

NEWSLETTER

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December 2014.

WE ALL ASK by Mel Cross

“What will happen to all my research after I have gone on to actually meet those ancestors who have so tantalisingly eluded me for so many years?”

The obvious but distressing truth is that my hours of painstaking work, looking to everyone else like rubbish, will be thrown out. If all those unlabeled photos, certificates, cuttings and indecipherable notes remain in that box in the cupboard, it will look like anything but treasure.

The time comes when we should stop researching and start writing up our family history but it's very hard for the amateur researcher to stop. There are always loose ends to tidy up or a new lead to follow and some of us have never thought of finishing. The detective work involved is far too much fun.

For our work to survive it has to be interesting. The easiest way is to do a simple family tree with a little additional information on. A document with some photos on would be even better and it's always best to mention the source of the information.

They say that if a job is worth doing then its worth doing well and all of us would agree that a family tree is worth doing. But it is one of those things that is worth doing badly because often the alternative is not doing it at all. Even if you plan to write up a complete family tree, it is important to do a temporary one in the meantime. The two most important objectives are to convey the facts accurately and clearly and to make it interesting otherwise our families won't read and enjoy it or appreciate all the work that we've done.

Anyone reading your family history will be interested in the facts, but what they'll mostly enjoy and remember are the everyday details – the favorite stories; anecdotes; embarrassing moments and family traditions. It is also important to try and preserve any oral stories with details of the story-teller and how they came to know about it. We genealogists have an obligation to treat our ancestors with respect and not accuse them of scandals or misdeeds that there is no proof of.

And don't forget - at the rate technology changes today it is very risky to leave your genealogy in a strictly digital format.



WHERE THERE IS A WILL. . .

Recently the British Government has placed records of Wills online as a service to the public (up to now one had to be subscriber of ancestry.co.uk to get the probater record)

The site is <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk>.

The site offers three tabs—Wills and Probates from 1996, Wills and Probates 1858 to 1996, and Soldiers Wills.

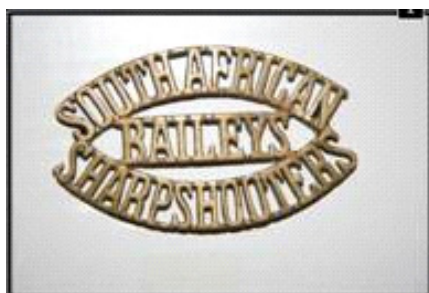
I tried with some of my ancestors I've obtained previously through ancestry.co.uk but on this site besides giving you the page with your person on it, the rest has to be purchased. The cost is £10 and I presume you get the entire will and not just the brief sentence in the probate index.

Feel free to share you experience of this site with us.

SOME FINAL WW1 FAMILY STORIES

MY GRANDFATHER WAS A SNIPER.

By Mel Cross



War in the trenches was the start of the deadly art of the sniper with the Germans being far better trained and equipped with rifles and telescopic sights than the British. They

inflicted heavy casualties on front line troops with some battalions losing about 18 men a day which naturally caused a huge drop in morale. The sniper would crawl into no man's land; take up a good position for several hours before firing a couple of well-aimed shots then retreating again when darkness fell. The primary target was the head where a hit meant either death or a seriously disabling wound.

A solution was needed urgently and the British wisely used the assets of the Empire. They recruited big game hunters from South Africa, Canada and Australia until the training of regular snipers could be completed. By the end of the War the Allies, mainly the British had turned the tables completely and their snipers were superior.

In 1916 The British Government approached the Union of South Africa's Government and Sir Abe Bailey to ask for assistance. Abe Bailey was a self-made multi millionaire who had made his fortune on the Rand. In addition to being involved with numerous projects and charities generally, on the military side he had raised troops for the Anglo Boer War and was involved with the planning of the Jameson Raid. So he was the ideal man to approach as he held rank in the Union Defense Forces and had the experience for this type of enterprise.

The Union Government agreed to the British request and authorized raising a unit of 100 sharpshooters. What made this unit unique is that Abe Bailey raised, selected and financed the unit for the duration of the war for which he later received a peerage (Baron of Craddock). It was therefore a private unit with its own shoulder badge.

The personnel were selected from Northern and Southern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa. There were stringent shooting requirements. The majority of men were either successful target shooters or big game hunters which gave them stalking and camouflage skills.

Selection was slow because of these requirements and also because many men had already signed up with other units. Eventually 17 men under Lt. Neville Methven were sent to France. They were assigned to the 1st Division under Maj. General Strickland and served for the next two and a half years being attached to several British regiments. These men had a particularly hard war spending all of it in No Man's Land, summer and winter.

My maternal grandfather - William George Hunt attested into the Baileys South African Sharpshooters at Wynberg in the Cape on the 20 April 1916 with the rank of Lance Corporal. His army number was S15. (S for Sharpshooter, number 15 to be attested). He had previously done the obligatory shooting test to qualify for the Sharpshooters and he embarked with the original contingent of 17 men under Lieutenant Neville Methven on the RMS Saxon from Cape Town on the 22 April 1916.

They arrived at Borden in the United Kingdom on 10 May 1916 and were issued with Purdey SMLE sniper rifles which Sir Abe Bailey had purchased for the sum of £13 6s 5p each, including a leather case and offset Aldis telescopes.

On the 07 June 1916 the BSAS were attached to the 2 Battalion Kings Royal Rifles which was part of the 2nd Brigade 1st Division of the British Army. It appears that they were split up into small groups to bolster various parts of the line as a counter to the German snipers.

L/Cpl Hunt went missing between 15/18 July 1916. His death was presumed on the 15 July 1916. His name is on the Addendum panel of Thiepval Memorial.

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The Unit's casualty rate was high with L/Cpl Hunt and 2 others killed in the Battle of the Somme and another 3 later on. Two were medically discharged and the rest came back to South Africa.

Methven claimed in an interview after the war that the unit had killed over 3000 Germans and that he had a personal tally of well over 100. He received an MC for sniping, good scouting and training work.

The top Allied WW1 sniper is believed to be Francis Neville Pegahmagabow, a Canadian Indian with 378 kills.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO LOST THEIR LIVES.

By JOYCE SETTLE



In October I started readying myself for my visit to the UK. I was not too sure what day I would travel so I felt I should get things in order. So, when the message came from my son David 'Ma, I really think you should fly tomorrow night' I was more or less tidy with all the usual things in position to pop into my big blue bag and rucksack. The morning of the flight I decided to stay in bed and luxuriate. I was itching for something to read as I had finished the

book I had been reading. My knitting was downstairs all ready for the flight. I had always thought knitting needles would be considered 'sharp' but David had told me that on his last work flight there was a lady

knitting so I thought I would finish the little jersey I was doing for my charity work as a Nutty Knitter. I spotted a couple of back numbers of Family Tree Magazine I had not read so I picked them up to see if there was anything interesting in them. Normally I have a quick look and nothing much takes my eye but in the first magazine I opened, April 1993 Vol.9 No.6 page 12, I noticed a picture. It was of Rookwood Cemetery, near Sydney, Australia. It said 'A funeral train of 1871 shown standing at the old cemetery station, built to resemble a chapel. The picture was from a photograph published by the New South Wales Government Printing Office, Sydney, Australia. My immediate thought was that David and his train type friends would be amused by this so I put a marker in the page and continued browsing. I opened the second Family Tree Magazine, December 1992 Vol.9 No.2, and on page 22 I was scanning down some letters from the public when I noticed a bit about a book called 'Introduction to Brookwood Cemetery by John Clarke assisted by Mary Lucas and Arthur Storie'. My brain must have still been thinking of Rookwood Cemetery because it made me have a closer look at the paragraph I was actually reading. It said 'Readers are referred to the June issue of Family Tree for a full page article on Brookwood Cemetery and, in July, we reviewed The Brookwood Necropolis Railway by John Clarke.' I chuckled 'The boys are going to like this indeed'. I went back to the first magazine and read the little write up. It was in reply to the question asked in the December issue 'Are there any more cemetery stations lurking out there?' Well, I was impressed because two magazines had been put together in the same bundle that my husband, Eric, had bought me at the Cape Town Family History Society meeting we had attended some time ago. I was sad I did not have the June or July magazines. If anyone has copies I would dearly like to read more about funeral trains and cemeteries.

I packed the two magazines in my laptop bag and set off for the airport. I had a super journey sleeping the kilometres away in my nice Club bed. I woke as we flew over the North African coast amazed that I had managed to sleep so long. I went to the galley, got a cup of fruit tea and a nice biscuit then did a bit of Nutty Knitting.

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The last few hours went by very nicely and soon I was stepping off the plane wondering what adventures were in store for me. I met my son, David, and we got into his car to go to his new flat. I told him all the news from 'home in Cape Town' and mentioned that I had been a lazy mum reading about funeral trains at Brookwood Cemetery. He piped up 'We can go there if you like. It isn't far away from the new flat. We can go on there by train and you will see the cemetery on the way as the train line runs along the perimeter beside the graves. It is a big place'. On 27th October we got ourselves a picnic and set off. We had to change trains at Alton station where we had our picnic as we had just missed the connection to Brookwood Station. We watched a steam locomotive, from a preserved railway group, chug up and down the line. It was a pleasant day so we were enjoying our outing. We got to Brookwood Station and walked under the track through a tunnel and then a gate. I wonder if that was the way the coffins went. As we walked round we saw lots of impressive graves of Sultans and important Islamic people. From what I had read I knew the cemetery had been opened in 1854 because the London Cemeteries were full to overflowing so they had chosen the Brookwood site to accommodate the required future funerals. The trains took the coffins in special carriages and the mourners in funeral coaches – 1st, 2nd and 3rd Class. As well as the cemetery for ordinary folk there is the Brookwood Military Cemetery which was established in 1919 after the First World War. The military graves were for servicemen and women who died in the London area from wounds received on the Western Front or from sickness or in training accidents. There are many war graves of other Nationalities in Brookwood as well as the British war dead. David and I spent a long time walking round looking at the

beautiful layout of the sections for each country. We saw the Canadian and American sections which were very nice. The section for unknown graves was a sad place. There is a Memorial to the Missing. There are sections for Indian, Turkish,



Polish, New Zealand, Czechoslovakian, Italian, French and dear to our hearts the South Africans. It was sad to read the names on the gravestones of those so very far away from our lovely South Africa. All I could think of was 'Did their families ever get to Brookwood to say a final farewell'. I am so glad we went on our Funeral Train Trip. We walked back to the station and left the gardeners making preparations for the Armistice Day. RIP

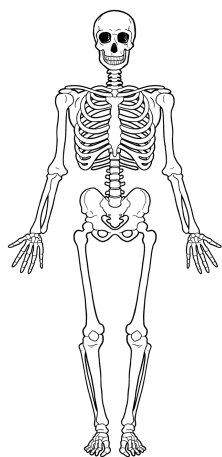
On Remembrance Sunday at 11am David and I found ourselves in the car park at Hatton Cross (Heathrow). We stood by the fence and noted the lack of aircraft flying round us. The planes on the ground had engines running but even so it was eerily quiet. The first plane to move after the 2 minutes silence was LOT the Polish Airline. David said 'The Poles have gone first. They suffered so badly in the war. It is nice they are first.' Very soon the sky was buzzing into normal life once more. We had all taken the quiet time to reflect and say our thanks to those who did not come back. Sitting beside the fence was a South African Airways plane and a British Airways plane with a large poppy on its side.

On 11th November at 11am David and I arrived into our parking place at Hatton Cross once more. So strange to be there again for the 2 minutes silence. We had not planned to be there. We were there to meet friend Daniel to go on to Hampton Court Palace for a visit. What a beautiful place and the gardens were really lovely.

I visited our friends Gis and Keith in Greenwich. Gis took me to the Tower of London to see the display of pottery poppies there. What an amazing sight. Sadly they were beginning to dismantle them. I was lucky to get there before too many had gone. The poppies covered the grass surrounding the Tower – one for each serviceman lost in war. It was like a sea of red. Each poppy was sold for charity. All were sold by the time I got there. I would have liked one to remember the brothers of both my grandmothers who lost their lives in WW1. At least I was back in UK to remember them all 100 years later.

I did lots of other nice things on my trip and saw many friends. I will remember being in France and at my Blo(o)r(e) Society meeting which was the best one I have attended. Having a very quick last minute visit over to Northern Ireland and going to the Christmas Market at Islington. My 2014 trip was super.

SKELETONS IN THE . . . WHERE?



www.timvandevall.com
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In the world of Genealogy we're used to coming across skeletons, but NOT in the real world!

In 1961 my husband and I bought our house in Plumstead, near the station. We'd bought it from an old Jewish man and his 2nd wife.

He was a furniture dealer, buying at house sales and auction houses. then reselling the furniture privately. When we bought his house, we bought most of his furniture too - so we ended up with a household of stinkwood, imbuia and yellowwood furniture. The house had an outside shed and Wendy house also containing oddments of furniture of charge. His car had never been stored in the garage as it too was filled (to overflowing) with furniture which he removed before our car went into it.

He told us odds and ends about his family in the three or four social times we spent with him during our transactions and he and his wife left to 'housesit' his son's house in Johannesburg.

Over the years we removed a loquat tree in the garden, put in several green- and shade-houses in spaces in the garden to contain my newly acquired orchid collection.

My husband died shortly after we'd been married 41 years, and I appointed an executor to my property and left to live in Texas, USA with my family. During my time there, my house was sold, then a short while later it was sold again. I returned to SA., and first lived in Kirstenhof then in a complex in Plumstead. I had no communication with anyone in my old house.

On Facebook recently my daughter posted that the present owner had contacted her with a story about

the house in which Leigh(my daughter) had grown up. It was a strange story.

"Tea years ago" said owner "I was going to build another room, onto the house. Between the garage and shed." (remember my loquat tree) "Well, the builders dug up. some skeletons, two incised skulls and several other bones. Do you know anything about this?." My daughter rightly answered "NO!"

It seems the owner called in the police, who taped off the area, and then consulted with an anthropologist from UCT who confirmed that the were over 60 years old. It was surmised that a 'family member' of the earlier owner might have been a doctor or medical student and buried them. Why - Heaven only knows? The police took away the bones, and the latest owner was given permission to continue with the building operation.

To try and prevent identity theft etc., my daughter doesn't let everyone know I am her mother, so I sent her a private email explaining a story I'd heard in 1961.

The owner from whom we'd bought the house, did indeed have a son who was a medical student at UCT, and had access to some bones, and HAD buried them in the back garden. My daughter posted this info on Facebook too and solved part of the mystery. I'd never told my children the story since I'd forgotten the story, as life after my marriage, having children, growing orchid etc. had just taken over

So there you have it - I'm researching family trees, and often we come across skeletons in the closet - BUT not everyone finds skeletons in their back-garden! You'd better hope then that the previous owners son was a medical student and nothing more sinister.

Maggie James.

p.s. It almost seemed 'fitting,' that there'd be Orchids in flower regularly over the 'grave' of the skeletons buried below. Almost like a 'tribute' to those who'd passed away

NEWS IN BRIEF

The First Fifty Years - a project collating Cape of Good Hope records



The First Fifty Years - a project collating Cape of Good Hope records brings together a wealth of information about the people who lived and settled in the Cape in the 17th century and their entangled lives. It includes information that is invaluable to those researching their family histories as well as those with an interest in the early history the Cape of Good Hope.

According to the project's website (<http://www.e-family.co.za/ffy/>) " This project began as a private endeavour to figure out some of the questions I had about my early Cape of Good Hope (de Caep de Goede Hoop / Cabo de Boa Esperanza) ancestry, to ensure the foundations of my research into the genealogies of those ancestors was sound.

In time however, I [Delia Robertson / Mansell Upham] realized my efforts might also help other researchers avoid the same errors I made when I first discovered this ancestry. Consequently, the first goal of the project is to enter data from all records that are available for the first fifty years or so of the VOC settlement at the Cape which commenced in 1652. "Fifty years or so" because there is in some cases a natural progression that results from available research material.

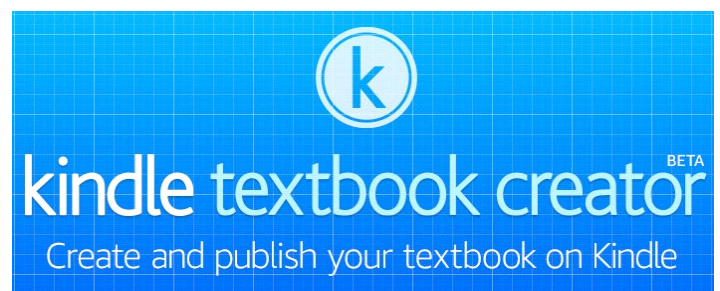
But more than adding the data, the goal is to add full transcriptions and as far as is possible, an image of that record as an exhibit. Where appropriate, it will include groundbreaking

published articles in the Acrobat format and linked to the relevant individuals.

The second, and very important goal, is to generate discussion around the available data, to correct errors, and hopefully to shine more light on some enduring mysteries. In this regard, please write to me to correct errors (motivate and document if possible), or offer suggestions, opinions, and so on."

For more information about this important initiative visit the project website, follow it on Facebook or email Delia Robertson (vandecaep@gmail.com).

Amazon Kindle Textbook Creator



Have you written you family history but haven't published it yet? Maybe to publish it as an ebook might be the answer for you.

Dick Eastman in his Newsletter tells us a new product from Amazon which creates Kindle ebooks. It has the word "Textbook" in its name but it appears to work for all sorts of books including genealogy books. The new software appears to be an extension to the already-available Kindle Direct Publishing application.

Kindle Textbook Creator even makes it easy to transform PDFs into an e-book format. I tried to use the program but although it created a file it had a ".kdf" format which my kindle didn't recognise. I'm not sure where I went wrong. I noticed that Amazon claims its Textbook Creator offers a simple way to organize an array of educational materials — graphs, equations, charts or anything else you might find in a textbook—sounds great for family trees.

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Best of all, Kindle Textbook Creator is available free of charge for Windows and Macintosh. The books can be read on all sorts of devices, including Amazon's Kindles, of course, as well as iPads, iPhones or Android devices.

The new product was released by Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing division which allows authors to self-publish. Newly-created Kindle ebooks can be sold on Amazon with authors keeping up to a 70% royalty or distributed free of charge directly from the authors' own web sites, by email, or by most any other method of using Amazon's (free) Kindle Direct Publishing.

For more information about Amazon Kindle Textbook Creator, see <https://kdp.amazon.com/edu>.

You might also want to read Independently Publish with Kindle Direct Publishing to reach millions of readers at <https://kdp.amazon.com/>.

Genealogy & Dementia

Researching your family tree is thought to be a good way of staving off the effects of dementia. Derek Hardwick has devoted thousands of hours to creating intricate hand-written family trees for patients with life-limiting illnesses. The longest was a whopping 13ft long and the furthest back he has ever gone was more than 1,000 years to the time of Alfred the Great.

Among his most poignant successes was helping a woman whose own life was coming to an end to trace the history of her mother who had died two weeks after she was born.

For others, there has been the surprise of discovering that they had relatives who were deported to Australia for crimes which in more modern times would hardly warrant a fine.

Derek is currently on his 76th family tree. The only one he has ever started and not completed is his own.

"I just don't have time to work on mine," he said. "I'm rushed off my feet but it's so rewarding. A lot of our patients have told me that it's something to pass on to their families."

Derek faced his own personal tragedy before becoming a volunteer for the hospice. His son was just 11 when he died after battling cancer. The tragedy ultimately led to Derek's early retirement from his post as a geography teacher at Graham School where he had taught for 34 years. He planned to devote some of his retirement to following his interest in tracing his own family history. His wife, Jane, a staff nurse at Saint Catherine's, had other ideas.

"She told me she would let the hospice know I had an interest in family trees," he said. "I haven't stopped since. It takes my mind off my own problems." Derek now spends every Friday in the Scarborough Day Hospice where he has helped 76 patients trace their family tree.

One of his most touching successes was helping an elderly lady whose mother had died when she was just two weeks old. The patient didn't even know her mother's name but Derek's persistent detective work meant he was able to find her and the patient was able to die finally knowing her roots at last.

The pressure to complete the family trees becomes particularly intense when patients whose health is failing take a turn for the worse. Derek remembers burning the midnight oil to complete one chart for a man who he knew didn't have much time left. When it was finally completed, he prepared to hand it to the family only to be told that the man had died the previous day.

Derek makes no charge for his many hours of work but grateful patients often make a donation to the hospice as a thank you. A single chart can take him up to three months to complete which is why he is unable to help everyone who would like to make use of his skills.

For the patients, there is the pleasure of being able to pass on a unique keepsake to their families.

- See more at: <http://www.stcatherineshospice-nyorks.org/volunteer-creates-a-forest-of-family-trees/#sthash.VwH0eH71.dpuf>

INHERITED DISEASES: PART 1

What might surprise some members is that other members have become interested in tracing their family history because they or an immediate family member has been diagnosed with an hereditary disorder.

Before I was ordained and before I was interested in family history I worked in a laboratory at Red Cross Children's Hospital. It was a Chemical Pathology Laboratory so we did not do a lot of DNA work but merely looked at those hereditary diseases that can be detected by chemical means. For example we looked for elevated chloride levels in the sweat of children with Cystic Fibrosis. Before I left the lab, the DNA site of the mutant gene had been isolated so we could detect positive CF children but it was an expensive test to do (in those days) and so it was used in difficult and more likely cases to confirm diagnosis, while sweat tests continued for routine screen of those with vague CF symptoms.

Another example, one which my professor was very interested in was hereditary elevated cholesterol levels. In fact, it was here that I first saw a family tree of a patient indicating the carriers and the non-carriers of the gene in the patients ancestors and family. The elevated cholesterol in many Afrikaners is now attributed to a "founder effect". This means that carriers from Holland, France or Germany who came out to the Cape during the DEIC rule, inter-married with the then small population of 2000 people causing the gene to be passed on. Today in most studies I found on the internet, some 95% of familial raised cholesterol had the same two sites on the gene affected

If those of you who have started your family research because of some hereditary disorder in your family are willing to write a short article on what you have discovered I would love to publish your findings.

To start of here is some research I discovered on *Huntington Chorea*. I took the information from a brochure published by UCT Dept of Human Genetics and as the pamphlets says: **"The resources in this brochure should not be used as a substitute for professional medical care or advice. Users seeking information about a personal genetic condition should consult with a qualified healthcare professional."**

My thanks also to Joan Saycell for giving me information about the disease and her family's involvement

What Is Huntington Disease?

Huntington Disease (HD) is a genetically inherited disorder which involves gradual loss of nerve cells in the brain. It is sometimes referred to as Huntington's chorea due to abnormal movements of the arms and legs (chorea). HD is named after Dr George Huntington who recognised that it was an inherited condition in 1872.

Huntington Disease is often diagnosed through a careful family history. Brain scans and genetic testing are also used to confirm the diagnosis. The Division of Human Genetics at the University of Cape Town currently tests for HD.

What is the genetic fault that causes HD?

HD is caused by a genetic mistake that involves the repetition of a particular DNA region over and over again. The scientists refer to this as a 'triplet repeat' expansion.

What are the symptoms of HD?

The age at which symptoms first appear varies but it has been found that the longer the 'triplet repeat' the earlier in life the symptoms start. [Editor: the famous American folk singer, Woody Guthrie singer of 'This land is your land' died from complications from Huntington Disease at age 55 after being diagnosed at 35 – the usual age when people are diagnosed and this is usually after they have produced children who might be carriers too – so perpetuating the disease. All this creates an interesting

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moral and ethical dilemma for carriers].

Generally the first symptoms become apparent between the ages 35 and 50, appear slowly and are often not noticed by the person. In the early stage of Huntington disease, most people can still enjoy many of their normal activities, including going to work. Involuntary movements such as twitching of the fingers and toes are infrequent, speech is unaffected and dementia, if present, is mild. Later, patients need more assistance with daily living. The symptoms are usually described as 'clumsiness', 'jerkiness', 'tremor' or 'balance problems'. Personality changes including irritation, poor insight, depression, withdrawal, euphoria and difficulty with organisation may also be noticed. [Editor: I hate reading symptoms such as these because it always seems to describe exactly how I'm felling!]

As the disease progresses, involuntary movements become more obvious. Difficulties with speaking and swallowing will develop and the person will walk in a wide-based, unsteady way. Falling and weight loss are common. Eventually reasoning and judgement become impaired and dementia is more obvious. In the late stage of the disease, patients need almost total care. They may be unable to walk or speak, and rigidity (stiffness) may become more common than involuntary movements. The person with HD eventually succumbs to pneumonia or complications of falls or choking. Life expectancy is usually about 15-20 years after the disease starts.

How Is HD Inherited?

Huntington disease is inherited as a dominant trait, which means that any parent who carries the fault in the gene will have a 50% chance of having an affected child. However, if a child does not inherit the gene it cannot pass it on to its own children. The chain of inheritance is then broken. It has been shown that the triplet repeat tends to expand (become longer) from one generation to the next. This is referred to as 'anticipation' and means that symptoms may start earlier in life and be more severe when the altered gene is passed on to the next generation.

How common is HD?

Huntington disease affects about 1 in 10 000 people. It affects men and women equally and occurs in people of all ethnic origins.

Is there any treatment or cure for HD?

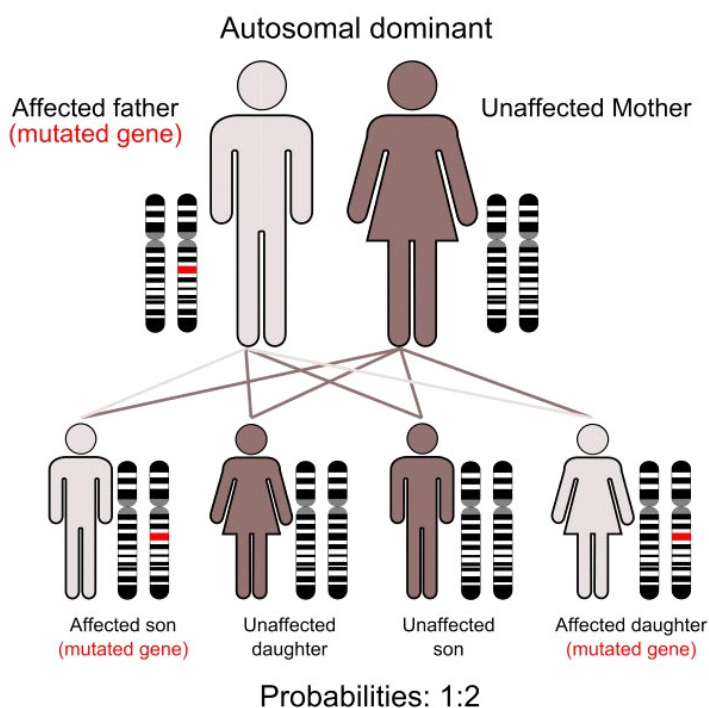
Not at present. There is also no treatment to slow the progression of the disease. Treatment is aimed at supporting the patient and his/her family. Prescription drugs can help control some of the symptoms, especially the involuntary movements and psychiatric conditions such as depression.

A comment from one of our members

My great-grand-parents arrived from Scotland in the mid 1800s. When they arrived and settled in the Eastern Cape they already had three children born in Scotland the rest of the family was born here. The family had six children, four boys and two girls.

From my records I am aware both the girls had Huntington's and maybe the 1 boy. My gran's sister died in her 30's in a mental home. My gran died at the age of 72.

My grandparents had 7 children, and 4 out of the 7 had the disease and passed it onto their children. In my generation 1 of my cousins has passed away as a result of the disease about 4 years ago. In another family there are 3 children, last year 1 of these children passed away and the other 2 siblings in the family have been diagnosed with the disease.



VAN VLYMEN & VAN WULVEN

In the 'Good Old Days' when a member of the family went overseas they often felt it would be a once in a life time event so they kept a dairy or a journal about what they did and who they visited while overseas. These are great sources of information for family historians, but they do come with a few problems. First amongst them is that they can be fairly biased – writing only what they feel was appropriate for future generations to see. When an ancestor did something horrific (often something today we would find very acceptable) it would be hinted at but no details given. This would arouse our interest and cause us to spend hours going down byways to find out just what that 'horrific' thing was. Another problem is that most of the information was hearsay evidence, leave us today to do the search of primary sources to confirm the hearsay.

Everard Van Wulven gave me a copy of his aunt's visit to Holland as she attempted tracing their family history. The Aunt has been died for over 40 years now and from what she wrote, it appears her visit was in the 1930s.

Personal Encounter

Many years ago I travelled to Holland via England and France and stayed in Amsterdam, my father's birth place. Father had been out of touch with his relations there since before I was born, and I now wanted to trace them.

I sought out the church where Father had been baptised and had served as an altar-boy – die Kerk te Poel- and, after viewing the interior, went to the presbytery next door. The priest-in-charge, Fr Knippenburg welcomed me, gave me tea and also photos of the church interior for Father, which delighted him eventually, beyond measure.

I told Fr Knippenburg that I sought cousins by name of Van Vlymen and Brand, but he knew no-one of either name, with corresponding first names.

I was very young, fatigued and too stupid to look up the names in a phone directory and call up likely people. Besides I was eager to be in London by a

certain date so, solitary and alone, I made my cheerless way to the station the next evening to catch a train to the coast. To my surprise and delight there was Fr Knippenburg (a Dominican) to see me off. I was overjoyed. How practical are the Dominicans in their sympathies and interests!

Arriving in London I went to a private house carrying a letter of introduction from a friend in South Africa to a lady who lived there alone. It was a bitterly cold winter's day and I most hospitably entertained by warm hearted Miss Morrison (still my friend). When she invited me to board with her I accepted with alacrity and we soon settled on reasonable terms.

A few days afterwards a letter came from den Weledelen Heer Johannes van Vlymen of Overveen. He introduced himself as my father's cousin, told me that Fr Knippenburg had phoned him, told him of my visit and enquiries, and had given him my address. He said: "By no means leave Europe till you come and stay with us. You will meet my wife, Thea and twelve children who are all anxious to make your acquaintance."

I had a wonderful three weeks stay in the lovely and luxurious van Vlymen mansion, and was thrilled to meet there interesting cousins and children ranging from about 24 years old to a baby under a year. Through them I met several members of the van Vlymen family

I was given treats, with two thrills of a lifetime:

One day, very early, in a chauffeur driven car I was driven to Cousin Jan with his wife and two of the children right across Holland into Belgium,

I was excited as the youngsters in finding ourselves, still in the car on the "pont" which takes passengers including pedestrians and cyclists across the wide Rhine River.

Entranced by the scenes that danced by this delightfully sunny day in winter, we lunched in a town in Holland with Jan's sister and husband whom I had the pleasure of meeting. I was given a dress length of material from them, incidentally, as a present.

We had tea in a town across the border (Tilburg, I think) where Cousin Jan had business to transact. We bought

(Continued from page 10)

some exquisite hand-made lace and returned to Overveen (about half-an-hour's car drive beyond Amsterdam in time for a late dinner.

The other highlight of my sojourn there was a car trip to Utrecht and nearby village of van Houten, which Cousin Jan, with Thea and two children arranged as a secret treat for me.

On arrival at the village I found we were driving up Oud Wulven Road and only then Jan reveal that we were going to see what remained of the one time family estates with centuries of fascinating history.

There were ruins of a one time imposing mansion with a basement chapel (roof and walls etc. still intact, dates, inscriptions in stone and family motto; and I revelled in the yet unvanquished glories of our romantic past.

Joy van Wulven

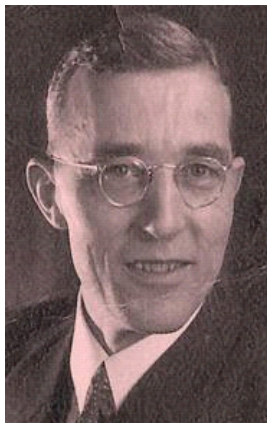
Some background on the families mentioned

So what is the connection between the Van Vlymen family and Van Wulven families?



On google I found **MBMJ (Thijs) Van VLIJMEN** – He was a member of the Dutch House of Representatives for Heemstraden and appears to be an expert on Defence, serving as Dutch

Representative on NATO. He was a Member of Parliament from 1981 to 1994. His full name was Matthew Bernard Maria Joseph Van Vlijman and he was born in Bloemendaal in 1930.



His parents were Jan or **Johannes Maria Bernard Van VLIJMEN** (1884-1964) and **Matthea (Thea) CARRIAGE** – the couple mentioned in the story above. Jan MB Van VLIJMEN was a business man who owned a perfume/cosmetic company, Booldot who were famous for there Eau-de-Cologne.



Besides Jan's son, Thijs, becoming a MP, his father was also one.

Bernard FR Van VLIJMEN was an army officer who had served in India. While serving in the Dutch Parliament he was promoted in rank from Captain to General. He was

elected unopposed to the House for the district of Veghel. He was one of a small group of MPs who were officer and involved only with military matters. He served in Parliament from 1888-1918. Born in Amsterdam, May 2, 1843; he died in Schijndel, December 17, 1919 and was buried in The Hague, cemetery of the Catholic Parish in Da Costa Street, December 22, 1919 (after Requiem Mass in Schijndel). His father, **Marinus VAN VLIJMEN** was a watchmaker in Naarden (born in Amsterdam, December 30, 1816) and his mother (at last we come to the connection between the **Van Vijmen** and **Van Wulven** families!) was **Catharina Elisabeth van WULVEN**, born Amsterdam, December 26, 1811.



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