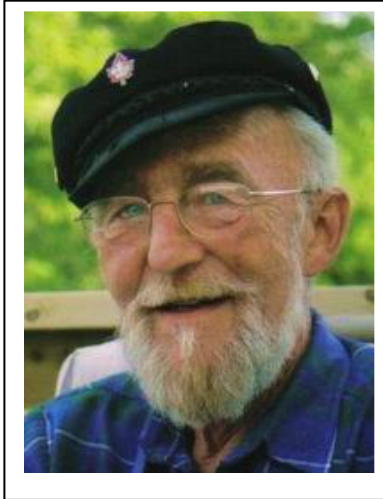


Divorce Records



While divorce was not as common among our ancestors as it is today, it was by no means rare and sometimes the public record can yield up a snippet or two of useful information like the date of the divorce, or the name of the spouse, or where they were living.

From 1867 to 1963, divorces were granted through a private Act of the Parliament of Canada. The procedure required that the person seeking the divorce publish a Notice of Intent to petition the Government in the *Canada Gazette* and in two newspapers in their home district. The Notice will name the parties, their residences, and the grounds for the divorce.

Virtually the only grounds for a divorce, especially in Quebec, were adultery and desertion, so almost everyone claimed these as the grounds. I wouldn't take these too seriously and, in fact, I know of some cases where the adultery was faked to provide legal justification for the divorce.

When the divorce was granted, it was published in the *Statutes of Canada* for that year. The usual wording was "An act for the relief of Jane Doe". Again, there is very little information other than names, places, and grounds for divorce.

If you don't know the date of the divorce, it is a simple matter to go through the indexes of the various volumes of the *Statutes of Canada* in the National Library or any other large library until you find the name you are looking for. You can then go through the indexes of the *Canada Gazette* for a period about four to six months previously to find the Notice of Intent.

You now have all the information you are likely to glean from the public record. The document that has the information you would really like to find is the Petition for Divorce. It would likely include information on occupation and other family matters.

Depending on the date and province, the divorce files, including the Petition, are kept by the various superior courts or the Office of the Law Clerk of the Senate of Canada and, as I discovered to my chagrin, they are sealed.

New Web Site

I am indebted to Dorothy Mather for bringing to my attention a web site she learned about from a British correspondent. Hall's Genealogy Website began as a family one but its creator, Rodney Hall, a retired ship's captain, continued to expand it until now it is a very useful resource to researchers with a British connection.

Originally it focused on Great Britain itself but it now includes Australia, Ireland, Canada, and India. I browsed through the section on Ireland and found a number of great sites that were new to me and that is always exciting.

Among the other goodies on the site are "An Index to Old Occupations" and a list of "Old Medical Terms". There is a date calculator where, if you know the exact age at death and date of death, it will calculate the exact birth date.

If you are sending money overseas to pay for a transcription, etc., you might want to use his currency converter. It is live and therefore always up to date.

All in all, it is a great site, clean, crisp, and easy to navigate. You can check it out at:
<http://rmhh.co.uk/index.html> .

Genealogy Humour

Occasionally during our research we find funny signs or epitaphs. These were previously published in *RootsWeb Review*, 19 Jan 2005, Vol 8, No. 3.

Kathryn Rogers found this sign in the Castlebrook Cemetery, Rouse Hill, NSW, Australia: "The Garden of Trust- Do not leave valuables in your car".

Joyce Tabler of Calgary found this on a tombstone in Melita, Manitoba: "I told you I was sick".