

## Genealogy Newsletter – November 2020

### *“Is **AI** the future for family history research?”*

In 2019, **Ancestry.com** started to use **Artificial Intelligence: AI** (workforce educated machine-learning algorithms) that can sift through their genealogical data at lightning speed...

Now, **AI** is unlocking the mysteries of the **Vatican’s Secret Archives**, one of the grandest historical collections in the world. It’s also one of the most useless !

Some thirty-five thousand volumes of records from the eighth century, which includes account books and letters from Michelangelo, **Henry VIII** requesting marriage annulment, and letters from Abraham Lincoln to the Pope. **The problem:** they are mostly in **ancient LATIN handwriting** !

However, all was not lost, researchers in Italy at **Roma Tre University** recently published the findings of a project called **Codice Ratio** or “**The Code System**” Using **AI** (machine learning) and **OCR** (optical-character-recognition) they have been able to generate the exact transcription for 65% of the word images of the ancient LATIN handwriting.

Now the future looks good for **Manorial Records** where most family history researchers can only get back to the 1538 Parish Records, to get back further you need to study **LATIN** and **Palaeography** – old handwriting found in documents written between 1086 and 1500.

To learn more about the Italian project, and **Artificial Intelligence: AI** - log into **[www.inf.uniroma3.it/db/icr](http://www.inf.uniroma3.it/db/icr)** - ‘In Codice Ratio’, there you can see two very informative videos about the project, and it’s in **English**...



**“Why is the 11th day of the 11th month important this year, because along with our Remembrance Day, it’s the 400th anniversary of the ‘Mayflower’ Pilgrims arriving in America”...**

**Almost 35 million people are descended from the ‘Mayflower’ Pilgrims, of the 132 known passengers and crew, was one of them your families ancestor ?**

Celebrate the voyage’s 400th anniversary by uncovering the stories of those onboard, when the Mayflower arrived in America and set anchor in present-day Cape Cod, at Provincetown Harbour in Massachusetts on the **11th November 1620**. The settlers were forced to endure their first winter unprepared; as a result, only about half of those recorded survived those harsh first months.

During the vessel’s ten weeks at sea, the ‘**Mayflower Compact**’ was created and signed, it recorded the essential details of those on-board and established a rudimentary form of democracy for the new settlement. Transcripts list the Pilgrims’ names, birth year, places of birth and their relationship to others on the ship while images may reveal additional details. The Compact only includes those that actually sailed on the Mayflower and does not include other members of the Puritan group that stayed in England or the Netherlands. For more information, log into the following link;

**<https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/massachusetts-mayflower-passenger-1620>**

However, if you haven’t got a **Findmypast** account you can get information from **FamilySearch.org** which is free and has a **Full Passenger List** which includes both Separatists and Non-Separatists, or “Strangers” to help establish the Colony of Virginia, the Indentured Servants and the Contracted Mayflower Crew but more important is the list of ‘**Mayflower Passengers with Known Descendants**’ just simply sign into your FamilySearch account. (If you don’t have one, it’s free and easy to create one!) Log into **[familysearch.org/blog/en/mayflower-passenger-list/](https://familysearch.org/blog/en/mayflower-passenger-list/)** dated 15th September 2020.

## **UKBMD.org.uk announced the 20th Anniversary of Cheshire BMD**

The 15th October 2000 saw the opening of the Cheshire BMD website, 20 years on and the project continues to grow with 11 areas of the country now using what has become to be known as the Local BMD Project software, and the total number of Birth, Marriage and Death indexes across all of these websites will soon hit the 50 million mark. So, it’s a really big thank you to all the volunteer transcribers who have contributed over the years!

For access to all the UK’s major BMD and Census sites visit:

**<https://www.UKBMD.org.uk/>** and **[UKGDL.org.uk](https://www.UKGDL.org.uk/)** also **[UKMFH.org.uk](https://www.UKMFH.org.uk/)**

## Recent new and updated records available online...

### FamilySearch.org

Great Britain, War Office Registers 1772-1935 over 911,600 **updated** records

### MyHeritage.com

Wales, Parish Births & Baptisms 1538-1920 over 8,242,540 **new** records

Wales, Parish Marriages & Banns 1538-1935 over 3,480,040 **new** records

Wales, Parish Deaths & Burials 1539-2005 over 3,149,920 **new** records

### Findmypast.com

Kent Baptisms to reveal new family milestones over 7,000 **new** records

Kent Burials for Eltham and Thames & Medway over 5,000 **new** records

Caribbean WW1 Rolls of Honour for Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago

Caribbean, The Bahamas Births, Marriages & Deaths over 470,000 **new** records

Great London Burial Index 1583-1665, many listed during the **Great Plague of London**

Warwickshire, Birmingham Burials 1874-2016 over 90,000 added records

Scotland, Forfarshire (Angus), Dundee Death Indexes 1990-1993

Scotland, Ayrshire Census & Population Lists 1801-1831

Scotland, Newspaper Death Reports & Obituaries

Scotland, Glasgow & Lanarkshire Death & Burial Indexes

Scotland, Post Office Directories, which go beyond the census records

**FMP Photo Collection**: the **Blitz**, and the **WW2 front lines** over 5,600 **new** images

Finally,

The **WikiTree** community announced on 5th November 2020 that they surpassed over 25 million profiles. **WikiTree** is a 100% **free** community-based website that has been growing since 2008:

- 21 million are connected to each other in a single web of family relationships.
- 7.4 million have **DNA test connections** !!!
- 750,000 represent registered members who have added or edited their family profiles.
- 167,000 are serious genealogists who have signed the **Wiki Genealogist Honour Code** to enable members to collaborate on family history in private.

**WikiTree's** unique community culture prioritizes quality over quantity through careful genealogical sourcing and a commitment to accuracy: <http://www.WikiTree.com>

***“Take care and stay safe”***

