SOME INTERNET RESOURCES FOR MEDIEVAL GENEALOGY

***by Chris Phillips*[1]**

Chris Phillips continues his regular feature with a focus on three important British academic resources on the Internet.

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The Humbul Humanities Hub

The Humbul Humanities Hub, at ***http://www.humbul.ac.uk/***, is essentially an academically oriented web directory, publicly funded and hosted by Oxford University. For each resource, there is a short review and a record page containing formal information. The collection is both searchable and browsable - for example the history section can be browsed by type of resource, period covered and other classifications (the section covering the period 500-1500 currently contains nearly 800 records). This provides an excellent way of locating high-quality material on the Internet, and of keeping up-to-date with new resources (40 new history items have been added in the last month). Among the advanced options available to people who register at the site are weekly email digests of new additions in chosen subject areas.

British History Online

British History Online, at ***http://www.british-history.ac.uk/***, is a fairly recent addition, produced by the Institute of Historical Research and the History of Parliament Trust, providing digital versions of published historical source material relating to medieval and early modern Britain. Currently there is more early modern than medieval material, but the site already contains a useful collection of texts, with a particular emphasis on London and Middlesex (though several items are only extracts, rather than complete works). There are plans to add many more in the near future, including 19 further volumes of the Victoria County History series due in June.

The Arts and Humanities Data Service

The Arts and Humanities Data Service is part of the so-called "Invisible Web" - places on the Internet that search engines like Google cannot reach. The History section, at ***http://www.ahds.ac.uk/history/***, was previously known as the History Data Service, and is part of the UK Data Archive at the University of Essex. Unfortunately the potentially confusing institutional relationships are reflected to some extent in the organisation of the website(s). It is a repository for digital collections of historical data, mainly relating to the UK, and mainly produced by academics and official bodies. Although some of these collections can be downloaded from the website, most are supplied on media such as CD-ROMs. I should stress that the service is provided mainly for academic users in the UK and elsewhere, and that *private researchers will generally have to pay a fee* for access to the data. In some cases there are additional restrictions – for example, the owner of the data may also have to give permission before it can be supplied.

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The collection currently includes more than a dozen datasets relating to the medieval period, with more due to be added soon. They are very varied in content and nature. Some are based on published works (such as indexes to Emden's Biographical Registers of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge), but most are compilations from original records or previously unpublished secondary works. They include data from particular classes of records (the Worcestershire Domesday; York deeds; Dyffryn Clywd court rolls; Winchester diocese pipe rolls), particular places (Stonehouse, Gloucestershire) or districts (West Berkshire; the East Midlands) and even a particular surname (Marfleet). This is a growing resource offering access to a lot of information that isn't readily available elsewhere, and is well worth investigating.