

Notice Board

→ Merry Christmas Everyone!

We wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy new year! Have plenty of mince pies and turkey over the Christmas season and hope to see you all in the new year of 2011

→ Solve Those Marriage Mysteries

MarriageMatchTM also means the end of mystery marriages. If you only know one partner's name, search for their details and MarriageMatchTM will find all the possible matches. You can then view a record to check it is your ancestor. Alternatively, if you know the first or last name of the spouse, enter this information in your search to get an even more accurate list of spouse matches.

<http://www.findmypast.co.uk/media/news/news-item.jsp?doc=fullyindexedmarriages.html>

→ Family History Research

Family-history-research.org is the free family history research advice website. Run by experienced genealogist, we have covered many centuries of history and have found ancestors in the most unlikely of places.

We have broken our family history guides into two sections Family History for Beginners, which is ideal for those just starting out or need a little jump start with the information they already have. Here we explain about certificates and censuses, the basic starting points of all family history research.

www.family-history--research.org

Christmas and Our Ancestors



Christmas has not always been celebrated like it is today. Before Queen Victoria's reign started in 1837 nobody in Britain had even heard of Santa Claus or sending Christmas crackers. No Christmas cards were sent and most people did not have holidays and time off from work. It was the Victoria era that brought to life a lot of the way we celebrate Christmas today. *A Christmas Carol* (published on 17 December, 1843) wrote by Charles Dickens had a huge influence on Victorian readers, its simple message of love, goodness and charity continues to touch modern readers in the same way.

Santa Claus / Father Christmas / Saint Nick

Santa Claus and Father Christmas come from two separate stories which we all refer today as one and the bringer of gifts. Originally Father Christmas was part of an old English midwinter festival, normally dressed in green, a sign of the returning spring. The stories of St. Nicholas (Sinter Klaas in Holland) came via Dutch settlers to America in the 17th Century. From the 1870's Sinter Klass became known in Britain as Santa Claus and with him came his unique gift and toy distribution system - reindeer and sleigh.

Christmas Trees

The custom of the christmas tree can be historically traced to 15th century Livonia (present-day Estonia and Latvia) and 16th century Northern Germany. According to the first documented uses of a Christmas tree in Estonia, in 1441, 1442, and 1514 the Brotherhood of the

At the last night of the celebrations leading up to the holidays, the tree was taken to the Town Hall Square where the members of the brotherhood danced around it. It was introduced over here in Britain when Queen Victoria's German husband Prince Albert helped to make the Christmas tree as popular in Britain as they were in his native Germany, when he brought one to Windsor Castle in the 1840's

Holly and Ivy

Our ancestors used Holly as a decoration and also to decorate the Christmas pudding. The red "male" berry was meant to protect the household from witchcraft and could only be brought into the home by a male. The "female" ivy, with its leaves that remained green throughout the winter, was a symbol of immortality.

Mince Pies

Traditional mince pies are made with mincemeat and spices -- were also traditional Christmas fare and were eaten for the 12 days of Christmas, ensuring good luck for the next 12 months of the year. According to custom, each of the twelve mince pies had to be baked by someone different.

CHRISTMAS DINNER MENU

1890

	<i>Raw Oysters</i>
	<i>Bouillon</i>
	<i>Fried</i>
<i>smelts.....</i>	<i>Sauce</i>
	<i>tartare</i>
	<i>Potatoes a la Maitre d' Hotel</i>
	<i>Sweetbread</i>
<i>Pates.....</i>	<i>Peas</i>
<i>Roast Turkey.....</i>	<i>Cranberry</i>
	<i>Sauce</i>
	<i>Roman Punch</i>
<i>Quail with Truffles.....</i>	<i>Rice</i>
	<i>Croquettes</i>
	<i>Parisian Salad</i>
	<i>Crackers and Cheese</i>
<i>Nesselrode Pudding.....</i>	<i>Fancy</i>
	<i>Cakes</i>
<i>Fruit.....</i>	<i>Coffee</i>

Christmas Pudding Recipe

Ingredients:

- 170g beef suet
- 2 tablespoon of self raising flour
- 170g of soft brown sugar
- 200g of soft, fresh white breadcrumbs
- 150g of currants
- 150g of raisins
- 150g of sultanas
- 110g of crystallised cherries chopped in half
- 2 flat teaspoon mixed spice
- half teaspoon of salt
- 3 eggs
- 75ml of the baked flesh of a cooking apple
- Zest of one large lemon
- 75ml of Irish whiskey

Method:

1. Take a large bowl and add all the dry ingredients, one at a time and mixing well before adding another.
2. In a separate bowl beat the eggs together and add the apple flesh and the whisky.
3. Stir this into the dry ingredients and stir very well. Remember to make a wish.
4. Grease a couple of 1.5 pint pudding bowls and divide the mixture between them.
5. Cover the top of each pudding with a round of greaseproof paper tying it under the rim with string and making a handle across the top of the bowl.
6. Steam the puddings for eight hours, a large saucepan of water (the water level half the depth of the bowls).
7. Be careful not to let the water boil over the top of the bowls or boil dry. After the first half hour, I check the puddings every hour or so and top up with boiling water if necessary.
8. Store the puddings somewhere cool and dry. Steam for a further couple of hours before you want to eat them.

Serve with Brandy butter, fresh cream or home made egg custard (or all three).

Contribute to the Newsletter

Tell us how you're getting on with your research so far and have you discovered any hidden skeletons you want share with us. Have you come across some unexpected Ancestors, lost relatives, a famous Ancestor? Or do you have any old photos and stories you would like to share in the newsletter, it's all history and we'd be happy to hear it.

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