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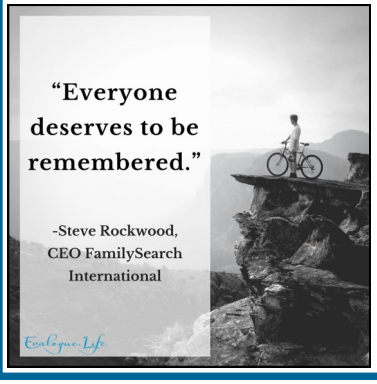

Five Takeaways from Roots Tech 2018*

As humans, we are hard-wired for stories and the kind of stories we love best are about people we know and love. As I attended RootsTech 2018 I was filled with inspiration, hope and longing. Inspiration to tell people's stories and my own with more heart. Hope for a bright future that will include the younger generation and encouragement to get to work. And longing for more time to get to work! Speakers like Brandon Stanton of Humans of New York fame, Steve Rockwood, CEO of FamilySearch International, gold medalist Scott Hamilton, beautiful Mexican songstress Natalia LaFourcade, world-renowned genealogist Henry Louis Gates of *Finding Your Roots*, plus many more, gave me new ideas and some insights that are too great not to share. There are five key takeaways I got from RootsTech 2018 that will help all of us to get work on our own stories – family, business or personal: 1. Remembering is key. 2. Writing about the hard stuff is vital. 3. Discover-gather-connect—these key actions will make your stories and your life complete. 4. Youth and family stories go hand in hand. 5. Family stories will connect DNA and dates.

Shared by Rachel J. Trotter, a senior writer/editor at Evalogue.Life

Henry Louis Gates' Presentation-One of Many Highlights of RootsTech '18

Henry Louis Gates Jr., Alphonse Fletcher University professor and director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research at Harvard University, thrilled the RootsTech audience as he described his passion for genealogy. Gates, a scholar, film-maker, and host of the popular PBS series, *Finding Your Roots*, graced the RootsTech Stage on Sat., Mar 3, the last and final day of the conference. He opened his keynote address by calling for a second round of applause for Natalia LaFourcade, the popular Mexican singer who preceded him on stage with her recent hit song, "*Remember Me*" from Disney/Pixar's animated movie, *Coco*. He mentioned he'd recently seen the film and shared an African tradition related to the movie's message saying, "If you continue to speak the name of your ancestor, they will never die. If you think about it, that's what unites us. That's why we love genealogy, because we're keeping alive our ancestors, our families, our traditions and therefore ourselves."

Gates shared that the previous day he had visited and toured the Family History Library operated by FamilySearch in Salt Lake City and related the following, "I love Salt Lake City . . . Every time I come here and go to the Family History Library a miracle happens." One of the recent miracles included the discovery of an obituary of his great-great grandmother, Jane Gates, whom he'd remembered seeing once as a nine-year-old child. It had described her as "an estimable woman." Gates remembered wondering at that young age if perhaps he might be estimable too. The *Finding Your Roots* PBS series is the successful evolution of an idea Gates says came to him during a trip to the bathroom in the middle of the night—an inspired moment he describes as being emotional. "It was one of the greatest moments of my life." The idea would combine traditional genealogy research with DNA test results and led Gates to first create *African American Lives*, a PBS miniseries. After being accused of racism for focusing solely on African Americans, the original idea evolved to include a more diverse group of celebrities. Gates is now in the process of filming the fourth season of *Finding Your Roots*. He works with experts such as genetic genealogist CeCe Moore to pair details from the paper trails of celebrity ancestors with DNA test results from the celebrities themselves to make meaningful, and often emotional, family discoveries.

Finding Your Roots, the Seedlings is the next step in the evolution of Gates' idea to help young people get in touch with their ancestry. It's a unique curriculum being developed for middle school children that will give them an opportunity to study their family tree in their social studies class. They will then take a DNA test, and study the science behind it, in their science class. Gates has high hopes for the curriculum and believes in its potential to reignite a love of learning in poor "black" and "brown" neighborhoods around the country. "The causes of poverty are both structural and behavioral and too many of our own people have lost their way," he said. Gates and his colleagues have already been testing the curriculum with a diverse group of middle schoolers from all over the country through a special summer program. Gates' overarching message to RootsTech attendees was a message of unity. A love of genealogy has been with him for most of his life and when people ask him today why he does it, his answer is the following. "I do it to show that we're all brothers and sisters under the skin at the level of the genome."

Many of the RootsTech presentations and sessions can be viewed at Roots-Tech 2018 Videos, and a number of the classes also can be accessed from their blog: https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/rootstech/

Upcoming Events:

22 Mar 2018
"How to Use the Danish National Archive Website"
FamilySearch Webinar
1:00 p.m.

27 Mar 2018
"Starting FamilySearch Family Tree: Navigating, Adding, Editing & Standardization of Dates and Places"
FamilySearch Webinar
10:00 a.m.

10 April 2018
"Introduction to the Family History Guide"
Melanie Bosselman
CGHS Monthly Meeting
6:15-8:30 p.m.
Sunflower Room
Laramie County Library

21 April 2018
"Colorado Palatines to America" Seminar
9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Denver Public Library B2 Conference Center
Go to: http://copalam.us/

2-5 May 2018
"Paths to Your Past" National Genealogical Society's Family History Conference
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Preregistration discount postmarked by 20 Mar at http://conference.ngsgenealogy.org

A glimpse back at the past…

The Strange, Gross, Dirty, Weird, Revolting Occupations of Our Ancestors

Information in this article is from a number of sources including: Wikipedia, creative commons; Smithsonian.com; MentalFloss.com; sacred-texts.com; Melanie Linn Gutowski; Tony Robinson's The Worst Jobs in History; and H. Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor, 1851.

The 21st century has its share of strange, weird jobs and many that are disgusting and foul (for example, armpit sniffer, gum buster, or slaughterhouse worker), but looking back in history there are numerous occupations that have come and gone, probably taking many workers along with them. But in ancient times, and even not so long ago—before mechanization, indoor plumbing, modern medicine, or electricity—our ancestors bore the brunt of "dirty work" when it needed to be done. Consider these career opportunities they worked at:

—**Vomit collector.** Everyone knows how extravagant and decadent Roman banquets could be. There were multiple courses and loads of wine to be consumed and the feasting lasted all night. But how did these people manage to eat non-stop for so long? Well, according to Lucius Seneca, a Roman philosopher, the Romans vomited so they could eat and they ate so they could vomit. It's a myth that the ancient Romans had dedicated rooms for regurgitating food...most Romans didn't feel it was necessary to leave the dining room in order to vomit. For this reason, they usually had bowls lying around, especially for this purpose, but other times they would just bend over and puke all over the floor. Who would think that there was a slave whose 'job description' was to crawl around on all fours under the dining couches and mop all this mess up. This unfortunate person was the 'vomit collector.'

—**Leech-gatherer.** From the Middle Ages until the late 19th century, methods such as bloodletting were common practices for a multitude of medical ailments, ranging from headaches to "hysteria." One method of bleeding a patient – the withdrawal of small amounts of blood as therapy—called for applying leeches (in high demand), which had to be collected from nearby ponds and bogs. Despite the demand, leech-gatherers were poorly paid. Worse still, they often collected the leeches by letting them latch on to their own legs – a practice through which they could lose dangerous amounts of blood. A leech collector would simply wade into the water with bare legs and swish around until the dreaded creatures attached. They were then pulled off and dropped in a bucket to be sold to the town's doctor, barber-surgeon, or other "medical professional."

The job of leech collectors usually fell to poor country women, who would wade into dirty ponds using themselves as human traps, and as a result often suffered excess blood loss and infectious diseases.

—**Groom of the Stool.** In the tradition of divine right—which placed kings on the level of gods—for centuries it was thought improper for a king to wipe his own bottom. Henry VIII was no exception, and the Groom of the Stool was a prestigious position assigned to a top-level aristocrat. *(Look through these nobles for an interesting ancestor.)* Though prestigious, the job was humiliating. The groom was responsible for fetching the king's toilet chair when needed, wiping his behind, and collecting his stool for examination and monitoring of his health. He also had the privilege of administering an enema should the king find himself constipated.

—**Violin string maker.** Prior to the 17th century's revolution in the technology of string-making for musical instruments, the industry was decidedly more disgusting. In order to make strings thick enough to play lower notes on a violin (which at the time had only three strings), the preferred method involved twisting strands of sheep innards together. String makers would have to butcher the sheep very carefully so as not to rupture the stomach or lower intestines and then spend painstaking hours trimming away feces, fatty tissue, blood vessels and muscle. Then the guts had to be soaked in a solution of wood ash to further clean them and constantly monitored so that they didn't begin to rot. The innards were then thoroughly dried and twisted into bass strings.

—**Rat catcher.** With rapid industrialization in the 19th century, cities became burgeoning hubs of filth and disease. Happily contributing to that were millions of rats. When the problem got out of hand in a certain household, the rat catcher was called in to sort things out. He rubbed oils of aniseed and thyme into his hands and clothing to attract rats, which he would try to catch with his bare hands. Most of these rats weren't killed; they were kept and sold as a tidy source of profit, often to "ratters," who put the rats into a pit and set a terrier loose upon them while onlookers made bets about how long it would take for the dog to kill them all.

Rat catcher,by Anonymous - Auktionshaus Zeller, Public Domain.

—**Matchstick maker.** In the factories of London, manufacturing matches consisted of dipping short sticks of wood into white phosphorous, a highly toxic chemical. In the Victorian era, this work was mainly performed by teenage girls who worked in terrible conditions, often 12 to 16 hours a day with few breaks, earning 4 shillings a week. The girls inhaled the chemical and were forced to eat at their work stations, meaning the toxic phosphorus got into their food. After a few years on the job, many developed an ailment known as "phossy jaw," in which the gums began to abscess and give off a foul-smelling discharge. Eventually, the absorption of the phosphorous caused the women's jaws to take on a eerie glow; the only known treatment was a harrowing operation to remove the jawbone.

—**Bone grubber.** Victorian cities had a vast scavenging economy, and the bone grubber fell somewhere in the middle of it. These workers would scavenge rotting bones from butchers, garbage piles, and stockyards and sell them to dealers. Some of the bones would eventually be made into toothbrush handles,

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children's teething rings, and other personal items. What couldn't be sold were boiled down for soapmaking, and the remainder ground into fertilizer.

—**Mudlark.** Another tribe at the bottom of the 19th century Victorian scavenging economy were the mudlarks, people (often children) who walked the river banks at low tide collecting debris or bits of anything overlooked by other scavengers. These people toiled in extreme poverty, often barefoot, in the freezing water of a city's rivers, foul with raw sewage. There was no telling what they might find—bits of metal, bone or cloth could be sold to other scavengers. Dead bodies, human excrement, and rotting fish were occupational hazards.

—**Tanner.** Among the most disgusting jobs of the times, tanners performed the essential work of preserving hides from cattle, pigs, and other animals for use in manufactured goods. The process of preparing the hide was a tedious and foul-smelling one, involving soaking the hides in giant pits of lime to soften the hair and tissues. All of the hair and fat would then be scraped off by hand, a slippery and odorous process. The cleaned hide was then re-immersed in a pit of water and dog feces to further clean and soften it. Of course, these pits were kept fermenting between batches of hides, so the Victorian tannery was one of the most revolting, wretched-smelling places in history. *(You can find thousands of tanners in the 1880 U.S. Census.)*

—***Pure finder.*** One whose surprisingly sought-after-job was picking up dog feces which littered the streets of London. Dog dung was known as "pure" because of its cleansing and purifying properties and was sold to tanneries where it was used in the tanning & curing of leathers. It was rubbed by hand into the hide being worked on to remove all the moisture and unpleasant odors from the skins. It was a lucrative occupation as the tanneries were voracious users of the stuff. They sold the dung by the stable-bucket load and could get between 8d to 10d or even between 1s and 1s 2d a bucket, depending upon quality. Dry limy dung fetched the highest price at some yards because of its high alkaline content which made it a more effective purifying agent. Other yards, however, had a preference for the dark, moist sort. To satisfy the requirements of the latter type of customers pure finders were not averse to adopting what might be termed tricks of the trade and adulterating what they had collected.

—**Gong farmer** (also **gong-fower** or **gong scourer**). This was a term that first entered use in Tudor England in the 1500s to describe someone who dug out and removed human excrement from privies and cesspits. The word "gong" was used for both a privy and its contents. Feces were excreted into a container such as a chamber pot, and sometimes collected in the container with urine and other waste ("slops," hence the term "slopping out"). The excrement in the pail was often covered with soil, which may have contributed to the term "night soil." Often the deposition or excretion occurred within the residence, and as the work was considered unclean and off-putting to the public, gong farmers were only allowed to work at night, hence they were often called nightmen. The waste they collected had to be taken outside the city boundary to farms, manure wharves or official dumpyards for disposal. These night-workers were restricted to living in certain areas. This hazardous occupation continued through 19th century England even though fewer and fewer cesspits needed to be dug out as more modern sewage disposal systems, such as pail closets and water closets, became increasingly widespread.

Eighteenth-century flyer advertising the services of John Hunt, nightman and rubbish carter, showing two men carrying one of the pipes used to remove human excrement.


Resurrectionists (1847), by Hablot Knight Browne. This illustration accompanies an account of John Holmes and Peter Williams who, for unearthing cadavers in 1777, were publicly whipped.

—**Resurrectionists or body snatchers.** A common purpose of body snatching, especially in the 19th century, was to sell the corpses for dissection or anatomy lectures in medical schools. Those who practiced body snatching were often called "resurrectionists" or "resurrection-men." They were commonly employed by anatomists in the United Kingdom during the 18th and 19th centuries to exhume the bodies of the recently dead. Between 1506 and 1752 only a very few cadavers were available each year for anatomical research. Body snatching became so prevalent in the United Kingdom that it was not unusual for relatives and friends of someone who had just died to watch over the body until burial, and then to keep watch over the grave *after* burial, to stop it being violated. Iron coffins, too, were used frequently, or the graves were protected by a framework of iron bars called *mortsafes*.

—**Fuller.** Wool is a naturally waterproof material, thanks to the oils distributed through it from a sheep's skin. This grease also was what made the harvesting, carding, spinning, and weaving processes run smoothly in the Middle Ages. But the cloth that resulted was coarse, had a wide mesh, and was easily frayed. To solve these problems, fullers were used to remove grease from the cloth with an alkaline solution, and the cheapest and most abundant alkaline solution at that time was stale human urine–a powerful cleaning fluid thanks to its high levels of ammonia. In Roman times, it was a job so bad that it was conducted by slaves working the cloth while wading ankle deep in tubs of urine. A fuller's job was to place freshly woven lengths of wool cloth into a tub, pour in stale urine, and then stomp it with his or her feet. As if that weren't bad enough, the urine used for this process came from multiple people — as many gallons were needed. Fullers had to collect it from public toilets and private homes. Urine was so important to the fulling business that it was taxed. Fulling, also known as **tucking** or **walking/waulking**, later became a process in the manufacturing of woolens to eliminate oils, dirt, and other impurities, *(continued on page 4)*


Engraving of Scotswomen singing while waulking cloth, c. 1770.

A glimpse back at the past, continued…

In Victorian Times, There Was No Shortage of Dirty, Dangerous Jobs

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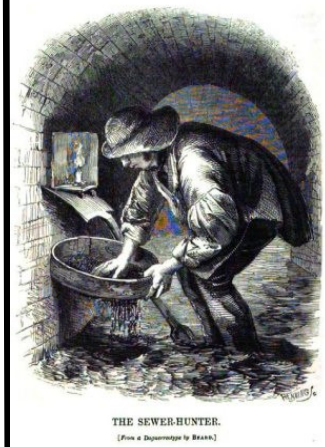
and thicken the woolen cloth by matting the fibers together to give it strength. Stale urine, known as "wash," was still used as a source of ammonium salts to assist in cleansing and whitening the cloth. In Scotland, groups of women sung waulking songs (Scottish beat-driven folk songs traditionally sung in Gaelic) while fulling/waulking cloth, which involved rhythmically beating newly woven tweed against a table or wooden surface to soften it. By the medieval period, fuller's earth, a clay-like material occurring naturally, had been introduced to replace urine in the process.

—**Tosher.** In Victorian London, there was no shortage of bad jobs. The combination of low wages, appalling housing, a fast-rising population and miserable health care resulted in the sharp division of one city into two. An affluent minority of aristocrats and professionals lived comfortably in the good parts of town, cossetted by servants and conveyed about in carriages, while the great majority struggled desperately for existence in stinking slums where no gentleman or lady ever trod, and which most of the privileged had no idea even existed. The city's toshers, for instance, stank of the sewers, because that's where they spent their days scavenging for tradable treasures, men who made it their living by forcing entry into London's sewers at low tide and wandering through them, sometimes for miles, searching out and collecting the miscellaneous scraps washed down from the streets above: bones, fragments of rope, miscellaneous bits of metal, silver cutlery and—if they were lucky--coins dropped in the streets above and swept into the gutters. They were mostly celebrated, nonetheless, for the living that the sewers gave them. The toshers earned a decent living—an average of six shillings a day—an amount equivalent to about $50 today. It was sufficient to rank them among the aristocracy of the working class. The toshers' work was dangerous, however, and after 1840, when it was made illegal to enter the sewer network without express permission, and a 5-pound reward was offered to anyone who informed on them—it was also secretive, done mostly at night by lantern light, and tough, and survival required detailed knowledge of it many hazards including rising tides, asphyxiation, gas explosions, releases of unexpected tidal waves of effluent-filled water into the long mazes of sewers, and most of all, attacks by rats.

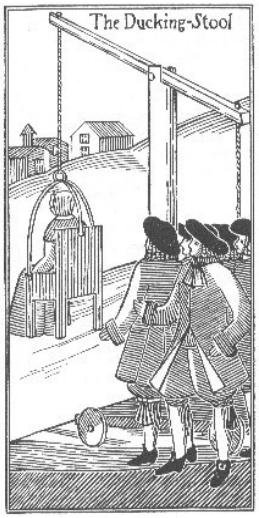


A tosher at work c. 1850, sieving raw sewage in one of the dank, dangerous and uncharted sewers beneath the streets of London, from Mayhew's London Labour and the London Poor.

—**Sin-eater.** The person who provided this professional service was once considered a necessity to the dead. Savage tribes have been known to slaughter an animal on the grave, in the belief that it would take upon itself the sins of the dead. In the same manner, it was the province of the human scapegoat to take upon himself the moral trespasses of his client—and whatever the consequences might be in the after life—in return for a miserable fee and a scanty meal. Surely there's high job satisfaction there, with a little ale and bread thrown in. But, in his day, the sin-eater was "abhorred by the superstitious villagers as a thing unclean," often cutting himself off from all social intercourse with his fellow creatures by reason of the life he had chosen. He lived as a rule in a remote place by himself, and those who chanced to meet him avoided him as they would a leper. This unfortunate was held to be the associate of evil spirits, and given to witchcraft, incantations and unholy practices; only when a death took place did they seek him out, and when his purpose was accomplished they burned the wooden bowl and platter from which he had eaten the food handed across, or placed on the corpse for his consumption.

—**Barber.** Between sweeping up other people's hair and forcing boring small talk, the duties of a modern barber aren't exactly glamorous, but the last few centuries provided unbridled horror to a job that left our ancestors scarred in more ways than one. In addition to trimming hair, the barbers of medieval Europe held a host of other job titles. They were generally charged with caring for soldiers during and after battle. Surgery was seldom conducted by physicians, but instead by barbers, who, in having razors indispensable to their trade, were called upon for numerous tasks ranging from cutting hair to amputating limbs. They dabbled in dentistry by extracting the rotten teeth of their clients. They played doctor by selling various primitive medicines, performing bloodletting, and even giving enemas. Though most shocking were the duties of the notorious barber-surgeons. As the terrifying title suggests, these barbers made a living hacking open their customers. Barely trained and almost never literate, these maniacs' attempts at medicine were little more than butchery. It was common for bloodstained rags to be seen hanging from the walls of the barbershop, inspiring the iconic red-and-white poles we still see today. Luckily, barbers were forbidden to do anything but cut hair by King George II in 1745.

—**Bartender.** The gravest dangers facing barkeeps today are bad tips, the occasional drunken brawl, managing unruly customers, and even if a drink mistake is made, the worst that can be expected is a demanded refund. But that wasn't the case in 17th-century Europe. During the Tudor era, it was common for brewers to sell their products directly to the alcohol-crazed masses. The ale went bad in a matter of days, so alehouses—or taverns—brewed their ale on-site to serve it as quickly as possible. This was a pretty efficient system, but the fact that nonprofessionals were handling the brewing often led to bad batches. People didn't like bad batches. Punishments for inferior ale were swift and bizarrely severe. In addition to fines, the



Ducking or cucking stool, a historical punishment for the common scold, 1896.

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offending brewer, which was traditionally a woman, would have her entire stock confiscated and distributed for free to the poor. But strangest of all was the use of the "ducking-stool," used both in Europe and in the English colonies. The "alewife" in question would be tied to a chair on the end of a long pole and submerged in dirty water. This primitive waterboarding was used on countless women among whose crimes were making or serving a few bad drinks.

—**Hat-maker.** Like so many professions in the 1800-1900s, the job of hatmaking was simplified to the point of being phased out. Machines replaced most of the workers, but that might not have been such a bad thing. The 17th century provided one of the worst manufacturing innovations in history. "Carroting" was a hatmaking shortcut that allowed hatters to work the stiff, partially shaped felt into complex shapes more easily. By simply washing the fabric with mercury nitrate—which temporarily turned it carrot-orange, hence the name—the fabric was much more workable, cutting down production time. It seemed like a miracle—until hatters started losing their minds. As it turns out, holding a mercury-soaked wad of cloth inches from your face for years isn't the healthiest pastime. Breathing mercury fumes allows the deadly metal to build up in the body and attack the nervous system as well as the teeth and gums. This led to a rash of "mad hatters." Their poisoning led them to drool, lose teeth, shake uncontrollably, and eventually suffer permanent brain damage. In Britain, the phrase "mad as a hatter" was used to describe the mercury poisoning. In America, afflicted workers *were said to have* "the Danbury shakes" *(Danbury, Connecticut was the largest center of hat production in America from colonial times to the early 20th century).*

Many Dangerous, Labor Intensive Jobs Were Often Relegated to Children

—**Chimney sweep.** It was known even in early European history that chimneys had to be brush cleaned. Because of the lack of proper tools, and because the flues of the time were often about seven inches wide, using children was a necessity because only a child was small enough to fit inside the chimneys to clean them. Tiny children as young as four years old were employed as chimney sweeps, their small stature making them the perfect size to scale up the brick chimneys. In England, during the 1700s and 1800s, Master Sweeps would buy young children from orphanages and take in young homeless children from the streets and turn them into indentured servants. These were usually small boys between the ages of 5 and 10, although most were under the age of seven, and some were even as young as four. These boys were used to clamber up chimneys to clean out deposits of soot. The chimney sweep master taught them the trade while being responsible for feeding, clothing, and housing them. From before dawn until afternoon, the "climbing boys," as they were called, passed through the city's streets announcing their services with cries of "Weep! Weep!" The job for these boys was to climb up inside the chimney, brushing and scraping the flue as they went, using small hand-held brushes or metal scrapers to remove the harder tar deposits left by wood and especially coal fire smoke. They weren't done until their heads poked out of the chimney top. Because the chimneys were extremely narrow, many of the children were reluctant to wriggle into them. However, plenty of encouragement was provided. It was a common practice for the Master Sweep or his assistant to actually light a small fire in the fireplace or hold lighted straw under their feet or even poke and prod the children with pins to force them up to the top. It has been said, that that is where the saying "light a fire under you" comes from.


A child chimney sweep.

Working conditions for the climbing boys was harsh and cruel. It was a dangerous and filthy job for the boys to undertake, especially without the protection of safety clothing and respirators, and many suffered from job related ailments, such as twisted spines and kneecaps, deformed ankles, eye inflammations and respiratory illnesses. All the climbing in the claustrophobic space of a chimney meant many sweeps' elbows and knees were scraped raw, until repeated climbing covered them with calluses. Inhaling the dust and smoke from chimneys meant many chimney sweeps suffered irreversible lung damage. Many suffered from the first known industrial disease 'chimney sweep's cancer' caused by the constant irritation of coal tar soot on the naked skin. Sadly there are recorded instances where these climbing boys choked and suffocated to death from inhaling the chimney dust or from getting stuck in the narrow and convoluted chimney flues. Casualties were also frequent as many boys were maimed or killed from falling or from being badly burned. Sadly, living conditions were equally deplorable. These young chimney sweeps would sleep in cellars on bags of soot collected from the chimneys they swept. Often the soot would be dumped out of one of these bags and that same bag would then be used as a blanket at night. They were often sickly, rarely bathed, and learned to beg handouts of food and clothing from their customers as all the money they earned went to their masters. The soot they collected was sold to farmers for fertilizer. Smaller sweeps were the most sought-after, so many were deliberately underfed to stunt their growth and most had outgrown the profession by the age of 10. Fortunately, an 1840 law made it illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to climb and clean a chimney, though some unscrupulous fellows still continued the practice. Children were still being sent up chimneys to clear out ash and dust in the late 1870s. They risked injury, accidental death and "chimney sweep's cancer," too.

—**Whipping boy.** How does the role of '*companion to a Renaissance prince*' appeal as an occupation? That may sound like a cushy job, but the young king's or prince's playmate was also his whipping boy – the stand-in who'd take the physical punishment meted out whenever the noble was naughty.

—**Crossing sweeper.** The job of crossing sweeper reveals the entrepreneurial spirit of the Victorian poor. Children would claim an area of the street as their patch, and when a rich man or woman wished to exit their carriage and walk across the filth-strewn street, the sweeper would walk before them clearing the detritus from their path, ensuring their patron's clothes and shoes stayed clean. Crossing sweepers were regarded as just a step up from beggars, and worked in the hopes of receiving tips. Their services were no doubt sometimes appreciated—the streets during this period were mud-soaked and piled with horse manure. The poor sweepers not only had to endure the dismal conditions whatever the weather, but were also constantly dodging speeding horse-drawn cabs and omnibuses.


A crossing sweeper.

How Two of President John Tyler's Grandsons are Still Alive, 174 Years Later

This story was written, and broadcast by Chip Reid, CBS News national correspondent' 6 Mar 2018.; For the full video interview, see the CBS News website at: http://cbsn.ws/2DuhH2q.

CHARLES CITY, Va.—John Tyler was the first vice president elevated to the presidency on the death of the chief executive and the first president to marry in the White House. Nearly 175 years later, two of his grandchildren are still around. Harrison Ruffin Tyler, 89, is one of two living grandsons of President John Tyler, who was born in 1790, one year after George Washington was sworn in as president. Just three generations — President Tyler, his son Lyon Tyler, and grandson Harrison — span almost the entire history of the United States. [The CBS team] met Harrison and his son William at President Tyler's Virginia estate. William was asked if people find it hard to believe that his father is the grandson of the 10th president. "I find it hard to believe," he laughed. "I think it had to do with second wives."

Here's how it happened. John Tyler became president in 1841. He had eight children with his first wife, who died while he was in office. At 52, he married 22-year-old Julia Gardiner. They had seven children, for a total of 15 — the most of any president. He was 63 when son Lyon Tyler was born, whose first wife also died. Lyon also had a very young second wife, and was 75 years old when Harrison Tyler was born in 1928. William showed the CBS team around Sherwood Forest Plantation, a home President Tyler renovated with his wife Julia in mind. She was 30 years younger and liked to party. William says the house is also haunted. He showed the CBS team a spot on a wall where you can see what looks like a young woman.

"You can see the curls coming down and a bonnet on top of her head," he said. "It's clearly a young girl, there's no doubt." The ghostly image remained even after being painted over.

William & Harrison Tyler; photo by CBS News.

John Tyler served in the House, Senate and as vice president before becoming president. His biggest accomplishment was the annexation of Texas. But political ambition does not run in the family. Both William and Harrison joked they [didn't] want that job. "I know better," William added. So instead of making history, William prefers to preserve it.

MyHeritage Announces Improvements to Their "DNA Matching," Providing Better Results

My Heritage recently announced major updates and improvements to their DNA Matching. Anyone who took a *MyHeritage* DNA test, and anyone who uploaded DNA data from another service, will now receive more accurate DNA Matches; more plentiful matches (about 10x more); fewer false positives; more specific and more accurate relationship estimates; and indications on lower confidence DNA Matches to help focus research efforts. They also added the long-requested Chromosome Browser feature. These improvements have been many months in the making by their Science Team. They took much time and effort because they wanted to perfect the science and provide users with optimal results.

MyHeritage DNA currently has more than one million people in the DNA database—1.075 million to be precise. DNA Matching compares DNA kits in the *MyHeritage* database to each other, to find relatives, i.e. individuals who share DNA segments with each other, and to help explain how these individuals are related. The presence of shared DNA segments between two people can indicate a blood relationship, meaning that the shared segments were inherited from a common ancestor. If the shared segments are numerous and large, a blood relationship is more certain. On the other hand, if the shared segments are small in number and size, it can also be a matter of coincidence, indicating no blood relationship at all. When a match is reported that is not a relative at all, it is a false positive. If you have taken a *MyHeritage* DNA test and received the results, or uploaded your DNA data to *MyHeritage*, then you will have received a list of your DNA Matches. The matches are updated daily, and users are notified by a weekly email about the best new matches they received that week. By "best" they mean the matches having the largest amount of shared DNA indicating a closer relationship. The list of DNA Matches shows individuals who share DNA segments with you, the amount and percentage of DNA you share, the number of DNA segments you share, and the size of the largest shared segment. *MyHeritage* also estimates the relationship by analyzing the number and size of the shared DNA segments in each match and comparing them to a reference pool of hundreds of thousands of other matches with known relationships according to family trees that were confirmed by DNA. The DNA Match Review Page offers leads that you can follow up on to trace your lineage back to your common ancestor. As of today, users who have received DNA Matches before, will see modified and enhanced matches following these improvements. This means many new matches will appear. Some matches that existed before, that were false positives, will disappear. Many matches will have their parameters changed (e.g. amount of shared DNA) to more accurate values. Users who have not received matches yet, will receive the higher quality matches from day one.

(To read the complete report on this new matching system, see the MyHeritage Blog, 11 Jan 2018.)

MyHeritage "DNA Quest" Project Will Help Adoptees Find Birth Families

At this year's RootsTech Conference, MyHeritage announced a new project that will help adoptees reconnect with their birth families. As part of *MyHeritage* DNA Quest initiative, the company will give away 15,000 free DNA kits to adoptees. The 15,000 kits, which are worth more than $1 million, will be given to selected applicants on a first-come, first-serve basis. The project is open to adoptees and those who are looking for relatives put up for adoption. *MyHeritage* has also said it will give preference to applicants in need of financial assistance. Those interested can apply via the project's landing page by April 30, and those chosen will receive their kits by the end of May. The *MyHeritage* team has assembled an advisory board of experienced genetic genealogists to support the project. DNA Quest expands upon *MyHeritage*'s previous pro bono efforts in reuniting families.

Genealogy News You Can Use...

Scroll Through 17th-18th Century American Life Using the Harvard University Library's Ongoing Digitized Document Collection Called "The Colonial North American Project"

This article is expanded from an announcement in Eastman's Online Newsletter, 24 Oct 2017, using additional information from Harvard University.

Recently, the Harvard Library released a revised website for its ongoing, multiyear digitization effort: "*Colonial North American Project at Harvard University*." For centuries, Harvard has accumulated materials relating to the North American colonies. Scattered among the Harvard libraries, many of these collections remained unexamined or rarely seen by students and scholars. The first step of the ambitious task to digitize them entailed a detailed survey uncovering more than 1,600 collections in 14 Harvard repositories, The Colonial North America Project at Harvard Library provides access to remarkable and wide-ranging materials digitized as part of an ongoing, multi-year project.

When complete, the project will make available to the world approximately 470,000 digitized pages of all known archival and manuscript materials in the Harvard Library that relate to 17th- and 18th-century North America. At present, there are nearly 300,000 digitized pages available through this website and updates are made periodically. Originally launched in November 2015 with 150,000 images, the online collection documents life in the European colonies of the Americas and Caribbean, as well as in Great Britain, continental Europe, and Africa. These extraordinary materials enable viewers to see through the eyes of the influencers and common folk of the era, providing insights not only about revolution and politics but also economics, science, society, and much more This should be a fabulous resource for anyone researching Colonial American ancestry. It isn't a genealogy database, but instead, it will teach you about the lives your ancestors led and the world in which they lived. Archived wills, deeds, estate inventories, legal records, merchants' ledgers, ships' bills of lading, statements of debt, personal letters, and institutional papers can all assist in this work. The library's vast collection from love letters to receipts, is continually being digitized for public view, and viewers are urged to check back often for newly digitized content and features.

27 Public Libraries and the Internet Archive Launch "Community Webs" for Local History Web Archiving

This article was reprinted from Dick Eastman's Online Newsletter, 14 March 2018.

With generous support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, as well as the Kahle/Austin Foundation and the Archive-It service, the Internet Archive and 27 public library partners representing 17 different states have launched a new program: **Community Webs: Empowering Public Libraries to Create Community History Web Archives**. The program will provide education, applied training, cohort network development, and web archiving services for a group of public librarians to develop expertise in web archiving for the purpose of local memory collecting. Additional partners in the program include OCLC's WebJunction training and education service and the public libraries of Queens, Cleveland and San Francisco which will serve as "lead libraries" in the cohort. The program will result in dozens of terabytes of public-library-administered local history web archives, a range of open educational resources in the form of online courses, videos, and guides, and a nationwide network of public librarians with expertise in local history web archiving and the advocacy tools to build and expand the network. A full listing of the participating public libraries (including Denver) is on the program website.

This could result in huge online collections of local history and information created by libraries nationwide. The list of participating libraries is impressive, ranging from big city libraries to one small town library. You can learn more at: http://bit.ly/2IqBJi1.

Presentations From the National Archives' 2017 Virtual Genealogy Fair Are Free to View on *YouTube*; Slides & Handouts Are Also Available

The National Archives hosted its fifth virtual Genealogy Fair via webcast last October. Viewers participated with the presenters and other family historians during the live event on *YouTube*. All of the session videos and handouts are available from this web page free of charge. You can watch the sessions and download the materials at your convenience or watch the entire day on *YouTube*. The sessions include:

—**Taking Care of Family heirlooms**, by Katie Smith, education and communication coordinator, National Archives at College Park, MD.

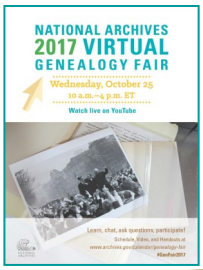
—**19th Century Ancestors in Tax Assessment Records**, by Elise Fariello, archives technician, National Archives at Chicago, IL.,

—**From the Cradle to the Grave: Birth, Childhood and Death in the National Archives at St. Louis,** by Daria Labinsky, archivist, and Cara Moore, archives technician, National Archives at St. Louis, MO.

—**A is for Archives, B is for Burn File: Accesing Burned Records at the National Archives at St. Louis**, by Ashley Cox, preservation specialist, National Archives at St. Louis, MO.

—**Locating the Relocated: Deciphering Electronic Records on Japanese Americans Interned During World War II**, by John LeGloahec, archives specialist, and Jana Leighton, archivist, National Archives at College Park, MD.

—**Beyond the War Relocation Administration: Finding Japanese Relocatees in Other Records**, by Gwen Granados, director, National Archives at Riverside, CA.



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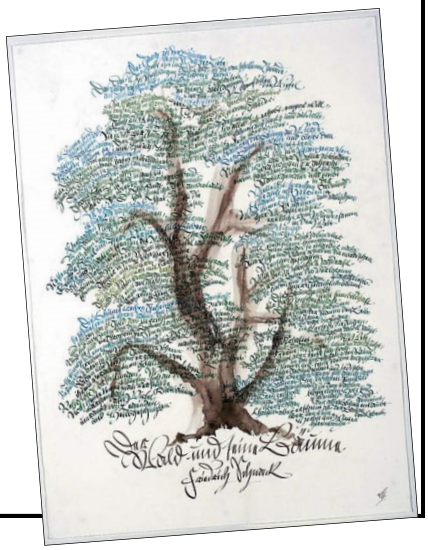
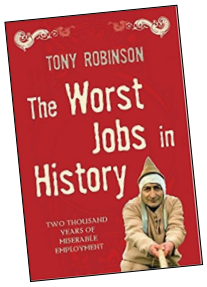
The Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society welcomes contributions and suggestions to this newsletter. Send them to the P.O. box or e-mail address above.



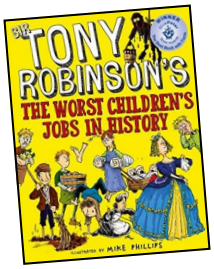
"Check This Out"

Family history-related fiction & nonfiction book reviews by CGHS members & others



The Worst Jobs in History by Tony Robinson c.2005; Pan Macmillan, London nonfiction, 216 pages

Sir Tony Robinson has uncovered life in the underbelly of history. Whether it's swilling out the crotch of a knight's soiled armor after the battle of Agincourt, risking his neck in the rigging of HMS Victory, or as 'Groomer of the Stool' going to places where none of Henry VIII's six wives would venture, Tony endures the worst jobs imaginable to get to the bottom (sometimes literally) of the story. From the Roman invasion to the reign of Queen Victoria, Tony has met the challenge of seeking out the worst jobs of each era. The Gunpowder Plot drew Tony to the role of the Saltpetre Man who collected human waste because its nitrate content could be turned into gunpowder. In the same vein, he has revealed some of the worst jobs behind the building of the great medieval cathedrals. With Tony we discover the dire conditions of Nelson's Victory, where the most common form of retirement was being sewn into a hammock with a couple of cannon balls and dropped over the side. Then there's the impact of the Industrial Revolution, a source of wealth and power for the few, but a cornucopia of lousy jobs for the many. Richly illustrated with artwork, photographs and diagrams, ***The Worst Jobs in History*** really gets into the grime of how life was for ordinary people, and provides a vivid alternative (and fairly disgusting) history of Britain. This book is an excellent companion to the television series of the same name or just as a stand alone book giving a very good insight into the worst jobs across our past. The book covers a period which starts in Roman times and goes through history to finish in Victorian times, giving lots of details of truly revolting and tough jobs though that period, such as puke collector, illuminator, egg collector, leech collector, spit boy, toad eater, plague burier, topman, stone picker and chimney sweep. As with anything Tony Robinson is involved in it is very factual, detailed and interesting. Once picked up and started it is difficult to put it down.



The Worst Children's Jobs in History by Tony Robinson c.2016; Pan Macmillan, London; nonfiction, 112 pages

Robinson continues his historic look at ***The Worst Children's Jobs in History***. He takes you back to the days when being a kid was no excuse for getting out of hard labor. This book tells the stories of all the children whose work fed the nation, kept trains running, and put clothes on everyone's backs, over the last few hundred years of Britain's history. No longer will you have to listen to your parents, grandparents, uncles, neighbors, and random old people telling you how much harder they had it in their day. Next time you find yourself in that situation, ask them if they were a jigger-turner or a turnip-picker in their young day. No? An orderly boy, perhaps? A stepper? Maybe they spent their weekends making matchboxes? Still no? Then they have no idea about the real meaning of hard work. With profiles and testimonies of real kids in rotten jobs, this book will tell you things you probably didn't want to know about the back-breaking, puke-inducing reality of being a child in the past.

—Book reviews by Amazon.com and PacMacMillan.com