

A: So how long have you been interested in genealogy ?

B: Oh, for about the last 30 years, I'd say.

A: And how far have you gone back?

B: Well, for some branches of the family we can go back to the 15th century.

A: Really? That far?!

B: Yes, for the Mannclerk family, we can locate them in the 1490s in East England.

A: And does it take a lot of time?

B: It does, because as you go back, you add another two families so there is more information to look for. For example, my father's name was Watson and my mother's surname was Lockwood. But then his mother was a Creasey and hers was a Butler. Luckily, there are many people who are doing research on the other families, so you can use their information and so make your tree bigger and bigger.

A: And how do you get the information?

B: Well, you have to look at birth certificates and marriage certificates, you look at lots of church and official documents and nowadays there's lots of information available online, and there are quite a few different family society groups who do research.

A: And have you found any famous relatives in your family?

B: It's hard to say. In our family we have a branch called the Tyrells and there is an assassin called Tyrell in English history. He is the man who killed King William II In the year 11 00. He said it was an accident, that he thought he saw a fox, - King William had very red hair you see-but most people aren't convinced. So we are possibly related to him.

A: And which type of people is it easier to research?

B: Basically, the rich , the aristocrats. Many of them can easily trace their family back hundreds of years because there is more information about the aristocrats and the rich old families. They appear in books and chronicles whereas if you are a poor farm worker, well there's simply not very much information available about you.

A: And what are the most common family names in Britain?

B: Well, Smith and Jones are common everywhere in Britain, but in England we also have Taylor and Brown, while in Wales they have Jones, Davies and Evans and up in Scotland it's Campbell and Stewart