

To Singe A Goose- Delving Into Our Murky Past!



Dickens on Parish Registers

As the poorest man cannot foresee to what inheritance he may succeed, through the instrumentality of Parochial registers, so in their preservation every member of the community is more or less interested; but the Paris Register returns of 1833 show that a general feeling seemed to exist in favour of their destruction.

Scarcely one of them pronounced the Registers in a satisfactory state. The following sentences abound in the Blue Book: "leaves cut out," "torn out," "injured by damp," "mutilated," "in fragments," "destroyed by fire," "much torn," "illegible," "tattered," "imperfect," "early registers lost".

Thanks to the General registry Act of William the Fourth, all such records made since 1835 are now properly cared for; but those prior to that date are still in parochial keeping, to be torn, lost, burnt, interpolated, stolen, defaced, or rendered illegible at the good pleasure of every wilful or heedless individual of a destructive organisation. Some time ago Mr. Walbran, of Ripon, found part of a Parish Register among a quantity of waste-paper in a cheesemonger's shop. The same gentleman has rescued the small but very interesting register of the chapelry of Denton, in the county of Durham, from the fate which once had nearly befallen it, by causing several liberatim copies to be printed and deposited

in public libraries. Among other instances of negligent custody, Mr. Downing Bruce, the barrister, relates in a recently published pamphlet, that the Registers of South Otterington, containing several entries of the great families of Talbot, Herbert, and Fauconberg, were formerly kept in the cottage of the parish clerk, who used all those preceding the eighteenth century for waste paper; a considerable portion having been taken to “sing a goose”.

Does it not fascinate you- the study of how people used to live? The languaging , so different, the times so different..

As I sit and write this book for you on a Sunday afternoon, I cannot help but wonder what the folks alive at this time might have been doing.

No phones, no internet, no TV... what on earth did they do??

Just that one conversation alone could keep me interested for hours on end.

Do you ever wonder what you would say if you could go back in time and talk to them, what *would* you say? Do you wonder what job they had, what they did for a living? Their political and religious beliefs... what they did for fun... how they parented their children?

Consider that you may be related to one or more of these people! Welcome to the fascinating and unlimited world of genealogy!