

# 2010 Detwiler Family Reunion Quiz ANSWERS

## FACTS ABOUT THE 1500's

1. Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and still smelled pretty good in June.
2. Since they got their yearly bath in May they were starting to smell so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor, hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.
3. In the 1500's the floors were dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, "dirt poor". The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance way. Hence the saying a "thresh hold".
4. Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.
5. In those days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme, Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old.
6. Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey in the 1500's. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a wake.
7. England was old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up old coffins and would take the bones out to a bone house, and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the graveyard shift) to listen for the bell.
8. Since people had to sit by the bell and listen for it and hear it ring, someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer".