

On the Net

Any doctors hiding in the family tree?

If you've ever felt that medicine was "in the blood," the Internet offers a new way to find out. Alex Glendinning, a British financial planner with a passion for the past, has created a Web site dedicated to the art of genealogy. And he has a special place in his heart for physicians.

His page (user.itl.net/~glen/doctors.html) provides a road map for those interested in digging into medical family histories. He not only provides resources broken down by category but also lists people willing to help in your search.

If you suspect there was a British army or navy doctor somewhere in the family tree, Glendinning suggests clicking into the Society of Genealogists at the Public Record Office in London (www.pro.gov.uk). The office has full army and navy lists dating from the mid-1700s. If you've a wee bit 'o the

Irish in your veins, visit the holdings of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (www.rcsi.ie/library/index.html).

As with most genealogical research, listed sources are weighted heavily to the British Isles, but there are links and references to resources around the world.

In Canada, Glendinning suggests trying the National Archives of Canada (www.archives.ca), the British Columbia Vital Events Index (www.bc.archives.gov.bc.ca/textual/government/vstats/v_events.htm) or the immigration and passenger records database (www.inGeneas.com/ingeneas/index.html). The latter provides records for the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries; documents can be ordered online for around \$8.

For general information on all things genealogical, turn to Cyndi's List (www.cyndislist.com), a categorized and cross-referenced index of In-

ternet genealogical resources created by genealogical writer Cyndi Howells. She includes a special section for medical professionals (www.cyndislist.com/medical.htm#doctors). The site is



very popular with the genealogy crowd — it has had more than 16 million visitors since it was launched in 1996. (All Web sites listed in this article were operational on July 20, 2000.) — *Michael O'Reilly, mike@oreilly.net*

MDs promote self-sufficiency in ravaged Africa

Against a backdrop of drought, internecine warfare and an AIDS pandemic, it's difficult to know where to start when attempting to reduce suffering in sub-Saharan Africa. Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief thinks it has found one way: concentrate on establishing healthy, self-sufficient



Much of CPAR's work involves improving water supplies. This unprotected spring in Ethiopia is at risk of becoming polluted.

communities, not on providing medical care. "Our goal is building healthy communities, and access to clean water, proper nutrition and primary health education are some of our strategies," says Dr. David Zakus, CPAR's president.

The organization's efforts are concentrated in Ethiopia, Uganda and Malawi, where it tries to provide the resources needed to build wells, protect springs and prevent drought. To combat deforestation and erosion, CPAR is coordinating and funding a reforestation program that has seen 46 million trees planted by local residents since 1986; CPAR pays planters for their work. In some areas, where drought has forced people to eat their own livestock and planting seed and to sell their agricultural tools to buy food, CPAR is now attempting to supply tools and seed.

The organization was launched as one doctor's response to the Ethiopian famine of 1984. Toronto physician Mark Doidge and his friend Henry Gold, an engineer, created CPAR as a way to provide food and emergency health services during that crisis.

CPAR, which has offices in Africa and Toronto, can be reached at 416 369-0865 or cpar@web.net; the Web site is at www.cpar.ca. — *Susan Pinker, Montreal*