Family History Nuggets

Meaning of British Sayings

Have you ever wondered where phrases such as “have a gander” come from or what they mean? There are hundreds of British sayings, idioms and expressions used in England and Great Britain that can tell you a lot about English culture and heritage. These come from the FamilySearch blog. Does your family have any inside phrases or expressions? Do you know how they got started or the story behind them? Share your family jokes, sayings or stories under Memories in FamilySearch.

“Brass moneys”- very cold weather

“Bob’s your uncle”- there you have it or ta-da

“Gutted”-feeling extremely upset or disappointed

“Knackered”- exhausted

“Cream crackered” extremely tired or exhausted

“Have a gander”- take a look

“Lost the plot”- lost the ability to cope or behave rationally

“Throw a wobbly”- become very angry or throw a tantrum

“Chinwag”- a good chat or gossip with someone

“Curtain twitcher”- a nosey neighbor or friend

“Full of beans”- lively or full of energy

“Chockablock”- crammed full or crowded

“Spend a penny”- use the restroom

“Take the biscuit”- particularly bad or annoying

“Put a sock in it”- be quiet

“On your bike”- go away

“Codswallop” nonsense

“Scrummy”- tasty

“Bodge”- a clumsy patch or repair

“Barmy” crazy or daft

“Collywobbles” stress-induced stomach pain or queasiness

“Donkey’s Years” a long time

“Gobby”- loud, opinionated and offensive

“Lurgy”- contagious but not a serious illness

“Blimey”- an expression of surprise

“Gobsmacked”- shocked

“Kerfuffle”- a confrontation over differing views

“Bagsy” stake a claim

“Flaff”- waste time on something unproductive

“Knees up”- a party

“Skive” ditch or leave early

“Trainers” athletic shoes

“Not my cup of tea”- not my favorite thing

“Bits and bobs” various items

“Throw a spanner in the works”-prevent something from

happening smoothly or to bring a plan to a halt.

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