

## Genealogy Do-Over Week 2; Goals & Interviews

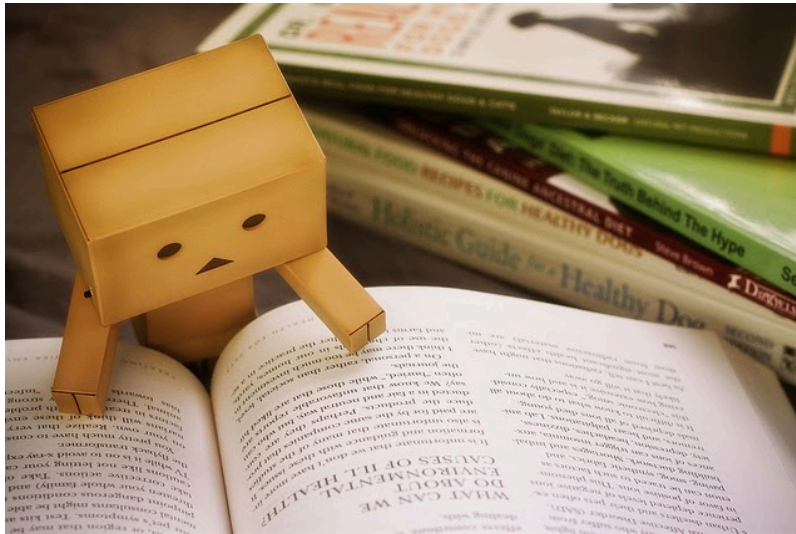


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[Thomas's post](#) regarding week two starts by asking us to go back to where it all began. For me it began properly when I broke my wrist at the gym on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 2006. I didn't remember the exact date, just that I really liked the gas and air I was given, morphine didn't help the pain, and I called my then boyfriend a gnome; he was a gym bunny. Luckily for my records my mother recorded the date on my immunisation record card so I'll not forget it. I was signed off work and bored out of my brain, the physiotherapist had told me that I wasn't to use a computer keyboard but she'd said nothing about a laptop. My wrist was kept flat so I figured what they hell ....

The first thing I did was look up my birth entry on the GRO index. I quickly moved onto the indexes for the rest of the family and joined [Ancestry.co.uk](#). Shaky leaf fever then set in. When my dad got home from work I'd drawn up a tree back to my great grandparents (I was very lucky to have known three of my great grandmother's) and my dad started telling tales of the family.

My Taid (that's a Welsh granddad for those who don't know) then found out what I was doing and he had my nana go and find all the old documents she could; they came in a shoebox and I spent an evening scanning them. I was told tales of a great grandfather (how many times great I didn't know, and I'm not sure my Taid did either!) who was a tailor and said he was 'going to London to buy some fabric', never to return. But Wait! He was seen by another relative who was a merchant seaman some years later when they were docked in South Africa but before contact could be made the runaway great great did another runner!

And then there was the tale of the great grandfather who had owned some substantial property in Holywell, only to lose it all in a game of cards.

How exciting, but how likely? Could these tales be proved? Unfortunately the last of my great grandmother's (and whose family all these stories related to) died in 2004 and my biggest regret is not taking the time to record her stories. She was 99 when she died. God Bless.

Even back then I knew I wanted to find out more about my family. Where did we come from? Are we as Welsh as we like to think we are? Why did we stop speaking Welsh? Without realising it I had set some of my first **Research Goals**, but they had a wide scope, and as I didn't realise what I was doing it wasn't very organised.

So my **Research Goals** for now are:

1.	<p><u>Re-evaluate link back to George Rice Price PARRY.</u></p> <p>This is the gentleman who supposedly ran away to London / South Africa. Although this is a do-over because he is a long-standing brick wall the line has been done-over previously. I wrote a blog about him and my hunt – it can be seen <a href="#">here</a>. Maybe you have some views on my evidence gathering and analysis.</p> <p>This time I will focus on the documentation; What does it tell me? What is missing? Have I missed anything?</p>
2.	<p><u>Did 'my' PARRY family own property in Holywell, Flintshire, Wales.</u></p> <p>A research plan will be constructed around this. The first step of which will be to confirm the ancestry.</p>
3.	<p><u>The PULESTON connection; How does Mary PULESTON relate to the PULESTONS of Emral, Flintshire, Wales, if at all.</u></p> <p>A research plan will be constructed around this. The first step of which will be to confirm the ancestry.</p>

The other two parts of this week focus on **Interviewing**:



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I have never taken the time to formally interview myself or any member of my family. I've asked leading questions whilst the beer has been passed around, I've arranged to meet up with cousins with the primary reason being genealogy, but I've not really thought about what I should ask, or if I should digitally record it. All my previous tales from the family have been scribbled down on scraps of paper, different notebooks, typed up as it's been spoken.

Sure I've taken along the pedigree and family tree to show (and hopefully jog memories), but my questions have been vague and rambling. For example, it took me ages to locate the GRO index for my auntie because I didn't know she had a middle name. I'd asked my mum "so who are the family members, what are their names and approximate ages?" but I'd never thought to sit her down (away from distractions) and ask a structured set of questions that would help to lead her down memory lane. Instead we ran all over it backwards, forwards and ended up in the bushes somewhere eating biscuits and drinking tea (distractions you see).

So my task this week, and I hope my cousins and immediate family members will participate once it's finished, is to design a questionnaire which will extract information about the family. It needs to be concise enough to cover the basic birth, marriage(s), death and burial information, but also have enough give to capture any family tales that may provide hints and clues to unlocking brick walls.

Thomas has mentioned using Family Group Sheets for his family interviews, and they appear to be central to his planning and tracking of research. Whilst I agree they are very useful for the genealogists I think they can be quite terrifying to the uninitiated. This is why I don't, and won't be using them as part of the interview phase in their current form. I use an Excel based Family Group Sheet, which you can access [here via GoogleDrive](#) if you so wish. Feel free to amend, use, or suggest alterations to your hearts content. I like using the spreadsheet because I can hyperlink the families easier than in a word processor or .pdf document, although one problem with hyperlinking is that once you move the files the links need re-attaching. When I'm out and about I tend to take print-outs with me, but again it depends how many loose sheets the archive or library will allow you to take in with you.