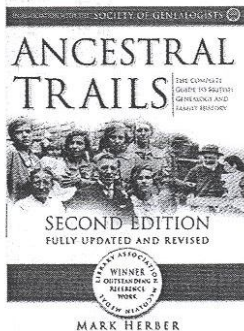


Book reviews

by Peter Watson and Janet Hole

Ancestral Trails:
the Complete Guide to Genealogy and Family History, 2nd edition

by Mark Herber.
Sutton Publishing.
Available from
Family Tree
Magazine's Postal
Book Service (see
pages 51-53) at
£36 (UK); £40.80
(overseas). ISBN
0-7509-3510-3.



As the most complete single volume guide to family history research, the first edition of the encyclopedic 'Herber' is a trusted friend in the *Family Tree Magazine* office. Those of you not lucky enough to own the first edition of *Ancestral Trails* can now go one better with the updated and expanded second (2004) edition.

Mark Herber organises his material well and writes in a clear, unfussy style. He engages with family historians by using examples from his own research and delights bookworms with an exhaustive bibliography. At over 850 pages this is no lightweight production, but it's an easy read.

The new edition has kept pace with name changes (The National Archives, not Public Record Office), website developments and publications since 1997, when the first edition appeared.

The obvious places to look for weakness in *Ancestral Trails* is in those parts of the UK most distant from London, where the author lives. Many general guides to family history simply stick to England, virtually ignoring Scotland and Ireland (not to mention Wales). As a large proportion of the 'English' have recent Scottish and Irish (or Welsh) ancestry this can be irritating. Despite its relative brevity - 18 pages in a chapter entitled 'Scotland, Wales, Ireland, The Isle of Man and the Channel Islands' - the expanded section on Scotland received an enthusiastic endorsement from my Scottish colleague, the professional researcher Sheena Tait. Although 'Herber' is no substitute for a specialist book on researching Scottish ancestry, it's more than

a helpful signpost. A final chapter deals with immigration, emigration and researching abroad.

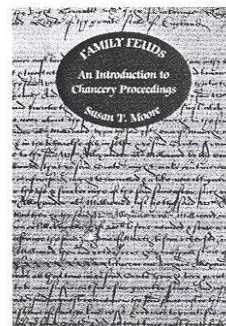
Initially available in hardback only, you'll find what you're looking for in the new edition of *Ancestral Trails*.

PW

Family Feuds:

An Introduction to Chancery Proceedings

by Susan T Moore.
Available from
the Family Tree
Magazine Postal
Book Service at
£7.15 (UK) and
£7.65 (overseas);
(see pages 51-53).
Published by the
Federation of Family
History Societies,
Units 15-16 Chesham Industrial Estate,
Oram Street, Bury Lancashire BL9 6EN;
website: www.familyhistorybooks.co.uk.
ISBN 1-86006-163-X.



When families fall out, especially over money or property, close and distant relatives may soon go to law, leaving a trail of court records behind them over a number of years. In Charles Dickens's *Bleak House* (1852-53) the case of Jarndyce v Jarndyce is an interminable chancery suit which was based on Jennens v Jennens, a real-life feud over the property of an intestate miser at Nacton, Suffolk, which took the lawyers 80 years to settle. Plenty to go at there.

'Chancery' records can be complicated, largely because the records of one case may be found in several different places, but this clear guide by Susan Moore will help the uninitiated to look for fresh material to assist their family history researches.

The records described (which in the case of the Court of Chancery itself run from the late 14th century to 1876) comprise those of the courts of Chancery, Requests, Star Chamber and Exchequer. The disputes - frequently over the contents of a will - were often recorded in great detail and reveal family relationships as well as details of family wealth and status.

The first part of the book describes

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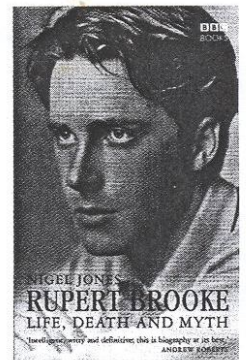
the value of the records of these so-called 'courts of equity' and the type of records found. The second part describes the records themselves and the indexes, calendars and online catalogues and databases used to access them, with a step-by-step guide to research. Helpful illustrations, a brief glossary of terms and a short bibliography complete an excellent 95-page guide.

JH

Rupert Brooke:

Life, Death and Myth

by Nigel Jones.
£10.99. BBC Books,
BBC Worldwide
Ltd, Woodlands, 80
Wood Lane London
W12 0TT; website:
www.bbcworldwide.com. ISBN 0-563-
48856-5.



Immortalised by his poem *The Soldier*, Rupert Brooke gained the reputation of an intellectual dandy. His languorous lifestyle was typical of many of his peers. They dabbled romantically in a charmed society, were sexually ambivalent, boasting literary merit and exceptional good looks.

This imagined façade is demolished in Nigel Jones's biography. Rupert Brooke's complex personality is exposed and the romantic myth exploded. The child of a dominant mother and ineffectual father, he was bisexual and promiscuous. Jealous, paranoid and deeply racist, his superficial charm and good looks hid a personality in conflict. A member of the intelligentsia, his friends included Frances Cornford, Lytton Strachey and Virginia Woolf.

Edwardian England was an ordered society and Brooke's early poems convey this tranquility. His war poems, with their overtones of religious and patriotic fervour, make it obvious that the England he had known was no longer to be.

Nigel Jones uses letters, journals, memoirs and personal reminiscence to reveal the complicated character that was Rupert Brooke. Family histories run through the book, but its value is largely to social historians. The extensive bibliography and full index complete a penetrating study.

JH