives.pdf](http://www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/Issues/FamilyHistories/downloads/FamilyWhatLives.pdf)

Several years ago I was sitting at the back of an Inset session, listening to Jane Richardson explain how she helped GCSE students understand the interplay of factors

that led to improvements in medicine and health after c.1850. The exam question behind this was one of those GCSE questions about factors – worthy and interesting in abstract but hardly motivating in itself – where was the individual experience? It suddenly occurred to me that we could explore the same issues, at least initially, through an individual's medical story and, unfortunately, I have such a story. So would it make a difference to students' interest levels and motivation if I'd begun by telling them my story and then asking 'why am I alive today when, if the same illness had hit me in 1850, I'd have died within days?'

That thought eventually led to me writing the account attached and including it in the TRB accompanying SHP's 2009 'Medicine' publications. In this form it was conceived as an introductory activity at the very beginning of Medicine through time, an alternative to thinking about medicine and health today as a generality. But, as suggested above, this account could be used as students are moving into work on the medical revolution post-1850 to overview developments - while surgery appears to be the dominant element in explaining my survival, factors such as science and technology lurk beneath the surface. Can students use their knowledge of medicine up to 1850 to suggest how other factors played a part in saving my life?

Hopefully you don't have such a story to tell yourself (and, just in case you're worried, I've only told the less gruesome bits – much has been left out, either because I don't have the skills to describe it or don't want to try) but there are plenty of personal medical stories out there – colleagues, family, stories in the media all can be used to lure students into an investigation that might otherwise be very general and abstract and thus less effective. And a personal story needn't be so surgical – something like dehydration is treated very easily nowadays using a drip but can have fatal effects if untreated and often did in the early 1800s and more recently, and still does in parts of the world today.

## **Conclusions**

Hopefully this has demonstrated some of the many ways of motivating and enthusing children by using your own histories as part of teaching. Most importantly it demonstrates the power of focussing on real individuals, people with whom children can form an emotional bond, even at second hand. One final area which can also be

developed through personal and family history is understanding of the use of sources as evidence when it's integrated within other enquiries rather than treated as a separate anaemic area. What understandings can be developed?

a) What kinds of sources can tell me about my family's past?

Can students suggest what kinds of sources there might be? How they might change across time? What kinds of information each might provide?

b) What kinds of things can I find out – and what can't I? And are records always accurate anyway?

Again an opportunity for a bit of hypothesising and then using the real things, census material etc, to see if their ideas are correct. But even the census can be inaccurate – it took me ages to find my great-grandfather on a census as recent as 1871 because he and his wife had been recorded wrongly under his mother's re-married surname. Even census enumerators make mistakes.

And finally, the use of family and personal stories underlines the fact that history is a subject that's predominantly about real, individual people – and about the events and stories that connect us to those people in the past.

Perhaps above all they enable us to pay homage to those who've gone before. To quote the last lines of Alan Plater's *Oliver's Travels*:

*'It's all about paying homage,' said Oliver. 'Hearing what the ghosts are saying.'*

*'What are they saying?' said Diane.*

*'They're saying ... please listen.'*

*They listened.*

## **A Handful of Links**

### **1. Ancestry**

<http://www.ancestry.co.uk/>

Much advertised – subscriptions buy access to census returns, military records, birth, marriage and death indexes (you need to purchase the full versions for the useful details and to establish it's the right person) and a range of other material. Note that some local authorities have taken out licences to this and other sites and you can get monthly subscriptions which, if timed for the school holidays, enable you to get a lot done quickly. There are several other commercial genealogy sites that are worth browsing before you choose one to subscribe to.

### **2. Lancashire Parish Registers**

<http://www.lan-opc.org.uk/indexp.html>

An example of the work of local enthusiasts which makes a wide range of material available.

### **3. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints**

<http://www.familysearch.org/eng/default.asp>

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints – free site which can be useful if you have a name and other details but limited information apart from basics.

### **4. Esther Arnott's Site**

<http://www.estherarnott.com/index.html>

Esther Arnott's site with a section on her own family history - short at the moment (August 2010) but Esther says:

*In the next few weeks / months I fully intend to start relating this to the classroom - in particular, getting children to research their own family history*

*since I've found that even finding a scan of a marriage record is a real buzz, and I'd love the students to discover this for themselves.*

Worth looking at too for Esther's resources, history teaching blog and even bread-making!

## **5. Maps**

[www.alangodfrey.com](http://www.alangodfrey.com)

Source of historical maps including old Ordnance Survey maps

Also **Google maps** and its linked images (camera shots of streets taken in recent years) – can be really useful for finding images of streets where our parents, grandparents etc lived – may now be car-lined but the essence of late-Victorian or Edwardian streets is little changed.